THE END OF PEASANTRY IN THE MEDITERRANEAN WORLD
— With Special Reference to the Italian Case —

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I

The term, "the end of peasantry" has more or less entered into popular usage, due to the Mendras book *La Fin des Paysans: Changement et innovations dans les sociétés rurales françaises* (1967), although Jean Lerner, the English translator of this book converted the title to *The Vanishing Peasant*.¹ As Lerner sums it up, according to Mendras, "The farmer who is content to run a small subsistence farm in conformity with traditional routines and to live in a face-to-face society, seldom going 'beyond the limited horizons of his own soil,' is becoming rarer and rarer. And his 'peasant soul' is disappearing with him".² Mendras opposes peasant society to industrial or mass society and, while coming up with an affirmation of the composition of traditional peasant society, he confirms its integration into industrial society. This integration is taking place because of the appearance of a new type of farmer who contains within himself the ethos and logical thinking of industrial society, and also because of the increasing number of persons in non-agricultural sectors in rural society.

This phenomenon of the decline or transformation of traditional rural society is not limited to France or to other industrialised countries; in every country of the world, the problem is currently under discussion as a domestic issue, sometimes from the sociological and economic viewpoint, sometimes in relation with welfare policies and sometimes with regard to development strategies. At the root of the discussions, there necessarily exist some fundamental questions: To what extent can one recognise the universality of such terms as "peasantry" (as an economy, class or culture), "traditional rural

² Lerner, J., op. cit. Translator's Note.
society” or “peasant society”; what are the origins or causes of the varieties of decline, and what is the nature of the decline or of the transformation of these societies and civilisations?

The definition of peasantry as a “general” or “universal” type leads also to different delineations of analytically marginal groups: a priori models emerging from a set of values, which stand out in the mind of students of the topic as being distinctly peasant because they are opposed to the stereotyped, tend to emphasise the immobile character of peasant culture. As Sutti Ortiz points out, there is a considerable body of literature on economic behaviour illustrating how moral values, social goals, institutional settings, tastes and temperaments affect behaviour and define what satisfies the producer; on the other hand, some author's use of the term “peasant” implies a political relationship where one party has greater power than the other, in which case the peasantry is characterised by a universal ideology or by a revolutionary movement. According to the American ethnologist Eric Wolf, “the peasant Utopia is the free village, untrammelled by tax collectors, labour recruiters, large landowners, officials. Ruled over, but never ruling, they also lack any acquaintance with the operation of the state as a complex machinery... Thus, for the peasant, the state is a negative quantity, an evil, to be replaced in short shrift by their own ‘home-made’ social order. That order, they believe, can run without the state; hence peasants in rebellion are natural anarchists”. Theses of this kind are certainly all schematic and based on an idealised myth of the peasantry, even when the authors pretend to a Marxist viewpoint. However, I rather agree with the stand of Pierre Barral, according to whom there is no unique nature of peasant culture independent from the historical particularities of each peasant society; in a situation of internal disequilibrium, with the relative autonomy of the superstructure in regards to a backward infrastructure, the peasant world is shattered by the violent tensions among different constituent strata. The internal divergences within rural society are thus undeniable but, if definitively localised in time and space, the peasantry can constitute a given subject for scientific analyses.

For productive purposes, agriculture utilises the growth process of cultivated plants and domesticated animals which, though they constitute elements of civilisation on the one hand, on the other, as biological species, they are always under the strong influence of the physical environment, especially climatic conditions. Hence, from the agronomical point of view,

one is certainly able to recognise the common characteristics of agriculture in various Mediterranean countries and, perhaps, also certain common social features and a common ethos among the Mediterranean peasantry, derived from those common agronomical characteristics, and a common infrastructure for agricultural production. There are, however, great differences among the cultural backgrounds and historical and socio-economic conditions, particularly between the countries south of the Mediterranean, i.e., the Islamic world, and European countries. Great differences also exist among European countries, especially between eastern Mediterranean countries and western Mediterranean countries. In this essay, I focus on the south European countries, especially Italy, in order to examine past and current discussions on peasant societies and on the end of peasantry.

In Italy, it is necessary to remark the special intellectual circumstances in which discussions on the characteristics of traditional peasant society have already been analysed in the second half of the nineteenth century in the debates on the “question of Southern Italy” (Mezzogiorno). In this sense, the situation was somewhat similar to that of Russia where, also, the unique and autonomous character of peasant society has been observed, from the time of the traditional populists in the nineteenth century to A.V. Chayanov and his theses in the twentieth. Early meridionalists, such as Sidney Sonnino and Leopoldo Franchetti, not only denounced the parasitic and anti-social character of the big landlords (latifundisti) of Southern Italy but also criticised the governmental policies which were inappropriate to the traditional peasant society of the South. Later on, after the 1880’s, some meridionalists of Southern origin based their arguments for the reindication of the exploited South and for its political autonomy on the proper and peculiar

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7 As I have already published several works on the history of the Mezzogiorno and on the Mezzogiorno question, I am not going into detail on these matters in this particular paper.


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Franchetti, L. *Condizioni politiche e amministrative della Sicilia* Firenze, 1877, especially pp. 373-384.

The texts of these two authors have been reprinted in Zanotti Bianco, U. (ed.) *Collezione di studi meridionali* Firenze, 1925.
character of Southern peasant society (società contadina). They furthermore insisted on the moral superiority of the cafone (Southern peasant), a term which has often been used in a derogatory sense by the people of Northern and Central Italy.  

Discussion on the peasant culture (civiltà contadina) was actively resumed in the period immediately after World War II and continued through the 1950’s. The decisive moment for the resumption of this discussion must have been the publication of Carlo Levi’s famous book. From his experience of banishment to small villages in Lucania, Levi recognised the Southern peasants who had perpetually lived extraneously to history and the State. In a society where humanity was at one with or undistinguishable from the soil it tilled, the livestock it tended and the ills it suffered in the malaria-plagued South, there was neither happiness nor hope in the community at large, but only individual sentiment of a passive and painful nature. At any rate, the world described by Levi in this book was, as its title indicates, totally different in nature from modern West European civilisation. At the same time, however, Levi did not remain an outsider observing an exotic society but made a penetrating analysis of the village community, discovering its class structure, especially the aspect of antagonism between contadini and gentry (galantuomini). It is possible that his intellectual stance derived, to a large extent, from his ideological position and the activities he had participated in at Turin, in collaboration with radical meridionalists such as Piero Gobetti, in the 1920’s.

II

In this way, Levi’s book could be read on the one hand, as an account of the discovery of, and an appreciation of, a very heterogeneous or truly traditional society in the modern state of Italy and, on the other, as a denouncement of backwardness and social injustice existing in the form of the

9 A typical example of the proud exaltation of the Southern people in their consciousness of a moral superiority can be found in Niceforo, A. L’Italia barbara contemporanea, Palermo, 1898, p. 4. Regarding autonomist and reformist thought in meridionalism see my previous works cited in note 7, and also Villari, R. Autonomismo e Mezzogiorno in: Mori, G. (ed.) Autonomismo meridionale: ideologia, politica e istituzioni II Mulino, 1981.

10 This discussion is well examined in Manna, G. Tramonto della civiltà contadina Massimo, 1979, 255 p. (the appendices to this book, which occupy two-thirds of it, are anthologies on the peasant problems in Italy and on the Mezzogiorno question), and in: Pasquinelli, C. Antropologia culturale e questione meridionale: Ernesto De Martino e il dibattito sul mondo popolare subaltern negli anni 1948-1955 La Nuova Italia, 1977, 246 p. Zannino, F. (ed.) Orientamenti marxisti e studi antropologici italiani, problemi e dibattiti (Quaderni di “Problemi del Socialismo”), Franco Angeli, 1976, 258 p. Bronzini, G.B. Cultura contadina e idea meridionalistica Dedalo, 1982, 261 p.

Mezzogiorno question in modern Italy. This ambivalent approach wielded influence in two directions, in discussions of peasant culture. One direction was adhered to by those writers who insisted on the immobile character of peasant society, and its chief proponent was Michele Lacalamita. The other direction was represented by R. Scotellaro. According to him, the Southern peasants were not always resigned to their lot but were always ready to adapt themselves to a new situation, and engaged also in activities other than agriculture. Lacalamita cites many passages from Levi’s book but Levi himself later on wrote the introduction to Scotellaro’s book insisting on the importance of political action and the intervention of intellectuals for the realisation of a new meridionalism. This fact clearly exemplifies the opposing aspects of the inheritance left to us from Levi. Though differing from Scotellaro, Ernesto De Martino and other so-called progressive folklorists also took a position against the immobilism of peasant society. The arguments propounded by Lacalamita and his followers were severely criticised by F. Compagna and his group whose base was the Napolitan journal Nord e Sud.

The cardinal points of the criticism directed at Lacalamita and his followers were 1) his tendency to consider the realities of Southern Italy without regard for the historical situation and, hence, to postulate the existence of a culturally unique world, in the shape of the peasant society; 2) the contradiction he established of a mythicised peasant world or peasant culture, as opposed to modern civilisation, and the negation of the possibility of communication between the two; 3) his anti-modernism which rejected the theoretical and ethical values of modern society; 4) his enthusiasm and romantic nostalgia for the mediaeval, feudal and Catholic world; 5) his excessive evaluation of the penetration of Catholicism into the peasant culture, confusing true religious belief and superficially religious, somewhat folklorist practices; and 6) his indiscriminate acceptance of all traditional things without

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12 Lacalamita, M. *La civiltà contadina* Edizione dell' Ateneo, 1959. Works of the same ideological orientation that should be noted at this point are:
De Martino’s term “barbarisation of Marxism” (*inbarbarimento del marxismo*) is severely criticised by other “progressive” folklorists, for instance:
Forni, F. *Contro il mito del « popolo », Avanti!* 22 April, 1950 (this article appears in Pasquinelli, C. op. cit. But the critics of De Martino also shared the same position in opposing the use of the notion *civiltà contadina*.
15 Compagna, F. *La questione meridionale* Garzanti, 1963, 157 p. The most representative and thorough criticism of Lacalamita is:
distinguishing true traditional values from those anachronistic elements which constitute a hindrance to the effective emancipation of the rural masses.

Table 1  Population Mobility of Each Socio-economic Zone of Southern Italy (in thousands)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
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<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mountainous zone</td>
<td>2,807</td>
<td>16.1</td>
<td>595</td>
<td>2,286</td>
<td>12.4</td>
<td>−596</td>
<td>−519</td>
<td>−1,115</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extensive pastoral-</td>
<td>2,275</td>
<td>13.0</td>
<td>537</td>
<td>1,967</td>
<td>10.7</td>
<td>−426</td>
<td>−418</td>
<td>−844</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>agricultural zone</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hilly zone</td>
<td>2,093</td>
<td>12.0</td>
<td>430</td>
<td>1,849</td>
<td>10.0</td>
<td>−394</td>
<td>−277</td>
<td>−671</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Specialised arboricultural</td>
<td>2,688</td>
<td>15.4</td>
<td>709</td>
<td>2,599</td>
<td>14.1</td>
<td>−410</td>
<td>−387</td>
<td>−797</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>zone</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Irrigated zone</td>
<td>820</td>
<td>4.7</td>
<td>292</td>
<td>956</td>
<td>5.2</td>
<td>−68</td>
<td>−88</td>
<td>−156</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intensive agriculture</td>
<td>2,204</td>
<td>12.6</td>
<td>725</td>
<td>2,560</td>
<td>13.9</td>
<td>−174</td>
<td>−196</td>
<td>−370</td>
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<tr>
<td>and garden farming zone</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urban zone</td>
<td>4,589</td>
<td>26.2</td>
<td>1,818</td>
<td>6,210</td>
<td>33.7</td>
<td>+ 18</td>
<td>−209</td>
<td>−191</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total for the South</td>
<td>17,476</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>5,107</td>
<td>18,435</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>−2.052</td>
<td>−2.096</td>
<td>−4.149</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sources: G.S. Marselli, L'emigrazione dalla Campania: aspetti nuovi di un fenomeno antico, Campania Documenti, 1976

Table 2  Evolution of the Agricultural Labour Structure, 1871-1970 (percentages)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Independent Workers</th>
<th>(Part-Profit-sharers, mezzadri)</th>
<th>Dependent Workers (Farm Laborers)</th>
<th>Others</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1871</td>
<td>42.7</td>
<td>(17.0)</td>
<td>56.9</td>
<td>0.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1881</td>
<td>38.4</td>
<td>(13.7)</td>
<td>61.2</td>
<td>0.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1901</td>
<td>53.2</td>
<td>(19.8)</td>
<td>46.4</td>
<td>0.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1911</td>
<td>46.3</td>
<td>(18.7)</td>
<td>53.3</td>
<td>0.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1921</td>
<td>55.0</td>
<td>(15.4)</td>
<td>44.7</td>
<td>0.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1936</td>
<td>51.3</td>
<td>(20.0)</td>
<td>28.4</td>
<td>0.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1959</td>
<td>75.7</td>
<td>(   )</td>
<td>24.3</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1977</td>
<td>62.0</td>
<td>(   )</td>
<td>38.0</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Besides Italian authors, a certain number of foreign anthropologists who were disconcerted by the peculiar character of the peasant society of Southern Italy described in detail the moral and material situation of the peasant communities in some monographic studies\(^{16}\) which have often been cited by Italian advocates of the *civiltà contadina*. It should also be noted that some critics of the *civiltà contadina* referred to the discussions in American sociology on “folk society” or on “little tradition and great tradition”\(^{17}\) in order to be able to insist on the mutability of the social structure and the value system of peasant society. We should also take into consideration to the fact that the land reform in Italy after 1950,\(^{18}\) though partial in nature began to bring about radical changes to the rural society of Southern Italy, together with the realisation of Mezzogiorno development policies. The rural exodus which occurred on a major scale in the second half of the 1950’s and continued through the first half of the 1960’s had already shown early signs of starting at the beginning of the 1950’s and accelerated the changes in peasant society.\(^{19}\) It was in a situation such as this that F. Fortini, E. De Martino and other folklorists of the new generation succeeded in refuting, both in the theoretical and the empirical sphere, the thesis of

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Brögger’s field work was conducted in the second half of the 1960’s so he also had occasion to remark the changing character of peasant society. But he still held to the view that it was necessary to discover the roots of traditional peasant culture traits in the Mediterranean world, as conceptualised by Pitt-Rivers, J. in his: *Mediterranean Counrmen: Essays in the Social Anthropology of the Mediterranean* Mouton, 1963, 236 p.


18 Exactly speaking, land distribution measures began in 1948. These measures had been anticipated because of the governmental enquiry in 1946, which had indicated the presence of a pathological situation in the polarisation of the tenure system. Generally, however, it is considered that agrarian reform in Italy took place at the time of the promulgation of a series of laws in 1950 which affected more than 600,000 hectares. For an overview of the land reform in Italy, see: King, R. *Land Reform: The Italian Experience* Butterworths, 1973, p. 257.

I have already made a comparative examination of land reform in Italy as follows:


the *civiltà contadina*.

The changing intellectual situation regarding the discussions on the *civiltà contadina* is clearly reflected in a book published in 1980, with photographs by Fosco Maraini that were taken at the beginning of the 1950’s and a recently written text by Giuseppe Giarrizzo. In the capacity of keen photographer, Maraini never failed to perceive the changing aspects of the situation and the penetration of new elements. His intention, though, was to conceptualise through visual means the specific unity of the South, especially peasant society; hence, in the postscript to the book, he deplores “the changing face of our South,” which has become evident in the last thirty years, with the rural exodus, the tourist invasion, industrialisation and the increasing uniformity of culture through the means of the mass media. Giarrizzo, however, belongs to the generation formed in the postwar intellectual mould and he analyses the apparent immobilism of the Southern landscapes at the beginning of the 1950’s in connection with the “neo-ruralist” policies of the fascist regime. Finding, as he did, many positive aspects in the transformations so lamented by Maraini, he judged the photographer’s position to be too pessimistic and one-sided. In a certain sense, the book is the result of a strange collaboration of photographer, author and editor, all of whom hold different viewpoints; however, both Giarrizzo and the editor, Enzo Persichella, utilise the photographer’s works as historical documents, in order to analyse the peasant society of Southern Italy during the period from the 1930’s to the 1950’s.

Around the end of the 1960’s, with the massive drain of the rural population from marginal areas (Table 1) and with the coming into effect of the E.C.’s Common Agricultural Policy, radical transformations in, and even the decline of, traditional peasant society were already more marked in Italy than in other member countries of the E.C. Thus, in Southern Italy, it became difficult to assert, as Mendras did in France in 1967, an optimistic stand or view to accord with the phrase “the end of peasantry”. Mendras in fact never denied the role of agriculture in the national economy of France and forecast the possibility of the formation of a new type of rural society made by agricultural entrepreneurs. Thus the implications of the phrase “the end of peasantry” in the situation in Italy, differed greatly from its implications in the French situation.

II

It is very obvious that, in regard to Italy where regional differences in agriculture in terms of productivity and of the land tenure system are very great, it is somewhat difficult to say exactly what the general characteristics

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of the agricultural structure are. In France, after a great number of small peasant proprietors had been brought into being by the Jacobinist revolution, the general trend, in the long-term sense, was the gradual growth of medium and large-scale farm management. The situation differed in Italy where it was possible to observe a growing peasantisation of Italian agriculture after the national unification, at least until 1950. In Table 2, drawn up by Giovanni Mottura and Enrico Pugliese, the prevalence of the farm labourer within the total agricultural employment remains at a significantly high level during the entire period from unification to fascism. On examining the structure of the agricultural labour force (which employed around 50 per cent of the total active population until the eve of World War II), we find certain tendencies emerge as significant after the 1920’s: 1) a reduction in the acreage farmed directly by the owner-capitalist or peasant-proprietor (67.7 per cent to 50.8 per cent of the total agricultural labour force between 1927 and 1936); 2) the considerable increase of tenant peasants and the contraction of capitalist-tenancy (according to Mottura and Pugliese, between 1913 and 1945, the former increased approximately from 33 per cent to 75 per cent of the area open to lease); and 3) significant expansion of the area farmed through share-cropping (mezzadria). It is also necessary to take into consideration the fact that, in this period (during which the share of agricultural production in the gross national product decreased from about 40 per cent to 26 per cent), the number of those employed in manufacturing industries registered a somewhat meagre increase (5,156,000 in 1921 and 5,822,000 in 1936). In this way, by putting at the disposal of the landowners a mass of labour forces faced with the difficulty of finding employment in non-agricultural sectors, the political course deriving from agrarian policies tended to do away with the incentive for the technical and organisational development of average and large farming enterprises. Thus, the agrarian policies of the fascist regime, whether intentionally or otherwise, resulted in hindering the capitalist development of the majority of rural areas. For the majority of the Italian rural population, this kind of peasantisation meant increased poverty, loss of contractual power and an increase in the share of self-consumption. This, then, was the reality of the “neo-ruralism” of the fascist regime. The situation was especially aggravated in the South where the persistent existence of large-scale absentee landowners interfered the development of agricultural productivity.

In the period immediately after World War II, an increase in absolute numbers of those engaged in agriculture in 1948, compared to 1936, pre-


supposed the strong predominance of peasant families in rural communities. At this point, we have to reconsider the arguments pertaining to the civilta contadina against this social and economic background and, in this respect, Giarrizzo’s interpretation of the immobility of Southern society is very much to the point.

As already indicated, the year 1950 was a turning point in many ways for the peasant society of Italy. When agrarian reform was initiated, it aimed at the creation of a large number of small owner-cultivators and an increase in agricultural activity by means of public investment in the agricultural infrastructure (construction of terraces, irrigation systems, and so on).\textsuperscript{22} Since then, however, the reform has demonstrated effects other than those officially forecast; it unquestionably abolished the parasitical absentee landlordism, and, in this sense, the apparent immobilism which had been effectively maintained by the mechanism of big landlordism through their agents (gabelotti) was shown to be based on determined social and institutional circumstances as already remarked by Renée Rochefort at the beginning of the 1960’s\textsuperscript{23} and later by a number of other authors.\textsuperscript{24} But the creation of a great number of small-scale agricultural managements resulted in a massive rural and agricultural exodus from most parts of the rural South, as indicated in Table 1. A change in Mezzogiorno development policies took place with the shifting of the emphasis on investments in the infrastructure, especially that for agriculture, to a preference for industrialisation-oriented measures. This resulted in large areas affected by agrarian reform being left in circumstances where the land productivity level was markedly low.\textsuperscript{25} Regarding certain parts of Central Italy, where large-scale agricultural management appeared after the almost complete decline of the sharecropping system, we may say that the end of peasantry in Mendras’ sense is indeed a fact. That is, while agricultural land use as a productivity activity exists, the destruction of the social organisation of rural communities and also the absolute decline of agricultural activities in Southern Italy indicates the end of peasantry in that region.

\textsuperscript{22} These original targets of agrarian reform are evidenced by many writings of that time, for instance:
Rossi Doria, M. Riforma agraria e azione meridionalistica, Edizioni Agricole, 1956, 394 p.
Bandini, M. La riforma fondiaria e l’agricoltura meridionale in: AA. VV., Problemi dell’agricoltura meridionale Cassa per il Mezzogiorno, 1953.


While the socio-psychological character of the inhabitants of rural communities has indubitably changed, being no longer completely agriculture-oriented, where the decline of economic activities is marked, we can explain this neither as the urbanisation of the countryside nor as the industrialisation of rural districts. It is very understandable, and can be verified by statistical data, that a massive rural exodus results in an increase in the proportion of older people and females in the age structure of the population. This is another aspect of the end of peasantry in the Italian case, especially in the South or, otherwise, evidence of the disappearance of the civiltà contadina, if indeed it had ever existed, in a certain historical context.

We should note, however, one more important aspect of the transformation of rural society in Italy especially where agricultural activities are actually conducted, in spite of the difficulties incurred under the continuing depression of the national economy and the unpropitious effects of the common agricultural policies of the E.C. I refer to the increasing amount of part-time farming (agricoltura a mezzo tempo), which Corrado Barberis has verified by means of a very skilful analysis. Moreover, from the statistical data obtained from the agricultural censuses of 1970 and 1981, we are able to ascertain the existence, in every economic area and municipality, of a large number of agricultural managements (aziende agricole) the land-holding scale of which is too small for the people concerned to live exclusively on agriculture. The presence of a population engaged in non-agricultural activities in villages or rural areas is an overall phenomenon in industrial countries and one aspect of the so-called “urbanisation” of the countryside. But alongside households totally engaged in and exclusively depending on non-agricultural activities (these include various services in villages and commuters to work in town, pensioners, week-end householders, i.e., people owning country houses or villas for rest and recreational purposes), there are also generally to be found comparatively stable, large-scale farmers and agricultural entrepreneurs. In cases such as that of Italy, where a great number of part-time farmers are to be found who continue to hold pieces of agricultural land for self-consumption or to assure a supplementary income, marketing a small quantity of agricultural products, the social disorganisation of the village community is more complicated than in a case where agricultural and non-agricultural sectors are clearly separated, both socially and spatially. In the former case of the disintegration of village life, in the agricultural sector itself, various categories

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of people engaged in agriculture are to be found; agricultural productivity, psychological attitudes towards the land and also towards urban influences vary according to the category of people involved. Consequently, traditional collaboration in productive activities, in daily life and festive events, and also in the maintenance of modern cooperative organisations has become very difficult among them. The true end of peasantry or of the peasant culture is not brought on by the integration of traditional peasant society into industrial society, but by the destruction or the exploitation of the former by the latter.\textsuperscript{28} In cases where there is a social and spatial juxtaposition of the agricultural sector and the non-agricultural sector, the possibility exists of self-identity on the part of the elements, i.e., the persons, belonging to each sector and also a mutual respect between the elements of the two sectors. But, as Eugenio Corsini points out, in the case of the contemporary Italian peasantry, a mutual penetration, in both the spatial and social sense, of the agricultural and non-agricultural sectors took place in rural areas, resulting in the serious problems of the loss of self-identity on the part of the peasantry and the growth of a mingled prejudice and disdain towards the peasant world (\textit{mondo contadino}) on the part of other people.\textsuperscript{29}

Since the oil crisis of 1973, with the setback in the growth of the West European economy, especially the Italian economy, the population mobility of Italy, caused by the internal and international migrations has slowed down. In fact, while during the decade 1961-1971 65 per cent of the national population increase was registered in Northern Italy against only 8.5 per cent in Southern Italy, in the decade 1971-1981, an increase of 30.5 per cent in the North, 21.7 per cent in Central Italy and, against all expectations, 47.8 per cent in the South were registered.\textsuperscript{30} This was partly due to the decreased possibility of emigration from the Mezzogiorno, and partly to the increased number of persons who returned to the South from the North and from other European countries. But when we examine the matter in more detail on the municipal level, we are compelled to note that, first of all, almost all the provincial centres of the South registered a very high rate of population increase, in other words, the main part of the population increase has been realised in the medium size provincial cities; and underpopulation in rural areas, including the desertion of villages in extreme cases, still constitutes one of the most serious problems in Southern Italy.

\textsuperscript{28} Molland A. \textit{Paysans exploités: Essai sur la question paysanne} Presse Universitaires de Grenoble, 1978, 244 p.

\textsuperscript{29} Corsini, E. Considerazioni sull' interesse attuale verso il mondo contadino in : Grimaldi P. (ed.) \textit{Condizione contadina, ricerca, intervento, sviluppo} Stampaori, 1979, 209 p.

As many commentators on Mezzogiorno problems now stress, the most grave regional problem of present-day Italy is not the North-South disparity but the increasing gaps in the social and economic development among different zones of the Mezzogiorno itself. These developmental gaps are particularly evident between plains or coastal zones and mountainous zones, between urban and suburban areas and backward rural areas, and between the growth poles and other vast, neglected areas. This situation indicates the shift of the political power gravity to the urban areas, from latifondisti or landed bourgeoisie to the parasitic real estate speculator and state bourgeoisie (an alliance of the bureaucratic apparatus and pressure groups, i.e., sottogoverni) in the cities.\(^{31}\) In Southern Italy, peasantry problems were discussed in connection with the civiltà contadina, in the context of the meridionalist culture. But when this culture became relegated to the position of a subordinate culture and an instrument of political parties in the proper political atmosphere of trasformismo,\(^{32}\) peasantry problems were less and less brought up and discussions of meridionalist questions all but disappeared.\(^{33}\) What this means, in other words, is that, through the new development policies regarding the Mezzogiorno, the South was completely drawn into Italian capitalism, with the massive mobilisation of labour forces to non-agricultural sectors during the period of the rapid growth of the Italian national economy in the 1950’s and 1960’s.\(^{34}\) In due course, under this newly integrated national economy, the peasant economy itself entered into a marginal existence.

Meridionalism had a significance and a function not only in the history of the Mezzogiorno but in the history of Italy, when it represented the nucleus of political criticism by the democratic opposition. The instrumentalisation of meridionalist culture is another political and ideological implication of the end of peasantry in Italy.

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32 Barrosi, V. *La scomparsa del latifondo: crisi, declino e trasformazione di una società tradizionale* Pellegrini (Cosenza) 1981, 99 p.
36 Tarrow, S. *Between Center and Periphery: Grassroots Politicians in Italy and France*, Yale University Press, 1977, 272 p.
As Henri Lefebvre remarks in a discussion on peasantry or the peasant world, a paradox exists from the very beginning. We can discuss the peasant world, not in the sense that the peasant reality constituted and still constitutes an isolated world, but in the sense of the urban reality that with its institutions and its ideologies, as well as its modes of production and their superstructures, has begun to encroach on the rural milieu. The rural reality had been for a long time ignored, particularly while the rural economy dominated society as a whole, both quantitatively and qualitatively.35 Thus peasantry has become a social and ideological problem because of its vanishing character and because of its extraordinary variety in the world, rather than because of its proper and unique character.

If we admit the paradoxical aspects of the peasantry problem, it then becomes somewhat difficult to explicate the general characteristics of the end of peasantry in Southern Europe or the Mediterranean world. It is possible to find, however, some parallelisms in discussions on peasantry problems, at least as far as the South European countries are concerned. Many papers pertaining to this matter are collected in the Pitt-Rivers book.36 A large number of authors attributed common static characteristics to Mediterranean peasant societies. At the same time, we are compelled to add that many researchers characterise these features as key notions in the understanding of modern peasant society, emphasising the role of these characteristics in the national political and economic life; hence the adaptability of the traits of the traditional peasantry to modern society.37 In this sense, peasant culture is understood, though implicitly, in a historical context. There are also some studies which analyse the land reform or agrarian reform in the context of the urban and industrial impact on rural society. It would perhaps be too hasty and imprudent to generalise the aspects of the end of peasantry in Mediterranean countries by explaining it as the integration of peasant agriculture into deformed capitalism, as Kostas Vergopoulos called it in the case of Greece.38 But under the same ecological conditions where an agricultural revolution or the introduction of modern agriculture of the West European type is very

36 Pitt-Rivers, J., op. cit.
37 For instance:
difficult or almost impossible and where the intensification of agricultural production has to be carried out in other ways, i.e., the development of arboriculture, garden farming with irrigation and so on, we would certainly be able to discover some common features of the end of peasantry in Southern Europe, for example, social disorganisation as a consequence of a massive rural and agricultural exodus, the persistence of small part-time farm households, and the shift of political and social hegemony from the rural parasitic classes to the urban parasitic classes. The analyses made in this paper, focussing on the Italian case, will hopefully afford material for further comparative studies.

竹内啓一

地中海世界における農民の終焉

本稿のタイトルにある「農民の終焉」とは、Henri Mendrasの著書La fin des paysans（1967）（津守英夫訳になる邦訳は「農民のゆくえ」という題になっている。英訳はThe Vanishing Peasantという題名である。）のタイトルによるものである。マンドラースは、フランスの伝統的農村社会を、それとしての内容、論理と体系とをしたものとして理解し、これに対置されるものとして工業（産業）社会を考え、フランスでは、工業社会論理を持った新しい農業経営者が出現し、伝統的農村社会は解体して工業社会に統合されると結論するのであるが、農村部門は、フランス国内において、政治的、経済的に、他部門と有機的に統合された強力な1ブロックとして存在し続けることを説いているのであって、彼の場合、「農民の終焉」という言葉には、ベシミズムもノスタルジアもない。

本稿は、地中海世界、ときにイタリアに焦点をあてて、「農民の終焉」がいかなる性格をもっているかということを分析しようとしたものである。まず、イタリアにおいて、伝統的農業社会あるいは農村社会なる用語が成立するかどうか、するとすれば、それはどのような特色をもつものであるかということことが問題になる。中部イタリアにおける折半小作制について、昨年くわしく論じたからという理由もあるが、イタリアにおいては、統一以来、農民社会、農民文明（civiltà contadina）の問題が、多くの場合南部主義（meridionalismo）の
コントクストの中でとりあげられてきたということ、そして、地中海世海における「農民文明」ということになれば、最も地中海的なのは南イタリアであるということ、これらの理由から本稿では、南部主導の中に、伝統的農民社会、あるいは農民文明という考え方が存在してきたことを明らかにして、次に、第二次大戦後、1950年代にいたるまで、再燃した農民文明に関する論争を覗知した。そこで特に強調したのは、変わるが少なく、時間をを超えて存在してきたかのように論じられた農民文明の諸特徴が、ファシズム体制下の農業政策の遺産に他ならなかったこと、そして、1950年代を通じての南部農民社会の急激な変化が、一時期を風靡した農民文明論の基盤をつくり崩したというのである。

それでは、このような南部農村社会の変化を、マンドラースの言う意味での「農村の終焉」として把握することができるであろうか。そこで生じているのは、農村の衰弱をもたらした農民社会の解体であり、非農業従事者、兼業の農業従事者が農村に多数存在するようにになっていくから、農業の工業への経済的従属、農村の都市への政治的、社会的従属である。もし農民の終焉ということを言うことができるとしても、それは、マンドラースのそれとは、非常に異なった意味においてでなければならない。しかも、それは、ベニスミズではなく、明確な分析をとならない、ノスタルジアではなく、農業部門の復権というベースベクトリヴァをとまったものでなければならない。

イタリア南部の「農民の終焉」を地中海世界に、いや南ヨーロッパ全体にさえ、どこまで一般化できるかということになれば、さらにあまりに多くの問題がある。そもそも農民文明という言葉は、その多様性にもかかわらず、あるいは、その多様性の故に、ますますその力と一様性を増大させることができるべきものとして概念化されたのではなかったろうか。そうだとすれば、その普遍性、共通性、一般性などを論じること自体が間違っていることになる。しかし、北西ヨーロッパ的な意味での農業革命が、そのままの形ではなく地中海世界では実現されないという技術的基盤の上で、そして北西ヨーロッパを中核とする周辺化という歴史的コントクストの中で、地中海世界における農民の終焉というテーマは、限定つきではあっても、今後の研究の発展のため、討論の素材とはなりうるのではなかったか。