

EDITORS

CHRISTOPHER DYER and FORREST CAPLE

BOOK REVIEW EDITOR
PETER FEARON

Officers of the Economic History Society

President: PROF. B. E. SUPPLE

Honorary Vice-Presidents:
PROF. F. M. L. THOMPSON
PROF. T. C. BARKER
DR P. MATTHIAS

Hon. Treasurer: PROF. B. W. E. ALFORD

Hon. Secretary: DR D. T. JENKINS

Chair, Publications Committee: DR P. M. THANE

Council

PROF. J. ARMSTRONG	DR R. LLOYD-JONES
PROF. J. BENSON	DR C. MACLEOD
DR M. BERG	DR H. MELLER
PROF. K. BROWN	PROF. R. MILLWARD
PROF. R. A. CHURCH	PROF. R. J. MORRIS
DR M. COLLINS	PROF. D. J. ODDY
PROF. N. F. R. CRAFTS	DR M. OVERTON
PROF. R. FLOUD	PROF. A. SLAVEN
PROF. W. R. GARSIDE	PROF. A. R. SUTCLIFFE
DR T. R. GOURVISH	DR R. H. TRAINOR
DR J. HATCHER	DR M. WALSH
DR K. HONEYMAN	DR R. G. WILSON
DR G. JACKSON	DR N. B. ZAHEDIH
PROF. W. R. LEE	
PROF. C. H. FEINSTEIN (<i>co-opted member Royal Economic Society</i>)	

Executive Committee of the Society

THE PRESIDENT, TREASURER, SECRETARY, EDITORS, AND CHAIR, PUBLICATIONS COMMITTEE

All persons interested in the study and teaching of economic history shall be eligible for membership. Payment of the annual subscription shall entitle a member to receive post free one copy of each issue of the *Economic History Review*. For further details see inside back cover.

Economic History Review, XLVI, 3 (1993), pp. 453-477

Town and country: economy and institutions in late medieval Italy

By S. R. EPSTEIN

The foundation of every division of labour . . . is the separation of town from country. One might well say that the whole economic history of society is summed up in the movement of this antithesis. However, for the moment we shall not go into this.¹

While relations between town and country have been a central theme of Italian historiography since the mid sixteenth century,² their social and economic features have been studied in their own right only from the 1890s. Since then, two main lines of interpretation have emerged.³ Initially, historians of the 'economic-juridical' school⁴ put forward the view that the expansion of the north-central Italian communes between the mid twelfth century and the thirteenth transformed town-country relations. Communes subordinated the rural hinterland (*contado*) to their economic and jurisdictional authority in the interests of the urban population and of the commercial bourgeoisie; the passage of powers from feudal to urban lordship meant for the peasantry a sharp loss of judicial and economic freedoms. While this view has since been considerably extended and refined,⁵ it is generally accepted that the city states of central and northern Italy did exploit the countryside through inequitable rates of taxation, regulations restricting most trade and industry to the ruling towns, compulsory labour services, and (increasingly during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries) judicial support for citizens' claims over their rural tenants.⁶

This view was challenged by Fiumi, who on the basis of thirteenth- and early fourteenth-century Florentine evidence, argued that communal rule was of major benefit to the countryside.⁷ While Fiumi's defence of economic

¹ Marx, *Capital*, I, xii, p. 4. Versions of this article were discussed at the Economic History Society's Annual Conference, Leicester 9-12 April 1992 and the First Conference of the European Association of Urban Historians, Amsterdam 4-7 September 1992. I have been assisted in research by a Molly Cotton Research Fellowship (1990-1), a British Academy Postdoctoral Fellowship (1991-2) and, last but not least, by Carlo and Fernanda Asutti. I also wish to thank Rita Asutti, James Thomson, and Chris Wickham for their critical comments.

² Toubert, 'Città' et 'contado'.

³ Maire Vigueur, 'Rapports ville-campagne', pp. 21-3.

⁴ In particular Salvemini, *Magnani e popolani*, *idem*, 'Comune rurale'; Gaggiari, *Comune libero*, *idem*, 'Repubblica di Siena', *idem*, *Ciampi e comuni rurali*. See also Arias, *Sistema*, pp. 207-27.

⁵ Bordone, 'Tema cittadino'; Brezzi, 'Relazioni'.

⁶ General statements to this effect in Cammarosano, *Campagne*, pp. 129-40, 183-7; Pinl, 'Comune città-stato', pp. 490-6; Waley, *Italian city-republics*, ch. 4; Hay and Law, *Italy*, pp. 51-8; Berengo, 'Città', pp. 683-91; Rache, 'Ville et contado'; Maire Vigueur, 'Rapports ville-campagne'. The need to overcome the current dichotomy between case studies of individual communes and generalizations about 'communal' Italy as a whole through a comparative 'geography' of town-country relations is argued by Cammarosano, 'Città e campagna'; see also below, n. 16.

⁷ Fiumi, 'Rapporti economici', *idem*, *Frontiere e decadenza*, pp. 127, 131, 195.

relations between commune and *contado* has found little credit,⁸ he was successful in shifting the focus of the debate from the character of urban *institutional* power (which had been the main concern of the 'economic-juridical' historians), to the *function* of towns in the late medieval economy. Fiumi did this by drawing on an 'integrated "town-based" model' of pre-industrial development, which contrasts the dynamism of urban capital and culture with the conservatism of peasant society.⁹ In this view, one still widely accepted by medievalists, Italian communes purveyed capital, markets, and economic and administrative rationality to a less advanced if not altogether stagnant countryside.¹⁰

As this brief outline suggests, many of the problems faced by the debate on the economically 'progressive' role of Italian communes since the 1950s arise from the ambiguity of its terms. In particular, whereas Fiumi's institutional arguments have been widely criticized, his economic ideas, and the implicit counterfactual hypothesis that rural economies would have performed *less* well without urban expenditure and enterprise, are on the whole accepted. Hence *both* main interpretations of town-country relations convey more or less explicitly the view that medieval urban domination was a powerful source of rural growth. This in turn often leads to the circular argument that regions lacking powerful towns must have had 'backward' or underdeveloped economies.¹¹

The evidence makes it impossible either to prove or disprove such arguments before the fourteenth century. When sufficient records do become available, however, they suggest that the economy of regions with strong communal traditions, such as Tuscany, might compare rather poorly with that of areas with far weaker urban institutions, such as Sicily.¹² If correct, this conclusion disproves the theory that strong urban powers invariably stimulated economic growth; but it also fails to prove the economic superiority of 'country' over 'town'. The dichotomy itself is the result of overemphasizing either the institutional or the economic features of town-country relations, without at the same time clearly distinguishing between the two. This problem can be overcome precisely if one first sets apart, and then draws together, these two features by analysing *market structures*.

* For example *idem*, 'Rapporti economici', p. 39, made much of the fact that in the 1330s taxes per head in the Florentine countryside were one-fifth of urban ones. Per capita tax returns from the *contado* in 1392, 1399, and 1400 were also 8.9-20.6 per cent of urban ones, with the median close to the latter figure (Molho, *Florentine public finances*, pp. 10, 29-30; my estimate is based on a 1:3.4 ratio of urban to rural population as in 1427: Hattily and Klapisch-Zuber, *Les Toscans*, p. 664). To what degree this allocation favoured rural taxpayers can be seen from the tax assessment of 1427, which reports average per capita wealth in Florence 17 to 19 times that in the *contado*, and 20 times that in the Tuscan countryside as a whole (*ibid.*, pp. 243, 664). On the basis of these figures (which take no account of the considerable tax-exemptions granted to Florentines), rural taxpayers after 1350 were paying 2 to 4 times as much per capita as urban dwellers, with the mean closer to 4. Even though there may have been a redistribution of wealth from country to town after the mid-fourteenth century (Molho, *Florentine public finances*, pp. 29-30 suggests that per capita taxation in the *contado* approximately doubled between the 1330s and 1390-1410; Brown, *Shadows*, pp. 167-8 suggests a fourfold increase for the town of Pescia), *contadini* before 1348 would still have been paying close to twice as many taxes as Florentines.

⁸ Langton and Hoppe, *Town and country*, p. 41; Epstein, 'Cities', pp. 12-3.

⁹ Brown, 'Economic "decline"', pp. 103-4; see also Brandel, *Capitalism and material life*, ch. 8.

¹⁰ Epstein, *Island for itself*, ch. 1; Del Treppo, 'Medioevo e Mezzogiorno', pp. 252-7; Britnell, 'England and northern Italy'.

¹² Epstein, 'Cities'.

There has never been, nor is there now, such a thing as an ideal market economy. This is because markets are complex bundles of social institutions (sets of enforceable rules), whose function is as much to discipline as to allocate resources.¹³ This implies that development does not arise from a spontaneous growth of productive forces and commerce *per se*, but from the way claims arising from increasing trade are enforced and constrained by the institutions that organize market exchange. A particular institutional constellation can as much retard as promote economic growth.¹⁴ The role of social institutions in orienting development, particularly in establishing the division of labour between town and country, is especially clear in late medieval Italy. On the one hand, the incorporation of independent communes into territorial states (in north-central Italy) and the growth of a more powerful monarchy (in the south) modified the wider political context of town-country relations. On the other, local markets centred on individual towns began to merge into more integrated regional ones.¹⁵ The character and rate of institutional change varied considerably between states, however, and I shall argue that these differences had significant economic consequences.

These changes mean that we must shift the focus of enquiry from relations between individual towns and their hinterlands to relations between town and country, and between different towns within nascent territorial states and economic regions.¹⁶ Here we will consider three Italian states of comparable size and rates of urbanization—Sicily (25,000 sq. km.), Tuscany (12,000 sq. km.), and Lombardy (27,000 sq. km. at its fullest extent)—between the early fourteenth century and the mid sixteenth. To demonstrate the influence of institutions we must be able to show that they do not derive from changes in underlying endowments. This proposition can be tested, for whereas the fourteenth-century epidemics subjected the economy of the three regions to a similar exogenous shock, their institutions evolved quite differently over time. Urban authority over the countryside in the early fourteenth century was far greater in Tuscany and Lombardy, where independent or semi-independent city states held sway, than in Sicily, where feudal monarchs had ruled the towns since the eleventh century. By the

¹³ See Barban, 'New institutional economics'; *idem*, 'Concept of power' for recent discussions of economic power. The definition of the latter adopted here is that quoted *ibid.*, p. 266 from Taylor, *Community*: 'A has power over B if A can affect the incentives facing B in such a way that it is rational for B to do something he would not otherwise have chosen to do. The incentives of B are affected by A mainly through the offer of a reward or the threat of a penalty or some combination of a threat and an offer' (it is of course assumed that the opportunity costs for A of acquiring and using its power over B are lower than the latter's costs of non-compliance). This definition of economic power includes A's ability to establish and maintain the institutional framework (enforceable rules) of production and exchange within which B operates. In a slightly narrower sense, economic power is also exercised when A is at the same time first party to, and third party enforcer of, exchange with B. Note that to endow cities with agency, as I do below, is not to lapse into functionalism; north-central Italian cities (or rather, their ruling elites) were consciously organized corporate bodies which could promote urban interests through collective action.

¹⁴ See Hodgson, *Economics and institutions*; North, *Institutions, Economic behaviour, Constitutional*, ed. Peiser for different versions of this proposition. This approach is at odds with the basic assumption of the 'New Institutional Economics', that institutional innovation is derivative of changes in factor prices, and hence that economic institutions are optimal or Pareto-efficient; see Field, 'Problem'; *idem*, 'Microeconomics'; Basu, Jones, and Schlicht, 'Growth and decay'.

¹⁵ Epstein, 'Cities'.

¹⁶ See Cammarosano, 'Città e campagna', pp. 303, 316-7.

fifteenth century the three regions spanned the entire spectrum of contemporary European states: Sicily belonged to an Iberian composite monarchy; Tuscany was ruled by an urban oligarchy; Lombardy came under the authority of a duke.¹⁷

The first section of this article discusses how the political order affected the size and economic contribution of late medieval towns, and the rate of regional economic integration. It contrasts the effects of changing institutional relations between town and country, between the towns themselves, and between towns and the state. In the second section, developments in clothmaking are used to assess the effect of social and political conflict on regional market structures, both on the division of labour between town and country and on regional integration as a whole.

I

Central place theory is an increasingly popular tool for analysing pre-industrial market structures.¹⁸ Holding all else constant, the theory states that in competitive markets, the towns of a region plotted by size on a logarithmic scale will distribute along a straight line; this is known as a lognormal distribution.¹⁹ The degree to which a region's urban hierarchy conforms to a lognormal distribution is taken to reflect the extent to which goods and labour are distributed competitively between the region's towns.²⁰ Although a lognormal distribution is seldom found in the real world, it does provide a useful benchmark which can be compared against actual distributions. In particular, since direct evidence of how people and material resources were distributed between pre-industrial towns is seldom available, urban distribution provides vital *indirect* proof of changes in regional market structures over time.

The discussion of urban hierarchies²¹ rests on four general premises. First, the customary assumption is made that population size is a surrogate measure of a town's resources. Second, urban hierarchies are taken to be shaped by enforceable access to fiscal, financial, commercial, and human

resources within a region; changes in the structure of urban hierarchies will therefore reflect changes in allocation of resources. Third, the regional urban hierarchies that existed in early sixteenth-century Europe are assumed to have been the result of greater regional integration and specialization triggered by the late medieval 'crisis'. Late medieval towns became embedded in a more extensive regional hierarchy and must be examined in this wider context.²² Finally, late medieval cities are presumed to have drawn most of their resources from the surrounding countryside and from the activities of the state itself. The state reallocated wealth between subject towns through taxes and administration, both of which were expanding rapidly in our period; state activities also drew resources from the territory as a whole to the political and administrative capital, whose regional hegemony therefore tended to increase.

The only region in our sample to lack city states, Sicily had two further distinctive features: a considerable instability of urban size and ranking, and two regional metropolises rather than one.²³ Instability of urban ranking, which is proof of a high degree of competition for resources between Sicilian towns, can be traced to two sources of individual mobility: a general scarcity of free property in peasant hands, which made it easier for individuals to migrate in search of improved living standards, and weak urban control over the countryside. Urban powers increased in the late fourteenth century, when the Sicilian feudal aristocracy and urban elite groups reacted to declining royal authority and a collapse of up to 70 per cent in land rents by taking charge of local urban administration and by intensifying control over rural markets. This caused the fragmentation of the regional market, at a time when Sicily was also being broken up into semi-autonomous territories under seigneurial lordship. However, the only city to achieve jurisdictional powers comparable to more northerly communes was Messina, and urban powers of jurisdiction all but ceased to expand after the Aragonese monarchy re-established central authority and territorial unity in the 1390s. Thereafter high rates of individual mobility ensured once more that towns competed for economic and human resources rather than relying on institutional privilege.

How were these features reflected in the urban hierarchy? In the mid to late thirteenth century, Palermo and Messina, with three to four times the population of the third largest Sicilian town, monopolized the resources of western and eastern Sicily respectively. In practice, they were still distinct, non-competing metropolitan 'capitals', whose influence extended in part to the southern mainland and which drew their wealth as much from political and administrative as from economic sources. The functional similarities between the two cities reflect the weak integration of the Sicilian regional market at this time.

¹⁷ I justify the definition of economic regions in politico-institutional terms in Epstein, 'Cities', pp. 10-2.

¹⁸ See van der Woude, Hayami, and de Vries, eds., *Urbanization in history*.

¹⁹ A special kind of lognormal distribution, known as the rank-size rule, is often used as a benchmark for actual urban distributions; deviations from the rank-size rule are seen as evidence of economic inefficiency and disorder. The rank-size rule refers to a pattern of city distribution in which the population of rank X is equal to the population of the largest city divided by X ; thus the population of the third largest city will be one-third of that of the largest city, and so on. The theory of urban lognormal distribution and its pitfalls are discussed by de Vries, *European urbanization*, pp. 87-95.

²⁰ Smith, 'Regional economic systems' and *idem*, 'City-size distributions', esp. pp. 30-1, 33, 40 has particularly emphasized the impact of imperfect labour markets on urban hierarchies, but her point can be extended to all factor and product markets.

²¹ Lack of adequate demographic data has restricted analysis to the 10 largest regional centres at any one time; this has meant excluding the smaller towns from the picture. While this pragmatic solution to the problem of defining the urban threshold raises few problems for Sicily, where administrative factors did little to determine urban size, it is less straightforward for Tuscany and Lombardy, where cities had well-defined political and administrative prerogatives which distinguished them from other central places and had powerful effects on size. For the economic significance of these institutional differences see below, pp. 460-5.

²² Epstein, 'Cities'; de Vries, *European urbanization*, pp. 255-7. The decline of the 'decentralized medieval urban structure' seems to have been caused mainly by the growth of regional, rather than of interregional trade as argued by de Vries at p. 356. The implied view that pre-fourteenth-century towns were isolated market centres is, of course, something of a fiction: see Hohenberg and Lert, *Making of urban Europe*, p. 57.

²³ Epstein, 'Cities', pp. 22-6; *idem*, *Island for itself*, chs. 2-3.

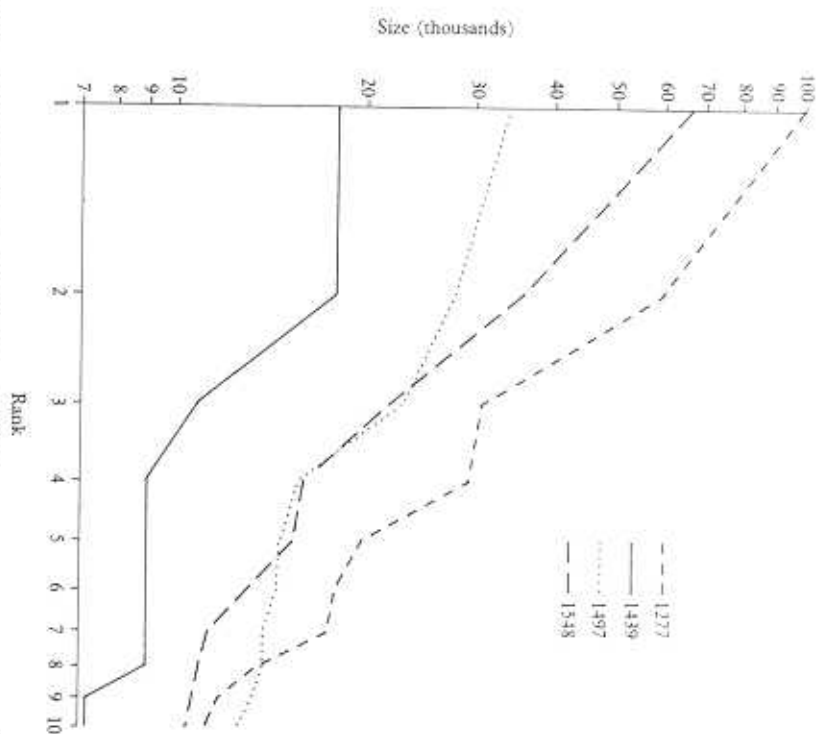


Figure 1. *Urban rank-size distribution in Sicily, 1277, 1439, 1497, and 1548*
 Note: the scale on both axes is logarithmic. Heights have been converted to inhabitants at a ratio of 1:4.5.
 Sources: for 1277, 1439, and 1497, see Epstein, *Island for itself*, pp. 42-9; for 1548, Beloch, *Bevölkerungsgeschichte Italiens*, I, pp. 135, 136, 159.

The political crises caused by the War of the Vespers (1282-1372) and by civil war (1348-62) modified the urban hierarchy significantly. Palermo and Messina lost their status as the main political and administrative centres in southern Italy, while retaining some of these functions within two of Sicily's three sub-regions (*valli*). Weaker regional integration during the late fourteenth and early fifteenth centuries is reflected in the horizontal levelling of the 1439 line in figure 1.²⁴ Although towns competed increasingly within individual *valli*, the regional market was fragmented under the impact of the civil war. The slowly rising slope of the rank-size distribution during the later fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries reflects increasing urban and market integration. Messina and Palermo took on more specialized and

complementary metropolitan roles. Messina's traditional function as the gateway between Sicily, the southern mainland, and the eastern Mediterranean was enhanced,²⁵ whereas Palermo drew increasing administrative, commercial, and financial benefits from capital status.²⁶ But despite considerable growth after 1450, Palermo never achieved regional primacy comparable to other capitals such as Naples, Paris or London, or indeed, as we shall see, such as Florence. Palermo's share of the population of the 10 largest Sicilian cities, which was c.32 per cent in 1277 and had dropped to c.17 per cent in 1464, was still no more than 32 per cent in 1548.²⁷

As figure 1 suggests, Sicily had achieved a high degree of market integration and territorial specialization already by 1500.²⁸ One reason for this lay in the weakness of urban jurisdictional privileges, particularly over the rural hinterland, and the high degree of urban and rural competition that this condition entailed. A second source of integration after the Aragonese restoration in 1392-8 was the royal policy of granting toll reductions and market franchises to individual demesne towns, a policy that by the mid fifteenth century had established an almost toll-free demesne. Given the unusually large size of the royal demesne and queen's benefice (*Camera reginale*), which included more than half of the Sicilian population and all the largest cities, the policy had considerable knock-on effects for the island's economy as a whole. Nonetheless, both *potential* institutional sources of commercial integration (urban jurisdictional weakness and a lowering of transaction costs in the demesne) came into effect after the 1390s only for two reasons: because the monarchy wished, for independent reasons of policy, to curry favour with the demesne towns and to maintain a degree of balance between them and the feudal aristocracy, and because from the mid fourteenth century urban society had slowly gained in both wealth and power at the expense of the feudal elite.²⁹

In striking contrast to the rapidly shifting urban hierarchy of Sicily, the same 10 Tuscan cities stayed the largest in the region up to the early sixteenth century. Changes in urban ranking were few and decreased over time. The only exception was the slow decline of Volterra and San Gimignano, which had held fourth and eighth position c.1330 and sixth and tenth in 1427, but were replaced by the first half of the sixteenth century by Borgo San Sepolcro and Pescia. Also by contrast with Palermo, Florentine primacy increased steadily between the mid fourteenth century and the mid sixteenth; the city's share of the top 10 cities' population, already an unusually high proportion (c.49 per cent) before the Black Death, rose to 53.1 per cent in 1427 and to 53.3 per cent in 1552.³⁰

The lack of significant changes in Tuscany's urban hierarchy, despite

²⁴ Epstein, *Island for itself*, ch. 5.

²⁵ Conditions in late medieval Sicily are somewhat reminiscent of late sixteenth-century Brabant, with Palermo analogous to Antwerp as the political capital and Messina resembling Bruges as the main centre of trade (Hohenberg and Loebe, 'Urban decline').

²⁷ For Sicilian population figures see Beloch, *Bevölkerungsgeschichte Italiens*, pp. 96-161; Epstein, *Island for itself*, ch. 2.

²⁸ Ibid., chs. 3, 5.

²⁹ Ibid., ch. 7.

³⁰ Giniatempo and Sanderi, *Italia delle città*, pp. 258-63.

²⁴ Purely formal representations of urban hierarchies are, of course, highly misleading if they are isolated from their broader social context; it is, for example, impossible to infer from figs. 1-3 alone that urban hierarchies were less integrated before the Black Death than after.

population losses of more than 60 per cent between 1348 and 1410-20,³¹ suggests that neither the social and demographic crisis, nor the growth of the Florentine territorial state, did much to change the way resources were distributed within the region, except by allocating an even larger share to the capital itself.³² Florence's territorial hegemony was largely achieved through discriminatory (albeit *ad hoc* and unsystematic) fiscal and economic policies towards subject towns and the Tuscan countryside.³³

As a result of these policies, both Tuscany's population and its rate of urbanization³⁴ took several centuries to recover from the fourteenth-century demographic slump; when the population began to rise again after the mid fifteenth century it did so more slowly than in most other Italian regions, suggesting that Tuscany was suffering relative economic decline.³⁵ Florentine lordship may also have done more to hinder than to promote a more integrated and competitive regional economy.³⁶ Territorial expansion occurred at first through addition rather than integration.³⁷ Despite attempts in the late fourteenth and early fifteenth centuries to consolidate and stabilize its territorial administration,³⁸ Florence seems to have done little to modify traditional imbalances between subject towns and their territories, to reduce the many barriers to trade between different *comiti*,³⁹ or to weaken the industrial and commercial monopolies of subject towns over their hinterlands except where they conflicted with the short-term requirements of the capital's elite. The Florentine oligarchy appears to have pursued regional integration insofar as it benefited the city itself, without significantly transforming the cluster of largely self-contained markets that existed before the annexation of other city states.⁴⁰ The lack of competitive integration between subject Tuscan towns after c.1400 is reflected in the S-shaped urban distribution around an increasingly flat centre represented in figure 2.

Patterns of urbanization in late medieval Lombardy lie somewhere in

³¹ Pinto, *Torreme*, pp. 68, 77.

³² Contrast e.g. Webb, 'Penitence and peacemaking', p. 253 (on Florence's hold on regional grain supplies c.1399) and Fiumi, 'Rapporti economici', p. 30 (on Florentine grain supplies in subject territories after the Black Death), with Pinto, *Libro del Biadato*, pp. 73-106 and Tangheroni, 'Di alcuni accordi' (on Florence's dependence on grain supplies from outside its *comune* before 1348).

³³ Epstein, 'Cities', pp. 19-20, 31-3, 36-42; n. 8 above. Florentine attitudes towards their subjects were formulated with characteristic starkness by Machiavelli, who argued that Arrezzo's rebellion of 1502 was to have been punished by razing the city to the ground; this would have enhanced Florence's political and military security and reputation and provided it with adequate food supplies. *Discorsi*, bk. II, ch. 23.

³⁴ Ginatempo and Sandri, *Italia delle città*, pp. 109-15.

³⁵ Epstein, 'Cities', pp. 43-7.

³⁶ Regional market integration before the Black Death seems to have been rather weak: *ibid.*, p. 31.

³⁷ Chittolini, *Formazione*, p. 293.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 292-5; Fusano Guarini, 'Statuti', Guidi, *Governo della città-repubblica*, III; Zorzi, 'Stato territoriale'. These policies were set in motion by the fears of economic and territorial blockade aroused by the anti-papal war of the Eight Saints (1375-8) and by the ensuing upheaval on the Italian political scene: Trexler, *Spiritual power*, pp. 101-8; Brucker, *Civic world*, pp. 102-25.

³⁹ Fusano Guarini, 'Città soggette', p. 16; Diaz, 'Articolazione'.

⁴⁰ Epstein, 'Cities', pp. 31-3. Hohenberg and Lees, 'Urban decline', p. 455 identifies a similar pattern in seventeenth-century Castile. The fiscal and legal support granted by Florence for a type of sharecropping contract (*mezzadria poderalde*), which aimed to maximize the landlord and tenant's agricultural self-sufficiency rather than the production of surpluses for the market, may have also reduced incentives for rural innovation: Epstein, 'Cities', p. 39; Aymard, 'Transition', p. 1157. For a contemporary statement to this effect see Alberti, *Libro della famiglia*, pp. 237-43 (written in 1432-4).

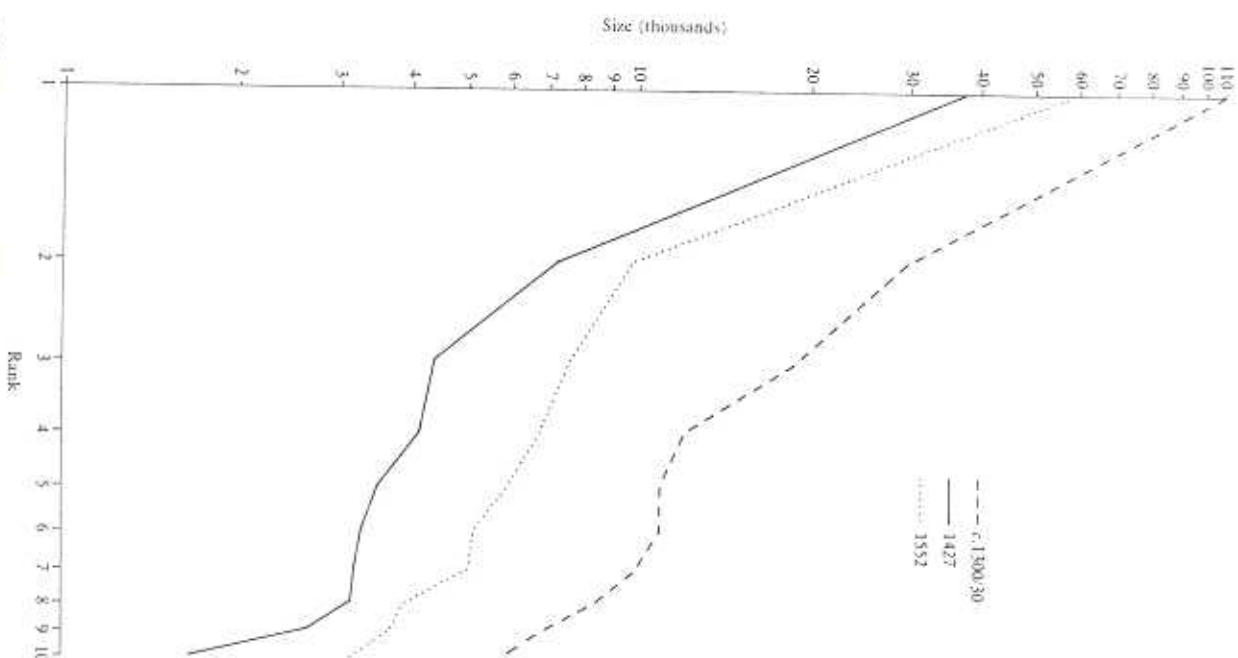


Figure 2. Urban rank-size distribution in Tuscany, c.1300/1330, 1427, and 1552

Note: the scale on both axes is logarithmic.

Sources: for 1300/30, see Ginatempo and Sandri, *Italia delle città*, p. 148; Riancho, *Florence*, II, pp. 649-96; Herlihy and Klappsch-Zelker, *Torreme*, pp. 71-2; for 1427, *ibid.*, p. 238; for 1552, Repetti, *Dizionario geografico*, V, pp. 566-77; Brown, *Shadow of Florence*, p. 27.

between those in Sicily and Tuscany. Firstly, changes in the urban hierarchy were more significant in Lombardy than in Tuscany. Between the early fourteenth century and the mid fifteenth, Brescia dropped from second to sixth position behind Milan, Cremona, Piacenza, Parma, and Pavia, possibly because of devastation during the war that led to submission to Venice in the 1420s. The most significant gain was made by Vigevano, which before the Black Death had not figured among the top 10 regional cities; in fact, Vigevano is one of the few cases of a late medieval north Italian town which was successfully recognized as a new *civitas* (it was granted the title in 1530).⁴¹ Also by contrast with Tuscany, where all the largest 10 cities were still far smaller c.1500 than in the 1330s, in Lombardy, Brescia, Piacenza, Lodi, Vigevano, and possibly Crema were actually larger by the late fifteenth century than before 1348, suggesting significant net economic growth.⁴²

Late medieval Lombardy differed further from Tuscany in the relative strength of the capital. Before 1348, Milan's importance in relation to central and western Lombardy (including Bergamo, Brescia, and Crema, which came under Venetian rule in the 1420s) was already somewhat weaker than that of Florence. Milan's position changed very little in the century after the Black Death, but between the mid fifteenth century and the mid sixteenth it declined, so that Milan's share of Lombardy's urban population was less than half of Florence's share of Tuscany's. Whereas in the early fourteenth century and the second half of the fifteenth, Milan accounted for c.35 per cent of the population of the largest 10 cities, by 1540-50 Milan's share had dropped to 26 per cent.⁴³ Although the Italian wars (1494-1559), the duchy's loss of Parma and Piacenza in 1512, and the great epidemics of 1527-9 may have something to do with these changes, Milan's relative decline after 1500 did *not* coincide with an overall slump in Lombardy's rate of urbanization or in its 'urban potential'.⁴⁴ The increasing approximation of the larger Lombard cities to a straight, loglinear distribution (see figure 3) suggests instead that Milan's decline was the result of increased regional integration and of the rise of competing urban centres.⁴⁵

This polycentric and pluralistic urban system⁴⁶ was partly the outcome of territorial consolidation by the Visconti and later by the Sforza. Two aspects of their policy had particularly far-reaching effects. Their propensity as *territorial* lords to respond to a wide spectrum of subjects' interests, rather than identity with those of a single group or institution (for instance, a dominant city state), ensured a degree of representational and economic

⁴¹ Chittolini, 'Quasi-città', pp. 20-1; Vigevano *nell'età visconteo-sforzesca*.

⁴² Giuntempo and Sandri, *Italia delle città*, pp. 73-9, 250-1.

⁴³ Milan's share rises to 46 per cent if one excludes Brescia, Piacenza, Bergamo, Parma, and Crema, which were no longer part of the duchy of Milan. It is suggested, however (below, n. 45), that these cities remained part of the Milanese economic region despite being politically detached, and that they therefore should be included in the region's urban hierarchy.

⁴⁴ de Vries, *European urbanization*, pp. 160-2.

⁴⁵ The shape of the mid-sixteenth-century Lombard urban hierarchy changes if one excludes Brescia, Bergamo, Crema, Parma, and Piacenza, which by 1550 no longer belonged to the duchy of Milan. However, these cities seem still to have gravitated economically towards Milan more than towards other metropolitan centres such as Venice, to which Bergamo, Brescia, and Crema were then politically subject. See Epstein, 'Manufacture itself', p. 6 n. 14; Ventura, *Nobiltà e popolo*, p. 382.

⁴⁶ Giuntempo and Sandri, *Italia delle città*, pp. 198-9, 214-5.

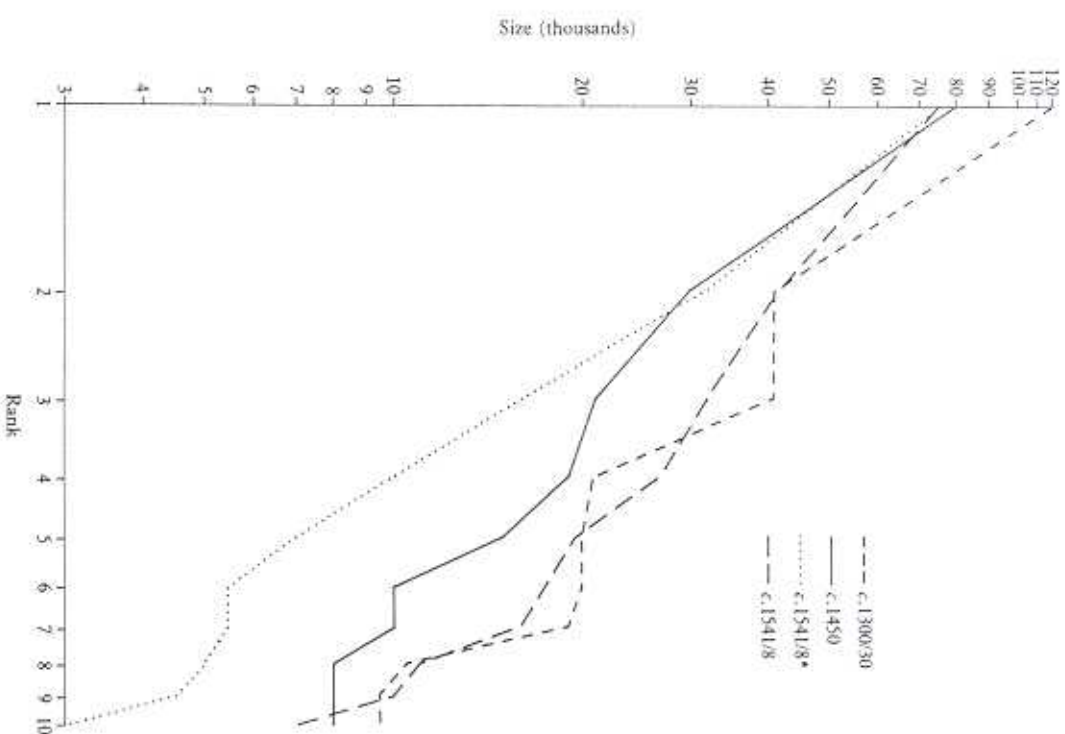


Figure 3. Urban rank-size distribution in Lombardy, c. 1300/1330, c. 1450, and 1541/1548.

Note: the scale on both axes is logarithmic. The urban hierarchy for 1541/8* excludes Bergamo, Brescia, Crema, Parma, and Piacenza; see also n. 43.

Sources: Belsch, *Bevölkerungsgeschichte Italiens*, II, pp. 243, 252; III, pp. 121-2, 145, 158, 190, 208, 211, 217, 226, 229, 231, 235, 239, 243; Giuntempo and Sandri, *Italia delle città*, pp. 100-1.

pluralism that was lacking in Tuscany. Furthermore, from the early fourteenth century the future dukes followed a long-term fiscal strategy that aimed to promote Lombard cross-regional trade through commercial agreements with neighbouring states, a more unified regional toll system, and a network of navigable waterways.⁴⁷ By the early decades of the fifteenth century the Visconti had probably gained full authority to establish new markets and fairs and to set road tolls in their domain;⁴⁸ the Sforza followed their lead after 1450.⁴⁹ Notably, both policies were the outcome of the lords' quite considerable political *weakness*: they were unable to establish full jurisdictional sovereignty over the Lombard cities⁵⁰ and behave like the autocratic and absolutist princes of historical myth.

The Visconti and Sforza promoted institutional pluralism and weakened urban jurisdictions by establishing local seigniorial support and by rewarding the loyalty of mercenary leaders (*condottieri*) with feudal holdings.⁵¹ During the fifteenth century, the dukes also increasingly granted or confirmed independent territorial status, franchises, and liberties from urban jurisdiction to lesser communities situated mostly at the mountainous and militarily strategic periphery of the state.⁵² At the same time, they were careful to ensure that grants of territorial franchise did not include market and excise rights.⁵³ Devolution of local power seems therefore to have gone hand in hand with a reduction of institutional barriers to regional trade.⁵⁴

The reasons for rural requests for independence were most clearly expressed in dozens of agreements drawn up between Francesco Sforza and local communities between the summer of 1447 and the early 1450s, as the *condottiere* established authority over the duchy. The communities' requests deliberately attacked the privileges which the regional state still granted urban centres and their citizens.⁵⁵ The most frequent demands invoked freedom of trade, including the right to hold markets and fairs against urban opposition, and independence from the city's fiscal and administrative control. Rural petitions put forward an inherently revolutionary model of the territorial state. The cities viewed the new state as a simple aggregate of large, compact, and independent urban provinces, in which the communes' political, jurisdictional, fiscal, and commercial privileges over their *contadi* would remain in place. The smaller towns, by contrast, had in mind a more pluralistic framework, in which a federation of smaller, autonomous centres established direct and independent relations with the sovereign.⁵⁶ Indeed, this republican model was not restricted to the small towns. The Milanese

elite, which correctly did not perceive of itself as a dominant force within the duchy, seems also to have aspired to a form of 'Swiss', independent republican status within a wider regional federation, first during the short-lived Ambrosian Republic in the 1440s, and again during the wars over Lombardy between France and Spain in the early sixteenth century.⁵⁷

Both the political and the fiscal aspects of ducal policy promoted competition⁵⁸ and weakened the cities' control over the hinterland. They help to explain why Milan did *not* emerge as a monopolistic regional capital like Florence. While capital status may have increased Milan's dominance over regional trade routes,⁵⁹ attempts to extend commercial or guild monopolies outside the city's immediate jurisdiction were inconclusive.⁶⁰ Further competition and markets were provided by metropolises such as Venice and Genoa, and by large cities such as Brescia and Bergamo (from the early fifteenth century) and Piacenza and Parma (from the early sixteenth), which came within Milan's range of economic influence but remained politically independent.⁶¹ They also weakened traditional economic barriers between individual members of the territorial state.

Milan's limited political and economic powers appear to have benefited the economy of Lombardy more than Florence's political and institutional privileges did the economy of Tuscany. This point also seems borne out by the lack of serious anti-Milanese conflict,⁶² compared with often extreme cases of resistance or opposition to Florentine authority (the dispersion of the commercial elite of Pisa after Florentine conquest in 1406,⁶³ Volterra's revolts in 1429, 1471, and 1501;⁶⁴ Pisa's rebellion of 1494-1509;⁶⁵ or Arezzo's uprising of 1502⁶⁶). Tuscan centralization ensured political and institutional continuity, at the cost of social and economic fragmentation and the alienation of subjects; Lombardy's greater political pluralism may have caused urban disaffection towards their lords and lost the state to French and later Spanish rule, but it also promoted more balanced relations between town, country, and the central state, and a better integrated and more dynamic regional economy.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 'Alcuni aspetti', p. 35; see Brady, *Turning Swiss*. See also Bueno de Mesquita, 'Ludovico Sforza', p. 214 on the Lombard towns' 'widespread sentiment of political fatalism' in 1500. By contrast, past explanations of the Sforza's political difficulties at the turn of the sixteenth century have emphasized the allegedly excessive power of an independent feudal class: *ibid.*, p. 203, with references.

⁴⁸ See Rovetta, 'Bochart', pp. 1028-9 for a ducal project of the 1460s to build a canal for transporting timber to Pavia and Milan from the territory of Piacenza, despite the latter's opposition.

⁴⁹ Ugolini, 'Formazione', pp. 204-5.

⁵⁰ Epstein, 'Mantenance tessile', pp. 16-9. Milan's monopoly over its hinterland's grain supplies may also have weakened in this period: Mira, 'Alcuni aspetti'.

⁵¹ Ugolini, 'Formazione', pp. 204-5.

⁵² Political instability in late medieval Lombardy stemmed from the difficulty of binding together subject cities and formerly autonomous territories (Chittolini, 'Alcuni aspetti'), rather than from the oppression by one city of many (see e.g. Fossati, 'Problema di storia', for Vigevano's rebellion of 1499).

⁵³ Petrella, 'Cisti'.

⁵⁴ Bruckner, *Cities and the world*, pp. 494-5, 505; Fiumi, *Impresa*; Fubini, ed., *Laurence de' Medici*, pp. 363-6, 347-53.

⁵⁵ Luzzati, *Guerra di popolo*.

⁵⁶ Pezzati, 'Diario'.

⁴⁷ Noto, ed., *Liber danti*, Ugolini, 'Formazione', pp. 201-8.

⁴⁸ Mira, *Fiere lombarde*; *idem*, 'Organizzazione fiertistica'.

⁴⁹ Annoni, 'Rapporti', Kellenbenz, 'Oberdeutschland und Mailand'.

⁵⁰ Bueno de Mesquita, 'Sforza prince'; Black, 'Limits of ducal authority'; Massetto, 'Fonti del diritto'; Storti Storchi, 'Statuti viscontii'; *idem*, 'Statuti quattrocenteschi'; *idem*, 'Aspetti generali'; Varanini, 'Dal comune allo stato regionale', pp. 703-6.

⁵¹ Chittolini, *Formazione*, pp. 30-100; Bueno de Mesquita, 'Ludovico Sforza'.

⁵² Chittolini, 'Governo ducale'; *idem*, 'Terre separate'; *idem*, 'Legislazione statutaria'.

⁵³ Begnini, 'Storia', pp. 267-8; Mira, *Fiere lombarde*, p. 114; Chittolini, *Formazione*, pp. 45-51, 65-9.

⁵⁴ See Mira, 'Alcuni aspetti' for the fifteenth-century grain trade; contra Vivanti, 'Storia politica e sociale', p. 302.

⁵⁵ Chittolini, 'Capitoli', pp. 677-8.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 688, 691-2.

II

This last point takes us back to the initial suggestion, that regional political institutions played a major role in establishing the division of labour between town and country and in shaping long-term growth. The point can be tested by comparing regional developments in one of the more advanced and better documented medieval industries, cloth manufacture. This is especially appropriate because production of low- and medium-quality cloth seems to have expanded in much of western Europe after the Black Death.⁶⁷

Until quite recently it was believed that cloth weaving in late medieval Sicily was underdeveloped, and that large quantities of woollen cloth had to be imported to meet local demand. A closer look, however, has revealed that a number of manufactures of woollen, cotton, fustian, and linen cloth did in fact develop in the late fourteenth and fifteenth centuries in response to rising domestic demand. At least a dozen distinctive cotton manufactures have been identified. By the fifteenth century, fustian manufactures were well established and their products even exported abroad. The weaving of linen and hemp cloth is not as well reported, but specialized industries also appear. By contrast, despite the growth of some low- and medium-quality woollen industries, attempts to establish high-quality production were on the whole unsuccessful.⁶⁸

Although we know very little about how the cloth was manufactured, including the degree of urban specialization and the extent of rural putting out, it is quite clear that conditions of supply were rather unusual. The lack of evidence for cloth guilds is particularly striking, although there are a number of factors that can explain it. Sicily lacked an important institutional basis for urban guilds, namely strong urban territorial control; the relatively high degree of market competition may have also restricted gains accruing to corporations. In pre-industrial Europe, easily mastered crafts with local and regional outlets such as the manufacture of linen or cheap, unstandardized wool usually lacked guild structures, and these were precisely the industries most commonly found in late medieval Sicily. In addition, Sicilian urban society before the 1430s seems to have been remarkably unstructured and informal. This informality, expressed, for example, in the weakness of cognate descent groups and of extra-familial ties of neighbourhood and fraternity, was accentuated by high rates of individual mobility and must have lessened both opportunities and demand to establish corporate bonds of solidarity.⁶⁹ All of this ensured that cloth weaving developed where production costs were lowest; there is no evidence of urban corporate monopolies over raw materials or labour.

Since research on Tuscan cloth manufacturing has concentrated on the high-quality Florentine woollen industry, our view of broader regional developments is still rather hazy. Nonetheless, two general patterns emerge from the available evidence. First, during the fourteenth century formerly

independent rural producers came under increasing urban corporate control.⁷⁰ Second, the transition, between the late 1380s and the mid 1430s, of the Florentine state from a form of regional protectorate to more direct territorial rule,⁷¹ enabled the Florentine wool guild to establish a regional monopoly over production of higher-quality woollens for export. This forced subject towns to re-orient their woollen industries towards the lower-quality regional market.⁷² Wool manufacture may have expanded in Pesca, but only because Florence granted it fiscal and commercial privileges that set it apart from other urban centres; this very success upholds the view that Florence was capable of exerting discretionary powers to sustain or stifle regional competitors.⁷³

In terms of industrial development, therefore, the rise of the territorial state seems to have strengthened urban corporate hold over the countryside and Florentine domination over the region. This was the result partly of the exploitative nature of town-country relations in Tuscany before Florentine conquest, and partly of the method of conquest, by which independent city states were added without seriously challenging the existing balance of authority between town and country in the provinces. General rural impoverishment after the mid fourteenth century because of oppressive fiscal policies and tenurial arrangements such as sharecropping encouraged by the towns⁷⁴ may have also restricted lower- and middle-class demand for cloth and further compressed opportunities for domestic growth.⁷⁵ There is on the other hand also evidence suggesting that cheaper woollen,⁷⁶ linen,⁷⁷ and possibly fustian⁷⁸ weaving expanded in the late fourteenth and early fifteenth century.

By contrast there is little doubt that late fourteenth- and fifteenth-century Lombardy experienced a strong growth of manufacturing across the entire

⁶⁷ Kotelnikova, 'Produzione', pp. 221-3; Herlihy, *Pisa*, p. 159.

⁶⁸ See the recent overview by Zorzi, *Sisao territoriale*.

⁶⁹ Poehlmann, *Wirtschaftspolitik*, pp. 75-6, 78; Dorelli, *Arti fiorentine*, I, pp. 172-3; Melis, 'Sguardo', pp. 133-7; *idem*, 'Pescia', pp. 166, 168; *idem*, 'Momenti', p. 194; Tangheroni, 'Sistema economico', pp. 58-9; Brown, 'Economic "decline"', p. 105. It has recently been suggested that the wool industry in Pistoia, which was previously believed to have been exempted from Florentine monopoly (Epstein, 'Cities', p. 42), also contracted during the fifteenth century under commercial pressure from the capital.

⁷⁰ Epstein, 'Cities', p. 42; Poehlmann, *Wirtschaftspolitik*, pp. 103-9, 150. Like other exported wool manufactures of the time (Munro, 'Industrial transformations', pp. 130-3), the Florentine *Arte della lana* seems to have responded to declining foreign market share after the Black Death by raising quality and differentiating its output. While dwindling foreign markets and rising economies of scale in the context of a growing regional market must have increased the competition between Tuscan wool manufacturers and have contributed to industrial rationalization within the region, it would still appear that the Florentines' long-lasting industrial hegemony was achieved primarily by passing discriminatory legislation (which included monopolizing imports of high-quality wool after conquering the main Tuscan port, Pisa, in 1406) against regional rivals.

⁷¹ Herlihy, 'Santa Maria Impruneta'; Mazzi and Ravagli, *Uomini e cose*; Kotelnikova, 'Tendenze progressive'; Conti, *Culturi agrari*, p. 78; *idem*, *Imposta diretta*, p. 28; Passano Guarni, 'Città soggette', pp. 48-54.

⁷² Herlihy, 'Distribution of wealth', p. 155.

⁷³ Brown, *Shadows of Florence*, pp. 104-5, 107-8; de la Roncière, *Florence*, III, pp. 800-1.

⁷⁴ Dorelli, *Arti fiorentine*, II, pp. 92 n. 1, 94 n. 3, 96 n. 1. Flux cultivation expanded in the neighbouring territories of Siena and Lucca (Cherubini, 'Campagne italiane', p. 384 n. 3; Hicks, 'Sources of wealth').

⁷⁵ Mazzavoli, *Italian cotton industry*, p. 148.

⁶⁷ Epstein, 'Textile industry', pp. 148-9.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*; *idem*, *Island for itself*, pp. 194-9.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 349-52.

range of linen, fustian, and woollen cloth.⁷⁹ There, the critical role played by *institutional* factors in shaping the new manufactures is even clearer than for Sicily. In particular, lower 'rural' production costs were neither necessary nor sufficient prerequisites for industrial success. Cloth making did *not* spread invariably to 'marginal', upland or pastoral regions, as most theories of the 'ruralization' of manufacture or of proto-industry predict. Although nearly every Lombard city had a linen industry of its own, for example, specialized 'rural' manufactures did not develop haphazardly or even where flax was in good supply. Whether in 'town' or 'country', the growth of linen weaving was checked wherever a strong urban fustian industry was already present. Strong linen manufactures failed to develop in the cities and *contadi* of Milan, Cremona, Piacenza, Brescia, and Bergamo for lack of the necessary support to compete with longer established fustian industries, whose powerful commercial and political backing had been enshrined already by the mid thirteenth century in monopolies over flax and spun thread in the urban hinterland. These urban monopolies were confirmed and extended in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries in response to rising competition on the regional flax and labour markets by lesser linen manufactures and, increasingly, by fustian industries which emerged in sizeable towns such as Lecco, Vigevano, Melegnano, Busto Arsizio, and Riviera del Garda. Those defensive measures, however, were never entirely successful. In fact, Lombard competition at the lower end of the market contributed, together with central European, Piedmontese, and Ligurian competition in the higher-quality ranges, to the slow decline of the great fustian industries of Milan and Cremona after the 1380s.⁸⁰

Lesser Lombard cloth manufacturing developed in spite of the cities' stubborn and occasionally violent resistance thanks to the jurisdictional autonomies, franchises, and immunities from urban authority described above. Yet even jurisdictional freedoms were no guarantee of industrial success. For example, no fustian industries emerged off the main trading routes and away from the larger urban markets (such as the more outlying provinces of Novara, Bergamo, and Brescia), despite the presence in those areas of many autonomous communities and of large supplies of cheap rural labour. The reason seems to have been the near monopoly over cotton imports of the larger Lombard cities.

Similar growth patterns can be found in wool manufacture. New industries prospered in areas free of urban interference, which in this case included Lombardy's more peripheral areas that had easy access to local wool and fast-running streams. Village manufactures expanded despite the hostility of urban wool guilds, which tried to subordinate or destroy rural competitors by stipulating compulsory corporate membership, by regulating access to the better qualities of wool and dyeing materials, or by controlling retail markets. While the best known success story is that of Vigevano, whose woollen industry propelled it to urban ranking in the early fifteenth century

and to full urban status a century later, woollen industries in the towns and valleys of Torno, Lecco, Cannobio, Varese, Cantù, and Madera also achieved comparable rates of growth.

So, although Lombard cities usually succeeded in quashing industrial rivals within their own jurisdiction, they were unable to withstand competition from the increasing number of independent communities within the region. In the long run, of course, urban industries stood to gain nearly as much as their lesser rivals from weaker local monopolies and a less fragmented territorial market. For protectionism was a double-edged sword, which preserved markets in the immediate hinterland but foreclosed those in neighbouring Lombard towns. Both points emerge from the repeal in 1457 by Duke Francesco Sforza of a decree of 1454 forbidding imports to Milan of wool cloth made elsewhere in the duchy. The reason for the repeal was that other Lombard cities were demanding similar bans in their own territories, and also that the 1454 import ban was proving unable to stop inflows to Milan of cheaper cloth from lesser towns such as Vigevano.⁸¹ Rather than enforcing a stricter ban on the latter, however, as urban producers demanded, the duke decided that the cheaper woollens should be marked so they could be easily recognized by buyers. This was a characteristic attempt to avoid the zero-sum outcome of urban protectionism and to reconcile all politically significant interests, which by the mid fifteenth century included those of the many 'separate' or autonomous communities and 'quasi-cities' on whose support the duke relied.⁸²

III

This article has pursued two parallel and distinct themes. First, we have seen the extent to which the size and contribution to economic development of late medieval towns depended upon their place in a regional political order. Late medieval regions were defined as much by institutional constraints on trade as by location and natural endowments, and those constraints played a critical part in the growth of urban hierarchies after the Black Death. The more integrated urban hierarchies of early sixteenth-century Europe identified by de Vries⁸³ did not emerge spontaneously from the late medieval social and economic 'crisis' and from a generalized trend towards larger, more structured polities. Rather, those hierarchies, and the regional economies that they reflect, were shaped by the changing balance of authority between town and country, between towns and the state, and between the towns themselves.

Secondly, it is evident that social and political conflict had important static and dynamic consequences for market structures and the economy as a whole. Regional patterns of political authority help to explain 'variation' in the institutionalization of marketing systems⁸⁴; in turn, the evolution of market structures played a critical role for long-term economic growth. I

⁷⁹ Epstein, 'Manufacture tessili'.

⁸⁰ Mazzaroni, 'Cotton industry', pp. 283-6; *idem*, *Italian cotton industry*, pp. 139, 144-6, 150; Frangoni, 'Merci di Lombardia', pp. 64, 67; Heers, *Gréce*, p. 229; Mannoni, *Ativista mercantile*, p. 577.

⁸¹ Barbieri, *Economia e politica*, pp. 130-2; Epstein, 'Manufacture tessili', p. 19.

⁸² Chittolini, 'Quasi-città'.

⁸³ de Vries, *European urbanization*, pp. 253-7.

⁸⁴ Smith, 'Regional economic systems', p. 51 (my italics).

have suggested that the increased approximation of Sicilian and Lombard hierarchies to rank-size rule during the fifteenth century reflects rising economic integration; this process was promoted and sustained by the way the emerging territorial state challenged and redefined former relations of authority between town and countryside and between the towns themselves. In Sicily, the Catalan-Aragonese political restoration of the 1390s nipped in the bud the growth of urban territorial jurisdictions, and promoted trade in the royal demesne through toll reductions. Although the monarchy had little influence over transaction costs in lauds under feudal authority, which were in a sense institutionally independent markets, the size and economic weight of the royal demesne helped to weaken barriers to trade in feudal territory. In Lombardy, the Visconti and Sforza were willing to support 'rural' claims of independence from communal jurisdiction, while guarding and expanding their rights of excise throughout the region. In both Sicily and Lombardy the creation of a more integrated regional economy undermined metropolitan primacy, despite the increasing fiscal and administrative resources that went to Palermo, Messina, and Milan. Florence, by contrast, seems to have deployed increased territorial powers to tighten its grip on the Tuscan economy and strengthen its primacy.⁸⁵ To quote the Florentine chancellor, Leonardo Bruni, at the turn of the fifteenth century, 'the city itself stands in the center, like a guardian and lord, while the towns surround Florence on the periphery, each in its own place'.⁸⁶ In theory, this political and economic centralization need not have retarded regional development—but as Florence did not seriously weaken the traditional hold of subject communes over their hinterland, regional integration and specialization progressed more slowly than elsewhere, and the Tuscan economy was permanently scarred.⁸⁷

These examples of how pre-industrial urban hierarchies could differ over space and time also raise some broader points for debate. Wrigley has recently suggested that urban hierarchies in early modern Europe possessed a 'striking regular shape', which reflected the 'stability of urban need, translated through market mechanisms into patterns of demand'.⁸⁸ The Italian material raises the question whether, as seems implicit in Wrigley's argument, deviations from the rank-size rule reflect a lack of markets or an 'incomplete or degenerate stage of urbanization'.⁸⁹ Perhaps instead they reflect the fact that, as socially bounded and historical institutions, pre-industrial markets were more complex and varied than is usually envisaged. The evidence mustered here suggests that we can help to explain long-term differences in regional economic growth by recognizing the historical complexity and path dependence of market structures.

This recognition provides a powerful tool for comparative analysis, and

also dispels the teleological presumption that, historically, markets have followed a straight and narrow path towards increasingly efficient, neo-classical forms. For example, patterns of change in late medieval Tuscany, where Florence increased its regional primacy and retarded regional integration, and in late sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Lombardy, where Milan's primacy also increased despite a general decline in the region's rate of urbanization,⁹⁰ show that market integration can be halted or even reversed for non-economic reasons.

What, in this context, can we conclude about current debates on 'town' and 'country'? Recently there have been increasing calls to abandon the dichotomy of 'urban' and 'rural', on the grounds that the terms of contrast are individually so diverse,⁹¹ or have such strong reciprocal connections,⁹² that they overshadow rather than illuminate the past. Some take the argument a step further, and suggest that 'town' and 'country' as such stand in no logical contrast, but are simply the inevitable outcome of a spontaneous process of functional specialization. Although developments in late medieval Italy support the first point, they also clearly disprove the reductionism of the second. The characteristically ambiguous quotation from Marx (taken from a discussion of the social division of labour and used as epigraph to this article) reminds us of the role of *social institutions* in defining the division of labour between 'town' and 'country' and in establishing the conditions and modalities of exchange.

The suggestion, however, that the division of labour between town and country was due to social and political rather than 'spontaneous' economic processes, and the argument (as has been presented implicitly here) that many medieval towns practised 'surplus extraction by means of extra-economic compulsion',⁹³ should not be taken to mean that urban jurisdictional powers invariably stifled economic growth. Late medieval Lombard 'rural' cloth manufactures were successful because the traditional economic, political, and jurisdictional authority of city states could be challenged by communities exerting *similar*, albeit territorially far more restricted, powers of coercion over the countryside. It is also well recognized that 'rural' manufactures required 'urban' resources (capital, marketing networks, and information; sometimes even urban artisans) to expand.⁹⁴ In a region such as late medieval Lombardy where communal institutions remained strong, the 'country's' only chance of breaking free of the urban mould was to adopt as far as possible the jurisdictional prerogatives of a 'town'. In a region such as late medieval Sicily, on the other hand, this strategy was unnecessary, because the institutional distinction between 'town' and 'country' was of primarily symbolic rather than practical significance.

My discussion of the role of politics in the development of late medieval towns also contrasts with some recent interpretations of European state

⁸⁵ See by contrast Muth, 'Urban concentration', pp. 618-9: 'in independent states with limited territorial spans of control—as in premodern Germany and Italy—primacy was nonexistent'.

⁸⁶ Bruni, 'Panegyric', p. 144 (c. 1403-4).

⁸⁷ Note however that market 'imperfections' as expressed by non-rank-size distributions are not necessarily incompatible with long-term social and economic development (Hohenberg and Lees, *Making of urban Europe*, pp. 348-9; Smith, 'City-size distributions', pp. 35-6; de Vries, *European urbanization*, pp. 92-3).

⁸⁸ Wrigley, 'City and country', p. 110; this suggestion is qualified on p. 111.

⁸⁹ Wrigley, 'City and country', p. 110; this suggestion is qualified on p. 111.

⁹⁰ Hohenberg and Lees, 'Urban decline', pp. 443-6.

⁹¹ Langton and Höpke, *Town and country*, pp. 36, 38; Abrams, 'Towns and economic growth'.

⁹² Ganciot, 'Villes et campagnes'.

⁹³ Epstein, 'Cities', pp. 14-5. See also Hibbert, 'Economic policy', pp. 197-8; Merrington, 'Town and country'.

⁹⁴ Hohenberg and Lees, 'Urban decline', pp. 449-50.

formation, which draw a stark dichotomy between 'cities' and 'states', between 'capital' and 'coercion' that the two allegedly embody, on the assumption that they pursued fundamentally conflicting goals. Specifically, it is suggested that late medieval and early modern cities tended to resist, rather than promote, the expansion of state power.⁹⁵

This view underestimates the degree to which the *economic* powers of cities were a function of their *political* authority. Cities exerted political (often including territorial) powers which were parallel to, rather than subordinate to, commercial interests. To reify 'capital' and 'coercion' as stark alternatives seems to misrepresent the extent to which urban elites pursued political and jurisdictional as well as economic goals in their relations with territorial lords.⁹⁶ Whether urban elites favoured one at the expense of the other depended on their assessment of relative costs and opportunities, rather than on some postulated hostility towards territorial expansion; on the other hand, urban enmity of higher political authority was rooted in the real and usually well justified fear of losing existing rights and prerogatives, including territorial jurisdiction, rather than in ill-defined 'capitalist' opposition to state power.⁹⁷

If we wish, therefore, to assess how far cities stood to 'gain' or to 'lose' from the growth of more powerful states, it seems that we must consider political as much as economic factors.⁹⁸ Town-country relations helped set the balance of political authority within a state, and affected the extent to which the state was willing to promote, restrict, or compromise with, the prerogatives of subject towns. In fifteenth-century Sicily the cities, which were formally under royal control and had weak rural jurisdictions, had everything to gain by allying with the monarchy against the feudal aristocracy and by promoting state finances and bureaucracy.⁹⁹ Once Florence had subdued rival Tuscan cities, by contrast, it was able to dominate the region unchecked, for no strong, non-urban authority had survived the Tuscan communes' earlier territorial expansion.¹⁰⁰ Florence had little need to compromise with its subjects and grant them greater political or economic rights; its main reason for weakening the hold of subject cities over their

contadi seems to have been to establish a more centralized, metropolitan administration rather than to promote rural autonomy for its own sake.¹⁰¹ Communal rule in Lombardy was far less effective than in Tuscany in submerging rival territorial bodies. When the time came, this 'backwardness' produced a politically more pluralistic territorial state lacking overwhelming urban prerogatives, helped to promote aggregate economic growth, and undermined Milan's hegemony over the urban sector as a whole. While the strength of the Tuscan communes became under Florentine rule a source of relative economic stagnation or decline, the initial greater weakness of Lombard cities had become by the late fifteenth century a considerable point of strength.

London School of Economics and Political Science

¹⁰¹ Chittolini, *Formazione*, pp. 292-352; Fasano Guarini, 'Città soggette'; Berengo, 'Città', p. 691.

Footnote references

- Abrams, P., 'Towns and economic growth: some theories and problems', in P. Abrams and E. A. Wrigley, eds., *Towns in societies: essays in economic history and historical sociology* (Cambridge, 1978), pp. 9-33.
- Alberti, L. B., *I libri della famiglia*, eds. R. Romano and A. Tenenti (Turin, 1972).
- Annotti, A., 'I rapporti tra lo Stato di Milano e i popoli della Confederazione Elvetica nei secoli XV e XVI', *Archivio Storico Lombardo*, xcvi (1970), pp. 287-312.
- Arns, G., *Il sistema della costituzione economica e sociale italiana nell'età dei comuni* (Turin, 1905).
- Aymard, M., 'La transizione dal feudalesimo al capitalismo', in R. Romano and C. Vivanti, eds., *Storia d'Italia: annali* (Turin, 1978), 1, pp. 1131-92.
- Barbieri, G., *Economia e politica nel ducato di Milano, 1386-1535* (Milan, 1938).
- Barthian, P., 'The new institutional economics and development theory: a brief critical assessment', *World Dev.*, 17 (1989), pp. 1389-95.
- Barthian, P., 'On the concept of power in economics', *Econ. & Pol.*, 3 (1991), pp. 265-77.
- Bass, K., Jones, E., and Schlicht, E., 'The growth and decay of custom: the role of the New Institutional Economics in economic history', *Exp. Econ. Hist.*, 24 (1987), pp. 1-27.
- Beloch, K. J., *Bevölkerungsgeschichte Italiens*, 3 vols. (Berlin, Leipzig, 1937-61).
- Berengo, M., 'La città di antico regime', *Quaderni storici*, 9 (1974), pp. 661-92.
- Black, J. W., 'The limits of ducal authority: a fifteenth-century treatise on the Visconti and their subject cities', in P. Denby and C. Elam, eds., *Renaissance studies in honour of Nicolai Rubinstein* (1988), pp. 169-80.
- Blockmans, W., 'Stadt, Region und Staat: ein Dreiecksverhältnis. Der Kasus der Niederlande im 15. Jahrhundert', in F. Seibt and W. Eberhard, eds., *Europa 1500. Integrationsprozesse im Wandelzeit: Staaten, Regionen, Personenterritorien, Christenheit* (Stuttgart, 1987), pp. 211-26.
- Blockmans, W., 'Princes conquérants et bourgeois calculateurs: le poids des réseaux urbains dans la formation des états', in N. Bériet and J.-Ph. Genet, eds., *La ville, la bourgeoisie et la grande de l'Italie moderne (XIV-XVIII siècles)* (Paris, 1988), pp. 167-81.
- Blockmans, W., 'Voracious states and obstructing cities: an aspect of state formation in preindustrial Europe', *Theory & Soc.*, 18 (1989), pp. 733-55.
- Bognetti, G. P., 'Per la storia dello stato visconteo: Un registro di decreti della cancelleria di Filippo Maria Visconti e un trattato segreto con Alfonso d'Aragona', *Archivio Storico Lombardo*, lrv (1927), pp. 237-357.
- Borjone, R., 'Tema cittadino e "ritorno alla terra" nella storiografia comunale recente', *Quaderni storici*, 18 (1983), pp. 255-78.
- Brady, T. A., Jr., *Turning Sicily: cities and empire, 1450-1550* (Cambridge, 1985).
- Braudel, F., *Capitalism and material life, 1400-1800*, trans. M. Koeban (1973).
- Brezzi, P., 'Le relazioni tra la città e il contado nei Comuni italiani', *Quaderni Storici di Studi Classici e Medievali*, 9 (1983), pp. 201-34.
- Britnell, R. H., 'England and northern Italy in the early fourteenth century: the economic contrasts', *Trans. Roy. Hist. Soc.*, 5th ser., 39 (1989), pp. 167-83.
- Brown, J. C., *In the shadow of Florence: provincial society in Renaissance Pesaro* (Oxford, 1982).
- Brown, J. C., 'The economic "decline" of Tuscany: the role of the rural economy', in C. Hugh Smyth,

⁹⁵ Tilly, *Coercion, capital, Blockmans*, 'Stadt, Region und Staat', *idem*, 'Princes conquérants', *idem*, 'Voracious states'.

⁹⁶ See for example Nicholas, *Town and countryside*; *idem*, 'Economic reorientation'; Brady, *Turning Sicily*.

⁹⁷ Once we assume that urban economic and political (including territorial) aggrandizement was not a contradiction in terms, the anomaly of north-central Italian cities—the only ones in medieval Europe to establish *meno proprio* independent city states—becomes an example of a more general pattern, in which the 'coercive' aspirations inherent to medieval towns were able to develop further than elsewhere in western Europe for lack of effective superior or competing territorial powers (Chittolini, 'Cities', 'city-states'). These unusually favourable opportunities for 'coercive' urban growth also explain why north-central Italian political powers 'did not experiment at all successfully with forms of economic organization that were distinct from political forms. Their means of pursuing commercial objectives, food supply, or the control of production were oriented chiefly to political conquest and subjugation of the territory' (*ibid.*, p. 695).

⁹⁸ *Idem*, 'Città europea'. This suggests that the debate on late medieval English towns, which has focused mainly on economic factors (Dyer, *Decline and growth*), could also gain by taking a closer look at changes in the political role of towns (see *ibid.*, pp. 35-6, 48).

⁹⁹ Epstein, *Medieval Italy*, ch. 7.

¹⁰⁰ *Idem*, 'Cities', p. 31.

- and G. C. Garfagnini, eds., *Florence and Milan: comparisons and relations*, 2 vols. (Florence, 1989), II, pp. 101-15.
- Brucker, G., 'The city world of early Renaissance Florence' (Princeton, 1977).
- Brumi, L., 'Panegyric to the city of Florence', in B. G. Kohl and R. G. Wili, eds., *The earthly republic: Italian humanism on government and society* (Manchester, 1978), pp. 135-75.
- Buono de' Mesquita, D. M., 'Ludovico Strozzi and his vassals', in E. F. Jacob, ed., *Italian Renaissance studies* (1960), pp. 184-216.
- Buono de' Mesquita, D. M., 'The Strozzi prince and his state', in P. Deely and C. Elm, eds., *Florence and Italy: Renaissance studies in honour of Niccolò Rubinstein* (1988), pp. 161-72.
- Caggese, R., 'Un comune libero alle porte di Firenze nel secolo XIII', *Prato in Toscana* (Florence, 1995).
- Caggese, R., 'La repubblica di Siena e il suo contado nel secolo XIII', *Bollettino Senese di Storia Patria*, XII (1906), pp. 3-120 (repr. Bologna, 1983).
- Caggese, R., *Classi e comuni rurali nel medioevo italiano*, 2 vols. (Florence, 1907-8).
- Cammarosano, P., *Le campagne nell'età comunale (metà sec. XI-metà sec. XIV)* (Turin, 2nd edn., 1976).
- Cammarosano, P., 'Città e campagna: rapporti politici ed economici', in Società e istituzioni dell'Italia comunale: l'esempio di Perugia (secoli XII-XIV), 2 vols. (Perugia, 1988), I, pp. 303-49.
- Cassandro, M., 'Commercio, manifatture e industria', in G. Cherubini, ed., *Prato storia di una città, L'arceia e declino del centro medievale (dal Mille al 1494)*, 2 vols. (Florence, 1991), I, pp. 395-477.
- Cherubini, G., 'Le campagne italiane dall'XI al XV secolo', in O. Capitani et al., *Comuni e signorie: istituzioni, società e lotte per l'egemonia*, Storia d'Italia diretta da G. Galasso, IV (Turin, 1981), pp. 265-448.
- Chittolini, G., 'I capitoli di dedizione delle comunità lombarde a Francesco Sforza: motivi di contrasto fra città e contado', in *Felix olim Lombardiae: studi di storia padana in onore di G. Martin* (Milan, 1978), pp. 673-93.
- Chittolini, G., *La formazione dello stato regionale e le istituzioni del contado: secoli XIV e XV* (Turin, 1979).
- Chittolini, G., 'Governo ducale e poteri locali', in *Gli Strozzi a Milano e in Lombardia e i loro rapporti con gli stati italiani ed europei, 1450-1535: atti del convegno internazionale, 18-21 maggio 1980* (Milan, 1982), pp. 27-42.
- Chittolini, G., 'Le terre separate nel ducato di Milano in età sforzesca', in G. Bologna, ed., *Milano nell'età di Ludovico il Moro: atti del convegno internazionale, 28 febbraio-4 marzo 1983*, 2 vols. (Milan, 1983).
- Chittolini, G., 'Legislazione statutaria e autonomie nella pianura bergamasca', in M. Cortesi, ed., *Statuti rurali e statuti di valle: la provincia di Bergamo nei secoli XIII-XVIII. Atti del convegno 5 marzo 1983* (Bergamo, 1984), pp. 93-114.
- Chittolini, G., 'Cities, "city-states", and regional states in north-central Italy', *Theory & Soc.*, 18 (1989), pp. 689-706.
- Chittolini, G., '"Quasi-città": Borghi e terre in area lombarda nel tardo medioevo', *Società e Storia*, 47 (1990), pp. 3-26.
- Chittolini, G., 'Di alcuni aspetti della crisi dello stato sforzesco', in J. M. Cauchies and G. Chittolini, eds., *Milano e Bergamo: due stati principeschi tra medioevo e Rinascimento* (Rome, 1990), pp. 21-34.
- Conti, E., *I caratteri agrari della Repubblica fiorentina e il casato particolare toscano* (secoli XIV-XIX) (Rome, 1966).
- Conti, E., *L'imposta diretta a Firenze nel Quattrocento (1427-1494)* (Rome, 1984).
- de Vries, J., *European urbanization, 1500-1800* (1984).
- de la Roncière, C. M., *Florence centre économique régional au xiv^e siècle*, 5 vols. (Aux-en-Provence, 1976).
- Del Treppe, M., 'Medioevo e Mezzogiorno: appunti per un bilancio storiografico, proposte per un'interpretazione', in G. Rossetti, ed., *Forme di potere e struttura sociale in Italia nel medioevo* (Bologna, 1977), pp. 249-83.
- Diaz, F., 'L'articolazione del Principato mediceo e la prospettiva di un raffronto', in C. Hugh Smith and G. C. Garfagnini, eds., *Florence and Milan: comparisons and relations*, 2 vols. (Florence, 1989), II, pp. 157-68.
- Doren, A., *Le arti fiorentine*, Ital. trans. G. B. Klein, 2 vols. (Florence, 1940).
- Dyer, A., *Decline and growth in English towns, 1400-1600* (1990).
- Eggertson, T., *Economic behavior and institutions* (Cambridge, 1990).
- Epstein, S. R., 'The textile industry and the foreign cloth trade in late medieval Sicily, 1300-1500: a "colonial relationship"?' *J. Med. Hist.*, 15 (1989), pp. 141-83.
- Epstein, S. R., 'Cities, regions and the late medieval crisis: Sicily and Tuscany compared', *P. & P.*, 130 (1991), pp. 3-50.
- Epstein, S. R., 'Manifatture tessili e strutture politico-istituzionali nella Lombardia tardo-medievale: ipotesi di ricerca', *Studi di Storia Medievale e di Diplomatica*, 12-3 (1991-2), pp. 1-31.
- Epstein, S. R., *An island for itself: economic development and social change in late medieval Sicily* (Cambridge, 1992).
- Fasano Guarini, E., 'Città soggette e contadi nel dominio fiorentino tra Quattro e Cinquecento: il caso pisano', in M. Marti, ed., *Ricerche di storia moderna I* (Pisa, 1976), pp. 1-94.
- Fasano Guarini, E., 'Gli statuti delle comunità toscane nell'età moderna', in *Atti del III Convegno della Società storica toscana, Cortinafiorentina, 4 novembre 1978*, repr. in *Miscellanea storica della Valdelsa*, LXXXVI (1981), pp. 154-89.
- Fasano Guarini, E., 'Gli statuti delle città soggette a Firenze tra '400 e '500: riforme locali e interventi centrali', in G. Chittolini and D. Willoweit, eds., *Stati e città territori in Italia e Germania tra medioevo ed età moderna* (Bologna, 1991), pp. 69-124.
- Field, A. J., 'The problem with neoclassical institutional economics: a critique with special reference to the North-Thomas model of pre-1500 Europe', *Exp. Econ. Hist.*, 18 (1981), pp. 174-98.
- Field, A. J., 'Microeconomics, norms and rationality', *Econ. Dev. & Cdn. Change*, 32 (1984), pp. 683-711.
- Fiuni, E., 'Sui rapporti economici tra città e contado nell'età comunale', *Archivio Storico Italiano*, CXIV (1956), pp. 16-68.
- Fiuni, E., *Fortuna e decadenza dell'economia fiorentina* (Florence, 1977).
- Fiuni, E., *L'imprezza di Lorenzo de' Medici contro Volterra (1472)* (Florence, 2nd edn., 1977).
- Fossati, F., 'Un problema di storia vigeranese', *Archivio Storico Lombardo*, 5th ser., 1 (1914), pp. 757-78.
- Fragioni, L., 'Le merci di Lombardia: produzioni artigianali di grande serie e produzioni pregiate', in G. Taborelli, ed., *Commercio in Lombardia*, 2 vols. (Milan, 1986), I, pp. 56-118.
- Fubini, R., ed., *Lorenzo de' Medici: lettere, I (1460-1474)* (Florence, 1977).
- Genicot, L., 'Villes et campagnes dans les Pays-Bas médiévaux', *Acta Historica et Archaeologica Medaevola*, 7-8 (1986-7), pp. 163-92.
- Giannempo, M. and Sanfrid, L., *L'Italia delle città: il popolamento urbano tra medioevo e Rinascimento* (secoli XIII-XVI) (Florence, 1989).
- Guain, G., *Il governo della città-repubblica di Firenze del primo Quattrocento*, 3 vols. (Florence, 1981).
- Gustafsson, B., ed., *Power and economic institutions: reinterpretations in economic history* (Aldershot, 1991).
- Hay, D. and Law, J., *Early in the age of the Renaissance, 1380-1530* (1989).
- Heers, J., *Città del XV secolo: architetture economiche e problemi sociali* (Paris, 1962).
- Herlihy, D., *Pisa in the early Renaissance: a study of urban growth* (New Haven, 1984; repr. Port Washington and London, 1973).
- Herlihy, D., 'Santa Maria Impannata: a rural commune in the late middle ages', in N. Rubinstein, ed., *Florentine studies: politics and society in Renaissance Florence* (1967), pp. 242-76.
- Herlihy, D., 'The distribution of wealth in a Renaissance community: Florence 1427', in P. Abrams and E. A. Wrigley, eds., *Towns in societies: essays in economic history and historical sociology* (Cambridge, 1978), pp. 131-58.
- Herlihy, D. and Klapisch-Zuber, C., *Les Toscans et leurs familles: une étude du casato florentin de 1427* (Paris, 1978).
- Hibbert, A. B., 'The economic policy of towns', in M. M. Postan, E. E. Rich, and E. Miller, eds., *The Cambridge economic history of Europe*, III: *economic organization and politics in the middle ages* (Cambridge, 1963), pp. 155-229.
- Hicks, D. L., 'Sources of wealth in Renaissance Siena: businessmen and landowners', *Bollettino Senese di Storia Patria*, CIII (1986), pp. 9-42.
- Hodgson, G. M., *Economists and institutions: a manifesto for a modern institutional economics* (Oxford, 1988).
- Hohenberg, P. M. and Lees, L. H., *The making of urban Europe, 1000-1950* (Cambridge, Mass., 1985).
- Hohenberg, P. M. and Lees, L. H., 'Urban decline and regional economies: Brabant, Castile, and Lombardy, 1550-1750', *Comp. Stud. Soc. & Hist.*, 31 (1989), pp. 439-61.
- Kellenbach, H., 'Oberdeutschland und Mailand zur Zeit der Strozzi', in *Gli Strozzi a Milano e in Lombardia e i loro rapporti con gli stati italiani ed europei, 1450-1535: atti del convegno internazionale, 18-21 maggio 1980* (Milan, 1982), pp. 193-225.
- Kotelnikova, L., 'La produzione dei panni di lana della campagna toscana nei secoli XIII-XIV e la politica delle città e delle arti della lana', in M. Spallanzani, ed., *Produzione commerciale e consumo dei panni di lana (nei secoli XIV-XVIII)* (Florence, 1976), pp. 221-9.
- Kotelnikova, L., 'Tendenze progressive e regressive nello sviluppo socio-economico della Toscana nei secoli XIII-XV: campagna e città nella loro interdipendenza', in A. Guarducci, ed., *Sviluppo e sottosviluppo in Europa e fuori d'Europa dal secolo XIII alla rivoluzione industriale* (Florence, 1983), pp. 124-7.
- Langton, J. and Hoppé, G., *Town and country in the development of early modern western Europe* (Norwich, 1983).
- Luzzati, M., *Una guerra di popolo: Lettere private del tempo dell'assedio di Pisa (1494-1509)* (Pisa, 1973).
- Machiavelli, N., *Il Principe e Discorsi sopra la prima decina di Tito Livio*, ed. S. Bertelli, intro. G. Prociati (Milan, 1960).
- Maiorani, P., 'L'attività mercantile e le casate milanesi nel secondo Quattrocento', in G. Bologna, ed.,

- Milano nell'età di Ludovico il Moro: atti del convegno internazionale, 28 febbraio-4 marzo 1983, 2 vols. (Milan, 1983), II, pp. 575-84.
- Maire Vigneur, J.-C., 'Les rapports ville-campagne dans l'Italie communale: pour une révision des problèmes', in N. Buis and J.-P. Garret, eds., *La ville, la bourgeoisie et la genèse de l'état moderne (XII-XVIII siècles)* (Paris, 1988), pp. 21-34.
- Marx, K., *Capital*, trans. B. Fowkes, 3 vols. (Harmondsworth, 1976-81).
- Masseto, G., 'Le fonti del diritto nella Lombardia del Quattrocento', in J. M. Cauchies and G. Chittolini, eds., *Milano e Borgogna: due stati principeschi tra medioevo e Rinascimento* (Rome, 1990), pp. 49-65.
- Mazzoni, M. F., 'The cotton industry of northern Italy in the late middle ages: 1150-1450', *J. Econ. Hist.*, 32 (1972), pp. 262-86.
- Mazzoni, M. F., *The Italian cotton industry in the later middle ages, 1100-1600* (Cambridge, 1981).
- Mazzi, M. S. and Ravèggi, S., *Gli uomini e le cose nelle campagne fiorentine del Quattrocento* (Florence, 1983).
- Melis, F., 'Uno sguardo al mercato dei panni di lana a Pisa nella seconda metà del Trecento', in *idem*, *Industria e commercio nella Toscana medievale*, ed. B. Dini (Florence, 1989), pp. 108-56.
- Melis, F., 'Pistoia nei secoli d'oro della sua economia', in *idem*, *Industria e commercio nella Toscana medievale*, ed. B. Dini (Florence, 1989), pp. 157-74.
- Melis, F., 'Momenti dell'economia del Casentino nei secoli XIV e XV', in *idem*, *Industria e commercio nella Toscana medievale*, ed. B. Dini (Florence, 1989), pp. 192-7.
- Merrington, J., 'Town and country in the transition to capitalism', in R. H. Hilton, ed., *The transition from feudalism to capitalism* (1978), pp. 170-95.
- Mira, G., 'Alcuni aspetti della politica economica di Francesco Sforza alla luce di nuovi documenti', in *Studi in onore di Gino Luzzatto*, 4 vols. (Milan, 1949), II, pp. 118-35.
- Mira, G., *La fase lombarda nei secoli XIV-XVI: prime indagini* (Como, 1955).
- Mira, G., 'L'organizzazione fiorentina nel quadro dell'economia della "Bassa" lombarda alla fine del medioevo e nell'età moderna', *Archivio Storico Lombardo*, LXXXV (1958), pp. 289-300.
- Molho, A., *Florentine public finances in the early Renaissance* (Cambridge, Mass., 1971).
- Munro, J., 'Industrial transformations in the north-west European textile trades, c.1290-c.1340: economic progress or economic crisis?', in B. M. S. Campbell, ed., *Before the Black Death: studies in the crisis of the early fourteenth century* (Manchester, 1991), pp. 110-48.
- Muth, S., 'Urban concentration and primacy revisited: an analysis and some policy conclusions', *Econ. Dev. & Cult. Change*, 37 (1989), pp. 610-39.
- Nicholas, D., *Town and countryside: social, economic, and political tensions in fourteenth-century Flanders* (Bruges, 1971).
- Nicholas, D., 'Economic reorientation and social change in fourteenth-century Flanders', *P. & P.*, 70 (1976), pp. 3-29.
- North, D. C., *Institutions, institutional change and economic performance* (Cambridge, 1990).
- Novo, A., ed., *Libri dotti mercanti Comitati Mediolani: registro del secolo XV* (Milan, 1950).
- Petralla, G., '"Crisi" ed emigrazione dei ceti emulanti a Pisa durante il primo dominio fiorentino: l'orizzonte cittadino e la ricerca di spazi esterni', in *I ceti dirigenti nella Toscana del Quattrocento* (Monte Ortole, 1987), pp. 291-352.
- Perzani, G., 'Diario della ribellione della città d'Arezzo dell'anno 1502', *Archivio Storico Italiano*, 1st ser., 1 (1842), pp. 213-26.
- Pini, A. I., 'Dal comune città-stato al comune ente amministrativo', in O. Capitani et al., *Comuni e signorie: istituzioni, società e lotte per l'egemonia*, Storia d'Italia diretta da G. Galasso, IV (Turin, 1981), pp. 449-588.
- Pinto, G., *Il libro del Biadino: carestie e amonia a Firenze dalla metà del '200 al 1348* (Florence, 1978).
- Pinto, G., *La Toscana nel tardo medioevo: economia rurale, società* (Florence, 1982).
- Poehlmann, R., *Die Wirtschaftspolitik der Florentiner Renaissance und das Prinzip der Verkehrefreiheit* (Leipzig, 1878).
- Racine, P., 'Ville et contado dans l'Italie communale: l'exemple de Plaisance', *Nouvelle Revue de l'histoire*, LXI (1977), pp. 273-90.
- Repetti, E., *Dizionario geografico fisico, storico della Toscana*, 6 vols. (Florence, 1833-46).
- Rovetta, E., 'I boschi nella pianura lombarda del Quattrocento', *Studi Storici*, 30 (1989), pp. 1013-30.
- Salvemini, G., *Magnum e popoli in Firenze dal 1285 al 1295* (Florence, 1899; 2nd edn, Milan, 1966).
- Salvemini, G., 'Un comune rurale nel secolo XIII', in *idem*, *Studi storici* (Florence, 1901), pp. 1-37; repr. in *idem*, *La dignità cavalleresca nel comune di Firenze e altri scritti* (Milan, 1972), pp. 274-97.
- Smith, C. A., 'Regional economic systems: linking geographical models and socioeconomic problems', in *idem*, ed., *Regional analysis, I: economic systems* (New York, 1976), pp. 3-63.
- Smith, C. A., 'Types of city-size distributions: a comparative analysis', in A. van der Woude, A. Hayami, and J. de Vries, eds., *Urbanization in history: a process of dynamic interactions* (Oxford, 1990), pp. 20-42.

- provincia di Bergamo nei secoli XIII-XVIII. Atti del convegno 5 marzo 1983 (Bergamo, 1984), pp. 51-92.
- Storti Sorechi, C., 'Lo statuto quattrocentesco di Crema', in *Crema, 1185: una controversia autonoma politica e territoriale* (Cremona, 1988), pp. 155-79.
- Storti Sorechi, C., 'Aspetti generali della legislazione statutaria lombarda in età viscontea', in *Legislazione e società nell'Italia medievale: per il VII centenario degli statuti di Alghero (1288). Atti del convegno Alghero, 18-21 ottobre 1988* (Bordighera, 1990), pp. 71-101.
- Tangheroni, M., 'Di alcuni accordi commerciali tra Pisa e Firenze in materia di cereali', in *Studi in memoria di Federico Melis*, 5 vols. (Naples, 1978), II, pp. 211-20.
- Tangheroni, M., 'Il sistema economico della Toscana nel Trecento', in S. Gensini, ed., *La Toscana nel secolo XIV: cronaca di una crisi regionale* (Pisa, 1988), pp. 41-66.
- Taylor, M., *Community, anarchy and liberty* (Cambridge, 1982).
- Tilly, C., *Coercion, capital, and European states, AD 990-1990* (Cambridge, Mass., 1990).
- Toubert, P., '"Città" e "contado" dans l'Italie médiévale: l'émergence d'un thème historiographique entre Renaissance et Romantisme', *La Cultura*, XXII (1984), pp. 219-48; repr. in *idem*, *Histoire du haut moyen âge et de l'Italie médiévale* (1987).
- Trolier, R. C., *The spiritual power: republican Florence under interdiction* (Leiden, 1974).
- Ugolini, P., 'La formazione del sistema territoriale e urbano della Valle Padana', in C. De Seta, ed., *Storia d'Italia: annali* (Turin, 1985), VIII, pp. 159-240.
- Variani, G. M., 'Dal comune allo stato regionale', in N. Tranfaglia and M. Furpo, eds., *La storia, i grandi problemi da medioevo all'età contemporanea, II. Il medioevo, 2. Popoli e strutture politiche* (Turin, 1976), pp. 693-724.
- Ventura, A., *Nobiltà e popolo nella società veneta del 400 e 500* (Bari, 1964).
- Vigevano nell'età visconteo-sforzeca: atti del convegno, Vigevano 30 settembre-1 ottobre 1988 (Milan, 1992).
- Virani, C., 'La storia politica e sociale: dall'avvento delle signorie all'Italia spagnola', in R. Romano and C. Vivanti, eds., *Storia d'Italia* (Turin, 1974), II, pt. 1, pp. 275-427.
- Waley, D., *The Italian city-republics* (3rd edn, 1988).
- Webb, D. M., 'Penitence and peacemaking in city and contado: the Bianchi of 1399', in D. Baker, ed., *The church in town and countryside* (Oxford, 1979), pp. 243-55.
- Wrigley, E. A., 'City and country in the past: a sharp divide or a continuum?', *Hist. Res.*, 64 (1991), pp. 107-20.
- Zorzi, A., 'Lo stato territoriale fiorentino (secoli XIV-XV): aspetti giurisdizionali', *Società e Storia*, XIII (1990), pp. 799-825.