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Interorganizational Networks  
and Social Capital Formation in the  
*South of the South*

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**EUROPEAN UNIVERSITY INSTITUTE, FLORENCE**

**ROBERT SCHUMAN CENTRE**

**Interorganizational Networks and  
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## Abstract

This paper travels against the current. While both the so-called policy network approach and arguments related to the role of civic communities are highly valued in present discussions of regional development, the author argues against the conceptual inflation of these analytic currencies. Both approaches are over-socialized, build on the voluntarism of collective action, and tend to miss the relevance of structural embeddedness. Proper structural analysis is presented, therefore, as the most appropriate tool for overcoming these constraints. Going beyond a study of individualistic forms of state-society relations that have assumed much prominence in recent debates on civiness and civic virtues, the author embarks on an empirical network analysis of organized forms of interest intermediation in the region of Sicily. Since two relational data-sets are being submitted to analysis, this represents the first attempt ever in the study of territorial politics not only to work with proper structural information but, moreover, to present diachronic material which allows for comparative evaluations over time.

Contrary to the initial hypothesis according to which branches of regional administration were expected to occupy the most central positions in the two policy and policy domain networks, these actors are shown to be quite marginalized in the organizational space. The often encountered image of an 'absence of the state' in much having been written on Italy's *mezzogiorno* appears to be fully corroborated. At the same time and largely unexpected, trade unions score highest on both influence reputation and centrality. Due to the segregated, non-overlapping nature of, on the one hand, a hybrid network of rather pathological political exchanges and, on the other, a less relevant network essentially populated by interest associations and void of material resources, forms of organized interest intermediation result to be poorly developed if not altogether absent in Sicily. This unexpected result leads the author to make recourse to rather modest and traditional recommendations with regard to problems of regional governance.

Given that civiness cannot be created by design and that this societal asset can hardly be accredited the relevance it is assumed to possess in influential work carried out on the case of Italy, the author turns to a couple of seemingly counter-intuitive arguments. In a situation where functional differentiation of a society is far from being fully achieved, it are not necessarily networks which would need strengthening and empowerment, or interest groups to be endowed with a public status and be accredited public tasks but, rather, the state itself. The *mezzogiorno* regions are advised, therefore, to embark on a proper federal project with a substantial increase of regional autonomy. Such a reform is more likely to make government responsive and responsible, would contribute to move it to the center of the organizational space, and would increase the incentives to individual citizens and entrepreneurs to make use of organized interest intermediation, as is the case in other parts of Europe.





## 1. Introductory remarks \*

This paper explores interorganizational relations among key actors dealing with regional development policies in an area of the *south of the south*<sup>1</sup>. The region chosen for analysis is Sicily, one of Italy's most underdeveloped territories. Although originally starting with the rather modest objective of identifying typical patterns of organizational interdependence in that area, the analysis soon turned out to possess a number of more far-reaching implications which, we claim, should lead future research on related subject matter to consider the possibility of some, albeit substantial changes in emphasis -- especially with regard to the research questions being advanced and to the methodology employed. Before moving to a presentation of the data and discussing its results, the shortcomings of two closely related approaches shall therefore briefly be subjected to a critical review.

We are concerned, in particular, with the so-called *policy network approach*, now representing one, if not *the* main paradigm of mainstream policy analysis and, secondly, of more recent vintage, with certain arguments related to problems of *social capital accumulation* -- especially in so far as this more general concept (Coleman 1990; North 1990) is used to explain development differentials at the regional level. For understandable reasons, this paper does not allow for a more elaborate critique of this work<sup>2</sup>. We are quite confident though that our empirical results are largely self-explanatory, requiring no more than a couple of remarks on these more complex concepts.

## 2. The limits of a paradigm

Policy network analysis can be traced back to early contributions in the field of organization theory (Hanf and Scharpf 1978; Aldrich and Whetten 1981; Crozier and Friedberg 1984; Rogers and Whitten 1982) before it started to be assimilated by political scientists. In the course of this assimilation process, the approach widely gained in importance and prominence. Yet, it also became increasingly subject to normative reasoning, *a priori* assumptions, and a conceptual inflation that have not necessarily contributed to making it either a viable tool for analysis or a clear-cut theoretical alternative to more traditional institutionalist approaches. In what follows, I do not refer to the valid and illuminating contributions collected in, or commented upon in Kenis and Schneider (1991, 1997), van Waarden (1992), Richardson (1996), Börzel (1997), and others but, rather, to those more uncritical applications that treat the approach as if it were a coherent and homogeneous theoretical model. In this catch-all kind of vision, the concept risks losing any particular analytical significance and hardly manages to be more than just a synonym or metaphor (Dowding 1994; Grote 1995b; Lazega 1996) for co-operation.

In this general critique, we shall simply try to outline a number of constraints limiting the usefulness of the concept in contexts and conditions that were not originally foreseen by its proponents. These remarks are inevitable because, at first glance, it may seem that policy network approaches would be of quite considerable relevance for our task. That this is not necessarily the case is due to the following reasons.

First, the concept tends to rule out the possibility of more encompassing comparison -- an area of research where, in theory, it may reveal its particular strength (Kenis 1996). Nowhere else has this been made so clear as in Renate Mayntz's authoritative definition. Mayntz submits that "*only in societies which are modern in a structural sense, where functional subsystems and within them, relatively autonomous actors exist, can interorganizational networks with a potential for voluntary and deliberate collective action form*" (Mayntz 1994:10). Following this logic, networks are then both conditioned by (degrees of) structural modernity and, simultaneously, expressions of (degrees of) structural modernity. In our particular context, this may lead to the following query: How would one have to conceptualize, and what would be the appropriate terminology for those sectoral and territorial cases where public and private actors collaborate under conditions of societal *pre-modernity*, i.e. where the differentiation and successive de-differentiation of state-society relations has proceeded in ways and according to a time-scale which makes these cases different from the (*post-*) modern ones of Central and Northern Europe? Not by accident, most applications of the policy network paradigm tend to cover only the latter geographical areas while political scientists from Southern Europe have hardly ever made use of the concept. This, in our view, represents the '*ethnocentric bias*' of the policy network approach.

Secondly, and linked to the above, most case studies undertaken in this theoretical tradition take account only of the second aspect of Mayntz's definition -- the property of networks to reflect structural modernity -- while at the same time dismissing the first -- the enabling conditions accounting for the occurrence of these phenomena. Where modernity is *a priori* assumed to exist, the debate then immediately turns to a discussion of the extent to which policy networks possess one or more of the following capacities: to reduce transaction costs, improve efficiency, increase legitimacy, strengthen action capacity, to represent flexible responses to complex problems and facilitate adaptation, to be subsidiarity-conforming and partnership-friendly, to contribute to a flattening of hierarchies, to produce consensus and reduce conflict -- in short, to overcome zero-sum situations of the most diverse kinds. This analytical perspective tends to guide even the study of those inconvenient cases for which the approach, following Mayntz, would appear to be inappropriate with the result that policy networks are declared to be either altogether absent<sup>3</sup>, or to

operate according to the logics of markets or hierarchies<sup>4</sup>. This may be called the 'normative bias' of policy network approaches.

Thirdly, while the distinction recently introduced by Börzel (1997) is certainly correct, namely that policy network approaches have tended to focus either on interest intermediation or on forms of governance, it essentially remains a conceptual distinction. In applications of the research program to specific cases, the bulk of work is concerned with problems of governance, while -- a few exceptions notwithstanding (Kriesi 1980; Schneider 1988; Sciarini 1996; Diani 1993, Lazega 1992, 1996)<sup>5</sup> -- empirically grounded studies of interest intermediation have hardly been carried out in that tradition. Assuming the existence of enlightened political entrepreneurs being equipped with a high capacity for 'other-regardingness' and potential to overcome 'short-termism' in the interest of achieving collective, long-term goals, the debate tends to over-emphasize the degree to which the functions accredited to these phenomena are actually performed and tends to disregard the possible constraints imposed by structural embeddedness. Moreover, proper *inter-organizational* relations tend to assume the character of *internal* relations of quasi-organizations, whereby the latter seem to be endowed with membership statutes and options for entry and exit. This shall be labelled the '*functionalist bias*' of policy network approaches.

Fourth, in much of the political science-based applications of the concept, one encounters a kind of inversion of the critique once advanced by Granovetter with regard to mainstream economics. While Granovetter accused economic theory of under-socialized assumptions, political science tends to adopt an over-socialized perspective, i.e. a great deal of emphasis is given to the network-building properties of voluntarist agreements, of norms of reciprocity, of mutual trust and so forth while the role of central enforcement agencies appears to be marginalized<sup>6</sup>. As Atkinson and Coleman (1992) have demonstrated, the political under-determination of such approaches results from a disregard of the need for, after having disaggregated the state, subsequently *re-aggregating* it again -- with the result that public administration is analytically treated as if it were just a *primus inter pares* empowered with the capacity, if at all, to moderate but not to police networks. This is the '*over-socialized bias*' of the approach.

Finally, more specifically related to the present analysis, the discourse encounters further constraints in that interorganizational patterns of territorial networks tend to be considerably less flexible than those described in studies of national and supranational policies or policy domains. The relations connecting a regional network are not only more over-determined culturally and more stable institutionally -- if not altogether sticky and viscous -- less densely populated, less capricious, more cohesive ideologically, less competitive, and more encapsulated in relation to external contenders; they also tend to exclude the *exit* option (and often also *voice*) thus largely being constrained to strategies such as *loyalty*, if not *sufferance* (see, for the latter,

Schmitter 1985). Abandoning a network and looking for entry elsewhere is less likely to happen since actors are considerably less footloose than organizations forming part of national, supranational, or functional policy circuits. Most importantly, because of the restricted pool of (regional) organizations from which to draw participants for network formation, the specific configurations of networks across various policies are likely to differ much less than is the case elsewhere. Regional networks tend to reflect relational patterns that characterize entire policy domains, if not the *political ecology* of the territory altogether.

While the preceding remarks are related to methodological problems and have served to accentuate the choice made in this contribution in favour of a more structurally-grounded type of analysis, the following remarks directly concern the specific case singled out for analysis: Italy's *mezzogiorno* and, in particular, the region of Sicily. We shall see that the work to which reference is made in the subsequent section can in many respects be subsumed to the same type of critique made above a *propos* of policy network metaphors.

### 3. Private goals, public goals, and 'own goals'

In probably one of the most controversially discussed and most often reviewed books of the 1990s, Robert Putnam (1993) has recently advanced a number of hypotheses of direct relevance to this analysis. Starting with the aim of measuring institutional performance differentials across the twenty regional governments of Italy, his conclusion is that these differentials are neither rooted in (degrees of) economic modernity nor that the latter would account for institutional performance. Both economic and institutional disparities which, in Putnam's view, clearly divide the country between a developed north and an under-developed south (see endnote 1), are ultimately contingent on a third factor, namely on what the author calls 'civicness', i.e. the endowment of regions with 'civic communities'. Civicness, unsurprisingly, appears to be absent in the *mezzogiorno* regions.

The compound indicator constructed to analytically grasp this property is made up of four variables of which one is then taken as the 'key proxy' (Boix and Posner 1996:9) accounting for social capital formation in Italy. This is the density rates of 'associationalism', i.e. the relative presence or absence within each of the regions of voluntary and leisure organizations such as soccer clubs, bird-watching societies, theatre and literature associations, etc. According to Putnam, it is essentially these types of groups<sup>8</sup> that generate strong horizontal ties among members of the local society and, at the same time, make for the emergence of trust, solidarity, reciprocity and all other types of civic virtues. Despite its critical importance for the coherence of the entire book, this argument is quite problematic both for conceptual reasons and more importantly, with regard to the available empirical evidence.

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One central reference point of the book is Alexis De Tocqueville's 'Democracy in America'. It appears that Putnam may have taken too literally some of the messages from that authoritative source. For example, it is not said that an association which "*counts its supporters and involves them in a cause*" (de Tocqueville; quoted from Putnam; p.90) must necessarily be a soccer club, even if such a group "*unites the energies of divergent minds and vigorously directs them toward a clearly indicated goal!*" (de Tocqueville, *ibid.*; emphasis added by the author). Yet, Putnam is very explicit in that respect. He excludes all local branches of national associations from his survey "*on the assumption that 'imported' organizations may be a flawed indicator of local associational propensities*" (*ibid.*:222; endnote 35).

In our view, it is not the formal status of an association but indeed the type of goal envisaged by inter-personal interaction, that makes a difference. Such goals may include the production and supply of both public and private goods. As observed by Boix and Posner 1996:7), private goods "*like the personal enjoyment derived from discussing literature, singing in a chorus or playing soccer can be enjoyed only by those who participate in creating it*" (*ibid.*:7). Groups producing these goods may involve some co-ordination, but not necessarily co-operation in the interests of enhancing the social capital endowment of an entire territory. Nor can soccer clubs necessarily be said to contribute to the emergence of generalized norms of reciprocity: "*in fact, they may just have the opposite effect*" (Levi 1996a:47). In brief, membership in the associations mentioned by Putnam may either not overlap with membership in other associations or, because of the single-issue purpose and uncompromising imperatives of these associations, may conflict with the goals of other associations. There may be some social capital-building involved -- yet the polarized social context in which it is employed, may be of limited use in promoting community-wide cooperation.

In a sense, this purely conceptual critique is now made redundant by new empirical evidence *a propos* the density of associational networks in the *mezzogiorno*. Putnam scores a further 'own goal' in that the figures on associationalism provided in the book are dramatically outdated and additionally undermine much, if not all, of the civic argument. The data is taken from a national head count of associations published in 1985 and covers the period until 1982<sup>9</sup>, i.e. a date preceding the publication of Putnam's results by ten years. Rather than trying to verify this information for later points in time by embarking on in-depth studies of at least a couple of regions, Putnam becomes a prisoner of his own path-dependent logic that does not allow for any significant deviations from long-established historical trajectories.

There is now evidence for such a deviation to have occurred exactly in the period mentioned above, i.e. between 1982 and the early 1990s. In a research project

directed by Carlo Trigilia (1995), the presumed lack of propensity to engage in collective action is shown to be a stereotype and prejudice on the basis of which societal reality in the *mezzogiorno* would be wrongly conceived. By and large, we are witnessing today in Italy a process of homogenization of the socio-cultural sphere -- a process, however, that does not find equivalents in the productive and economic dimension (ibid.:213-215). There have been peaks of annual growth rates of southern associationalism of up to 30 percent in that period (Diamanti 1995:21), so that in some particular circumstances, associational networks are anything but more developed in the north than they are in the south. More precisely, with regard to Sicily, the authors count more than 2000 cultural associations in that region (ibid.:15), making it fourth in a rank order of *mezzogiorno* regions in terms of associational density (ibid.:34). Although not doing much harm to many of Putnam's individual results, this data strongly undermines the generalizations drawn by the author from his information to support the main argument of his book.

Apart from the above, Putnam's analysis rests in essential aspects on assumptions that also characterize parts of what has been written in the policy network tradition. Social capital formation is thought to be rooted in a politically under-determined voluntarism. Trustful co-operation results from bilateral exchanges among equals which converge in a kind of social equilibrium situation characterized by the rule of '*always co-operate*', while the opposite ('*always defect*') appears to apply to the south. Central enforcement, in this view, is "*an inadequate solution*" (Putnam 1993) and, despite many indications to the contrary<sup>10</sup>, politics is explicitly removed from the agenda of mechanisms able to correct 'community failures'.

Most importantly, in his last chapter dedicated to providing a more compact theoretical framework, Putnam employs a network terminology and suddenly turns to emphasizing the *relational properties* of actor systems for which he actually lacks any empirical evidence. What before have been rates of participation in individual associations, now strangely become networks of civic engagement that are built from multiple, overlapping associational memberships. For Boix and Posner (1996:11), this shift in emphasis is largely "*an artefact of data collection constraints: information on the number of civic associations per capita is easier to collect than data on social networks*".

In what follows, we shall try to overcome this constraint, first, by employing quantitative network analysis, and secondly, by focussing on the relational properties of types of associations that, in our view, are better able to account for the institutional performance differentials of subnational government. Government performance or the 'supply of governance' are essentially determined by the degree and type of demands advanced by a category of collective actors of the interest group variety. Their activities tend to have significant impacts on the endowment of territories with public goods. Contingent on their 'encompassingness', they may therefore be able and

prepared to re-internalize parts of the externalities produced by them in the interest of enhancing the well-being of a whole region. It is these 'secondary citizens'<sup>11</sup> whose behaviour and contacts both among each other and *vis-à-vis* their public institutions are more likely to reflect degrees of social capital accumulation than are the propensities of individual citizens to join choral societies and so forth.

#### 4. Tentative hypotheses

Interest groups are crucial for representative government and democratic stability alike. Their importance increases over time proportionally to the expansion of state activity. This is the case for both northern European countries and, as demonstrated by Schmitter (1994), for the south as well. There are four points in Schmitter's essay which are essential for my argument. Firstly, interest systems in southern Europe tend to be extremely fragmented. Secondly, while interest groups were initially displaced from the centre of political life, political parties have subsequently sought with considerable success to penetrate and colonize them. Thirdly, class governance as well as strategic capacity are relational in nature and do not emerge simply from rational choices but, rather, from the complex interactions of interest associations with norms, programmes, ideologies, political parties, public policies, etc. Finally, very little can be deduced from even the most detailed of constitutions about how political parties, interest associations and social movements will interact to structure the channels of representation.

Approaching now the empirical cases presented here, it appears that these four points are fully corroborated. Leaving aside problems related to the organizational format adopted by individual groups and asking, rather, for the contribution these groups may supply to social order and public governance, the consultation of constitutions or of regional statutes appears to be largely useless<sup>12</sup>. The story of the relationship between the regions and organized interests is far more a story of a rhapsodic encounter than one of a conscious and politically explicit endeavour (Cammelli 1990). Few, generally short-lived, exceptions apart, this holds for most of the country's regions (Trigilia 1991, 1995; Grote, 1992b, 1996b).

Yet, things are currently changing rapidly both domestically and internationally, and interest systems as well as forms of interest intermediation are facing strong pressures to adapt to these new environments. (Inter-) organizational adaptation concerns both the national and the subnational levels but less so the supranational one. To take an example, after years of having been issued death certificates of various origins, social pacts and similar forms of corporatist macro-concertation are suddenly back on the agenda of national policy-makers in the 1990s even of those countries whose interest systems have been, and largely continue to be 'incorrectly' organized (Schmitter and Grote, 1997). Italy belongs to that group of countries. Since

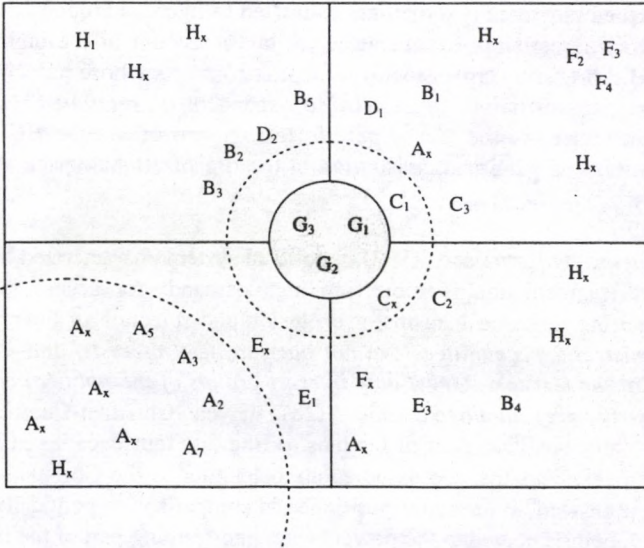
organizational settings and interorganizational relations at the subnational level essentially reflect the patterns observable at the level of the nation state, one might expect such collaborative efforts here as well. Moreover, the transition currently underway in Italy from the First to the Second Republic (in part bearing similarities to regime transitions in Eastern Europe; see for this, Kurth 1993), should additionally promote the search for new organizational settings.

In an earlier version of this paper (Grote 1995b), I have tried to plot these changes in two-dimensional space. The argument can conveniently be outlined with the help of *figure 1*, although -- as we shall see later -- this figure actually contains a message quite different from the one presented in what immediately follows. For the time being, the reader is therefore requested to ignore both the figure's title and the inserted acronyms. Of importance for understanding the following arguments is merely familiarity with the general pattern, i.e. with the distinction between the center and the periphery of the organizational space.

In the pre-transition period, which ended in about 1989-90, strong organizational fragmentation prevailed in the Italian interest system across all levels of territorial and functional complexity. Between three to five major peak associations used to compete for influence and political recognition by public authorities within each of the country's main sectors and categories<sup>13</sup>. Many of these associations at the same time claimed representational monopoly for their category and some of them, albeit nowhere completely, came quite close to fulfilling this claim at least at the subnational level - always contingent, of course, on the specific political situation in a given region<sup>14</sup>.



FIG. 1:<sup>15</sup>  
Social distances among actors of M<sub>1</sub>



My argument has been that due to political party affiliations, interest group relationships would be much stronger between groups belonging to the same political camp than along sectoral or categorical lines. For example, I expected groups of originally communist derivation or inclination such as, for instance, *Cna* (artisans), *Confesercenti* (commerce), *Lega delle cooperative*, *Confcoltivatori* (agriculture), and *Cgil* (trade union) to occupy spaces rather close to each other in terms of frequent contact, common consultation of politics, and exchange of information and, at the same time, far removed from groups of competing political camps, say that of the Christian Democrats, or the Socialists, Liberals and Republicans. It would appear, then, that the two major representatives of craft and artisanal interests (*Cna* and *Confartigianato*) are further apart from each other than, say, the representatives of two different professional or class interests (e.g. *Cna* and *Cgil*).

Let us imagine that groups belonging to the first camp occupy positions in the bottom-left part of the figure, and Christian Democratic groupings are positioned in the upper-right part of the organizational space. The center would then, of course, be occupied by public actors especially in an area such as Sicily, where markets are said to be virtually absent and where everything is overdetermined by politics and party political domination (Rossito 1988). Regional administration in Sicily easily

outperforms other Italian regions in terms of its financial and organizational assets. It employed more than 22.000 full-time civil servants in the early 1990s, with more than ten per cent of these (2586) occupying leading positions at the level of director and head of division (Comitato 1993). The employment share of the regional machine in overall regional employment is sometimes estimated to figure at around 25-30 per cent -- a figure which is certainly exaggerated, yet takes account of the high number of precarious and short-term (professional) formation contracts whose holders are on the pay-roll of the administration. In an area so dependent on rents being fed into the regional circuit either via the *Cassa per il Mezzogiorno* or via the EU's structural funds, the position of public administration in the organizational space should seem rather obvious.

As observed by Lanzalaco (1993), a political system characterized by such high an amount of fragmentation is subject to high demands for access to decisional processes requiring rigid mechanisms of exclusion and selection of interests. Indeed, "*public administration committees are not open to new interests, and in the policy communities at the territorial level only interest groups of the political colour of the governing party are admitted*" (ibid. 128). Given Christian-Democratic party hegemony or party coalition control for most of the last four decades in Italy (Sicily included) our guess was that the associations belonging to the Christian-Democratic family would appear to be far better positioned in comparison to politically competing groups. In fact, being coopted to the power center and forming part of the inner circle, we located these groups within the boundaries of the extended center of *figure 1*.

As to other associations, the comments of one of the most prominent analysts of interest groups in Italian politics made thirty years ago, may have applied at least until the late 1980s: "*Italy's interest groups are isolative and essentially non-bargaining. Antagonistic groups that rarely communicate with each other and go in search of legislators of like ideological predispositions are ill-equipped to bargain democratically*" (LaPalombara 1964: 249).

Much of the above is now subject to change. We may indeed be witnessing a move from political camp mentalities towards the predominance of sectoral, corporate, or class identities. Recognizing their relative weakness as individual groups<sup>17</sup>, many interest group leaders have started to look for the possibility of pooling their resources. This finds its expression at the regional level in the form of so-called *intese*, i.e. interorganizational pacts formed in the interest of increasing corporate pressure on the administration but in part also to economize on enhanced cooperation, thus improving the quality of supply with selective goods offered to the associations' membership<sup>18</sup>. Another indicator pointing in the same direction are the *enti bilaterali* and the reform of the chamber system<sup>19</sup> which both are likely to substantially reduce levels of inter-associational competition (Perulli and Catino 1997). The more recent and modernizing pattern would have to be imagined in the form of a sectoral as opposed to a political

clustering around the center of the organizational space. This latter would, as before, still be occupied by divisions of public administration, yet, with relations between these divisions and non-public actors being much more equally distributed across the space of the plot area. Changes of this type would not come about without distress to those having previously been co-opted to the center and occupying the *inner circle* of relational power. Interest groups of the same professional or class categories may now be closer to each other, but closeness in terms of regular contacts and information exchange is not the same as the building of alliances<sup>20</sup>. The strongest antagonists may continue fighting each other most of the time in the very same committees and working groups where they are in constant face-to-face contact. More importantly, closeness does not imply that those having formed part of the inner circle would easily renounce their privileged positions, discard their organizational self-interest and, hence, move from *legitimation from above* to *legitimation from below*, although the most recent political developments in Italy may leave few opportunities for continuing with the first option.

## 5. The data

Let us now turn to the empirical evidence able to support these hypotheses. The data from which the arguments for this paper are drawn represents a tiny fraction of two more encompassing data sets collected for two successive projects, one concluded in 1992 and the other, four years later, in 1996<sup>21</sup>. Due to the particular research design and thanks to the fact that the author has had the chance to direct the first and coordinate the second -- which also meant the personal conduct of interviews -- the data is perfectly comparable over time.

The first project, exclusively dealt with the region of Sicily. It formed part of the process of elaborating the regional development plan (PRS) 1992-94 for that region and served as background material for that purpose (Grote 1992a). Interestingly, the management of interorganizational relations between key actors at the regional level, especially in the field of 'small and medium sized enterprise' policy, was one of the decisive elements distinguishing this PRS from its predecessors. One of the central sections of the guidelines to the plan (Regione Siciliana, 1991) is entitled the 'governance of interdependence', introducing issues such as development interdependencies, institutional interdependencies, and social interdependencies. With regard to these latter, the guidelines distinguish between self-equilibrating (the market, the community) and externally enforced (the state, large enterprises, and other public hierarchies) modes of economic governance and identify social networks, representing an intermediate category between the former two extremes, to be the most appropriate instruments for combatting both market and hierarchy failure in the allocation of resources<sup>22</sup>.

According to the 'guidelines', social networks may be either of a purely private type (inter-firm alliances, joint ventures) or may represent the kind of interorganizational relations between the private and the public sphere being the analytical focus of this paper, namely associational interest systems and their links to public administration. Where none of the principle governance mechanisms, i.e. (formal) hierarchies and (competitive) markets, has ever been properly working, it was thought that interventions might be more promising and successful in this intermediate arena where actors are sufficiently far removed from a (discredited) public sphere without being completely disconnected from an (underdeveloped) economy.

The second project, although being of a completely different nature and exclusively serving academic purposes, followed a quite similar logic, at least in those parts dealing with the structural configurations of regional action systems. It was managed and coordinated at the *Mannheim Centre for European Social Research* (MZES - University of Mannheim) and drew on the collaboration of other four European research institutes which were formally involved both in the collection of data and the discussion of results (Kohler-Koch, 1997). Of the nine European regions studied in that framework, Sicily was just one, thus representing, together with Andalusia, the extreme southern fringe of the territorial sample<sup>23</sup>. Although the main objective was an analysis of the action capacity of regional organizations in the context of European integration, a smaller part of it nevertheless was concerned with exactly the same type of *problematique* as outlined above, namely an investigation of interorganizational relations occurring between key regional actors within each of the nine regions of the sample (for comparative results see Grote 1996a and 1997a). It was thought that information about the structural patterning of these relations in what we identified as the policy domain 'regional development', would provide for important insights into the behavior of regional actors both within and external to the region.

Those parts of the two projects to which reference is being made in what follows, essentially rest on a formal network analysis of interorganizational relations among key actors in the region of Sicily. The first case is a policy network in the narrow sense. Both the reputational and the contact questions asked were related to policy-making in the field of financial incentives, service supply, the creation of enterprise zones (*aree industriali di sviluppo*) and other initiatives of interest to organizations dealing with small and medium sized enterprises. The second case, on the other hand, represents a policy domain network. The analysis was aimed at the identification of structures in the more extensive intersectoral domain of 'regional development' - an area with a substantial overlap between policies as diverse as, for instance, health, social policy, industrial policy, environmental policy and so forth. Indeed, this domain appeared to be so encompassing that it made sense to conceptualize its interorganizational relations in terms of the general contours of 'the political ecology' of that region.

Relational data is habitually stored in matrix format. In order to enable distinctions between the matrices that contain the information, the following subscripts are being used:  $M_1$  (contact)<sup>24</sup> and  $M_2$  (reputation) contain the data of the 1992 network, and  $M_3$  (contact) and  $M_4$  (reputation) the one of the 1995 network. Altogether, we are working with four 39x39 actor by actor matrices. The convergence in the number of actors of both networks just happened to be a fortunate coincidence which ultimately facilitated later comparison. We are now in a position to elaborate and present, for the first time in the area of territorial politics, a data-set consisting of relational time series material -- something that had never been achieved before. The relative weakness of the data -- representing only information about contacts and the reputation of actors and not about eventual resource exchanges of goods in the interest, for instance, of influencing a specific law or modifying the course of action of a public regulatory initiative -- is fully offset by the strength of its comparative properties. This should allow for rather robust conclusions about the political ecology of regionalism in the *south of the south* and should even facilitate the drawing of conclusions *a propos* forms of governance in that area -- forms that can easily be verified and checked empirically.

The main procedure chosen for analysis is blockmodelling. Blockmodels are the most convenient analytical tool both for the comparison of networks across countries or sectors and for *diachronic* analysis over time (for the methodology see Faust and Wasserman 1992; Wasserman and Faust 1994; for recent comparative applications see Knoke et.al. 1996). Network members are grouped by this method into structurally equivalent positions which are then analyzed internally, with regard to their composition and externally, with regard to their relations to other positions<sup>25</sup>. Each network is made up of centrally-located and less centrally-located groups of actors or positions. For the sake of simplicity, these are here called the *center*, the *extended center*, the *semi-periphery*, the *periphery* and, finally, the *extreme periphery*. We shall see that restricting attention to a discussion of the composition of the most centrally located position (the *center*) is fully sufficient in the interest of identifying the most characteristic features of the networks.

## 6. A first approximation of empirical reality

Apart from the calculation of basic statistical information concerning the two networks (overall density, network centralization indices, etc.) which are routine procedures and shall not be further commented upon<sup>26</sup>, our main arguments hence are drawn from a structural equivalence analysis of network members. This type of procedure is able to supply more detailed information about individual actors than, for example, spatial representations as the one presented in *figure 1*. Equivalence analysis is particularly useful for comparative purposes. Yet, since spatial representation allows for some

immediate insights into relational patterning, let us begin by turning to the most important messages resulting from that figure.

Contrary to the expectations outlined in section four above, our hypotheses appear to be only in part confirmed by the results achieved by the multidimensional scaling of path distances of  $M_1$ , i.e. the 1992 contact network<sup>27</sup>. To a certain extent this must be accredited to the fact that this particular type of data had never been collected before for any of Italy's (*mezzogiorno*) regions, so that we were simply lacking a yardstick for evaluation. Yet, the subject of analysis itself is equally to be blamed for this divergence. It behaved so abnormally in structural terms that nobody would have expected such a drastic deviation from the norm<sup>28</sup>. We had argued that organizational relations within specific professional groups or categories may no longer be based on political divisions, at least not to the same extent as throughout the pre-transition period. This appears to be essentially confirmed. Despite still being divided organizationally, Sicilian interest groups representing the concerns of the same category report an intensity and frequency in their communication contacts positioning them quite close to one another.

For example, three of the four agricultural associations, *Confagricoltura* ( $F_2$ ), *Coldiretti* ( $F_3$ ), and *Cia* ( $F_4$ ) appear in a rather cohesive cluster in the upper right hand side of the multidimensional scaling of relations within the network  $M_1$  (figure 1). *Unindustria* ( $F_x$ ) alone, a less representative association of the same sector, is almost disconnected from the rest of the cluster and also occupies a completely different region of the plot area. Since the *policy network* 'SMEs' mainly concerned interventions in the areas of industry, mechanical engineering, and craft-related activities, it should not come as a surprise that the associations just mentioned are relatively far removed from the organizational center of this policy.

Adjacency among the four artisan associations, *Cna* ( $C_1$ ), *Confartigianato* ( $C_2$ ), *Casa* ( $C_3$ ), and *Claai* ( $C_x$ ) is equally strong. Yet, contrary to the agricultural pattern, these are placed much more centrally, with two of them (*Cna* and *Claai*) even belonging to what has been referred to above as the *inner circle* of relational power. This partly contradicts some of our original assumptions since the political reference point of *Cna*, the *Partito Democratico della Sinistra* (*Pds*), was drawn into the *Giunta Regionale's* coalition government only after the termination of the interviews.

Sectoral clustering, moreover, is strong also in the cases of industrial associations (B) as well as those representing the regions's commercial sector (D). As for the first case, the regional branches of *Confindustria* ( $B_2$ ), of *Api* ( $B_3$ ) -- the association representing small enterprises -- and of *Intersind* ( $B_5$ ) -- the representation of public enterprises -- all appear in the upper left hand side of the plot area. Albeit slightly removed from that group, the regional chamber of industry and commerce ( $B_1$ ) also belongs to that same cluster. This is not the case for *Ance* ( $B_4$ ), the regional

branch of the national business association representing the construction sector. *Ance* appears to be an 'isolate' with regard to the cluster of industry associations and is also quite far removed from the central region of the organizational space.

Both the two commercial organizations -- *Confcommercio* ( $D_1$ ) and *Confesercenti* ( $D_2$ ) -- as well as the three associations of the cooperative sector -- the *Lega* ( $E_1$ ), *Agci* ( $E_x$ ), and the *Unione regionale della cooperazione* ( $E_3$ ) -- form clearly discernible clusters. Interestingly, albeit hosting interest associations that represent a considerable number of agricultural cooperatives, the latter cluster appears to be quite far away from the one made up by agricultural organizations (F).

While up to this point our hypotheses are essentially confirmed, this is not the case for the network's most relevant actors, namely the various divisions and directorates (*assessorati*) of regional public administration (A). These are not, as expected, positioned in the center but, with few exceptions, appear close to the margins of the organizational space, i.e. toward the bottom left hand side of *figure 1*. Quite obviously, public administration in Sicily, although commanding a considerable amount of resources, is strongly marginalized in relational terms -- at least in the type of interorganizational network analyzed here. The only noteworthy exception to this is  $A_x$  located in the upper right quadrant somewhere between  $D_1$  and  $C_3$ . To some extent, this is understandable since  $A_x$  represents the regional Economic and Social Council (*Crel*), i.e. a part of the administration in constant face-to-face contact with the members of the region's interest system<sup>29</sup>. The *Crel*'s relative centrality, however, must be strongly questioned on various grounds. First, the body had just been set up shortly before the time of interviewing and most respondents declared it to be largely ineffective and in part paralyzed organizationally -- a fact fully confirmed by our own impression. This also explains why *Crel*, while formally consulting the interest groups of the region, does not appear to be consulted at all by other factions of the administration of which it is forming part. There is hardly any direct tie between members of camp A and this particular institution.

Who fills the 'political vacuum' left in the center of the plot area? It will probably be hard to believe for many, but these are the regional branches of the three Italian trade union associations *Cgil* ( $G_1$ ), *Cisl* ( $G_2$ ), and *Uil* ( $G_3$ ). While I first was tempted to discount these results on grounds of accidental circumstances in the process of data collection that I was not able to control, I am now much more confident in them. Calculations undertaken on the *policy domain network*  $M_3$ , i.e. on a data set for which information was collected three years later, fully confirmed this peculiar structure.

The most significant point to be kept in mind, before turning to structural analysis proper is this: interorganizational relations in both the '*SME*' *policy network* and in the '*regional development*' *policy domain* are clearly segregated into two non-

overlapping networks. One, being highly visible, centers around the trade union community and consists of multilateral interorganizational relations essentially among private actors of the region. Members of professional, categorical, or class 'families' seem to have overcome much of the political incompatibilities that previously had been an obstacle to collective action and, hence, are positioned rather close to each other. The other network, strongly marginalized, is occupied by the bulk of divisions of regional public administration. Members of these divisions may reasonably be thought of to maintain rather obscure interpersonal contacts of an essentially dyadic character to individual actors (enterprises, etc.) that span beyond the borderlines of the organizational space<sup>30</sup>.

According to Boix and Posner (1996:13), segregated, non-overlapping networks "*may increase cooperation within the network communities themselves but create disincentives for collaboration within the larger community in which the segregated groups are situated*"<sup>31</sup>. For the present context, this would imply that social capital accumulation would occur not, as suggested by Putnam, as result of a voluntary abstention on the part of members of civil society from contacts largely beneficial to them but, rather, only to the extent that public administration would deliberately cut off the type of bilateral ties making it both the target and the initiator of particularized contacting<sup>32</sup>. That fraction of the sub-network whose general contours we have been able to identify only in part and which represents proper public institutions would then move towards the center of the plot area. It would therefore overlap with large fragments of the associational sub-network. At the same time, members of the latter would thus be given a chance to do exactly what they are unable to do, or do only to a limited extent, under present circumstances: to mediate between the public and the private spheres.

That this interpretation is not entirely speculative is supported by additional data of a more traditional, attributive type. In the absence of information about relations between the non-organized part of society and public administration, the 1992 survey was also interested in gathering data on the mediating or brokerage capacity of the regional interest system. Respondents were asked whether contacts between individual enterprises and the public sphere were predominantly based on unmediated, direct contacts (particularized contacting) or whether they were undertaken with the help of organized intermediaries (interest associations). Only 20 percent of the respondents which, *nota bene*, exclusively represented members of interest groups and of public administration, accredited some importance to organized interest intermediation, while 37 percent reported direct and unmediated contacts to be dominating in the region<sup>33</sup>. Moreover, as to the prevailing strategies chosen for influencing public decisions at the regional level, only 25 percent made reference to formally institutionalized contacts while 75 percent believed that this was habitually done by using friendship relations and personal acquaintances (see *table 9 in appendix B*).



Considering that the regional policy style was characterized by 86 percent of the members of the 1995 sample ( $n=80$ ) as clientelist and particularistic (see *table 10* in the *appendix B*) as well as the fact that relations between the interest system and public administration were described by 79 percent of the members of the 1992 sample ( $n=43$ ) as being insufficient or hardly developed -- with more than half of the respondents indicating contact frequencies of less than once per month (see *table 9* in *appendix B*) -- the interpretation of the relational analysis above appears to be largely confirmed.

## 7. Structural results and discussion

Turning now to the type of procedure described above, similarities between the two networks become immediately apparent. Note, however, that configurations of MDS plots cannot directly be compared with structural equivalence measures or blockmodels<sup>34</sup>.

Applying blockmodel analysis to the data sets led to results far stronger than the ones achieved by multidimensional scaling. *Table 1* is the reduced blockmodel of the policy network 'SMEs' ( $M_1$ ). The model is derived from the density table for the same matrix as being represented in *appendix B (table 6)*. The blocks have been ordered by a combination of block status measures (*table 6*) and the indegrees and outdegrees achieved by each position as resulting from *table 1*. That is to say, that members of block 1 ( $\mathcal{E}_1$ ) occupy the most central position ('the *center*') both in regard to the choices received (i.e. to their indegrees) and to the choices made towards members of other positions (their outdegrees).

TABLE 1:  
Blockmodel of  $M_1$

	$\mathcal{E}_1$	$\mathcal{E}_2$	$\mathcal{E}_3$	$\mathcal{E}_4$	$\mathcal{E}_5$	
$\mathcal{E}_1$	1	1	1	0	1	4
$\mathcal{E}_2$	1	1	0	1	0	3
$\mathcal{E}_3$	1	0	1	0	0	2
$\mathcal{E}_4$	0	1	1	1	0	3
$\mathcal{E}_5$	1	0	0	0	1	2
	4	3	3	2	2	

The '*extreme periphery*' of the network, on the other hand, is occupied by members of  $\mathcal{E}_5$ . The positions in between represent, in diminishing order, '*the extended center*' ( $\mathcal{E}_2$ ), '*the semi-periphery*' ( $\mathcal{E}_3$ ), and '*the periphery*' ( $\mathcal{E}_4$ ). A consultation of *table 8* in *appendix B* reveals that 20% of the public sector actors, 52% of the private sector actors, and 25% of the para-state agencies of  $M_1$  form part of either the *center* or the *extended center* of the *SME policy network*. At the same time, 80% of the public actors, 15% of the private actors, and 75% of the para-state agencies of that network are placed in the *periphery* and the *extreme periphery*. The structure of interorganizational relations is now clearly observable. It is dominated by private interest associations whereas the bulk of the divisions of public administration is completely marginalized. To take a closer look at the center-block, just consult *table 2*.

It lists the members of  $\mathcal{E}_1$  and provides for individual (indegree) centrality measures both for communication contact and for influence reputation of the 1992 network. The regional *Economic and Social Council* attracts the highest number of indegrees on the contact relations. Yet, it can easily be dismissed from  $\mathcal{E}_1$  membership on the grounds mentioned earlier. To some extent, this is confirmed by the below-average reputation score totalized by this organization (0.31 points with a network indegree centrality mean of 0.37). We remain then with one *assessorato* (social and labor affairs) and four interest associations,

TABLE 2:  
Members of the most central block ( $\mathcal{E}_1$ ) of  $M_1$  (1992)

codes	members of equivalence class $\mathcal{E}_1$	indegree centralities	
		contact (net. mean: 0.20)	reputation (net. mean: 0.37)
A3	GR - Assessorato lavoro	0.26	0.51
Ax	Consiglio regionale economia e lavoro	0.50	0.31
B3	API (piccole imprese)	0.29	0.49
G1	CGIL	0.42	0.82
G2	CISL	0.29	0.79
G3	UIL	0.47	0.74

three of which are trade unions. Apart from *Api*, the association representing small and medium sized enterprises, all other members of the *center* are related to the labor domain. Interestingly, it is not the 'ministry' for labour affairs (assessorato lavoro) which scores highest on centralization but, rather, two of the trade unions, namely *Cgil* and *Uil*. The same applies to the influence reputation of the latter. *Cgil* arrives at a score of above 80% and hence results as the most important organization of the region within the field of SME policies.

The *center* is also the organizationally most cohesive position -- a fact that should justify the assignment of the label 'social clique' or, more precisely, 'labour clique'<sup>35</sup> to that group of actors. It arrives at a block density of 0.67, which is considerably higher than the successive one achieved by members of the *semi-periphery* (0.41). Moreover, members of the *center* emerge as important not only with regard to their indegrees (column sum 4 in table 1) but also with regard to their outdegrees, i.e. their ties to members of other positions (row sum 4 in table 1). In other words, they perform important broker functions for the entire network with a lot of information travelling through them. Whatever the reasons for this high prominence of trade unions in the area of enterprise policy, the most important result to be drawn from the above is the absence of public administration from the *center* of the network's organizational space.

The results for the *policy domain network* 'regional development' ( $M_3$ ) for which information was collected three years later in 1995, appear to be almost congruent with the ones presented above. Again we end up with a typical *center-periphery* structure of the image matrix with  $\mathcal{E}_1$  largely dominating the organizational space. Moreover, again (see *table 8* in *appendix B*) we have a large fraction of public institutions in the *periphery and semi-periphery* (50%), while both *center* and *extended center* are strongly 'controlled' by interest associations (83%).

TABLE 3:  
Blockmodel of  $M_3$

	$\mathcal{E}_1$	$\mathcal{E}_2$	$\mathcal{E}_3$	$\mathcal{E}_4$	
$\mathcal{E}_1$	1	1	1	0	3
$\mathcal{E}_2$	1	1	0	0	2
$\mathcal{E}_3$	0	0	0	0	0
$\mathcal{E}_4$	1	0	0	0	1
	3	2	1	0	

Most importantly, the composition of the *center* comes close to being a carboncopy of the one encountered earlier. The trade union community is fully present, although slightly less prominent both in terms of reputation and contact indegree centrality while *Api* appears to be replaced by another business interest association representing however, almost the identical category of firms. Indeed, *Cna* has recently be renamed the *Confederazione nazionale dell'artigianato e della piccola impresa* which puts a lot of competitive stress on *Api*, the group having originally started with representing the interests of the small enterprise domain.

The only significant difference between the results for  $M_1$  and  $M_3$  for the *center* position is that in the latter the 'labour clique' is joined by three out of a total of twelve *assessorati regionali* which also possess slightly higher centrality scores both on contact and reputation. Yet, this does not change very much with respect to the general patterning of relations in the domain 'regional development': the bulk of public actors is absent from the *center* just in the same way as has been the case for  $M_1$ .

**TABLE 4:**  
*Members of the most central block ( $\mathcal{B}_1$ ) of  $M_3$  (1995)*

codes	members of equivalence class $\mathcal{B}_1$	indegree centralities	
		contact (net. mean: 0.31)	reputation (net. mean: 0.40)
Ax	GR - Presidenza	0.66	0.74
A5	GR - Assessorato alla presidenza	0.47	0.67
A2	GR - Assessorato coop/artigianato	0.55	0.64
C1	CNA (artigianato)	0.32	0.36
G1	CGIL	0.50	0.49
G2	CISL	0.50	0.46
G3	UIL	0.47	0.46

In addition to the above calculations, we also have tried to arrive at more general information about the type of relationships across different *categories* of actors. Mainly being interested in the identification of public/private interfaces which we conceptualized in terms of general *state-society relationships* or of the *political ecology of the region*, information on this can be gathered from *table 5*. It contains information about the multiplexity of relations of the respective contact and reputation matrices. The four adjacency matrices  $M_1$  and  $M_2$  as well as  $M_3$  and  $M_4$  have separately been submitted to a procedure measuring the occurrence of multiplex ties between the contact and the reputation networks. This produced the new matrices  $M_{1,2}$  and  $M_{3,4}$  containing entries that ranged from '0' to '3'. These matrices have then been blocked according to the actor categories they contained. Since, as mentioned above, these were three, three blocks for each of the two matrices were produced in that way. The third block, assembling para-state organizations, was then dropped from analysis so that figures in *table 5* now only represent the density values for the relationship 'interest associations' → 'public institutions' for all of the four possible combinations: neither reputation nor contact (a); reputation, but no contact (b); no reputation, but contact (c); both reputation and contact (d).

**TABLE 5:**  
 Multiplexity measures for the relations  
 'contact' and 'reputation' of the 1992 ( $M_{1,2}$ ) and the 1995 networks ( $M_{3,4}$ )

	a	b	c	d	total
$M_{1,2}$	0.44	0.38	0.07	0.11	1.00
$M_{3,4}$	0.40	0.20	0.36	0.04	1.00

The results are as follows: 51% of the interest associations of  $M_{1,2}$  and 76% of those of  $M_{3,4}$  believe the group of public institutions of their respective networks to be of relatively low value to them (i.e. 'no reputation'). 14% of the first (i.e. 0.07 in total) and 47% of the second group (i.e. 0.36 in total) nevertheless 'feel constrained' to maintain communication contacts to these *assessorati*.

On the other hand, 49% of the associations of  $M_{1,2}$  and 24% of those of  $M_{3,4}$  think that their public institutions are relevant for activities within the respective policy and policy domain (i.e. 'high reputation'). Yet, only 22% of the former group and 17% of the latter maintain or -- a slightly different reading -- *manage* to maintain contact to these institutions. Overall, of those associations reporting strong and frequent contacts to parts of the regional administration, 39% do so despite the irrelevance accredited to the public sphere and 61% because of the latter's relevance. Yet, these latter only represent a meager 11% of all the associations in  $M_{1,2}$ . For  $M_{3,4}$ , the respective figures are: 90% report contacts despite irrelevance and only 10% because of relevance. The latter represent only 4% of the respondents of the associational category. These relational measures largely confirm the results drawn from the attributive data analysis in the preceding section.

Let us briefly summarize these findings and also spend some words on the outright falsification of our initial hypothesis according to which the *center* was thought to be essentially occupied by public actors. In the absence of more detailed information, this can only be done by making recourse to a number of speculative assumptions whose reliability would have to be checked by further research. It are the unions which result to occupy the center of a network basically consisting of interest associations and para-state or development agencies. The bulk of public institutions appears to be marginalized to an extent pointing to the likely existence of another network where 'the real action is going on', i.e. where most of the financial means available for structural interventions in the region is being concentrated. Being short of material resources, the first network, then, looks more like an interorganizational playing ground for interest associations that promote and defend the interests of their respective clientele *vis-a-vis* a public target which has retreated from the organizational space<sup>36</sup> and, seemingly, is neither willing nor able to deal with this type of organized demands. Dealing with organized demands would require substantial investments into collective bargaining and forms of problem solving. State agencies seem to have clear preferences for another type of societal demand management (individualized or particularized). This type of exchanges is largely invisible in our graphical representation and, generally, hard to capture in empirical terms.

Yet, what about the curious position of the trade unions? No unambiguous explanation can be offered here with regard to their obvious prominence in the networks. One possible reading would look as follows. In a situation characterized by the country's highest unemployment figures, there seems to be hardly any policy

domain not directly concerned with measures in favour of employment creation. The unions, hence, are almost naturally drawn into enterprise policies and decision-making even in more encompassing policy domains such as the one of regional development.

Although the role of trade unions in national policies and policy domains can certainly not be taken to lend support to the findings of an analysis carried out at a different level of territorial complexity, Compton's (1995) figures *a propos* union participation in economic policy making are quite illuminating. Of the four most important founding members of the European Community, union participation in that domain has been ranked highest in Italy (6.7 points on average) -- more than the double of France (3.0) and Britain (3.6) and considerably higher than in Germany (4.5) -- over a period of about a quarter of a century (1970-1993). In Compton's words, there has been a continuing pattern '*of broad but informal political exchange*' in that country (ibid.:322) which, to some extent, may have had repercussions at the subnational level as well.

Yet another reading would have to turn to the extremely high employment shares, in the island's overall employment, in the service sector and, in particular, in the area of public or non-market services. Regional administration is a union stronghold in Sicily and this may in part account for the high reputation accredited to these organizations.

Finally, somehow related to the previous interpretation but more far-reaching, for not to say daring in its implications would be a reading in terms of the role of trade unions for both the emergence and the persistence of clientelist practices. Taking into account the relevance of the Sicilian branches of *Cgil*, *Cisl*, and *Uil* within the regional bureaucracy, their centrality in the interorganizational network would then assume a completely different flavour. In a comparative research project on 'Clientelism in Southern Europe'<sup>37</sup>, it was found that, contrary to the initial expectations of the authors according to which trade unions would '*serve, if not as guardians of meritocracy, at least as bulwarks against clientelism*' (Mavrogordatos 1996:21), in reality '*they have served as Trojan Horses of ... clientelism instead*' (ibid.). Or, in the words of another project member, '*trade unions proved to be the most powerful lever for the persistence of clientelism, more than party deputies or government ministers*' (Papadopoulos 1996:4). While the above mainly refers to the case of Greece, the results for Spain turned out to largely confirm that pattern: '*trade unions were ... important agents in patron-client relations, and some of the interviewees attributed to them an even more central role than to the parties*' (ibid.).

Our analysis has measured the relative centrality of trade unions (and other organizations) in an interorganizational space where the single associations and institutions were represented by their respective regional headquarters, i.e. by their secretary generals, directors, or presidents. It may well be that the unions' centrality is

not only result of their relevance in that organizational space but, in addition, of their role within the services of public administration.

## 8. Interorganizational relations in the *south of the south*

The above results give support to a number of statements that have been made a *propos* of problems of interest intermediation, and not only in Italy's *mezzogiorno* regions. There seems to be a general lack of properly organized forms of demand for regional government. At least in Sicily, the maintenance of this underdeveloped status quo of interorganizational relations seems to be a deliberate strategy of public administration: it is less likely to threaten its discretionary power and control over the allocation of resources. Demands for the latter and for other types of special treatment are as much disorganized and of an individual nature as is the supply of these resources (*interventi a pioggia* or *slicing the cake*). In other words, preferences for individual transfer payments on the part of single entrepreneurs correspond to preferences on the part of political entrepreneurs for immediate benefits and returns in terms of votes and legitimacy (Triglia 1991). It is the strange amalgamation of political and economic markets that pulls public administration away from the centre of interorganizational relations towards the lower left-hand side of the plot area in *figure 1*.

Looking at these results through the glasses of the type of policy network approaches introduced in the beginning, state-society relations in Sicily would seem to reflect typical post-modern patterns: state agencies suffering from governmental overload and desperately trying to come to grips with constantly increasing complexities are compelled to draw interest groups into the center of the public space, together with whom they then engage in joint decision-making and forms of problem solving where each participant is accredited an equal status. This would represent a new form of societal governance based on 'other-regardingness' and the recognition of mutual interdependence which would be aimed at achieving improvements in flexibility, efficiency, and democratic accountability.

We know, that this is far from being the case. While regional government is dramatically underloaded with demands, at least as far as these latter are expressed through associational channels, the opposite applies to demands advanced by individual citizens and entrepreneurs. Members of another network seem to be at work in the area lying beyond the borderlines of the organizational space in the bottom-left corner of *figure 1*. This area could be called a political market for the exchange of favours. It is a market which functions on the basis of highly individualized and essentially dyadic relations -- 'particularized contacting' in Robert Putnam's (1993) terms. State-society relations are managed by direct and unmediated brokerage at the margins of interorganizational life. The more this second, obscure and individualized



network is developed, the less are public institutions likely to be found close to the center of the visible, interorganizational one that has been studied here. Vice versa, the less it is developed, the more likely will individuals have incentives to make recourse to associational channels for promoting their interests and approaching the offices of regional government.

In such a situation, there is little left for interest groups to intermediate at all. In policy networks of this type, there is little room for modernization. Even the most entrepreneurial of presidents of any of the regional business interest associations is bound to follow the established channels of political exchange if he wishes to increase the status of his organization or to obtain selective goods for this organization's membership.

This study has tried to demonstrate a number of different but somehow related things. Firstly, many of the concepts elaborated for the analysis of state-society relations in the (post-) modern, industrialized societies of North and Central Europe do not work in more traditional contexts of Europe's south. It is not by chance, then, that the term 'policy network' is largely absent on the agendas of most political scientists from these areas. Secondly, development differentials appear to be less rooted in degrees of civicness. They essentially result from state capacity and from the features of formalized or informal state-society relations that public authorities must embrace, deliberately build-up and promote. Finally, comparative research on interorganizational relations needs more empirical and structural grounding. Network analysis may be one of the most appropriate tools to overcome the inflationary use made of the network metaphor.

The question remaining is what one could possibly recommend in a situation where public actors have emigrated from the area of democratic bargaining while, at the same time, marginalizing the potential role of organized intermediaries. One variant of reform proposals, albeit in no way concerned with the specific case studied here, directly aims at the restructuring of systems of interest intermediation. Starting from a presumed 'crisis in representation', it seeks to promote less fragmented and less voluntaristic forms of intermediation by empowering interest associations with a whole array of tasks that have previously been managed under the discretion of public authorities<sup>38</sup>. In a similar vein, Paul Hirst (1994) enlarges that type of vision by explicitly adding a subnational, regional dimension to the scenario. In his words, "*a fully developed associational welfare state would be federal in that the core organizations of provision would be the region ... Voluntary associations would ... enter into public governance in a decentralized state*" (ibid.:177). Although clearly less emphatic, more prudential and, more importantly, directly concerned with problems of public governance in Italy's regions and the country's *mezzogiorno*, Carlo Trigilia seems to envisage a similar remedy. In both his work on the *perverse effects of public policies in the mezzogiorno* (1992) and on the *paradox of the region* (1991), he

pleas for a “*delegation of public powers to private actors, where it is believed that this method is more appropriate for attaining the public objective*” (ibid.:324).

Although in general being sympathetic to this kind of proposals, the evidence for the poorly developed state of organized forms of interest intermediation in the case of Sicily would suggest a more cautious attitude to be taken<sup>39</sup>. Our proposal, therefore, turns to less far-reaching and more traditional forms of institutional engineering. This is, because by following the remedies mentioned earlier, the region would risk, indeed, to end up with a replication of what it already had experienced in the domain of economic development -- with the difference that, this time, it would achieve not the type of direct leap from an agrarian towards a service society (by skipping the phase of industrialization) but, rather, from a pre-modern state apparatus towards a post-modern setting of governance. Taking this into account, a *Hobbesian solution to collective action problems* may actually not be the worst thing -- as long, at least, as it tries avoiding the *bringing-the-central-state-back-in* type of recommendation. Forty years of special interventions in the south should suffice as arguments against that solution.

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*More realistic would seem a move towards federal structures with a substantial increase in regional autonomy<sup>40</sup>. This task would have to be achieved by public authorities, both central and subnational ones, and would need quite a lot of political underpinning and enforcement. Yet, it would probably meet the consent of the more enlightened parts of the territorial and functional representatives of the regional citizenry. Most importantly, such a reform would make regional government more responsible and responsive and would contribute to moving it back to where it belongs to. If this could be achieved by simultaneously reducing levels of associational fragmentation, one could reasonably expect substantial increases in the incentives to individual entrepreneurs to making use of organized interest intermediation, as is the case in other parts of Europe.*

## 10. Appendix A (methods)

The same kind of procedure was followed in both cases for the identification of network participants. Boundary specification was undertaken by employing a mixture of positional, decisional, and reputational approaches (see for boundary specification the descriptions contained in Knoke and Kuklinski, 1981; Scott, 1991; and Wasserman and Faust, 1994). Information drawn from a number of handbooks (various issues of both the *Guida delle regioni d'Italia*, and of the *Guida generale della Sicilia*) made possible a first evaluation about the most relevant actors in the two fields. This was then deepened subsequently by consulting the membership list of the regional Economic and Social Council (*Crel*) as well as a number of regional laws specifying the composition of various consultative committees both within the administration and the regional assembly. Finally, a fine-tuning of the organizational sample was done by conducting *ex-ante* interviews with particularly well-informed members of the administration and individual experts. The two main networks then essentially consisted of three types of organizations: public actors (directorates and divisions of regional public administration, offices of the regional assembly, etc.), private actors (the regional universe of sectoral interest associations), and para-state and other agencies (technology and financial brokers, banks, development agencies, and consultancies and service centres in part jointly managed by members of the two former actor categories).

Together with the general questionnaires, the resulting organization lists for network analysis were then presented to leading figures of each organization with a request to furnish two types of information. First, the respondents were asked to indicate which organization on that list would be of particular relevance for decision-making processes in one of the two areas indicated above. Secondly, they were asked to identify those organizations with which their own would maintain strong and frequent communication contacts in the interest of exchanging information (and other resources) of strategic importance to the policies adopted by their own group. This information was then inserted into a relational data bank and re-arranged in matrix format with the rows of the matrices indicating 'choices made' (*outdegrees*) and the columns indicating 'choices received' (*indegrees*). Four binary (i.e. '1' and '0' entries) adjacency matrices were generated in that way, two of which contained information about communication contacts and two information about power, or influence reputation within the policy and the policy domain networks respectively.

As to the procedures for data elaboration, blockmodelling was chosen as the most appropriate tool for analysis. Blockmodel analysis is based on the measurement of structural equivalence, or structural similarity, of ties among subsets of actors. The central notions used in blockmodels are positions and roles. Members of a network occupying the same position are said to be structurally equivalent with regard to their relations to members of other positions. They do not need to be adjacent, or even close to each other and may not even be able to reach members of their own group by more than just one step, i.e. by 'travelling' through a broker. Although adjacency, proximity, and reachability hence are not considered to be of importance for the criterion of equivalence, in specific cases, members of the same equivalence class may, however, form cohesive subgroups where all of the above criteria perfectly apply. Groups of this kind are habitually referred to as social cliques (Kappelhoff 1986, Scott 1992, Wasserman and Faust 1994). Since in what follows, attention is limited to positional analysis, we abstain here from any further comment on the notion of roles.

The algorithms for partitioning raw data into positions and roles, i.e. into blocks, are far too complex to be dealt with manually and require the use of specific computer programmes. While most elaborations of the present data has been undertaken with the

help of a particularly user-friendly relational data bank system -- UCINET IV 1.62/X (Borgatti, Everett and Freeman; Copyright 1991-95 by Analytic Technologies) -- a different programme was employed for the calculation of equivalence measures.

This was due to a number of limitations of the CONCOR procedure being implemented by UCINET. CONCOR, albeit being the algorithm mostly used for the partitioning of matrices, is not yet fully understood and still is believed by many researchers to be rather intransparent in its procedures. Apart from that, it does not allow for uneven solutions, i.e. iterated partitioning in CONCOR only produces two-, four-, six-, eight-, etc. block solutions thus excluding three-, five-, and x-block solutions. As we shall see, a five-block solution was suggested to be the most appropriate one for the 1992 network. Use has been made therefore of another algorithm (COBLOC) implemented, in this case, by SONIS -- a relational data bank system developed by Franz Urban Pappi and his team of researchers. COBLOC has the advantage to optimize on zeroblock solutions, i.e. to produce a maximum of blocks filled with '0's -- a fact giving particularly clear information about the structure of relational systems. Moreover, a number of additional information is supplied with each procedure, which is not the case for CONCOR. This in particular concerns status values for each individual block that allow for a more straightforward ordering of equivalence classes according to their relative strengths. Most importantly, COBLOC ultimately leaves it to the researcher to decide where to interrupt partitioning of a matrix and, in order for enabling him or her to do that, supplies particular fit values on which such a decision should be based.

It is important to distinguish between different degrees of equivalence. The strictest version is the one of complete equivalence. Imagine an adjacency matrix containing information about contact between actors where '1's represent the existence and '0's the absence of contact. In the case of perfect structural equivalence among subsets of actors both the rows and columns of the original socio-matrix would be permuted so that actors who are assigned to the same equivalence class would now be adjacent to each other. The submatrices corresponding to the ties between and within positions would then all be filled with either '1's (oneblocks) or '0's (zeroblocks). These binary values could then without problems be transferred into a reduced version of the original matrix, i.e. into an image matrix or blockmodel.

Unfortunately, in actual network data it is very unlikely that actors will be exactly equivalent. Procedures partitioning empirically obtained sociomatrices into positions will hardly ever contain perfect oneblocks or zeroblocks. We should expect that oneblocks might contain some '0's and zeroblocks might contain some '1's. Most empirical applications of network analysis, hence, are working with what could be called measures of approximate equivalence. It is necessary then to measure the extent to which actors are equivalent. Matrix reduction of this type is habitually done by specifying a criterion by which '1' and '0' cell entries in the original matrix can be assembled to blocks. To arrive there, a density criterion is the most straightforward way. In other words, we need to calculate the densities of each individual block and then specify a cut-off value below which densities are coded as zeroblocks and above which as oneblocks. The formal representation of this procedure is as follows:

The density  $\Delta$  of ties within a block  $g_{klr}$  is the proportion of ties being present, i.e.

$$\Delta_{klr} = \frac{\sum_{i \in g_k} \sum_{j \in g_l} x_{ijr}}{g_k g_l}$$

where  $g_k$  is the number of actors in position  $\mathcal{B}_k$  and  $g_l$  the number of actors in position  $\mathcal{B}_l$ . More specifically, the density of ties within a position, for example of block  $\mathcal{B}_{kl}$ , is equal to:

$$\Delta_{kl} = \frac{\sum_{i \in \mathcal{B}_k} \sum_{j \in \mathcal{B}_k} x_{ijr}}{g_k(g_k - 1)}$$

where  $g_k (g_k - 1)$  indicates the number of ties among actors in position  $\mathcal{B}_k$ . The resulting values, contained for  $M_1$  in table 6 and for  $M_3$  in table 7 of appendix B, can then be reduced to blockmodels in the following way.

Block 1 ( $\mathcal{B}_1$ ) will be a oneblock (i.e.  $\mathcal{C}_{klr} = 1$ ) if  $\Delta_{klr} < \alpha$  and it will be a zeroblock (i.e.  $\mathcal{C}_{klr} = 0$ ) if  $\Delta_{klr} > \alpha$ . The cut-off value  $\alpha$  is the density achieved by the overall matrix. In other words, should block density be below the value of matrix density, then the block will be coded as a zeroblock, and as a oneblock otherwise.

Important for the understanding the overall results is, firstly, that organizations belonging to the same block are approximately equivalent in their relations both to members of their own block and to members of other blocks and, secondly, that blocks are ordered according to their status, i.e. members of the first block are better connected both internally (block cohesion) and externally, while members of other blocks occupy less prominent positions in their respective networks.

## 11. Appendix B (data):

**TABLE 6:**

*Number of actors per block, block status, and densities of blocks 1 to 5 of  $M_1$*

$n$		$\mathcal{E}_1$	$\mathcal{E}_2$	$\mathcal{E}_3$	$\mathcal{E}_4$	$\mathcal{E}_5$	status
6	$\mathcal{E}_1$	0.67	0.57	0.38	0.03	0.32	32.56
9	$\mathcal{E}_2$	0.56	0.25	0.00	0.24	0.00	17.86
7	$\mathcal{E}_3$	0.41	0.00	0.41	0.17	0.00	19.67
5	$\mathcal{E}_4$	0.00	0.24	0.37	0.45	0.15	17.50
12	$\mathcal{E}_5$	0.25	0.02	0.00	0.15	0.24	12.41

**TABLE 7:**

*Number of actors per block, block status, and densities of blocks 1 to 4 of  $M_3$*

$n$		$\mathcal{E}_1$	$\mathcal{E}_2$	$\mathcal{E}_3$	$\mathcal{E}_4$	status
7	$\mathcal{E}_1$	0.83	0.39	0.45	0.19	34.08
18	$\mathcal{E}_2$	0.55	0.53	0.14	0.07	20.30
8	$\mathcal{E}_3$	0.18	0.09	0.13	0.04	17.80
6	$\mathcal{E}_4$	0.43	0.14	0.23	0.07	7.82

**TABLE 8:**

*Distribution of actor categories of networks  $M_1$  and  $M_3$  across equivalence classes (in %)*

		$\mathcal{E}_1$	$\mathcal{E}_2$	$\mathcal{E}_3$	$\mathcal{E}_4$	$\mathcal{E}_5$
public actors	$M_1$	0.20	0.00	0.00	0.30	0.50
	$M_3$	0.25	0.25	0.42	0.08	
private actors	$M_1$	0.19	0.33	0.33	0.05	0.10
	$M_3$	0.22	0.61	0.06	0.11	
para-state	$M_1$	0.00	0.25	0.00	0.13	0.62
	$M_3$	0.00	0.44	0.22	0.34	

**TABLE 9:**  
*Form, quality and intensity of contacts  
between public administration and interest associations (1992)\**

n = 43	administration	associations	total
form <sup>1</sup>	0.58	0.79	0.69
quality <sup>2</sup>	0.64	0.68	0.66
frequency <sup>3</sup>	0.66	0.43	0.55

**\* Notes:**

There are inconsistencies between the numbers of respondents in tables 9 and 10 and the numbers of network participants in tables 1-8. This is due to the fact that the general questionnaires of which the network questions have formed part have also been answered by actors not included into the network analysis.

- 1: 5 point scale from 'strong' to 'hardly developed'. Percentages only represent the answers for the last two scores (i.e. 'insufficiently developed' and 'hardly developed');
- 2: 5 point scale from 'very satisfying' to 'absolutely unsatisfying'. Percentages only represent the answers for the last two scores (i.e. 'hardly satisfying' and 'absolutely unsatisfying');
- 3: Percentages represent the answers for 'less than once per month'.

**TABLE 10:**  
*Character of regional policy style (1995)*

n = 80	
conflictual	0.55
consensual	0.45
transparent/rational	0.04
clientelist/particularistic	0.86
n.a.	0.10

## 12. Endnotes

\* This paper benefitted much from the help of Christian Melbeck as well as from discussions with the latter and with Franz Urban Pappi (both of MZES-Mannheim). Earlier drafts have also been discussed with members of the REGE team (MZES), of a workshop jointly organized in 1993 by OPPEs (Montpellier) and the Istituto delle Regioni of the Italian CNR (Rome), with participants of a conference organized in 1995 by the Fondazione Pietro Seveso (Milan) and, more recently, with members of a workshop on 'Clientelism and Interest Intermediation in Southern Europe' of the 1997 ECPR Joint Sessions of Workshops (Bern, Switzerland). The latest version has been presented at the Conference on Territorial Politics in Europe: A Zero-Sum Game? at the European University Institute, Florence (Robert Schuman Centre); April 21-22, 1997. Gratefully acknowledged are the critical comments by Tanja A. Börzel (European University Institute, Florence), Patrick Kenis (University of Konstanz), and Pascal Sciarini (University of Geneva).

<sup>1</sup> The term 'south of the south' has deliberately been chosen for the title of this contribution because pointing to the *proper multi-regional character* of present-day Italy. This reflects our disagreement with the north-south dichotomy of traditional 'meridionalismo', which has recently been revitalized by authors such as Putnam et.al. (1993). Years after Bagnasco's discovery of the 'Third Italy' (1977), the country today could easily be broken down into 'Three and more Italys' (Bianchi 1994) if not, even more disaggregate in perspective, into a highly disparate whole of individual provinces, or groups of provinces with pockets of relatively stable development in parts of the south and seriously declining areas in the north or North-East-Centre (Triglia 1992).

<sup>2</sup> The reader is invited, though, to consult related material produced during the course of this research. For the time being, the present paper is the last of a series of attempts to employ network analytic tools to the study of territorial politics. After some preliminary conceptual thoughts (Grote 1992a), first empirical applications followed in studies covering the regional level (Grote 1992c), the provincial level (Bramanti e Grote 1995), and the inter-comunal level (Grote et.al. 1993), before we embarked on the more comprehensive exercise to submit interorganizational relations of nine European regions to this type of analysis (Grote 1996, 1997a, 1997b). The results presented here are an off-spring of these previous initiatives.

<sup>3</sup> See, for example Burton and Smith (1996) who were not able to identify policy networks in the British structural funds policy process or, for the Spanish case, Held and Velasco (1996) for whom policy making in the structural fund policy domain does not contain any network-like elements.

<sup>4</sup> Incidentally, the 'enabling condition' is violated, for example by van Waarden (1992) who speaks of 'clientelist policy networks' -- a *contradictio in adjecto* by Mayntz' standards. Not by chance, then, that van Waarden refers to the US congress (and not to southern European cases), i.e. to a country that can certainly not be attributed structural premodernity. Equally contradictory would be Bache's et.al. (1996) characterization of British center-periphery relations in terms of 'hierarchical policy networks' or Rhodes' dictum according to which "within a unitary structure, the centre is the fulcrum of policy networks ... It (central government) cannot be treated as one more group; its role is constitutive. It can specify unilaterally substantive policies, control access to the networks, set the agenda of issues, specify the rules of the game" (1988:82). Compare also Balme and Jouve (1996: 251) for whom, in France, "the central state is clearly dominant in all networks."



<sup>5</sup> For the U.S., where authors do not seem to care very much about the incompatibilities between policy network discourses and proper network analysis, see the advanced work by Lauman and Knoke (1986) and by Knoke et.al. (1996).

<sup>6</sup> The consideration of power and coercion is at odds with the approach since it would bring hierarchy in through the backdoor and, hence, undermine the normative and functionalist assumptions referred to above.

<sup>7</sup> The reader is referred, in particular, to the contributions by Claire O'Neill (1996) and Margaret Levi (1996b) which scrutinize both the Anglo-saxon and the Italian literature on the topic.

<sup>8</sup> „*Good government in Italy is a by-product of singing groups and soccer clubs*“ (Putnam 1993:176).

<sup>9</sup> Putnam's data exclusively rests on information provided by Mortara (1985).

<sup>10</sup> As shown by Margaret Levi (1996a:2), „*centralized government is sometimes crucial in establishing levels of trust among citizens that make possible a whole range of social, political, and economic transactions that would otherwise not be possible. Critical to this task is the use of coercion*“. See also her remark directly addressed to Putnam: „*Policy performance can be a source of trust, not just a result*“ (Levi 1996b:50).

<sup>11</sup> Civil society alone cannot monopolize the interaction between individuals and the state. Moreover, it cannot express all lines of cleavage in a society and in reality operates everywhere „*alongside direct contacts and uncivil actions in efforts to influence the course of public policy. However, the more these efforts are channelled through formal intermediary organizations, the greater is the degree of civil society and, by implication, the easier will it be -- ceteris paribus -- to consolidate democracy*“. (Philippe C. Schmitter, 1997, Essay on Democracy, Chapter 6: 18, typoscript, EUI-Florence).

<sup>12</sup> There is hardly any one among the fifteen ordinary and five special regional statutes in Italy, where interest associations are not accredited substantial rights in one or more of areas such as the support of public government (Lazio), associational self-government (Lombardy, Campania, Basilicata), the co-determination of regional policies (Campania) or of political decisions (Piemonte), the formulation of administrative norms of general interest and the implementation of law (Lombardy), control agencies providing for checks and balances to public governance (Piemonte), and so forth (see for this the comprehensive account given by Tuccari, 1974).

<sup>13</sup> Lanzalaco (1993) counts about a dozen peak associations whose structures, essentially, appear to be reproduced at the sub-national level.

<sup>14</sup> The Confederazione Nazionale dell'Artigianato (*Cna*), for example, scores very high on representation in a number of North-East-Centre regions where it almost holds a monopoly position -- a fact not necessarily applying to other regions. Yet, contrary to conventional wisdom, Grote (1992b) has found surprisingly high figures in terms of representativeness among craft associations even in some of the *mezzogiorno* regions.

<sup>15</sup> For comments on figure 1, see further in the text (section 6) and endnote 26.

<sup>16</sup> This picture is overdrawn of course and does not take account of the increasing loss of the DCs hegemony over the last ten years or so, and the subsequent need to draw the various liberal, republican, and socialist factions into the centre of government - with all its implications for the latters' transmission belts among the country's interest associations. See for arguments on such types of consociationalism Pizzorno (1994). It also neglects the highly particular situation in some of the North-East-Centre regions where groups of different political origin dominate the associational landscape.

<sup>17</sup> Or, as being put by Schmitter (1995), Southern European interest groups „had less members and financial resources than one might have expected had class, sectoral and professional associations been able to retain their organizational unity and, hence, monopolistic location in the general system of interest bargaining“.

<sup>18</sup> The three major trade unions (*Cgil*, *Cisl* and *Uil*) apart which have a long record of, so far, unsuccessful attempts to unification, short of being implemented, however, in at least one region (Lombardy), other groups have equally started to make endeavours in this direction. This is the case, in particular, for the two most representative craft associations, the ex-communist *Cna* (*Confederazione nazionale dell'artigianato*) and the ex-demochristian *Cgia* (*Confederazione generale italiana dell'artigianato*). Moreover, one of the biggest agricultural associations carrying the unfortunate acronym *Cia* (*Confederazione italiana dell'agricoltura*), is trying to persuade its competitors to join a common, if not unified structure.

<sup>19</sup> In those regions where they exist, *enti bilaterali* may substitute for traditional forms of representation and interest intermediation. Particularly diffused in the artisan sector, they consist of all interest associations representing this category and often also organize employees of these firms. Degrees of representativeness are reported to figure between 50 and 80 percent of enterprises of a given territory (Perulli e Catino 1997:10).

<sup>20</sup> This needs to be evidenced because more descriptive work on policy networks tends to confuse these quite distinct properties of interorganizational relations.

<sup>21</sup> Field work terminated early in 1992 in the first case and in autumn 1995 in the second.

<sup>22</sup> Reasons for why the plan, although formally approved by the government (*giunta regionale*), has never found a majority among the members of the '*assemblea*', are spelt out in Bianchi, Grote e Pieracci, 1995.

<sup>23</sup> The other regions were: Lombardy and Catalunya, Baden-Wurttemberg and Lower-Saxony, Rhones-Alpes and Languedoc-Roussillon and, finally, Wales.

<sup>24</sup> In reality, the raw data for  $M_1$  was not of binary character. Respondents were asked, indeed, apart from indicating the existence of communication contacts, to indicate who habitually initiated such contacts, i.e. 'ego', 'alter', or both. Cell entries in the matrix therefore consisted of values between 0 and 3. This substantially improved the reliability of information in  $M_1$  which is a recoded version of the raw data matrix.

<sup>25</sup> For more detailed information on the procedures see the methodological notes in appendix A.

<sup>26</sup> Overall density for  $M_1$  is 0.20, and for  $M_3$  0.31. In a comparative perspective (Grote 1996a, 1997a, 1997b), this appeared to be rather high. One could speak, therefore, of a high degree of contact redundancy. The opposite is the case for the overall centralization indexes of the networks which are comparatively low. They figure at 0.32 for  $M_1$  and at 0.37 for  $M_3$ . Again, comparative evidence suggests that high density and low centralization indicate a situation characterized by the absence of one or more centrally positioned (public) actors capable of assuming the task of network management. In the absence of such agencies, network members are compelled to look out for functional substitutes. One of these is a high degree of relational redundancy.

<sup>27</sup> Figure 1 is a simplified drawing of the social distances among actors of the policy network 'SME-policies'. It is based on a plot produced by the multidimensional scaling (MDS) procedure implemented by UCINET-4. The input are the path distance measures of the *symmetrized* version of the original adjacency matrix  $M_1$  containing information on communication contacts among network members. Minimum symmetrization has been chosen whereby all unconfirmed, i.e. non-reciprocal relations were dropped for the purpose of the MDS plot. In a sense, only 'strong' relations are considered in figure 1, i.e. relations based on '1' entries in the matrix cells both for 'choices made' and 'choices received' for the same pair of actors. Mainly being interested in the spatial location of actors and not in their connections, we renounced to a representation of the edges of the graph since this would only have confused the main message to be drawn from the picture. For those actors carrying numbers in their subscript, comparative information is available for both the policy network  $M_1$  (small firm policies) and the policy domain network  $M_3$  (regional development). Actors carrying an 'x' in their subscript, on the other hand, have only been interviewed once in 1992, but not in 1995. The following abbreviations apply to the different actor categories: public administration (A); interest associations representing industry, including the chamber of commerce and industry (B); associations representing the craft sector (C); associations representing commercial firms (D); associations representing the cooperative sector (E); associations representing agricultural interests (F); trade unions (G); and para-state and other organizations (H).

In what follows, we only comment upon the MDS results for the 1992 ( $M_1$ ) network. Although slightly different positioning of individual organizations occurred in the MDS of the 1995 ( $M_3$ ) network, the reader can be assured that the general patterning essentially remained the same. These latter results hence are not presented here.

<sup>28</sup> The comparative network analytic results of other eight European regions suggested the existence of something like a generalized norm of relational patterning. In none of these cases did we encounter structures so peculiar as the Sicilian ones (see Grote 1996, 1997a, 1997b). With few exceptions, the most central positions of all the other networks tended to be exclusively occupied by organizations of the public sphere -- a fact which, as demonstrated later, does not apply to the Sicilian case.

<sup>29</sup> At the time of interviewing, Sicily was the only Italian region to possess such a body. Its composition is modelled according to the example of the national *Consiglio Nazionale Economia e Lavoro* (Cnel).

<sup>30</sup> Although not actually being the same, Pizzorno's distinction between 'politica palese' and 'politica oscura' (Pizzorno 1994), is immediately coming to mind when looking at these results.

<sup>31</sup> Incidentally, this is also acknowledged by Putnam (1993:175) himself. Yet, his imagined 'networks of civic engagement' are thought to cut across all types of cleavages thus facilitating wider cooperation (ibid.).

<sup>32</sup> While the interest of individual citizens in maintaining such contacts is rational and can hardly be criticized under the given circumstances, this is clearly not the case for public administration which should operate according to a different kind of rationality.

<sup>33</sup> 43 percent mentioned both types to be of importance (see Grote 1992).

<sup>34</sup> This is the case not only because we used a symmetrized version of the original adjacency matrix as input to multidimensional scaling but, moreover, because MDS procedures give much stronger weight to adjacency and reachability while blockmodels mainly stress structural similarities which is something rather different.

<sup>35</sup> It should be noted that there are no value judgments involved in accrediting the label of 'clique' to this position. For clique analysis, see Kappelhoff (1987) and the relevant chapters in Wasserman and Faust (1994).

<sup>36</sup> The Italian state may well be an 'available state' in Giuseppe DiPalma's (1980) terms -- yet not necessarily for organizations as the ones forming part of our analysis.

<sup>37</sup> The project was financed by the Volkswagen Foundation and assembled research teams from Turkey, Greece, Spain, and Portugal. Parts of the results will be published in one of the next issues of *South European Society and Politics*.

<sup>38</sup> I refer here to the collection of essays contained in Cohen and Rogers (1995) and, in particular, to the editors' own contribution.

<sup>39</sup> For general problems regarding the feasibility of such proposals and for alternative recommendations, see Schmitter (1997).

<sup>40</sup> When this paper is going to print, some form of this will probably have been adopted by the 'commissione bicamerale'. Whether this will be a form of federalism really suiting the country's specificities, remains to be seen.

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