Davide Cadeddu

Reimagining Democracy

On the Political Project of Adriano Olivetti

Springer

The European Heritage in Economics and the Social Sciences

Series Editor:
Jürgen Georg Backhaus

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To Eugene,
and Graham, Maxine, Adele

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Chapter 1
Introduction

In the numerous references to the political thought of Adriano Olivetti, which have featured in journalistic articles or historiographical essays, the term constantly employed to indicate the characteristics of his thinking is 'utopia'. And it is from this word, or, rather, from the consideration, which can be put forward, of the misuse of this word, that one needs to begin in order to shed light on Olivettian political thinking. Indeed, the word 'utopia', which ought to be used with a degree of caution given that it implies value judgements that are far from harmonious, appears often to almost elude discussion of its basic premises and passes silently over the whole range of its implications[1]; used in a vague manner and thus lacking in descriptive function, the word appears with a merely prescriptive value, which is to say it is furtively ideological. Sometimes just such a lack of precision falls short, but the reasons employed to justify the poor reputation of utopianism reveal their purely ideological intent, often connected to Marxist ideology.[2] So, precisely because the literature on the political thought of Olivetti appears to suffer greatly from 'empirical' influences, it seems necessary to pointedly confront the Gordian knot of his presumed utopianism, with the aim of establishing if it is possible, or not, to cut through it with a suitable methodological approach.

Without indulging in the fruitless intellectual exercise of venturing into the endless typological range of utopias, and debating which, if any, best suits the political project of Olivetti, it is pertinent for our purposes to consider here solely the most diffuse meaning of utopianism, in its most superficial sense. In fact, the term 'utopia', which has come to designate an entire vein of political literature, has also entered into common usage to define an impossible project, a wide-eyed dream. And an 'utopian' is that individual who longs for abstract projects, whose head is in the clouds, who lacks common sense and an idea of the concrete.[3] It would be unproductive to resort to the diverse arguments of Firpo and Mannheim, or Bloch and the philosophers of the Frankfurt School, or others,[4] since, as Giovanni Sartori has observed, 'after the word ceases to exist—where utopia is understood to mean impossibility—the impossibilities still remain'.[5] The intention of this study, then, is to reflect on the inherent

'impossibilities', if they indeed exist, in the political thought of Olivetti, considering how the ideal is mapped onto the real, how becoming interacts with being. It seeks to understand, as a result, if the Olivettian ideal is lacking in any true consistency, since it is secluded from an adequate analysis of historical reality, or if it is, rather, 'an idealism which does not lose sight of reality, whilst attempting to overturn it as the basis for a global vision of that which is possible'.[6]

In order to arrive at such an understanding it is necessary, in the first instance, to survey the historical context of the period during which the political reflections of the entrepreneur were made concrete, in defined legal institutions, with the drafting and publication of his principle text. It was, indeed, from the publication of ideas contained in *L'ordine politico delle Comunità*, printed in Switzerland in September 1945,[7] that the adjective 'utopian' began to be applied to Olivetti who, in previous years, did not have a means of expressing, explicitly and completely, his own political convictions, both because of his commitment to his father's business and the particular political situation in Italy.[8]

A work of detailed historical reconstruction has already been undertaken,[9] but analyses of Olivetti's thought, up to this point, have rarely dwelt on philosophical beliefs, except for generic references to French personalism. In fact, firstly, it is only the heuristic possibilities of comparative analysis, which can allow the evaluation of how (and in what manner) political thinking defined as 'utopian' distances itself from so-called 'realistic' contemporary proposals, and how, springing from an identical historical reality, it instead feeds on the same ideal values and attempts to satisfy the same practical needs. Then just as necessary, in the second instance, is the deeper analysis of Olivetti's political thought with a philosophical enquiry, with the aim of understanding if the values, by which it is inspired, compromise a realistic analysis of society or invalidate the practicality of the concrete solutions it proposes.

Apart from the publication, in 1946, of a new edition of *L'ordine politico delle Comunità*,[10] Olivetti produced only a modest number of political writings during the post-war period and the 1950s, owing to his primary business ventures; and those articles and essays published often comprised re-workings, or literal transcriptions, of passages from his previous publications.[11] In February 1952, he then had a collection of his writings edited under the title *Società Stato Comunità*,[12] in which he expounded particularly on the economic aspect of his own political programme and, in December 1959, around two months before his death, a collection of essays and discussions, *Città dell'uomo*,[13] went to press, in which he confirmed and rendered explicit some aspects of his own thought. The result was a sorting of Olivetti's writings, effected by the author himself, intended to subsequently clarify his political convictions.[14] It should also be noted, moreover, that at the moment of his death, though started between 1955 and 1956, the third edition of *L'ordine politico delle Comunità*, edited by Sergio Cotta, was being put together, in which the 1946 edition would have been integrated with essays published in *Società Stato Comunità*.[15]

Given the essential coherence and complementarity of the three main works of Adriano Olivetti, a systematic interaction in the analysis of the three texts seemed, therefore, opportune,[16] with the aim of better penetrating the concepts which inform

them, supported by a contextualised reflection on the historiographical assessment of Olivetti's political thought, from specific studies to simple overviews of his writings.

This study intends to serve as an introduction to the analysis of *L'ordine politico delle Comunità*,[17] and though much has already been written, the interpretative key assumed here is rooted in an enquiry into the political philosophy which pervades Olivettian thought.[18] As has been noted, 'it is still precisely Olivetti the "politician" which represents, today, the least understood, and least analysed, side of his singular personality. Many years after his death, in February 1960, and running counter to the proposals to re-think his work, critics of utopianism still make their voices heard, critics who, in referring specifically to Olivetti's political intentions and his conception of institutional design, show themselves to be particularly bitter. The process of ridding the field of this misconception is seen to be a necessary step to provide a greater understanding of the empassioned work of Adriano Olivetti'.[19]

Notes

1. Cf. Arturo Colombo, *Adriano Olivetti fra intuizione e utopia*, in «Nuova Antologia», vol. 554˚ - fasc. 2156, October-December 1985, pp. 102–103 (reprinted with some variations in Id., *Voci e volti della democrazia. Cultura e impegno civile da Gobetti a Bauer*, Firenze, Le Monnier, 1990, pp. 213–230). The same opinion is shared by Quintino Protopapa, according to whom the accusations of utopianism and eclecticism made against Olivetti often serve as convenient labels which gloss any real political comparison (*Il problema delle fonti di Adriano Olivetti*, in «Annali dell'Istituto Ugo La Malfa», vol. XII, 1997, p. 266). Valerio Castronovo maintains that it would be misleading to stick labels on a figure as complex as Olivetti and thus exorcise the problems that he poses, calling into question the utopia or eclecticism of his character (*Per una cultura industriale*, in *Fabbrica, Comunità, Democrazia. Testimonianze su Adriano Olivetti e il Movimento Comunità*, ed. Francesca Giuntella - Angela Zucconi, Roma, Fondazione Adriano Olivetti, 1984, p. 99).
2. Cf., for example, Paolo Petta, *Ideologie costituzionali della sinistra italiana (1892–1974)*, Roma, Savelli, 1975, *passim*. Marcello Fabbri, who has offered perceptive readings of other aspects of Olivetti's thought, draws a comparison between the figure of Olivetti and the description of utopians drawn by Engels in *Antidühring*: 'they are not presented as representatives of the interests of the proletariate, that was in the meantime historically produced. Just as with the followers of the Enlightenment, they did not want to free a specific class, but humanity as a whole' (*Le ideologie degli urbanisti nel dopoguerra*, Bari, De Donato, 1975, p. 52; Id., *L'urbanistica italiana dal dopoguerra a oggi. Storia ideologie immagini*, Bari, De Donato, 1983, p. 116). Lucio Levi notes that, 'fundamentally, the same criticism which Marx and Engels made of "utopian socialism" is also valid for federalism. Regarding the founders of socialsm, Engels wrote: "The solution to the social problem… ought to have been created by the mind. Society offered only incongruity; eliminating this incongruity was the aim of rational reasoning. It was a question of devising a new, more perfect social order, and to introduce it into society from the outside, with propaganda and, where possible, with the help of experimentation"' (*Introduzione*, in Altiero Spinelli, *La crisi degli stati nazionali. Germania, Italia, Francia*, ed. Lucio Levi, Bologna, il Mulino, 1991, p. 36).
3. Luigi Firpo, *L'utopismo*, in *Storia delle idee politiche economiche e sociali*, directed by Luigi Firpo, vol. III, *Umanesimo e Rinascimento*, Torino, Utet, 1987, p. 811.
4. *Ibid.*, pp. 811–812 (or Id., *Appunti sui caratteri dell'utopismo*, in *L'utopia e le sue forme*, ed. Nicola Matteucci, with Vita Fortunati - Saffo Testoni Binetti - Gianpaolo Zucchini, Bologna,

il Mulino, 1982, pp. 11–13). It might be of interest to relate a judgement from Firpo regarding the governmental reform envisaged by Olivetti: 'this reform could appear impracticable at first, almost a modern technocratic utopia, a political science fiction; far from futurist though, it is a serious programme' (*Adriano Olivetti, il tecnocrate che inseguì una moderna utopia*, in «La Stampa», a. 114, n. 47, 28 febbraio 1980, p. 3).

5. Giovanni Sartori, *Democrazia. Cosa è*, Milano, Rizzoli, 1993, p. 48.

6. Virgilio Melchiorre, *Utopia*, in *Dizionario delle idee politiche*, directed by Enrico Berti - Giorgio Campanini, Roma, Editrice Ave, 1993, p. 937.

7. Adriano Olivetti, *L'ordine politico delle Comunità. Le garanzie di libertà in uno stato socialista*, Nuove Edizioni Ivrea, [Ivrea] 1945 (which is cited in the pages that follow).

8. For a synthetic examination of the influences on Olivettian thought in the 1920s and '30s, see Corrado Malandrino, *Il federalismo comunitario di Adriano Olivetti*, in Id., *Socialismo e libertà. Autonomie, federalismo, Europa da Rosselli a Silone*, Milano, FrancoAngeli, 1990, pp. 203–209. For a general overview see Davide Cadeddu, *Humana Civilitas. Profilo intellettuale di Adriano Olivetti*, in Giulio Sapelli - Davide Cadeddu, *Adriano Olivetti. Lo Spirito nell'impresa*, Trento, Il Margine, 2007, pp. 67–111; and Davide Cadeddu, *Adriano Olivetti politico*, Roma, Edizioni di Storia e Letteratura, 2009.

9. Cf. Davide Cadeddu, *Introduzione*, in Adriano Olivetti, *Stato Federale delle Comunità. La riforma politica e sociale negli scritti inediti (1942–1945)*, ed. Davide Cadeddu, Milano, FrancoAngeli, 2004. See also C. Malandrino, *Il federalismo comunitario di Adriano Olivetti*, cit., pp. 201–222.

10. Adriano Olivetti, *L'ordine politico delle comunità. Dello Stato secondo le leggi dello spirito*, Roma, Edizioni di Comunità, 1946. The cover of the book reads: 'An organic plan for structural reform of the State, intended to integrate the social values established by Marxism with those cradled by Christian civilization, so as to safeguard the spiritual freedom of the individual'. The detailed comparison between the first and second edition of *L'ordine politico delle Comunità* has shown numerous minor corrections, though purely of an expressive and formal nature.

11. Cf. *Bibliografia degli scritti di Adriano Olivetti*, ed. Giovanni Maggia, Siena, Facoltà di Scienze Economiche e Bancarie, Università degli Studi, 1983, tome I.

12. Adriano Olivetti, *Società Stato Comunità. Per una economia e politica comunitaria*, Milano, Edizioni di Comunità, 1952.

13. Adriano Olivetti, *Città dell'uomo*, preface by Geno Pampaloni, Milano, Edizioni di Comunità, 1960. Pampaloni's preface, *Un'idea di vita*, pp. 7–24, was also published in «Comunità», a. XIV, n. 78, March-April 1960, pp. 29–33; in *Ricordo di Adriano Olivetti*, ed. «Comunità», Milano, Edizioni di Comunità, 1960, pp. 9–23; and finally in Geno Pampaloni, *Adriano Olivetti: un'idea di democrazia*, Milano, Edizioni di Comunità, 1980, pp. 9–22.

14. In *Società Stato Comunità*, cit., there are numerous references, beside the internal ones, to the Roman edition of *L'ordine politico delle Comunità*, cit., and also in *Città dell'uomo*, cit., the same number of cross-references to the book appear, but above all to the two volumes previously published. It should be noted, moreover, that in *Società Stato Comunità*, cit., chapter 10, 'Riforma del Senato o della Camera?', pp. 115–129, was indeed re-published, with few variations, in *Città dell'uomo*, cit., chapter V 'Chi sceglie i Ministri? Tre saggi intorno alla riforma dello Stato', under the title 'Un Parlamento nuovo', pp. 229–241. Again in *Società Stato Comunità*, cit., in the first appendix, the paragraphs I 'L'idea di una comunità concreta', pp. 183–220, and II 'Lo Stato funzionale secondo le leggi dello spirito', pp. 223–224, are an almost identical reprint from *L'ordine politico delle Comunità*, cit., chapter I 'Di una società fondata sull'idea di una Comunità concreta', pp. 3–28, and chapter III 'Di taluni principi che reggono l'ordinamento delle Comunità', pp. 43–56 (for paragraph I) and chapter IX 'Comunità territoriale e Ordini Politici come elementi di un nuovo federalismo', p. 192 (for paragraph II).

15. Cf. Adriano Olivetti, *Chi sceglie i Ministri?*, in Id., *Città dell'uomo*, cit., p. 268, and also the inside cover. The project for a third edition, edited by Sergio Cotta, which remained incomplete and unedited, is noted not only by V. Ochetto, *Adriano Olivetti*, cit., pp. 250–251, but also by Renzo Zorzi, *Nota al testo*, in Adriano Olivetti, *L'ordine politico delle comunità. Le*

garanzie di libertà in uno stato socialista, ed. Renzo Zorzi, Milano, Edizioni di Comunità, 1970, p. XVIII. Just as Zorzi does not refer to an adjustment in Olivettian thought, comparing the first edition of *L'ordine politico delle Comunità* to the drafts of the incomplete third edition edited by Cotta (*Nota al testo*, cit., p. XIX), so Valerio Ochetto confirms the essence and content remain unaltered (*Adriano Olivetti*, cit., p. 132).

16. This approach implicitly disproves that which Vittorio Agosti has stated: 'the main text to understand the thought of Olivetti is the volume "Società Stato Comunità", since the first work of Olivetti ("L'ordine politico delle Comunità", del 1946) however organic it may seem, suffers still from too much juridical-economic technicality and the haste for experimentation in the immediate post-war climate of Italy. (His final book, "La città dell'uomo" del 1959, does not add anything new, technically at least, to previous works, being a collection of articles and interviews with workers and thus popular and casual in tone)' (*Adriano Olivetti tra Maritain e Mounier*, in «Humanitas», a. XVI, n. 3, March 1961, p. 228).

17. For a synthetic description of the institutional structure envisaged by Olivetti in *L'ordine politico delle Comunità* see Costantino Mortati, *Autonomie e pluralismo nel pensiero di Adriano Olivetti*, in *La regione e il governo locale. Atti del Symposium: Problemi della Regione e del governo locale*, ed. Giuseppe Maranini, Milano, Edizioni di Comunità, 1965, vol. I, pp. XXXV-XLIX (reprinted as *Il pensiero di Adriano Olivetti*, in «Comunità», a. XIX, n. 131, August 1965, pp. 25–33); C. Malandrino, *Il federalismo comunitario*, cit., pp. 213–218; and above all [Umberto Serafini,] note VIII, in Henri Brugmans, *Panorama del pensiero federalista*, Milano, Edizioni di Comunità, 1960, pp. 133–134 (*ibidem*, pp. 123–137, Serafini re-published part of his *Ci ha lasciato uno dei più grandi Maestri del federalismo integrale: Adriano Olivetti*, in «Comuni d'Europa», a. VIII, n. 3, March 1960, pp. 1–6, 27–28; reprinted in Id., *Adriano Olivetti e il Movimento Comunità. Una anticipazione scomoda, un discorso aperto*, Roma, Officina Edizioni, 1982, pp. 318–338; for the authorship of the anonymous note, cf. *ibid.*, p. 458).

18. 'Political philosophy' ought here to be understood as a 'theory of values', in line with the meaning expressed in point IX of Alessandro Passerin d'Entrèves's essay, *La filosofia della politica*, in *Storia delle idee politiche economiche e sociali*, directed by Luigi Firpo, vol. VI, *Il secolo ventesimo*, Torino, Utet, 1972, pp. 587–608 (reprinted as *Filosofia della politica*, in *Dizionario di politica*, directed by Norberto Bobbio - Nicola Matteucci - Gianfranco Pasquino, Torino, Utet, 1983, pp. 421–428).

19. Q. Protopapa, *Il problema delle fonti*, cit., p. 267.

Chapter 2
On Alienation

In the attempt to identify the origins of Adriano Olivetti's political thought, various different studies have noted that his father was Jewish and his mother Waldesian,[1] but that his religious education was free from dogma.[2] These biographical details are often employed to simplistically ascribe a messianic, dreamlike, and even visionary quality to Olivetti's 'character', and a fanciful and eclectic edge to his political thought,[3] rather than offering a true understanding of the influence that religion exerted over him.[4] It is an influence, though, that is notable, given that his political reflection took shape from the consideration of the reality 'of man and his true nature',[5] a consideration nourished in itself by views of religious origin.

He believes this nature to be neither good nor evil, but simply imperfect, convinced as he is by the biblical dogma of original sin: 'we do not start with an overly optimistic view of the nature of man: we believe in his imperfection,[6] we know he is fundamentally corrupt'.[7] From this idea, which forms the basis of Olivetti's theodicy, it can be immediately understood that his proposal to organise the State through 'Communities' did not have, nor could have, the perfect harmony of humanity as its objective. Unlike the main thrust of opinion on his political thought,[8] the objective towards which he aims is far more limited and pragmatic: 'the fundamental idea of our society is to create a common moral and material interest between those men who lead the social and economic aspects of their lives in a Community environment'.[9] Even if Olivetti does not make great pains to avoid equivocations and misunderstandings, his writings evince a *streben*, a striving towards the betterment of society, rather than an unyielding certainty that a perfect State which is rationally planned in theory, as has been (inconveniently) noted, could produce 'a global harmony, where all tensions and every dialectic are overcome and taken up in a supreme order, in an approach that is without, and outside of, history'.[10] This 'supreme order' belongs, in fact, purely to the 'final, eschatological [dimension] of a Christian community'[11]: between the political community, which forms the basis of the State body in Olivetti's vision, and the Christian community, 'there is a division […], an immense spiritual chasm […] which it is not given to us to bridge'[12]; man can only live 'with his eyes fixed on the ideal which he will not be able to reach without the

intervention of God'.[13] In Olivetti's post-war political philosophy, the difference seems clear, then, between the Christian community, associated with a religious sphere, and Christian civilization, or *Humana civilitas*,[14] which is politically attainable with the apparatus of State that 'operates at the material level with *homo faber* centre stage'.[15]

At the centre of Adriano Olivetti's political thought, avowedly socialist in its inspiration,[16] there is, then, the creator of the 'inchoate world'[17]: the worker. Or, rather, it is the individual in his relationship to work, who 'lives every day in a never-ending fight for his own material betterment, to climb *at least one step* up the social ladder, for a recompense more worthy of his effort'.[18] Work is seen, in the light of its biblical meaning, as 'the condemnation of man and the atonement'[19] for his original sin, but also as an expression of his own vocation, of his own creative capability.[20]

Work itself is 'the real unifying centre of his thought and action, in themselves extremely complex and diversified', together with the strictly connected problem of alienation from work[21]: 'And work should be', Olivetti states, 'a great joy, but for many it is a torment: the torment of not having a job, the torment of having a job that has no purpose and does not pursue a virtuous goal. Primitive man was naked on the earth, living amongst stones, forests and swamps, with no tools or machines. Work alone changed the world and we are on the verge of a definitive change',[22] since, 'finally, for the first time in the history of technology, the material means available to man, that energy that man redeems from work […] offers us an unexpected and unyielding strength, such that man, *perhaps*, might be freed from his sentence'.[23]

This 'sentence' was served several times by Olivetti too, experiencing first hand the traditional lot of the worker[24]: 'since I was with you in the factory', he recalled, 'I know the monotony of the repeated gestures, the exhaustion of difficult jobs, the desire to see, in the breaks from work, the light and the sun, and then at home the smile of a woman and a baby, and the heart of a mother'.[25] The real experiences of the worker, besides the atmosphere around his father's business which suffused his life since childhood,[26] nurtured in Olivetti an anxiety and an existential problem which was expressed in, and sought answers from, both active engagement and political reflection[27]: 'I knew the awful monotony and the weight of repeating actions ad infinitum, on a drill or at a press, and I knew that it was necessary to set man free from this degrading slavery. But the path was extremely long and difficult'.[28]

His ultimate aim became to 'avoid the alienation produced by enormous factories and by the unbearable detachment from nature',[29] such that 'man has *outside and inside work the sense of a more harmonious and complete life*'[30]; but to attain this objective he realised that it was not sufficient 'to wish for the "best" and not the "most" from human efforts, […] to perfect the welfare system and working conditions'.[31] The alienation of the individual from work was not only an illness of the body but of the mind too.[32] In order for it to be cured, psychological problems needed to be addressed[33]: one needed 'to create awareness of the aims of work. And achieving this was no longer the task of an "enlightened employer", but of society'.[34] For this reason society needed to be structured in a new way, where the environment surrounding the workplace could be its resultant image[35]: 'the joy of

work, which is today denied to the great number of workers in modern industry, will finally be able to emerge again as soon as the worker realises that his effort, his exertion, and his sacrifice—*and it will always be a sacrifice*—is materially and spiritually linked to a virtuous and human entity which he is capable of perceiving, measuring and controlling; his work, then, will serve to strengthen that Community, a live, real and tangible community where he and his children have their lives, bonds and interests'.[36] If the aims of the factory 'are concrete, visible, tangible and within reach, then the whole organisation will have a sense of participation and a deep sense of purpose for its daily work',[37] allowing the worker to mentally regain possession of his work, in a continual process of *Bildung*, which underpins the ethic of self-responsibility.[38] But since, given these conditions, 'work becomes, little by little, part of our soul, thus becoming a great spiritual force',[39] it also reveals itself, in Olivetti's *Weltanschauung*, to be the nexus which allows a direct interaction between the material and spiritual world.

Faced by the perennial metaphysical antinomy between the spiritual and material, Adriano Olivetti claims 'the dominance of spiritual over material forces',[40] and 'the supremacy of the spirit over the material',[41] but maintains that 'the spiritual perfection of the Individual demands adequate material premises'.[42] In fact, 'if the aim of communal and individual life is mainly the spiritual perfection of one's character, the nexus between the spiritual and the material is such that harmonious means of physical perfection are nonetheless indispensable'.[43] To regenerate this 'decadent society',[44] in this 'age of transition',[45] spiritual values need to inform every aspect of life, contributing to the realisation of 'a society where material and spiritual values will be harmoniously fused'.[46] To this end, 'there is only one solution, which is difficult, still distant and misunderstood: to make sure that new material forces—those same forces which have given life to the modern world—become a valid and powerful instrument for spiritual goals'.[47] And, Olivetti confessed, 'this fight on two fronts, in the material field and the spiritual sphere […] is the greatest commitment, and the driving force itself, of my life'.[48]

So, as a solution to the problem of alienation of the individual at work, Olivetti proposes to reform the State, basing it on confined, though self-sufficient and vital, territorial nuclei, with 'a complete life on independent and solid foundations'[49]: only in a Community will work be 'the means of ransom; because work torments the spirit when it does not have a virtuous goal'.[50]

Notes

1. Adriano Olivetti was born in Ivrea on 11 April 1901, to Camillo Olivetti, an atheist Jew who embraced the Unitarian faith in his later years, and Luisa Revel, the daughter of a Waldesian pastor (cf. V. Ochetto, *Adriano Olivetti*, cit., pp. 23–25, 102). Bruno Caizzi notes that Camillo Olivetti, born in 1868, 'declared himself agnostic' and only formally adhered to the Unitarians in 1934 (*Camillo e Adriano Olivetti*, Torino, Utet, 1962, pp. 184–185). Arturo Carlo Jemolo observes that 'Adriano Olivetti found himself at the point of intersection of three faiths: the oldest monotheistic religion […]; Protestantism […]; Catholicism.' He goes on to assert that 'he could not but pursue a spirit of freedom, drawn from having a mother and father who

belonged to two different lineages, but who both bore the permanent marks of a history of persecution' (*Adriano Olivetti*, Roma, Famija Piemontèisa, 1960, pp. [6], [8]). Cf. also B. Caizzi, *Camillo e Adriano Olivetti*, cit., pp. 374–375; G. Miegge, in *Ricordo di Adriano Olivetti*, cit., p. 86; G. Saragat, *ibid.*, p. 108; A. Levi, *Appunti per la futura costituzione*, in «Critica Sociale», a. XXXVIII, n. 4, 16 febbraio 1946, p. 56; A. Colombo, *Adriano Olivetti fra intuizione e utopia*, cit., p. 102; etc.

2. Cf. V. Ochetto, *Adriano Olivetti*, cit., pp. 28–29; and the views of G. Maranini, in *Ricordo di Adriano Olivetti*, cit., pp. 81–82.

3. Such reductivism characterises, in particular, V. Ochetto, *Adriano Olivetti*, cit., and also B. Caizzi, *Camillo e Adriano Olivetti*, cit., the two main biographies of the entrepreneur.

4. In February 1944, Olivetti declared his faith to be 'Protestant, evangelical Waldesian' (cf. the *Questionario* completed by Olivetti, for the Bellinzona police station, dated 9 Febraury 1944, p. 2, in Archivio Federale di Berna, dossier *E 4264 1985/196*, vol. 1763, «N 20629. Olivetti Adriano 11. 4. 01 Italien»). In 1949, Adriano Olivetti was baptised Catholic, entering into the 'Catholic Church, convinced of its theological supremacy' (cf. Adriano Olivetti's letter, of 19 December 1948, to his future wife Grazia Galletti, cit. in V. Ochetto, *Adriano Olivetti*, cit., p. 249). Until the death of his Waldesian mother, in September 1944, (*ibid.*, p. 121), he had refused to enter a Catholic church for personal reasons and out of filial duty (*ibid.*, p. 249).

5. Cf. *Per una pianificazione democratica nel Mezzogiorno*, in *Città dell'uomo*, *Città dell'uomo*, preface by Geno Pampaloni, Milano, Edizioni di Comunità, 1960, p. 286 (or *Democrazia senza partiti*, in *Società Stato Comunità. Per una economia e politica comunitaria*, Milano, Edizioni di Comunità, 1952, p. 168).

6. 'The family, the elemental and unbreakable cell of the social body, is the first and most eminent example of the existence and possibility, within the objective limits of an imperfect humanity, of a socialist-communist and Christian society.' (*L'ordine*, cit., p. 16).

7. *Per una pianificazione democratica nel Mezzogiorno*, cit., p. 286. In *Democrazia senza partiti*, cit., p. 167, a sentence is added to this same quote: 'we also live in sin'. Vieri Nannetti states that 'it does not seem that Olivetti is a follower of Rousseauian law of nature, nor does he believe in that ideal perfection of human society, which would exclude the need for the State and would reject the fundamental problem of evil' (v.n., *L'ordine politico delle comunità*, in «L'Ultima», a. IV, n. 37–38, 25 gennaio-25 febbraio 1949, p. 86).

8. In Claudia Petraccone's view, for example, 'the Community ought to have eliminated all the tensions and conflicts that develop in economic structures, between agriculture, industry and artisanal work, so as to guarantee a perfect "symbiosis between the agricultural and industrial economies".' (*Federalismo e autonomia in Italia dall'unità a oggi*, ed. Claudia Petraccone, Roma-Bari, Laterza, 1995, p. 261). But the Community, given man's imperfect nature, cannot aspire to a total eradication of the conflicts of the economic order, since this is itself the result of human initiative: 'Communities', notes Olivetti, 'in creating a greater concrete interest, *tend* to create such conflicts and unite mankind'. (*L'ordine*, cit.,. p. 3. The italics are mine; cf. also *La dimensione «ottima» dell'autogoverno locale*, in *Città dell'uomo*, cit., pp. 42–43).

9. *Democrazia senza partiti*, cit., p. 168 (in *L'ordine*, cit., p. 3, the sentence structure is slightly modified). In other words, 'the Community is conceived in such a way as to *facilitate*, in a concrete manner, the endorsement and dissemination of sentiments and instincts toward human solidarity, while current society tends instead to halt their spread and to feed an instinct of oppression and selfishness' (*L'ordine*, cit., p. 20. The italics are mine).

10. Cf. V. Ochetto, *Adriano Olivetti*, cit., p. 129. But even Pampaloni, after recalling the comparison drawn by Olivetti between science and the Holy Spirit, announced by Christ in John's gospel, states: 'here we have, it seems to me, the beginning of an optimistic, and almost triumphant, reading of history, a profound faith in a peaceful and brotherly order' (*Un'idea di vita*, cit., p. 12).

11. *Democrazia senza partiti*, cit., p. 168.

12. *Ibid.*, p. 169.

13. *Ibidem*.

14. *Il cammino della Comunità*, in *Città dell'uomo*, cit., p. 84. In the first epigraph of *L'ordine politico delle Comunità*, the intention of the author behind the writing of the treatise is made explicit: 'To make use of peace and the Christian civilization with the same willpower, the same intensity, the same boldness with which they were used to bring about oppression, destruction and terror' (*L'ordine*, cit., p. V).

15. *Democrazia senza partiti*, cit., p. 169.

16. 'At the basis of this plan for reform, a new society is conceived which will be essentially oriented towards socialism' (*L'ordine*, cit., p. VIII).

17. *L'ordine*, cit., p. X; and *La dimensione «ottima» dell'autogoverno locale*, cit., p. 45.

18. *Il cammino della Comunità*, cit., p. 83.

19. *Democrazia senza partiti*, cit., p. 140.

20. Cf. *L'industria nell'ordine delle comunità*, in *Società Stato Comunità*, cit., p. 46.

21. This is the reply to the question which Massimo Fichera provocatively asked at the Convegno di Ivrea in October 1980, faced by a number of individuals who spoke of the eclecticism and spiritualism of Olivetti (cf. *Dalle riforme al progetto*, in «Mondo Operaio», a. 33, n. 11, novembre 1980, p. 87). As Geminello Alvi notes, Olivetti links 'the reform of motivation and of the act of working to a reformulation of every field of life' (*Le seduzioni economiche di Faust*, Milano, Adelphi, 1989, p. 109).

22. *Ai lavoratori d'Ivrea*, in *Città dell'uomo*, cit., p. 185.

23. *Democrazia senza partiti*, cit., p. 140. The italics are mine. Cf. also *Le forze spirituali*, in *Città dell'uomo*, cit., p. 34.

24. Cf. B. Caizzi, *Camillo e Adriano Olivetti*, cit., p. 132; V. Ochetto, *Adriano Olivetti*, cit., pp. 36, 45.

25. *Ai lavoratori d'Ivrea*, cit., p. 183.

26. Cf. Gino Martinoli, *Gli anni della formazione*, in *Fabbrica, Comunità, Democrazia*, cit., p. 26; V. Ochetto, *Adriano Olivetti*, cit., p. 111; B. Caizzi, *Camillo e Adriano Olivetti*, cit., pp. 157–158.

27. Cf. *Ai lavoratori d'Ivrea*, cit., p. 184; B. Caizzi, *Camillo e Adriano Olivetti*, cit., p. 132; V. Ochetto, *Adriano Olivetti*, cit., p. 111. 'There was a continual integration between the two activities', Pampaloni noted, 'at an existential level, I would say, rather than a theoretical one' (*Impegno imprenditoriale e impegno politico*, in *Fabbrica, Comunità, Democrazia*, cit., p. 29).

28. *Prime esperienze in una fabbrica*, in *Società Stato Comunità*, cit., p. 3.

29. *Urbanistica e libertà locali*, in *Città dell'uomo*, cit., p. 108.

30. *L'ordine*, cit., p. 10. Italics in original.

31. Cf. *Prime esperienze in una fabbrica*, cit., p. 3.

32. Cf. Luciano Gallino, *Alienazione*, in Id., *Dizionario di sociologia*, revised edition, Torino, Utet, 1983, p. 16.

33. Olivetti asked: 'Do the solutions, which the critics of the capitalist system have so far proposed, and nationalisations, perhaps resolve the necessary aim of work satisfying the complex psychological patterns of man? No' (*Il cammino della Comunità*, cit., pp. 73–74; *L'industria nell'ordine delle comunità*, cit., p. 46–47). See Giancarlo Baussano - Francesco Novara - Renato A. Rozzi, *Psicologi in fabbrica. La psicologia del lavoro negli stabilimenti Olivetti*, Torino, Einaudi, 1980.

34. *Prime esperienze in una fabbrica*, cit., pp. 3–4. Cf. also *Punti programmatici del «Movimento Comunità»*, in *Società Stato Comunità*, cit., p. 178.

35. Cf. *Il cammino della Comunità*, cit., pp. 73–75.

36. Cf. *L'industria nell'ordine delle comunità*, cit., p. 46 (the italics are mine). 'Too many workers', he observed, 'wonder whether there is not something fundamentally unjust and tragic in the fact that the wealth that they create is not utilised to better satisfy the needs, and resolve the problems, of their community' (*Le forze spirituali*, cit., pp. 31–32).

37. *La Fondazione proprietaria*, in *Città dell'uomo*, cit., p. 225.

38. Cf. Saverio Santamaìta, *Educazione Comunità Sviluppo. L'impegno educativo di Adriano Olivetti*, Roma, Fondazione Adriano Olivetti, 1987. Franco Ferrarotti maintains that 'the working class, in Olivetti's thinking, cannot be socially, economically and politically emancipated,

unless it is through the conscious and autonomous initiatives of the working class itself' (*Un imprenditore di idee. Una testimonianza su Adriano Olivetti*, ed. Giuliana Gemelli, Torino, Edizioni di Comunità, 2001, p. 81). Cf. also Vittorio Gamberini, *Adriano Olivetti è morto: grave lutto per l'organizzazione scientifica*, in «Organizzazione scientifica e tecnica amministrativa», a. IV, n. 3–4–5, 31 March-30 April-31 May 1960, pp. 220–221.

39. *Ai lavoratori di Pozzuoli*, in *Città dell'uomo*, cit., p. 168. Cf. also *Alle «Spille d'Oro»*, in *Città dell'uomo*, cit., p. 156.

40. *Ostacoli alla pianificazione*, in *Città dell'uomo*, cit., p. 124.

41. *Proposta per un Senato organico e funzionale*, in *Città dell'uomo*, cit., p. 245; *Democrazia senza partiti*, cit., p. 149.

42. *L'ordine*, cit., p. 20. Cf. also *Ai lavoratori d'Ivrea*, cit., p. 181.

43. *Ibidem*. Cf. also *Punti programmatici del «Movimento Comunità»*, cit., p. 178. On the other hand, 'culture constitutes, indeed, a *broadening* of individual capability', but 'cannot alter the inner orientation of a person. Rather it will be considered as a highly important means of expression, and not exclusively an end, which remains forever associated to the ethical sphere' (*L'ordine*, cit., p. 49. The italics are in the original).

44. *Perché si pianifica?*, in *Città dell'uomo*, cit., p. 97. 'The causes for such a state of things', states Olivetti, 'are complex: crises of civilization, crises of the social economic order and crises of the parliamentary system are intertwined in such a way, and are so intimately related, that it is extremely difficult to examine a problem without seeing the continual reflections of one situation over another' (*Democrazia senza partiti*, cit., p. 134).

45. *L'architettura, la comunità e l'urbanistica*, in *Città dell'uomo*, cit., p. 144.

46. *Ostacoli alla pianificazione*, cit., p. 124.

47. *Ibidem*. Cf. also *Le forze spirituali*, cit., p. 29.

48. *Ai lavoratori d'Ivrea*, cit., p. 181.

49. Cf. *Urbanistica e libertà locali*, cit., p. 102.

50. *Il cammino della Comunità*, cit., pp. 64, 75. Cf. also *Ai lavoratori di Pozzuoli*, cit., pp. 164–165.

Chapter 3
A Scientific Approach to Politics

If the question of the alienation of the individual at work is at the origin of the political thought of Adriano Olivetti, then the methodology that is followed in the elaboration of his *L'ordine politico delle Comunità* provides the response that he offers up to the political crisis of the contemporary world,[1] before even 'suggesting'[2] different concrete proposals. This methodology, which would go on to form the basis of his theoretical and practical engagement, is referred to by many commentators,[3] but is not illustrated by any, perhaps because its significance is taken for granted or is deemed of secondary importance: it is a method that has been perceptively defined as the 'coordinated totality',[4] which aims to explain the way in which political problems are confronted and solutions are presented.[5]

It is important to show what this method of analysis and programming consists of, not only for the chance it offers to grasp a particular aspect of Olivetti's thought but also for the possibility it offers to understand some otherwise equivocal considerations that were expressed by the author concerning *L'ordine politico delle Comunità*. 'Our ideas for the make up of the State', stated Olivetti, 'for an authentic Christian civilization are *extremely precise*. This precision will not damage the movement because this very exact detailing of the State, this *perfection* of the State, towards which we aim, is a guarantee of freedom, thus our coherence is a guarantee of freedom'[6] and, 'with a structure before us whose every detail and intricate constructs have been studied, there is no hesitation, *there is no place for doubt*; every stone which we move, every wall which we erect will form part of a new order, there will be no need to remove them, nor remake them'.[7] Some hasty interpretations have read these, and analogous declarations, isolated from their general context, as an explicit confession of utopianism on the part of the author, who goes on to state: 'the general outline, the scheme, presents itself with the purity and perfection of a crystal whose form is shaped with the geometric rigour of nature'.[8] To understand the true significance of this persistent reference to the perfection of the proposed political system, it is necessary to reflect on the value that the author ascribes to the application of scientific method and the need to institutionalise, in a rational manner, the socio-economic reality which, de facto, influences the State.

From the time he attended the Turin Politecnico as a student, from 1919 to 1924, Olivetti questioned 'why society had known how to find, in many fields, surprisingly efficient forms of organisation and why political structures, on the other hand, appeared so poorly suited to their purpose'.[9] It took several years before he was convinced of the need for 'the political world, which is still enclosed in its traditional empiricism, to finally accept scientific guidance'.[10] But what does Olivetti mean by 'empiricism'? And by 'scientific guidance' for the political world? The adjective 'empirical' is used by Olivetti to connote an action, or thought, which is not underpinned by the knowledge of 'complex laws',[11] which regulate the context in which it operates, or an action which lacks engagement with ethical value.[12] It appears as a synonym for 'contingent', 'practical' or 'political'[13] and indicates often insufficient measures,[14] contrasting it with the adjective 'scientific' which corresponds to the 'theoretical', 'doctrinal' or 'rational'. Scientific method consists, rather, in the analysis of human experience,[15] and in the creation of precise laws which, in explaining social phenomena, allow decisions to be contextualised.

On the basis of the difference that exists between empirical and scientific method, Adriano Olivetti impartially passes judgement on different political relations throughout history: he defines corporative thinking as wayward, since it was derived from the empirical acceptance of the necessity of an institutional expression of workforces[16]; it shows up as shameful 'the chaotic, disordered and occasionally unjust manner, with no regard for the evidence of scientific method', in which very notable sums were spent on the south of Italy, 'sometimes based *purely on electoral calculations*'.[17] But he does not limit himself to a reading of history which ascribes political failures to empirical method and positive outcomes to a scientific one: 'the type of democratic planning produced in the United States with social politics that began with President Roosevelt's *New Deal*, and that saw its greatest expression in the experiences of the *Tennessee Valley Authority Act* (TVA)' is the paradigmatic result of an empirical process.[18] The difference between 'the American empiricism' of the TVA[19] and the 'absolute methodological empiricism' of Soviet planning[20] lies in the fact of the first being developed in a democratic–federalist context, and with a very limited geographical scope, while the second, 'for historical reasons, had to confront the very difficult problem of a comprehensive plan'.[21] Above all, though, the difference lay in the fact that while in the USSR 'the most serious faults came from [...] a lack of coordination',[22] in the TVA it was a single territorial authority that was present, 'a sole authority, capable of coordinating the programme',[23] even though this was a centralised body, which thus threatened 'the development of a normal democratic life'.[24]

The scientific approach to political problems produces 'a clear vision of methods suitable to generate results in a rational manner'[25] and allows form to be given to a plan, which 'derives from a general vision of life',[26] while 'empiricism, in the guise of a false realism, generally opposes such political thinking'.[27] Only in the first instance, it is possible to avoid political decisions being swept aside by circumstance and attempt to 'soothe, with palliative empiricisms, the greatest errors of a society in crisis'.[28]

In direct contrast to these methodological premises, different interpreters often analyse Olivetti's political thought by referring to a 'roll call, a list of "ingredients" that are certainly present and active in the thought of Olivetti', lining up 'in a neat and orderly fashion, as if on a chemist's shelf, the raw materials of Olivetti's ideal, its allusions and cultural and socio-political references, from Rathenau to Walther Reuther'.[29] It is often noted that in *L'ordine politico delle Comunità* and other essays he mentions the Weimar Constitution, though there is also constant reference to the experience of the USSR[30] and frequent allusions to the Soviet Constitution of 1936, put forward in various ways as an example of political foresight.[31] The influence of the English labour movement is often mentioned, as is that of Mounier, Maritain, Proudhon, Weil and Gurvitch[32]; at the same time, though, it should be remembered that Olivetti also paid attention to Kelsen, Croce, Montesquieu, Rousseau, Aristotle, etc.[33] References to the Zeiss Foundation are often highlighted, but it is forgotten how Olivetti also alludes to the example of 'a co-operative Swedish society affiliated to the Kooperativa Förbundet'.[34] If, therefore, this description is followed without a concept in mind, one merely accumulates information and can no longer understand how this kaleidoscope of references can harmonise to become a coherent political consideration. Olivetti's thinking can then seem like a form of parroting, with Olivetti himself an eclectic parrot, reading and repeating everything he has read.[35] In reality, he does not seem to lack creative capability at all, for which reason the principle drawn from an external source rarely acquires new value, and so, to penetrate his syncretism, attention needs to be directed to the differences rather than the limited analogies, between the historical facts or concepts to which he makes reference and the new meaning which these assume in his own personal reflections.[36]

Historical examples are never presented as ideal models to imitate: they are, rather, the partial empirical validation of scientific hypotheses drawn from his research and theoretical analysis. They are criticized or integrated by Olivetti with the example of other concrete situations, in the context of a comparative analysis between different socio-political realities, combined with that which he labels "scientific method". Integral to this is the evolutionary possibility of lawmaking, based on experience[37] and benefitting from continual 'scientific updates', which allow previously proposed solutions to be modified.[38] For this reason too, Olivetti analyses contemporary political events, following the industrial revolution and its aftermath,[39] so as to deduce from them a number of factors which may be applicable 'to the current state of historical experience'[40]: in fact, 'the establishing of superior institutional forms is prepared for by a series of continuous and slowly-formed experiences'.[41] Since 'history, then, is satisfied by finding necessary solutions, even if they are temporary and inadequate', in the end it is 'our duty to rediscover, interpret and understand if new forms are not germinating by chance, and if fragile fragments are not intertwining'.[42]

The solutions offered, at a theoretical level, can also be modified in the light of any practical difficulties encountered in their implementation, but it is important to always have clearly in mind the goal towards which one aims.[43] The scientific method employed by Olivetti, with regard to politics, calls, in the final result of analysis and research, for a clear panorama of the objective to be reached, yet one

should identify 'the multiplicity of conditions, norms and routes that are determined by an organic vision' of the way in which one could realise a modern State.[44]

Given the need to generate a complete vision of the political system, the importance of specifying defined constitutional bonds is central: 'parliamentary democracy does not recognise the great changes which have radically transformed, in the last one hundred years, the physiognomy of the social body—and, consequently, the offices of the State; it entrusts, in great part, the defence of freedom to morality and political custom'. But such a defence, 'in the context of a regime which upholds freedom, even in favour of those forces which intend to destroy it, is wholly insufficient'.[45] The most important reform, then, is to integrate into traditional institutions 'organs which parliamentary practice already recognises, [whilst] perfecting and extending their powers'.[46] Olivetti proclaims the importance of a constitutional codification of all those principles which national and international political experience have shown to be indispensable for a better-organized society.[47] He analyzes not only the functions of various legal institutions, but also understands the reasons why they were created[48]: 'the refusal of judicial approval', Olivetti stated, 'is a hypocritical refusal of the principle which is claimed to be upheld, since the certainty that the principle will be contravened is clear for whoever wishes to see the reality of things. For us there is nothing more urgent than a detailed regulation of political experiences'.[49]

The will to constantly look at the reality of political facts leads Olivetti to mistrust custom and poorly formed habit[50] and to call for precise constitutional and 'judicial bonds'[51] so that politics can develop 'within institutions'[52]; the independence and autonomy of corresponding organisations of society are guaranteed, though, through 'divisions', necessary to ensure 'political freedom and a continual evolution of social forms'.[53] He wishes for '*an ordered, but strongly evolutionary, society*'[54]: 'an environment which is politically unprepared and unstable requires, in our view, stricter constitutional procedures'.[55] And, in general, one of the most important 'guarantees of freedom' identified by Olivetti dovetails with the institutionalisation of that which is defined by others as 'conditional power'[56]: 'the solution to the "crisis of freedom" consists, in fact, in the discovery of new legal bonds which society's new structure has made indispensable'.[57]

Adriano Olivetti, then, speaks of the perfection and inflexibility of the political system, as outlined in *L'ordine politico delle Comunità*, in order to state, in the first instance, contentiously and provocatively, the necessity of theoretical clarity which must inform every political action: 'constitutional judicial form' is the necessary guarantee which allows 'a rigorous application of *principles*' from which concrete proposals take inspiration.[58] In his main work, with its pre-eminent aim of reforming the representative system, Olivetti often explicitly declares the approximate character of some of his proposals[59] and communicates, just as often, the need to state in the future Constitution some aspects which are omitted in his main tract,[60] such that nothing be left to empirical improvisation. It is, then, clearly mistaken to reproach Olivetti for not dwelling upon certain points[61] or for going into too much detail on others.[62] *L'ordine politico delle Comunità*, the work with which the author intended to 'devise an idea for Society that is feasible in practice',[63] is important above all for

the paradigmatic meaning it expresses as a whole: it is an example of the political application of a 'rigid methodology', based 'on the scientific updating of doctrines'.[64] The 'succession of institutions, laws, regulations and forms which constitute the new political order and make of it a singularly complex, and extremely rigid, structure'[65] are adaptable.[66]

Second, and most importantly, the perfection and inflexibility of *L'ordine politico delle Comunità* are attributed to the fact that a change in the structure of the State would entail the need to monitor the possible effects that such a change has on the State's entire organisation: 'every attempt at partial reform of the highly fragile parliamentary system is to be considered dangerous for the inevitable repercussion, on other elements, of the change brought about in one of the bodies of which it is constituted'.[67] Convinced that 'every imperfection in the structure of the State reverberates through society in the form of a lack of freedom',[68] Olivetti developed his work from the belief that 'a political system, in order to respond to the complex demands of modern life and to confront those manifold spiritual and moral crises which have affected contemporary society, ought to appear as a unitary system where each element with which it is constituted had an autonomous existence, but is organised with the totality in mind'.[69] For this reason, the modification of any part of the system, resulting from the analysis of historical experience of political practice, entails the revision of the entire structure.[70] For this reason too, as was noted before, it shows the folly of the apodictic statement according to which 'even his utopia, like all other, is totalising, to be either accepted or rejected without discussion', constructed 'once and for all, in the complete and absolutely typical form of social utopias, during the months of the quiet Swiss retreat'.[71]

Olivetti's intention is to propose a new system of political representation,[72] but, as has been noted, 'without a plain and clear arrangement for the basic institutions of political representation' it is not possible to hope for a sufficient degree of precision. 'A model of political representation cannot be abstractly developed without taking into account the possibilities and limits of the institutional mechanisms, which must ensure the implementation of rigorous rules'.[73] The only correct way to present a proposal for reform of the representative system is, in the end, then, that employed by Olivetti: a defined, coherent and complete system, though one which can also be adapted and improved. If reference may be made, by way of explanation, to a renowned German psychological school, one can maintain that the mental approach of Adriano Olivetti to socio-political problems echoes that of *Gestalt*, according to which every part acquires a precise value, purely in relation to the order of relationships into which it is inserted.[74]

This holistic approach of Olivetti to the problems of politico-administrative organisation is driven by the striving towards a harmonious framework for society, 'but without order and without symmetry harmony is unattainable; and it was this which we went looking for'.[75] At this point we find ourselves faced with another ambiguous question: references to symmetry and geometry can appear to be a convenient invitation to speak of the abstract rationality of an eclectic engineer who cites, in the same essay, comments of the Pythagorean Nicomachus of Gerasa, of Plato, 'through the mouth of Socrates', and of Vitruvius,[76] and goes on to maintain

that 'the State must open the geometric perfection of its structure to analysis'.[77] But to understand this reference to geometry, it must be put in a specific context and circumscribed by Olivetti's ideas, without extending its meaning to every institutional aspect of *L'ordine politico delle Comunità*.[78] In fact, the focus on geometry allows Olivetti to resolve only one problem, which he maintains as 'central' in a federal State: '[the problem] of extending the same political equilibrium, which characterises the government of the Community, to all the bodies amongst which the exercise of the three powers in the Federal State is divided'.[79] In this regard, he notes that the Communities must become Regions and these federated Regions must form the State, 'in the same way as small crystals congregate to make a bigger crystal, without changing shape or form'.[80] On this point, he states that 'in the "political order", a regular rhythm runs everywhere, a continual recurrence of an identity of forms, of invariable numbers',[81] alert to 'that which the Greeks call *analogia*, a consonance between each part and the whole'.[82] But to propose this State structure, this link between local autonomies and the State, is no more than to hope for interventions that strive to realise a process to rationalise relationships between governors and the governed, so as to generalise, from the point of view of both uniformity and specify, in relation to other activities. And in this precise and defined context, it is appropriate to re-evaluate the importance of geometric data, which always appears subordinate to the consideration of the efficiency and functionality of the proposed judicial order.[83] With a reasoned philosophical outlook, it is easy to agree with Olivetti that, in every display of human activity (and also in Constitutions of every time and place), symmetry and geometry are presented as sometimes unwitting requirements of order and harmony: 'nobody who has cast an eye over the relationships between life, nature and the exact sciences could label these statements as reveries and dangerous hypotheses'.[84]

In *L'ordine politico delle Comunità*, as in every Constitution, geometry is only present in procedures of a strictly juridical character, with some provisions to soften the rigidity of the system.[85] All these measures, which appear in connection with changeable and evolutionary aspects of social life, are adaptable to reality,[86] since Olivetti is convinced that 'life is not suited to systems that are too rigid'[87] and that 'the purpose of institutions lays in their, more or less, strong adherence to the continually evolving life of a collective group, in their capacity to satisfy needs to an adequate degree'.[88] Every concrete political proposal must take into account the reality in which it will take form and, for this reason, *L'ordine politico delle Comunità* is considered only in relation to the historical and geographical reality of Italy.[89] Continually present in his work is reference to national and international historical reality and, for this reason, explicit 'transitory provisions' are present, which permit the adaptation of some requirements that are indispensable to fulfil an institutional role in the Community, in the socio-political conditions of the immediate post-war period.[90] The same Community 'represents a rationalisation of the Swiss Canton, adapted to the *Italian tradition*, perfecting it so it is fit to confront the complex needs of modern society'. And the author speaks of 'rationalisation' because

'the Swiss Canton has *exclusively* historical origins, which do not always take into account the needs of the economy, nor of a valid administrative division'.[91]

It is not possible, in Olivetti's view, to conceive of an ideal State or of a perfect political model which can be applied to every society, since 'a political *regime* is both the cause and effect of the environment in which it manifests itself'.[92] Olivetti's idea is expressed through a constant consideration of precise spatial and temporal coordinates, due to his being clearly drawn towards finding concrete and practical answers to the problems of the society in which he lives. The reasons which lay at the root of certain problems, and the principles from which their solutions are derived, can be generalized, but human experiences, and the institutions and Constitutions created around them, cannot be repeated *sic et simpliciter* in other historical and geographical contexts.

A lack of consideration in this regard would be an implicit declaration of utopianism on the part of Adriano Olivetti. Instead he offers political solutions whilst being constantly aware of their achievability and knowingly concerned that he is not dealing with a utopia: 'I would not say […] that our proposal posits impossible revolutions and starts on the treacherous path of utopia. It is limited to operating according to the precept which states that one should not ignore, when putting in every effort day after day, the belief in other, greater and more perfect goals, but it also calls for one not to disregard, on account of such beliefs, the duty towards daily work'.[93] In the same way, there is an explicit need to 'halt the generous, but utopian, impulses, which live on in peoples' conventions'[94] and the fear of constitutional order which 'brings about in some […] officials a *utopian* attitude towards the immediate possibilities of social transformation, which are conditioned by technical problems and educational complexities'.[95] His feeling for the concrete is made even more evident by his concern over his, or others', possible utopian allusions: 'only the *domain of reality* allows one to realise how some innovations can destroy positive values and, in fact, constitute a regression, as is the case when the *idealistic champions of the new* fail to recognise the still vital sap under the old bark, or refuse to admit the validity of some laws which cannot be broken with impunity'.[96]

If, as has already been noted, the ultimate end of a 'Christian community' transcends earthly reality and derives from faith in God,[97] then the idealism which ought to guide society's accomplishments appears to be, for Olivetti, a science: 'scientific endeavour […], by its very nature, does not recognise limits, nor partial achievements; summoned to new efforts, it cannot allow for either stoppages or slowing down'.[98] He applies scientific method to the political environment and, moreover, to the economic one, always continually aware of the problem of alienation at work. 'The awareness of completing a *scientific process*', he maintains, 'that is, the passage from a purely commercial mindset to a scientific one […] forms the essence of the new ethical code of industry'.[99] The products of work can be considered, then, 'not as goods but as scientific objects',[100] the expression of a professional pride[101]: this new consideration of productive activity also manifests itself 'in the incessant elimination of exhaustion and hardship, in the brightening of the work process', and

in the rejection of profit as the only reason for introducing new improvements[102]: 'The supposition that the company is, all the while, an economically active concern', Olivetti notes, 'is a condition of existence which obviously cannot be abolished. Yet the level of profit cannot be the exclusive focus of an industrial company. The social necessity of consumption takes its place'.[103] And, indeed, the 'coordination between production and consumption'[104] appears to be the 'central problem' of the economy as developed in the Communities.[105]

Notes

1. Cf. also Adriano Olivetti, *Presentazione del piano*, in *Studi e proposte preliminari per il Piano Regolatore della Valle d'Aosta*, direzione generale del Dott. Ing. Adriano Olivetti, ed. Renato Zveteremich, [Ivrea,] Nuove Edizioni Ivrea, 1943, p. 14.
2. *Proposta per un Senato organico e funzionale*, cit., p. 245; *Democrazia senza partiti*, cit., p. 149.
3. Cf., amongst others, B. Caizzi, *Camillo e Adriano Olivetti*, cit., p. 373; M. Fabbri, *L'urbanistica italiana dal dopoguerra a oggi*, cit., p. 103; Giulio Carlo Argan, in *Ricordo di Adriano Olivetti*, cit., p. 50.
4. Franco Ferrarotti, *Prefazione*, in Donatella Ronci, *Olivetti, anni '50. Patronalsocialismo, lotte operaie e Movimento Comunità*, prefazione di Franco Ferrarotti, Milano, FrancoAngeli, 1980, p. 15; Id., *Un Imprenditore di idee*, cit., pp. 87, 91.
5. See also Gino Giugni, *Il rinnovamento delle istituzioni rappresentative*, in «Comunità», a. XIX, n. 131, August 1965, pp. 33–36; A.C. Jemolo, in *Adriano Olivetti*, cit., p. [5].
6. *L'industria nell'ordine delle comunità*, cit., p. 44. The italics are mine.
7. *Democrazia senza partiti*, cit., p. 172. The italics are mine.
8. *Ibid.*, p. 155. Cf. also *L'ordine*, cit., p. 376. Regarding this particular sentence, Paolo Casini observed that 'the allusion to the harmony of the Platonic polis is clear: geometric shape, indeed, responds to that precise distribution of justice which is alone the guarantee of individual freedom and happiness' (*Città dell'uomo*, in «Il Notiziario Amministrativo», a. VI, n. 1–2, May-June 1960, p. 43).
9. *Prime esperienze in una fabbrica*, cit., p. 4.
10. *Le forze spirituali*, cit., p. 30. Cf. also *Perché si pianifica?*, cit., p. 91. 'Engineers and experts study, for years sometimes, development plans', Olivetti confirmed, 'and the biggest and most interesting industrial projects are, indeed, the result of a predetermined plan. This method ought to be progressively employed, with necessary caution and adaptability, as an instrument of a new social politics. The transformation of our way of life is intimately linked to the initiation, development and perfection of such an approach, because the disorder of our industrial, economic and urban planning structures is all too evident and, as a result, the sense of harmony, which was once automatic, between individual and collective life, no longer exists' (*Presentazione del piano*, cit., p. 14).
11. *Stato sindacati comunità*, in *Società Stato Comunità*, cit., p. 33.
12. Cf. *L'ordine*, cit., p. 19.
13. Cf. *L'ordine*, cit., pp. 177, 204, 241, 243.
14. Cf. *Tecnica della riforma agraria*, in *Società Stato Comunità*, cit., p. 106. A.C. Jemolo notes that Olivetti 'is contrary to every form of empiricism' (*Adriano Olivetti*, cit., p. [4]).
15. Cf. *La rappresentanza nel sistema delle comunità*, in *Società Stato Comunità*, cit., pp. 112–113; *La forma dei piani*, in *Società Stato Comunità*, cit., p. 83; *L'ordine*, cit., *passim*.
16. Cf. *Stato sindacati comunità*, cit., p. 34. 'And when we say corporativism', he specified, 'we wish to indicate a regime in which economic forces hold sway. […] The corporative order is crystallised, since it does offer a true evolution of property rights and aims to resolve the

conflict between capital and labour, reproposing the idea of social laws, whose intrinsic value is practically non-existent, it being a superficial solution, incapable of resolving the serious problems of a modern firm's socio-economic structure' (*Un Parlamento nuovo*, in *Città dell'uomo*, cit., pp. 230–231).

17. *Per una pianificazione democratica nel Mezzogiorno*, cit., p. 283. Italics in original. On Olivetti's political thought in relation to the problem of the development of the south, see Francesco Compagna, *Meridionalismo e «fordismo» di Adriano Olivetti*, in «Nord e Sud», a. VII, Nuova serie, n. 3 (64), April 1960, pp. 70–74; Riccardo Musatti, *Pensiero e azione di Adriano Olivetti per il Mezzogiorno d'Italia*, in «Comuni d'Europa», a. VIII, n. 12, December 1960, pp. 34–35; and Id., *Il concetto di urbanistica secondo Adriano Olivetti*, in Id., *La via del Sud e altri scritti*, Milano, Edizioni di Comunità, 1972, pp. 149–156.

18. Cf. *La forma dei piani*, cit., p. 83 (Olivetti's italics); *Un piano organico*, in *Città dell'uomo*, cit., p. 295.

19. Cf. *ibid.*, p. 84.

20. Cf. *ibid.*, p. 81.

21. *Ibid.*, p. 84. 'The Soviet plan – within the limited aims it prescribed – was theoretically precise', Olivetti declared, 'but for a long time, its details were mistaken; yet the errors proved reparable and the plan led the Russian people to victory' (*L'ordine*, cit., p. 375). He went on to underline that 'the communist-style plan, even though realised with a rigorous coherence to the Soviet state, revealed a considerable gap between plans and results, owing both to the poor elaboration and poor execution of the plan' (*La forma dei piani*, cit., pp. 80–81).

22. *Ibid.*, p. 81.

23. *Ibid.*, p. 83.

24. *Edilizia popolare e pianificazione urbanistica*, in *Città dell'uomo*, cit., p. 131.

25. *La lotta per la stabilità*, in *Società Stato Comunità*, cit., p. 68.

26. *Perché si pianifica?*, cit., p. 96. Until 'plans are valid instruments of a vibrant and free society, a multiplicity of norms, conditions and restrictions is necessary, all determined by an organic and complex vision of the way in which, constituted in law and operating within their own limits', they would be allowed to operate in society (*ibid.*, p. 98).

27. *L'ordine*, cit., p. 185. The constitutional proposal which Olivetti elaborates follows the 'precept of leaving nothing to chance and empiricism' (*ibid.*, p. 329). Cf. also *Libertà di associazione e partiti politici*, in *Città dell'uomo*, cit., p. 205; *Democrazia senza partiti*, cit., p. 151.

28. *Un Parlamento nuovo*, cit., p. 233. Rather, 'in the aftermath of a catastrophe that ought to have brought about the revision of every value', Olivetti noted, 'that type of democratic, parliamentary republic, which did not know how to resist the overwhelming force of armed groups, was born again, slightly modified, with the first European constituents (of Italy and France) without a serious process of analytical examination, without new ideas being able to penetrate these new charters of rights, in these organisations of the state.' (*Democrazia senza partiti*, cit., pp. 134–135).

29. Cf. F. Ferrarotti, *Prefazione*, cit., p. 11.

30. Cf. *La lotta per la stabilità*, cit., p. 66; *Tecnica della riforma agraria*, cit., p. 103; *Democrazia senza partiti*, cit., p. 151.

31. Cf. *L'ordine*, cit., pp. 285, 287, 323, 327–328, 346; *Chi sceglie i Ministri?*, cit., pp. 268–269.

32. For some reflections on the differences between Proudhon and Olivetti, see Umberto Serafini, *Il socialismo personalista e comunitario di Adriano Olivetti*, in Id., *Adriano Olivetti e il Movimento Comunità*, cit., pp. 347–353; Id., *La comunità di Adriano Olivetti e il federalismo*, in «Comuni d'Europa», a. XLI, n. 3, March 1993, pp. 4–5 (article republished as Id., *La Comunità di Adriano Olivetti e il federalismo*, in «Queste istituzioni», a. XXII, n. 97, January-March 1994, pp. 3–20). On the relationship between Olivetti and Weil, see Saveria Addotta, *Simone Weil e Adriano Olivetti*, in «Queste istituzioni», a. XXI, n. 93, January-March 1993, pp. 110–129. On Georges Gurvitch, it is useful to recount an observation of Olivetti: 'The economic plan of the Federal State of Communities differs from the solutions proposed by Gurvitch that were in some ways devised to achieve the same goals. This is characterised by a greater recognition, altogether human and natural, of the territorial idea' (*L'ordine*, cit., p. 188).

Gino Giugni observed that 'the gap between Olivettian thinking and Gurvitch's *Dichiarazione dei diritti*, which was still one of the first works to be edited by Edizioni di Comunità, cannot be bridged. Olivetti's Community order is a political order […]. The technical dimension is found in political experience and it is from there that it must draw its legitimacy' (*Il rinnovamento delle istituzioni rappresentative*, cit., p. 35).

33. Cf. *L'ordine*, cit., pp. 207, 277; 178; 66, 196, 223, 326; 298–299, 326–327; 244, 275–276.

34. Cf. *L'ordine*, cit., p. 23. In this regard it is worth remembering Olivetti's comment: 'the solution which I put together, on the basis of our studies, seems more advanced and socially more complete than that adopted, in its day, by the Zeiss Foundation and the Régie Renault, which remain, nonetheless, *models* whose relevance should not be underestimated' (*La Fondazione proprietaria*, cit., pp. 224–225. Italics in original). For a summary description of the model created by the Zeiss Foundation, see *Il cammino della Comunità*, cit. pp. 74–75, and *L'ordine*, cit., pp. 22–23.

35. In the same way, as far as the concrete activity of the reformer is concerned, as Ferrarotti has revealed, 'the suspicion arises that the exaltation of some aspects serves to hide the general sense of the undertaking' (*Jacques Maritain, Felice Balbo e il Movimento Comunità*, in *Jacques Maritain e le scienze sociali*, ed. Angelo Scivoletto, Milano, FrancoAngeli, 1984, p. 50).

36. As has been noted, 'it seems certain, in any case, that Olivetti had a very clear idea of the objective he intends to pursue. He proposes a model whose essential lines are already drawn, but which needs to be challenged, clarified and, indeed, supported by the thinking of other writers. He moves forward using "cuts" and "corrections", rigorously selecting from his own sources. Olivetti subjects all that is vital and innovative in modern thinking to a sharp analysis, the criteria for which seem to be definitively fixed' (Q. Protopapa, *Il problema delle fonti*, cit., p. 279).

37. Cf. *La lotta per la stabilità*, cit., p. 69.

38. Cf. *L'industria nell'ordine delle comunità*, cit., p. 45; *Urbanistica e libertà locali*, cit., p. 116; *Democrazia senza partiti*, cit., p. 154.

39. Cf. *L'ordine*, cit., p. 43.

40. *La libertà di stampa*, in *Città dell'uomo*, cit., p. 200.

41. *L'ordine*, cit., p. 301.

42. *Società e stato*, in *Società Stato Comunità*, cit., p. 28. As Valerio Castronovo has underlined, 'in Adriano Olivetti's political thinking and institutional engineering, beyond the strong voluntaristic content of his work, there is a prescient vision of things, which not only understood how transformative processes tended to operate, but also foreshadowed new prominent ideas in the relationships between politics, the economy and society' (*Per una cultura industriale*, in *Fabbrica, Comunità, Democrazia*, cit., p. 60).

43. Cf. *Ostacoli alla pianificazione*, cit., p. 123; *Perché si pianifica?*, cit., p. 94.

44. Cf. *Democrazia senza partiti*, cit., p. 154.

45. *Ibid.*, p. 321. Cf. also *Democrazia senza partiti*, cit., p. 161.

46. *L'ordine*, cit., p. 219.

47. Cf. *L'ordine*, cit., p. 40.

48. He clarified that 'Freedom can and must be saved and protected only within a complete transformation of institutions, which presupposes an exact vision of the nature of institutions and an equally precise notion of their relationship to the reality of the social body' (*Chi sceglie i Ministri?*, cit., p. 270; *L'ordine*, cit., pp. 321–322).

49. *Chi sceglie i Ministri?*, cit., p. 278; *L'ordine*, cit., p. 369.

50. Cf. *L'ordine*, cit., p. 354.

51. *Società e stato*, cit., p. 29; *L'ordine*, cit., p. 29.

52. *Il cammino della Comunità*, cit., p. 66; *Democrazia senza partiti*, cit., p. 153.

53. Cf. *L'ordine*, cit., p. 69. Italics in original.

54. *Ibid.*, p. 46. Italics in original.

55. *Chi sceglie i Ministri?*, cit., p. 266.

56. Cf. Alessandro Pizzorno, *Le organizzazioni, il potere e il conflitto di classe* [1963], introduction by Ralf Dahrendorf, *Classi e conflitto di classe nella società industriale*, with an introductory essay by Alessandro Pizzorno, Roma-Bari, Laterza, 1974, pp. XXIII-XXV.

57. *L'ordine*, cit., p. VIII. The second Olivettian intuition specified by Arturo Colombo is that democracy 'constitutes essentially a point of departure, which cannot do without new boundaries, new structures and new explanations' (*Adriano Olivetti fra intuizione e utopia*, cit., p. 106).

58. Cf. *L'ordine*, cit., p. 91. The italics are mine. Alessandro Levi, regarding the particular question of the 'collegial presidency of the Republic', proposed by Olivetti, notes: 'As many criticisms and objections as one wishes to raise *might* be made against the *particulars* of the proposal, and one might suggest all the modifications one believes to be appropriate for a better composition and functioning of the supreme court; but it seems to me, at least, the *principles*, from which the proposal itself draws inspiration, *must* be seriously discussed.' (*Per una presidenza e contro un presidente della Repubblica*, in «La Critica Politica», a. VIII, fasc. 4, April 1946, p. 128. Italics in original).

59. Cf. *L'ordine*, cit., pp. 8, 69, 87, 91, 95, 213, 267, 278, 296, 349, 363.

60. Cf. *ibid.*, pp. 97, 114, 140, 186, 328, 344, 362, 363.

61. Cf. Giuseppe Valentini S.J., *L'ordine politico delle Comunità*, in «L'Osservatore Romano», a. 86, n. 216, 15 September 1946, p. 3; Alessandro Levi, *Appunti per la futura costituzione*, cit., pp. 55–57; Andrea Chiti-Batelli, *Oltre la democrazia rappresentativa?*, in Id., *Elezioni Europee 1984 e riforma delle comunità. Una nuova strategia nella battaglia per l'Europa. Con due note su difesa ed euromissili e su la crisi economica europea*, preface by Alexandre Marc, Milano, Giuffrè, 1984, p. 92; e Id., *L'idea federalista nel pensiero di Adriano Olivetti*, in *Europeismo e federalismo in Piemonte tra le due guerre mondiali. La Resistenza e i Trattati di Roma (1957)*, Atti del Convegno tenuto presso la Fondazione Luigi Einaudi (Torino, 9 and 10 October 1997), ed. Sergio Pistone and Corrado Malandrino, Firenze, Olschki, 1999, pp. 254, 260.

62. Cf. the review of *L'ordine politico delle Comunità*, in «La Critica Politica», a. VIII, fasc. 8–9, August-September 1946, p. 344; v.n., *L'ordine politico delle comunità*, in «L'Ultima», cit., p. 85.

63. *Democrazia senza partiti*, p. 160.

64. *L'industria nell'ordine delle comunità*, cit., p. 45. Serafini correctly defined *L'ordine politico delle Comunità* as 'a hypothesis of work' (*Ci ha lasciato uno dei più grandi Maestri del federalismo integrale: Adriano Olivetti*, in Id., *Adriano Olivetti e il Movimento Comunità*, cit., p. 334). Alberto Mortara wrote that 'the social order imagined in *L'ordine politico delle comunità*, his major work, is a "perfect" construction and, as such "abstract": it is not for this reason, however, "utopian", since it constitutes instead a rational scheme, corresponding to the necessity of conceptual clarity' (*Adriano Olivetti (1901–1960)*, in *I protagonisti dell'intervento pubblico in Italia*, ed. Alberto Mortara, Milano, FrancoAngeli, 1984, p. 648).

65. *Democrazia senza partiti*, cit., p. 155.

66. Olivetti states, in fact, that 'to prevent dangerous fractures in the continuity of life in the state, which are inevitable when the State itself does not possess bodies capable of modifying their own institutional structure at the appropriate time, the constitution itself of the new State will ensure that it nominates bodies that will have to meet at fixed intervals […] to decide on amendments to make to the fundamental laws of the State. / Compared to the limits of legislative and normative powers of less important bodies and of the adaptability of Regional and Community Committees to new situations that might also come about as a result of international events, the Federal State of Communities offers great flexibilty and the capacity to adapt and change' (*L'ordine*, cit., pp. 37–38).

67. *Un Parlamento nuovo*, cit., p. 231. Cf. also *L'ordine*, cit., p. 307.

68. *L'ordine*, cit., p. 376.

69. *Democrazia senza partiti*, cit., p. 158. Costantino Mortati declared that 'in Olivetti's system, everything holds together, with every detail intimately connected to the totality' (*Autonomie e pluralismo nel pensiero di Adriano Olivetti*, in *La regione e il governo locale. Atti del Symposium: «Problemi della Regione e del governo locale»*, ed. Giuseppe Maranini, Milano, Edizioni di Comunità, 1965, vol. I, p. XLVI). Gino Giugni, in *Il rinnovamento delle istituzi-*

oni rappresentative, cit., p. 35, notes that *L'ordine politico delle Comunità* 'drew its essential reasoning from its intrinsic coherence, even down to the most minimal detail; but its monolithic structure was more illusory than real, dictated by methodological needs rather than an inherent desire to present itself as an absolute truth that rejects everything which does not adhere unconditionally to it'.

70. Cf. *L'ordine*, cit., p. 40. When addressing the question of local autonomy, even Pierangelo Schiera speaks of the 'relational character' of autonomy. 'A lot depends, in fact, on the frame of reference in which the autonomy operates' (*Introduzione*, in *Le autonomie e l'Europa. Profili storici comparati*, ed. Pierangelo Schiera, Bologna, il Mulino, 1993, p. 9). Mortati declares that 'the difficulty of representing such a construction in short essays [*L'ordine politico delle Comunità*] is, indeed, born out of the richness of the elements and reasons that go into its makeup, none of which can be considered as secondary, such that each fulfils its basic function, as a constitutive part of the system' (*Autonomie e pluralismo*, cit., pp. XXXVIII–XXXIX).

71. V. Ochetto, *Adriano Olivetti*, cit., pp. 129, 132.

72. Cf. *Chi sceglie i Ministri?*, cit., p. 268.

73. Maurizio Cotta, *Rappresentanza politica*, in *Dizionario di politica*, cit., p. 957. 'It is precisely this procedural, rather than the material, dimension', states Cotta, 'which distinguishes between true political representation and other phenomena from the past or other modern political contexts which are also often spoken of in terms of political representation, which ought to be considered, however, incorrect' (*ibidem*).

74. Cf. *L'architettura, la comunità e l'urbanistica*, cit., p. 146. Ernesto N. Rogers states: 'Adriano Olivetti was conscious of representing a progressive moment of history, but without claiming (which would be against his nature) to have found a definitive solution to history itself. He continually searched, renewed himself, not changing empirically but rather following a coherent line of development. The idea of coherence, in the vast number of proposals he handles, means that the multiple aspects of experience are brought together towards unity. / This aspiration toward unity was, for Adriano Olivetti, a religion' (*L'unità di Adriano Olivetti*, in «Casabella continuità», n. 270, December 1962, p. 6). See also Franco Ferrarotti, *Commemorazione alla Camera dei Deputati*, in *Ricordo di Adriano Olivetti*, ed. «Comunità», Milano, Edizioni di Comunità, 1960, pp. 37–44; R. Zorzi, *Nota introduttiva*, cit., p. XIV.

75. *Democrazia senza partiti*, cit., p. 157.

76. Cf. *ibid.*, pp. 156–158.

77. *L'ordine*, cit., p. 376. Italics in original.

78. Ochetto declares instead: 'In a design which claims to give a rational and scientific order to politics, the values of the symbol multiply such that another, almost 'cryptographic', reading of the book, is possible. There is a secret harmony which does not come from institutional structuring or ingrained solutions but from an arcane relationship between numbers and their combinations'. And he goes on to add: 'Three and seven crop up continuously; the presidential committee of the community is made up of three men who stand for three principles, which Adriano calls "the idea of the original nucleus of power: a Trinitarian association"; complex situations revolve and take shape around the structure of the "trilogy" – that is, a concrete community, an integrated democracy and a functional order; there are seven essential political functions. But the examples could be manifold' (*Adriano Olivetti*, cit., p. 130). Aside from the coincidence between the three main representatives which form the original nucleus of power and the trilogy on which Olivetti bases his reform of the representative system, it does not seem at all to evince a continuous stream of 'threes' and 'sevens'. Rather, if one wishes to play with numbers, one ought to 'cryptographically' note that Olivetti identifies *eight* 'main reasons for disrupting the social order' (cf. *L'ordine*, cit., p. VII); there are *two* chambers which fulfil, naturally, the bicameral system, since the forces, principles and antithetical political forms are dualities (cf. *ibid.*, pp. 241–262); the number *one* refers to the synthesis which realises 'unity in plurality' (cf. *ibid.*, pp. 260–262); there are *nine* main powers of the Supreme Council of the Federal State (cf. *ibid.*, pp. 339–340); there are *four* typologies amongst which the Communities can be distinguished (cf. *ibid.*, pp. 59–60); there are *five*

categories to which the members of the Supreme Council of the Federal State should belong, creating a collegial presidency of the republic (cf. *ibid.*, p. 339); and many more examples might be given.

79. *L'ordine*, cit., p. 322.
80. *Democrazia senza partiti*, cit., p. 155.
81. *Ibid.*, p. 157.
82. *Ibid.*, p. 158. Costantino Mortati notes that 'in confronting then the problem of the internal structure of every community, Olivetti highlights how this has to be put in terms to render possible […] the fulfilment of the office in relation to the community itself; the office is designed to be positioned as the necessary intermediary with which to connect the community itself to superior bodies in an organic nexus: the regions and the state are joined to each other in an uninterrupted chain, which achieves a unnoticed unified harmony through its plurality. / To fulfil its duty as a basic constituent part, the community must be organised like a state in microcosm, with the same structure of higher bodies reproduced within it, in smaller measure, containing elements that, if they are suitably developed and enriched, can be used in the running of the aforementioned bodies' (*Autonomie e federalismo*, cit., p. XL). Corrado Malandrino (*Il federalismo comunitario*, cit., p. 219, note 54) mentions that Mortati expressed doubts over some of the institutional aspects of *L'ordine politico delle Comunità* (*Autonomie e pluralismo*, cit., pp. XLV-XLVII), but it is clear that Mortati is only using a rhetorical form of argument, and even though the questions are hypothetical they are always dealt with in a thorough manner.
83. Nonetheless, what Pampaloni has defined the 'Pythagorean notion of his ideal political construction' (*Un'idea di vita*, cit., p. 16), needs to be fundamentally re-considered.
84. *Democrazia senza partiti*, cit., p. 156.
85. Cf., inter alia, *L'ordine*, cit., pp. 352, 355, 357.
86. For example, in drawing up a meritocratic structure of the representative political system, Olivetti notes that 'significant individuals are not distributed through the whole national territory according to mathematical rules' (*L'ordine*, cit., p. 273).
87. *Libertà di associazione e partiti politici*, cit., p. 208. 'The fusing of problems and the necessity for complex solutions', states Olivetti, 'makes it necessary to confront each problem separately, as well as each relationship between the State and the essential parts of society, since it is all too clear that these relationships vary with the nature of the events' (*Società e stato*, cit., p. 30). Jemolo notes in this regard, too, that 'in all of Olivetti's ideas, [there are] no rigid schemes, since the demands and needs of generations vary continually.' (*Adriano Olivetti*, cit., p. [7]).
88. Cf. *L'ordine*, cit., p. 241.
89. In the same work, Olivetti notes that 'the State will take the name of Federal State of the Communities of Italy' (*L'ordine*, cit., p. 15). And Riccardo Bauer notes: 'Adriano Olivetti […] had the superior temperament of a man for whom the narrow confines of a homeland never have a sense of restriction, even though, given the concreteness of his thought, he constantly sought those confines so that the social structure that he yearned for would be entirely suited to reality, and the work to which he devoted all his energies would be wholly true to life.' (*Ricordo di Adriano Olivetti*, cit., p. 54). Antonio Troccoli, on the other hand, states that 'every historicist vision of society eludes Olivetti's thought: the construction of his society begins from year zero; his is an ideal scheme suitable for every era and every place, prompting the accusation of *bourgeois utopianism* to be levelled at him from several quarters' (*Il pensiero politico e sociale di Adriano Olivetti*, in Id., *Il problema della "Regione" in Italia. Studi e saggi storici*, Firenze, Noccioli, 1964, p. 136. Italics in original). Ettore A. Albertoni expressed similar ideas in *Aspetti politico-giuridici del federalismo e dell'autonomismo regionale*, in *L'Italia unita nella storiografia del secondo dopoguerra*, ed. Nicola Tranfaglia, Milano, Feltrinelli, 1980, p. 246.
90. Cf. *L'ordine*, cit., pp. 68, 70–71, 72–73.
91. *L'ordine*, cit., pp. 105–106. Italics are mine. 'Adapting the system to Italy plays out, while considering that the Community, even having medium size of a Canton, must correspond, in the majority of cases, with traditional unities which have been located in the Diocese, in

the electoral constituency, in the districts and neighbouring areas, giving rise to a unity which presents a notable dimensional uniformity' (*ibidem*).

92. *Chi sceglie i Ministri?*, cit., p. 266. Italics in original.
93. *Urbanistica e libertà locali*, cit., p. 116.
94. *L'ordine*, cit., p. 252.
95. *Ibid.*, p. 229. Italics in original.
96. *Ibid.*, p. 242. Italics are mine.
97. Cf. *ibid.*, p. 333.
98. Cf. *Ostacoli alla pianificazione*, cit., p. 119.
99. Cf. *La lotta per la stabilità*, cit., p. 63. Italics in original.
100. *Ibid.*, p. 64.
101. Cf. V. Agosti, *Adriano Olivetti tra Maritain e Mounier*, cit., p. 236.
102. Cf. *La lotta per la stabilità*, cit., p. 64.
103. *Ibid.*, p. 64.
104. *Ibid.*, p. 66. True civilization 'is harmony […] between centres of consumption and centres of production' (*Ostacoli alla pianificazione*, cit., p. 123). Cf. also *La forma dei piani*, cit., p. 79; *L'ordine*, cit., p. 179.
105. *Ibidem*. 'The Community will facilitate the coordination between co-operative production and distribution, inside and outside the Community, all the while leaving the transfer of products to co-operative associations' (*Tecnica della riforma agraria*, cit., p. 100).

Chapter 4
Between Marxism and Personalism

When speaking of alienation, utopianism and scientific method, one dominant figure of socialist thinking inevitably stands out, reference to whose political thought might be expected from Olivetti. Indeed, the key part of Olivetti's institutional scheme is the guarantee of freedom not in a generic socialist State, but in a socialist State which makes reference to Marxist criticism of representative democracy as a form of cultural heritage: 'Marxism and Christian social movements recognised the inherent failure of the liberal parliamentary system to create a just and human social order, to eliminate, that is, those incontrollable forces which oppose the moral and material rise of the lower classes'. The Federal State of Communities envisioned by Olivetti, 'starting from the same critical premises of the first, and the acceptance of the same spiritual values of the second', proposed 'institutional and economic reform designed to safely guarantee an order for society that would be more equal than that which would result from the pre-existing conflict between opposing forces'.[1]

The reference made here to Marxist thought is not intended to simply note an interesting consonance, but to provide the cue to highlight the impact of a profound influence on Olivetti's thinking. Until now historiography has put into broad context the spiritual and mystical aspect of his thought, drawn from the influence of French personalism and, more generally, of different Judaeo-Christian religious currents. It has overlooked, though, the theoretical roots of his socialism or, rather, has brought them into contact with a 'vague, generic, and type of Christian, humanitarianism'.[2] Olivetti clearly seems, though, to pay constant attention to Marxist thinking, intertwining it with other doctrinal influences that work to alter some of its theoretical foundations. To this end, some aspects of Olivetti's thought can be clarified by analysing the concrete relationship between Marxism and Olivetti's much evoked community personalism, by looking at the details of French personalism and avoiding the nominalist schools and the vagueness of convenient labels.

Rather than explaining the concepts that actually inform his writing, it is easier for hasty critical analyses to pick up on explicit references to individuals or philosophical trends which surface in texts. For this reason, studies have been quick to

note that Olivetti mentions, in *L'ordine politico delle Comunità*, the names of Jacques Maritain, Emmanuel Mounier and Denis de Rougemont,[3] thus undermining his thought and reducing his voice to that of an epigone.[4] Where it is not glossed over, though, and where it is asked what this 'personalism' is which appears, in numerous commentaries, to be the only and main source of his political thought, the use of the singular alone would reveal an error, since '"personalism" was really an ethical, intellectual and spiritual badge, […] the concern of a new generation before it was a philosophical school', given that 'in this regard, indeed, there were more than a few distinctions and divisions'.[5] From this statement, it can readily be understood that Olivetti's reference to the names of Maritain, Mounier and de Rougemont is driven by the will to evoke nothing more than 'an inspiration',[6] a critical attitude towards the circumstantial socio-political reality which he himself defined as an 'undoubted manifestation of modern conscience'.[7] In fact, it is worth noting that, far from being an ideology or a philosophy, 'personalism is the anti-ideology par excellence. This is a basic truth which, implicitly or explicitly, is universally recognised'.[8] This allowed Olivetti to update, to 'define'[9] and to express, in new terms, the ideas and values in which he believed from his time at university.[10]

One might question the apparent discrimination in mentioning three specific names and not others of equal importance in the history of 'French personalisms',[11] such as Alexandre Marc or other exponents of 'Ordre Nouveau' or 'Jeune Droite'.[12] But the three names cited by Olivetti do not refer purely and simply to the 'personalist' realm, but also infer specific political references. If the 'Jeune Droite' had a clearly anti-democratic leaning,[13] then the 'Esprit' and 'Ordre Nouveau' movements set themselves apart above all for their different attitude towards Marxism[14]: 'Ordre Nouveau' 'rejected both the idea of State ownership and collective property', while 'Esprit' declared itself in favour 'of a partially collective organisation of ownership'.[15] In particular 'Esprit' was inclined, perhaps more than the other journals, to look in its analyses for the "truths" of communism' and 'was more prone than other movements perhaps to accept contact with militant Marxists (who had often broken with orthodoxy)', even if 'its general tendency was characterised by their clearly justified rejection'.[16]

Having outlined a hypothesis of the reason why Olivetti focused greater attention on 'Esprit', rather than 'Ordre Nouveau', both movements that he considered maintained the 'distinction between the concept of *persona* and *individual*',[17] it is interesting to note that, in this heterogeneity of 'personalisms', even the approach of Maritain to Mounier would be problematic, since 'the theoretical difference, which is at the base of these two personalisms, is truly radical',[18] if it were not that in two such different figures a common interest clearly emerges: 'in both Maritain and Mounier there is constant reference to Marxism as a necessary voice and a keen need to grasp the "spirit of truth" of an ideology which is contended all the same in the end'.[19] There are several points common to both Maritain and Mounier,[20] but 'three can be identified that seem […] of particular significance: *the awareness of the political role of the intellectual; the perception of the cultural crisis of the West; the critical focus on Marxism*'.[21] Moreover, it ought to be noted that 'above all, both Maritain and Mounier attempt to grasp in Marxism and, one might say, extract from it, its positive elements, foremost amongst which are the anxiety for

the redemption of the working classes, the concern for the poor and the aspiration for a society in which work returns to the centre of the economy'.[22]

While specific studies are yet to illustrate the critical relationship between de Rougemont and Marxism,[23] the common factor that links Maritain, Mounier and the journal 'Esprit' has been highlighted. With this in mind, one can note that Olivetti makes explicit mention of the *Manifesto of the Communist Party* and of one of its measures that could be applied to developed countries so as to subvert the whole system of production, referred to as a concept present in his *L'ordine politico delle Comunità*.[24] And other Marxist suggestions, as put forward in the same *Manifesto*, can also easily be found in his other writings.[25] And, to this end, it would bear little value to repeat that Marx and Engels, in the preface to the *Manifesto* of 24 June 1872, declared that no special importance would be attributed to the revolutionary signs provided at the end of section II: nonetheless, it is symptomatic that Olivetti looks for correspondence with the symbolic banner of scientific socialism. The influence of Marxist thinking is evident even in the terminology he uses: 'proletarian ranks',[26] 'de-proletarianization',[27] 'fascist counter-revolution',[28] 'possessors and means of production and the earth',[29] 'reign of freedom',[30] 'ongoing quarrels between capital and labour',[31] etc. A suitable study would clarify how far the content compares or differs, and in what manner, to Marxian or Marxist considerations, assessing its various and significant claims.

If the structural reforms, which Marxist thinking promised, were to have provided, in Olivetti's view, 'a freer social base', they would not have led, by themselves, to 'a political solution': this still remained to be found.[32] The negative assessment of contemporary society—and in particular of the parliamentary system[33]—entails, for Adriano Olivetti, the need for a *reformatio ab imis fundamentis*, not only of economic relationships of ownership, but also of political institutions, in which and through which communal life is expressed.[34] Olivetti's proposal of a new political and social order seems, then, to be consciously revolutionary, since it involves 'a profound transformation of political institutions and economic and social structure'[35]: in his view 'the revolution of the era consists in identifying a state of society' in which the economic and social life of workers is harmonised.[36] And in this strict relation between the institutional system and the economic one, the influence of Marxist thinking is noticeable.[37]

In Adriano Olivetti's view, it was absurd to think about 'resolving such a serious crisis with limited reforms'. There should have been 'instead a move towards an improvement and transformation of all the traditional institutions and the creation of new links between them'.[38] *L'ordine politico delle Comunità* reveals, in fact, a struggle to realise a State that is organised so as to allow the transition to a socialist society, gradually transforming the current 'economic regime based on private ownership of the means of production'.[39] More precisely, 'the new agricultural and industrial economy will be pluralist, in as much as it will permit the co-existence of forms of personal property, co-operative forms and socialist forms'[40]: 'this pluralist and federalist vision of socialism', notes Olivetti, 'is highly evident in Western political thinking'.[41] The new economy would be characterised by 'a progressive shift from the market economy, based on the idea of profit, to an economy based on

the *social* idea of *service*' and by 'reference, where the level of quality and price are concerned, to the international market'. The market economy, therefore, still retained 'its value of *competition*', but its financing would be controlled 'in the realm of the national market'.[42]

In the new socialist State, envisaged by Olivetti, 'the class struggle *tends* to fade away and morph into an intelligent and careful vigilance, ensuring that social provisions do not degenerate in the administrative phase'.[43] In other words, the class struggle does not disappear completely, but takes on a lead role in the path towards social progress.[44] Olivetti accepts the dichotomous division of society between capitalists and proletarians, as 'Marxist theorists rightly claim',[45] but considers the actions of individuals dependent, except in a concrete social situation, on a moral condition, which does not derive directly and mechanically from the latter. In order, perhaps, to explain to himself his own position in society, he notes that 'a spiritual situation of equal importance exists: that which brings together the good and the just, who are still not united against the most powerful, the greedy, the egoists, who exist in "every" party and in "all" social classes'. And he adds: 'this dualism is far more creative, fertile and closer to the design of God than that other simpler division which separates rich and poor'.[46]

Adriano Olivetti, who considers, then, the class struggle, the 'secular fight against class privileges',[47] as an historic reality, rejects the use of violence as an instrument with which to bring about new political and social order: 'as far as our methods are concerned, we are not revolutionaries, since we do not believe in the use of force, we do not believe in violence'.[48] Political activism customarily dictates that, for it not to fail, it must consider its means and ends as one and the same; if the aim is the legal bond, the means must come from the law: 'we will abandon every Machiavellian or post-Machiavellian idea in which there is abundant talk and discussion of the distinction or justification between means and ends'.[49] In this rejection of violence, as an instrument with which to obtain political results, and in the aforementioned cross-party division of the classes, a further Christian influence is evident: 'the plan of the Federal State of Communities', states Olivetti, 'aims to integrate the social values proclaimed by the Communist Revolution with those which are strictly rooted in Christian civilization, thus protecting the spiritual freedom of the individual'.[50]

If 'the Italian nation gave millions of votes to Christian democracy and millions to Marxist parties',[51] in reality it meant that 'millions of votes were given to Christianity, and millions to socialism and not to their particular forms or party structures'. The meaning was clear: 'the Italian nation is socialist and Christian' and 'could simply call itself socialist too because it is naturally Christian'.[52] With the aim of identifying 'the sources of inspiration for an authentic civilization', it was necessary to abandon 'the materialistic conceptions of history and highlight the political action of the irreplaceable values of Christianity'. In other words, there was a need 'to find a new ideological formulation' and 'from this formula would emerge, organically fused and practically achievable, those principles of solidarity and humanity which unite socialists and Christians'.[53]

This new ideological formulation ought to have taken into account, in the first instance, the new idea of freedom[54] which emerged and took hold in the twentieth century, but which could not 'be defended and understood by those institutions which once guaranteed it'. And for this there are two reasons: 'because these institutions are, by now, insufficient and outdated'; and 'because the very idea of freedom acquires a different meaning in a true Christian civilization than that which it had in the past'.[55] Olivetti maintains that history seems to have witnessed the realisation of the paradox whereby the new idea of freedom which was envisaged also, and above all, by Marxist movements, did not itself manage to transpire in those institutional forms which drew on Marxist thinking: 'the freedom proclaimed by the revolution of the 1800s was the freedom of the individual',[56] the freedom to attain in society a 'limitless individual power'[57] through economic initiative. But this idea of freedom, which did not prevent 'the insults of man towards society and of society towards man',[58] was criticized by revolutionary Marxist movements and Christian associations. The idea of freedom gradually shifted meaning and was enriched with new values: 'respect for *dignity* and the individual's *vocation*'.[59] The relationship between Society and State, which until the beginning of the First World War possessed clearly defined boundaries, entered into crisis.[60] Throughout Europe, as a response to the need to bring about this new idea of freedom, the intervention of the State in society became widespread and 'the two opposite systems or regimes, bourgeois anti-communism and proletarian antifascism, found themselves united by the same mortal sin of statolatry'.[61]

Faced with the new meaning acquired by the idea of freedom, Olivetti theorised 'the dual facet of every human activity, characterised by its own division: on one side this is solved through an entirely free expression and on the other in an expression rooted in socio-political organism'.[62] In the first case, '*the freedom of society*' is guaranteed; in the second, human activity has to assume an 'institutional expression', such that '*freedom is social*'.[63] Freedom in society reveals itself through the 'right to express one's own opinion', through the 'choice of economic initiatives, of career and of profession', through the 'possibility of comparison between particular cultural, technical and economic outcomes', and as 'a spiritual attitude that intuits and accommodates every last unforeseen human need'.[64] Freedom is social, on the other hand, in the way in which it finds 'its guarantee in a balance of legally defined social and spiritual forces'.[65]

If 'the concept of freedom deepens and grows', two necessary consequences result from it: 'the juridical transformation of the institutions which defend freedom and a new concept of democracy'. Liberalism and democracy are strictly related to one another, in Olivetti's view, and, so, 'a new concept of democracy must correspond to the new idea of freedom',[66] since that which exists 'is too weak and prone to be overwhelmed by the influence of money and by the pressure of organised groups which do no represent the majority'.[67] Truth cannot be imprisoned in 'limited, simplistic or abstract formulas', but must generate 'a creative synthesis', where 'that which is keen and vital for democracy, liberalism and socialism' can find 'a new and happier expression'.[68] The communist revolution tried to give form to a

new idea of democracy,[69] but failed in its attempt, because of the empiricism that informed its actions. Communists worried solely about 'applying every letter of the Communist programme, to establish the dictatorship of one class'. From there, according to Marx's pledge, a panorama of freedom would have emerged, which, however, proved to be beyond revolution: 'nobody explains how one can move from proletarian dictatorship to the rule of freedom'.[70] In line with Marxian suggestions, a form of 'predominance of State over society'[71] came about, then, through history and 'thus, in the socialist conscience, the idea remained that the State would inevitably assume responsibility to lead economic affairs itself, and that it would intervene in that society which it wanted to set free but which was regressing, on the path full of dangers of *direct* intervention, not only in the economy but also in the life of the individual himself, in culture, sciences and arts'.[72] Structural reforms of Communism, both desired and realised, even 'in simplistic and primitive forms',[73] contributed to create a freer society, but did not lead, by themselves, to a socialist democracy.[74] This problem remained unresolved, because 'Marxists visibly loathed giving themselves ends[75]: according to their ideology, 'the only valid way in which one can think of oneself is how one lives, the rest is imaginary'.[76]

Notes

1. *L'ordine*, cit., p. 45.
2. Cf. D. Ronci, *Olivetti, anni '50*, cit., p. 31. Donatella Ronci ideologically rejects Marxist influences on Olivetti's thinking, pointing to the friendship between Olivetti and Carlo Rosselli and Piero Gobetti, to his participation in Turati's fleeing Italy, and to the links with Parri and antifascism as 'episodes without significant implications in his political growth, which remained entrusted, during the whole of fascism, to personal political reflection rather than ideological or party political ties' (*ibidem*); almost as if only a tie to a political party could bear witness to the theoretical 'implications' in the political education of an individual.
3. Cf. *L'ordine*, cit., pp. 13–14.
4. Cf. [Geno Pampaloni,] *Introduzione*, in *Società Stato Comunità*, cit., pp. IX-XXXVIII, and Id., *Un'idea di vita*, cit., pp. 14–15, and, subsequently, the majority of articles on the two works of Olivetti (cf. in particular Franco Rinaldi, *Filosofia, ideologia e prassi della "rivoluzione comunitaria"*, in «Il Politico», a. XVII, no. 3, December 1952, pp. 315–321; re-printed in «Comunità», a. VII, no. 17, February 1953, pp. XIII–XV). Quintino Protopapa has perceptively observed that the reference to the names of Mounier, Maritain and de Rougemont, in 'a text which has no bibliography and lacks quotations, perhaps contributed to significantly deepen the true import of French personalist thinking on the shaping of Olivetti's work' (*Il problema delle fonti*, cit., p. 269). Moreover he criticised the content of the introduction to *Società Stato Comunità*, highlighting 'some strain on the problem of Olivetti's dependence on French personalist thinking' (*ibid.*, pp. 269–271). Corrado Malandrino correctly notes that it would be mistaken 'to think of the social personalism of Maritain and Mounier as the sole source or definitive key to fully understand Olivetti's thought in the period in which he conceived and drafted the *Ordine politico*' (*Il federalismo comunitario*, cit., p. 207).
5. Antonio Pavan, *Il marxismo «ultima eresia cristiana»*, in «Vita e pensiero», a. LV, no. 1, January-February 1973, p. 11. Danilo Zolo, on the other hand, states that 'in modern acceptance, Personalism describes a movement which emerged in France about 1930 around the review 'Esprit' and under the guidance of Emmanuel Mounier (1905–1950)' and, consequently,

instead of clarifying what personalism is, describes exclusively Mounier's thinking (*Personalismo*, in *Dizionario di politica*, cit., p. 813).

6. Jean Lacroix, *Il personalismo come anti-ideologia*, Milano, Vita e pensiero, 1974, p. 10. Cf. also Giorgio Campanini, *Per un bilancio politico del personalismo di Mounier*, in Id., *Cristianesimo e democrazia. Studi sul pensiero politico cattolico del '900*, Brescia, Morcelliana, 1980, p. 120. 'Personalism, also as political thought, aims to be an open structure, continually in search of itself, not a "doctrine" and even less a system' (*ibidem*). See also, by the same author, *Personalismo e democrazia*, Bologna, Edb, 1987.

7. Letter from Olivetti to Einaudi, 30 November 1944, in Luigi Einaudi - Ernesto Rossi, *Carteggio (1925-1961)*, ed. Giovanni Busino and Stefania Martinotti Dorigo, Torino, Fondazione Luigi Einaudi, 1988, p. 579. Arturo Colombo notes that 'Olivetti's doctrinal theses […] can be understood only indirectly in the whole context of communitarian *Weltanschauung* of French origin.' And he adds: 'It seems to me […] that there exist equally profound characteristic elements, which distinguish in an original manner his system of ideas, so as to make it a *unicum* which is difficult to assimilate with the current picture of communitarian experiences dear to the Esprit group' (*Adriano Olivetti*, in «Il Politico», a. XXV, no. 1, March 1960, p. 202). Vittorio Agosti, although correctly reappraising the influence of Maritain and Mounier, considers, conversely, the thought and action of Olivetti as if it were inspired exclusively by the 'two cultural experiences' of Maritain and Mounier. Adriano Olivetti seems here like an eclectic, superficial and well-intentioned individual, wanting to impress upon Italy, with 'plain optimism', a philosophical idea that had developed elsewhere, making it concrete in an institutional form: his thought and action are reduced to the 'evidence' of a Christian (*Adriano Olivetti tra Maritain e Mounier*, cit., pp. 228–236). Reservations on this article are expressed, both by Q. Protopapa, *Il problema delle fonti*, cit., p. 271–273, and also by F. Ferrarotti, *Jacques Maritain, Felice Balbo e il Movimento Comunità*, cit., p. 50.

8. J. Lacroix, *Il personalismo come anti-ideologia*, cit., p. 10.

9. *Ibid.*, p. 41.

10. Cf. D. Cadeddu, *Adriano Olivetti politico*, cit., pp. 1–47; *La dichiarazione dei principi*, in «L'Unità», a. VIII, no. 17, 26 April 1919, pp. 1–2; and C. Malandrino, *Il federalismo comunitario*, cit., pp. 204, 208; S. Santamaita, *Educazione Comunità Sviluppo*, cit., p. 31; Sergio Ristuccia, *Il progetto politico di Adriano Olivetti nell'Italia del dopoguerra*, in *La comunità concreta: progetto ed immagine. Il pensiero e le iniziative di Adriano Olivetti nella formazione della cultura urbanistica ed architettonica italiana*, ed. Marcello Fabbri and Antonella Greco, Roma, Fondazione Adriano Olivetti, 1988, p. 29. With regard to the idea of the Community as a place of political and social practice, Marcello Fabbri notes that 'this intuition does not seem alien to the cultural climate of the 'conciliar' Turin in the immediate post-war period, during which Olivetti had begun his time as a student at the Politecnico (*L'urbanistica italiana dal dopoguerra a oggi*, cit., p. 101).

11. As Jacques Maritain suggests, though, it would be more correct to speak of numerous 'personalisms'. In fact, «rien ne serait plus faux que de parler du "personnalisme" comme d'*une* école ou d'*une* doctrine. C'est un phénomène de réaction contre deux erreurs opposées [le totalitarisme et l'individualisme], et c'est un phénomène inévitablement très mélangé. Il n'y a pas une doctrine personnaliste, mais des aspirations personnalistes et une bonne douzaine de doctrines personnalistes, qui n'ont parfois en commun que le mot de personne, et dont certaines penchent plus ou moins vers l'une des erreurs contraires entre lesquelles elles se situent» (*La personne et le bien commun*, Paris, Desclée De Brouwer et C., 1947, pp. 8–9. Italics in original).

12. The same Denis de Rougemont defines Marc as 'l'*inventeur*' of personalism and notes that 'la plupart des thèmes *juridiques* et *politiques* de la pensée personaliste ont été proposés, formulés et souvent développés en premier lieu par un homme: Alexandre Marc' (*Alexandre Marc et l'invention du personnalisme*, in *Le fédéralisme et Alexandre Marc*, Lausanne, Centre de recherches européennes, 1974, p. 62. Italics in original).

13. Cf. J.-L. Loubet del Bayle, *I non-conformisti degli anni Trenta*, Roma, Cinque Lune, 1972, p. 493.

14. Between January and April 1934, the rift between Esprit and Ordre Nouveau grew, on account of the latter's excessive sympathies towards 'National-Fascism'. The split with Ordre Nouveau marked a significant turn 'to the left' in the ideological leaning of Esprit (cf. *ibid.*, pp. 196-198). Nonetheless, '*Ordre Nouveau*, above all with Aron and Danieu, tended to oppose Soviet communism to authentic Marxism and Marxism itself to Marx, or at least the "young Marx".' (*ibid.*, p. 374).

15. *Ibid.*, p. 506.

16. *Ibid.*, p. 377.

17. Letter from Olivetti to Einaudi, 30 November 1944, in L. Einaudi - E. Rossi, *Carteggio*, cit., p. 579. Italics in original.

18. Cf. Armando Rigobello, *Il «personalismo» di Jacques Maritain e di Emmanuel Mounier*, in *Jacques Maritain*, ed. Antonio Pavan, Brescia, Morcelliana, 1967, p. 71. 'The fundamental idea of Maritain's doctrine remains classical metaphysics, even if transcended in a Christian vision of reality and life; the start of Mounier's enquiry is, rather, personal experience and only in the fullness of that experience can the outline of a doctrine be explained.' (*ibidem*). See also G. Campanini, *Due "profili paralleli": Maritain e Mounier*, in Id., *Cristianesimo e democrazia*, cit., pp. 85, 89–90.

19. G. Campanini, *Il pensiero politico cristiano*, in Id., *Cristianesimo e democrazia*, cit., pp. 32–33. The author observed that 'the attitude of Catholic French culture toward Marxism undergoes a subtle evolution from the 1930s, for a number of reasons: from the need not to deepen the rifts within the antifascist "front" to the hope of a humanistic re-reading of Marxism, hastened and encouraged by the circulation of the texts of a young Marx, and the impact they had particularly in France after 1932, above all the *Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts*, published for the first time in German in 1929' (*ibidem*).

20. 'Common elements to both Mounier's project and Maritain's are the radical critique of the bourgeois world, the new and critical relationship with Marxism, and the foundation of a new Catholic political practice' (G. Campanini, *Il pensiero politico cristiano*, cit., p. 32).

21. Cf. G. Campanini, *Maritain – Mounier: impegno intellettuale e proposta politica*, in Id., *Cristianesimo e democrazia*, cit., p. 97. Italics in original.

22. *Ibid.*, p. 99. 'In a context in which Catholic culture showed an obstinate, and sometimes preconceived opposition, to Marxism, Maritain and Mounier initiate a new type of reading of Marxism: founded, in the first instance, on a type of "pre-understanding" and on a careful and direct understanding of the texts, at that time quite rare in Catholic circles; and designed, above all, to grasp not only the negative aspects of Marxism, but also the positive ones too' (*ibidem*). For the critical attitude of Maritain towards Marxian thought, see *Maritain e Marx. La critica del marxismo in Maritain*, ed. Vittorio Possenti, Massimo, Milano 1978. On the differences between Maritain and Olivetti see F. Ferrarotti, *Jacques Maritain, Felice Balbo e il Movimento Comunità*, cit., pp. 27–52. On Mounier, see also Antonio Quagliani, *A proposito di cattolici e marxisti. Emmanuel Mounier: «ovvero il senso della terra»*, in «Il Mulino», a. XXI, n. 223, September-October 1972, pp. 852–876.

23. In general, see J. L. Loubet del Bayle, *I non-conformisti*, cit., *passim*, François Saint-Ouen, *Denis de Rougemont*, in «Federalismo & Società», a. II, n. 2-3, 1995, pp. 87–97, and *Denis de Rougemont. La vita e il pensiero*, ed. S. Locatelli - G. Huen de Florentiis, Milano, Ferro, 1965. For biographical details, Bruno Ackermann, *Denis de Rougemont. Una biographie intellectuelle*, Genève, Labor et Fides, 1996, voll. I-II.

24. Cf. *L'industria nell'ordine delle comunità*, cit., pp. 50–51, in which it is noted that the same concept is expressed in *L'ordine politico delle Comunità* as in point 9 of part II of the *Manifesto of the Communist Party*, where the need is demonstrated to gradually eliminate the antagonism between city and country, employing a 'combination of agricultural with industrial work'.

25. Cf. *Tecnica della riforma agraria*, cit., pp. 98–99; *L'industria nell'ordine delle comunità*, cit., pp. 51–52; *L'ordine*, cit., p. 110. Marcello Fabbri notes that 'the picture of a communitarian factory, and the social and productive organisation built around it, coincides, for Olivetti, with the realisation of the *Manifesto*: with the idea of the socialist factory' (*L'urbanistica italiana dal dopoguerra a oggi*, cit., pp. 112–113).

26. *L'ordine*, cit., p. 93.
27. *Tecnica della riforma agraria*, cit., p. 103.
28. *Ibid.*, p. 99.
29. *Urbanistica e libertà locali*, cit., p. 103.
30. *Società e stato*, cit., p. 25; *Un Parlamento nuovo*, cit., p. 230.
31. *Ai lavoratori di Pozzuoli*, cit., p. 164; *Il cammino della Comunità*, cit., p. 64.
32. Cf. *Democrazia senza partiti*, cit., p. 146.
33. Cf. *L'ordine*, cit., p. 315.
34. In the introduction to *L'ordine*, cit., p. VII, Olivetti states that the persistence of 'inadequate political structures' is one of the reasons for the crisis of contemporary society. The first Olivettian institution identified by Arturo Colombo is that one cannot 'be happy with palliative measures and minor improvements' to revitalise contemporary democracy (*Adriano Olivetti fra intuizione e utopia*, cit., p. 104).
35. Cf. *L'industria nell'ordine delle comunità*, cit., p. 44. Costantino Mortati notes that Olivetti is aware 'of the sterility of legal structures – even if they are sensibly designed – if, on the one hand, a diffuse ethical sense does not run through them, and if, on the other, they do not sit on top of on an economic order that is fit to realise the harmonious convergence of interests. / The fact that Olivetti's structure allows such room to breathe distinguishes it from all other ideas that see decentralising institutions as just one of the elements of the framework of state organisation, one cog to add to the others which go together to constitute it.' (*Autonomie e pluralismo*, cit., p. XXXVIII).
36. Cf. *L'ordine*, cit., p. 23.
37. This is also noted by Andrea Chiti-Batelli, *Oltre la democrazia rappresentativa?*, cit., p. 96. 'Transforming the means of production and insitutional transformation', noted Danilo Zolo, 'are involved in a reciprocal manner in line with the general methodological rule of Marxian materialism: the reduction of the whole social problem to a problem of the means of production. In my view, this remains the fundamental epistemological key to a theory of the State which aims to take inspiration from the scientific work of Marx. And by using this key one can attempt to find an exit from the aporia represented by the "asymmetric" relationship in his work between political theory and economic analysis' (*Stato socialista e libertà borghesi*, Roma-Bari, Laterza, 1976, p. 30).
38. *L'ordine*, cit., p. 219.
39. *Libertà di associazione e partiti politici*, cit., p. 214.
40. *L'ordine*, cit., p. 186.
41. *Ibid.*, p. 188.
42. *La lotta per la stabilità*, cit., p. 65. Italics in original.
43. *L'ordine*, cit., pp. 68–69. Italics are mine. As Ferrarotti notes, 'Olivetti was well aware that the class struggle exists, that it is utterly useless to banish it with moralistic discourses and dilute it with the subterfuge of sociological jargon' (*Comunità e democrazia nel pensiero politico di Adriano Olivetti*, in Id., Franco Ferrarotti, *La sociologia come partecipazione*, Torino, Taylor, 1961, p. 80). Paolo Petta expresses a different view in *Ideologie costituzionali della sinistra italiana*, cit., p. 94.
44. Valerio Ochetto asserts the presence in Olivetti's thinking of the 'refusal to consider the class struggle, like every other form of conflict, as a permanent fact and source of the movement (*Adriano Olivetti*, cit., p. 129). Olivetti, though, explicitly states that 'the Community Movement has assumed the task' of 'tracing a path designed to show that it is possible [...] for creative dualisms to live equally in the State environment, that is the opposition of forces, that contrast between tradition and progress without which society and life would stagnate' (*Democrazia senza partiti*, cit., p. 150). Cf. also Augusto Todisco, *Per una libera Comunità del Canavese*, in «Città e Campagna», a. XII, no. 10/11, October-November 1980, p. 16 (reprinted with additions, omissions and modifications as *Adriano Olivetti e la Comunità del Canavese*, Ivrea, Irses, 1990).
45. *Il cammino della Comunità*, cit., p. 82.

46. *Ibidem.*

47. *L'ordine*, cit., p. 251.

48. *Il cammino della Comunità*, cit., p. 63. 'To give life to this new world', he states, 'the rich and the powerful will have to abandon the inconsiderate and indiscriminate path towards ever greater wealth, renounce the vanity of Power and its ephemeral glory'. And he goes on to wonder: 'Will this be possible without a definitive conflict? It is not for us to answer, but to staunchly manage the responsibilites which were bestowed on, and taken up by, us.' (*Alle «Spille d'Oro»*, cit., p. 157).

49. *Democrazia senza partiti*, cit., p. 171.

50. *L'ordine*, cit., pp. 375–376.

51. *Il cammino della Comunità*, cit., p. 60. Cf. also *L'industria nell'ordine delle comunità*, cit., p. 43.

52. *Ibidem.* 'Old socialist ideals and Christian principles *cannot die* since they represent eternal values' (*ibid.*, pp. 83–84. Italics in original).

53. *Il cammino della Comunità*, cit., pp. 60–61. Cf. also *L'industria nell'ordine delle comunità*, cit., pp. 43–44. 'We propose, in fact, an order which can be equally accepted by socialist masses and cultural figures, and by Christian masses and cultural figures, whether they are Catholic or orthodox' (*La libertà di stampa*, cit., p. 198).

54. *Democrazia senza partiti*, cit., p. 160.

55. *Ibid.*, pp. 160–161.

56. *Ibid.*, p. 161.

57. *Società e stato*, cit., p. 25.

58. *L'ordine*, cit., p. VIII.

59. *Democrazia senza partiti*, cit., p. 161. Italics are mine. 'Man's freedom itself […] is a declaration of inner vocation' (*L'ordine*, p. 47). Olivetti maintains that promoting vocations 'and giving them the means of expressing themselves is perhaps the most secret and authentic way that a civilization can express itself' (*Perché si pianifica?*, cit., p. 94).

60. *Società e stato*, cit., pp. 25–26.

61. *Ibid.*, p. 26. On the other hand 'the communitarian economy tends to give life to *autonomous groups* in which the State is only present as an indirect instrument of control, to see that privileges do not develop, a theoretical, and already forecast, condition and one partially implemented by the liberal State. In the State of Communities, an organic federalist system takes the place of traditional ownership, in which a wide range of moral and material interests are present, capable of finally giving life to the *autonomous order of the Economy*, free from the overbearing intervention of the State' (*La lotta per la stabilità*, cit., p. 69. Italics in original).

62. *Società e stato*, cit., p. 30. Cf. also *L'ordine*, cit., p. 30. In *Stato sindacati comunità*, cit., p. 34, he speaks of a '*dualistic aspect of the social and spiritual display of the individual*' (italics in original). Between these two demonstrations of freedom, 'man has still not found a new and more equitable balance, above and beyond his current circumstance, torn as he is between two evils of the century: unfettered individualism and the idolatry of the state' (*Ostacoli alla pianificazione*, cit., p. 125). Olivetti makes it clear that 'Autonomous, free and individual scientific and artistic events should not be confused with the activities relative to that particular organised structure of society called the State, created out of necessity from *political offices*. Since the latter, after all, have a direct and indirect influence on the free acts of man, they must be subject to rules and assessments which the former do not require at all' (*L'ordine*, cit., p. 49. Italics in original).

63. *Stato sindacati comunità*, cit., p. 34. Italics in original.

64. *L'ordine*, cit., pp. VIII–IX.

65. *Ibid.*, p. 321. This dualistic aspect of the social and spiritual expression of the individual is defined by Umberto Serafini as 'the second of Olivetti's discoveries' (*Adriano Olivetti e le dottrine politiche*, in Id., *Adriano Olivetti e il Movimento Comunità*, cit., p. 441). See also U. Serafini, *La comunità di Adriano Olivetti e il federalismo*, cit., pp. 3–4).

66. *Democrazia senza partiti*, cit., p. 161. Giuseppe Maranini defines that advanced by Olivetti as an 'organic democracy', which re-proposes themes which have already been tackled by the historic sensitivity of Napoletan neo-Guelphs, in particular by Federico Persico, without

forgetting or misunderstanding Gaetano Mosca's resolute critique of 'arithmetic democracy' (*Storia del potere in Italia. 1848–1967*, Firenze, Vallecchi, 1967, p. 325).

67. *Ibid.*, p. 148. Cf. also *L'ordine*, cit., p. VII. In Olivetti's view, 'parliamentary democracies are founded on three classical institutions, which are clearly insufficient: political parties, proportional representation, and universal suffrage (*Libertà di associazione e partiti politici*, cit., p. 205).

68. *Il cammino della Comunità*, cit., p. 86.

69. Olivetti speaks of the USSR as a 'triumphant revolution' and a 'huge social transformation' (*L'ordine*, cit., p. 286) and remembers Soviet disorganisation 'not so as to undermine a huge social revolution', but to uphold the necessity for coordination at the root of the State (*La forma dei piani*, cit., p. 81).

70. *Democrazia senza partiti*, cit., p. 145. To underline the 'panorama of freedom' promised by Marx 'with words of prophetic power', Olivetti cites the final section of the second part of the *Manifesto of the Communist Party*, which ends with the well-known sentence: 'In place of the old bourgeois society, divided by classes and class conflict, there will be a general association, in which the free development of each individual will be the condition for the free development of everyone' (*ibidem*).

71. *Società e stato*, cit., p. 26.

72. *Ibid.*, p. 27. Italics in original.

73. *Democrazia senza partiti*, cit., p. 146.

74. *Ibidem*.

75. *Ibid.*, p. 145.

76. *Ibidem*.

Chapter 5
Philosophy of Action

It seems clear then that, for Olivetti, Marxism is lacking in something in order for it to be defined as 'scientific socialism'. 'One realises how little it mattered—not in Karl Marx's time, but today—after the revolution had already triumphed', notes the entrepreneur, 'to not know how, and not want to address the serious issue of the way in which communism passes from a dictatorship to a regime of freedom, and what this regime is, if the form in which it is expressed in bourgeois society is by now an outdated, incapable and inefficient instrument'.[1] For this reason, Olivetti maintains that it is important to develop an innovative 'theoretical contribution',[2] 'outside of the main dogmas and outmoded and uncertain beliefs',[3] which attempt to resolve the problem: a concrete base of a socialist theory of the State needed to be laid down[4] which, far from being the bridge towards a society without the State,[5] would be the guarantee of organisation and freedom. Since the problem was identified as a current one, it seemed necessary to Olivetti that whoever had lived through it historically faced the challenging task of providing a response: to this precise end, in fact, searching for 'guarantees of freedom in a socialist State', he developed *L'ordine politico delle Comunità*, which represents, then, that 'real and true alternative model of a socialist State' whose very absence is, indeed, revealed.[6]

His political programme originated from the knowledge of an 'historic necessity',[7] of a necessity that communal life urgently reclaims in this historic moment: 'a new political order, open to every possibility, must be based on an authority which reflects a new socio-political balance'.[8] Olivetti, positioning himself within history,[9] declares the 'impossibility of an anti-historical return',[10] at least in Europe, to the political equilibrium which assured individual freedom before the two World Wars[11] and notes that the criticism against 'the socialist programme, accused, not without reason, of leading man into a new slavery', cannot lead 'to an anti-historic return to the past', nor prevent 'the real state of things from being seen'.[12] Olivetti rejects a determinist vision of history, one which leads to a quietistic faith in its magical capabilities, and believes instead in the possibility of planning within history, in starting from history.[13]

Unlike the 'mythological tradition' created around the personality of Adriano Olivetti,[14] it is possible, in fact, to find in his writings a constant reference to historical example and the experience of other political realities of the past: history is the omnipresent point of reference in all his political thought.[15] 'We do not fear the messy antithesis between historicists and rationalists, but the messy clash between pseudo-historicists and poorly informed rationalists. This would give rise to means of conservation alone'.[16] Instead, according to Olivetti, 'the positive and creative spirit of conservation is only that based on the *authentic realism* of superior intellects, of those who deeply understand the origins, the meaning and the structure of human institutions and the keys to progress which they draw from *scientific research*'.[17]

A philosophy of action emerges from this approach,[18] which is organised in two stages: an explanation, through a scientific analysis of the problems, of the goal and the plan to follow, and a coherent action to each solution, in the constant interaction between practice and idea. 'The continual exchange between practice and idea', Olivetti states, 'regulates our conduct'[19]: an exchange between practice and idea which becomes continuous, since 'execution has the same importance as preparation. Indeed, preparation and execution are two sides of the same coin'.[20] For Olivetti the problem of theory seems, then, inseparable from that of action: a theory that stems from analysis of historical practice and a practice that must interactively emerge from theory.[21] As has been noted, 'this, perhaps, is the most interesting aspect of Olivetti's thought, and one which is discussed too little: the interconnection, which permeates all his activities, *between strategy and structure, or rather between strategy and the organisation of efforts designed to pursue individual objectives through long-term planning*'. His key work, *L'ordine politico delle Comunità*, 'provides the founding moment of a cultural undertaking and political participation, which comes from a precise "directive idea": and, through continual research, they must become the realisation of that idea'.[22] This philosophy of action considers '*the time of implementation as the variable element of the plan* and not its rules or principles'.[23] It always takes into account, though, as is usual in Olivetti's thinking, the decisive role which historical circumstance plays in allowing actions to achieve positive results, 'since everything has its season and every action under the sun has its time. But the true responsibility lies with us and we cannot escape from this responsibility'.[24]

Notes

1. *Democrazia senza partiti*, cit., p. 146. 'The political solution of communism cannot be criticised', states Olivetti, 'because it does not exist' (*ibid.*, p. 144).
2. *La libertà di stampa*, cit., p. 193.
3. *Perché si pianifica?*, cit., pp. 92–93. 'There is a need to go further, a need to see if in the limits of an economy and a changing society, these forms and these institutions can be modified or substituted by new solutions, informed by new principles' (*Appunti per la storia di una fabbrica*, in *Olivetti 1908–1958*, ed. Riccardo Musatti, Libero Bigiaretti and Giorgio Soavi, Ivrea, Ing. C. Olivetti & C., 1958, p. 17).

4. Socialist, and not Marxist, theory, since 'Karl Marx, in implementing, rather, a distortion and invalidation of Hegel's dialectic, gives rise to the doctrine of historic materialism, which through the dictatorship of the proletariat led, *inevitably*, to the other type of predominance of the State over society brought about by communism' (*Società e stato*, cit., p. 26. Italics are mine).

5. Danilo Zolo states that 'Marx does not predict the extinction of the State, nor does he claim, much less so, that 'there is no need to perfect the state but abolish it'. He refuses, indeed, in the clearest way, Bakunin's idea of the "*abolition de l'Etat*", which he sees as a genuine shock' (*Stato socialista*, cit., pp. 29–30). Zolo states, moreover, that 'Marx does not "deny" […] in a utopian manner, the power of the State as an exercise of strength. He criticises a specific prerogative of bureaucratic-representational institutions: the "independence" of the morphological-functional dissociation of bureaucratic power, integral to the performing of general social functions, with respect to the process of social reproduction. And he criticses, at the same time, the dependence and functionality of bureaucratic structures when faced with the power of managing the process of social reproduction, a power which the structure of paid labour puts in the hands of the private owners of means of production. (*ibid.*, pp. 166–167).

6. 'When I say that a real and true alternative model of a socialist state does not exist – a full and complete model, that is, in every detail, like the model of the representative state that has been elaborated and perfected by the great tradition of liberal thought – I mean to say', noted Norberto Bobbio, 'that the efforts of socialist political thought, especially those of Marxist inspiration, have concentrated above all on criticism of the representative state and have omitted to plan a new state' (*Quale socialismo? Discussione di un'alternativa*, Torino, Einaudi, 1976, p. 56). See also N. Bobbio, *La teoria delle forme di governo nella storia del pensiero politico*, Torino, Giappichelli, 1976, pp. 185–200; and *Il marxismo e lo Stato. Il dibattito aperto nella sinistra italiana sulle tesi di Norberto Bobbio*, prefazione di Federico Coen, Roma, Mondoperaio, 1976.

7. *La libertà di stampa*, cit., p. 198.

8. *Ibidem*. 'In other words, the attempt is outlined,' in Olivetti's view, 'to *socialise without nationalising*, to organise economic society in an autonomous way, with its own means and to make it free from the prevalent influence of the State' (*Società e stato*, cit., p. 28. Italics in original). Cf. also *L'industria nell'ordine delle comunità*, cit., p. 41.

9. Reflecting on the cool welcome, from the Italian political world, given to his political proposal, which was rooted in the application of scientific method, Olivetti notes: 'Perhaps the time was not ripe' (*Perché si pianifica?*, cit., p. 92). Recalling the years between 1919 and 1924, when the ambitions of the socialist revolution in Italy were thwarted, he declared: 'I knew the time was not ripe' (*Prime esperienze in una fabbrica*, cit., p. 4).

10. *L'ordine*, cit., p. 196.

11. Cf. *ibid.*, pp. 195–196.

12. *La lotta per la stabilità*, cit. p. 59.

13. In *L'ordine*, cit., pp. 207–208, Olivetti explicates a debate which is surreptitiously present in every page of his main work: 'The tragic consequences of the prevalence of Prussia in the Weimar Republic ought to make those politicians, who thoughtlessly offered so-called "historic" solutions to the despised ones labelled as *rational*, pause for thought.' Italics in original.

14. Giancarlo Lunati recalled that 'his dislike for history and historians was perhaps akin to that for politicians'; 'Plan and produce. But above all plan: because the new had a limitless fascination. Everything that had been produced belonged to the past; Olivetti disliked historians for this too' (*Con Adriano Olivetti alle elezioni del 1958*, Milano, All'insegna del pesce d'oro, 1985, pp. 6, 16). Aldo Garosci declared: 'history, which is my specialty, proved as alien to him as the transcendent aspect did to me' (*Ricordo di Adriano Olivetti*, cit., p. 69). Carlo L. Ragghianti also wrote that 'Olivetti is straightforwardly ahistorical in his works' (*Adriano Olivetti*, in «Zodiac», n. 6, 1960, p. 4), Valerio Ochetto that Olivetti 'has an ahistorical mind' (*Adriano Olivetti*, cit., p. 216), Alberto Mortara that Olivetti's vision is 'the fruit of a non-historicized analysis of social development' (*Adriano Olivetti*, cit., p. 681). Even Maranini, who defines

Olivetti as a 'man for whom only the future existed', recalls that he heard him declare: 'I never think of the past, because there is no past in me' (*Ricordo di Adriano Olivetti*, cit., pp. 83, 85). With this sentence (of Maranini), Bruno Caizzi concludes Adriano Olivetti's biography, and adds after: 'precisely because time did not exist for him' (*Camillo e Adriano Olivetti*, cit., p. 376). But the whole volume is inlayed with references to Olivetti's presumed idiosyncracies with regard to history: 'in his writings, Adriano rarely opens the book of the past' (*ibid.*, p. 130); 'history was an alien category for him' (*ibid.*, p. 131); 'Adriano did not have the sense of history, he did not look for the living sign of the past in the present' (*ibid.*, p. 152); etc.

15. Renzo Zorzi also declares: 'There was not, it seems to me, a single important moment in his life, a difficult decision, a doubtful choice, which did not bring him back to his sources: a childhood memory, an episode in the history of a factory, a word from his father, a familiar proverb'. And he adds, after quoting some of Olivetti's own words, that this observation seems to offer a preliminary response to the 'discourse of Olivettian utopianism, with which everyone was able to put their conscience at peace and refuse a dangerous conflict' (*Ricordo di Adriano Olivetti*, cit., p. 27, p. 28). Giulio Sapelli notes that Olivetti, in order to define the essence of the entrepreneur's 'capability', which promotes the efficiency and growth of an industry, 'addressed the solution to the problem with a type of historical approach' (*Organizzazione, lavoro e innovazione industriale nell'Italia tra le due guerre*, Torino, Rosenberg & Sellier, 1978, p. 184). Riccardo Monaco writes that Olivetti, in *L'ordine politico delle Comunità*, 'foresees the possible development of human society toward a temperate and holistic socialism with a highly perceptive historical and political sense' (*Una geniale anticipazione della società di domani*, in «Sempre Avanti!», a. III, n. 95, 21 April 1946, p. 1).

16. *Un Parlamento nuovo*, cit., p. 231.

17. *L'ordine*, cit., p. 242. Italics are mine.

18. Olivetti recounts that 'My father used to tell me that the light of truth shines through only in actions, not words' (*Ai lavoratori d'Ivrea*, cit., p. 181). From this lesson, he grew 'to believe that nothing important or lasting in the world is created or produced without effort and personal sacrifice' (*Il cammino della Comunità*, cit., pp. 81–82).

19. *Urbanistica e libertà locali*, cit., p. 116. A. C. Jemolo correctly declares: 'But I think it would be mistaken to think that Olivetti was so taken with the allure of his construction that he forgot that no political structure ever emerges from the pages of a book, that no politician ever manages to do any more than set in motion an embryonic structure, which various forces will then alter substantially' (*Adriano Olivetti*, cit., p. [18]).

20. *L'ordine*, cit., p. 129.

21. Paolo Casini notes that 'we are faced with a case of a remarkable conjunction between the abstract and the concrete. Olivetti could establish – as few can – a fertile dialectic between the ideal and the real; he endeavoured to put his ideas into practice, to put flesh on the bones of his thoughts, to drop them into the daily life of a large industry, to nourish them with a broad discussion of social and cultural problems of the time. Indeed, the point of departure for his ideas was often a practical problem, which he knew how to fruitfully elevate to the rarefied realm of theory. And this is the most individual, most meaningful and exemplary aspect of his life' (*Città dell'uomo*, in «Il Notiziario Amministrativo», a. VI, n. 1–2, May-June 1960, p. 44).

22. Giulio Sapelli, *Per una nuova classe politica. Ascesa e caduta del progetto olivettiano nel Canavese*, in Giulio Sapelli - Roberto Chiarini, *Fini e fine della politica. La sfida di Adriano Olivetti*, introduction by Luciano Gallino, Milano, Edizioni di Comunità, 1990, pp. 9–10. Aldo Garosci maintains that, in Olivetti's work, utopia 'existed, *if at all*, in the manner in which, outside of ordinary political means, the design was proposed and the ideal shaped: not according to contingent, arbitrary forces, but as a project: almost a clear project of a future factory, whose connections and whose capacity to serve the ends for which it was conceived are analysed, independent of local conditions and the bringing together of available forces, in relation to which it *will be modified*' (italics are mine). And he goes on to add a sentence whose ambiguity is only clarified when read in conjunction with the 'italics' of the previous sentence: 'Olivetti's utopia is not aristocratic, because it does not propose, as the most noted political utopias, a leap outside of history; rather it is 'ahistorical'; it is waiting for conditions that will make it possible'

(*Il pensiero politico di Adriano Olivetti*, in «Comunità», p. 5). Or rather, 'the utopian element was for him an authentic ideal of anticipation; it had the value of a catalyst, as a point of reference in daily political and economic activity' (F. Ferrarotti, *Un imprenditore di idee*, cit., p. 83). In an article for *Città dell'uomo*, Garosci again writes: 'it is, like every society project and like constitutions before they are put into practice, a utopia: but it is a utopia-plan, not a utopia-dream or a satirical or critical utopia. It is simply, with all its magistrates organised in the best manner, a rational design of a socialist state, as the design of a factory plant might exist in the draws of a planner, with all necessary machines in place, waiting for a businessman to come and better specify his request' (*La città dell'uomo*, in «Il Mondo», a. XII, n. 14, 5 April 1960, p. 9).

23. Cf. *L'ordine*, cit., p. 184. Italics in original. 'The advantage of plans, when they are studied rationally', notes Olivetti, 'is that one can always graduate their implementation in a more convenient manner without changing *the character* of the desired definitive structure. The systematic adoption of a plan, then, provides for an economic means of attaining superior forms of communal life' (*L'ordine*, cit., p. 185. Italics are mine).

24. *Perché si pianifica?*, cit., pp. 93–94. Ferrarotti declares that with Olivetti 'socialism itself ceases to be a chronological destiny or the vain promise of prophetic historicists, becoming instead a political and moral duty that man ascribes to himself' (*Introduzione*, cit., p. 20).

Chapter 6
Puzzled Democracy

The 'Olivettian concept of the "masses" and "individuals" […] is influenced by a pessimistic tradition in democracy which might be dated back to Burke's critique of the French revolution and was very likely connected (though not explicitly) to the positivist and anti-parliamentarian movement in France and Italy, from Le Bon to Pareto, well known to the young Olivetti'[1]: one might agree with this observation, but it is worth clarifying to what extent this influence is present in the *Weltanschauung* of the entrepreneur from Ivrea.

Truly democratic and socialist political thought, like Olivetti's, which is convinced of the existence of a nation 'which does not fear the new',[2] and plays a critical role in the march of social progress, can but only believe, profoundly, in its own 'enlightened force' because it is 'this which will be able to distinguish between what guides the nation towards its emancipation and what drags it along the paths of hollow illusions or adventures without turning back'.[3] So, 'until very large sections of the people are no longer connected to the life of the State […], laws will only dare to scratch the surface of the immense privileges which they ought to confront'.[4] The problem to address was how to identify suitable means of expression that allow the display of popular will. The regime of parliamentary democracy, which 'was formed on the continent by imitating the Anglo-Saxon system', had declined due to both 'altered conditions' and 'the different historic and environmental climate in which it had to function'.[5] Today's democracy is, in Olivetti's view, only 'a formal democracy whose only democratic quality is an outmoded mechanism in which man's inner conscience cannot have a real voice because his means of expression are insufficient'.[6] The so-called democratic organisation, in fact, entails the political expression 'of the human being as undifferentiated from one who follows the idea of number and mass, while the true nature of human activity is complex and multiform'.[7] The instruments which parliamentary democracy provides for people to allow them to express their will are political parties: 'outdated and tired parties, whose driving forces have become blunt'; parties who 'have in some way betrayed the same ideals from which they were born'.[8] The human being, who, 'given his

intrinsic value, his spiritual inclination and his complex nature, is not classifiable in parties',[9] nor 'measurable in figures', is subjected, all the same, 'to absurd arithmetic calculations, which deceive the people in its name and its proclaimed sovereignty'.[10] For this reason, Adriano Olivetti feels the need to 'propose a form of consolidated democracy', which offers the possibility to organise 'a State without parties',[11] or, rather, a State where the parties' function is re-evaluated: 'the role of political parties will be finished and politics will have a purpose when the distance between means and ends is wiped out, when, that is, the structure of the State and society are integrated and balanced such that society, and not parties, will create the State'.[12]

He avoids, though, embracing the dogma 'of the infallibility of shapeless and indistinguishable majorities who barely emerge from the shadows where they have been kept by an unjust system'.[13] There is a need to differentiate and to give form to the people, who 'are not capable of judging *directly* what greater qualities are necessary for the conduct of the whole nation',[14] just as belief is created in the parliamentary system, and whose behaviour is influenced 'by the passions and those dangerous facts of an instinctive nature'.[15] According to Olivetti, 'the people are disorganised' and, yet, 'the expression of their will is falsified because their organisers and mediators—the parties—have lost contact with the people'.[16] Seemingly wanting, then, to implicitly recall the Moschian idea of the 'disorganised majority',[17] he proposed organising people by establishing 'a plurality of spheres of *live* interest, where the will of the majority is shaped with fewer chances of error and with greater freedom'.[18] Olivetti's proposal to re-order Italian political institutions does not stem from a fanciful and chimerical appeal to solidarity and fraternity, but from the identification of common interests. Solidarity between a group of people can emerge from humanitarian inspiration or from Christian brotherhood, but this is not what people truly value. The glue that really binds individuals together, in Olivetti's view, is direct or indirect economic interest, stemming from the realities of work and the material condition of an individual's life.[19] And there are four categories of such interest, through the application of which one arrives at 'the common good of industry', or rather the good of the place of work, the melting pot in which the conflict between different social forces is clear: '(a) individual and direct interests of those who participate in work; (b) indirect, spiritual and social interests of solidarity between those same participants; (c) interests of the wider regional and national communities, who find their own raison d'être and their future in the progress of industry; (d) interests of the immediate surrounding territory'.[20] Even if the name 'Community' might be misleading, the institutional reform proposed is not based on the values of Tönniesian *Gemeinschaft*, but on those of the *Gesellschaft*, aiming to reintroduce 'communitarian' values into the structure of everyday life.[21]

'There was an urgent need to define democracy', Olivetti noted, 'in a far broader manner, and in greater keeping with the *interests of the majority*, which standard democracy cannot claim and cannot guarantee'. In other words, 'there was an urgent need to force democracy to provide a more attentive interpretation of the *real needs* of the masses and of the people, who are easily deceived by the throwaway promises of presumptuous leaders'.[22] Individuals, engaged in different jobs, can feel the need for a reciprocal collaboration with others, particularly at the moment in which they

see the undeniable existence of a common interest.[23] Adriano Olivetti focuses his attention on achieving a social order which 'corresponds to the interests of the many and to the awareness which the most free and visionary spirits have of these interests'.[24] He looks beyond the concrete fact of interest, which is innate to man and his work, and inevitably present, with more complex meaning, in every part of communal life. Above all, he focuses on the awareness that those 'visionary' individuals should have in the analysis of power and authority, cognisant of the potential interests of the majority.

Authority, power and elites: three strictly connected, sometimes coincident, concepts, on which Olivetti focuses intently. This is an Olivetti, in contrast to that which has been claimed,[25] who is concerned to safeguard the freedom of the individual.[26] The consideration of the existence in society of an elite group of individuals seems, for Olivetti, a postulate of political science: in fact, since 'irrepressible moral and intellectual differences' exist,[27] 'the inequality between men, which cannot be eliminated, leads to a hierarchy of competencies and values which constitutes a natural and human order in society'.[28] The fundamental problem lies in ensuring, when faced with 'the eternal principle of the fundamental equality of men',[29] equal opportunities when forming the social hierarchy and maintaining the respect for key criteria, including experience and merit, when choosing individuals.[30] The creation of a meritocracy, based on democratic method and on these two prerogatives, allows every individual to assume 'at the most appropriate time, the role, the authority, and the responsibilities which his spiritual inclination and his particular attitudes—in a word, his vocation—would foster in him'.[31] The political aporia whereby individuals are equal in law and unequal by nature is resolved by identifying the equality and diversity in vocations: the new idea of freedom, enriched indeed by respect for the *dignity* and *vocation* of the individual, is consonant with a new idea of democracy, in which work becomes the tie which binds these two political merits.

For Olivetti, the objective of every democracy ought to be to 'express a political elite'[32] and to 'ensure the circulation of these elites, a fair and continual exchange, which is the requirement of a free and vibrant State'.[33] These two obligations of democracy are entrusted, respectively, to a new instrument of local government and to the institution of official political structures.[34] In fact, demonstrating once again his own elitist concept, Olivetti starts from the presupposition that if 'variations in historic progress, the great changes in the structure of society, are to be considered natural needs of mankind', then, revolutions, on the other hand, 'are catastrophes which are produced when evolution continues, or greatly significant variations are prevented'.[35]

Nonetheless, 'a new instrument of self-governance' is needed, 'which is better connected with the Provinces and stronger than the Comune, finally capable of forming, and selecting, a new leading class which replaces that whose past has shown it up as clearly incapable'.[36] This 'political class'[37] should demonstrate 'a wider, systematic cultural grounding'[38] and 'an objective and eclectic schooling',[39] achieved through a designated educational institution,[40] since 'to trust the process of training, selecting and administering candidates to habit rather than to constitutional laws […], would mean bestowing a prize on less conscientious individuals, on arrivistes

and on the ambitious'.[41] Given the inevitability of the struggle for power, the author questions what requirements are needed by its participants: the 'many selective processes' present in *L'ordine politico delle Comunità* are, in fact, designed to eliminate incompetence and corruption—the 'two forms of political dishonesty'—and 'are not to be confused with systems that, rather, are seen to limit the free expression of popular will'.[42] The project for constitutional reform proposed by Olivetti shows 'neither a prevalence of culture, nor technology, but the fusion and integration, rather than separation, of values that are indispensable to the formation of an "elite", which is as rich as possible in human spirit', and whose 'political sense' is entrusted to 'a continual creative synthesis between culture and experience'.[43] For this reason, 'every committed and positive effort should be directed towards a reconciliation, to a synthesis of political sense and competency', without either dominating the other[44]: in developing *L'ordine politico delle Comunità*, Olivetti is constantly concerned 'to assign political offices to people who, other than being technically prepared, are endowed with a political conscience'.[45] He rejects the Saint-Simonian technocratic utopia and the idyllic administrative State, since he understands politics as a moment of collective decision-making. Nonetheless, it is absolutely necessary, 'in order for institutions to function correctly, that the path towards greater duties of the Federal State be determined by a hierarchy where administrative capability is able to reveal and refine itself, and is not determined by success brought about by theoretical and oratorical skills which legislative offices usually highlight'.[46] In the new order, 'one cannot, by law, reach a higher level without having first held office at a lower level, where experience is gradually acquired and the personal value of administrators and politicians is displayed'.[47]

In the creation of the political class, the democratic formula plays an important role, allowing appropriate popular feeling to be expressed towards the 'human touch of elected figures'[48]: democratic thinking, in Olivetti's view, 'is the only way in which society is allowed to judge the moral value of those to whom political responsibilities are entrusted'.[49] If the co-optive system had the advantage of allowing 'some needs to be recognised, and some individuals to be identified, while providing for their immediate involvement in public life', then in a true democracy it is necessary for 'this procedure, this listing of needs and this selection of individuals to come about automatically'.[50] Such an outcome cannot emerge from 'a spontaneous, natural process', but through 'a material premise composed of appropriate scientific methods, together with a political mechanism capable of bestowing experience and administrative wisdom to that fraction of "politicians" who come from a doctrinal background'.[51] With respect to those without this background, those shapeless majorities, this one, numerically and geographically restricted,[52] guarantees, through its own decisions, the inclusion in the political circuit of individuals with progressive ideas. In fact, for Olivetti, 'the great innovative ideas which were able to stir movement in a social order that otherwise tends towards crystallisation […] were, and are, guided, in an almost exclusive manner, by people who are very close to popular feeling'.[53] What is proposed seems to be, then, a hierarchical and upward-leaning structure, democratic 'by virtue of the freedom of access' and elite 'by the rigour of choice'.[54] Thanks to such a structure, an organised minority can be formed

which, rather than dominating, proves to be the organic expression of an equally organised majority[55] and which, as a pure oligarchy, ought to become a 'democratic aristocracy'.

So as to allow a movement of the elite within political institutions, an elite which is regulated by democratic principles, by experience and by the value of the elected individuals, Olivetti believes it necessary to create a vertical connection between different geographical entities of the government, 'since no serious and long-lasting basis for political power can be created without numerous well-distributed roots across the land; it guarantees a direct circulation of vital lifeblood which allows, in political society, for the movement of those with administrative experience from lower to higher levels of the hierarchical structure of the State'.[56] For political power to be energised, and adhere to the social reality from which it emanates, it must spring from forces rooted in society. These forces, in order that they can effectively maintain power, ought to be in possession of the instruments of economic production, given that, in Olivetti's view, 'only *possession* provides effective Power'[57] and that 'leaders of economic activities are more aware, more responsible and more dynamic'.[58] As has been stated, for Adriano Olivetti, 'the question of *economic power* provided the point of departure, but […] *where power of society as a whole over means of production was concerned*'.[59]

Notes

1. C. Malandrino, *Il federalismo comunitario*, cit., pp. 221–222.
2. *Il cammino della Comunità*, cit., p. 77.
3. *Ibid.*, p. 63.
4. *Urbanistica e libertà locali*, cit., p. 103.
5. *Democrazia senza partiti*, cit., p. 147.
6. *La dimensione «ottima» dell'autogoverno locale*, cit., p. 43.
7. *Stato sindacati comunità*, cit., p. 37.
8. *Il cammino della Comunità*, cit., p. 83. 'The confusion […] between State and governing Parties, even if difficult to avoid, has led, little by little, to a phenomenon of regression, with the initial creative urge growing weak.' (*Perché si pianifica?*, cit., p. 90).
9. *L'ordine*, cit., p. 235.
10. *Il cammino della Comunità*, cit., p. 66. Cf. also *Democrazia senza partiti*, cit., p. 152.
11. *Democrazia senza partiti*, cit., p. 150.
12. *Ibidem*. Cf. also *ibid.*, p. 154.
13. *L'ordine*, cit., p. 43.
14. *Ibid.*, p. 222. Italics in original.
15. *Ibid.*, p. 349.
16. *Democrazia senza partiti*, cit., p. 152. Cf. also *Il cammino della Comunità*, cit., p. 66.
17. Giovanni Russo is alone in explicitly demonstrating the influence of Mosca on Olivetti's thought: 'in defining the "political order of the Communities", Olivetti made use of all his experience as an industrial organiser and, at the same time, took into account the most acute criticisms aimed at the functioning of parliamentary democracy and at the universal suffrage system, levelled by generous politicians such as Gobetti and scholars like Mosca' (*Gli eretici di Comunità*, in «Il Mondo», a. I, n. 39, 12 November 1949, p. 8).

18. *L'ordine*, cit., p. 43. Italics in original. As Malandrino clarifies, 'the mass of individuals had to be divided into groups of people inside historic-natural communities so that they can exercise their own rights to make judgements and choose' (*Il federalismo comunitario*, cit., p. 222, note 56).

19. Cf. also C. Mortati, *Autonomie e pluralismo*, cit., *passim*.

20. *La Fondazione proprietaria*, cit., pp. 218–219. Cf. also *L'industria nell'ordine delle comunità*, cit., pp. 49–50. Franco Ferrarotti notes that 'the four interests outlined by Adriano Olivetti constituted the four-fold root of legitimacy for modern industrial power and make possible, together with mutual recognition, the dynamic and harmonious balance against the obvious dangers of authoritarian degeneration and commissarial regression.' (*La sociologia come partecipazione*, cit., p. 117).

21. Cf. Ferdinand Tönnies, *Comunità e società*, introduction by Renato Treves, Milano, Edizioni di Comunità, 1963. Geminello Alvi maintains, on the other hand, that 'exemplarily, Olivetti, in calling the new economy an economy of communities, perpetuates a sense of confusion: he leaves it to reason that similar economies demand a return to the organic will of *Gemeinschaft*. While, contrarily, their novelty offers the chance for the most radical intensification of *Gesellschaft*' (*Le seduzioni economiche di Faust*, cit., p. 114). On Tönnies see Ferrarotti's observations in *Comunità e democrazia*, cit., pp. 77–78; and also Id., *La «ricerca della comunità» in Robert A. Niobet*, in Id., *Un Imprenditore di idee*, cit., pp. 132–133, 143.

22. *Come nasce un'idea*, in *Società Stato Comunità*, cit., p. 21. Italics are mine.

23. For Olivetti, life ought to work 'towards a greater order, something which, while carrying man forward on the path of his own interests, *according to a natural law*, allows him to see a goal which gives succour to the inner working of his own conscience' (*Ostacoli alla pianificazione*, cit., p. 121. Italics are mine).

24. Cf. *L'ordine*, cit., p. 333.

25. Giuseppe Giarrizzo highlighted in Olivetti 'an indifference in his anthropolgy and his ethics toward the problem of power as a structure, as legitimitisation, and as consensus. He himself wrote that "if democracy is contained by the consideration of experience and illuminated by the consideration of personal values, then it is the only means suitable for ensuring that movement of the *elites*, the balanced and continual exchange which is a condition of freedom and vitality in a state." / He underlines the "movement of the *elites*": they are two concepts, that of the elite and that of movement, which bring us back to that superimposition of freedom and nature which, once again, elicits the religious sense, and mystical dimension of Olivetti's Pythagoreanism. And in such a context, the problem of power, in fact, is not posed either' (*Modernità e «virtù»: il tema della comunità locale*, in *La comunità concreta: progetto ed immagine*, cit., p. 63). Arturo Colombo, on the other hand, noted that 'Olivetti's aim is not simply to limit power and control its functions […] but rather to "bring to the centre of political attention the relationships between the individual and the different communities in which human society is expressed"' (*Adriano Olivetti fra intuizione e utopia*, cit., pp. 106–107).

26. A.C. Jemolo notes that 'all Olivetti's political thought is based on the assertion of freedom' (*Adriano Olivetti*, cit., p. [7]). And Olivetti declares in *L'ordine politico delle Comunità* that 'the *raison d'être* of this institutional reform' is 'the safeguarding of freedom' (*L'ordine*, cit., p. 321). Pampaloni notes too: 'that which seems original and vital in his enlightened syncretism, beyond the almost platonic ideal of life as harmony, is the libertarian force which runs through every point of his integral federalist system' (*Adriano Olivetti tra utopia, eresia e profezia*, in Id., *Adriano Olivetti*, cit., p. 82).

27. *L'ordine*, cit., p. 44.

28. *L'industria nell'ordine delle comunità*, cit., p. 52.

29. *Democrazia senza partiti*, cit., p. 148. Cf. also *L'ordine*, cit., p. 44. 'The new Society', Olivetti hoped, 'will make its own that which is eternal in the democratic ideal: the fundamental equality of all men as spiritual beings, that is as *individuals*, and thus, politically, the equal right of all men to participate in public government' (*L'ordine*, cit., p. 43. Italics in original).

30. Cf. *L'ordine*, cit., p. 45. In fact, '*aristocratic* choices do not sit well with the mediocrity of the normal democratic process' (*Edilizia popolare e pianificazione urbanistica*, cit., p. 134. Italics in original).

31. *L'ordine*, cit., p. 44.
32. *Democrazia senza partiti*, cit., p. 145. In *L'ordine*, cit., p. 158, the title of one paragraph reads: 'The creation of a political elite.'
33. *L'ordine*, cit., p. 45.
34. The Federal State of Communities ought to have considered as '*fundamental* the need to identify, educate and organise a political elite, without a sense of privilege, primed to contribute to the formation of the new society.' (*L'ordine*, cit., p. 158. Italics are mine).
35. *L'ordine*, cit., p. 254.
36. *Per una pianificazione democratica nel Mezzogiorno*, cit., p. 286. Caizzi notes that 'where the traditional notion of territorial decentralisation is concerned, Adriano included an "organic" decentralisation, whose main point was not the transfer of institutional powers from the centre to the periphery, as in the scheme of the old regionalist and federalist tradition, but was the inverse flow of political energy brought from the smaller and distant unity to the central and larger one' (*Camillo e Adriano Olivetti*, cit., p. 163).
37. *L'ordine*, cit., p. 158.
38. *Ibid.*, p. 157.
39. *Ibid.*, p. 158.
40. This was considered by Chiti-Batelli indeed, together with the Community, as an 'absolute prerequisite' of Olivetti's proposed reform (*Oltre la democrazia rappresentativa?*, cit., p. 81). On the institution of political education proposed by Olivetti, see Andrea Chiti-Batelli, *Mass Media e società europea. La prospettiva federalista per una radio-televisione continentale*, Manduria, Lacaita, 1977, pp. 78–81 and *passim*.
41. *L'ordine*, cit, pp. 236–237.
42. *Ibid.*, p. 255.
43. *Ibid.*, pp. 237–238. The relationship between administrative competence and experience must also be stabilised by the Constitution, and 'the study of such laws, regulations, procedures […] and their introduction into a democratic order is the main thesis of *Ordine Politico*» (*Chi sceglie i Ministri?*, cit., p. 267).
44. Cf. *Un Parlamento nuovo*, cit., pp. 229–230. Olivetti states that 'When, in fact, the political criterion prevails over the administrative one, it gives rise to inefficiency, which proves to be a fresh cause of error and injustice'. If, on the other hand, it is the 'technical-administrative criterion' which is prevalent, then it 'sidelines a general policy of transformation of society and its institutions, which, instead, need to be urgently looked at; far worse, it risks dragging State and Society towards those forms of corporative crystallisation which represent the natural political philosophy instinctive of engineers and administrators' (*ibid.*, p. 230). Federico Perinetti, on the other hand, maintains that for Olivetti 'the men who have to support and administer the communitarian state ought to be selected not for their ideas and their principles but solely on the basis of their competency and specific qualities' (*L'ultimo libro di Adriano Olivetti. Città dell'uomo*, in «Gazzetta del Veneto», a. IX, n. 123, 24 May 1960, p. 3). In L.M., *Il regime delle Comunità*, in «Mondo Nuovo», a. I, n. 250, 23 novembre 1947, p. 3, the author states that *L'ordine politico delle Comunità* 'is a perfect State where, owing to its very perfection, every political initiative disappears, or at least appears useless and superfluous. Precisely because of this, with its consecrating the need for study, diplomas, training etc., together with the totality, or near totality, of public responsibilities, and the extreme respect given to the offices and the deliberations of the University, the Unions and such institutions, the work seems to end with the crystallisation of every activity within a fixed, stable and unchangeable order'.
45. *L'ordine*, cit., p. 273. 'The Federal State of Communities does not undervalue the necessity of a political objective, but associates this criterion with a serious administrative grounding, recommending that no individual occupies an office which is of interest to the whole Nation if they have not shown evidence, first in the Community and then in the Regions, of administrative capacity of that same role which they are called to fill. / If this critical necessity is not respected, parliamentary democracy ends up as a dangerous font of corruption and a promoter of vanity, utterly incapable of realising a modern and socially progressive State' (*Chi sceglie i Ministri?*, cit., p. 277. Cf. also *L'ordine*, cit., p. 353). Aldo Garosci notes that the 'attempt to

bring together technical competence and political capability amongst the ruling class' is at the 'heart of that which Olivetti cared for most in his project of the human city' (*Il pensiero politico di Adriano Olivetti*, cit., p. 4).

46. *L'ordine*, cit., p. 358.
47. *Chi sceglie i Ministri?*, cit., p. 277. Cf. also *L'ordine*, cit., p. 368. 'Exceptionally gifted individuals will have the possibility of a fast-track career when they know how to create a consensus of opinion, within the limits prescribed by the Constitution. The transitions between one position and another almost always come about through free elections; in some cases appointments are made by committees which express, in any event, popular opinion' (*ibidem*).
48. *L'ordine*, cit., p. 238. 'And in the mechanism of the new State, the effective political participation of popular will, to whose intuition alone such judgement is entrusted, exists in a much broader, more coherent and tangible sense than in any democratic regime' (*ibidem*).
49. *Ibid.*, p. 48. 'Nothing will be easier', notes Olivetti, 'than identifying and condemning within the life of the Community, where everything is visible and identifiable, a false Christianity which faded out in a formal and hypocritical tribute: the work and character of man will be concretely judged' (*L'ordine*, cit., p. 18). In fact, 'the Community is the environment suited to the formation of such a judgement, since no-one there can lead a corrupt life, nor work with shallow motives without public opinion, sooner or later, having exact knowledge of it, and there can be no-one who, possessed of charitable sentiment, will not be duly appreciated' (*L'ordine*, cit., p. 48).
50. *Un Parlamento nuovo*, cit., p. 233.
51. *L'ordine*, cit., pp. 157–158.
52. Alvi gives credit to Olivetti for 'having identified two indispensable prerogatives for a more authentic reform of life: Unions that are numerically limited and decentralised as far as possible' (*Le seduzioni economiche di Faust*, cit., p. 114).
53. *L'ordine*, cit., pp. 251–252.
54. *L'ordine*, cit., p. 164.
55. It is worth noting that, according to Gaetano Mosca, 'the bigger the political community, the smaller the proportion of the governing minority compared to the majority, and the harder it is for the former to organise itself to react against the latter' (G. Maranini, *Storia del potere in Italia*, cit., p. 20).
56. *Un Parlamento nuovo*, cit., p. 234.
57. *L'industria nell'ordine delle comunità*, cit., p. 50. Italics in original. Alessandro Levi notes: 'but, then, it is certain – as Machiavelli said, using words dear to Cattaneo – that to safeguard one's own freedom, one must "be hands on"' (*Per una repubblica democratica*, in «Critica Sociale», a. XXXVII, n. 2, 30 settembre 1945, p. 25). For this reason, 'certain private companies will be progressively transformed into public entities and will be named Autonomous Social Industries or Autonomous Agricutural Associations. / The Community will always hold a large part of the capital of autonomous companies, with the remainder belonging to dependents, to the Regions or other Communities. / The Community will act, then, as a pivot for the most collectively important economic bodies and will constitute an essential 'diaphragm' between the individual and the State. (*L'industria nell'ordine delle comunità*, cit., p. 48. Cf. also *L'ordine*, cit., p. 13). Franco Ferrarotti notes that 'since only possession confers effective power, and since only daily participation in relevant decisions gives real substance to such power, it is clear that the concept of plural and de-centralised ownership, which controls the concept of Autonomous Social Industry, is as an essential presupposition for the realisation of common good in a technically advanced society' (*La sociologia come partecipazione*, cit., p. 117).
58. *Il cammino della Comunità*, cit., p. 59.
59. Marcello Fabbri, *L'urbanistica italiana dal dopoguerra a oggi*, cit., p. 115. Italics in original. Cf. also *ibid.*, p. 49, and Id., *Le ideologie degli urbanisti nel dopoguerra*, cit., p. 51. Norberto Bobbio notes that it is 'on the ground of democratic control of economic power that the battle for socialist democracy is won and lost' (*Quale socialismo?*, cit., p. 85).

Chapter 7
Heterogenesis of State Sovereignty

Historical events warn of how power can degenerate into uncontrolled freedom, since, as Olivetti notes, recalling the words of Montesquieu, 'where man has power, he is prone to abuse it: he goes as far as limits allow'.[1] Power needs to be limited by another form of power: this is the only truly effective means.[2] In other words, only balanced social forces and balanced forms of State power can ensure individuals' freedom: a balance between 'forces which represent interests'[3] that are present around places of production, both industrial and agricultural[4]; and a balance between institutional structures through which power is exercised.

   Different powers in society ought to be able to express themselves through their own political class and through State institutions, so that there are no other powers to contend the sovereignty of the State.[5] The noted existence of more social elements, which influence political decisions, demands that they be juridically organised and balanced. Therefore, in Olivetti's view, 'a new idea of sovereignty' can consequently be developed, 'which is distinct from the enduring principles of the '89 revolution which tied the idea of sovereignty to that of universal suffrage'.[6] From an analysis of social reality, then, he consciously theorises the heterogenesis of State sovereignty, which entails the necessity of developing from numerous social elements, from those elements that influence the life of society and the organisation of the State.[7] There are three elements, identified by Olivetti, which ought to be given prominence in political institutions: those of work, culture and democracy.[8] Yet the forms 'with which this involvement of labour and culture must fit, in the democratic process, will depend on political circumstances'.[9] The identification of these three social elements, which ought to create State sovereignty and constitute the 'original nucleus of power', entails the need for new and diversified forms of legitimisation[10]: a form of competition, for cultural bodies, and suffrage limited to employees, both subordinate to universal suffrage.[11] According to the principles that inspire Olivetti's institutional choices, these criteria for legitimacy come from the will to represent general interests through a representative form which can best interpret them.[12] The principle of universality and equal votes, already put in place by democracy, is maintained, in an organicistic manner, by the fact that those who

are not employees are represented by the competitive form, which is most suited to express the meritocratic value which must connote cultural forces. The principle of the equal vote, though, is subordinate to the principle of the diverse vote in relation to the work carried out in society. The particular interest of every person is then expressed in two ways: the first, the same for all, as a manifestation of the political equality of every citizen; the second in relation to his working life. With these diverse procedures of legitimisation of political representatives, which incorporate the principle of popular sovereignty, Olivetti seems to want to demystify, in some part, the Moschian 'political formula': interests of different social groups ought to be represented explicitly through the principle of legitimisation which best guarantees its expression.[13] In this way, 'pressed between cultural forces which have the responsibility to be a creative guide and will defend scientific and artistic values, and union pressures which defend values of social justice and equality, democracy confirms and defends its values with a new splendour and a renewed energetic surge'.[14]

Adriano Olivetti considered freedom to be guaranteed only in an order in which political power was entrusted, in all its forms, 'to the balance between these three fundamental categories'.[15] Moreover, as if wanting to implicitly challenge Montesquieu, he asserts: 'freedom is not, then, safeguarded solely by the division of, and balance between powers, but also by the introduction, in each of the constitutional organs which exercise such powers, of diverse social and spiritual forces which characterise a modern State'.[16] In his view, only in this way would the principle of freedom— 'which is the co-existence of forces'—have imbued 'like sap, the great tree of State, in all its ramifications'.[17] The balance between these three social forces, which 'represent an essentially progressive formula *in the current state of historic experience*'[18] and are a guarantee of freedom, ought to constitute the basis of political authority, in order to 'fuse together again, in new forms, Freedom with Authority'.[19] This new political authority, which contains in itself a deep meritocratic meaning, is at the basis of the new democracy envisioned by Adriano Olivetti: 'authority is the necessary power conferred on the custodians of the State, by virtue of a free choice amongst equals and by virtue of all the laws which historic experience has shown to be useful and necessary for the choice of the best individuals'. The power of this aristocracy, 'conferred by, and renewed with, consensus', is subject to numerous checks, and ensures the legitimacy of authority and the power of the State which alone can defend individual freedom.[20] Olivetti confers on this new authority the task of organising society through an essential 'basic coordination'.[21] In order for this to be efficient and produce genuine results, it must be determined by a single coordinating authority[22] and 'made possible by the *unity* present in the real Community, bringing together the original source both of economic and politico-administrative power'.[23] In fact, he notes that 'the coordination, the constitution of an authority capable of reaching the process of synthesis or organic fusion of the many activities which continually modify the form of a society' is essential.[24]

This coordination concretely manages to organise the 'disorganised' majority and to allow it to express its desires. For it to be effective it must be carried out in line with two directives: from one side, at the base of the State organism[25]; from the other, following vertical coordinates,[26] which tie together the different territorial

levels of the government: 'the real problem of modern democracy today is pinpointing an "optimum" size for local authority, capable of reconciling, at one and the same time, the needs of freedom with those of functionality, imposed by technical needs of the modern world'.[27] In other words, 'the central problem of politics consists in creating a special relationship between society and the State, a relationship which takes into account and develops the forces and forms of the spirit'.[28]

Notes

1. *Democrazia senza partiti*, cit., p. 162.
2. Cf. *ibidem*.
3. *L'industria nell'ordine delle comunità*, cit., p. 50.
4. Cf. *Tecnica della riforma agraria*, cit., pp. 89–106.
5. Cf. *Il cammino della Comunità*, cit., p. 66. Cf. also *Democrazia senza partiti*, cit., p. 153.
6. *Democrazia senza partiti*, cit., p. 150.
7. Costantino Mortati notes that to confer originality and importance on the autonomist idea developed by Olivetti, 'is of use for its vivid awareness of the need to direct all the vital forces of contemporary society to the construction of the basic community, balancing out between themselves in such a way that each one finds its most suitable place from which to give the greatest productivity to the whole and obtain from it, to the greatest degree possible, the satisfaction of its own needs' (*Autonomie e pluralismo*, cit., p. XXXIX).
8. Cf. *L'ordine*, cit., pp. 43–49. 'The democractic method, as an elective procedure from the bottom upwards, remains the predominant and irreplaceable element of the greater operations of political life' (*L'ordine*, cit., p. 44).
9. *Edilizia popolare e pianificazione urbanistica*, cit., p. 137. So 'in the new State, power will no longer be firmly based on a single force, democracy, which is all too easily prey to power and money. Power will be rooted in organised juridical culture and, at the same time, well-defined political power will be granted to work'. (*Democrazia senza partiti*, cit., p. 163).
10. It seems appropriate to remember that Gaetano Mosca noted that 'in order for the sanctioned division of powers to function efficiently in the statutes, every power of the State must be based above a ruling body of society, and thus it is vital that there are numerous ruling bodies. In other words, the hierarchies and means which allow the heights of the social scale to be reached must be *varied and independent of each other*; and no-one from these hierarchies must be placed in an absolutely superior position to others, rather they should be mutually independent and dependent and organised in such a way that control of one over the other can be effectively exercised' (G. Mosca, *Il programma dei liberali in materia di politica ecclesiastica*, in «Giornale degli economisti», XV, 1 November 1897, pp. 458–471, in Giorgio Sola, *Il pensiero politico di Mosca*, Roma-Bari, Laterza, 1994, p. 211. Italics are mine).
11. Aldo Capitini notes that the balance between the Federal State of the Communities 'resides in the three elements of democracy, work and culture, which form the original nucleus of Power. This is the complex aspect of the liberal socialism of Rosselli and Calogero. Representing and promoting these three needs, and giving them their maximum power, was the fundamental aspiration of much of anti-fascism, of which Olivetti's work is today a conspicuous expression' (*Il Cos e le Comunità*, in «Comunità», [a. I,] n. 2, April–May 1946, p. 15).
12. Cf. also C. Mortati, *Autonomie e pluralismo*, cit., p. XL–XLI.
13. Aldo Garosci notes that 'Olivetti's argument follows the disenchanted work of Machiavellians in tearing apart ideological illusions and restoring the idea of a ruling class, which in the case of communitarian theory, though, should not be founded on undifferentiated force but on a particular force which is of our time, meaning it is capable of resolving certain technical problems connected with politics' (*Il pensiero politico di Adriano Olivetti*, cit., pp. 4–5).
14. *Edilizia popolare e pianificazione urbanistica*, cit., p. 137.

15. *Ibid.*, p. 198. Cf. also *Chi sceglie i Ministri?*, cit., p. 271. For this reason industry and agricutural enterprise should be owned by 'a new judicial institution' where 'an organic sharing of all the life forces of the community, representative of territorial and cultural bodies, and trade unions' is realised. It is, though, vitally important to geographically fix and precisely define the aims of this 'integrated structure', whose main purpose is to overcome 'the limits of traditional institutions of ownership (whether private, national or social)' (*La Fondazione proprietaria*, cit., pp. 220–225).

16. Mortati notes that Olivetti poses the problem of identifying the 'social forces which have a spiritual root in society, considered as an expression of the basic needs of contemporary man, and of the values through which one achieves a full explication of his personality' and that for him these forces 'crystallise in popular sovereignty, in work and culture' (*Autonomie e pluralismo*, cit., p. XL).

17. *L'ordine*, cit., p. 323. Giorgio Sola notes that 'while accepting the conviction that political freedom can be considered "an effect of the so-called division of powers"', Mosca 'insists that it is necessary that the prevalently formal principle codified by Montesquieu be accompanied by a real and effective "multiplicity of forces, offices and social hierarchies" (*Il pensiero politico di Mosca*, cit., p. 79). And this would require 'the predisposition of a series of conditions, institutions, rules and procedures which, other than guaranteeing the multiplicity and hetero-geneity of ruling bodies, can realise a true balance between the difference sections which make up the political class in such a way that they control each other, preventing one from dominat-ing and quashing the others' (*ibid.*, pp. 79–80).

18. *La libertà di stampa*, cit., p. 200. Italics are mine.

19. *Società e stato*, cit., p. 28. 'The Community aims to instill, to its furthest reaches, and in terms that are reconciliable with a modern and free society, the principles which uphold family life, where freedom and authority are reconciled and where the gift to childern is not charity but benevolence and duty' (*L'ordine*, cit., p. 17).

20. Cf. *Democrazia senza partiti*, cit., p. 162.

21. *La forma dei piani*, cit., p. 80.

22. Cf. *ibid.*, p. 75. Cf. also *ibid.*, pp. 80, 83.

23. *Ibid.*, p. 80. Italics in original.

24. *La forma dei piani*, cit., p. 73.

25. Cf. *ibid.*, p. 80. For Olivetti the fact that 'such a coordination for the purpose of civilization is only possible in small territorial unities' becomes an 'axiom of political science' (*ibid.*, p. 73).

26. 'Since the political organisation of the State is a democracy which comes directly from the Communities and Regions, the official elements coming from above are an *additional comple-ment*, a device to happily aid coordination and never the expression of an authoritarian will' (*L'ordine*, cit., p. 53. Italics in original). Serafini notes that '"political orders", in Olivetti's vision, represent a vertical structure of the State, which breaks every possible seal of the territorial community' (*La comunità di Adriano Olivetti e il federalismo*, cit., p. 3).

27. *La dimensione «ottima» dell'autogoverno locale*, cit., p. 41. Cf. also *ibid.*, p. 47.

28. *Le forze spirituali*, cit., p. 27. Cf. also *Il cammino della Comunità*, cit., p. 59.

Chapter 8
Political Orders

But what does Olivetti mean by 'spirit'? The word, present throughout his political writings, indicates a set of 'greater human goals'[1] or 'supra-individual and therefore ethical goals',[2] which converge towards the 'common aim' of civilization, towards 'an organised and conscious goal'.[3]

Adriano Olivetti lists 'four essential forces of the spirit',[4] which, all together in equal measure, are vital[5] for the realisation of a Christian civilization: 'Truth, Justice, Beauty and, above all, Love'.[6] These four spiritual forces are directly drawn, as Olivetti explicitly indicates,[7] from the four forms of the spirit identified by Benedetto Croce, who 'proposed adding the form [...] of the Useful or the Economic and further, and perhaps better, of pure and simple Vitality, to the venerable triad of values and forms of the spirit, namely the True, the Good and the Beautiful'.[8] It is evident from this how Olivetti made the form of Vitality correspond to that of the spirit which he identifies in Love and which acquires an all-inclusive semantic value[9]: Economy, which in politics assumes for him the value of a creative force, corresponds to the spiritual display of Love, a creative force par excellence.[10]

These four forms of the spirit, which 'remain eternal in time and immovable in space, from Plato to Christ',[11] and which are subdivided into the two practical forms of Ethics and Economy, and in its two theoretical forms of Aesthetics and Logic, correspond directly to four political offices: Justice, Social Economy, Town Planning and Culture.[12] And 'to the four basic forms of the Spirit' he believes three other spiritual dimensions ought to be added: authority, charity and work.[13] To these correspond, respectively, the political offices of General Affairs, Social Assistance and Social Relations.[14]

Since it is 'hierarchically superior', the first spiritual form, for Olivetti, is Authority, to which 'the power to *coordinate*' is tied.[15] And 'the concept of authority, understood as the *power to coordinate*, entails ideas of responsibility, experience and democratic justification'.[16] Olivetti derives Authority from the spiritual form of Truth, since 'the principle of authority in its most profound sense means an authentic mandate'.[17]

Truth corresponds to 'logical knowledge' and to science,[18] and 'in a human society it means cultural freedom, independent research and scientific understanding'.[19] Olivetti notes that it is 'in Truth, above all, that we will find the real revolution, the real moral and material renewal of everything',[20] since it allows the individual to discover the 'nobility' of his own heart, to reveal to himself 'his true inner conscience',[21] and his vocation. Moreover, 'science, indissolubly linked and associated with the spirit of truth, was the first bestower of every good, because it has always created material progress. Giving life to modern technology, science has given a new direction to the life and work of man'.[22]

Justice, 'the second of the spiritual forces, is in turn illuminated by Truth'[23] and finds in the working classes its 'authentic representatives', who 'incarnate this feeling with sometimes dramatic, and always generous, fervour'.[24]

Charity, which corresponds to 'the political office of assistance, security and hygiene, echoes, in the spiritual world, the idea of *justice*, whether social or collective, but distinguishes itself from the political office of social relations (or of work) which is more precisely the *economy* of work'.[25] Olivetti notes that Charity, in everyday society, is antithetical to, rather than compatible with,[26] justice, 'since with two fundamental principles of action, justice and charity, one tends to prevail over the other, rather than be reconciled together. Whoever works with justice in mind works well and opens the path to progress. Whoever works according to charity follows the impulse of the heart and works equally well, but does not eliminate the causes of evil which take root in human injustice'.[27] It follows that the inclusion of Charity as a political office allows the consequences of social injustice to be remedied, as long as its causes remain: 'the office of assistance, social security and hygiene is not wholly covered in the idea of justice, but has a meaning and a human value intimately linked to the Christian idea of *charitas*, of generosity and equity in the distribution of goods whose nature has embellished man'.[28]

Work, on the other hand, has its own spiritual roots in the Economy: 'The confusion between the questions of work and a system of social security', notes Olivetti, 'originated from the fact that both these political offices interest the working classes'. The scientific root of workers' rights resides, though, 'in the economics of industry and in the *ethos* of the concept of work', while 'social security and protection rest on concepts of human solidarity which are completely distinct from the former, in terms of function, organisation and competence'.[29]

Social Economy, which is the 'science of means in service of ethical ends',[30] is involved 'with all other political offices, but it should be recognised, at the same time, that it focuses particularly on a defined purpose (production, distribution and circulation)'. It is possible to consider it, therefore, as '*material economics*, thus distinguishing it in from *labour economics* which we considered to fall under the jurisdiction of the Social Relations Division'.[31]

Aesthetics, finally, 'will confer one of its components on political order in the guidance of *town planning*, which can also be defined as social architecture, a *utilitarian aesthetic in the service of supra-individual, and thus ethical, aims*'.[32] Town planning ought to maintain a tight and interactive relationship with Economics. In fact, since every building presupposes 'a reciprocity, an interdependence, a life in tune'[33] with the surrounding environment, 'it is now no longer possible to disassociate

socio-economic planning from town planning'.[34] It makes it necessary that town planning, built 'on a doctrine coming from a scientific tradition of study and experience', gives 'form to an economic plan'.[35] As Olivetti's conceives it, this, then, is the instrument that gives form to the creative force of economics and to the 'inchoate world', without evolving in any way into a demiurgic science capable of achieving social harmony. It is the instrument, or rather, one of the instruments (even if the most important), that allows the realisation, in a tangible and historical reality, of Beauty, one of the metaphysical values towards which human work should move.[36]

Far from sharing the Hegelian concept of the State,[37] Olivetti considers it 'physically and morally too distant from our problems and our interests',[38] solely a means that allows for the spiritual growth of man[39]: 'political order will […] represent no more than a method and a means for achieving these aims'.[40] It is necessary, therefore, 'to prepare an organised State along precise lines, but with a sole aim: to make society free and create a new type of civilization that can assert itself and, far from being a slave to procedure, will be at the service of the ultimate and higher goals of humanity'.[41] Moreover, 'the establishing of political offices is not to be seen as an eternal and universal truth, but can vary over time and according to the size of a State's territory',[42] even if these offices 'cannot be either reduced or expanded without important consequences for the development of social life'.[43]

In order to be able to define new offices of a State, though, it is not enough to identify new, specialised bodies: 'since a specialised body becomes an official political body, it ought to first contain a characteristic cultural, spiritual and finalistic attribute'.[44] But how is it possible to identify these 'cultural, spiritual or finalistic attributes'? 'The theoretical justification of such a procedure, at first sight empirical, or worse, one that can be criticised for deriving from the administrative State', notes Olivetti, 'is brought forward in "Ordine Politico delle Comunità"'. And he adds: '*The effectiveness of such a procedure depends on the correct choice of offices*; in limiting oneself, that is, to only choosing those which contain spiritual forms, and abandoning those purely technical ones'.[45] And yet the concept would continue to remain obscure were it not for the following statement: 'an order is operational where the competence of various executive bodies begins from a homogeneous division of activities, precisely defined and all under a single authority. The *functionalization*, then, is a well-defined example of *specialisation*, from which it distinguishes itself theoretically through the scientific, and not simply empirical character, of the analysis which has given rise to such a division of roles'.[46] Thus in Adriano Olivetti's idiolect, 'scientific character' implies, in itself, a spiritual matrix (and not vice versa), and so it is scientific analysis which proves to be, in fact, the criterion with which the offices containing 'spiritual forms' can be distinguished from those that are 'purely technical'.[47] His political thought, indeed, is eminently concerned with finding realistic and functional solutions, which emerge from analysis of historical facts. A theoretical tension is superimposed on, and interacts with, this approach, enquiring into the philosophical, and even esoteric, underpinnings of the practical and workable choices already in place. This intellectual attitude does not negate, clearly, the efficacy of the scientific solutions proposed, but the terminology employed ends up jeopardizing the understanding and positive evaluation of the ideas put forward.

The assembled State structure presupposes a doctrinal position which, as already seen, entails the idea of a whole individual, considered in the round, in his physical and spiritual values, and as an essential part of the State and of the sovereignty which considers finite values as instruments to allow the individual to raise himself towards infinite values. From a precise understanding of the individual comes a precise idea of sovereignty. *L'ordine politico delle Comunità* is imbued with a rationality, which moves from particular to universal values: it displays the signs of a classic understanding of sovereignty,[48] in which Olivetti substitutes, however, the metaphysical basis with historic reality.

The political offices are proposed as a principle of State organisation, following the teaching, 'which no organiser can underestimate',[49] of the Catholic Church, in which, through the religious orders, 'efforts are combined towards a single goal'.[50] In the State, in the same way as in the Church, the division of roles ought to be established according to the principle of 'vocation' and the preparation of potential political representatives ought to depend on the characteristics of each office.[51] Olivetti, then, brings political offices into line with the public expression of what the individual understands as a vocation. The two aspects are, moreover, connected, since 'political systems provide the overarching order which contribute to man's life and destiny'.[52]

There is no reason, though, to think that this reference to the Catholic Church represents an attempt to merge a religious dimension with the secularity of the State.[53] In fact, even if Olivetti states that 'on a political level, a Christian civilization can only be realised with a mechanism that […] presents a continuous analogy and parallelism with the structure of the Church',[54] the 'lines of collaboration and inter-penetration'[55] between State and Church are identifiable only in the definition and defence of the rights of the individual[56]: '*the collaboration between State and Church will happen as a matter of course, through the juridical order*, with the sole aim of decreeing those rights of the individual, in the defence of which both State and Church have equal interest'.[57] So, since 'Europe cannot accept a common and higher moral law other than the Christian one',[58] which 'can be accepted by Catholics and non-Catholics, believers and non-believers',[59] the 'higher moral law'[60] of the new State can only be 'illuminated by the Gospel'.[61]

But Olivetti's attention to the Church goes beyond this 'vague evangelism'[62] and the conviction, alluding to other socialists, that 'without a basic element of moral direction, no new economic plan, no new social structure and no political philosophy will be able to satisfy the wishes of the individuals and nations sadly affected'.[63] Rather Olivetti's focus on the Church depends also on the fact that it represents the example of an institution with 'secular experience'[64] of organisation and, for the same reason, his thinking focuses equally on the General Staff of the Army and on industrial enterprises, with the aim of drawing out valuable ideas: 'there is a need now, in the politics and administration of many countries, for these rules and experi-ences to be applied'.[65] From the analysis of these historical institutions, Olivetti considers the tripartite division of the levels of State government as a 'fundamental rule of organisation'[66]: 'the reduction of the number of communities in which planning activities have a role, with three degrees at most, each having a different

range of executive duties corresponding to an organisation and functional criterion, is well known to the Church, to the General Staff [of the Army] and to industries, who know that an excessive vertical division of authority creates a very long chain of delegation and responsibility, which leads to paralysis and inefficiency'.[67] Moreover, he notes that 'no body which aims to carry out delicate tasks and to resist change can abandon the principle of subjecting its own future leaders to a steady education and a specialised preparation. Examples include the Curia Romana, the General Staff and large industries, just to name bodies that are profoundly different in their means and aims'. For Olivetti, then, it is clear that 'for such a need', they should not 'take away from those who oversee the most important offices of the State'.[68]

In organising different offices—which link the tripartite political order of Communities, Regions and State—the selection of individuals to elect, the requirements of voters, and the practicalities of election must be arranged in relation to each political office, since each 'has it own rules and each maintains, from a political point of view, a particular facet for the cultural grounding and political legitimacy of the governing and representative bodies'.[69] From this comes the varying importance, 'from a political perspective'[70] of each office, so that the criteria for career promotion of the political representative are not conditioned so much by belonging as by competence.

Having identified the political offices necessary for a modern State,[71] Olivetti intends 'to make them, in a certain sense, autonomous and organise them in democratic associations on a national scale'. He hypothesises, then, a solution for which such associations are 'the only ones authorised to propose candidates in local elections'. In this way, 'a completely new system, designed to substitute the party regime' could be drawn up. Democracy would be saved, in his view, because of two procedures: 'first by virtue of the democratic statute of the official association, second by virtue of the local choice'[72] made in each Community.[73] A similar situation, 'even though not abolishing the role of political parties, will lead to clarifications, to coherent associations founded on concrete programmes and to that general direction of political struggle, between a realistic right and an idealist left, which seems to respond, in the final analysis, to the true essence of political struggle'.[74]

In this new form of national organisation, 'democratic associations' or, rather, '*official political associations*'[75] are the institutions that could be 'the heirs to political parties'.[76] Through these, Olivetti then reaches 'the more accurate proposal of the qualification of true and genuine political orders',[77] which 'has a precise reference in the constitution of the Roman Church' with religious orders[78]: 'we can define *political Order* as all of those individuals who, within the new constitutional structure, are imbued, in the environment of each office, with executive powers (in the Community) and representative powers (in the Region)',[79] and, so, it is possible to identify as many political Orders as there are offices in each Community.[80]

Together, the political Orders constitute the political class which, holding particular references and indispensable cultural titles, specific to each political office, is authorised to represent the general will through different forms of legitimisation, all subordinate, at least indirectly, via simple constitutional processes, to universal suffrage. In this regard, one needs to note that universal suffrage only expresses

itself in a non-mediated form in the Community environment and, here too, in a circumscribed manner[81]: only the political Orders of General Business and Justice come directly from universal suffrage; the Orders of Social Relations and Social Assistance are endorsed by dependent workers[82]; those of Town Planning and Culture by competition[83]; the Social Economy office by a co-optive form.[84] These designations of different nature respond, in Olivetti's view, 'to the conditions of *current political reality* with relation to the need to create a new society'.[85] Moreover, there is a need to consider that the representatives of each political office 'do not have, from a political perspective, equal standing'[86]: General Business, Social Relations and Culture constitute, in each Community, the 'original nucleus of power', 'for whom essential political offices are reserved'[87] in the selection of the other representatives.

With the creation of the political Orders of the Communities, as has been noted, 'a deontology' is achieved, which applies pressure 'to the vertical aspect of politics',[88] guaranteeing a circulation of democratically elected elites. And since Olivetti garners a priori political Orders from a rigorous analysis of the basic duties of the State, the organic and corporative representation of interests is also overturned,[89] seeming thus to be subordinate to general interests and aiming towards infinite values.

Notes

1. *L'ordine*, cit., p. 173. Cf. also *Democrazia senza partiti*, cit., p. 164.
2. *Libertà di associazione e partiti politici*, cit., p. 213.
3. *Le forze spirituali*, cit., pp. 27, 30.
4. *Ibid.*, p. 28.
5. 'One cannot talk of Civilization if a single one of these elements – Truth, Justice, Beauty and Love – is absent' (*ibidem*).
6. *Ibidem*. Olivetti declares that 'in its role as a creative synthesis intelligence leads to harmony and unity; since beauty, truth and goodness are One' (*Democrazia senza partiti*, cit., p. 157).
7. Cf. *Libertà di associazione e partiti politici*, cit., pp. 211–212.
8. Cf. Benedetto Croce, *Indagini su Hegel e schiarimenti filosofici*, Bari, Laterza, 1952, p. 133 (quoted with only the author and title referenced in *Libertà di associazione e partiti politici*, cit., p. 212).
9. 'And love understands everything, even justice' (*Il cammino della Comunità*, cit., p. 84).
10. Giancarlo Lunati recalls that, speaking to Olivetti about Croce in early 1957, Olivetti 'said that he did not agree with Croce's categories, since they lacked something. […] the four categories were not enough to understand the world, man and society, since an empty space remained that needed filling. A fifth category was necessary: love. Love as a desire to live, as a continual openness toward others, as a duty to plan the new society, in the common interest' (*Con Adriano Olivetti alle elezioni del 1958*, cit., pp. 13–14).
11. *Le forze spirituali*, cit., p. 34.
12. 'The Federal State of Communities recognises the Economy as a fundamental political office, to which the term "Social" is added to call to mind the fact that economic legislation is not purely determined by technical calculations, but must always be inspired by the awareness of political ends. Consequently, production, distribution, and circulation indicate diverse aspects of a economic approach which has a subordinate character. / The lack of recognition of this principle is a theoretical cause of the failure of all the corporative constructions and all the attempts to

confer political offices on technical, professional and economic representatives' (*L'ordine*, cit., pp. 185–186).

13. *Libertà di associazione e partiti politici*, cit., p. 213. These other three expressions of the spirit can be defined as 'activities' or 'offices which have a spiritual root' and are 'at the same time essential to the running of a modern state' (*Proposta per un Senato organico e funzionale*, cit., p. 245. Cf. also *Democrazia senza partiti*, cit., p. 164).

14. 'The duty of the Social Relations Division of a Community […] is to watch over the application of labour laws and act as an intermediary between the Community and the General Confederation of Work' (*L'ordine*, cit., p. 68).

15. *Libertà di associazione e partiti politici*, cit., p. 213. Italics in original. Cf. also *L'ordine*, cit., p. 174.

16. *Ibidem*.

17. *Democrazia senza partiti*, cit., p. 161.

18. Cf. *Libertà di associazione e partiti politici*, cit., p. 212.

19. *Le forze spirituali*, cit., p. 28. He mentions that 'men of culture, experts in all scientific and technological activites, express through their tireless research, equally universal values, in the order of truth and science' (*Ai lavoratori d'Ivrea*, cit., p. 187).

20. *Le forze spirituali*, cit., p. 31. Cf. also *Il cammino della Comunità*, cit., p. 70.

21. *Il cammino della Comunità*, cit., p. 70.

22. *Le forze spirituali*, cit., p. 29.

23. *Ibid.*, p. 31. Cf. also *Il cammino della Comunità*, cit., p. 81.

24. *Ai lavoratori d'Ivrea*, cit., p. 187.

25. *L'ordine*, cit., p. 181. Italics in original.

26. 'The idea of the State carrying out social justice is always made complete by the individual spirit of charity and tollerance' (*Punti programmatici del «Movimento Comunità»*, cit., p. 178). Cf. also *L'ordine*, cit., p. 17. Pampaloni, on the other hand, maintains that Olivetti 'considers justice as the institutional form of charity' (*Un'idea di vita*, cit., pp. 13–14). This same consideration is noted by Elisabeth Mann Borgese, in a review of *Città dell'uomo*, in «Il Ponte», a. XVI, n. 2, February 1960, p. 14.

27. *Il cammino della Comunità*, cit., p. 80.

28. *L'ordine*, cit., p. 181. Italics in original.

29. *Proposta per un Senato organico e funzionale*, cit., p. 249. Italics in original.

30. *Libertà di associazione e partiti politici*, cit., p. 211. Cf. also *L'ordine*, cit., 54.

31. *L'ordine*, cit., p. 177. Olivetti's italics.

32. *Libertà di associazione e partiti politici*, cit., pp. 212–213. Italics in original. Cf. also *Proposta per un Senato organico e funzionale*, cit., p. 250, and *L'ordine*, cit., p. 179. In this regard see R. Musatti, *Il concetto di urbanistica secondo Adriano Olivetti*, cit. Mario Labò notes that Olivetti's interest in aesthetics 'teaches, in short, that *joy in work* is one of the highest goals of any form of moral and human politics' (*L'aspetto estetico dell'opera sociale di Adriano Olivetti*, Milano, Görlich, 1957, p. 8. Italics in original).

33. *Ostacoli alla pianificazione*, cit., p. 122. Cf. also *La forma dei piani*, cit., p. 79.

34. *Ibid.*, p. 123. Cf. also *La forma dei piani*, cit., p. 79.

35. *Ibidem*. Cf. also *La forma dei piani*, cit., p. 79, and *L'ordine*, cit., pp. 179–180.

36. For this reason, one must treat Rogers's declaration with a pinch of salt, according to which 'town planning and architecture are, at the same time, the means and end of social living for Adriano: they are the necessary condition to practically organise cohabitation as well as the artistic representation of its cultural and moral qualities' (*L'unità di Adriano Olivetti*, cit., p. 9). Garosci notes that Olivetti 'did not conceive of truth as a transcendent factor to which one should conform, but as a theoretical construct, no less than beauty, to which social work and politics ought to have given space' (*La città dell'uomo*, cit., p. 9).

37. Cf. *Società e stato*, cit., p. 26.

38. *Il cammino della Comunità*, cit., p. 65.

39. 'In order for the individual to be free and capable of possessing an absolute spiritual value, infinitely more important and infinitely higher that every value of the economic and political order, the State must exist for man and not man for the State' (*Il cammino della Comunità*, cit., p. 59).

40. *Le forze spirituali*, cit., p. 35. As Pampaloni notes, '"politics" means research for Olivetti, the definition and vital creation of an organic and harmonious relationship between society and State, the State being above all the organising instrument, the institutional expression of forces, of desires, of capabilities, of the moral wealth of the "individuals" which constitute social groups, the collectivity. According to Olivetti's deeply religious conception, society is in the order of the spiritual, the State in the order of the useful (of practical instrumentation, of official representation): politics is the form of their relationship, a search for the ideal, a continually renewed balance of their contrasts; at most, a harmony and truth expressive of society in its institutions' (*Un'idea di vita*, cit., pp. 10–11).

41. *Le forze spirituali*, cit., p. 36.

42. *Proposta per un Senato organico e funzionale*, cit., p. 246. Cf. also *L'ordine*, cit., p. 173. Serafini correctly notes that 'Olivetti does not present these offices as incontrovertible truths, but admits that their shape might vary with time (as the structures of production and individual practice mature) and with the growth of the juridical order' (*Ci ha lasciato uno dei più grandi maestri*, cit., p. 329).

43. *L'ordine*, cit., p. 174.

44. *Proposta per un Senato organico e funzionale*, cit., p. 250.

45. *Libertà di associazione e partiti politici*, cit., p. 210. Italics in original. Cf. also *L'ordine*, cit., p. 179. 'Since in the political-administrative order of the Communities, there will not be a "Public Works" Division, instead its relevant activities will be considered as *competencies subordinate* to Town Planning which is an Aesthetic applied to social life. Nor will Industry and Agriculture be created as independent offices, both to be considered as *competencies* subordinate to political economy, which is a science of means for ethical ends' (*Libertà di associazione e partiti politici*, cit., p. 211. Italics in original. Cf. also *L'ordine*, cit., p. 54).

46. *Libertà di associazione e partiti politici*, cit., p. 211. Italics in original. Cf. also *Proposta per un Senato organico e funzionale*, cit., p. 243, and *L'ordine*, cit., p. 53. One must note that Olivetti, unlike 'one of the most characteristic aspects of integrated federalism', contrasts its official representation with its professional one, implicitly criticising this 'corporative component of integrated federalism, which […] rather than deepening democracy, would end up by creating new privileges' (Lucio Levi, *Il federalismo*, Milano, FrancoAngeli, 1987, p. 92. See also U. Serafini, *La comunità di Adriano Olivetti e il federalismo*, cit., p. 4). Chiti-Batelli notes that 'the so-called "integrated federalism", above all of the French school […] constitutes only a variant' of corporativism (*La dimensione europea delle autonomie e l'Italia. Regione, ente intermedio, autonomie nella prospettiva federalista. Esame critico. Aspetti storico-linguistici. Bibliografia ragionata*, Milano, Franco Angeli, 1984, p. 199). See also *Proposta per un Senato organico e funzionale*, cit., p. 247, and *L'ordine*, cit., pp. 173–174).

47. One should mention, in this regard, that Olivetti identifies science with 'the Consoler', 'who would have led the world towards total Truth', announced by Christ during the Last Supper: 'The spirit of truth has, then, worked in silence for many centuries, in order that it would be possible one day for humanity to become happier' (*ibid.*, pp. 28–30). It is sufficient, then, to define Olivettian political offices, as Chiti-Batelli does, as offices which are 'organically analysed and gleaned, *a priori*, from the study of absolute tasks and the ends pursued by public authorities' (*Oltre la democrazia rappresentativa?*, cit., p. 84). Pampaloni, describing a vision of purely positivist science, writes that Olivetti 'identifies the path of science with that of truth, and its triumphs with an approximation of a state of freedom from pain, such that its triumph basks in the light of charity' (*Un'idea di vita*, cit., p. 13). But Olivetti, in an article included in the same work prefaced by Pampaloni, declares: 'And the world moves toward more radiant and happy days, but on one condition: that the great material forces which are today at the disposition of man are directed to spiritual aims and goals. Otherwise the power of atoms, rather than building a new society, could, in radio-controlled missiles and hydrogen bombs, destroy it for ever' (*Le forze spirituali*, cit., p. 29).

48. Cf. A. Tarantino, *Sovranità. Valori e limiti*, Milano, Giuffrè, 1990, pp. 133–134, 41–89.

49. *Proposta per un Senato organico e funzionale*, cit., p. 245. Cf. also *Democrazia senza partiti*, cit., p. 164.

50. *Ibid.*, pp. 244–245. Cf. also *Democrazia senza partiti*, cit., pp. 163–164.
51. Cf. *ibid.*, p. 245. Cf. also *Democrazia senza partiti*, cit., p. 164.
52. *Ibid.*, p. 244.
53. Together with Pampaloni one should mention, in this regard, that Olivetti 'positioned himself, in 1947, against article 7, considering that a "religious peace" obtained at the expense of the principle of the State's secularity was the first step of a regime' (*Adriano Olivetti tra utopia, eresia e profezia*, cit., p. 89).
54. *Democrazia senza partiti*, cit., p. 169.
55. *Ibidem*.
56. For Olivetti 'recognising and defending certain rights of the individual means admitting the existence of a supernatural element in mankind's institutions' (*ibid.*, p. 332). For this reason, 'if, in a Monarchy, sovereignty springs from a pact between God and the King, then in a democratic Republic sovereignty has a dual source which corresponds to the dual connection which links the individual to God and to earthly society' (*ibid.*, p. 333).
57. *Democrazia senza partiti*, cit., p. 170. Italics in original. Vittorio Agosti speaks of Olivetti's 'fragility' and 'religious pragmatism', since 'on an organisational level, Olivetti treats the relations between Church and State rather simplistically, which can collaborate "to stabilise those rights of the individual, which both share an equal interest in defending', without distinguishing clearly the different aims and expansion of the two "societies"' (*Adriano Olivetti tra Maritain e Mounier*, cit., p. 234). But it is rather strange that Olivetti is accused of treating 'the relations between Church and State rather simplistically' since, immediately following the sentence cited by Agosti, he notes: 'The problem is extremely complex and delicate and can only be outlined here in its basic form' (*Democrazia senza partiti*, cit., p. 170).
58. *L'ordine*, cit., p. 19.
59. *Ibid.*, p. 17. Rather, a communal law which can be shared by those who '*will accept, even without recognising their transcendence, the human and social content of the Gospel*' (*L'ordine*, cit., p. 19. Italics in original). Alessandro Levi declares that 'one can be a fierce adversary of every anti-historicist theory of law, as was the writer of these lines *ab antiquo*; but, whatever the philosophical presupposition from which one begins, if it is a truly democratic political sentiment, one can only side with those who declare that the State "should safeguard the dignity of the individual", even if such a declaration comes, rather than from faith (which, fundamentally, is religious too) in the immanent justice in the course of human progress, from the belief in an "other-worldy purpose of man" (cfr. p. 333)' (*Appunti per la futura costituzione*, cit., p. 56).
60. *Ibidem*.
61. *Punti programmatici del «Movimento Comunità»*, cit., p. 177.
62. Adalberto Nobile speaks of 'vague evangelism', candidly belittling Olivetti's proposal (*L'illusione del compromesso*, in «Il giornale di Trieste», 21 October 1952). Vittorio Agosti notes that 'the Gospel is presented by Olivetti not so much as a body of "truth" or as divine words revealed, but rather used for practical ends, that is for its value as a moral code, as a rule for social conduct' (*Adriano Olivetti tre Maritain e Mounier*, cit., p. 234).
63. Cf. *L'ordine*, cit., p. 19. For Arturo Colombo, Olivetti's personalist conception is 'the most decidedly "utopian" component' (*Adriano Olivetti fra intuizione e utopia*, cit., p. 106). Mortati declares, though, that the 'ethical foundation on which any democratic regime should be based, so as to credit every man with the same dignity, and to exclude any division between public and private morals […], is reaffirmed by Olivetti, with notes of extreme *pathos*, with words that ought to be widely popularised, and rouse to action the conscience of citizens who are subjugated by prevailing greed, a foundation poorly camouflaged beneath a Pharisaic call to religious values' (*Autonomie e pluralismo*, cit., pp. XLVI–XLVII).
64. *Edilizia popolare e pianificazione urbanistica*, cit., p. 132.
65. *Ibid.*, p. 133.
66. *Ibidem*.
67. *Ibid.*, p. 132. 'With regard to a rational distribution of sovereignty and expertise, acknowledgement can be made here, one should remember, of the need to respect, in every judicial order

which implicates a subordinate order, a law of universal value, since it is founded on human faculties and attitudes. Such a law tells us that no delegation of authority or executive power can be transmitted through a hierarchy made up of more than three subordinate orders, without creating weaknesses, insufficiencies, and misrepresentations incompatable with the aims pursued by the higher authority. Exercising sovereignty by dividing it into more than three orders, for each office, would be inconceivable, and would lead to confusion, to an irreparable lack of coordination' (*L'ordine*, cit., p. 195).

68. *Chi sceglie i Ministri?*, cit., p. 276. Cf. also *L'ordine*, cit., pp. 352–353.

69. *Proposta per un Senato organico e funzionale*, cit., p. 245. Cf. also *Democrazia senza partiti*, cit., p. 149.

70. *L'ordine*, cit., p. 61.

71. 'This division of offices responds very well to the *current* demands of a national system, but they would have to be re-examined when it needed to be used as a basis for a supranational judicial order' (*Proposta per un Senato organico e funzionale*, cit., p. 247. Italics in original. Cf. also *L'ordine*, cit., p. 173).

72. *Libertà di associazione e partiti politici*, cit., p. 208.

73. In fact, democracy 'can be said to be well founded only when it is based on the representation of colleges or territories which are homogeneous with respect to the population. It is a principle well known by philosophers of law, known as the territorial principle' (*La dimensione «ottima» dell'autogoverno locale*, cit., p. 41).

74. *L'ordine*, cit., p. 235. Cf. also *Democrazia senza partiti*, cit., p. 150.

75. *Libertà di associazione e partiti politici*, cit., p. 205. Italics in original. Ferruccio Parri notes: 'A natural ascent must be organised through administrative experience, which finds in itself a reason for self-perfection and circulates through a hierarchy of institutions and offices capable of organising and limiting the divisive effect of parties' (*Sulla crisi degli istituti democratici (suggerimenti di Adriano Olivetti)*, in «Mondo Economico», a. VII, n. 20, 17 maggio 1952, p. 2).

76. *Ibidem*. 'In other words it is a question of doing without deceit and pretense that which political parties have dishonestly attempted to do to gain power, through organisations controlled by themselves and without regard for the true structure of the State, for the value of men, for democractic movement, or for the freedom to criticise' (*ibid.*, p. 210).

77. *Ibidem*.

78. Cf. *Proposta per un Senato organico e funzionale*, cit., p. 244.

79. It is interesting to note that in the Marxian system 'in order to deal with national affairs, the peripheral delegates would have had to shed light on the centre from the communes, but in such a way as to not reconstitute a sovereign central parliament, but to form a meeting point for local delegates to discuss national affairs' (N. Bobbio, *La teoria delle forme di governo nella storia del pensiero politico*, cit., p. 198).

80. Cf. *L'ordine*, cit., p. 192. Italics in original.

81. As A. Chiti-Batelli also notes in *Oltre la democrazia rappresentativa?*, cit., p. 89.

82. 'Thus the workers directly control social relations and social and sanitary assistance, an area in which they have an immediate interest and can provide instant feedback' (*L'ordine*, cit., p. 81). The procedure chosen for the selection of the 'individual to put forward for these two offices' draws its political legitimacy from the fact that 'they predominantly concern the life of the working classes' (*ibid.*, p. 181). It should be noted that to be elected as a representative of the office of Social Relations or to become a union leader, the candidate is required to have worked as an employee for at least two and three years, respectively (*ibid.*, pp. 70, 92). 'Such an arrangement verifies a special vocation and guarantees a direct and detailed understanding of the fundamental problems of work (pay systems, the working of social insurance, conditions of work, hours and so on), problems which anybody who has ever worked knows only partially' (*ibid.*, p. 93).

83. 'Culture and town planning, which require specific knowledge that is difficult to acquire for an electoral body, are entrusted to Presidents who are not appointed from above or below, but through an application process' (*ibid.*, p. 82).

84. Cf. *L'ordine*, cit., p. 193. Cf. also *ibid.*, pp. 62–63. Since 'no economic problem is strictly technical, so inseparable are they from human and social problems', 'every political office in the economic sector, in the organisation of the State of Communities, is entrusted to economic analysts, chosen by politicians for their metaphysical leaning and not appointed by economic and professional groups' (*ibid.*, p. 50). The nomination of the representative of the Social Economy office is entrusted to the 'original nucleus of power', 'rather than to the electoral body of the Community; adjusting the electoral system for such a delicate office is designed to avoid the electorate being influenced by reasons other than the moral capacity and integrity of the candidate and, in particular, by the actions of organised interests. / Not even an open competition would guarantee an enlightened selection, since the theoretical understanding of the candidates in this instance might place too much weight on the judgement of the examiners. Such a procedure, very similar to that decided by co-option, ensures a political identity that lies between the appointing body and the appointed representative' (*ibid.*, p. 78).
85. *Ibid.*, p. 80. Italics are mine.
86. *Ibid.*, p. 61.
87. *Ibidem.*
88. S. Ristuccia, *Il progetto politico di Adriano Olivetti*, cit., p. 27.
89. Cf. U. Serafini, *Adriano Olivetti e le dottrine politiche*, cit., pp. 438–441. The concept is reaffirmed in Id., *La nascita della partitocrazia italiana e il Movimento Comunità*, in «Queste istituzioni», a. XX, n. 92, October-December 1992, p. 78, and in Id., *La comunità di Adriano Olivetti e il federalismo*, cit., p. 3. Gino Giugni notes that the system of political representation proposed in *L'ordine politico delle Comunità* constitutes 'one of the most original attempts to move away from old schemes, from the worn contrast between political representation and that of professional interests, from the hard, and perhaps vain, search for solutions capable of bridging, in the classic parliamentary system, the gap between the political class and technical expertise, the latter coming about in order to give a title to participation in power as an expression of the technocratic "new class"' (*Il rinnovamento delle istituzioni rappresentative*, cit., p. 34).

Chapter 9
Communities

The political office, which defines the political Order, is an instrument of mediation between society and State,[1] in the same way as the Community, which mainly absolves the requisite to satisfy the concrete and intimate needs of the individual[2]: the State, on the other hand, is too distant and 'does not see the social life of man, which could remove him from isolation and from every form of moral decadence, and make him, definitively, into a new man, conferring new dignity on him'.[3] And, above all, 'one of the essential aims which are hoped to be fulfilled with the creation of the Community'[4] is the 'harmonisation of interests',[5] since 'here, due to its limited size, interests can be easily harmonised'.[6]

As has already been noted, at the root of Olivetti's political thought is the problem of the alienation of the individual from work, for whom the ethical aspect immediately intertwines with the economic.[7] His attention switches from the factory and the problem of its efficient organisation, respecting the worker's character and dignity,[8] to the impact on the administrative and political field[9]: 'I saw that every problem of the factory', Olivetti himself recalled, 'became an external problem and that only he who was able to coordinate internal problems with external ones would have managed to find a correct answer for everything. [...] If I had been able to show that the factory was a common good and not a private interest, then transfers of ownership would have been justified, as would town plans, bold social experiments decentralising work... The way of balancing these things existed, but it was not in my hands: a just and human authority needed to be created which was capable of reconciling all these things, in the interest of everyone. For this authority to be efficient, it had to be invested with great economic powers. It had, in other words, to do in the interest of everyone what I had done in the interest of a factory. There was only one solution: to make the factory and the surrounding environment economically in tune with each other. Thus the idea of a Community was born'.[10]

From his practical personal experience as a captain of industry and as an 'organiser of production',[11] Olivetti analyses the political reality around him and proposes the solution which seems to him to be able to resolve the problems of society's development. The politico-administrative and economic body,[12] labelled

'Community', springs from the 'need for an official Autonomism',[13] from the search
for the suitable seat for the coordinating authority, so that its power[14] guarantees the
administrative efficiency and harmonious development of all productive activities[15]:
for this reason the Community acquires a supremacy[16] over other territorial
communities, namely 'the house, the quarter, the city, the province, the region, the
State and the plurality of States'.[17] The Comune,[18] however small or large it is,
cannot be a suitable place for a vigilant and efficient authority: 'the Comunes
that are too small are set against those that are immense, part of metropolises, in
which—for contrary reasons—the possibility is lost to direct all the forces of political
and social renewal towards a true human measure'.[19] And, just as 'the Comune, too
small or too vast, almost always excludes nature and landscape', so, 'the Province,
which corresponds neither to geographical criteria nor to human needs, remains an
artificial creation'.[20] To allow the Province to be an effective means of self-government,
it needs to be returned to 'its natural geographic limits', because only if it becomes
'an official instrument of economic and planning coordination can it bring together
different administrative, economic, political and social problems'. Equally, there is
a need to 'reform the provincial politico-administrative system', with the aim of
eliminating 'the complications and duplications of offices', which characterise today's
great metropolises, 'in whose area Province and Comune come into conflict'.[21]
In short, there is a need 'to try to recompose a lost unity between the urban fabric as
the source of a much vaster and more profound body, which existed in the city–State
of ancient Greece and was revived in many aspects during medieval history with
the Comune'.[22] Thus, 'history and reason lead us to the examination of an "ideal"
Community: neither too large, nor too small, but in proportion to mankind'.[23]
The shaping of the Community, though, is not the result of merely speculative theo-
rising, but of the intent to institutionalise an existing social reality[24]: as with Olivetti's
other institutional proposals 'it is not a question […] of new creations, but of
highlighting aspects of the best bodies […] and guiding their rational, general
development'.[25] For this reason it is important to create a dual aspect[26] of political
power, both centralised and decentralised: centralised with respect to small Comunes
and decentralised in large metropolises.

    The territory of a Community, in Olivetti's theory, ought to coincide in general
with traditional geographical unities (like the neighbourhood, the diocese, the
precinct and the constituency), where there would be the need to gradually bring
about those necessary alterations in order to create the unity which has 'its foundations'
in nature and history and reaches its limits in the individual. Communities would be
able to identify themselves through 'a convenient division of each Province',[27]
since—far from being free associations of nearby Comunes[28]—they are the product
of a rational planning will. The Communities would have a population that was
'variable according to criteria dictated by the geographical and economic conditions,
even if potential, of particular zones', oscillating 'between 75 and 150,000 inhabitants'.
Large communes would have been able to create, 'in *very approximate* terms, a
number of Communities for every 100,000 of the total number of inhabitants'.[29]
In particular, Olivetti distinguishes between administrative Communities, 'centres

of cultural, political and administrative organisms (mixed official centres)', industrial Communities, 'formed in areas where the prevalent activity and importance is ascribed to industry', the agricultural Communities, 'in the areas where activity is predominantly[30] agricultural', and mixed Communities, 'constituted from areas where the agricultural and industrial activity of citizens are so intertwined that distinct unities cannot be established'. Their diversification, nonetheless, 'is purely formal, not offering Communities fundamental differences in the political structure'.[31]

This 'communitarian Province' or 'concrete Province'[32] or 'consortium of Comunes'[33] is the most suitable place for the coordinating authority, because it is the place where history, traditions and Comune affairs can represent a 'concrete element of solidarity' which, bringing about 'common interests', makes it possible to 'establish a tangible human solidarity',[34] and a 'moral and material unity'[35]: a 'community of understanding and action'.[36] Between family and State there is 'an emptiness which must be brought back to life'[37]: the Community, or rather the 'everyday events which take place' in the 'environment where our social life is expressed'.[38] It is territorially and numerically limited, so as to facilitate administrators' 'direct contact'[39] with problems to be addressed,[40] and with those individuals who cause or suffer from these problems, keeping in mind all the social, economic, historical and geographical characteristics of the administrative district.[41]

In general, to be able to bring a real Community to life, the conditions needed are: an ideal territorial space to be organised, founded 'on economic and historical facts, and homogeneous and unitarian cultures'[42]; a suitable administrative structure; and the implementation of a town plan to organise the territory and take into consideration its ultimate aims.[43] The fourth and most important condition is the assimilation in social life of authentic spiritual values, but—Olivetti states— 'this is not in our power, since spirit blows wherever it wants'.[44] Moreover, 'it takes generations to give life to an authentic Community'. 'The continuity of time' is necessary, 'it is a strong, continual work of research and refinement'.[45]

'Intercommunal'[46] urban planning ought to be conceived in relation to 'an indispensable series of planning *grades*',[47] or rather to urban plans of other different territorial communities (Comune, Region, State),[48] each with its own specific 'priority',[49] and it must be elaborated, like the others, with a relevant consideration of economic planning,[50] since it is 'the only means capable of giving suitable form to an economic plan'.[51]

Each is elaborated through 'highly detailed plans',[52] but the executive arms should only be found in the Communities' intercommunal plan, powers based on 'an organic technical and administrative idea' and 'with respect for freedom'.[53] In fact, 'the value in setting out the *intercommunal* plan consists indeed in this guarantee, since it guards the democratic virtues of a plan that is entrusted to the Comunes, which appeal, in a better way than the State, to a vibrant and immediate consideration of the concept of democracy'.[54]

The realisation of these planning programmes ought to be entrusted to three distinct plans: the federal plan, which consists of 'a set of laws, provisions and rules of a general nature, approved through national legislative and executive bodies'; the

regional plan, which 'provides for the execution, in the regional domain, of federal matters and organises, through its self-sufficient bodies, the coordination of smaller plans', even with alterations,[55] and the plan of the Communities, which is 'the only complete plan which contains executive details'.[56]

Ultimately, there are two marked characteristics of communitarian planning: the coordination of economic and social data (gathered, in the first instance, from numerous autonomous and private companies and, in the second, from regional and federal communitarian authorities) and the coordination, through town planning, of different public and private initiatives.[57]

The town plan, 'a technical-juridical instrument, an organ of both synthesis and propulsion',[58] enables industrial decentralisation which, 'having been made easier by more progressive modern technology, brings man back to the land, re-establishes a mixed economy, a new balance between agriculture and industry, the only one capable of restoring lost harmony to man'.[59] There is a need, though, to take on, 'as a fundamental planning organisation, the *second ranking* community',[60] or rather the 'Community', while the plans of the Comunes—the top level communities—which lie beneath it constitute 'the true, highly detailed and executive plans of the community'. The Regional plan—or that of the third ranking community—is 'the complete set of basic plans, appositely modified and corrected, of the second ranked communities'.[61] Olivetti notes that in general 'the important thing is to understand that the fundamental plan of coordination must correspond to the natural fusion of particular situations and must avail itself of proven organisational criteria'.[62]

In order for it to prove efficient and be the mirror of democracy,[63] the interaction between urban and economic planning, which enables the organisation of communitarian territory and, consequently, State territory, must consider a further, direct relationship with the political representative[64] of the Community. In other words, it must consider a direct relationship with that individual who serves as the coordinating authority,[65] since 'an evolution towards political forms which have an immediate correspondence with economic reality appears indispensable'.[66] In Olivetti's understanding, 'the system of Communities resolves this undeniable need with an almost perfect *approximation* of political and economic representative identity': an identity that 'existed, moreover, as an historic assumption of the creation of the parliamentary regime'.[67]

In the Community ('a small, tiny State')[68] the three main representatives of the three institutionalised social forces, which are at the root of sovereignty, constitute the 'original nucleus of Power'.[69] From it power develops, 'repeating, growing, and enriching itself so as to make up the executive of the Community, which amounts to its micro-government, equipped with all the Regional and State bodies'.[70] In this way, 'our Communities seem like well-organised micro-States', which can be grouped into Regions, which, in turn, can be brought together 'like a three-tiered pyramid to form, as a whole, the State'.[71]

Notes

1. Cf. *Libertà di associazione e partiti politici*, cit., p. 212, in which it is pointed out: 'political office = mediation between State and Society'. 'The *departmental* structure is the formal apparatus of an organic State in which, that is, a coherent nexus exists with society' (*Un Parlamento nuovo*, cit., p. 232. Cf. also *Proposta per un Senato organico e funzionale*, cit., p. 243).

2. 'In our small Communities one can once again see and love the population for the detailed vision it provides of its worries, of its anxieties, of its fears and sacrifices' (*Il cammino della Comunità*, cit., p. 79). As Santamaita notes, 'the community is, however, for the most part, a place to take stock and reorganise, where the man can move towards being reunified, harmoniously, with his economic and social life' (*Educazione Comunità Sviluppo*, cit., p. 104).

3. *Perché si pianifica?*, cit., p. 92.

4. *L'ordine*, cit., p. 35.

5. *Ibidem.*

6. *Ibid.*, pp. 34–35.

7. 'A social politics which aims to help in every way the life of workers […] needs a degree of job security, of continuity of work, and the creation of a symbiosis, crucial in perfecting the individual, between the external environment and industrial activity' (*La lotta per la stabilità*, cit., p. 62). To this end, there is a need to 'bring about a serious decentralisation of industry, […] the insertion, that is, of industrial life into agricultural life' (*ibidem*).

8. Cf. *Il cammino della Comunità*, cit., p. 74.

9. Santamaita notes that 'The political order is born from Olivetti's inner thought, as its necessary development. Its conception, in fact, would have been irreversibly damaged and, one may well say, utopian, if it was limited to the longing for a "Community" as a place of joy for the "individual" and his "humanism", without considering the institutional context in which it was to be placed' (*Educazione Comunità Sviluppo*, cit., p. 105). In *Prime esperienze in una fabbrica*, cit., p. 4, Olivetti states: 'When I left for America in 1925, I intended to study the secrets of organisation, so as to then see its reflections in the administrative and political field'. Caizzi notes that 'it was from the study of the problems of industrial growth, and its relations with the surrounding environment, that Olivetti uncovered the territorial and economic links around which he developed the concept of the community, the concrete nucleus of communal life and the cell of every politically organised society' (B. Caizzi, *Camillo e Adriano Olivetti*, cit., p. 158).

10. *Prime esperienze in una fabbrica*, cit., pp. 10–11.

11. On the entrepreneurial model represented by Adriano Olivetti in the history of industrial Italy, see Giulio Sapelli, *Organizzazione lavoro e innovazione industriale nell'Italia tra le due guerre*, cit. On this subject see the interesting considerations expressed by V. Gamberini, *Adriano Olivetti*, cit., pp. 220–237.

12. 'Such a simple and elemental concept, which is the fundamental and untouchable basis of our ideology' is intended 'to bring together, in a single territory, administrative unity, political unity and economic unity' (*Come nasce un'idea*, cit., p. 20). 'To judge the importance of the new entity which we have called the *Community*, it is essential to show how in the same unity the administrative, political and economic divisions of Regional States are brought together' (*L'ordine*, cit., p. 51. Italics in original).

13. *La dimensione «ottima» dell'autogoverno locale*, cit., p. 47. Autonomism should though consider the '"mediated" character of autonomy', since 'total autonomy […] would prove indifferent to greater interests and would not take sufficient account of the experience of other Communities' (*L'ordine*, cit., pp. 89–90).

14. *La dimensione «ottima» dell'autogoverno locale*, cit., p. 47, talks of the 'necessity, in fact, to begin from local bodies of power, re-considering the meaning of the State in the process, but, at the same time, to organise these local bodies according to official criteria suitable for the real demands of administrative, economic and political life in our era'.

15. 'I noticed very early on that the most confusing situation came from the mistaken and non-homogeneous limits of the districts in which Authority and Power were realised: in a

word the Province was always too large and the Comune was, in the majority of cases, too small. Why did these two Powers not merge: the authority of the Comune and that of the Prefect in a new politico-administrative instrument?' (*Come nasce un'idea*, cit., p. 19). Ettore Rotelli notes that 'the chance to bring together, territorially, scientific-economic unity and politico-administrative unity was already planned by Olivetti in 1945, who took up the definition of an "ideal" dimension of local self-government as a typical problem of modern democracy, capable of reconciling the need for freedom with the need for officialdom imposed by industrial society and by the planned economy' (*La non riforma. Le autonomie nell'età dei partiti*, Roma, EL, 1981, p. 177).

16. To this end it is interesting to note that Olivetti seems to oppose the position of the majority of integral federalists, for whom 'the integration of individuals into a number of social groups is valued with no one person being privileged at the expense of others.' (L. Levi, *Il federalismo*, cit., p. 91).

17. *La dimensione «ottima» dell'autogoverno locale*, cit., p. 38. In *Il cammino della Comunità*, cit., p. 67, Olivetti notes that 'only small Communities can provide the authentic spirit of the nation and the source for authentic democracy'.

18. Olivetti reveals, 'even in the inevitable structural differences, a fundamentally shared historical experience' of the problem which interests the 'current continental European Comune' (*La dimensione «ottima» dell'autogoverno locale*, cit., p. 50).

19. *Ibid.*, p. 42.

20. *L'ordine*, cit., pp. 6–7.

21. *La dimensione «ottima» dell'autogoverno locale*, cit., p. 49. 'Concrete Communities, more than Comunes, can move nearer to […] Provinces, which are understood, though, in a new way, overcoming the current artificiality and increasing their self-governing power, as well as making them smaller in number' (*ibid.*, p. 47).

22. *Ibid.*, p. 44. But in even these two historic realities, the city, which is constituted in an 'organic unity', 'was unable to constitute itself as a true Community because it was missing two fundamental attributes: a social constituent and a common end' (*ibid.*, p. 44).

23. *Ibid.*, p. 39.

24. Each and every Community that would form the great city, is 'a concrete unity […] where labourers from different workshops spontaneously unite […] in a common need to exchange experiences and where everyday life takes them, and their families, to the same shops, the same schools, the same honest pubs, the same clubs' (*L'ordine*, cit., p. 27). As Giannini Olivetti also points out 'he observes […] that in reality communities already exist: the common market centre, communcation centre, school centre, and so on, already constitute today the nucleus of a territory which gravitates around it' (review of *L'ordine politico delle Comunità*, in «Bollettino d'informazione e documentazione del Ministero per la Costituente», a. II, no. 12, 30 April 1946, p. 14). Riccardo Monaco, in *Una geniale anticipazione della società di domani*, in «Sempre Avanti!», a. III, n. 95, 21 April 1946, p. 1, also notes that 'communities, being natural, and not abstract, entities, are not a mental creation or a rational product, but the expression of given local situations'.

25. *Tecnica della riforma agraria*, cit., p. 95.

26. A. Chiti-Batelli notes this too, *Politica regionale al Parlamento Europeo*, in «Comuni d'Europa», a. XIV, n. 11, November 1966, p. 11.

27. *La dimensione «ottima» dell'autogoverno locale*, cit., p. 42, e *L'ordine*, cit., pp. 3–4. Italics in original. 'The "human measure" of a Community is defined by the limited possibility for social contact which is available to every person' (cf. *L'ordine*, cit., p. 4). 'Modern means of transport and telecommunication *only outwardly increase human contact*. They merely move the site of contact. The number of people with whom Power can exchange ideas or services depends on the nervous energy of men and their individual time spent at work each day, conditions which cannot be altered by technical means' (*ibid.*, p. 5). Indeed, 'the use of fast and super-fast means of transport tends, rather, to diminish, instead of increase, the precise understanding and awareness of everyday life which is evident in the thousands of details that can

only be appreciated by being present, at every step, at the playing out of life which man, woman and child carry reflected in their faces' (*ibid.*, p. 6).

28. Massimo Ganci, though, defines them in this manner, which probably muddles the political thought of Olivetti with the way in which political action of the Community Movement manifested itself in Italian society (*Istanze federalistiche in Italia nella fase dell'Assemblea Costituente*, in *Federalismo Regionalismo Autonomismo. Esperienze e proposte a confronto. Atti del seminario internazionale Enna 24–27 giugno 1987*, a cura di Ettore A. Albertoni e Massimo Ganci, Palermo, Ediprint, 1989, vol. I, pp. 17–18).

29. *L'ordine*, cit., p. 7. Italics are mine.

30. In fact, 'the Community is not an economically homogeneous organism' (*ibid.*, p. 34).

31. *L'ordine*, cit., pp. 59–60. Italics in original.

32. *La dimensione «ottima» dell'autogoverno locale*, cit., p. 49.

33. *Il cammino della Comunità*, cit., p. 66. Since 'the Community, and not the Comune, is the greatest expression of local political autonomy, the Comune assumes, in part, the physiognomy of the body of administrative decentralisation of the Community, in line with the communal and provincial law regarding the Province and the State' (*L'ordine*, cit., p. 9).

34. *La dimensione «ottima» dell'autogoverno locale*, cit., p. 43, or *Prime esperienze in una fabbrica*, cit., p. 13. In *L'ordine*, cit., p. 6, the form of the sentence is slightly modified. Some criteria which are 'indispensable to the functioning of a real community […] are represented by "feelings of provincial attachment, by historical and cultural ties, by economic convenience and social structure"' (*ibid.*, p. 50). Mortati, though, notes that the Community is 'fixed within a territorial area' which offers 'homogeneous evironmental conditions, gleaned not so much from historical or traditional factors, as from economic, geographical and ethnic ones, so as to create spontaneous convergences of needs and interests' (*Autonomie e pluralismo*, cit., p. XXXIX).

35. *Il cammino della Comunità*, cit., p. 72.

36. *Ibid.*, p. 73.

37. *Democrazia senza partiti*, cit., p. 166.

38. *Ibidem*.

39. 'An organism is harmonious and efficient only when men in charge of certain duties are able to explain them through direct contact' (cf. *Prime esperienze in una fabbrica*, cit., p. 12, or *L'ordine*, cit., p. 4).

40. The individual who is elected 'will be able to analytically handle, in the heart of the Community, both through contacts and direct inquiries, all the important cases, or ones which exceed the knowledge and responsibility of ordinary administration' (*L'ordine*, cit., pp. 4–5).

41. 'The resolution of the problems of life implicate, on the part of Power, understandings relevant to social relationships, economic factors, the state of technology, geographical aspects, cultural needs, artistic values and last, but not least, ever-present historical or traditional elements. / They can be resolved in a valid synthesis only when they are entirely present to Power and assimilated by it. Such a synthesis, indispensable to the creation of a new civilization, is only possible in reduced unities, whose dimensions are only modified to a limited extent by the use of cars and telephones' (*Prime esperienze in una fabbrica*, cit., p. 12, or *L'ordine*, cit., pp. 5–6).

42. *Urbanistica e libertà locali*, cit., p. 101.

43. Luigi Piccinato correctly notes: 'In a certain sense Town Planning […] seems almost an accessory to his thought, both always contingent and as an instrument' (in *Ricordo di Adriano Olivetti*, cit., p. 93). The third of Olivetti's intuitions, identified by Colombo, consists, beyond the importance of local autonomies, 'in the concrete proposals of territorial planning and industrial decentralisation' (*Adriano Olivetti fra intuizione e utopia*, cit., p. 107). Olivetti states: 'This transformation [of our methods of living, which allows for harmony between individual and collective life] will only be achieved by understanding what the new civilization will offer to the problems of architecture; putting itself to social use, architecture will become the basis of all regeneration' (*Presentazione del piano*, cit., p. 14. A similar sentence appears

in *La forma dei piani*, cit., p. 75). Ochetto, on the other hand, exaggerating its importance, notes that town planning is for Olivetti 'a different discipline, and superior to others, since it is a political order capable of organising all the other elements around it (sociological, architectonic, demographic, environmental)' (*Adriano Olivetti*, cit., p. 93).

44. *Perché si pianifica?*, cit., p. 93. Cf. also *La dimensione «ottima» dell'autogoverno locale*, cit., p. 45.
45. *L'architettura, la comunità e l'urbanistica*, cit., p. 145.
46. *Perché si pianifica?*, cit., p. 97.
47. *Ibidem*. Italics in original.
48. *Ibidem*. 'Territorial coordination plans are of real importance, and are vitally valid if they can be the synthesis, the integration, and the overview of all underlying plans. In other words, we should have firmly in mind a hierarchy of plans, parallel to the hierarchy of territorial communities itself' (*ibidem*).
49. *Ibidem*. Thus avoiding 'an excessive superimposition of authority which would render the progress of plans practically impossible' (*Edilizia popolare e pianificazione urbanistica*, cit., p. 131).
50. Cf. *Perché si pianifica?*, cit., p. 95, which speaks of an 'unbreakable bond between the economic plan and the town plan'.
51. *Ibid.*, p. 96.
52. *Urbanistica e libertà locali*, cit., p. 99.
53. *Ibid.*, p. 100.
54. *Ibidem*. Italics in original.
55. One should consider '*regional* planning as a fundamental element for serious progress in town planning coordination' (cf. *Edilizia popolare e pianificazione urbanistica*, cit., p. 128. Italics in original).
56. *La forma dei piani*, cit., pp. 85–86. Italics in original.
57. *Ibid.*, p. 86.
58. *Ostacoli alla pianificazione*, cit., p. 118.
59. *Urbanistica e libertà locali*, cit., p. 107.
60. *Edilizia popolare e pianificazione urbanistica*, cit., p. 130. Italics in original.
61. *Ibid.*, pp. 130–131.
62. *Ibid.*, p. 131. Further on, Olivetti reaffirms the 'concept of the unavoidable necessity of the second tier plan of the community, the *intermediate* plan which is the main matrix in the planning organisation, under the guidance of a single local Authority which includes control of all the offices which give life to a community' (*ibid.*, p. 141. Italics in original).
63. As far as the economic power of the Community is concerned, Olivetti proposes a 'federalist type of solution', which allows a 'greater efficiency which comes from the specialisation made possible by the narrower territorial expertise of every Community and by the great ease with which citizens can come into contact with its bodies and control them' (*L'industria nell'ordine delle comunità*, cit., p. 48, and *L'ordine*, cit., p. 13).
64. 'The plan should correspond with an electoral district. When this situation does not exist, a real and continuous nexus between the electoral body and the political representative is lost, a necessary condition for the correct functioning of a true democracy' (*Edilizia popolare e pianificazione urbanistica*, cit., p. 131).
65. Marcello Fabbri observes: 'We see here the fundamental effectiveness of intuition, according to which the management of means of production, town planning development and the running of institutions constitute a single task, which cannot be separated given the principles of autonomy; and it is the exercise of this operation by a dominant, single class – a "general class" – which validates the aesthetic process' (*Le ideologie degli urbanisti nel dopoguerra*, cit., p. 48).
66. *L'ordine*, cit., p. 51.
67. *Ibidem*. Italics in original. 'Such a coherence is based on the two following conditions realised by the Community system: a) the subdivision of the Region into smaller unities of the Province,

where the most important economic activities are *isolated*, thus giving rise to representatives who reproduce with greater approximation the economic reality in its fundamental physiognomy; b) the Community assumes concrete economic interests in industry and agriculture: *political* representation transforms itself into *economic* representation without having recourse to perilous representation from professional economic groups' (*ibid.*, p. 52. Italics in original).

68. *Come nasce un'idea*, cit., p. 21.
69. *Ibid.*, p. 22.
70. *Ibid.*, p. 22.
71. *Democrazia senza partiti*, cit., p. 155. In each Community there would be regional and federal officials, so as to facilitate the cooperation of the three territorial levels of the State. The appointment of these officials is made through respective regional and national competitions: in fact 'only the Federal State and the Regional State can make use of resources and organisational experience so as to ensure a comptent selection, *removing at the same time, at least to a degree, those appointments influenced by protection, favouritism, group or factional pressures which are the negative factors ineluctably associated with local self-government*' (*L'ordine*, cit., p. 84. Italics in original).

Chapter 10
Which Representation?

In order to realise this federation, 'the central problem', in Olivetti's view, 'consists in extending the same political equilibrium which exists in the Community to each of the higher bodies, whose exercise of the three powers—legislative, executive and juridical—is transferred to the Federal State itself'.[1] He outlines, therefore, 'a type of *pyramidal* State in which a rigid organisation of micro-government of the Communities takes shape, from which Power is born'. The federated Communities give rise to the Regions which,[2] in turn, constitute the State, through 'a precise *hierarchical* order, where voting based on the *integration* of the *territorial principle* (amongst the Regions) and of the *functional principle* (amongst homogeneous groups,[3] including the Nation as a whole), guarantees an efficient democratic order[4]: this is the reason for which 'the Federal State outlined here takes its name from the Communities and not from the Regions: in fact it is the executives of the Communities which participate, in direct and indirect manner, in the formulation of federal bodies'.[5]

Since 'the creative synthesis which we are searching for is only possible if it works with a limited group of men of high and varied culture, who have had the time and the opportunity to deeply assimilate the problems of the Community and bring out a new and easier vital idea from its historic and sociological roots',[6] it is necessary to delineate 'the idea of a *pluralist* representation' of every Community,[7] appointed 'with particular procedures designed to guarantee the balance between cultural, work and democratic forces, in the strict sense of the word'.[8] So 'there will not be another individual as in the single-candidate electoral district or a list of individuals as in the proportional system, but the territory of a Community, the Community itself, will be represented by *a group*, a committee in which all political offices would be *equally* represented'.[9] This is an expression of representation as a so-called 'mirror', or sociological representation, which, based on all the qualities of single political representation, appears as a microcosm, in which the characteristics of the political body are reproduced.[10] It enables the enhancement of the '*whole, total* complex' of the individual, since the latter can participate directly in different elections, or indirectly according to precise procedures, decided by different individuals who are entrusted with defending specific values and needs.[11]

The role that the Community plays, even in this last instance, in the proposed reform of the representational system, enables, in Olivetti's view, the realisation of the 'transition of sovereignty from the disorganised nation to the concrete and organised Community',[12] which holds part of the share capital of the main extant enterprises of its territory,[13] which sees the economic, planning and political unity coincide in itself and which proves to be 'the exclusive *executive* body of the federal and regional governments'.[14] Each Community is represented by a group of seven people, one for each political office. The regional, and national, sets of these groups represent, respectively, the sovereignty of Region and State[15]: 'the coherence of the system and the possibility of a definitive solution to the problem come from having traced back to its root each representative official to the same, identical territorial principle'.[16] It seems possible to maximise, in the meantime, the representativeness and that which has been defined as 'dependent responsibility' and 'independent responsibility',[17] without reaching the disconcerting rejection of the need for universal suffrage[18]: 'one single individual will never be able to represent a Community, but the association between the masses and the appointed individuals of the ideological community offices (political Orders) can, within the limits of human affairs, constitute a representative entity which greatly approximates to social reality and is imbued with a richness of values, unattainable in a single representative'.[19] In this way, not only can such a representational system have a considerable influence on belief in legality but the gap between the title holder and the exercise of sovereignty is clearly diminished; this is because those appointed, and organised in Communities with tangible interests in common, delegate less, on a qualitative level, in the exercise of power in a sovereignty which is expressed in political offices that are territorially decentralised and co-ordinated by the State. Moreover, since the proximity of territorial, and official, representation corresponds to the factual reality of every democratic political organisation, Olivetti believes it necessary to integrate the two principles, identifying in the process another aspect of the new concept of State sovereignty. In fact, with the organic fusion of the territorial and official principle,[20] an implicit definition emerges of what might be called the 'heterophany' of State sovereignty. In a federal State this is distributed through different territorial levels, in order to be capable of effectively coordinating a plurality of legal and economic orders, and is made manifest through territorial and official representation, intimately intertwined, to the point of contributing to the realisation, according to the author, of '"unity in plurality", the legal principle well known to philosophers of the law'.[21] In order that the political structure 'adheres correctly to social reality', it must be founded 'on the *integration* between the territorial principle and the official principle'.[22] Each exponent of the political class is thus the representative of a defined territory and, at the same time, of a precise political office, so as to support—refuting that which for others is a 'peaceful observation'[23]—the democratic territorial principle with official jurisdiction.[24] With this representative system, which is both organic and functional in representing social expression,[25] an authentically sovereign order seems to be reached, then, since organising both finite and infinite interests pursues the protection of the former, on the condition that this favours the affirmation of the latter. Only in this way can the human being be recognised as being in command of all his activities, which

are always considered in context and in harmony with each other, even if from time to time one is privileged over another.[26]

Adriano Olivetti's concept of sovereignty originates, then, from a process of synthesis, or rather, from that which more clearly marks out his *forma mentis*.[27] It is a process of synthesis, of harmonisation which allows syncretism; a synthesis which 'comes about by virtue of coordination'[28]; a synthesis which may be a synonym for civilization[29] and which, however, is not merely a means of overcoming antithesis, but a true and proper *aufheben*, overcoming antinomy while safeguarding the creative force present.

For Olivetti, a 'cosmic law' exists, or rather 'the presence, in becoming, of transformative forces and stabilising forces, of principles of innovation and conservation, of practical and theoretical forms',[30] for which 'the ordered development of society is only possible […] when politics is shaped by special relationships between these forces, these principles, these forms, which give rise to creative conflict'.[31] In order to be able to achieve, politically, 'that spiritual synthesis which we have shown as necessary in the transformation of a civilization',[32] Olivetti considers as fundamental not only the continued existence of antinomies, but also 'the search for antitheses and the methods suitable to shape them'[33] in the institutional structure. Amongst the 'antithetical and creative values',[34] and the basic political antithesis, he identifies an initial overall distinction between transformative forces and inhibitive forces: both are realised, in the case of Italy's historical and cultural circumstance,[35] respectively, in what he defines as 'practical political forms', drawn from 'democratic principles', and 'theoretical political forms', gleaned from 'aristocratic principles'. Olivetti equates the following antinomic couples with this distinction: necessity and freedom, majority and unanimity, particular and universal, decentralisation and centralisation, intuitive knowledge and logical knowledge, synthesis and analysis, experience and value.[36] This sequence of 'creative antitheses'[37] informs the institutional structure in general,[38] but clearly it is the bi-cameral system he proposes which is the ultimate solution for the representational mechanism: 'the whole system which has been considered is based on a contrast, or, if one prefers, a complementarity, between practical political forms and theoretical political forms'.[39] The 'cosmic law' of antitheses, nonetheless, in order to be wholly and correctly understood, ought to be combined with 'a more secret and more complex form of becoming: the *variation*'.[40] If the principle of permanence, of continuity, must be realised in the 'strength of the institutions' and in the 'liberal principle of *re-electability*',[41] denying the validity of the 'process of long mandates',[42] then variation in politics is realised through the sensitivity of institutions to the shift in public opinion,[43] through 'a frequent renewal of the relationship which unites governing powers and the people'.[44]

This 'synthesis, which constitutes civilization'[45] is realised, in the proposed representative system, with an appropriate instrument of political synthesis. The federalist principle, evident in the territorial organisation of the envisaged State, becomes the intellectual means which enables the explanation of a new concept of sovereignty, implicitly expressed in the meaning of the 'trilogy'[46]—the ideas of the 'concrete Community', 'integrated democracy' and 'official order'—on which he bases the reform of the representational political system.

Adriano Olivetti, having redefined the governmental structure, theorises the establishment of the varied origin and dual display of State sovereignty, on account of the confluence, in the congenial non-conformist melting pot of personalism, of both Marxist criticism and elitist criticism of representational democracy,[47] assimilated and integrated through federalism, understood as political method.[48]

Notes

1. *L'ordine*, cit., p. 199. The concept is also re-stated in *ibid.*, p. 322. Vieri Nannetti states that 'the federal State, formed as it is by appropriately appointed representatives of regional States, is no more than the top of a structure which has at its foundation its raison d'être and its same juridical and political basis, its only legitimacy' (*L'ordine politico delle comunità*, in «L'Ultima», cit., p. 86,).
2. 'In the division of sovereignty between Federal State and new autonomous organism, the section assigned […] to Regional States will be the most important; nonetheless the Community will still have a not insignificant sphere of influence' (*L'ordine*, cit., p. 88). 'Regional States will be defined, for the most part, along historical or economic-geographical lines and in such a way as to create bodies of between three and five million inhabitants' (*ibid.*, pp. 97–98).
3. Defined as 'electoral bodies' by A. Levi, *Appunti per la futura costituzione*, cit., 57.
4. *Chi sceglie i Ministri?*, cit., p. 267. Italics in original.
5. *L'ordine*, cit., p. 209. 'The characteristics of the fundamental nucleus of the State, the Community, inform all new political life. So one speaks of the Federal State of Communities and not the Federation of Regional States, as would seemingly be implied by the legislative importance which […] is entrusted to the latter' (*ibid.*, p. 15). 'Ultimately, the transition from a unitary State to a Federal State based, from a political perspective, on Communities, and from the technical-organisational perspective, on Regions, is an institutional act of the utmost importance. Its direct and indirect consequences will develop, conspicuously and inconspicuously, in the life of every Region established by the Constituent, a creative process which will engage several generations' (*ibid.*, p. 115).
6. *La dimensione «ottima» dell'autogoverno locale*, cit., p. 39.
7. It is an environment in which 'the electoral body is able to have a direct empathy for men and the offices which they have to carry out, as well as a more intricate understanding of problems to resolve and a more vivid interest in their resolution' (*L'ordine*, cit., pp. 222–223).
8. *La rappresentanza nel sistema delle comunità*, cit., p. 110. Italics in original.
9. *Stato sindacati comunità*, cit., p. 36. Italics in original.
10. Cf. M. Cotta, *Rappresentanza politica*, cit., p. 955.
11. Cf. *Stato sindacati comunità*, cit., p. 36. Italics in original.
12. *Democrazia senza partiti*, cit., p. 152. In *L'ordine*, cit., p. 354, Olivetti defines 'the organised Communities [as] the only source of sovereignty'. Roberto Tommaselli notes that 'for the most part Olivetti confronts, and resolves, with his "Communities", the debate against the modern state, strongly highlighting an original and concrete form of pluralism, ascribing to the "Communities" that power beyond which there is no higher power: sovereignty' (*Democrazia senza partiti*, in «Il popolo di Roma», a. III, n. 288, 28 November 1952, p. 3).
13. In this way it is possible to deprive the State, to a degree, of 'the originality and independence' of the sovereign order present in its territory. Olivetti resolves the problem of the surreptitious influence of the sovereignty of these non-territorial organisations on that of the State by establishing the influence of State sovereignty over that of these numerous other organisations.
14. *L'ordine*, cit., p. 39. Italics in original.
15. Cf. *ibid.*, pp. 110–111.

16. *La rappresentanza nel sistema delle comunità*, cit., p. 113.

17. Cf. G. Sartori, *Sistemi rappresentativi*, in Id., *Democrazia e definizioni*, Bologna, il Mulino, 1969, pp. 361–365. 'The idea of responsibility has two sides: 1) *individual* responsibility towards somebody, meaning the duty of the representative to "respond" to an interested party; 2) *functional*, or technical, responsibility, to provide a suitable level of performance, in terms of capability and efficiency. The first is a *dependent* responsibility; the second an *independent* responsibility. In the first instance the representative defers to another individual; in the second "responsible conduct" is expected of the representative, which amounts to saying that his behaviour is entrusted, in the final analysis, to his own conscience and competence' (*ibid.*, pp. 361–362). Sartori maintains though that 'from the point of view of constitutional engineering, we cannot construct representative structures which maximise, at the same time, the functioning office and the representational office' (*ibid.*, p. 364).

18. Cf. *ibid.*, p. 365.

19. *L'ordine*, cit., p. 200.

20. 'The superiority of the *territorial* principle over the *functional* principle has always been an axiom of political science [...] The notion of the general superiority of the territorial principle over the functional cannot be contested though' (*L'ordine*, cit., p. 202. Olivetti's italics).

21. *Democrazia senza partiti*, cit., p. 158. The importance of this concept is reaffirmed in *L'ordine*, cit., p. 192: 'The recognition of political Orders implicates on the part of the new State the awareness, already repeatedly expressed, of the necessity to establish a higher level of cultural learning for each individual entrusted with official responsibility. Such a situation is indispensable in realising *unity* in *multiplicity*, that unity without which are created imbalances, hypertrophies, and other deformations which are far from the spiritual synthesis which we defined as the aim of the new State' (italics in original).

22. *L'ordine*, cit., p. 202. Italics in original. Alessandro Levi declares that 'the idea of integrating two principles seems uniquely convenient, princples which, the Author [Olivetti] notes, refer to logical ideas of synthesis and analysis, in the shaping of political representation' (*Appunti per la futura costituzione*, cit., p. 57). Franco Rinaldi notes that 'the solutions offered by Olivetti represent, always and forever, the conclusion of a logical process which, beginning from sufficiently defined premises and valorised above all as aspects of "functionality" and "territoriality", arrives at formally orthodox results' (*Filosofia, ideologia e prassi della "rivoluzione comunitaria"*, cit., p. 320). And further on he adds: 'Where [...] the strictly formal part of the communitarian community is concerned, its rigorous logic and structural harmony should be recognised' (*ibid.*, p. 321).

23. Or rather, 'that territorial representation does not satisfy, indeed it obstructs, the constitution of a official or technical respresentation' (G. Sartori, *Sistemi rappresentativi*, cit., p. 368).

24. 'Consistent with the premises of our study, only a body which represents both principles has absolute validity' (*L'ordine*, cit., p. 359).

25. Cf. S. Santamaita, *Educazione Comunità Sviluppo*, cit., p. 110.

26. Cf. A. Tarantino, *Sovranità. Valori e limiti*, cit., pp. 137–139. Cf. also S. Santamaita, *Educazione Comunità Sviluppo*, cit., p. 101, who notes: 'the character of functionality, on the other hand, is strictly connected to this entirety, in the sense that social offices are distinct and differentiated, but they must all be integrated and interact between each other to settle on a complete unity, with reference to the goal for which they exist: the human individual, once again, and his development'.

27. Q. Protopapa, in *Il problema delle fonti*, cit., p. 279, notes that Olivetti 'is not eclectic in accordance with a practical choice of economy of thought. Between opposing values he does not choose to remain at the "centre" because of a natural urge to compromise, or a refusal to choose, or for convenience of argument. What he chooses, in reality, is integration as a value and synthesis as the most elevated form of political society. It is, one might say, a rigorous eclecticism precisely because the integration of the elements is assumed not only as a means of producing a greater result, but also as the end of political research'. 'The continual searching and renewing of oneself is not through empirical change, but according to a coherent line of development.

Coherency, in the breadth of the proposals confronted, involves many aspects of experience being brought together as one. The aspiration toward unity was, for Olivetti, his religion' (E.N. Rogers, *L'unità di Adriano Olivetti*, cit., p. 6).

28. *L'ordine*, cit., p. 348.
29. *Ibid.*, p. 21, the title of one paragraph reads: 'Civilization and spiritual synthesis.' 'If one thinks of all civilizations,' observes Olivetti, 'and of the things which have come closest in this world to the idea of perfection, one finds there is synthesis in them. / Human work is far closer to this perfection than it is harmonious. And there is no harmony without synthesis. Such that every activity of the spirit must be present in man's works. / In order that such a state of things is practically achievable in a modern society, a *synthesis* must be found where humanity, science, technology, art, in short the fundamental building blocks of society, operate in a coordinated fashion' (*ibidem*. Italics in original). 'Since the detailing of the offices reacts to criteria of a spiritual nature, their synthesis is a matrix, in itself, of civilization' (*ibid.*, p. 348).
30. *Ibid.*, p. 241.
31. *Ibidem*. This aspect has also been shown by S. Santamaita, *Educazione Comunità Sviluppo*, cit., p. 106.
32. *Ibid.*, p. 242.
33. *Ibid.*, p. 245. Thus 'the duty of the legislator in creating a coherent assembly consists: a) in the search for basic political antitheses, drawn from the most important *experiences* of the parliamentary regime; b) in the choice of methods designed to determine, through the *force of things*, the natural establishment of the antitheses themselves' (*ibidem*. Italics are mine).
34. *Ibid.*, p. 246.
35. *Ibid.*, pp. 255–256. In fact, 'some forces that have been defined as transformative can, in some circumstances, be considered inhibitory, and vice versa. […] / But the exceptions are not of interest to the lawmaker: on the whole, in the current state of political maturity of the country, things would move forward along the lines of the scheme which we have sketched out' (*ibid.*, p. 255).
36. *Ibid.*, pp. 248–253.
37. *Ibid.*, p. 251.
38. It is in the light of what is declared here that following, seemingly extravagent, sentence of Olivetti should be considered: 'the fact is that we have given preference, in our structure, to neither freedom nor authority; to neither the majority nor unanimity; to neither work nor culture; neither centralisation nor de-centralisation; to neither experience, nor value; neither the paricular, nor the universal; to neither synthesis, nor analysis; to neither the nation, nor the individual; to neither theory, nor practice; to neither territory, nor departments; to neither politics nor power; rather we accepted each one of these elements for its value and in its proportions so that each one of these lead to harmony' (*Democrazia senza partiti*, cit., p. 155).
39. *L'ordine*, cit., p. 253.
40. *Ibid.*, pp. 241–242. Italics in original.
41. *Ibid.*, p. 254. Italics in original.
42. *Ibidem*. Cf. also *ibid.*, p. 244.
43. *Ibid.*, pp. 253–254.
44. *Ibid.*, p. 244. Santamaita notes that 'the conflict, though, is useful to ordered social development, provided political direction manages to find a "spiritual synthesis" which leads to unity – a dynamic unity, of transformation and "variation" – the diversity of interests, of needs, in short, of reality' (*Educazione Comunità Sviluppo*, cit., p. 107).
45. *Ibid.*, p. 309.
46. *Società e stato*, cit., p. 30.
47. 'In recent decades, through the work of theorists of various tendencies, the ideological destruction of the democractic representative structure was achieved, not without skill and proficiency. But the solutions, theoretically insufficient or unacceptable, have not presented themselves yet according to the direction mapped out by the political wisdom of the statesmen of the Risorgmento, towards, that is, federalism, de-centralisation, and self-government, but rather

were predominantly based on an autocratic conception of Power and on the consequent limit on freedom and individual rights' (*Democrazia senza partiti*, cit., p. 139).

48. Cf. Ettore Rotelli, *Federalismo e presidenzialismo*, Milano, Anabasi, 1994, pp. 31–32; B. Caizzi, *Camillo e Adriano Olivetti*, cit., p. 335. See also in this regard Mario Albertini, *Introduzione*, in Id., *Il federalismo*, Bologna, il Mulino, 1993, pp. 7–16, and Lucio Levi, *Federalismo*, in *Dizionario di politica*, cit., pp. 403–414, and above all Mario Albertini, *L'«utopia» di Olivetti*, in «Comunità», a. XIX, n. 131, agosto 1965, pp. 41–44; republished in Id., *Nazionalismo e federalismo*, Bologna, il Mulino, 1999, pp. 105–112; also published in French as Id., *L'«utopie» d'Olivetti*, in «Le Fédéraliste», a. VII, n. 2, September 1965, pp. 95–102.

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