

CHAPTER 13

CAPITAL AND THE WORKING CLASS AT FIAT: A MIDPOINT IN THE INTERNATIONAL CYCLE

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[Paper delivered at the Seminar on Class Composition, at the Centro Giovanni Francovich, in Florence, 30 April-1 May 1967]

Postscript by the Author [1975]:

This piece is the text of a paper delivered at a conference at the Centro Francovich in Florence, and then published anonymously in a limited number of copies that have had a reasonable circulation; it is less unknown as a text than might have been expected. I am republishing it here because it offers many substantive elements that can be traced back to previous research experiences, first at FIAT, then in *Quaderni Rossi*, and then in the journal *Classe operaia*. On balance I would say that it does not add a lot: I would say that its novelty lies in the fact that penetrated the question deeply, especially in the first part which deals with the cycle of production at FIAT. It is one of the rare occasions where someone has published a fragment of a research into Turin's major multinational corporation, a term which we are justified in applying to FIAT (this term, which made its way to Italy with Sweezy's book on monopoly capitalism, was not yet in the public domain) .

There is clearly an imbalance between the two parts of this paper: some aspects (in the first sections) are dealt with fairly substantially, albeit within the limits imposed by a conference, whereas the material in the later sections is only sketched, often little more than section headings. It seems to me that in this text, which starts by taking the emerging reality of the multinational as an overall level of historical development of capitalist accumulation, what appears more heavily than in the other is the lack of analysis of society and of social reproduction, of the state and the political system.

We move then between wages and profits without grasping the central importance of rent in the Italian capitalist system, and also without grasping the importance of financial capital as a mix of rent and profit, of public and private, of which Fiat, in its relationship with the political system it was the most important node. The paper also does not see how and why the working class is tending to its own recomposition on a scale that was different from that of the 1960s. However, for the little that it contains, my paper sparked a certain interest. It has been and may still be, a reference point for those who have taken this kind of research further, into different sectors and structural nodes. But even on all this, we are seeing the emergence of new things that are more satisfactory than the work that we were doing in those years.

CAPITAL AND CLASS AT FIAT: A MIDPOINT OF THE INTERNATIONAL CYCLE

Pub. Centro G.Francovich, May 1st 1967.

The following is a paper presented by Romano Alquati to a Seminar on "Production and Territory", organised at the Architecture Faculty of Florence University, April 30th – May 1st 1967.

FOREWORD

We use the phrase *class composition* as Marx used it, to mean only the original process of constituting the class.

We use the phrase *articulation of the labour force* to encompass all the internal differences, both horizontal and vertical, within labour power in its capacity as variable capital, beginning from differences of concrete labour.

We use the phrase *class recomposition* to encompass movements of the working class against capital, but in a framework of the present absence of the tactical strategic leadership role of the party.

We use the expression *political unification*, on the other hand, to mean something which still lies wholly in the future – class movements organised strategically and tactically by the revolutionary and international party of the working class. In short, that which is currently lacking.

Some features of the metalmechanical industry.

A first obvious consideration that helps us to understand the question of *cooperation* at FIAT, and how it is conditioned by *concrete labour*, is the following: the metalmechanical industry is the only one that contains within itself both the cycles of production of the *means of production* specific to the *productive forms of capitalism*: on the one hand it produces the machinery (with a few exceptions, which do not alter the position, such as the mass production* of tools, equipment, plant and machinery in the special departments of other productive sectors whose workers are remunerated according to the trade union contract of those sectors), and on the other it produces goods intended for consumption. From this it follows, among other things, that the production cycles of a company in the metalmechanical sector already feature, within their *cooperation*, a very complex combination of the collective labourer, in which the division of labour has characteristics which generally occur only in the *social* of labour. Because it is a cooperation between levels of the labour force that are different and with *distinct functions* in the labour process, such as generally occurs only in the division of labour at the level of a given *society*.

Precisely for this reason the metalmechanical companies can separate out and distribute various moments of the cycle within the social fabric of production of goods: as what is known as *auxiliary* functions, which are located as nodes in the social fabric of capitalist accumulation. And this also happens even if they maintain them within their own corporate structure: they always function as *nodes* of the overall cycle of accumulation of social capital.

The *sectors* of production and the *categories* of waged labour are generally distinguished according to the kind of goods that they produce (according to the kind of needs that the given commodity, according to its use value, tends to satisfy). This, at least, is the tendency among both employers on the one hand, and trade unions on the other. However, there are areas of production and trade-union categories in which a *technological* criterion still prevails.

What defines a sector of production in technological terms is the type of *technology* that is used in the transformation of its work-object. But the type of technology is

mainly determined by the material of which the work-object is made. The *metalworking* [metalmechanical] sector is a technological sector because it is the sector in which production takes place by working metals with both cold and hot processing technologies, by shaping them, and by removal of material, as the manuals teach us.

Most consumer durable goods are made of metals and metal alloys. The overwhelming part of the means of production (at least until the start of the process of *cyberneticisation*) have been made of metal and metal alloys. This means that that since the early of manufacturing (and later, despite the growing complexity of companies and production cycles, and despite the derivation and specialisation of functions) the same type of technology has been used to manufacture both the means of production and the various consumer goods.

As a result of this exceptional characteristic, these two types of production that* allowed them to maintain within the sector part of the overall process of accumulation (without going through the market) developed in a more direct interdependence. And also as a result of this exceptional characteristic, in the history of capital the metalmechanical sector has been the sector that had a driving function within accumulation. And in particular in the mechanisation of labour. It has been a driving force in the *development of mass* production* on a social scale, long before they then became a key sector as producer of consumer durable goods.

In the metalmechanical industry therefore aggregates not only the majority of the working class, but also the vast majority of *factory workers*. There are three explanations for this, namely

- 1) the exceptional *complexity* and the forms of cooperation in the sector;
- 2) massification and concentration;
- 3) the role as strategic hub of the social fabric of many of its moments,

From the very start these elements have functioned as a driving motor for the processes of industrialisation and mechanisation, and thus as a social driving motor for the growth of the working class. These features are also the objective terrain which explains the particular political significance of the struggles of metalmechanical sector workers. They also explain why this category of workers has not yet been broken up into sectors defined in terms of commodities produced.

The metalmechanical industry still retains this propulsive role because still today it produces the *machinery*. But today it plays this function even more effectively at an international level: (a) in those countries undergoing so-called "first industrialisation (and therefore starting up machine industries as part of basic industry); and (b) in those countries in which industrialisation is already under way, and which are a market for, and sometimes even seats of production of, metalmechanical products. The *metalmechanical* sector in these countries plays the same role of brain and driving motor, of thrust and control of industrialisation, of growth and socialisation of capital and, within it, of the labour force, both when, in substantial part, it is managed by those same countries, and also when, instead, it is *telecommanded* by the more advanced capitalist, and also when the *machinery* is from these latter.

[...]

From this point of view, not only is FIAT a typical company in the metalmechanical sector, but with the recent economic conjuncture of 1964, it comes to the end of a period of its history that, as we shall see, we can call the *period of advanced*

mechanisation, precisely because of the propulsive characteristics of the metalmechanical industry mentioned above.

Characteristics of industries of “aggregation”.

If you exclude some processes – for instance, sheet metal working, and hot and cold pressings, and, in a different sense, the integral cycles of iron foundries (processes which, if we examine the global cycle down to the non-productive consumption, are only only *degrees of processing*, which produce semi-worked goods which enter as raw materials into other labour processes), precisely because its work object is metallic, the production cycle of the metal sector is characterised, first of all, by a strong *discontinuity*. The materials of its object of labour are rigid; therefore the object of work grows as a progressive combination, an *aggregation* of separate parts, each of which is processed separately in parallel processing cycles, and are then aggregated into more complex parts, which, in turn, are only component parts of *sub-assemblies* which are then *mounted* or *assembled* in such a way that, only at the end, is there conferred onto the commodity the required use value. Here there is little to add to the analysis that Marx makes cooperation manufacturing, in which production proceeds by aggregation. We need only point out the features that the structure of cooperation takes on today: the main effort of the employer is to render as fluid as possible the cycles of the aggregation industry, attempting to give them a relative continuity, by separating, redistributing and bringing together in ever different ways the four basic types of operation that characterize the industry of aggregation in the metalmechanical industry: *assembly*, *machining on-line*, *auxiliary processing*, and *tertiary production*.

An important consequence of aggregation industry (where there is a strong presence of assembly operations) is that it is, among all industries, the one that sees the greatest *fall-out*: even more so than electronics, which entails a maximum of *proliferation*.

It proliferates in the first place because of the ease with which (since it is a discontinuous cycle) production can be separated by grades of working or production of simple loose parts, or complexes and sub-assemblies, or accessories. In other words, the labour processes (generally mechanical and assembly-line) of separate parts of the same product whose scale determines the overall cycle.

A different case, however, is the proliferation linked to the fact that surrounding a primary cycle there are *auxiliary* or *tertiary* industries depending on the relations proportional to the levels of indirect labour.

The first characteristic means that the metalmechanical industry is an industry which in itself is a drive motor of subsequent industrialisations. Ditto the second. And this explains why today the metalmechanical industry is central to the demands of the reformists who, also on this side, realise that it is the key to the industrialisation of areas that are backward in terms of the development of capitalism, but where there has already been a pre-industrialisation.

The *concentration* into the same working environments, or at any rate into territorial areas that are very limited, in relation to the means of communication, of huge masses of factory workers, is another characteristic of the machining lines (where there remain non-mechanisable operations already in the manufacture of separate parts), of sub-assembly production, and of final assembly. These masses are directly brought together into the same physical buildings, together with large nuclei of auxiliary and tertiary workers. This is always a support for processes of class recomposition (and aid to a subjective unification of its movements as regards political organisation). So also from the workers' point of view the metalmechanical industry is the one that sees the most *cumulative effects*...

Since its origins FIAT has moved on two paths. The first is the automobile. The leading role played by automobile production is clear to everyone today and is not disputed. All the left-wing criticism of the national plan and the Piedmontese regional plan seeks only to *qualify* the driving role of the automobile sector, to which all other developments are subordinated.

But economists (such as Leonardi) and trade unionists generally grasp only the aspect of the automobile as a *consumer good* in the neocapitalist system. We in *Quaderni Rossi* have discussed the other aspect: namely the *complexity* of this consumer good which, given that it is constituted by a huge number of *positions* (in other words aggregations of basic detached parts), is a receptacle for a large mass of surplus value, which is realised in this consumption.

The motor vehicle in the history of FIAT is simultaneously a means of production, a consumer good, and an instrument of war. In all these guises the automobile has been a key driving sector, because it is the first product of great *complexity* that immediately reaches scales of production that are sufficiently high (thanks to exports, and military procurements) to permit not only the extraction and realisation of surplus value and a growing accumulation of profit and power at FIAT, but also, further upstream, to allow a greater development of series production inside FIAT, and therefore an increasing mechanisation of labour. This has involved an exceptional development, for Italy, of indirect productive labour on construction and project management and coordination of mechanised systems: of the *machinery* (as well as maintenance, tooling, etc.) that from the very beginning (since only part is manufactured inside the company) determines the international level of the FIAT cycle.

The *mechanisation* of automobile production also makes possible the separation and the simplification of operations of assembly on the assembly line, and the first specialisations of the work machinery on the line.

This makes possible, right from the start, what we can define as *the transition into production* – in other words the insertion into the factory – of masses of proletarians coming mainly from the countryside; first from the surrounding rural areas, then from the region, then from the other regions of northern Italy, and finally from the South. Since this process, which is still continuing today, takes place in a continuum of struggles, it is also a *transition to becoming working class* of masses of the proletariat.

So the automobile in its three guises, pulling in mechanisation, combines the new directly productive labour with growing quantities of indirect productive labour: auxiliary and tertiary, according to the characteristics of the metalmechanical sector as outlined above. The process takes place historically outside the narrow limits of the company, at a *social* and *international* scale. While this specifies the driving role of the automobile, there emerges from this something very different from the denunciation of the *distortion of consumer goods*.

The other path of FIAT's development has been the "internal combustion engine". Many historians of capital take the development of the internal combustion engine (together with the use of electricity as an energy source) as the defining factor in the so-called *second industrial revolution*, .

The internal combustion engines in turn give a push to industrialisation and the mechanisation of labour on a social scale, in the first place with the production of drive machines and the motorisation of *machinery*, of different sectors of *large-scale* industry; secondly with the motorisation of transport and with the rapid growth of the mechanisation of transportation labour, to which Marx accords a *productive* function

also at the level of use value (when this involves operations of transportation of variable and constant capital within the production process). From the social point of view, the motorisation of the carriage of goods and labour force reduces the circulation time and reduces the costs that affect profit levels; not to mention the ecological and urban transformations arising from the motorisation of transport as a function of profit.

Since FIAT's production of machinery was always rather limited, and likewise the Italian production of it, FIAT has a further propulsive function in accumulation, on a social scale; a function that today it exercises more and more against backward capitalist countries. These countries buy their own transport goods; in particular lorries and earthmoving machines are consumed *productively* by developing countries, as they lay down the basic infrastructures.

The multi-sectoral structure of FIAT's cycle of accumulation. The internal combustion engine has been produced by FIAT in autonomous forms, as a commodity for industrial production itself, for the motorisation of machinery: and today also *gas turbines*.

But in matters of means of transport, it had not only motorised the carriage and wagon, but also the ship, the train, the omnibus, and airplanes, and has generally embodied the horses used in construction and agriculture (tractors).

This is why FIAT was born as, and remains, a *multi-sectoral* company, because the production of engines makes it possible to create and combine numbers of commodity sectors that are different from that of the automobile, and *all sectors of the metalmechanical sector for technology*.

When other commodity sectors also arrive at and develop series-production, this permits a whole internal articulation of the cycles of production of these various goods, with auxiliary and tertiary functions that often grow in cumulative proportion, with several cycles of production taken together. This increases the complexity of cooperation, because the other sectors also extend outside the company and beyond the national borders.

There is also associated with an even more extensive circuit of auxiliary and tertiary labour; there is an increase in the international social incidence of indirect labour. The latter, on the basis of different sectors of series productions, at different productive scales and levels of mechanisation, expand also at FIAT. And as indirect labour grows in importance, first the auxiliary first and then the tertiary, these features increase their own scales, become mechanised, massified, concentrated.

Cooperation and the international economic cycle at FIAT in the cycle that ended with the recent economic conjuncture of 1964

For a retrospective panorama of *cooperation* as a socialising of *labour as capital* and for the accumulation of capital, it will suffice to examine the last 15 years. The periodisation of the capitalist face of the coin does not coincide with that of the working class; it precedes it and is out of phase with it by a few years, and is the objective ground on which the working class, having rediscovered a new *force of attack*, moves into action again with movements of struggle, seeking a further recomposition at the new levels of class relations. While for the capitalist face the decade is 1951–61, for the new workers' struggles it is 1951–66.

The *precedence* of the employers' main initiative is apparent. It is massive in many directions – at the institutional political level, in relation to the government's economic policy and also political control, and in relation to the labour movement, etc. And internationally it is framed in the context of the Cold War which provides a pretext for

an international attack on the left of the labour movement, and on the Communist Parties, carried out also with innovations used in an unprecedented fashion for an outright offensive against trade unions and political organisations. We have described this in various articles in *Classe operaia* in recent years. But we have said, in particular, that with this the FIAT employer was seeking to anticipate and guide the Italian employing class towards a massive and general defensive response against the workers' struggles that developed in the post-war period, of the political level, that reach through the exceptional use that the working class makes of the *party in the factory*, also instrumentalising the union in the factory.

Let us now shift our discussion to FIAT's *technological leap* in the 1950s. It is a *major leap*, in other words an authentic process of *technological innovation*, and not of mere technical innovation, since it concludes a whole long period which we can certainly trace back to the First World War and, in practice, to the opening of the new Lingotto plant, and, with the rise of fascism, to the strong national economic growth of the early 1920s. At that time the employer responded to the national and international struggles of 1922–23** with a big leap in the mechanisation of labour and in the subordination of living labour to accumulated dead labour (a leap that the employers had been planning since the *Settimana Rossa* [Red Week] and the strike of 1915); in the same way there was a further major leap in technological innovation in the 1950s, characterised by strong *development investments* in the motor* industry that followed on a high political level of struggles.

This *major leap* at the strictly technological and economic level had been in place for a long time: in the years 1937-38 there existed in Italy the conditions for a possible development of a domestic market for motor cars, and FIAT had already prepared the ground for the overthrow of government's economic policy, and also for an indispensable democratisation of the regime. With World War II the international situation required a conversion of factories for rearmament. The new plant at Mirafiori (inaugurated during the war, and with a war production which up until 1942 brought fabulous international profits to FIAT) had been programmed precisely for the launching of a mass production of utility cars that could also profit from the domestic market. This was to come about only in the 1950s, with the famous *vetturina democratica* [democratic little car] designed at the *Camera del Lavoro* [Chamber of Labour]... and only in the 1950s does Mirafiori truly enter into a *new period*, when it initiates the period of mass production of popular motor cars.

For the FIAT cycle that meant a sharp rise in the mechanisation of labour. The beginning of this period is characterised by the introduction of conveyors and automatic transfers. It is the period of *advanced mechanisation*. The innovations were mainly concentrated in FIAT's own internal workshops where *machining work* was done, and where there was the biggest concentration and massification of the kind of machine workers who had been the mass driving force of the struggles of the post-war period within the driving industry of the social employer. The automobile becomes a key driving sector, and, within FIAT, automobile production came to prevail over other product sectors.

We have already said that, for the type of structure internal to the metalmechanical industry and to FIAT, the development of the scale of production and the mechanisation of the production of automobiles on various lines involved, depending on the proportional relations between the various productive functions of the labour force, a strong development of the following elements:

- a) the importation of raw materials by the industries that served FIAT, especially of steel;
- b) a very big increase in the production of semi-finished and detached parts in small regional and national companies;

c) a major increase in the production of accessories and *subassemblies* in national supplier industries, which were mostly located in Lombardy;

d) a proportionately greater increase of internal auxiliary labour at FIAT, but especially outside, and largely located in the capitalistically most advanced Western countries;

e) a proportionately even greater increase in tertiary production work, particularly *project design*, inside and outside FIAT, especially in the countries that were already monopolising tertiary production, particularly the United States.

This framework indicates clearly the new international structure of the real cycle at FIAT. The cycle directly managed by FIAT is always only a relatively minor part of its real cycle.

The *external* part is not only provided by the suppliers and sub-suppliers of detached parts and accessories (which are mainly national). The *external* part is constituted: on the one hand by the suppliers and especially by the sub-suppliers of raw and auxiliary materials which are located mainly (but not solely) in the capitalistically underdeveloped countries; and on the other hand by the *external* supplier and sub-supplier companies of auxiliary and especially tertiary processes, which are located in the capitalistically most advanced countries, because only there has a very high increase in production scales increased mechanisation to the point of making it possible for these productions to be mechanised and industrialised, with strong cost savings and a competitiveness that increases proportionally with the world development of capital. FIAT, therefore, with its direct management (and with its Italian suppliers and sub-suppliers), covers only the *midpoint*, as an industry that is a driving force in the Italian economy, of its real cycle of accumulation.

If we want to grasp the international level of FIAT's operations, we cannot limit ourselves to the supplier and sub-supplier industries and to FIAT's pattern of imports; we also have to look at its exports: the exports of goods and the export of capital.

Italy's foreign policy was significantly conditioned by the transfers and exports of FIAT goods and FIAT capital.

The suppliers and sub-suppliers

A) *Raw materials*. Leaving aside a few minerals – coal and auxiliary raw materials (for ironworks and the second melting foundries) – FIAT does not directly import extractive raw materials. They buy them already transformed by the iron and steel and metallurgical industries, and largely from the nationalised industries, that proceed with it in *joint costs*. The steel industry and the national metallurgy industry, in turn, imports primary and auxiliary raw materials of which only a limited proportion comes from the economically under-developed countries (particularly Africa and Latin America); they also buy from the US, but they also buy a lot from the socialist countries of Eastern Europe. Then there is a whole story of the CECA*, particularly as regards the high productive consumption of scrap characterising FIAT's supplier industries, and also FIAT itself in its ironworks.

Another material that plays an important part in the motor car is *rubber*. The companies that supply FIAT with *tyres* are well known: Ceat, Pirelli and Michelin. In all of these (and in descending order) FIAT has major shareholdings. They are all *international* companies inasmuch as they import natural rubber from plantations especially in Asia (as we know, Michelin has plantations in South Vietnam). But they do not have only plantations in these areas; they also have factories for processing the rubber.

And together with the rubber (increasingly synthetic) the automotive production cycle also involves the use of *plastics*, which today are obtained in very large part from processing the residues of petroleum. The suppliers of plastic materials are closely related to FIAT. They are national and international companies, and they are those same large groups and petrochemical cartels with which Fiat is already involved as regards gasoline prices. The role of the areas of oil extraction in the world is among the best known.

These are the first and basic auxiliary materials of the real cycle of FIAT at the international level. They are *strategic raw materials*. We already know how their extractive industries proceed: on the one hand the international oligopolistic competition, and on the other the various types of agreements, including military. According to the levels of development of the areas from which the raw materials are *extracted*, in general, these industries insert themselves in very different ways. In the capitalistically more backward countries they are islands that employ a very limited local working class, and they do not *proliferate*: they have no cumulative effects, especially because the *royalties* are paid to parasitic strata, and at very low prices. But in countries at an *intermediate level* (especially in the *socialist countries*, which generally at this level), also by reason of an *unfair* competition policy of AGIP and ENI, they support a certain proliferation and development of processing industries and manufacturing.

B) *The suppliers of detached and semi-detached parts*. The most simple are located mostly in the Turin region. This is the most proliferating type of production, and it has diffused itself by satellitism. First of all in the region and in the city and outskirts of Turin then in contiguous regions, to the peripheral zones of Lombardy and Veneto, and to Tuscany and to some small factories in the Central-South. In relation to these suppliers FIAT has conducted a well-known policy, which forced them into their early searches for ways to reduce costs, especially with the blackmail of the EEC and with the wage struggles. In fact, the low-unification and thus interchangeability did not permit competitive levels. To blackmail through prices and to guarantee itself the continuity of its programmes in the face of labour struggles, FIAT arranges to obtain its semi-worked pieces to be sourced from several companies simultaneously, thereby reducing the scales of each of them. Today this whole part of the cycle is under major review, and is linked more closely with international developments: it will be more streamlined, but it will not die. The *mechanisation* of the *great leap* has also extended here, and very much so: these are artisanal workshops [*boite*] constituted by an automatic transfer that makes thousands of pieces per minute; and larger-scale workshops of the primary and not ancillary production operations; the workshops of very large series that must become even larger producing for factories with the unification of parts and with concentration and integration of the companies.

C) The suppliers of "complexes sub-assemblies" and "accessories".

These industries are mostly located in Italy, and many of them in the Milan region, especially as regards production of electro-magnetic components. They are generally small and medium industries, but also medium and sometimes big companies, which in turn have a complex cycle of international suppliers and sub-suppliers, which then become the driving force for large-scale proliferations.

For this group of FIAT suppliers in recent years there has developed a major problem of reorganisation at the international level, which had already begun in the period that we are dealing with, and which experienced a leap with the conjuncture.

Already in the 1950s, for these providers there was a very high level of international integration and dependence, as regards their designs and their machinery, on capitalistically more advanced levels (and, for example, of the MEC on the USA) and

particularly as regards light electromechanical components, an area in which an embryonic Italian electronics industry was already emerging in that period. The diffusive proliferation of these suppliers contributed to the industrialisation of the outlying areas of the industrial triangle, and even of nuclei to the south of Rome.

D) The auxiliary type suppliers.

Here the discussion takes something of a leap.

We have said that is typical of metalmechanical companies produce *on a mass scale* * a good part of the machinery, and provide for technical innovation and maintenance directly and autonomously, realising a close, direct and complex cooperation between the workers on the assembly lines and those of the auxiliary functions, in particular of of technical innovations, and the construction of new machinery. One need hardly say that already we find here the figure of the *technician* (who was born in the early period of manufacturing, and from the first embryonic start of the capitalist division of labour), and one need hardly say here that, with the growth of accumulation, the growth of auxiliary labour has been increasingly tightly fused with the productive tertiary work, and thus not only with the highest levels of processing lines and with the increasing mechanisation thereof (an auxiliary relationship with *direct* machine workers, and, to a minimal extent, also with those involved in assembly operations). Already at the start this close relationship was possible only at the international level precisely because it was connected to *tertiary* labour and, in particular, to high-level science (understood as *applied research*), also for the technologies involving metalworking, only in the more advanced countries. All the more so that it was a question of applications at an *industrial scale*, not the artisanal production of Sputnik and racing cars! Right from the start FIAT supplied itself with machinery (i.e. bought labour objectified in machinery, the highly productive auxiliary and tertiary labour objectivated* in the machinery) from the most advanced capitalist countries. This tendency has grown, with cyclical fluctuations, both absolutely and in percentage terms. There has grown above all the dependence of the auxiliary work on the tertiary labour: the auxiliary labour as a mediator between the assembly lines and the application of scientific discoveries.

We know the differences between an operating machine, a machine tool, a *second*, *third* or *fourth* machine: these are are functional differences in the overall structure of cooperation, which are regulated to each other by the law of proportional relationships between the respective levels of the working on the primary line (operators), and that of the auxiliary, and that of the auxiliary of the auxiliary, etc. They are also classified according to the different levels of the mechanisation of the labour objectified in them: from universal machines to special ones, to complexes, to transfers, to carousels, to continuous automatic lines etc. But it is only for the necessity of proportional relationships that today in certain functions the one is used, and in other functions the other.* Now the domestic production of machine tools (that is, the machines that are used to produce operating machines) and of operative machines has always been weak. At FIAT they are mostly imported. The company orders relatively simple special automatic or semiautomatic machines from Italian companies in the sector, which generally are pulverised* at semi-artisanal level with high costs and low productivity, very low level of application of applied research, which (with the exception of Olivetti OMO of S. Bernardo), and* in general they order on commission a fair part of their *project-planning* and tertiary work. FIAT gets most of its operating machines made by specialised companies, particularly in the USA; they order from CIMAT, Morando etc automatic machines designed by US *technicians* in connection with the objectification of the labour of the workers on the Mirafiori or Lingotto assembly lines: others are produced within the company.

Slightly different is the issue of third machines, which until relatively recently could

still be of artisanal production, because at FIAT the mechanisation of auxiliary functions was relatively low: it was easy to stay with very low productivity in the artisanal workshops [*boite*] of auxiliary productions in Turin and its suburbs. These kinds of machines are normally produced in socialist countries in large-scale production and with very low cost, by reason of the particular conditions of a planned economy.

E) *The tertiary labour suppliers*. I have already outlined the position on this question. FIAT has only a relatively modest amount of tertiary work within itself; the tertiary sector is mainly concentrated in the USA, England, Germany, France and Sweden (and also to a certain extent in Switzerland, Poland, Czechoslovakia and East Germany). As we mentioned above, in recent years FIAT has introduced a degree of mechanisation, especially as regards machining on the assembly lines, and has then tried to reorganise the whole cycle, leveling it and integrating it with a *continuity* on highly advanced levels of *advanced mechanisation* at these points, involving the automation of many machining processes. Therefore the type of relationship between the production lines and the tertiary work was the predominant one, while the situation in auxiliary work has not changed a lot.

The tertiary sector jobs has grown far more than others in the real (international and social) cycle of FIAT. To better understand the function of the FIAT assembly lines and of their internal auxiliary productions as a *midpoint*, we need to survey – briefly – the distribution and the articulation of FIAT's *markets*. There you see how FIAT *mediates* between the pre-industrialisation and then the economic lift-off and industrialisation of certain countries, and the further growing accumulation, industrialisation and mechanisation of tertiary labour, especially in the United States. The question of suppliers, as addressed here, applies not only to the automotive sector, but to all sectors of FIAT. Indeed this is even more evident when you consider the aeronautical sector at FIAT. The same can be said with regard to FIAT's markets.

To the capitalistically underdeveloped countries FIAT exports objectified labour in the form of:

- * Earthmoving machinery and special equipment; lorries mostly as capital goods in the construction industry and public works in situations of pre-industrialisation (and also for military use); plus diesel and gas turbine engines;
- * Public transportation vehicles for road and rail.
- .
- * Some G-91 fighter aircraft;
- * Cars and *derivatives*;
- * Methods and patents; licenses and procedures.

And living labour, in the form of:

- * Engineers and consultants; some auxiliary-type skilled workers.
- * Tertiary workers, especially in relation to the international development of sales offices and customer service.

The developing countries and countries in the course of industrialisation provide FIAT with its biggest market. Here, however, more than the exportation of commodities, what is realised is the export and transfer of capitals, of labour objectified at all levels. So not only trucks and tractors related to the building of infrastructures, passenger transport, automobiles etc, but also (especially to get round high customs barriers etc) more or less mechanised production lines of car and tractors. This

involves, in most cases, assembly lines for parts that are made in Turin; but also, in some instances, a lot of parts that may be produced *locally*.

It also exports marine engines, gas turbines and the aforementioned G-91 fighter aircraft.

Here it exports much more living labour – secondary and tertiary.

The most developed capitalist countries provide the largest market for FIAT automobiles, in particular the Common Market countries. But we also have the export of component parts as a result of processes of international integration, especially as regards the aviation industry. FIAT produces most of the F-104 aircraft for NATO, and not only for NATO. Few people know that in Turin FIAT also produces a series of components for the French *Caravelle*. For these countries the balance of living labour in the interchange is clearly to the detriment of FIAT: there are technicians, especially Americans, who work at FIAT and in its sub-suppliers, also as a function of the *command of capital*.

This static cross-section of the capitalist articulation of the FIAT cycle helps us also to understand the *foreign policy* (really *intermediate*) of FIAT, which has not only always been open in relation to the socialist countries, but has also been open and paternalistic with developing countries in whatever sphere of influence. This international reformism characteristic of social capital, of FIAT's foreign policy always also benefits the United States, which sucks out and realises surplus value in their highly industrialised tertiary productions, thanks to the neocolonialist reformism of the FIAT. FIAT produces both the G-91 fighter bomber that now bombards Guinea or that trains South African pilots, and tomorrow it will produce and export the lorries, trolley buses and trains for the first five-year plan, or the second, of the future socialist and ex-Portuguese Guinea!

The international articulation of labour power

In our discussion we have placed much emphasis on the international cycle. [In this paper] it is not now possible to examine directly, in the same degree of detail, the types of labour power that are unified in cooperation at the various levels, and to open, at least, the discourse on the movements of this labour power (as *articulation of capital*), making use of a set of techniques of the *capitalist social sciences* (from ecology and economic geography and macro-urbanistics to sociology itself, just as they are being unified into a single *science of programmation*). However something of this has already emerged from the points outlined above.

The great technological leap of the 1950s, operating through a series of movements (both *horizontal* and *vertical*), produced an internal articulation of a labour force reproduced on an enlarged scale and thrust forward according to the various levels of technological development internal to the cycle of capitalist accumulation.

In the processes of differentiation into opposing classes of peasants, in certain areas of Asia, Africa, Latin America and or Oceania, FIAT has not had a great effect. We know what is the role of the *islands* of relative well-being as are generally the extractive industries: an ambivalent role because on the one hand we have the proletarianisation and concentration in rubber plantations of a minority of *privileged* natives that are exploited – in the form of robbery of surplus value; on the other *the urbanisation* of these proletarian masses that precedes industrialisation in the locality, and is initiated and pushed by the worldwide process of industrialisation. FIAT has more effect when it makes felt its productive thrust in the developing countries where the proletariat is concentrated in services and in transport, and nuclei of the working-class appear in small manufacturing industries.

In some countries of *early industrialisation*, especially those with socialist regimes, FIAT is often one of the main levers for movements of the labour force that is being drawn into production, giving rise to a strong cumulative and proliferating expansion. A working class is formed, consisting mostly of masses of assembly workers and labour processes that are already considerably mechanised, and this is combined on-site with auxiliary and tertiary nuclei, according to a model of articulation of labour power that is similar to what has functioned, and indeed still functions today, in Italy.

Indeed Italy is one of these countries. FIAT has been in all senses the *driving motor* of the Italian economic miracle, with its *technological leap*, which diffused among its numerous suppliers and sub-suppliers, and which increased both their productivity and the numbers of their workforces in the decade 1951-61. Thus it has been the driving force behind a process of quantitative growth of the Italian working class as *capital*: tens of thousands of new workers within its factories, many more in its supplier companies, and hundreds of thousands indirectly. During that period there were territorial movements, movements of interregional and intraregional migration, a proletarianisation of the peasantry, and vertical movements of new forms of qualification of the labour force.

This period also saw the emergence of the *steel* and *petrochemical* "poles of development" in the South, with islands of working class which, however, gradually linked to the struggles of the proletariat in the local areas, providing them with a centre.

There was pressure for an industrialisation of transport, for the slow transformation of ports into factories, and for the development of urbanisation, which put the construction industry on the path to industrialisation, etc.

There was also the diffusion, through satellitism, or direct or indirect proliferation, of manufacturing industries in zones immediately adjacent to the industrial triangle. There was the further dissemination and concentration of investment and the creation of new factories, massively, inside the triangle, and especially in Turin and Milan, with massive immigration around Turin and Milan, coming first from the North and later from the Centre-South.

In Turin and its hinterland the consequences were far more direct. The growth of the working class, as a result of the immigration of masses that entered the entire social fabric of the *city-factory* until it caused it to explode, leads to the first massive industrial decentralisation. The other three *driving forces* (Olivetti, RIV and Michelin) were suppliers of FIAT. The *external part* of the FIAT cycle socially encompasses and controls in its articulated machinery a further 200,000 factory workers, in addition to the 100,000 within Turin. There is no need here to examine the new and different functional masses of the various different levels of qualification combined with* the growth of the workforce in FIAT's factories and in the social fabric of the factory-city.

We need only recall only that, due to the presence in Turin of FIAT as an employer and as a high point of capitalist *command* (tele-command), there was a growth, concentration and massification in the higher-level service industries of a mass of tertiary unproductives, whose work is on the threshold of industrialisation.*

In the more advanced capitalist countries, especially in the United States, the *great leap* contributed to a growth in the indirect productive labour of *technicians*. That serves as a reminder that it is absurd to view the articulation of the labour force in the USA if you do not relate those tertiary productives to the whole mass of auxiliary productive work, and to direct productive work on the lines of production of the capitals of the whole world, whether their functionaries be public or private, and whatever may be the political regimes in those countries.

And given that we have returned to the international level, we also need to open the discussion – at least by outlining a few basic issues – on the central question (as regards the analysis of movements of labour power for capital), in other words the *valorisation at the international level* of the international accumulation of capital. On the international production of surplus value by the international working class.

This also requires a theoretical elaboration. For example (taking into account the different levels of technology, and of productivity), how do we understand at the international level the relationship between simple labour and complex, enhanced labour; and in regard to that, how are the different wage levels posed in real terms in relation to the costs of production and reproduction of labour power, taking into account collective and individual skill levels, in the various areas and the particular local markets of labour.

The differences in levels of development are leveled and unified in the overall process of valorisation. The various levels of objective labour (even if isolating the local moment of compulsion to surplus value they determine a different *exchange* with living labour that moves them, so that in the most backward locations of objectification and accumulation it may still appear that it is the workers who operate the machines and not vice versa), which are not part of a global and social exchange that is increasingly mediated between living labour and dead labour integrated internationally which squeeze it out and controls it. However, this process is controlled by one of its centres, which is that place to which all the surplus value flows, or at least from which command exerts the entire control of its flow into a series of decentralised centres of capitalist command. And from this, and from those, it then flows back as objectified labour, as accumulated capital, to enhance further the increased mass of living labour that socially produces relative surplus value.

The international level shows how the concentration of profit is the concentration of the power, despotism, and command of capital.

It is in this sense that in our case the whole of capital's system of command, of the organisation and planning of profit, are *tele-commanded* from Turin, as a centre of power that guides technological innovation and directs the bureaucratic apparatus for controlling the working class in the factory and in society, at the point where the extraction of surplus value affects* in the real cycle of FIAT, beyond Italy's national borders.

So we should highlight not only the manner in which the *unpaid cooperation* of the internationally unified working class (whose movements tend to become socialised at an international level) is multiplied by the productivity that science accumulates internationally, with the objectivation of the international exchange between the various parts of *living labour*, only mediated by machinery; but especially the process by which capital, unified internationally, uses and controls as its productive power the social movements of the divided *working class*, that is broken up at various levels, even in collective bargaining, and is not politically organised *as such* in the vast majority of its movements of struggle.

A few remarks on the movements of the struggle against work of "the FIAT working class"

Here the period that concerns us is 1957-66.

We have already said that the *great leap* conducted by the FIAT collective employer was to prepare a new terrain on which the working class would then, by resuming its attack with waves of offensive struggles, attempt to regain at a wider level its political recomposition. We have also said and repeated that the subjective dimension of the process of political *unification* of the class and of the movements of struggle places

on the agenda the issue of tactics, the problem of the political party of the working class.

In *Classe operaia*, we have done this analysis as regards the situation in the FIAT establishments in Turin. And after the kind of discussion on the international articulation of FIAT capital that we have initiated here, it is obvious that the discussion on the recomposition of the movements of struggle against work, and of their political level, should at least now be attempted internationally, even if we only limit its scope to those environments in which FIAT's great leap has had an impact in some obvious way.

A certain political and subjective *unification* at the international level was platonically placed on the agenda only in Lenin's time, with the Third International. Precisely at that time, at the moment of the October Revolution, a process of *recomposition* of the working class at the world level, and of the international proletariat in the scientific sense of that word, took place and was transmitted precisely through the left of the labour movement of that time, and particularly through the communist parties. We all know about the capitalist counter-offensive and the reformist role then given to the international communist current. However, at the level of the working class, what is left of the original *composition* of the movements of struggle? What is the impact of the large blocks of class that passed through the experience of the party? Today more than ever we need to try to see what is the tendency of class recomposition at the international level, and what are (also at this level) the *convergences* and *homogenisations* of the struggle that, to a certain extent, are identifiable, verifiable, and are taking place within a relative spontaneity. We then need to pose the problem of the subjective *political unification*, of these convergent movements. It makes no sense to put on trial the working class of the rich countries, on a charge of having compromised with imperialism, on the backs of the peasants of the poor countries, and of wallowing in the bed of economic struggles managed by unions that are necessarily reformist. Rather we have to pose the problem of the lack of revolutionary parties of the working class, and of the workers' international use of the historical parties in the West; because conversely, locally, the problem of the party is solved in areas in which the ongoing movements of struggle are those that are related to the broad movements of proletarianisation under way.

Some people have adopted a subjective approach, seeking to study and measure the degrees of *internationalism* of the workers FIAT by interviewing them. In that light it would be as well to remember that on the only two occasions in recent times when the labour and democratic movement symbolically took strike action as a way of showing international solidarity (for Cuba and Spain), the workers at FIAT suspended working unanimously, and often for far longer than the symbolic ten minutes that had been called for, transforming it already into a momentary blockage of production, as indeed was also done at Finsider in Genoa, where they took spontaneous strike action throughout the day... And these events especially showed us how the simple possibility of suspension of work, of a brief "*no to work*" that connects us symbolically to a problem of political initiative that is internationally understood by the working class, succeeds in mobilising the grassroots cadres and those whom we call the factory communists with a force not previously seen. Because democratic solidarity may, suddenly, be overturned by workers from the inside, once it is obliged to walk, even symbolically, the path of suspension of work.

Here too it would be useful to take a step backwards in our discussion, in relation to another process-problem: that of the *international recomposition of the class* through its relatively *spontaneous* movements of struggle in the capitalistically developed countries. If we study in quantitative terms the workers' struggles and the struggles of the proletariat (and of proletarianised peasants) at the worldwide level, it is obvious that there is a tendential process of *homogenisation* under way, going beyond differences in levels of development at an international level.

Another question is that of their possible objective convergence in struggle against social capital at the international level: this is a discussion that has to be had, freeing it from dangers and ingenuousness.

Now, seeing that we are talking about FIAT, another point that would be worth considering is the way in which company may have an effect in these movements:

(A) as an effect deriving from the working class nuclei directly exploited by FIAT in various areas of world capital. To give just one example we could cite the struggles of the FIAT workers in Argentina, and the role they have played in the class struggle of the proletariat and movements in that country which has been key in the struggle against social capital in Latin America.

(B) as an effect deriving from indications that the political struggle at FIAT within the working concentration of the *industrial triangle* can give to the working class and to the international proletariat (but through the mediation, here irrepressible, of their subjective organisations, with the problem of the parties at the various levels, and of the international communist current), for the the critical area of international strategy, and, for the future, its decisive international translation into an international articulation of tactics.

These indications are, more or less, the same as those given to the subjective forces of the national working class in Italy. It is obvious that here, as a priority, we have to dig deeper to see what is the political level of the struggle within the concentration of FIAT factories in Turin, and also the complex of issues and class-party relationships that we find there. There is also the question of the indications for an international strategy of subjective and political unification of the movements.

So what has been the political level of the struggle at FIAT, and what have been the relations between class and party in the period 1957-66? Anarcho-syndicalism was strongly present, and played a positive role for as long as the problem was one of getting the struggles moving – but then played a very negative role when the struggles went beyond the economic level and attacked at the political level. The PSI, which is dominated by the left (and which then transited to PSIUP), was almost more syndicalist than is now the FIM of the Turin CISL: at any rate it was trying to bypass the PCI on the working class terrain. The Turin PCI stood firmly by “*the Italian way*” until the congress of 1963. What was, in those years, the political role of the communist cadres and factory communists and the kind of battle that they conducted in the party and in the union from 1957-58 to the congress of 1963? At the top, the 1963 congress subordinated the CGIL to the PCI in a direct way, and also in Turin very much calmed the conflict between the anarcho-syndicalists, who were the left of the party, and the Stalinist leadership.

As regards the process of *massification* and *homogenisation* of the movements of the Italian part of the working class, the part which is concentrated in the industrial triangle, and in particular the part that is concentrated in the region that is being created around Turin and Milan, has played a vanguard role. An analysis of the territorial and sectoral distribution of the struggles and, in particular, of the struggles *against work*, inasmuch as there were such things in the decade 1957-1968, finds its highest point in the metalmechanical factories and in the areas of major working-class concentration around Turin and Milan.

Precisely for this reason they had a levelling and homogenising function for the working class and for the many non-productive workers who have struggled against capital in recent years, a function that has grown together with the potential for struggles in the economic conjuncture and in the period of economic recovery. An authentic *recomposition*, which still remains a focus of the employers’ response, in

their attempts to control it and combat it.

You can see a little more closely at how they are *composed*, these movements of struggle in the Turin region: as a *struggle against work* they are centred on FIAT. The defensive struggles in the valleys against the liquidation of an industry that concentrated much of the residual strength of the *party in the factory* at the regional level (smaller foundries, artisanal metalmechanical shops, textile factories etc) were defeated through struggle, and they were not always defeated; such was the strength of the struggle in preventing the employers from enacting decisions that had already been taken.

However, they were isolated struggles, united only by the fact of the party issuing protests to the public authorities.

The weak point of the struggle was precisely the inter-regional zones of rural migration. Slightly more advanced was the political level of the struggle in the traditional peripheral centres. It was more advanced in the urban poles with interregional references, into which were flowing already existing masses. The situation is no different in the lesser poles, where the new generations of the agricultural proletariat come to be merged in the factory with the earlier generations who experienced the key political movements of the post-war period. It was in Turin that the major immigrant masses – from the region, from the North and from the South – entered the factory and made the political leap to becoming working class, in these ongoing struggles. Not only was the expansion of the Manchester-style city and the type of new articulation of the labour force used by the working class in its *struggle against work*, but, immediately afterwards, the point of the highest political level of the struggles in the region was precisely the new industrial belt around Turin: that of the first decentralisation and diffusion through satellite development of the old factories that had been a driving force in an metalmechanical sense.

There is no need to enter more deeply into this fabric of the struggle against work and see the hows and whys of the class-party relationship in these different political levels of the struggles. What I would like to emphasise, also using for the *struggle against work* the terminology of the macro-urban planners, is that while it is correct to put the articulation of the labour force into the background, it is wrong to make it disappear completely with an unrealistic *subjectivism*; since it weighs and also has an effect on the highest level of political movements, it is useful to deal with it in order to establish, in a given phase of the class struggle, how in fact it has made its presence felt; how it has been by the employers; how it has been used by the workers; how it has, or has not, been transcended by processes of political unification that pass through the *political* level of the factory, so as to arrive at building a strategic line, at both the national and the international level. Let us not put the cart before the horse.

The employers' response currently under way. Now it is the employers who are taking the initiative (1967)

The collective employer that is FIAT, the political brain of the Italian employing class, did not wait for the attacking force of the Italian working class to develop to its full before guiding the entire capitalist bloc to a massive counter-offensive. They did not even wait for the contract struggles of 1962. The trends of class recomposition were already detectable in 1961, both within the FIAT and nationwide. When the 1962 strike at FIAT, and the events of Piazza Statuto, and the big strikes in all sectors and in the whole country, blew up in the employers' face, the employers already had plans in place, and were already moving their troops* to launch a counteroffensive on a social scale, at all levels. We began to see this in 1963, with the waning of the economic miracle, and in the interviews in which Agnelli threatened the first mass layoffs at FIAT, and even more so, when the first rumours started coming round of a

restructuring at RIV. Then came the conjunctural attack, and we know how that finished up.

With 1963 at FIAT the initiative goes back to the employers, and it also returns to the employers at the national level. With 1963 there opens a period in which the employers' response unfolds in its entirety. We should recall that this period is out of phase* with the period of the workers' offensive. This response was planned over time in an articulated way. Our interest is to see how it has worked out in the factory.

In the short time, the answer was the economic conjuncture. The facts are known. We have already described, and repeated, what happened in production in FIAT during the period of the conjunctural offensive, and also in the companies that are external to but related to FIAT's cycle of production.

No big technological leap, even in the medium term. The confrontation with the working class is also postponed by reason of the passivity of the workers. There is a progressive technical upgrading, slightly pushing forward the mechanisation of the lines. A series of organisational restructurings, with many relocations and internal transfers of labour-power, with workers continuously being redistributed. This serves, on the one hand, to break up the internal organisation of the workers as *non-work* and, at the same time, to prepare the ground for successive mechanisations, which now also begin to involve other parts of the production cycle, in addition to the metalmechanical processes, (assembly of sub-assemblies, sheet metal working, painting, and chemical and thermal operations, etc).

The major innovation is that we begin to see a mechanisation and reorganisation of auxiliary machining, starting from tooling and going through to the machining of press moulds. The occasion is the introduction of the FIAT 850: a car of the conjuncture. This technical updating, aimed at achieving a greater flexibility on the assembly lines, with separable and interchangeable stations, is found in all sections of production, including trucks.

These were above all the years in which Fiat strengthened its sales network abroad and started to build an international customer support system, with spare parts shops and service stations being established worldwide. This coincided with a major reorganisation of the smaller branches and the Turin accessories plant, a process that will eventually conclude with the opening of the new FIAT-Ricambi (accessories) plant at Rivalta.

In the factory the conjunctural offensive sets in motion a reopening of profit margins, seeking to tighten and intensify exploitation. Production increases despite the relative lack of new investment, but it is the scene of a strong underground struggle over qualitative (and not only quantitative) aspects of productivity.

It is with 1962 and with the conjunctural offensive that we began to see the outlines of a planned response in the medium term. The doubling of production planned for the 1967 was actually already achieved by 1965. The employers' plan combines with project planning, and the programming can be defined precisely as a capitalist response, as an increased imposition of command by capital, as despotism, and as a further concentration of political power, founded on new levels of profit at the international level.

This mid-period, imposed by the collective FIAT employer since 1962, will conclude in the early 1970s, but a series of more precise tendencies are emerging and will soon impose themselves, even if they have their roots in the previous period.

If we were to give a label to this period we would call the *period of cyberneticisation* of the extortion of surplus value at FIAT.

Electronics, with the first and second generations of calculators, had already entered FIAT in the 1950s with the *great leap*. However it is only now that cybernetics is used by the FIAT employer (at all levels) in the creation of a new and complex system (the American model) of capillary control by capital of capital's centre of command, which is direct, continuous and on a daily basis, over the entire production cycle of the motor car. In particular, we see the establishment of an overall and integrated system for an articulated and programmed direction, from the centre, of the rhythms of work: this is a huge political fact, which today already governs large parts of the operations at the Mirafiori plant, and partly also other sections, such as FIAT-Ricambi.

This process of cyberneticisation is therefore a big political fact, but by itself it does not yet constitute a *technological breakthrough*: it is, however, a preparatory stage! Also because already it makes possible a centralised cutting of production times at Mirafiori, and therefore of all the suppliers and sub-supplier industries, which are programmed in a *continuum*, according to the needs for feeding the Mirafiori assembly lines, and generally the *sub-assembly groups* and *final assembly*.

This process of *cyberneticisation* is almost the internal face of that growth of despotism represented by capital plan: by programming. It is no coincidence that the mediating element is the Rivalta project.

This cyberneticisation should be read in terms of the major leap that electronics was experiencing internationally, especially in the US.

In terms of technology, the medium-term programme initiates and prepares what, in my opinion, may be the next *big leap*, in the second half of the 1970s, namely the *mechanisation of auxiliary operations*. This would be the outcome of the strong ongoing progress of automation of machinery, which is already becoming flexible or even universal, thanks to numerical control. This process is already under way, and it involves restructurings, concentrations, integrations and mergers at both the national and international level. These changes are already contributing to a change in the nature of cooperation in the factory-city of Turin, at a moment when, as a result of this programmed process, it is being transformed into a city-region in the full sense of the term. In fact a whole large part of Turin's metalmechanical industry (but also that of Milan) will be involved in this process.

The mechanisation of auxiliary operations will reduce, in proportional terms, the numbers of traditional auxiliary workers, who will partly be re-employed in the auxiliary workshops (*boite*). There will also be an increase in tertiary labour within the production cycle of FIAT, and within the companies and factories that come under its direct management. This will have major consequences in the articulation of the working class at an international level, and, above all, at the national level and in the city-region of Turin: it will pose – and indeed is already posing – the problem of new levels of the struggle, through which – on the new terrain that the employer is preparing – the working class can regain a *political recomposition*.

Since the re-projecting of automobiles, and in general of all FIAT products, is limited, being regulated internationally by oligopolistic competition, there will certainly not be an equally strong drive to mechanisation of the *assembly lines*. This is true despite the continuation of the process that has already been under way for some time, of unbundling and decentralising assembly lines and assembly operations to FIAT factories overseas, especially to the newly industrialised countries, in the case of cars, tractors and trucks. Assembly operations will predominate at Mirafiori; the foundries will all be transferred to Carmagnola. The mechanical machining involving stripping* of material will go to the Rivalta factory. Metal-pressing and forges will remain at Mirafiori, along with chemical and thermal processing. Here there will be a technological upgrading. Lingotto will soon become a warehouse. The production

cycle of trucks will be reorganised with the expansion of SPA-Stura, which will absorb STIMA. Grandi Motori will develop large machine tools in Turin, as well as smaller engines, and turbines (under licence from Mercedes and General Motors); but the larger engines will be built in the new plant in Trieste, with the participation of IRI. Aeronautical production will proceed and will grow, in full integration with international aeronautical production, and probably including the manufacture of component parts for *Concorde*.

All these changes are directly part of a reorganisation at the international level. There are two aspects that we want to emphasise here: the international integration of capital and territorial redistributions.

We shall not dwell here on the transformations that the Rivalta plan will entail for all the *external* operations at FIAT, and for its suppliers industries.

What is now clear, because it is very advanced at the social level and at all levels, is the process of international integration. This began during the period of the economic miracle, but it experienced a leap during the period of the conjuncture. Everyone realised this with the first RIV-SKF agreement, and then with the OGE, and then with the international integration of Elettromeccanica, both light and heavy, down to the present day, by which time all the supplier and complementary industries related to FIAT are involved. If you visit the auto show, you find that even the small factories have their stands, where (with agreements, concentrations and international mergers) they present specialised and unified products that are destined for a wider and international market. Where you used to hear people speaking in Italian dialect, now you hear German, English and French, or even Russian, and, vice-versa, under German, English or French labels you find the small businessmen of yesteryear who still speak in dialect ... But the major developments are yet to come, and as far as *production* is concerned these will involve the development of the industries of the industrial triangle, and a development of tertiary productive functions in the more "advanced" countries.

In considering this process we need to take into account the aspect of *territorial redistribution* of moments and functions of production.

Here too, today, the international level is the determining factor. Let us limit ourselves to Europe. In recent years there has been a crisis, and a major renovation, of the traditional industrial regions. Development investments have been decentralised and refocussed into areas adjacent to those regions. While we have witnessed the decline of the North West of England, the Ruhr and the Lorraine, new and more massive development investments have occurred around London, in the famous Lotharingia, and, by a proliferating process of diffusion, in southern Germany and in the Rhone. This process will continue: there will be a renewal of the Ruhr, Lorraine and part of Paris, but there will be an industrialisation of the axis of the Rhine and that of the Rhone.

As everyone knows, Italy is also following (and even more so) this path, which is one that strengthens national points: preferring congestion costs and competitiveness through efficiency at company level. The social and decentralisation will come later.

The Rivalta project, the Pieraccini plan, and all the regional plans that have been more or less drawn up, show this to be the case in the longer term.

Development investments will focus (again, and indeed increasingly) on the industrial triangle, especially around Milan and Turin, although there will be a further proliferating spread of small industries in the neighbouring regions. There will be some new poles of development in southern Italy, but certainly not yet the proposed massive relocation of the Finmeccanica factory to the South. In sectoral terms, in the

industrial triangle and particularly in the city-region of Turin, there will continue to be a growth – in absolute number but also in percentage terms (coming to involve more than 60% of the workforce) – precisely of the workforce employed in the metalmechanical sector!

Turin will complete its tertiarisation and will become a *metropolis* as traditionally defined in economic geography. But many of its industries, and in particular the driving sectors, with FIAT at their head, will still maintain important factories within the central urban nucleus. Many of the present factories will be decentralised to the first and second industrial suburbs, and this will put into crisis, even without dismantling it completely, the old structure of the relationship between the factories and the working-class living spaces of the “*barriere*” that has characterised the workers' struggle in Turin for decades. This industrial decentralisation is pulling working-class living spaces out to the first, and subsequently into the second belt: it is pulling *conurbations*, and it is transforming the entire structure of the city-region, with axial difusions, and fringes, and crowns, that are now reaching right up to the lower reaches of the valleys. This reproduces on a new regional scale the factory-town features of the old Manchester-style Turin. And the *political recomposition* of the working class is also going to have to adapt itself to this new ecological structure, and to these new forms of *diffuse concentration*, linked to the spread of new means of transport, and to the growing motorisation of transport.

Finally, if we look at things in the longer term, we see how the agreement between FIAT and the USSR functions a bridgehead for a complex integration that will bear fruit also – and more (probably) – in sectors other than the automotive sector.

In the long run to a certain extent FIAT will develop the aeronautic sector as an international industry, and will also participate to a growing extent in the aerospace industry. Already today, from San Marco to the European FLDO projects etc, FIAT is the company most involved, but what is likely to come out of this first, is probably an agreement with the USSR for the integrated production of helicopters. Meanwhile, for the auto industry the determining factor remains precisely (and perhaps even more so) the European cartel and the agreement with a major US company, specifically with *General Motors*.

At the end of this period, FIAT will arrive at a saturation of the domestic market, which will oblige it to pass, for the first time, from a predominantly expansive type of investments to an intensive type of investments. However, the future lies with the new markets of Eastern Europe and *countries in the developing world*, where, in the longer term, the transfer and export of FIAT capital will contribute to a *lift-off* into the status of working class of African and Asian masses. The FIAT-Soviet agreement is a stage in this process. This is the logic underpinning our description of FIAT as a *midpoint* for international social capital.

The prospects for the class-party relationship at FIAT in the medium term

With 1967 a new phase of workers' struggles is beginning at FIAT. You need to approach things more at the *tactical* level to say at least this: that this response of the employer (which is ongoing, and which comprises the series of processes of planning, such as internal and external control, in the factory-society relationship, which we have termed the *cyberneticisation* of FIAT), already gives a glimpse of a possible new face that will serve the workers, which already gives an idea of what will be the terrain of a new struggle. On the one hand you cannot predict this struggle, but on the other we see that in Turin the class has not been defeated and has not fundamentally expressed and used, even in 1966, its full potential.

Meanwhile certain phenomena begin to occur which weigh heavily. The FIAT-USSR agreement passes from the design of machinery for *Togliattigrad* to their

construction. This means an expansion of the auxiliary industries and of the whole machine tools sector with its associated suppliers. This machinery is produced only in part within the FIAT; the majority is produced outside, in external factories, traditional suppliers. This will create a shortage of skilled workers, the likes of which has never previously been seen, and will give a growing bargaining power in broad strata of labour, which, although they are relatively less *non-unionised**, will not fail to get out of hand (we recall that at the simple *trade union* level workers at CIMAT in 1961 had been calling for '*self-management*'). It was these workers who registered the highest percentage of members of the Communist Party. During the conjuncture the union had enjoyed particular margins of demands over demands: the *special category of monthly workers* was designed precisely for these workers. We need to prevent them from being channeled in here with isolated and privileged concessions as happened as early as 1961, in the line of the *modern trade union*, at FIAT, Olivetti and Michelin. The communist draughtsmen* of Workshop 30, with their spontaneous struggles in 1960 and 1961, had realised that this was precisely what they had to reject!

As regards the mass assembly processes, FIAT resumed recruitment on a scale even more massive than in the past: more than 20,000 new workers have entered FIAT over a period of twenty months, making up for the conjunctural hiring freeze and re-launching hiring to new levels, with global growth rates among the highest in its history. Here, the FIAT-USSR agreement has nothing to do with the matter: masses of immigrants will resume their flow and will be distributed in the new regional-scale fabric of the city-factory. Even for this mass that will be imported onto the assembly lines of large and very large series-production, making its passage to becoming working class, the contractual conditions will quickly turn to the best. We shall not speak here of the sectoral deficiencies, the congestion, the problems of transportation, schools, town planning and social services, which multiply the costs of agglomeration and which in recent years have always favoured *wage rise*, and never *strike-breaking* or *passivity*. On the basis of this mass onslaught, unionisation saw its already limited possibilities being reduced still further: the relations between young militants and the PCI and PSIUP, after the contract struggle, are already deteriorating. In this situation, we can predict the spread of spontaneous struggles, of the kind that we glimpsed in 1963-64. In fact an underground struggle at FIAT is already in progress, and this is shown, in addition to the recent strikes at Ferriere and Materferro (and the first stoppage in a section of the bodywork department at Rivalta FIAT!), by elementary facts such as the massive spontaneously organised rejection of *overtime* at a time when the employer has a desperate need for overtime! The new recruits now coming into the FIAT factories are already among the most combative. The decentralisation in taking place in the Rivalta plant, at the foot of the mountains, means that several thousand so-called "*barott*" will enter the factories – among the most *barott* that the region has to offer – but the Milan experience (where these decentralizing phenomena in the Vendee*, and experiences of regionalisation, have already been happening, anticipating Turin by ten years) tells us that, in the long run, even the *barott* become working class, if the climate is one of struggle, as it has been and as it will probably continue to be.

From this point of view we have to reject and defeat the kind of pessimism about the class situation that is beginning to creep into the base of the labour movement, and especially into the Communist Party, in the brief period of post-contractual reflux. The pessimism is, if anything, justified in the face of the political leaderships of the workers' parties, the PCI and PSIUP.

In the first place, in the face of the employer's plan, the overall articulation of the employers' response, and especially in the face of the tangible signs of a series of positive possibilities that the plan will inevitably offer for a subsequent, further, workers' counter-attack on the strictly political terrain, the labour movement, the workers' parties, found nothing better to do than to contest, in the various consultative meetings, the Pieraccini plan and the regional plans, because they

further concentrate those investments. They turned themselves into defenders of the districts* sacrificed and they cry about this sacrifice. They call for a *diffusion of investments* throughout the territory – something that they do not even know what this means – and this is immediately contradicted by others who are in favour of a redevelopment of the policy of development poles. In all the locations of the various regional plans they call for a public control that *requalifies the investments*, in terms of a widespread *territorial diffusion*. And what goes forward is only the protests of the provinces, regions, districts of exodus. Instead we need to re-launch the *political leadership* of the struggle, using as leverage precisely the new capabilities of the advanced points. Balancing in this perspective the party-factory relationship is also the maximum contribution you can make to the international class struggle and to its political unification, working in a strategic area such as Turin.

[Return to Contents page](#)

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Extracted from: THE BOOK OF FIAT: Insurrection, insubordination, occupation and revolutionary politics at the FIAT motor company – 1907-1982

Published: Red Notes / May Day Rooms

First published in 2020