

# Workers and Revolutionaries at the Twilight of Fordism: The Breakdown of Industrial Relations in the Automobile Plants of Detroit and Turin, 1967–1973

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In their respective countries, and worldwide, Detroit and Turin are known as the ‘Motor City’ and *la città dell’auto*—two metropolises that have grown around the manufactured product that best symbolized modernity: the automobile. Because an extraordinary proportion of car production during most of the twentieth century was centred in these two cities, they have retained this reputation well after the bulk of the automotive industry had actually abandoned them. As I write, Detroit is struggling to entice automobile manufacturers back into town after they moved operations away in the 1970s (as part of a process that started much earlier). Likewise in Turin, most automobile plants have shut down or undergone conversion for the service economy. The flagship of FIAT, Mirafiori, is now undergoing a process of rapid downsizing.

In both cities, the automobile industry informed the economic, social, and spatial dimensions of the urban space. It was each city’s largest single employer, and the fortunes of a subcontracting network of small and medium supplying companies were strongly intertwined with the city’s prosperity. The extent of the hegemony of automobile manufactures over Detroit and Turin was unparalleled in the US or Europe. However, the concentration of manufacturing employment led to dependence, and the destiny of these metropolises became bound to the fortunes and whims of a handful of corporations.

For a few years now the cliché that the decline of metropolises in the American industrial heartland initiated only in the 1970s with increased international

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competition, in particular from Japan, and the backlash against the liberals and the Great Society has been questioned. In the case of Detroit, historian Thomas Sugrue has convincingly argued that the city's woes actually began in the prosperous 1950s when early de-industrialization, labour market discrimination, and residential segregation combined together resulting in a devastating effect on the city. More recently, historian Heather Thompson has pointed out that, although the city was the victim of corporate decisions and wider market forces, the choices of unions leaders, city officials, and the automobile companies during the 1960s, 1970s, and 1980s fundamentally shaped a history that was still in flux, rather than already marked with an inevitable outcome.<sup>1</sup>

I have no contention with this literature that assigns to race, politics, and local dynamics an explanatory power. However, I believe that a contribution to this discussion can also come from a comparison with a city on the other side of the Atlantic with important similarities to Detroit as well as significant differences. In fact, many structural factors that characterized the development of these two cities can be analysed as elements of the regime of accumulation that was globally dominant in the post-war period: Fordism.

Although in its productive aspect—as a ‘system of organizing mass production through a blend of “scientific management” and machine-dictated pace of work’<sup>2</sup>—Fordism could differ considerably from country to country and within a single industry, it represented a widely shared project of modernity as a political programme of regulation of capitalist economies based on mass production and mass consumption. The expression ‘regime of accumulation’ designates a coherent phase of capitalism that rests on a complex balance between different factors and social forces. In the Fordist case, for instance, the state had to take on institutional powers to organize redistribution; corporations had to constantly innovate to keep a high productivity and accept, even if grudgingly, the system of redistribution; organized labour had to cooperate in keeping in check the labour force, whose reliable performance was the most important component of the productivity effort.<sup>3</sup>

In the large industrial metropolises of the ‘core’ regions of capitalism Fordism enjoyed its supremacy and tested its limits.<sup>4</sup> In Detroit and Turin this system achieved its full potential while planting the seeds of its demise. Corporations experimented with sophisticated management techniques that rationalized the movements (also in the sense of motion) of huge quantities of men and materials. After the Second World War automobile manufacturers introduced automation and, later, computer-based technologies aimed at a reduction of the social power of the workforce. Paradoxically, the rigidity of large per-capita investments ultimately amplified the disruptive potential of spontaneous rank-and-file actions.

The internal dynamic of Fordism irresistibly drew to the core regions a massive migration that, in both Turin and Detroit, recomposed the working class of the plants and deeply changed the make-up of neighbourhoods and the social and demographic characteristics of their entire metropolitan areas. The encounter between residents and newcomers involved both conflict and accommodation. Tensions over competition for housing and resources became enduring urban problems and reinforced cultural

(and, in Detroit, racial) stereotypes of northerners and southerners, whites and blacks, 'natives' and strangers. These tensions were exacerbated by the marginalization of sizeable groups of workers in 'competitive' high-risk sectors who did not share the standard of living and political clout of the employees in the 'monopoly' sector of the big corporations.<sup>5</sup> In the Fordist dual labour market of high-paid steady jobs and precarious low-wage occupations, newcomers resided in a marginal position that, most visibly in the case of African-Americans, passed onto the second generation.<sup>6</sup> When, in the last leap of expansion of the late 1960s, the car manufacturers hired the marginal workers into the monopoly sector, they introduced in the Fordist factory individuals who eventually dissented to its form of regimentation of the workforce.

A comparative analysis of the effects of post-war migration in Detroit and Turin reveals how the complex interplay of race, class, and regionalism—different in the two cases—transformed the terms of class struggle.<sup>7</sup> This approach can be useful to cast a fresh look on the social conflict that characterized the late 1960s in these two cities. In fact, in both cases, radical groups became the catalysts of formidable social movements in which marginal workers, first- or second-generation migrants, were prominent actors. Groups such as Lotta Continua in Turin and DRUM (Dodge Revolutionary Union Movement) in Detroit challenged the basic tenets of Fordism-Keynesianism by exploiting southern migrants' (in Italy) and African-Americans' (who, within the US, were also migrants) alienation from both the production process and the established system of industrial relations. Acting often outside the framework of normal labour relations, the workers of these two cities, with their struggles, impelled capital to shift to another paradigm of production.

### The Geography of Fordism

Fordism, like any regime of accumulation, exhibited its own economic geography. Through its agglomeration of manufacturing in specific urban concentrations, it created large peripheral or semi-peripheral areas, both within and beyond the core states of the world economy, that had unemployment, low wages, and 'backward' social organization. The American south and the Italian *Mezzogiorno* both fitted this description.<sup>8</sup> In both Italy and the US there were many economic and social factors that made workers leave their home and settle in the industrial centres of the north. In the United States, in rural areas across the south and in the Appalachian region, machines replaced farmhands as the region shifted from subsistence to commercial agriculture. The coal industry underwent a similar conversion when it introduced new machinery during a period of slackening demand for coal. These transformations created an employment crisis that induced southerners to look to the northern manufacturing industry for salvation. African-Americans paid the toll of the economic change disproportionately, as an entrenched pattern of discrimination denied them the meagre opportunities that the region provided to whites. Black Americans eagerly escaped the pervasive system of racial segregation that mocked their rights as citizens and hurt their dignity as human beings. This trend continued during the 1950s and in the early 1960s. In fact, although the south was slowly and unevenly changing, the

social and political effects of ‘Jim Crow,’ in the light of the ‘massive resistance’ against civil rights, continued to be a significant push factor for African-Americans.<sup>9</sup> In Italy the *questione meridionale*, the question of the south, surfaced immediately after the Italian unification in 1861 in the terms of a large gap in social and economic development between the southern and northern halves of Italy. For decades afterwards the problem remained unsolved, and it worsened as the north (in particular the northwest) developed a strong base of manufacturing and the south stalled in a backward rural economy.<sup>10</sup> Agrarian reforms in the 1950s failed to efficiently allocate the land. Even the subsequent government policy, always tainted with patronage, to subsidize industrial investments in the region achieved little in terms of employment, since only capital-intensive industries accepted the move south. These industrial complexes came to be known as ‘cathedrals in the desert,’ since they were surrounded by desolate rural villages and did not contribute to the development of the region. A parliamentary commission established in 1951 to investigate poverty ascertained that a quarter of Italian households fell in the ‘poor’ category, but a majority of these, 50.2 percent lived in the south. The bottom of misery was to be found in Calabria, where the average income was only 30 percent that of Piedmont.<sup>11</sup>

Migration from south to north reached a peak in the 1940s and 1950s in Detroit, and in the 1950s and 1960s in Turin. These relocations involved the uprooting of hundreds of thousands of men and women, many of them unaccustomed to life in an industrialized metropolis. In Italy, three million workers left the *Mezzogiorno* during the 1950s and the 1960s. This mass exodus reached a peak during 1958–63, due to the high rate of economic growth in northern Italy during this time. In the United States, between 1940 and 1960, more than five million people left the American south, of whom three million were African-Americans. The latter added to the millions who had left the south a generation earlier, during the first Great Migration. By 1966 only 55 percent of blacks lived below the Mason–Dixon line.<sup>12</sup>

### Comparing Apples and Oranges: *Meridionali* and African-Americans

Comparing Detroit and Turin in the post-war period means coming to terms with one basic difference that profoundly shaped the history of these two cities. In Detroit, racial strife between the black and white residents was a central fact of everyday life. Racial discrimination constituted a barrier that kept blacks segregated in increasingly deteriorating neighbourhoods, employed (or often unemployed) at the lower end of the labour market, abused in the daily interaction with the white authorities. Historian Thomas Sugrue, for instance, has shown that in Detroit the practices of real estate brokers, bankers, and city planners all conspired to preserve the racial homogeneity of the neighbourhoods and to heighten racial animosity.<sup>13</sup> In Detroit, as in the rest of the US, race relations were informed by stereotypes and inequalities deeply rooted in both black and white self-representations. In Turin none of this existed. Although Piedmonteses identified *Meridionali* as having different characteristics in height, skin colour, and facial features, they considered them as ‘other’ not because of race but because of culture.<sup>14</sup>

The literature on the cities that were the privileged destination of black migration has rightly focused on how race informed African-Americans' urban experience.<sup>15</sup> It is an undeniable fact that race shaped the development of Detroit in a myriad of ways. By comparing African-Americans in Detroit and *Meridionali* in Turin I do not mean to neglect this crucial factor, but I want to emphasize another circumstance: that they were both originally migrants from the south of their own countries. If the migratory experience of southern blacks and southern Italians in the northern industrial cities differed in the crucial importance that 'race' had for the lives of African-Americans, it also presented important similarities that can help us to understand the impact, in Europe as well as in the US, of the forces that uprooted millions of southerners and brought them to their respective norths.

Even as migrants, the two groups differed in at least one important aspect: while southern blacks had a strong sense of a common identity both as blacks and as southerners, Italian southern migrants became *Meridionali* only through contact with the natives. *Meridionali* carried local identities, not regional ones, to the new setting.<sup>16</sup> In fact, *Meridionale*—and its pejoratives like *terrone*—was an appellation that carried no particular meaning for the southern migrants. Their identity was rooted in their village or, in some instances, their region (Sicily, Calabria, and so on). They lacked a communal notion of being part of a *Meridione* until they encountered northerners who were not acquainted with differences in the south. On the contrary African-Americans had developed before migration a unique culture through centuries of sharing the collective experience first of slavery and then of segregation. Their racial identity had already been shaped in the south and, to their disappointment, African-Americans found out that although the racial protocol was partly different in the north most racist practices existed there too. Crucially for our comparison, in the American case the discourse over the *racial* difference of African-Americans was so overwhelming that it overshadowed the *regional* difference of the newcomers.

However, blacks and *Meridionali*, as migrants, shared two fundamental characteristics. First, the magnitude of their impact on the cities set off similar urban crises. The intense pace of new arrivals heightened competition for the insufficient housing, providing migrants with expensive and shabby accommodation. Because newcomers arrived often through a migratory chain, overcrowding of single-family units further dilapidated the city housing stock. Likewise, in the job market, migrants entered in competition, primarily among themselves, for hazardous and intermittent occupations, since in both cities the established residents had secured the steady and remunerative jobs. In both cases, even without the aggravating circumstance of racial discrimination, mass immigration from the south crippled the system: it overloaded hospitals, schools, the welfare system, and other municipal services. Inevitably, in both cases, it was the migrants who bore the brunt of the urban crisis.

The second similarity is implied in what we have said so far. Both groups occupied a marginal place in the cities' social spectrum. In Turin, the migration of another group, the peasants from Veneto, in the northeast of Italy, had preceded and overlapped with that of *Meridionali*. Venetians fared in general much better than southerners. They found fewer barriers to integration because in their features, language, and culture

they were closer to the Piedmontese.<sup>17</sup> In Turin, *Meridionali* compared unfavourably with Venetians and the rest of the population in terms of education, income, housing conditions, visibility in politics—in other words, in status.<sup>18</sup> A 1965 survey showed that, even after a decade of migration, the rate of marriage between *Meridionali* and natives was half that of Venetians and natives.<sup>19</sup> It was therefore under circumstances that smacked of social inferiority that *Meridionali* forged a new collective identity and transformed the workplace.

In Detroit, southern blacks were in a comparable situation, only it was worse. Southern whites, in particular ‘hillbillies’ from Appalachia, had also migrated to Detroit. Appalachians were also victims of prejudice and discrimination, and were as culturally distant from native Detroiters as southern blacks were.<sup>20</sup> However, they were white. The dynamic of race relations opened to them more opportunities to integrate into mainstream American life. In the fierce struggle for resources, jobs in the first place, natives were preferred to ‘hillbillies,’ but the latter always outstripped African-Americans. A few years after the end of the period of greatest migration from the south, which occurred during the Second World War, southern whites in Detroit (except for a few small enclaves such as the Briggs area) statistically disappeared among the native population.<sup>21</sup> On the other hand, their fellow southerners of a different race needed more than a generation to overcome the obstacles to integration. In the late 1960s, the children of the wave of black migrants of the 1940s were still as marginal in status, income, education, and political representation as their parents. Although this generation was more likely to be born and reared in Detroit than in the south, it still makes sense to compare them to the *Meridionali*, not as migrants, because technically they were not, but as a marginal group.

### Antisystemic Struggles in Turin and Detroit

‘There have only been two *world* revolutions. One took place in 1848. The second took place in 1968. Both were historic failures. Both transformed the world.’ So remark Arrighi, Hopkins, and Wallerstein in their short essay *Antisystemic Movements*.<sup>22</sup> The student revolt of 1968 is generally acknowledged as a transnational phenomenon, although it took a peculiar form in each national context. There is a vast literature that, correctly, analyses 1968 from a global viewpoint.<sup>23</sup> However, when we scan through the literature on the workers’ movements in the late 1960s we find only studies of single cases, firmly rooted in their national setting.<sup>24</sup> Yet, the workers’ uprising that simultaneously struck Turin, Detroit, Stuttgart, Billancourt, and elsewhere has more than one link with the ‘global’ New Left. With the New Left the workers’ movement shared the critique of organized labour, the anti-authoritarian mood, and militant revolutionary rhetoric. More importantly, the workers’ movement in the late 1960s and early 1970s, as much as the New Left, was the outcome of a global process that had similarly restructured the system of Fordist accumulation in several countries. The increased technical and financial interconnection among national productive systems resulted in an integrated world economic market. For this reason I suggest that it is more useful to study these movements in the perspective, proposed by Wallerstein and

co-authors,<sup>25</sup> of a world system that created the conditions in which antisystemic movements such as the revolutionary black workers in Detroit and the radical *Meridionali* in Turin could exist. These are two significant examples among a larger series of rank-and-file upsurges in mass-production factories. In many cases migrants or marginal workers were protagonists of these struggles, but the paucity of comparative historical analysis has diminished their visibility.

In their respective national historiographies these two movements are explained within larger trends of social change in the national context. In the Italian case, widespread agreement exists on the role of the centre-left coalitions that had governed Italy since 1963. The shift from a centre coalition to one that included the socialist left had taken place in Italy after much resistance from conservative circles and from some American diplomacy. Corporate managers like Vittorio Valletta, the manager who brought about the post-war productive revolution at FIAT, strongly endorsed this political change because they believed it could finally put Italy completely in line with the kind of Fordism-Keynesianism that informed other Western countries. Italy was in fact still tarred by the Fascist legacy: the lack of social and institutional reforms in the realm of education, urbanization, industrial relations, and the administration of justice. This situation strongly contrasted with the dynamism of the economy during the 'miracle'—the Italian economic boom between 1958 and 1963. However, the centre-left government never actually delivered these reforms or it did so only in an ineffective way. For historian Paul Ginsborg, 'Between 1962 and 1968 the governments of the centre-left had failed to respond to the multiple needs of a rapidly changing Italy. They had done both too little and too much, in the sense that they had talked endlessly of reform but had then left expectations unfulfilled. From 1968 onwards paralysis from above gave way to movement from below.'<sup>26</sup> From this assessment of the failure of the centre-left derives the idea that the social movements of the late 1960s, the students and then the workers' movement, rose from a deluded expectation of reform even if they eventually put forward demands that were far more progressive.<sup>27</sup>

With similar tones, in the American case, a number of historians have interpreted the outburst of black militancy in the urban north as a case of 'rising expectations,' meaning that the Civil Rights and Great Society legislation passed under Lyndon B. Johnson had suddenly accelerated the anticipation for improvements in the economic conditions of blacks. However, Johnson's reforms never attacked the key institutions that perpetuated the unequal distribution of power and wealth in American society. The fact that the reality of the living conditions in the northern 'ghetto' differed so much from the intent of the legislation sparked a number of civil disturbances and the radicalization of the protest movements.<sup>28</sup>

While it is persuasive to interpret the protest movements of the 1960s as stemming from dissatisfaction and impatience with belated reforms of the system, this framework is also a reductive way to understand rank-and-file struggles in Detroit and Turin. There is no automatic connection between the lack of reforms and the uprisings in the factories of the two motor cities. These struggles were primarily shaped in the context of life in the plants and in the city. They were prepared by the



transformations that occurred in production technology, in the changes in urban settings, in the dynamics of shop-floor politics and were spurred by the action of marginal workers.

There also exists a rich literature concerning more specifically the rank-and-file struggles in the two cities. In the Italian case, the period of intense workers' struggle that occurred in autumn 1969 has been named *Autunno Caldo*. This period has interested historians and social scientists because it opened the path to many pieces of progressive legislation. Labour historians have interpreted this cycle of struggles within a framework, which has enjoyed enduring success, that put the *Autunno Caldo* in a perspective that emphasizes the agency of the unions.<sup>29</sup> Strike levels at the end of the 1960s stand in stark contrast with the scarcity of industrial conflict in the previous decade, when Cold War politics, both in the US and in Italy, gave rise to a political climate favourable to union baiting. According to this paradigm, it was the resistance of a group of left-wing militants during Valletta's authoritarian management that prepared the ground for an awakening of the labour movement at FIAT in the following decade. For historians and activists Emilio Pugno and Sergio Garavini, 'A vanguard has resisted and has represented a reference point for the renewal of workers' struggle that developed between '62 and '68.'<sup>30</sup> Although the mid-1960s were a period of absolute calm on the shop floor at FIAT, the leftist union Federazione Italiana Operai Metalmeccanici (FIOM), it is argued, regained ground, while ideological divisions with the other components of labour became softer. Thus, the explosion of industrial conflict in 1969 is seen as evidence that the unions regained influence among workers. Southern migrants—it is acknowledged—played an important role with their spontaneous rebellion, but they could grow into a strong mass organization only thanks to the guidance of the unions. This interpretation, centred on the experience of 'class,' emphasizes migrants' role in the production process as a 'mass' or unskilled workforce, rather than their distinctive migratory experience, as the main source of their spontaneous rebellion.

In other words, this historiography regards the events of Turin as the culmination of a coherent, though discontinued, growth of the union movement from the early 1960s onwards. This view is unacceptable. The *Autunno Caldo* represented a watershed not only in the sense that it opened a progressive decade in which the union movement became an important political actor, as these authors imply, but also in the sense that the social force that initiated this change—southern migrants—burst into the workers' movement without any previous link to organized labour.

A historian who has worked in this direction is Giuseppe Berta. He has pointed to the change of FIAT's recruitment policy in the late 1960s as a crucial factor in detonating the struggle. At the eve of the *Autunno Caldo*, remarks Berta, 'FIAT did not know its workers anymore. They had become an abnormal mass.'<sup>31</sup> Historian Marco Scavino, in a similar tone, has maintained that it was a mistake to interpret the resurgence of rank-and-file action only within the terms of the history of organized labour. Commenting on Berta, Scavino remarks that 'if FIAT in those years did not know its workers anymore, unions had an analogous problem.'<sup>32</sup>

My view concurs with this latter position. The comparative perspective further



encourages me to follow this line of enquiry. Knowing, for instance, that African-Americans' militancy in Detroit's plants was moulded not only by their relation to the means of production, but also by their own identity as racial 'others,' one can wonder whether at FIAT too the recomposition of the working class brought about a more profound rupture with past industrial relations than is commonly acknowledged. In this case, the *Autunno Caldo* is less likely to represent a stage, however important, in a process of advancement of the union movement than a *starting point* for a whole different system of industrial relations.

While in Turin rank-and-file struggles gained momentum in 1969, in Detroit a wave of wildcat strikes had already begun in 1968, simultaneously with the French May. Black revolutionary groups triggered strikes that, similarly as in Turin, destabilized the plants' hierarchies and halted production. The DRUM, later called the League of Revolutionary Black Workers, spread the protest against working conditions and racial discrimination (an issue that was absent in the Italian case) from the Dodge Main plant to all other Chrysler plants in the city, where the workforce was fragmented along racial and generational lines similar to those which divided African-Americans from native and ethnic whites, especially the Polish. The radical protest captured media attention nationwide and provoked a crisis both in the company headquarters, about lost production, and in the United Automobile Workers (UAW). The latter was afraid of losing its hold on the workforce. One could argue that its failure to come to grips quickly with the protest showed that, as in the Italian case, the union did not know its workers anymore.

The League of Revolutionary Black Workers has also been the subject of an abundant literature, but it has not been conferred the same status as the *Autunno Caldo* in the Italian case.<sup>33</sup> In the United States, these events are not deemed to have been particularly influential in transforming society. Yet, in the American case, rank-and-file rebellion was a national phenomenon, not a local one. Between 1968 and 1974 workplace militancy spread across the nation and in a number of industries: from autoworkers to postal workers, from telephone operators to the teamsters.<sup>34</sup> The main reason for this difference is that the outcome of these episodes was different. American wildcatters, rather than having been institutionalized, were more often suppressed, until the movement faded out.

Contrary to the Italian historiography, the Americans interpreted the outburst of militancy at Chrysler firmly in the context of Detroit's urban problems and with a stronger emphasis on 'race.' From the first authors who dealt with the subject in the 1970s in a militant vein, Geschwender, and Georgakas and Marvin, to the last compelling study of Detroit by Thompson, there has been a consensus that what happened in the plants was inextricably linked to the riot of 1967 and the rise of militant left-wing activism in every realm of civic life. Why was it so much easier for the Americans to recognize this relation? This owed to the fact that the experience of Detroit paralleled, and actually surpassed, that of other major northern urban centres in being characterized by intense racial conflict over housing, education, and law and order. The militancy of black revolutionaries on the shop floors cannot be dissociated from this context.

I have no contention with this point of view, and, indeed, I believe it is a valid interpretative key to understand how urban dynamics set off the shop-floor struggles in the Italian case also. Yet, the observation that in Turin, in the absence of a racial divide, of black nationalism, and of a politics of race at local and national level, southern migrants similarly, and with equal vehemence, attacked the basic institutions that regulated industrial relations made me catch sight of other aspects of the Detroit case. For instance, I was intrigued to realize that, in the 1960s, in the highly polarized racial context of Detroit that these authors describe, African-Americans who joined the ranks of black radical groups that mobilized in the plants might have done so simply as a strategy to achieve social recognition, that is, as an expedient to evade the social invisibility to which members of marginal groups were confined, rather than as a political choice dictated by 'race.' This was also strikingly similar to the experience of southern migrants in Turin. In other words, the limit of these previous studies consisted in neglecting the fact that the experience, past or present, of migration had shaped the construction of a collective identity of southern blacks and their offspring in ways that interacted with race and class. In this sense, the situation of African-Americans in Detroit and in other American urban centres was not unique, but comparable to other groups in the capitalist world system who had been uprooted by the forces of industrialization and then marginalized in a new setting.

### **Migrants Become Radicals: Challenges to the System at Chrysler and FIAT in the Late 1960s**

The pronounced industrial conflict of the late 1960s has mainly engaged the attention of economists and sociologists seeking to prove generalizations about recurrent patterns in class struggles. One hypothesis links the rank-and-file movements to slowdowns in the rise of real wages and living standards in the years preceding the upsurge. In Italy, for instance, the rise in real incomes during the period 1965–68 was only half as great as in the period 1962–65, at the height of the 'economic boom.' This check in the expectations of a rising standard of living, according to this view, explains the resentment that led to the *Autunno Caldo*, the period of the most intense labour unrest in Italian history. Workers, in this interpretation, reacted directly to the changing pace of growth in the international market.<sup>35</sup>

Macroeconomic forces undoubtedly have an influence upon workers and the labour market. However, this explanation does not address the issue of the novelty of actors and the forms of protest that characterized the conflict and mark it out as distinct from the struggles that preceded it. Rather than posit a deterministic correlation between workers' industrial behaviour and variation in real wages, we need to seek a multi-factored and more historically nuanced explanation. Another, more sophisticated, interpretation assumes that younger employees raised in a period of post-war prosperity carried higher material expectations and were less accommodating to social constraints than the former generation, which held potent memories of the hardships of the Second World War and the Great Depression. The events of May 1968 in Paris signalled the start of this generation of industrial workers' activism. While again

ignoring the question of the composition of the insurgent working class, this interpretation at least brings in the generational factor. In both Detroit and Turin, attention to generational dynamics further develops an understanding of workers' demands and their tactics.<sup>36</sup>

Sociologists Charles Sabel and Michael J. Piore have put forward an alternative view. They argue that industrial countries in the post-war decades had large reserves of workers to call upon: in the United States rural blacks and white Appalachians and, in Italy, southerners. As long as these reserves saw themselves as outsiders to industrial society they were not especially interested in gaining job security, acquiring factory skills, or fighting for better working conditions. However, once they were drawn into full participation in the industry their worldview changed. They came to consider their condition as marginal unjust and confining; in other words, something worth fighting against.<sup>37</sup>

Elaborating on these insights, I suggest that one of the key sources of rank-and-file militancy in the auto plants of Detroit and Turin was the unfulfilled 'recognition' of large groups of workers whose number and importance in the production process was not matched by any improvement either on or off the shop floor. I borrow the concept of 'struggle for recognition' from philosopher Axel Honneth. Following the work of E. P. Thompson, Honneth developed the idea that the motivation underlying protest actions is not orientation towards positively formulated moral principles but rather the experience of disrespect towards the subjects' intuitively presupposed conception of justice. He argued that 'violence to individual or collective claims to social recognition will be experienced as moral injustice.'<sup>38</sup> Because it departs in one important respect from E. P. Thompson's 'moral economy,' Honneth's theory can be profitably applied to enquire into rank-and-file actions in Detroit and Turin. In fact, where Thompson suggests that moral outrage emerges in defence of traditional ways of life, Honneth adds that it also surfaces in situations of exclusion and degradation that violate self-respect and self-confidence, even outside a traditional way of life.<sup>39</sup> The experience of racial discrimination or social isolation can lead to some of the many motives to press forward collective demands for expanded recognition of a group.<sup>40</sup>

In 1969, industrial conflict at FIAT took on a chaotic dimension. Migrants put at the top of their agenda egalitarian demands that drastically diverged from the culture of the leftist organizations, like the PCI (Partito Comunista Italiano) and the CGIL (Confederazione Generale Italiana Lavoro), that had traditionally represented the metal workers. These groups regarded workers' skills as the cornerstone of the bargaining process. For the generation of Piedmontese workers whose experience at FIAT antedated the reorganization of production of the 1950s, or for those who had been transmitted the Piedmontese work ethic through their family or community, there still existed the myth of the 'demiurge' worker—the worker who creates a manufactured good out of his own hands and skills.<sup>41</sup> This was a standpoint that could not mobilize unskilled southerners, mostly with a rural background. Instead, the insurgent southern rank and file forged an explosive alliance with the revolutionary student movement that swept the Turinese, and other Italian, universities in 1968. At

the end of virtually every shift students and workers gathered in informal meetings. They discussed the actions to be taken and produced leaflets for distribution at the gates the following day. In June 1969, they started signing their literature *La Lotta Continua*—‘the struggle goes on’. These groups sparked off a bold critique of the established unions. In particular, they accused them of a reluctance to champion a protracted struggle for an across-the-board wage increase. Students and workers also built a loose organizational structure, the Students–Workers Assembly. At its opening meeting, a worker from Mirafiori body shop declared,

Today we can make it with our own means. We don’t need any union representation anymore, or nobody else’s. This means that we now decide not only the form of the struggle, but also its goals, the style of its leadership, the way of organising it and spreading it. This is what manufacturers and union bureaucrats alike are more afraid of.<sup>42</sup>

On the eve of the *Autunno Caldo* these words articulated a state of disaffection without precedent at FIAT. They also testified to the ultimate failure of the hegemonic project of the company to defuse the class struggle within its plants. It was, in fact, the assurance that left-wing militancy had been subdued that led FIAT managers<sup>43</sup> to abandon the traditional policy of carefully screening job applicants at a moment when increased consumer demand required a rapid match in production.<sup>44</sup> For Turinese autoworker Vincenzo Damiano, ‘when FIAT needed it made no distinctions. The company hired a whole bunch of hoodlums without any previous information. When I was hired they asked everywhere about who I was.’<sup>45</sup> In the course of 1969, FIAT hired no less than 15,000 migrants, the ‘hoodlums,’ directly from the south, most of them without any previous industrial experience. These workers augmented the thousands of *Meridionali* already hired during the 1950s and 1960s. However, while the latter could make a favourable comparison between the steady employment conditions at FIAT and the small workshops of the ‘competitive sector’ which they had experienced in their first years in the north, the former were employed without any previous experience of industrial work. Therefore they quickly responded to the appalling pace of the assembly line and the problematic safety conditions they encountered on the shop floor.<sup>46</sup>

Worker Armando Bianchi recalls that ‘these people were quite upset ... some used to sleep at the train station ... they came to work, but they could not integrate in society.’<sup>47</sup> However, migrants were rebellious not only against their precarious housing situation, but also against the plant hierarchy and the condition of exploitation at work. FIAT managers once remarked to a group of southern strikers, ‘What do you demand of us? Yesterday you were at the hoe and today you raise your head.’<sup>48</sup> Under the astounded look of fellow Piedmontese workers, young *Meridionali* adopted a confrontational stance towards foremen that was unthinkable to workers who had gone through the 1950s. A Piedmontese worker appropriately remarked, ‘It was *Meridionali* with their impoliteness [*maleducazione*] who started to break up the discipline.’<sup>49</sup> Responding to the hardship of working conditions inside the plant and of living conditions in the neighbourhoods, these migrants were more likely to transform their identity not through training as industrial workers or as members of

‘thrifty’ northern society, but in the course of the struggle and through contact with the tiny radical Marxist groups that canvassed workers outside the factory.<sup>50</sup>

Andrea Papaleo, a southerner hired in 1969 at Mirafiori, told an interviewer,

So far, I’ve never had a chance to listen to them [the radicals of Lotta Continua] in person. I agreed with their aims and I liked their language. This was simple, direct, not like the one of the unions, which hardly distributed leaflets and those few times they were incomprehensible. My encounter with politics began in this way. I started to attend meetings regularly with other workers. I attended gladly because I could always learn something new and free of charge!<sup>51</sup>

In the meetings with fellow migrant workers and northern students, southerners like Papaleo became familiar with the revolutionary ideology that inspired the militant organizations. These groups specifically rejected the parliamentary road to power and advocated the empowerment of workers through direct action. *L’Unità*, the official paper of the PCI, accused them ‘of dividing the workers to the advantage of the master—FIAT.’<sup>52</sup> In Italy the two groups with the greatest following were Lotta Continua and Potere Operaio (‘Workers’ Power’). They repudiated some key tenets of the labour movement including discipline at work, the desirability of skills, and the usefulness of delegation. They scorned prolonged negotiations and regarded the contracts only as a basis for new demands. Consequently, they adopted the direct language and the slogan of the young migrant workers: *Vogliamo tutto e subito*—‘We want everything and we want it now.’

It would be a mistake, however, to formulate any equation between the agency of the radical groups and the extraordinary momentousness of rank-and-file action at FIAT. Lotta Continua and the others remained a *minorità agissante* outside the plant and could instigate shop-floor activism only by relying upon militants in the various departments. This cannot account for the majority of occasions in which the workers, *motu proprio*, initiated the wildcats. It is more precise and accurate therefore to consider the radical movement outside FIAT and the rank and file inside as two entities sharing some goals, influencing each other and overlapping to a limited extent, but separate nonetheless.

For the migrant the struggle often represented a stage in his inclusion, as an outsider, in the new society.<sup>53</sup> He (rarely she) would bring his own baggage of experience and ideas, but he also enriched it or transformed it according to which path of inclusion he followed. Participation in a radical group, in a union, or in any other organization was part of an individual strategy to obtain ‘recognition’ and it was also an occasion to develop a new self. That is why it is difficult to establish to what extent, in both Turin and Detroit, migrants were part of the New Left. The story of Domenico Norcia is a case in point. He left Apulia for Stuttgart, where, even without speaking German, he led a wildcat in an auto plant. This experience radicalized him. In the late 1960s Norcia moved to Turin and entered FIAT Mirafiori where he looked immediately for a union, but no one on his line belonged to one. By chance he ran into an FIM (Federazione Italiana Metalmeccanici—of Catholic influence) activist outside the plant and joined. Undaunted by the pressure of his foreman he was on the first line when the situation in the shop heated up. He participated in the meetings of

Lotta Continua. 'I attempted—he recalls—to introduce in the union the ideas we discussed in those meetings, but I was always “put on trial” for this kind of behaviour.'<sup>54</sup> Evidently, Norcia's ideological inconsistency and aggressive militancy embarrassed Catholic FIM officials; however, they did not expel him, since at this time of increasing mobilization unions competed for activists with the New Left groups. Norcia became one of the leading militants in his department; he organized processions inside the plant to arouse workers to strike, and distressed FIM leadership by enthusiastically beating up strikebreakers. He was eventually elected as a union shop steward.<sup>55</sup>

Did Norcia belong to the New Left or to a union? Norcia's case is revealing because it shows that these labels cannot be easily pinned on workers. In a similar case, Pasquale De Stefani, a migrant from Veneto, joined the New Left sphere for a while by becoming member of the PSIUP (Partito Socialista Italiano Unità Proletaria). This party was an offspring of the socialist and communist parties that was more sympathetic to the new trends. De Stefani also befriended some leaders of Lotta Continua. However, at the same time he was a steward for FIM.<sup>56</sup>

More importantly, the ambiguity in the position of many workers derived from their own personal motivation to join a union or a radical group. For migrants, the boundaries between New and Old Left were not as rigid as for the northern skilled workers. Migrants looked at political participation primarily as a means to gain recognition of their status as citizens and as participants in industrial relations. In some cases it could also be part of a strategy of advancement that included siding with what was believed the winning side.

During my interviews with former DRUM members I found out that a similar consideration could apply to black autoworkers in Detroit. While leaders consciously espoused an ideology, the rank and file did not find it inconsistent to shift their political allegiance. For instance, General Baker, one of the founders of DRUM, had a solid background in Marxism built through frequent encounters with local Trotskyites and trips abroad that even brought him to meet Fidel Castro and 'Che' Guevara in Cuba and come back 'with some level of responsibility.'<sup>57</sup> However, the membership's ideological creed was, to say the least, variegated. According to one member it went 'from nationalist distrust of all whites, to Christianity, astrology, pro-socialist sentiment, and even anti-Marxist sentiment.'<sup>58</sup> Viewed from the rank and file, DRUM did not look like the 'Marxist-Leninist party' it proclaimed to be.<sup>59</sup> However, by reconstructing these personal stories, what can superficially look like a contradiction makes sense if we interpret them not as stories of an abstract class struggle, but of how migrant and marginal workers came to terms with a hostile environment. Their stories tell us more about their strategy to cope with discrimination or marginalization than about an abstract class consciousness they could have gained.

Eula Powell entered the Chrysler Dodge Main plant in 1968 as part of the post-riot black recruitment when she was in her early twenties. In fact, in the aftermath of the 1967 riot the liberal leadership of the city urged the Big Three to hire the 'hard-core' unemployed blacks of the city, those considered to be the main actors in the riot. Chrysler, the last to run plants in Detroit itself, hired 4,000 African-American in a two-



year period, under a federal-funded training programme. When Eula Powell was hired the racial climate in the city and in the plant was tense. The murder of Martin Luther King, Jr resuscitated fears of another riot and Chrysler managers shut the plant for a few days as a precaution. In May 1968 DRUM organized the first of a series of successful wildcat strikes. The DRUM asserted that black workers on the assembly line, like the slaves on the antebellum cotton plantations, occupied the core of the production process, the most vulnerable gear of the capitalist machine.<sup>60</sup> The DRUM promptly decided to work as an alternative workers' organization, rather than as an opposition caucus inside the UAW. Since its creation it intended 'to establish an all black union' and 'to give black workers a more active voice in policymaking in the plants.'<sup>61</sup>

As in the case of the last wave of young unskilled *Meridionali* indiscriminately hired at FIAT at about the same time, these workers were at the forefront of the strikes and shop-floor activism for the following two years. They knew little of the union of which they were nominally members, except for the fact that they had to pay a sizeable initial membership fee and then regular dues.<sup>62</sup> Moreover, the failure or unwillingness of the UAW to bargain contracts that effectively addressed the question of unsafe working conditions and speed-ups (issues that were so pressing in the ageing Chrysler plants) meant that these African-Americans no longer looked at the union as the solution of their problems. On the contrary, very often the union *was* the problem. For instance, many African-Americans saw the union rules governing seniority and entry into the skilled trades as obstacles to promotion to better jobs that were seemingly monopolized by the older-stock Polish and ethnic whites. These practices exposed the inconsistency of the UAW, a union with a progressive image on racial matters, but one reluctant to advance African-Americans within its own ranks or seriously challenge racist company policies.

At the local level, UAW Dodge Main Local 3 President Ed Liska represented the old generation of Polish ethnic workers who were hostile to the counterculture, the student movement, and the aggressive turn that the Civil Rights movement had taken in the north, and in particular in Detroit. As black militancy grew at Dodge Main, so did Liska's aversion towards the dissident groups. Local 3 and DRUM engaged in a protracted struggle on the future of labour relations in Detroit. It was a struggle for power but their antagonism derived also from a cultural, ideological, and generational divide. In opposition to trade unions, radical groups in Detroit, as in Turin, did not see an ethical or educational value in work and they promised to upset social (and racial, in the case of Detroit) hierarchies. On the other hand, radicals at Dodge Main, too young to remember the organizing days of the 1930s, or even the post-war strikes, saw the local and international officers as being part of the same machine as the company management. They did not believe in the possibility of an independent black leadership in the UAW because they were convinced that the union's political machine could easily coopt African-Americans desirous to improve their status and salary.<sup>63</sup>

Eula Powell worked in production, tape-masking in the painting department. She participated in the strikes and joined DRUM, therefore paying a fee to both the radicals and the union. For Eula DRUM 'had a nice movement ... they had a lot of



smart people with them too.' However, when, after the defeat of their own slate in the local election, DRUM declined, Eula joined the faction of Ed Liska, whom she characterizes as a 'nice guy.' She later became a union steward in her department. As in Norcia's case we might wonder whether Eula Powell felt like a radical or a union officer, but this would be to simplify the complex experience of someone who passed from being marginal, to sharing the collective experience of activism in a radical group, to having a public role, such as union steward, and therefore being 'recognized.'<sup>64</sup>

'You know, people they'd call us radicals,' recalls another former DRUM member, Clifford Jr Brookins. However, he too did not represent himself as radical. In his story the experience of radicalism is rather told as part of his journey to a more comfortable way of living, although it still was an important moment, because it situated him among the protagonists of his generation. Brookins was only a second-generation southerner: his father came from Alabama and was a coal miner in West Virginia, where he met his wife. They moved to Highland Park, a municipality within Detroit, where they had ten children. Clifford, Sr found a job at Uniroyal, a tyre factory. Like Eula Powell, Clifford Brookins, Jr. also entered Dodge Main in 1968. Three events pushed him to join a radical group: discrimination at his recruitment, Martin Luther King's death, and the riot. At the hiring gate Clifford observed that although he had a school degree in electronics he was assigned to the assembly line in a nocturnal shift. Instead, a white man of the same age who did not complete school was given a comfortable job as an inspector. 'I had all the schooling, had a certificate and a degree and everything. It didn't mean nothing,' commented Clifford. At Chrysler the dual labour market did not end with the passing of the Civil Rights Act.<sup>65</sup>

On the line Brookins toiled with fellow black workers 'under a lot of pressure.'<sup>66</sup> Many of his co-workers intoxicated themselves. On the night shift, in particular, drugs and alcohol were a common remedy to the high pace of work. The augmentation of consumption of drugs and alcohol within the plants had been noted by both management and the union, and constituted the topic of a frequent exchange of letter between the two. For young workers, intoxication constituted an alternative type of resistance, one that did not involve a political engagement. However, this kind of resistance eventually had political and economic consequences, since it attacked the productivity of the workers, the cornerstone of the Fordist factory. A 'cultural' rejection of work could be as disrupting as a political or economic one.<sup>67</sup>

Brookins first joined the Black Panthers, and later DRUM. He said this happened after the riot that occurred in consequence of King's death. Nine months elapsed between these two events, the 1967 riot and the assassination of King, but, interestingly, Brookins remembered them as a continuous event. Like Eula Powell, Brookins must have lived through the strong tensions that exploded in the black departments on 4 April 1968, which prompted him to become more militant in the workplace. We know that rumours of a riot in Detroit after King's murder failed to materialize. Mayor Cavanagh declared the curfew and the governor sent 3,000 National Guardsmen to prevent an outbreak, but nothing happened. However, Brookins in his memory shifted the riot from July 1967 to April 1968, thereby

combining the two events that radicalized him into one. Brookins merged 'the myth and the reality,' the two moments that had a symbolic significance in the construction of his identity.<sup>68</sup> Brookins left Dodge Main two years later after a minor incident on the line. He could have joined the litigation that DRUM lawyers had initiated on behalf of a number of Dodge Main workers injured on the line. Understanding that the political stance of DRUM might have harmed his chances to get compensation, Brookins decided to sue the company on his own with a different lawyer. As one could expect in the hot political climate of Detroit, the court dismissed DRUM's protégés, but awarded Brookins compensation. DRUM had raised a political case, Brookins only a legal one.<sup>69</sup>

## Conclusion

The industrial conflict that saw *Meridionali* and African-Americans as protagonists were instances of social groups struggling for 'recognition.' They can be framed in Axel Honneth's theory. Social struggle in these cases starts, as Honneth maintains, 'with a practical process in which individual experiences of disrespect are read as typical of an entire group, and in such a way that they can motivate collective demands for expanded relations of recognition.'<sup>70</sup> While the action of native groups can be more easily accounted for with a logic of material interests, migrants' militancy was more linked to the process of formation of a new individual and collective identity in the new urban setting (which of course passed through the acquisition of a more comfortable material life). The relatively small numbers of migrants who joined radical groups and the relatively large numbers who participated in strikes or pickets were an expression of the distance between what they wanted to be and what place they were assigned in the receiving communities. Struggles in the automobile plants assailed the gap between the expectations and the reality of life in the northern cities for migrants. African-Americans expected the end of the discrimination that determined their low wages, their poor housing, and their inferior social status. Likewise *Meridionali* protested against the burden of inequalities that the quick industrial development had caused in Italy. In the collective struggle, both groups recovered their sense of dignity and self-respect that seemed undermined in the north.

Although the UAW and Chrysler made no concessions to DRUM, within two years of its appearance Local 3 elected a black president (and so did other locals) and Chrysler appointed black supervisory staff in its plants. By 1973, during a subsequent wave of wildcats at Chrysler's Detroit plants, conditions on the shop floor were equally bad for both black and white, and rank-and-file protest was markedly inter-racial. In Turin, the appeal of Lotta Continua among migrants prompted the unions to espouse the demands of the latter lest the unions lost their grip over an insurgent labour movement at FIAT. The resulting union growth served as a catalyst for the enactment in 1970 of the Statuto dei Lavoratori, a progressive piece of legislation that protected workers' rights on the shop floor. In both cases the activity of small radical groups gave migrants the chance to fight for their recognition as full-status actors in the system of industrial relations.

Workers' struggles compel capitalist forces to restructure. Labour and capital coexist in dialectic and it is legitimate to read changes in the mode of production as responses to international cycles of working class struggle.<sup>71</sup> In core industrial regions such as Detroit and Turin, in the concluding stage of Fordism-Keynesianism, it was the marginal workers who were the protagonists of crucial episodes of struggle. This meant that although organized labour functioned in regimenting workers in a way organic to the regime, and although unions had sometimes to take into account the feelings of their rank and file, they were increasingly troubled from outside, from the underprivileged categories that did not fit into the agenda of any of the three pillars of Fordism.<sup>72</sup> These changes relate to the emergence of a non-class 'subject of history': ethnic minorities, blacks, women, a kind of 'wretched of the earth' inside the First World. This was, from Marcuse to Fanon to Sartre, a key theme of the 1960s, and spurred that crisis of the grand narratives that is now considered an important stage in the passage from modernity to postmodernity.<sup>73</sup> The story of Detroit and Turin, however, reminds us that this development was itself a by-product of the maturity of Fordism as a system of accumulation in the post-war period, and of the bankruptcy of the institutions of class politics that accompanied it.

## Notes

- [1] Sugrue, *The Origins of the Urban Crisis*; Thompson, *Whose Detroit?*
- [2] Coriat, *L'atelier et le robot*, 20.
- [3] Robert Boyer and Yves Saillard defined a regime of accumulation as 'the social and economic patterns that enable accumulation to occur in the long term between two structural crises', in Boyer and Saillard, *Régulation Theory*, 36. The *régulation* scholars have the merit of having elaborated an analysis of how Fordism has 'regulated' capitalism development in the twentieth century. The founding work of this school is Aglietta, *A Theory of Capitalist Regulation*; but since then there have been several contributions to this line of thought, in particular from French scholars: see Lipietz, 'Reflection on a Tale.' For a critical survey of this theory I direct the reader to Boyer, *The Regulation School*; Jessop, 'Regulation Theories in Retrospect and Prospect;' Tickell and Peck, 'Accumulation, Regulation and the Geographies of Post-Fordism.'
- [4] I draw the terms 'core' and later 'periphery' from and use the concept of 'world system' with reference to Wallerstein's classic *The Modern World-System*. I believe that the world-system model provides a useful framework to examine the relevance of metropolitan areas such as Detroit and Turin to the world economy and explain why they became poles of attraction for both capital and workers. However, by using these concepts I do not automatically subscribe to every aspects of that theory. A discussion on the limits of Wallerstein's world system, especially its mechanistic nature, is out of place here, but can be found in Van der Linden, 'Global Labor History,' 423–59.
- [5] I borrow these terms from O'Connor, *The Fiscal Crisis of the State*.
- [6] But this is also the case for the second-generation southern migrants in Turin, according to two sociological studies of generational mobility: Ceravolo et al., 'Migrazioni e integrazione sociale;' Negri, 'I nuovi torinesi.'
- [7] The comparative method has long proved a rewarding tool for historians and social scientists who seek to gain insights into phenomena occurring in two or more social systems. In comparing Detroit and Turin I have in particular taken into account some key articles and books that appeared in the 1980s, such as Fredrickson, 'Comparative History,' 457–73;

- Kolchin, 'Comparing American History,' 64–81. Grew, 'The Case for Comparing Histories,' 763–778; Fredrickson, *White Supremacy*; Kolchin, *Unfree Labor*, as well as the well-known theoretical framework provided by Skocpol and Somers, 'The Uses of Comparative History in Macrosocial Inquiry,' 174–97. I also benefited from the debate on transnational history that appeared in the *Journal of American History* 86 (1999).
- [8] Lago and Halpern, *The American South and the Italian Mezzogiorno* is a work of comparison between the two regions.
- [9] Holley, *The Second Great Emancipation*; Ford, *The Southern Appalachian Region*; Wright, *Old South, New South*, 241–43.
- [10] Eckaus, 'Il divario nord-sud nei primi decenni dell'unità,' Castronovo, *Storia economica d'Italia*, 1–105.
- [11] Ginsborg, *Storia d'Italia 1943–1996*, 143; Braghin, *Inchiesta sulla miseria in Italia*; Castronovo, *Storia economica d'Italia*, 397.
- [12] See Jones, *The Dispossessed*, 224; Lemann, *The Promised Land*; Johnson and Campbell, *Black Migration in America*; on Italian migration see: Ascoli, *Movimenti migratori in Italia*, 117–27; Reyneri, *La catena migratoria*; Pugliese 'Gli squilibri del mercato del lavoro,' 421–65.
- [13] Sugrue, *The Origins of the Urban Crisis*.
- [14] For the reception of southern migrants in northern Italy see: Batacchi, *Meridionali e Settentrionali*; Fofi, *L'immigrazione meridionale a Torino*.
- [15] Concerning the post-war period see: Hirsch, *Making the Second Ghetto*; Jackson, *Crabgrass Frontier*; Newman et al., *Protest, Politics, and Prosperity*; Trotter, 'Blacks in the Urban North,' 28–55; Sugrue, *The Origins of the Urban Crisis*.
- [16] A point also made by Donna Gabaccia in relation to Italian migrants to the US in *Italy's Many Diasporas*.
- [17] Barbano and Garelli, 'Struttura e cultura nell'immigrazione,' Paci, *Mercato del lavoro e classi sociali in Italia*.
- [18] Fofi, *L'immigrazione meridionale a Torino*, 91, 98; Anfossi, 'Differenze socio-culturali tra gruppi piemontesi e meridionali a Torino.'
- [19] IRES, *Immigrazione di massa e struttura sociale in Piemonte*, 240–42.
- [20] Philliber and Obermiller argued that there existed a segmented job market with three layers: the best jobs went to the dominant group; next came the white migrants. Whatever was left went to blacks. For a white Appalachian, however, possession of a college degree delivered the entrance into mainstream northern society. This was not the case for African-Americans. Educated blacks were often offered work as janitors, although also in their case education could provide more chances to get a decent job. Philliber, 'Appalachians in Midwestern Cities,' 21; see also Philliber, *Appalachian Migrants in Urban America*; Tucker Anderson, 'Last Hired, First Fired,' 82–97. For narratives of hillbillies' arrival in Detroit, see Hartigan, *Racial Situations*, 47. The survey of Kornhauser, *Detroit as People See It*, shows that Detroiters saw southerners, whatever their race, as a cultural 'other.' By reading Kornhauser one is left with the impression that Detroiters alternately directed their contempt at blacks or hillbillies depending upon what unpleasant encounters they had in their neighbourhood or workplace.
- [21] For an anthropological study of the Briggs area, see Hartigan, *Racial Situations*.
- [22] Arrighi et al., *Antisystemic Movements*, 97.
- [23] Fraser, 1968; Ortoleva, *Saggio sui movimenti del 1968 in Europa e in America*; Katsiaficas, *The Imagination of the New Left*; Marwick, *The Sixties*; Flores and De Bernardi, *Il Sessantotto*.
- [24] For a sample of this literature see Harman, *The Fire Last Time*; for the Canadian case see Palmer, *Working-Class Experience*, 314–16; for Chile see Winn, *Weavers of the Revolution*; for South Africa see Adler, 'The Factory Belongs to All Who Work in It,' for Brazil see Humphrey, *Capitalist Control and Workers Struggle in the Brazilian Auto Industry*.
- [25] Arrighi et al., *Antisystemic Movements*, 1.

- [26] Ginsborg, *A History of Contemporary Italy*, 298; for an overview see also Tranfaglia, 'Dall'avvento del Centro Sinistra al Delitto Moro,' a monograph on the subject is Tamburrano, *Storia e Cronaca del Centro Sinistra*.
- [27] Ginsborg, *A History of Contemporary Italy*; Lanaro, *Storia dell'Italia Repubblicana*; Revelli, 'Movimenti Sociali e Spazio Politico,' 399–436.
- [28] This interpretation was initially sparked by the 'Kerner' report on the riot—see *Report of The National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders*—and is reprised in a number of works. See, for instance, Patterson, *Grand Expectations*, 562–92; Isserman and Kazin, *America Divided*, 187–203; Chafe, *The Unfinished Journey*, 302–42.
- [29] Archivio Storico della FIOM Provinciale di Torino, *Torino 1945–1983*; Trentin, *Autunno Caldo*. This view is also accepted by non-Italian scholars; see Grisoni and Portelli, *Le Lotte Operaie in Italia*; Sabel, *Work and Politics*.
- [30] Pugno and Garavini, *Gli anni duri alla Fiat*, 5; and Sapelli et al., *Fiat e Stato*, 33.
- [31] Berta, *Conflitto industriale e struttura d'impresa*, 153
- [32] Scavino, 'Un tentativo di interpretazione,' 131.
- [33] Geshwender, *Class, Race, and Workers Insurgency*; Georgakas and Survin, *Detroit*; Fujita, *Black Worker's Struggles in Detroit's Auto Industry*; Jefferys, *Management and the Managed*, 168–87; Widick, *Detroit*, 196–200; Thompson, *Whose Detroit?*, 159–92.
- [34] Brenner, 'Rank-and-File Rebellion;' Green, *The World of the Worker*; Moody, *An Injury to All*, chapters 1–3; Brecher, *Strike!*
- [35] Soskice, 'Strike Waves and Wage Explosion.'
- [36] This argument is developed in Huntington et al., *The Crisis of Democracy*; Goldthorpe, 'The Current Inflation,' 186–214.
- [37] Piore and Sabel, *The Second Industrial Divide*, 167–68. See also Sabel, *Work and Politics*.
- [38] Honneth, *The Fragmented World of the Social*, xiv.
- [39] *Ibid.*, *The Struggle for Recognition*.
- [40] *Ibid.*, 162.
- [41] See Lanzardo, *Personalita' operaia e coscienza di classe*; Passerini and Filippa, 'Memorie di Mirafiori,' 341.
- [42] Quoted in Giachetti and Scavino, *La Fiat in mano agli operai*, 38.
- [43] Under the new leadership of Giovanni Agnelli after the death of Vittorio Valletta, who in the 1950s was the main person responsible for the reorganization of mass production under the American model.
- [44] A point made by Berta, Piore and Sabel, *The Second Industrial Divide*, 87.
- [45] Archivio Storico FIAT, interview with Vincenzo Damiano, no. 2.10.
- [46] Bruno, 'The Industrial Reserve Army,' 131–51.
- [47] Archivio Storico FIAT, interview with Armando Bianchi, no. 2.01.
- [48] This an episode cited in *La Classe*, 21–28 June 1969, 8.
- [49] Luciano Parlanti, in Polo, *I Tamburi di Mirafiori*, 53.
- [50] Mario Dalmaviva, in Giachetti, *Oltre il Sessantotto*.
- [51] Interview with Andrea Papaleo, in Polo, *I Tamburi di Mirafiori*, 212.
- [52] 'La Fiat ricatta minacciando sospensioni,' *L'unità*, 2 June 1969.
- [53] Radical protest also included occasions of social interaction with students that were important for the social integration of the migrant. Commented a migrant: 'there were a lot of students who used to come outside the gates at Mirafiori. It was full of university students and we, ill-mannered [*cafoni*] *Meridionali*, miserable wretched who never went to school, had the opportunity to meet such girls with furs,' quoted in Borio et al., *Futuro Anteriore*, 3. For worker Cesare Cosi, 'An old worker who for years had felt almost like an inferior being, all of a sudden had a young woman [student] taking interest in his life, telling him he was the center of everything,' quoted in Polo, *I Tamburi di Mirafiori*, 152.
- [54] Interview with Domenico Norcia, in Norcia, *Io garantito*, 51–54.
- [55] *Ibid.*

- [56] Interview with Pasquale De Stefani, April 2001.
- [57] Interview with General Baker, May 2002. I gathered information about the Socialist Workers' Party in Detroit thanks to interviews with Dan Georgakas, April 2002, and Martin Glaberman, June 2001. See also Le Blanc and Barret, *Revolutionary Labor Socialist*.
- [58] Mkalimoto (former DRUM member), 'Dying from the Inside,' 81.
- [59] League of Revolutionary Black Workers, 'General Program (Here's Where We're Coming From).'
- [60] Widick, *Detroit*, 193.
- [61] This is from a 1968 draft of its programme in ALUA, DRM collection, box 1, folder 1.
- [62] In this regard an interesting episode is related by UAW Local 3 President Ed Liska concerning an African-American who had worked only nine days and 'was ready to go to prison' to have the initiation fee back. Ed Liska's diary, entry 7 July 1969, in ALUA, Liska collection, box 1, folder June 1969 to December 1969.
- [63] Levy, *The New Left and Labor in the 1960s*; ALUA, DRM collection, folder 5, box 4, DRUM newsletter no. 3, May 1968.
- [64] Interview with Eula Powell, June 2001. Asked what she meant by 'smart', Powell candidly added that a few of them had become supervisors within the company.
- [65] Interview with Clifford Brookins, Jr, June 2001; Widick, *Detroit*, 199.
- [66] Interview with Clifford Brookins, Jr, June 2001.
- [67] See correspondence between Dodge Main labor relations supervisor Kowalsky and UAW Local 3 President Pasica in ALUA, UAW Local 3 collection, box 11, folder 16–18. A Chrysler executive reported to the media, 'one of every five assembly workers is on narcotics and one in three carry guns to work;' this is related by Liska in his *Diary*, entry 24 June 1971, ALUA, Liska collection.
- [68] Passerini, 'Women's Personal Narratives,' 191; interview with Clifford Brookins, Jr.
- [69] *Ibid.*
- [70] Honneth, *The Struggle for Recognition*, 161–62.
- [71] I take encouragement here from Antonio Negri's reading of Marx in 'John M. Keynes e la teoria capitalista dello stato nel '29.'
- [72] Faruk Tabak, 'The World Labor Force.'
- [73] Lyotard, *The Postmodern Condition*.

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