

ECONOMIC SPACE AND URBAN POLICIES

Fairs and Markets in the Italy of the Early Modern Age

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The difficulty of defining fairs and markets with any methodological clarity is particularly pronounced when one considers the problem of space and the growth of urban centers. The close link between the two economic institutions is especially conspicuous in the case of Italy, a country that not only boasted the highest concentration of towns, but also showed precocious instances of institutional powers adopting urban strategies. What this suggests is that a single model is insufficient and that different analytical approaches must be adopted. The aim of this article is to identify certain lines of development in the relations linking fairs and markets to urban spaces—in the broad sense of both urban spaces and geo-economical spaces dominated by an urban center.

Keywords: *fairs; markets; Italy; Modern Age; trade*

The difficulty of defining fairs and markets with any methodological clarity and of distinguishing between the two phenomena—a difficulty pointed out by many historians and economists with regard to Italy and other countries¹—is particularly pronounced when one considers the problem of space and the growth of urban centers.² The close link between the two economic institutions is especially conspicuous in the case of Italy, a country that not only boasted the highest concentration of towns (of which most were, for the medieval and early modern ages, densely populated) but also showed precocious instances of institutional powers adopting urban strategies. What this suggests is that a single model is insufficient and that different analytical approaches must be adopted. The aim of this article is to identify certain lines of development in the relations linking fairs and markets to urban spaces (in the broad sense of both urban spaces and geo-economical spaces dominated by an urban center).

Within the context of European trade, the fairs of the medieval and early modern ages represented a dynamic element in the economy of their time. According to Fernand Braudel, this was the case at least until the early decades of the eighteenth century.³ The fair systems, such as those of Champagne or Flanders, and the big fairs in cities such as Geneva, Frankfurt am Main, Lyons, and Medina del Campo lay at the center (N.B., none were ports) of extensive economic areas that corresponded neither to political regions nor for that

matter to geographical areas. They also constituted the heart of the European economic system in both its mercantile and financial aspects (reflected in the commodity fairs and financial fairs, respectively). The big international fairs thrived on the work of restricted merchant elites, which were mainly, if not entirely, dominated by the Italian merchants: above all, Tuscans, Genoese, and Lombards and to a lesser extent Venetians (given that their interests were principally focused on the Near Eastern world and the East as a whole).

In fact, fairs comparable to those just mentioned never existed in the early states of the Italian peninsula,⁴ most likely because the growth of the urban centers and the growth of the markets were concurrent developments. The case of Venice is emblematic. In spite of being a city of more than 160,000 inhabitants in the midsixteenth century, not to mention a center of mediation between East and West, where anything could be bought, sold, and exchanged, a fair was never held there (the importance of the *Sensa*, still operative today, was essentially that of a complement to the religious festival).⁵ The example of Venice is indeed the most conspicuous illustration of the fact that the Italian "market" laid outside the obligatory and organized structures of intermediation. At the end of the fifteenth century, Marin Sanudo wrote about Venice as follows:

*In questa terra non nasce alcuna cosa, e tuttavia di tutto si trova abbondantemente, perché di ogni terra e parte del mondo che possa venir roba e massime da mangiare qui viene e facilmente vi trova acquirenti per essere tutti danarosi. (In this land nothing at all is created, yet everything is found in abundance, because goods and especially food arrive from every country and part of the world and easily find buyers since everyone is wealthy.)*⁶

A similar thing happened also in Naples, a lively center of both trade and production, at least until the Angevin and Aragonese domination. As Gino Luzzatto reports in his *Storia economica d'Italia*, between the thirteenth century and sixteenth century, the Italian mercantile cities had become large permanent fairs, where everything could be bought in the shops, stores, and warehouses.⁷

This does not, by any means, signify that the Italian peninsula (see Figure 1) was not widely disseminated with fairs⁸ but merely that their economic significance was little more than local. Only in a few cases, when they took place in small centers situated in frontier areas, was their importance regional or slightly wider. Examples were the Lombard fairs in the Alpine foothills,⁹ which connected the merchants of northern Italy (of Lombard for the most part) with the merchants from the other side of the Alps (particularly the German Swiss) (see Figure 1). Significantly, these fairs tended to be located in the less important urban centers. There were undoubtedly many towns, particu-



Figure 1: Map of the Italian Peninsula

but such events would seem to point to the survival of social and economic gatherings associated with religious festivals.

In addition, there were fairs hosted by communities located at the center of important land or river routes (or even land, river, and sea routes) that enabled the circulation of goods both within Europe and between Europe and the Arab world. The existence of these fairs would appear to have been dictated by the system of communications joining geographical areas that—often in spite of considerable distances—were brought together by the supply and demand of complementary products: cereals and agricultural products, raw materials and manufactured articles. This was particularly apparent in central and southern Italy, which had a sparser concentration of urban settlements than the Po plain region. In this context, the small towns on or near the Adriatic coast such as

which still in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries were important manufacturing centers particularly in the textile sector (more specifically, the wool industry).¹⁰ In the second half of the fifteenth century, the population of Verona was 33,000, and that of Brescia was more than 48,000—in other words, by and large the same as before the Black Death. In the European context, therefore, they counted among the few *villes géantes*. We also note that certain fairs of the inland areas, if located on important traffic routes such as a Roman road or the road to Naples, were conditioned by the same economic dominance and by the need for the commodities to reach the large centers of consumption in central-southern Italy.¹¹

In the north-south/south-north connection, the manufactured articles of northern Italy, of both high and low quality, that issued from the urban workshops and from the rural homes in the country areas subject to the town's authority were exchanged with agricultural products from southern Italy (leather, olive oil, wine, and wheat) and raw materials (in particular wool, hides, and dyes). In the economic area established in an Italy divided vertically by the Apennines, the fairs of the Adriatic coast constituted the preeminent occasions for trade. As a rule, they also constituted nerve centers in the much wider trade between northern Italy and the Near East.¹²

In the opposite direction, the woolen cloth of Verona, Brescia, and Bergamo made its way across the Alps to be exchanged with the manufactured textiles of the German area (e.g., the famous fustians and the hemp or flax cloths) or the important raw materials of the northeastern area (again leather, flax, timber, iron, and other ores) essential to the development of their manufacturing industry.

In this northern direction, a crucial role began to be played by the fair of Bolzano, a city connected with Verona by the Adige river route, along which goods traveled in both directions. By taking the road from Mainz to Augsburg (via Nuremberg) and then on to Innsbruck, the German merchants brought their goods to the city lying on the River Isarco. From there, using the Adige water route, they got as far as Verona, even Venice if they wished. With its four fairs—the two “hot” (or spring) fairs and the two “cold” (or autumn) fairs, each lasting a fortnight—Bolzano became the principal center of trade along the following axis: the transalpine countries, Verona, the Apennine and sea route, the fairs of central and southern Italy, and the Near East.¹³ Throughout the modern age, the fairs of Bolzano fulfilled this intermediate function, forming an ever-closer symbiosis with the city of Verona on one hand and the Habsburg state on the other.¹⁴ In this case, the growth of the original urban structure was conditioned by its mercantile function. It would be legitimate, therefore, to conjecture that the small fairs of the Marche and Puglia also constituted a system that was sustained by the markets of the big Italian cities of the Po plain and the Islamic Mediterranean. And so again, as has already been remarked about all the European fairs and fair systems (like that of Champagne), it was

A consequence of this network of links was that these same fairs on the Adriatic coast declined when the large northern Italian towns went through a critical period in the sixteenth century owing to the complex interaction of various political and economic events: the formation and growth of the aristocracy and the consequent interest in land investment, the expansion of the markets, the peripheral development of the Mediterranean, and so forth. Admittedly, the fairs still continued to animate the small communities, but by this time—apart from the fair of Senigallia, which retained its economic vitality until the nineteenth century—their impact was local and exclusively involved merchants operating at a restricted territorial level.

It is by now an established fact that the very same period saw a strong decline in the fair system in Europe as a whole, with trade becoming increasingly elitist and the preserve of a relatively small number of big merchants. The impact of the fairs on commercial and financial trade was weakened by a variety of factors, among which we include the economic situation, the rise of the large European capitals that boasted numerous markets (e.g., Paris or, to an even greater extent, London, the mercantile expansion of which provoked—according to Britnell—the eclipse of the major international fairs and the decline of the institutional structure of commerce in England),¹⁵ the birth of the first stable structures for the storage of goods, and the role of the big ports of the Atlantic continent or the north, such as London, Amsterdam, and Seville.¹⁶ And it has also been assumed (following a Weber model) that the fairs represented a system of trade that preceded wholesale trade based on consignment. But in actual fact, the fair system would appear not to have been utterly devitalized by the new organization. Though one can certainly view the fairs principally as institutions associated with a medieval economy, one can equally plausibly assert that they continued to coexist with the new economic institutions of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries and were by no means replaced by them. Indeed, the eighteenth century would seem to have witnessed a progressive increase in the number of country fairs, that is, fairs prevalently involved in local trade and with agricultural produce as their object. That, at least, is what we find in France,¹⁷ as well as in northern Italy, an area about which we still know little.¹⁸ Thus, in France, for example, after the decline of the Lyons fair,¹⁹ large fairs continued to survive in the following centuries, above all for internal trade and with a distinct prevalence of primary sector products. A good example was the huge Beaucaire fair, the influence of which extended over the whole of southern France. In the Italian peninsula, such gatherings continued to remain firmly rooted, not only in the country areas but again also in urban contexts, above all in the center north.

In connection with the international networks of trade, we find that financial fairs were established at Novi Ligure (as an appendage to Genoa) and later Piacenza. In the 1630s, they were also established at Verona, though here with scant success.²⁰ But alongside these financial fairs, which

of the stock exchange) and were still linked in some way to the international elites that operated with great facility and flexibility throughout Europe, the Italian towns tended to sustain the fairs of medieval origin and increasingly confused the role of fair with that of market. This also affected the use of spaces, given that markets and fairs were often located in the same areas: *intra moenia*, in the center of the town, in the main square and neighboring streets, or just outside the walls, in areas normally set aside as grassland, often by a watercourse. In the interests of public decorum, many towns adopted the policy of reorganizing the commercial spaces linked to the market's function and restricted them to specific areas, also imposing a degree of uniformity on the commercial structures themselves, that is, the shops, stalls, and tents. During fairs, on the other hand, such a concept of order was reversed: on these occasions, the designated areas (usually particularly urbanized) were subjected to a disorderly invasion of merchants and goods. The tendency to choose spaces lying outside the town walls would seem to be a visual projection of the need for freedom and independence. In the long run, however, with the change in attitude toward markets and fairs on the part of ruling elites, the two phenomena were more closely assimilated, even in matters concerning spaces and internal organization. In the long run, the policy of urban decorum was also to get the better of the element of freedom implicit in the concept of fair, caging it in the elegant architectural structures that were then expected to grace the town centers.

In the course of the sixteenth century, the desire for public decorum, closely compounded with the adoption of stricter fiscal policies (that began to assert themselves in the cities of the Venetian state, Lombardy, and the entire Po plain, and even extended as far as distant Cagliari), resulted in a precise regulation of the spaces set aside for trade. In some cases, these spaces were deliberately separated from those designated for political government.²¹ In southern Italy, Naples (with its 125,000 inhabitants the most populous European city after Paris in 1500) is an eloquent example. Here, from the sixteenth century onward, the rulers discontinued the policy of encouraging mercantile spaces and instead transformed the historic commercial area into a decentralized and degraded area separate from the "upper" city, where public and official business began to be concentrated. And when the city eventually ended up losing its status as a port city to become a city with a port (after it had fallen under Spanish dominion and military reasons prevailed over every other consideration), at that stage the market essentially served as a market for consumer goods.²²

In the sixteenth century, however, the fairs still tended to use mobile structures widely scattered over the praterie or even in the town squares themselves (as, for example, the fairs in the market squares of Bologna and other small towns of Emilia). Farfa, perhaps, was exceptional in resorting to fixed structures in wood, as we also find at the renowned French fair of Chalon sur

Saône,²³ where the fair was situated *extra moenia* in wooden buildings that could be rapidly dismantled and rebuilt to suit the needs of the merchants.

But as the Chalon example also shows, the distribution of spaces and shops at Italian fairs was by no means random. Instead, it depended on the economic and social hierarchy that lay at the basis of the contemporary economic system. As in the case of the North African *suqs* and Middle Eastern warehouses scrupulously studied by anthropologists,²⁴ the network of socioeconomic relations governing the spaces within a fair area was complex and (so it would appear) somewhat inflexible. In particular, the corporations played an essential role, in Italy as in all the European towns.²⁵

The frequent and insistent requests for the institution of new fairs by both merchants and towns can be attributed to a variety of factors: the crisis of the early seventeenth century, the decline in population after the outbreaks of plague, the slow recovery (which, at least in the Veneto area, was faster in the *contado* than in the urban centers—thus perhaps explaining why the fairs expanded in the country areas), and the negative economic trend. The notion of a fair system centered on urban gatherings thus seems to have regained strength. Generally, it was a matter of “free fairs,” but this was not the norm, and often they were exempted from taxes only on certain days of the fair period. Both the community and the central authorities viewed them as an element that could stimulate new processes of economic and demographic growth. In a period when Europe was abandoning the system of the big commodity fairs and when the centers dominating the contemporary economy were planning (even architecturally) to receive the spaces and structures needed for an increasingly wide-ranging market (seen not only in the growth of Amsterdam as a world entrepôt and financial market but also in London in later years with the port space gradually encompassing dockyards, granaries, and warehouses),²⁶ the states of the Italian peninsula, or at least some of them, seem to have been reiterating the traditional fair formula as the only means of strengthening the economy. Though Italian historians have repeatedly asserted that the persistence of fair gatherings in the late modern age is to be viewed as a sign of backwardness in the Italian economy, in actual fact the phenomenon is much more complex and cannot be interpreted in any single manner. Besides, the coexistence of fairs and wholesale commerce based on the consignment of goods would seem to be an indivisible element of the contemporary economic picture even at a European level.

A good example is the important coral fair in the important Tuscan port of Livorno in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Set up by Armenian and Jewish merchants and protected by the city authorities (who indeed encouraged its establishment), it shows scant evidence of having been a backward gathering in an antiquated economy. Instead, it was a highly specialized fair that concerned a product destined for luxury manufacturing (though not exclusively) and that directly involved the merchants and entrepreneurs who domi-

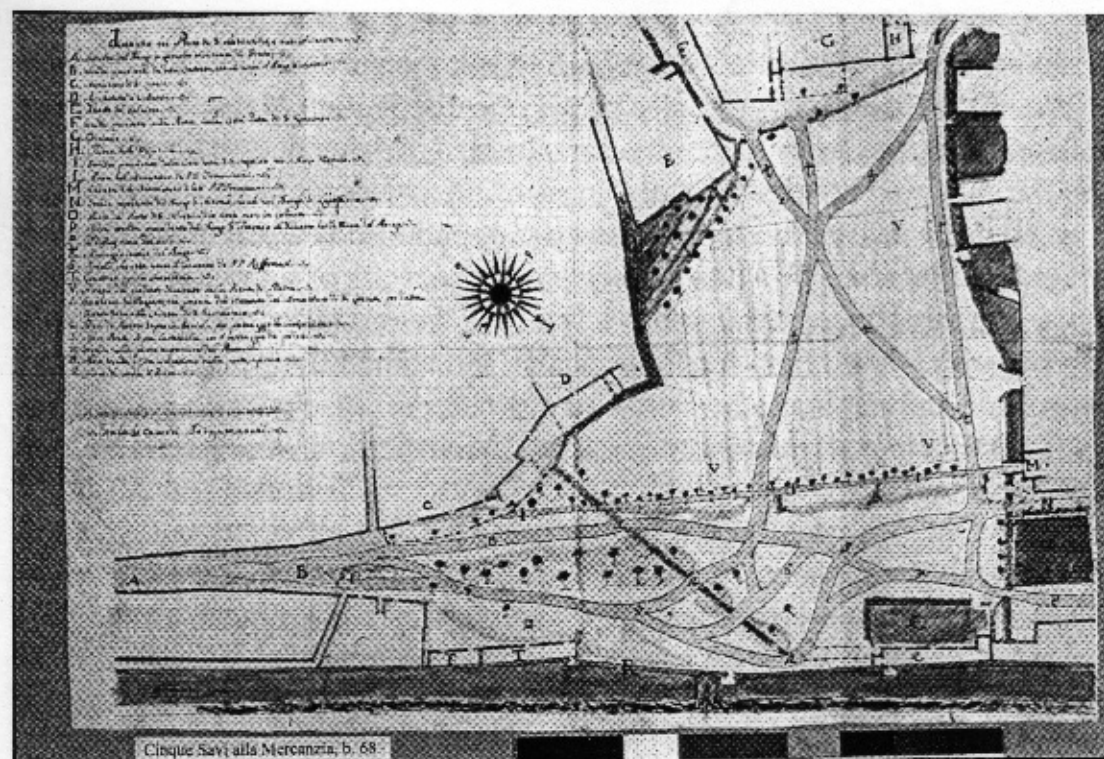


Figure 2: Bergamo: The Fair Area

SOURCE: Dioteca IUAV Venice. Reprinted with permission.

nated its production, manufacturing, and trade at an international level.²⁷ In 1782, for example, the author of a contemporary journal claims that coral worth an exorbitant 100,000 zecchini had been traded at the fair. It has indeed been stressed that the Livorno coral fair distinguished itself from the other contemporary urban fairs by presenting itself as a fair concentrated on a single product²⁸ or, to use a modern expression, as a "vertical fair."²⁹ A similar case was the fair in Bologna for the sale of silkworm cocoons.³⁰ It is also an example of an institution that was neither projected nor imposed from above but, instead, an instrument adopted by the merchants themselves to sustain standards of quality, permit the circulation of information,³¹ facilitate the circulation of credit, and keep prices low.³²

Equally foreign to the notion of backwardness, though in different respects, was the fair system that developed in northern Italy in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, with centers in the large Lombard and Veneto towns such as Bergamo, Brescia, Verona, and Vicenza, not to mention Bolzano, which had become an increasingly important crossroads in north-south commercial relations (see Figure 2).³³

Some of these towns were seats of fairs *ab antiquo*, which often derived from religious festivals and had survived for centuries in a strictly urban context. Some, like those of Crema, Brescia, and Padua, were even reconfirmed in the "pacts of submission" to Venice; others had declined and died a natural death. What is interesting, however, is that between the second half of the sev-

new fairs organized a system of trade that involved the mercantile elites that operated on an international scale (or, at the very least, on both sides of the Alps).

Even in these cases, the fair movements were organized by groups of big merchants to obtain a reorganization of the legislation on fairs and to ensure that the available spaces and exposition structures were increasingly functional to business of commerce—in other words, exactly as was happening (or, rather, had already happened) in the major European cities. When the cities chosen by the merchants to serve as the theatre for their operations agreed to set up a fair, such decisions were officially justified by a desire to revive an urban economy severely damaged by the demographic collapse of 1630 (when, for example, populations dropped in Verona from 53,533 to 20,738; in Brescia from about 50,000 to 20,010; and in Vicenza from about 32,000 to 19,000).³⁴ But in actual fact, the role played by the cities seems to have been an utterly subordinate one. Moreover, the weakness of the guild system in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries (when the proliferation of guilds was matched by their intrinsic fragility) seems to have favored the requests and strategies of the mercantile elites. The pivots of the system were Bergamo in the west and Verona in the east. The former dominated Crema and Brescia; the latter helped to form a functional axis with Bolzano and Vicenza. The fairs in these cities took place at staggered periods so as to allow the groups of merchants from the Po plain area (Veneto, Lombardy, and Emilia) to organize their movements, avoid periods of inactivity, and most likely (as in Livorno) exert control over the prices of goods.

Eventually, the requirement of safe places for both their merchandise and their own persons soon induced the merchant groups that seemed to act as such, rather than individually, to ask for “walled fairs” (*fiere in muro*) in spaces that tended (though it was not a rule) to be extra moenia and no longer confined within the town center (see Figure 3). This interest in functional structures, combined with the politicians’ desire to put a mark of architectural opulence on the town’s physical appearance, lies at the basis of that unique and exceptional process of edification within a fair system that constituted the *fiere in muro*, a phenomenon that seems to have had no equivalent in either the rest of the Italian peninsula or Europe. Admittedly, the permanent structure of the Parisian fair of Saint Germain could be likened to these “stone fairs” of the Veneto system, though in fact it acted more as a market than as a fair.³⁵ In Italy, on the other hand, the phenomenon affected a range of towns that were spatially and economically distributed to form a network of connections covering a very wide geopolitical economic area (Tyrol and the Habsburg state, Swiss and German territories, northern and central Italy).

The archetype of such fairs was the Veronese “walled fair” completed in 1725 in an area extra moenia, the so-called Campo Marzio. It was an enclosed quadrangle with four buildings inside, a large central fountain, and two monu-

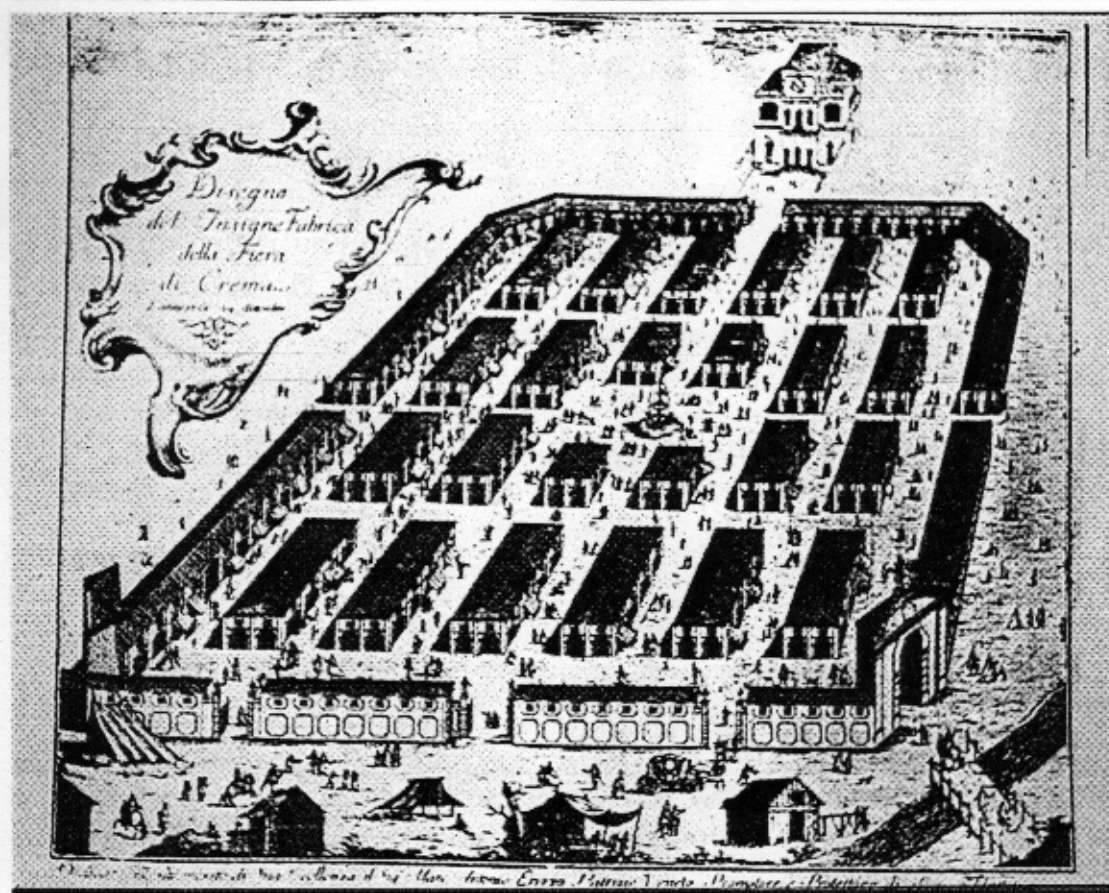


Figure 3: Crema: The *Fiera In Muro*

SOURCE: Diatca IUAV Venice. Reprinted with permission.

warehouses³⁶ and the idealized squares for spectacles and fairs designed by Giorgio Vasari the Younger.³⁷

Even from the urban point of view, the Veronese experience was the most complex, for the walled fair was not the only innovative project the government elite was willing to implement. It gave its assent also to the erection of the new customs house (*Dogana*), a building that adopts a characteristically Veronese architectural identity, thus transforming a certain type of urban layout that had been imposed by Venetian tax policy and its concession of exemptions during fair periods. The road and river communications within the city itself had been reflections of the different tolls imposed—which depended on the provenance of the goods arriving at the fair: from beyond the Alps, the Veneto, or the rest of Italy. In this respect, the axis comprising “the River Adige—the *Dogana*—the Ponte Navi bridge—the fair” had become crucial to the system of controlling goods.³⁸

Though the quadrangular model was the dominant one in the fair system examined here, it was not the only structural pattern for the walled fairs. Another model, which was elliptical in shape and perhaps less frequent (it was more common in Emilia), inspired the project for reorganizing the Paduan fair, proposed by the city’s Venetian *provveditore*, Andrea Memmo.³⁹ It is worth

been intended to constitute the central focus of a broader and more comprehensive plan to redesign the city. It reveals, therefore, a tendency to reject the "fair citadel" model in favor of a more extensive redefinition of an urban area, in this case, the Prato della Valle square, in a way that would change the city's entire functional structure.

In fact, at the very time when the fair structure was becoming strictly confined within a stable structure, the economic dynamism that had determined its origins also showed signs of rigidity. In the central decades of the eighteenth century, when even the fairs were subjected to strict policies of control (taxation, above all), many shops in both Verona and Bergamo were being abandoned, while the fairs themselves increasingly witnessed a decline both in their turnovers and in the number of commercial operators. The fair system of northern Italy was thus disintegrating before the demands for economic liberty that, almost completely disregarded in the Italian peninsula, were elsewhere taking the form of new economic dynamics.⁴⁰

NOTES

1. See, for example, John Gilissen, "La notion de la foire à la lumière de la methode comparative," in *Récueils de la Société Jean Bodin* (Brussels, 1953), 323-32, and more recently, Mauro Ambrosoli, "Fiere e mercati in un'area agricola piemontese tra sette e ottocento," in *Storia d'Italia—Annali I* (Turin, 1978), 661-711.

2. Donatella Calabi and Paola Lanaro, "Lo spazio delle fiere e dei mercati nella città italiana di età moderna," in Simonetta Cavacciocchi, ed., *Fiere e mercati nella integrazione delle economie europee. Secc. XIII-XVIII* (Florence, 2001) 109-46.

3. Fernand Braudel, *I giochi dello scambio* (Turin, 1981), 64.

4. On this subject, see the reflections of Charles Verlinden, "Mercati e fiere," in *Storia Economica Cambridge*, vol. 3 (Turin, 1977), 137-75.

5. Gino Luzzatto, "Vi furono fiere a Venezia," in *La foire*, 267-79.

6. Quoted in Gino Luzzatto, *Storia economica d'Italia. Il medioevo* (Florence, 1963), 228.

7. *Ibid.*, 232-33.

8. Giovanni Cherubini, "Foires et marchés dans les campagnes italiennes au Moyen Age," in Christian Desplat, ed., *Foires et marchés dans les campagnes de l'Europe médiévale et moderne* (Toulouse, 1996), 71-84.

9. Giuseppe Mira, *Le fiere lombarde nei secoli XIV-XVI. Prime indagini* (Como, 1955), chap. 1.

10. Paola Lanaro, *I mercati nella Repubblica veneta. Economie cittadine e stato territoriale (secoli XV-XVIII)* (Venice, 1999).

11. Alberto Grohmann, *Le fiere del regno di Napoli in età aragonese* (Naples, 1969).

12. Paola Lanaro, "I rapporti commerciali tra Verona e la Marca anconitana tra basso medioevo ed età moderna," *Studi Storici L. Simeoni XLV* (1995): 9-25.

13. Edoardo Demo, "Le fiere sudtirolesi tra XV e XVII secolo. Organizzazione dello spazio e rapporti commerciali fra area tedesca ed Italia" (paper presented at the Fifth International Conference on Urban History, Berlin, August 2000); also see Demo, "Le fiere di Bolzano tra basso medioevo ed età moderna (sec. XV-XVI)," in *Fiere e mercati nella integrazione delle economie europee*.

14. Andrea Bonoldi, *La fiera e il dazio. Economia e politica commerciale nel tirol del secondo Settecento* (Trento, 1999).

15. Richard H. Britnell, *The Commercialisation of English Society 1000-1500* (Cambridge, UK, 1993).

16. Braudel, *I giochi dello scambio*, 67-69.

17. Dominique Margairaz, *Foires et marchés dans la France préindustrielle* (Paris, 1988) and, more recently, Margairaz, "Les foires et les marchés, instrument d'intégration des campagnes à une économie marchande au XVIIIe siècle," in *Fiere e mercati nella integrazione delle economie europee*.
18. See, for example, Ambrosoli, "Fiere e mercati in un'area agricola."
19. Richard Gascon, *Grand commerce et vie urbaine au XVIe siècle* (Paris, 1971).
20. Calabi and Lanaro, "Lo spazio delle fiere e dei mercati," in *Fiere e mercati nella integrazione delle economie europee*.
21. Donatella Calabi, ed., *Fabbriche, piazze, mercati. La città italiana nel Rinascimento* (Rome, 1997). Specifically on the case of medieval Cagliari, see Maria Bonaria Urban, "Organization and Distribution of Markets in the Urban Area of Cagliari in the Late Middle Ages" (paper presented at the Fifth International Conference on Urban History).
22. Teresa Colletta, "Naples, the Market and the Town. The Transformations of the Maritime Mercantile District across the 15th to the 16th Century" (paper presented at the Fifth International Conference on Urban History).
23. Henri Dubois, *Les foires de Chalon et le commerce dans la vallée de la Saône à la fin du moyen âge (vers 1280-vers 1430)* (Paris, 1976).
24. Clifford Geertz, "Suq: the Bazaar Economy in Sefrou," in C. Geertz, H. Geertz, and L. Rosen, eds., *Meaning and Order in Moroccan Society. Three Essays in Cultural Analysis* (Cambridge, UK, 1979), 123-264. But see also George Dalton, ed., *Research in Economic Anthropology* (Greenwich, CT, 1979), in particular Brent D. Shaw, "Rural Periodic Markets in Roman North Africa as Mechanism of Social Integration and Control," 91-117.
25. Calabi and Lanaro, "Lo spazio delle fiere e dei mercati," in *Fiere e mercati nella integrazione delle economie europee*, chap. 1.
26. Fernand Braudel, *Capitalismo e civiltà materiale* (Turin, 1977), 436.
27. Francesca Trivellato, "The Coral Fair of Livorno (17th and 18th Centuries)" (paper presented at the Fifth International Conference on Urban History).
28. In this respect, certain fairs of the early modern age in Italy (e.g., those of Bologna and Livorno) provide ample material for criticizing those who claim that no fair had ever specialized in a single product; see the recent article by Stephen R. Epstein, "Fairs, Towns, and States in Renaissance Europe," in *Fiere e mercati nella integrazione delle economie europee*.
29. Trivellato, "The Coral Fair of Livorno," 5.
30. On the architectural structure of the Bolognese fair (the so-called *pavaglione* or *padiglione* typical of the towns of Emilia and Romagna), see Elena Svalduz, "La città delle cose. L'architettura per le fiere in età moderna: alcuni casi" (paper presented at the Fifth International Conference on Urban History).
31. On the circulation of information on trade and thus on fairs and markets, see the recent fine essay by Pierre Jeannin, "La diffusion de l'information," in *Fiere e mercati nella integrazione delle economie europee*.
32. On the capacity of the fairs to reduce the costs of transportation and information, see the extensive reflections in Epstein, "Fairs, Towns, and States in Renaissance Europe," in *Fiere e mercati nella integrazione delle economie europee*.
33. Calabi and Lanaro, "Lo spazio delle fiere e dei mercati," in *Fiere e mercati nella integrazione delle economie europee*, 5-6.
34. A demographic picture of these and other Veneto cities is given in Lanaro, *I mercati della Repubblica Veneta*, 79-85.
35. See the drawing for the eighteenth century in Charles Zetter, *Evolution des foires et marchés à travers les siècles* (Paris, 1923), 111.
36. Ennio Concina, *Fondaci. Architettura, arte e mercatura tra Levante, Venezia e Alemagna* (Venice, 1997).
37. Giorgio Simoncini, *Città e società nel Rinascimento* (Turin, 1974), 176-78.
38. On how this system of communications was strongly conditioned by customs policy, see the recent reflection in Paola Lanaro and GianMaria Varanini, "I ponti 'costruiti': riflessioni sull'esempio veronese," in Donatella Calabi and Claudia Conforti, eds., *I ponti delle capitali d'Europa dal Corno d'Oro alla Senna*, (Milan 2002), 58-73.
39. Calabi and Lanaro, "Lo spazio delle fiere e dei mercati," in *Fiere e mercati nella integrazione delle economie europee*, chap. 2. On Memmo's project, in particular, and on the links between it and the elliptical shape of the squares appointed to receive fairs and markets in Emilia and Romagna, see Elena Svalduz, "La città delle cose" (paper presented at the Fifth International Conference on Urban History).

40. See Turgot's entry for "Foire" in the *Encyclopédie*:

Concluons que les grandes foires ne sont jamais aussi utiles, que la gêne qu'elles supposent est nuisible, et que bien loin d'être la preuve de l'état flourissant du commerce elles ne peuvent exister au contraire que dans des états ou le commerce est gêné, surchargé des droits, et par conséquent médiocre.

Diderot and D'Alembert, eds., *Encyclopédie ou Dictionnaire raisonné des sciences des arts et des métiers*, vol. 2 (Paris, 1757).