

## Chapter 4

### Manfredonia Political Organisation

#### The Traditional system

For most of the period between 1861 and the conclusion of the Second World War, politics in Manfredonia was dominated by a small elite of landowners and professionals. Until 1913, when adult male suffrage was introduced, they made up the bulk of the electorate, and throughout the period they monopolised political offices in the commune.<sup>1</sup> In addition, as clients in the national patronage system, they acted as occasional intermediaries between the local and national levels, a position which both strengthened their political mastery and economic dominion within the town.

Until the advent of Fascism, the Liberal party dominated Italian politics and public life. In parliament the main struggles were not between the Liberals and other parties, but between the many Liberal factions from which the government had to produce its majority. Indeed, in the modern sense of the term, it is doubtful whether the Liberals can be called a party. They had no permanent organisation in the constituencies, no shared political programmes and ideologies, nor means of disseminating them; there were neither central political funds nor a national newspaper. Government majorities and voting strength in the constituencies were built up by the judicious use of state patronage. As the government's representative in the provinces, the prefect played a key role in the process. In addition to his administrative and regulatory functions, he was expected to act as electoral agent for governmental candidates. He helped them to gather votes by promising contracts, rewards and offices to local electors and their followers, by condoning violence and bribery at the hustings, and by turning a blind eye to the abuses of power of local magnates in the communes. Indeed, so persuasive was his influence, that much of what we know about nineteenth century politics in rural constituencies such as Manfredonia is derived from prefectural reports and enquiries into local affairs.

Under Depretis and Giolitti,<sup>2</sup> the South came to play a vital role in maintaining the national patronage system, or the system of *transformismo* as it was commonly called. In comparison with northern Italy, it had

relatively few voters, and state resources could be more easily used to bind them to the government party. Indeed, by the end of the century, two hundred 'ministerial' deputies from the South, placemen who could be relied upon to vote for whatever government was in office, formed the core from which Giolitti built up his parliamentary majorities.<sup>3</sup> In return for faithful service in Rome, they sought and obtained favours, services and protection for their supporters and clients in the provinces. To quote Max Weber's memorable phrase, 'they lived off politics, not for politics'.

Factionalism in Parliament was closely mirrored at the local level, where the political elite quarrelled amongst themselves over the control of jobs, privileges and benefits in the gift of the commune. In the second half of the nineteenth century, the resources and field of competence of local government was greatly increased. After the confiscation of ecclesiastical estates and the *Opera Pie* (the Church Charity Boards) in 1866, the commune became responsible for the administration of charity relief; as a result of increasing state investment in public works, it was charged with improving roads, schools and public services, and had the right to grant contracts and appoint local officials. In addition it retained control over demesne lands and the collection and distribution of local taxes. For the local gentry and their followers, these perquisites of office were a valuable source of income. Younger sons could be found jobs as school masters or communal employees, and most members of upper class households were able to avoid paying their proper share of local taxes.

But the resources at the disposal of the commune were far too slight to meet demands on them. And the structure of local politics came to reflect the rivalries and hostilities of the gentry families. Political success lay in gaining control of the rewards of office, the price of failure was exclusion from the distribution of the spoils, and the risk of being called to account for past abuses by one's rivals.<sup>4</sup>

In the period between the mid-1880s and the First World War, politics in Manfredonia was dominated by two contending factions, struggling for mastery in the commune and seeking to exclude their opponents from the spoils of office. Both were led by wealthy local notables, and were largely indistinguishable in terms of either political ideologies or programmes.<sup>5</sup> Much the same can be said of national election campaigns. From 1861 to 1924, Manfredonia invariably returned Liberal members, whose only serious rivals belonged to different factions of the same party, voting patterns being determined in part by the alignments of local factions, in part, according to which of the candidates received the backing of the government and the prefect. Until the turn of the century, Manfredonia had no formal political

associations, although many of the working men's clubs and professional societies which sprang up in the last quarter of the nineteenth century had a strong political content, one of their main functions being to further the electoral ambitions of the local notable who had sponsored them.<sup>6</sup>

The last two decades of the nineteenth century saw the emergence of a series of peasant protest movements which in most of the larger communes of the Tavoliere (Cerignola, Lucera, San Severo, and Foggia) seriously challenged the traditional patronage system. The first anarchist groups appeared in the 1880s, to be followed a decade later by leagues of peasants which through negotiation, strikes and riots sought to wrest control of demesne lands from upper-class usurpers and to improve the working conditions and pay of agricultural day labourers. After the formation of the Socialist party in 1892, many of the supporters of these movements banded together to form socialist clubs and associations. In 1895, the Socialists first presented parliamentary candidates in various constituencies within the province; by 1919 their electoral support had increased to the point at which they were able to capture three of Foggia's six parliamentary seats and to hold a majority on the provincial council.

Although Manfredonia did not escape the wave of protest and peasant discontent which swept through the province in the early years of the twentieth century, its impact there was far less than in towns of comparable size on the Tavoliere. In the early summer of most years between 1902 and 1909, the local peasant league organised a series of strikes, and its efforts were rewarded with a modest improvement in agricultural wages and conditions. But although landowners were sufficiently alarmed by these tactics to make repeated appeals to the prefect for police reinforcements, their economic mastery of the commune was not seriously threatened.<sup>7</sup> Similarly, despite a steady rise in the Socialist vote between 1913 and 1920, the party never came close to ousting the traditional Liberal factions from power.<sup>8</sup>

The reasons for the comparative weakness of peasant radicalism in Manfredonia in this period are to be found in the differences in the structure of agriculture between Manfredonia and its neighbours on the plains, which I discussed in Chapter 3. Thus, the lack of fertile demesne lands took the sting out of popular demands for land reform and the partition of communal holdings. And the fact that a large part of the town's agricultural labour requirement was met by importing temporary workers greatly weakened the bargaining position of Manfredonian peasants. Indeed, peasant weakness (and not the strength of left-wing opposition) probably also explains why Fascist ideologies were accepted slowly and with some reluctance in post-war Manfredonia. For they had little appeal to a landowning elite which had

experienced few difficulties in staving off opposition, and which was still able to maintain its economic and political supremacy in the commune by traditional means.

Structurally, Fascism brought relatively few changes to Manfredonian political life. Its ideological insistence on mass participation in the political process led to the establishment at the local level of a party machine and organisation much wider in scope than anything that had gone before; and the fact that most townsmen were compelled to hold a party card, and that both children and adults were expected to take an active part in political associations, was also new. It afforded good prospects to a new type of professional politician, and in Manfredonia, as in many towns in the South, a small number of people from outside the traditional political elite made a successful career within the party hierarchy. Yet although these changes were a portent for the development of politics in the post-war era, their immediate effects were limited. The landowning and professional interests continued to dominate the council, and factionalism and hostilities between elite families were expressed in rivalries between the various local associations of the fascist movement. The ideological content of politics was still very low.

### Post-war Politics

Since the war all the main Italian parties and trade unions have established branches in Manfredonia, although some of the smaller parties are poorly organised and financed, their offices functioning intermittently, usually only for short periods before elections. The Christian Democrat and Communist Parties are by far the largest political organisations in the town, and they are the only parties which can afford to maintain a reasonable number of permanent officials. The tendency for trade unions and parties to develop separate interests and policies, which is becoming increasingly common elsewhere in Italy, has, so far, not been followed in Manfredonia. Generally speaking, there is an overlap of both personnel and policies, and the labour syndicates are very firmly under the control of the main party leaders. Thus, the largest trade union movement, CGIL, is rightly regarded by Manfredonians as a recruiting ground for the Communist party, and the leaders of the next largest workers' organisations, the *Coldiretti* (the small landowners association), the Artisans' association and CISL (the catholic workers trade union), are influential members of the DC hierarchy. There is also a marked similarity in the day-to-day operations of both parties and labour movements, one of the primary tasks of both being to act as bureaucratic intermediaries, processing the many *pratiche* (applications for documents, welfare benefits, grants and so on) brought to them by their members.

Over the last 25 years, voting patterns in Manfredonia have remained remarkably stable. Both local and national election campaigns have been dominated by the PCI and DC parties, each of which has generally taken about 40% of the poll.<sup>9</sup> Overall, the Communists have had a slight edge. Their greatest success has been in national elections. For most of this period, the constituency has been represented in parliament by a local communist leader, l'Onorevole Michele Magno, who first as deputy and later as senator has shown a marked talent for convincing uncommitted voters that their interests are best served by a member with an intimate knowledge of local affairs. In municipal politics, however, they have experienced some difficulty in taking full advantage of their electoral support. On only two occasions (between 1946 and 1948 and from 1969 to 1973) have they taken control of the commune, and only then in coalition with the Socialists. By contrast, and largely because of their willingness to take allies from a wider range of political parties<sup>10</sup> the Christian Democrats dominated local government in the period 1949-1968. Thus, between 1949 and 1958 they were the major force in an administration headed by a Liberal mayor, and from 1962 to 1968 they led a centre-left coalition with the Socialists.

One of the consequences of this close electoral rivalry between the PCI and the DC parties is that local government has shown a marked tendency towards instability. Quarrels between coalition partners have rendered council majorities insecure and precarious, and relatively few administrations have run their full term of office.<sup>11</sup> Another effect has been to enhance the bargaining position of minor parties, who have usually been able to insist on a disproportionately large share of executive power on the council as the price for their support. Thus, throughout the fifties the Liberals were able to impose their own nominee as mayor. A decade later, the PSI, with less than 10% of the poll, held the balance between the two major parties and was able to claim up to one-half of the posts on the *giunta* (the executive body) of successive DC and PCI administrations.

In Manfredonia, as elsewhere in the South, there is no clear cut correlation between class interest and party affiliation, and social class is at best a rough and not very accurate predictor of voting behaviour. The highest degree of correlation occurs at the extremes of the political spectrum, but even here it is never absolute. Thus, on the right, the Liberal party relies heavily on the support of landowners and established professionals, but the landowning interest is also strongly represented in the DC party; and all political organisations in the town are centred on a core of professionals. Similarly, although the Communist party draws its strength from the lower socio-economic groups, particularly from industrial workers, unskilled manual workers in the building trade and landless labourers, a high

proportion of the votes of fishermen and peasant smallholders go to the Christian Democrats.

It is even harder to generalise about the socio-economic composition of the smaller parties, since the differences between them can usually be more readily understood in terms of personal rivalries and quarrels amongst the political elite than as the result of competing ideologies or the separate class interests of their supporters. Once again, there are observable differences between the extremes of right and left, with the parties of centre and right depending far more on the *benpensante* vote (the support of civil servants professionals and entrepreneurs) than parties of the left such as PSIUP. But in terms of social characteristics, it is virtually impossible to distinguish between large and small parties occupying similar positions on the political spectrum. Thus, it would be simple to find a matching sample of Republican or even Neo-Fascist supporters within the DC party, and the social composition of PSIUP is almost identical to that of the Socialist party, of which it is in any case an off-shoot.

In terms of organisation, recruitment and leadership, there are important differences between parties in Manfredonia (and, for that matter, in the South as a whole) and political parties in the rest of Western Europe.<sup>12</sup> The dominant characteristic of all political organisations in Manfredonia is that they are patronage based. As we have seen, the relationship between class interest and party affiliation is much less precise than in most modern industrial societies. Furthermore, although on the hustings contestants for leadership generally claim that their differences have an ideological basis, it is widely held that party programmes and ideologies take second place to private and patronage interests, being invoked only *ex post facto* to explain and justify factional manoeuvres and re-alignments.

Formally, all parties in Manfredonia are corporate and permanent institutions, consisting of members and their elected leaders who share or who are supposed to share common interests, ideologies, rules and aims; in practice, however, they are composed of shifting and unstable coalitions of factions bound together not so much by shared ideologies as the common hope of gaining control of patronage resources. And it is these factions and not the formal bureaucratic framework within which they operate which shape the structure of politics and political conflicts. Factions are recruited by a leader, or more commonly a clique of upper class patrons, each bringing into the alliance his own personal network of supporters. The bonds linking leaders to followers are based on a wide range of structurally diverse principles, the most important of which is clientship, but ties of kinship, neighbourhood, religion and ideology are also of some significance. Generally speaking, the

patronage resources available to faction leaders are of three sorts: first, resources, usually jobs or favours, directly controlled by the leader himself; second, jobs, contracts and favours in the gift of the commune; third, benefits emanating from outside the town which can be tapped either by exploiting the personal network of a faction leader or through the party hierarchy.

This type of political structure has a number of important implications. In the first place, since patronage resources are scarce, there is intense competition between faction leaders, and intra-party conflict is frequently even more bitter than the rivalry between different parties. For example, since the early sixties communal administrations in Manfredonia have been unstable and short-lived, not only because the majority parties found it difficult to come to terms, but even more because factions within the dominant party quarrelled over the division of the spoils of office. Indeed, one of the reasons why the municipal authorities took very little part in the discussions leading up to the choice of the site of the ENI factory (a decision which, as I show later, aroused much controversy and recrimination) was that throughout the period in which negotiations were taking place the administration was in disarray, its DC party leaders having quarrelled amongst themselves.

A second implication of patronage politics is that appointments to permanent posts, particularly those in the gift of the commune and the province, are of key strategic importance. Such jobs are scarce and highly prized. Not only are they the best way of satisfying supporters who expect a tangible reward for their services, but they can also be used to build up party strength. All minor office holders are patrons in miniature, who, by the skilful exercise of their 'duties', are able to acquire a network of followers. Consequently, a great deal of the time and energies of any communal administration are taken up in deciding how such offices should be distributed. This is a phenomenon which is often observed but not always fully understood by representations of outside 'development' agencies. Thus, ENI officials in Manfredonia sometimes complained that the local council was inefficient and uninterested in industrial affairs, being almost exclusively concerned with the allocation of offices and patronage resources. Such accusations, whilst superficially justified, fail to take into account the fact that efficiency can only be measured in terms of the goals of a particular organisation, and that political efficiency in the local system (measured in terms of the maximisation of political support) can only be achieved by the careful husbanding of patronage resources.

Thirdly, political leadership is confined to a small elite of landowners and professionals, since only they have the necessary skills and

opportunities to control the full range of patronage resources. In this respect, their role as intermediaries between the local and national political systems is crucial. In the eyes of most Manfredonians, the primary duty of any politician is to ensure that the town gets as large a share as possible of scarce regional and national development funds, and it is commonly held that only people with superior educational qualifications and extensive political networks in the wider society are in a position to do so. All political parties take account of this view. A high percentage of all candidates standing in local elections are drawn from the political elite, and in both left and right wing administrations it has tended to monopolise executive power on the council. Interestingly enough, within the parties themselves, political competition is focused on those positions, particularly party secretaryships, which ensure ready access to political networks outside the town.

### The 1969 Election Campaign

Many of the general points about the nature of political behaviour in Manfredonia, which I discussed in the last section, can be illustrated by examining in some detail the way in which the major parties prepared for the local elections of 1969. In the context of this study as a whole, this campaign has an added interest, since it was in this period that political attitudes towards the ENI project were defined and given public expression, and the form they took was influenced by competition within and between the parties.

The reason for the 1969 elections was the premature fall of the centre-left administration of 1966-68 which, because of internal quarrels, had failed to run its full term of office. The motives behind these quarrels are complex, many of them having originated in the previous administration, and during the election campaign of 1966.

During the mid-1960s, three distinct factions had emerged within the DC party in Manfredonia, corresponding to three of the major political groupings within the party nationally. The first, the *Moroteo* faction,<sup>13</sup> based on a core of local landowners and professionals, dominated the 1962-1966 administration, providing the mayor and several of its leading councillors. Its position was increasingly threatened by the emergence of second faction, the supporters of l'Onorevole Vincenzo Russo, a Foggian deputy and former employee of ENI, whose rapidly growing popularity within the province as a whole can, in part at least, be attributed to the widely held belief that he and his followers had privileged access to the new industrial concerns which were beginning to be established in the region. A third faction, centred on the *Coldiretti*, adopted a stance of uneasy neutrality between the other



two.<sup>14</sup>

Throughout the period, the Russo faction was increasing its power base in Manfredonia. A major triumph was the capture of the DC party secretariat. It also won the allegiance of the Artisans' association,<sup>15</sup> a section of the clergy, and attracted the support of the personal and professional rivals of leading exponents of the *Moroteo* faction. The communal elections of 1966 brought the rivalry between the two main factions to a head. Taken overall, the party did well at the polls. Its 42% of the vote was its best ever result; and with 18 elected members out of 40, it was the largest single force on the council.<sup>16</sup> But although some leading members of the Russo faction were elected to the council, their success was tempered by the fact that the outgoing *Moroteo* mayor was re-elected with almost double the number of votes of preference of his nearest rival, a genuine personal triumph, and two of his closest supporters also came high up on the list. In the negotiations leading to the formation of a new administration, however, the Russo faction fared much better. On the pretext that they were in debt to the commune, the ex-mayor and his staunchest ally were excluded from office, and later temporarily suspended from the party altogether. A local schoolmaster, and apparently unaligned DC councillor, was chosen as mayor, but became increasingly identified with the Russo interest on the council.

The DC party as a whole paid a heavy price for the success of the Russo faction.<sup>17</sup> The rivalries between council members made it difficult to form an executive, and constant bickering between the Christian Democrats and their Socialist allies over the division of the spoils of office made the situation worse. After a series of crises the centre-left administration finally collapsed in 1968, after the resignation of a DC councillor, reputedly as the consequence of a family quarrel with the mayor.

In the elections of June 1969, eight parties (PCI, PSIUP, PLI, PSI, PRI, DC, and MSI and PDIUM combined) stood for office, and a group of politically unaligned citizens presented a *lista civica*. With the exception of the PSIUP, which narrowly failed to take a seat, all gained representation on the council. With 18 and 15 elected members respectively, the lion's share fell to the Communists and Christian Democrats. A further three seats went to the PSI and each of the other lists obtained one.

Of the major parties the Christian Democrats had the greatest difficulty in drawing up a satisfactory list of candidates, and, in view of the fact that most of the many Manfredonians who were applying in this period for jobs at the ANIC plant believed that they would only be successful if armed with a DC recommendation, the outcome of the campaign was particularly disappointing. The Christian Democrats' poor showing in the elections can be

attributed to two main factors. First, none of the leading members of the *Moroteo* faction was prepared to be included in the list, or to take an active part in the campaign. Secondly, the *lista civica* drew heavily on the votes of former DC supporters.<sup>18</sup> Furthermore, by bringing in, at the last moment, a group of very young professionals to fill the vacancies left by prospective *Moroteo* candidates, the party secretariat broke one of the basic rules of the Manfredonian political system, the principle that there should be as little overlap as possible between the personal networks of members of the same list. The only advantage enjoyed by these candidates was that they were young and new to politics and consequently had few political enemies. But this advantage was out-weighed by the fact that they were largely unable to tap the networks of candidates lost to the party, and their own personal support networks overlapped with those of existing members of the DC list.

The only other party to encounter difficulties of this sort was the PSI, which was also confronted with a *lista di disturbo* put forward by its left-wing rival PSIUP. PSIUP's leader, an ex-socialist councillor, had quarrelled with his former colleagues, and in presenting a new party list, hoped to carry his supporters with him and, if elected, to become an indispensable ally in any future left-wing administration. This strategy, which nearly succeeded, was less damaging to the PSI than many of its supporters had feared. By and large, the party retained its traditional vote, particularly in the dockyards, a Socialist stronghold. By including in its list a group of young professionals, it gained access to a wider range of voters, and probably managed to pick up part of the dissident DC vote.

The PRI was easily the most successful of the smaller parties. Whereas in 1966 it had felt unable to present a list of its own, in 1969, despite having only a handful of paid-up members, it took 4.5% of the vote, and came close to winning two seats on the council. Its success was based on a careful selection of candidates and an energetic election campaign. The Republican party list was similar to that of the Socialists in that it contained a mixture of old guard and new professional candidates.<sup>19</sup> Similarly, it also appears to have attracted the votes of disaffected members of the DC party.

The success of the Communist party, which emerged from the elections as the strongest single party, was probably as much due to its rivals' weaknesses as to its own strengths. Paradoxically, one of its main advantages was the lengthy period it had spent in opposition. Like all other parties in Manfredonia, the PCI is ultimately patronage based, and in office is equally subject to disputes between rival factions over the control of patronage. Thus, once it had taken control of the commune, it showed increasing signs of fission, but throughout the campaign itself, it was able to

present a united front to the electors. A further advantage was that its position on the ANIC question, that industrial development was worthwhile at almost any price, was a more accurate reflection of popular feeling in Manfredonia than the stance of qualified opposition adopted by many of the other parties. Finally, it is worth noting that organisationally the PCI has tended to have the edge over its main rivals. Over the years, the party machine, aided by the permanent staff of the CGIL movement, has consistently turned out the vote, particularly amongst peasants living in isolated rural hamlets, amongst whom the traditional patronage networks of the other parties do not easily penetrate.<sup>20</sup>

### Conclusion

One of the most striking features of politics in Manfredonia is the remarkable similarity between the structure of parties and political conflict in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Although party labels have changed and a much enlarged electorate has a wider range of political choices, the basic principles on which parties are recruited, the aims of their leaders and even the motives behind the quarrels which divide them have remained much the same. The ideological content of politics is still fairly low, and the same sort of factional rivalries which divided the nineteenth century Liberal party still give shape to all the main parties in the town.

Nevertheless, despite these structural similarities, there have been important changes in the post-war period, both in the social composition of the political elite and in the type of resources which it commands. Until the 1950s most political leaders were landowners or entrepreneurs and their power and support was mainly derived from their control of economic resources, in the last resort their ability to provide or deny work to large numbers of labourers.<sup>21</sup> By contrast, in recent years, although the landowning interest has never completely disappeared, it had gradually been supplanted by a new generation of career politicians, for the most part drawn from the professional middle classes, who have won for themselves a position of near monopoly in the leadership of all major parties. The reasons for these changes are complex. In part, they can be attributed to a partial decline in the economic power of the gentry. More important, they are the result of increasing state intervention in local affairs, and a conscious effort on the part of all the major parties to tighten their control over their organisations in the constituencies.

In Manfredonia, as in all traditional agrarian societies, the state was traditionally regarded as predatory and hostile, and its representatives were seen as arbitrary and corrupt, and as outside the moral community

altogether. But despite their hostility, few townsmen can nowadays afford to ignore it, for particularly since the war, it has come to provide a wide range of services and welfare benefits on which their economic well-being depends. Indeed, as we saw in earlier chapters, most people now believe that the state has a positive duty to promote growth and increase industrial employment in the south. Yet in part, because of distrust, in part because of their lack of literacy skills and educational attainments, they have been increasingly obliged to employ the services of intermediaries. Correspondingly, the political elite of Manfredonia has come to constitute a hinge group between the local community and the state. Nowadays, to a greater or lesser extent, all politicians are bureaucratic intermediaries, and it is these brokerage functions which now constitute their main fund of power. Indeed, to use a communications metaphor, this group can be seen as a central clearing house through which all messages, information and communications between community and state must pass, and which in the process are filtered and interpreted in its own interests.

This switch from patronage to brokerage has had important effects on political styles and strategies. The resources at the disposal of the traditional landowning patrons were community based, highly visible and well known. Their clientele tended to be long term and fixed, and scope for political bluff and manoeuvre was limited. By contrast, modern broker-client relationships tend to be unstable, impermanent and fluctuating. In one sense at least the relationship contains a strong element of bluff, for although the broker seeks to create a sense of obligation amongst his clients (which can later be converted into votes) many of the services he provides, either directly, or through the party hierarchy, are citizenship rights to which the client is anyway entitled. Moreover, in an effort to maximise support, local politicians can and usually must exaggerate their influence and power, and the amount of resources which they are able to tap in the outside society. Such tactics are risky, since a person who constantly promises more than he can deliver may well lose political support (and there is indeed a high casualty rate amongst politicians in Manfredonia). But the astute politician, by exploiting the distrust which most members of his electorate feel for the state, can often explain away his failures by shifting responsibility to the arbitrary and despotic whims of outside authorities.

The fact that the local political elite has a near monopoly of communications between community and state has obvious implications for outside industries which come to the town.<sup>22</sup> The arrival of new resources threatens the existing balance of power, and leads to a somewhat undignified scramble, in which sets of local politicians seek to gain control over them and to harness them to their own ends.<sup>23</sup> Not only will they interpret and explain

the needs, aims and policies of newly arrived industries, but they will do so in a way which seems to stress their own influence and importance, even if, in fact, they have none.<sup>24</sup> If it becomes known that a major politician or faction has little or no control over these new resources, their failures will tend to be explained not in terms of their own lack of power, but will be blamed on the arbitrary scheming of the industrial decision makers.

A further consequence of the professionalisation of Manfredonia's political elite has been an increasing interdependency between local and provincial politics. This tendency has been encouraged by easy communications with the city of Foggia, and by the fact that many local politicians work or hold offices in political organisations in the provincial capital. Interdependence has also been strengthened as a result of the greater authority which the provincial and national party hierarchies now wield over local political associations, for as political brokers, the current generation of middle class professionals are far more dependent on the support of the party hierarchy than the landowning notables who preceded them. Indeed, this shift in the balance of power has affected local politics in two important respects. First, local politicians are now obliged to present factional quarrels in an idiom acceptable to their political superiors.<sup>25</sup> Secondly, in recent years there has been a growing tendency for patronage to become bureaucratised, aid, services and favours being distributed according to political criteria alone, and not as part of an ongoing generalised exchange relationship between patrons and clients.

One final point. One of the most fascinating aspects of Manfredonian politics is that all political events produce a crop of widely varied and often contradictory stories each purporting to explain the motives and the interests of the politicians involved in them. And the fact that most important decisions are taken in private gives free reign to the popular *passeggiata* pastime of political speculation. But despite the bewildering variety of different versions of any one particular political event, political explanations as a whole tend to fall into a small number of stock categories. In the Manfredonian view, ideological commitment, party patronage interests and personal self-advancement are the three mainsprings of all political action and of these the first, although the ideal form, is comparatively rare.

There are, then, two main models of political behaviour in Manfredonia. The first stresses the need of parties and factions within them to build up followings of clients and supporters. The second is based on the widely held assumption that all politicians are corrupt, self-seeking and intent only on promoting personal and family interests. Both are widely diffused and invoked at all social levels, although the second tends to predominate at the

lower end of the socio-economic hierarchy.<sup>26</sup> Both are also self-regulating and closed systems of action and belief, *ex post facto* explanations of political behaviour so firmly grounded in the society's value system that they cannot easily be challenged or discredited.

#### Notes to Chapter 4

1. In 1889, 6.5% of the population of Manfredonia had the right to vote in parliamentary elections and 6.9% in local elections. It is interesting to note that these percentages are much lower than the provincial averages - 8.9% in both types of election (Magno, *op.cit.*, pp.18-19).
2. Depretis was Prime Minister three times between 1876 and 1887; Giolitti led the government on five separate occasions in the period 1892-1921.
3. Seton Watson, 1967, p.247
4. The classic account of the structure of local politics in this period is to be found in the writings of Salvemini. See for example his article of 1911, 'La Piccola Borghesia Intellettuale nel Mezzogiorno d'Italia', reprinted in Salvemini, 1963, vol II, pp.481-92.
5. Magno, *op.cit.* p.31
6. The first working men's friendly society (sponsored by a local notable and an Abruzzese deputy who owned lands in Manfredonia) was established in 1876. A few years later, a similar society for fishermen was set up. An association of landowners and professionals, *Il Circolo Unione*, was established in 1898.
7. For a detailed account of the activities of the peasant leagues in Manfredonia, see Magno, *op.cit.*, chs III and IV.
8. A Socialist candidate first stood for the constituency of which Manfredonia formed a part in 1904, but with such scant success that no attempt was made to contest the seat in 1909. In the elections immediately following the introduction of universal male suffrage in 1913, the Socialists obtained 29.22% of the vote in the constituency as a whole but only 9.95% in Manfredonia. In 1913, the Socialist vote in Manfredonia rose to 15.4%, a disappointing result considering the overall majority of the party in the province as a whole.
9. For further details, see Appendix A.
10. Most Communists, however, believe (and with some justification) that DC domination of the council was achieved because of the support and preference they received from the prefect.

11. Since the war, Manfredonia has had no less than eight 'prefectoral commissioners' (civil servants nominated by the prefect to run communes which, for whatever reason, are without an elected government), who have been in control of the commune for periods totalling more than five years.
12. For an interesting analysis of the differences between party organisation in northern and southern Italy see Tarrow, 1967; and also Allum, 1973.
13. That is, the supporters of Aldo Moro, a former Prime Minister, and the most influential Puglian parliamentarian.
14. Nationally the *Coldiretti* give their allegiance to the Bonomi faction, which in the parliament of 1958-63 is said to have controlled about 60 of the party's 273 deputies.
15. This was expanding rapidly in this period, since, informally at least, it was the main channel through which *Cassa* grants were distributed to artisans.
16. One of the main reasons for the party's success was the increase of patronage resources as its disposal. In this period many people joined the party and DC associations in the hope of obtaining jobs at the *Ajinomoto Insud* plant.
17. I was told, for example, that the Russo faction deliberately restricted the number of card carrying members in order to retain its hold on the party secretariat. I have, however, no way of knowing whether this story was true or false.
18. The *lista civica* was lead by a group of school-teachers, many of whom, if not actually DC activists, had tended to support the party in the past. One of the main reasons for presenting an independent list was disagreement with the Russo faction's support for the ANIC project. Some Manfredonians also claimed that their opposition was rooted in professional jealousies and family quarrels with the outgoing mayor.
19. In the South as a whole over the last decade there has been a growing tendency for young professionals to support the smaller 'government' parties of centre and left. Initially, at least, there was less competition for posts of influence and responsibility, and many ambitious young professionals held the view that their chances of gaining access to patronage resources were better in such parties than in the already over-crowded DC political hierarchy.
20. A striking confirmation of the difficulty of recruiting political support amongst rural based peasants and, for that matter, amongst fishermen, is the practice, common to all of the parties of including politically

insignificant representatives of these categories in their lists. Such candidates are generally chosen because they are members of large families, and they have relatively little chance of being elected to the council. The networks of voters which they put at the disposal of the parties which adopt them are based on ties of kinship, affinity, neighbourhood and friendship, and only very rarely on clientship. Indeed the fact that the parties need to resort to them at all, is a clear indication of the limits of the traditional patronage system.

21. The Liberal mayor, who headed the communal administration in the years between 1949 and 1958, provides a good example of the old type of political leader. As a successful entrepreneur, running a large fleet of lorries engaged in the transport of bauxite from the mines to the port, he was one of the town's most important employers.
22. Clearly this monopoly is never absolute. A limiting factor is the influence of the mass media, and particularly television which is widely diffused in Manfredonia. The impact of the media on public opinion is difficult to assess. My strong impression is that a number of important national issues (for example the Valpreda affair, national industrial strikes, pollution and so on) which were given wide coverage in the press and on television in 1969 and 1970 did, in fact, influence public attitudes in Manfredonia and helped to mould trade union and party tactics. On the other hand, it is equally clear that people's perception of the issues involved was shaped by their own models of political behaviour and the attitudes taken up by opinion leaders in the traditional political parties. In other words, these issues were as much subject to the process of filtering and selective interpretation as any other messages passing from state to local community.
23. Thus, for example, an important dimension of the quarrel between the two leading DC factions in 1966 was the mutually irreconcilable attempt by both to gain exclusive control of patronage resources at the newly opened *Ajinomoto Insud* plant.
24. Thus, for example, I was told of one politician in Manfredonia who sought to persuade people that he could obtain jobs for them at the ANIC factory. To the best of my knowledge, his claims were false, but they were nevertheless widely believed.
25. That is, either in terms of ideological differences or differences between the supporters of factions recognised at the provincial and national levels.
26. See chapter 3, above.