

Ethical Meaning of the Re-emerging Thought about “Civil Economy” in Italy

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ABSTRACT. The paper synthetically illustrates the thought ongoing in Italy, especially due to some economists as S. Zamagni and L. Bruni, about “Civil Economy”¹ as a cultural perspective of ethical relevance (but even as a basis for institutional interventions) framing the whole economy, showing its importance in order to face the economic and social problems dealing with the transition from an industrial to a post-industrial economy.

With respect to those looking at market expansion and at the logic of efficiency as solution to the main social evils and to those who consider them like a menace to civil life, the link between market and society - typical of the civil economy - is regarded with a radically different perspective. The civil economy perspective (taking back to the secular tradition alive in Humanism and then during Italian Enlightenment) could suggest also types of companies, and their Governance policies aimed at “humanizing” and “civilizing” markets, through forms not only of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) but also of Corporate Civil Responsibility (CCR).

The principles of the social order: exchange of equivalents, re-distribution and reciprocity

Nowadays, two visions of intending the relationship between the economic and the social spheres are facing (and, sometimes, clashing).

On the one hand, there are those looking at market expansion and at its logic of efficiency, as solution to all social evils; on the other hand, there are those who interpret market’s growth like a “desertification” of the society, and therefore, suggest adequate forms of protection.

The first approach regards the company as an “a-social” entity: according to this view, society is completely distinct from the market, which is presented as an ethically and socially neutral institution. The market is asked to perform efficiency and then richness creation, a sort of a “pie enlargement”. Solidarity, instead, begins where the market ends, supplying criteria for the pie partitioning (in the political field), or intervening in those social realities not reached by market.

At the antipodes, we find the second approach which intends the company as “anti-social”. This view, whose maximum theoreticians are Marx and Polanyi², conceives markets as places where the exploitation and the overwhelming of the strong on the weak happen, and the society menaced by markets. Thereof, the plea to “protect the society” from the market (and, in particular, from big corporations) arises arguing that real human relationships (as friendship, trust and fraternity) are shattered by the growth of market area. This approach refers to the market like a de-humanizing entity, like a mechanism able to destroy that “social capital” which is essential for any authentic human coexistence, and for any economic growth.

Zamagni and Bruni (2003) in particular, assert that the principles of the social order are three instead of two: the **exchange of equivalents**, the **re-distribution** and the **reciprocity**³.

The first one relates to the **exchange of equivalents**. The most common expression of the equivalence is the market price. The normal location for this principle is the market. In fact, this statement is quite right, even though it is not correct to affirm that markets are institutions compatible only with this principle. An economy basing on the exchange of equivalents is efficient. Therefore, **efficiency** is the target of this principle.

The second principle regards the **re-distribution**. It states that to have a social order able to last a long time, not only has richness to be efficiently product, but also equally distributed. If, for any reason, the re-distribution could not take place, the system would decline. The purpose of the re-distribution is **equity**, which does not mean equality. Rather, equity enables anyone to play the economic game.

Reciprocity deals with many elements; among them we find gratuity and the expectations regarding its imitation. What is important in the reciprocity is the *relationship*. **Fraternity** is the goal of this principle. Reciprocity, on one side, looks for the consolidation of the social nexus, and so the generalized trust without which neither markets nor the society itself could exist; on the other side, freedom⁴ in its positive meaning, which results in the possibility for anyone to realize his/her own life plan and the opportunity to be happy. Reciprocity, then, is the principle translating into practice the fraternity spirit.

It is worth to remind that, in the beginning, market economy was based not only on the exchange of equivalents and on the principle of re-distribution, but even on the reciprocity. As historically documented in

Bruni and Zamagni (2004), the notion of reciprocity declined with the advent of the Industrial Revolution and consequently with the full achievement of capitalism; it was even banished by the economic vocabulary⁵.

In this way, the idea that a modern social order can be held upon the first two principles arises: what is asked to the market is to perform efficiency, that is producing the most richness is possible, while the primary task of the State is to re-distribute the richness to grant social acceptable levels of equity.

It is to be clear that the principle of reciprocity is not a kind of exchange of equivalents (see Zamagni, 2002a). The difference stays in that the principle of reciprocity is three-polar⁶, transitive, instead, the exchange of equivalents is bipolar and biunivocal. Moreover, “while in the exchange relationship – Zamagni states (2006a) – the determination of the means of the exchange (that is the price) is previous to the transfer of the exchanged thing – just after the seller and the buyer agree on the price of the thing which is the object of the transaction, then the transfer can occur – in the relationship of reciprocity, the transfer precedes, logically and even temporally, the counterpart action, with respect to the one who starts the relationship cannot boast any right, but only an expectation”.

Reciprocity differs from the exchange of equivalents even in that, while in the latter the exchanged thing is what of importance, and the presence of the contractors is pleonastic (so that they can be substituted by intermediaries), in the former, the principle of reciprocity is, primarily, the same relationship among people.

The “Civil Economy”

The idea behind the **civil economy** is that all the three principles (exchange of equivalents, re-distribution and reciprocity) can coexist. Societies develop harmoniously if this “triadic” structure is maintained. The “good” society wishing to live in is the one performing efficiency, equity, and even fraternity, enhanced by reciprocity.

All societies differently know this “triadic” structure, reminding the “triad” of the French Enlightenment: *liberté, égalité, fraternité* (freedom, equality, and fraternity). What happens when one of the three principles misses (see Zamagni, 2003a)? If we remove the reciprocity – which translates into practice the fraternity – we obtain that social order model represented by the **Welfare State** (the “Benevolent” State). The market produces with efficiency and the State re-distributes equitably whatever the market produced. If we disregard re-distribution, we are facing the model of **charitable capitalism**, or rather as it is called in the United States, the **Compassionate Conservatorism**. The market represents the lever of the system, and it is needed to be free without obstacles. In this way it can produce richness, and the “rich” are “charitable” with the poor, “using” the civil society and its own organizations (both Charities and Foundations). Then, doing without the exchange of equivalents results in those collectivisms and communitarisms, where we live in wishing to do without the logic of the contract (even having inefficiencies and wastes). Up to now, history taught that only small communities can survive without this principle.

A society not built on these three principles cannot last for long. The market itself, in order to work properly, has to count on a little bit of gratuity. Since the nexus between trust⁷ and the possibility of development for a Nation or a geographical area is affirmed, it can be stated that the market is an institution mainly relying on trust, whose basis is “reciprocity”, and so on the reciprocal acknowledgement of identities, and on the respective commitment of not deceiving and betraying, which are offered as “free gifts” and not as acts of goods exchange with counterparts of the same value and in the same time. The main idea, and then the proposal of the “Civil Economy”, is of living the experience of the human sociality, of reciprocity and fraternity **within** of the normal economic life, and not at the boundaries, before or after it. It remarks that those principles, which are “other” from profits and the pure instrumental exchange, could take place **inside** the economic activity.

In this way, the first vision looking at the economic (the markets) as an ethically neutral place based only upon the exchange of equivalents, is overcome, since the same economic moment, according to the presence or lack of these other principles, turns to be civil or un-civil.

At the same time, we go beyond even to the second approach considering reciprocity like a quite exclusive of other moments of spheres of the civil life (in the so called Third Sector, or non-profit sector), a vision any more sustainable, as we will see.

The roots of the “Civil Economy”

The perspective on the Civil Economy has antique roots⁸, and more precisely, in the Italian civil humanism of the XV century (see Garin, 1994).

We cannot understand the identity and the specificity of today's European culture, if we do not comprehend the innovative meaning of the birth of the market economy, which happened during the Humanism and which is distinct from the capitalistic market economy. The market economy was born during the XV century and, only after three centuries, with the advent of the Industrial Revolution, the market economy will turn into capitalistic economy, especially in England.

The civil Humanism is the époque where in Italy (and Flandres) was developed the **model of city civilization**. One of the central points of this model is the invention of the market economy as social order. It does not conceive market as a technique: the exchanges, the merchants have always been before; instead, it relates to **market as a social organization**, the organization of the whole society.

The "golden age" of the civil Humanism is undoubtedly the Tuscany of the first half of the XV Century. Coluccio Salutati, Poggio Bracciolini, Leonardo Bruni, Léon Battista Alberti, Matteo Palmieri, Antonino da Firenze were its major exponents.

During the civil Humanism an extraordinary re-evaluation of the earthly and relational dimension of the human being, from the family to the city and the State, occurred. According to Humanists, the only virtue is *social* virtue. The search for private objectives turns into social well-living just inside the *civitas*: civil economy cannot exist without laws, institutions and civil virtues.

The second moment of "flowering" of the thought about "Civil Economy" was during the Italian Enlightenment, in Milan, with Beccaria and Verri, and above all in Naples, with Genovesi, and also with Galiani, Giannone, Vico.

Enlightenment in Naples cannot be avoided in any reconstruction of the thought about Civil Economy (see Zamagni, Bruni, 2004). Antonio Genovesi was the leading economist in the neapolitan school. "*Civil Economy*" was, in fact, his expression to describe a notion of the economic activity where civil virtues of reciprocity, shared trust and mutual confidence were essential for the development of a nation. Genovesi developed an idea of economy where the role of civil society and the informal network of interpersonal relationships were the key issues.

The key-words of Genovesi (1765) were: Market intended as reciprocal help (reciprocity even in the economic market); Public trust: the first natural resource of a region is *trust*. According to Genovesi, wherever trust occurs, the market also occurs (see Bruni, 2004b).

In the Enlightenment, Italian exponents' central topic regarded the "Public Happiness", and all the conditions (public trust and civil virtues) enabling its realization.

But public happiness (since its theorization through the aristotelic tradition) is, at the same time, "civil" and "fragile": it is fragile as "civil", because it needs – and depends on – the free relationship with other people (see Bruni, 2004a)⁹.

Modernity represents the real breaking point in this tradition, and the invention (and concept) of the market in the XVIII century has to be framed within the Enlightenment project of "eliminating fragility of goodness". Adam Smith¹⁰ is the major theoretician. The market relationship is "civil" in that it sets free from the feudal links, but in the markets, since we pay for what we receive, we get freed from the "dependence on the others' goodwill". The market seems to protect us from the fragility of the relationship with the other (in fact goods, being "anonymously"¹¹ purchasable on the market, reduce the need for friends!). The market, in economy, is the antidote for not depending on the "fragility of the goodness".

The rebirth of the "Civil Economy"

In the last years, some phenomena and new problems (typically "post-industrial") have paved the way for the re-emerging of this ideological movement called "civil economy".

Only a civil economy, based upon efficiency and equity, but above all on the reciprocity, can:

- reduce those problems generated by **globalization**;
- avoid the "**crowding out**" effect;
- face the explosion of **expressive and identity needs**;
- grant the **re-equilibrium of the consumptions between utility and happiness**.

1) Problems generated by globalization

In global markets, the "two steps" logic (firstly, companies produce and then the State takes care of the society) does not work any more, since the strict nexus between richness and territory fails, upon which the entire social system was thought, especially in Europe. Today, this mechanism was broken, due to the

growth of the market globalization. The company is asked to become social (and civil) in its normal economic activity¹².

The national State power is decreasing because traditional power (related to the monetary and fiscal policies and of the interest and exchange rate) are not as free as in the past due to globalization. The national State has not any more the same power as in the past¹³.

Thereof, if the State is not able to take care of its citizens any more, they need someone else to do it. This one else can only be the civil society, whose duty is to re-organize and to re-take those tasks it had during the XV century (when the State was not existing yet). The phenomenon of the globalization makes people to re-discover the necessity and the importance, for those acting in the civil society, of a reorganization enhancing to reach the collective targets.

2) *The “crowding out” effect*¹⁴

If market, and economy more in general, becomes only an instrumental exchange, we enter one of the most worrying paradoxes of our days: “*Bad money drives good money out of circulation*”. The exchange, based only on prices, and on the instrumental agreement, expels all the other forms of human relationships: in this way, market development menaces the elements at the basis of its same existence, which means trust and tendency to cooperation.

The market is needed to be civil, as a meeting place and a location for the construction of relationships among people, and not just to exchange goods. The market has to be considered as a civil means in which not only is there an acquiring dimension, but even an expressive one undergoing the human behaviour. All the human dimensions, and therefore, even the relational ones, are to be recognized. The use of economic incentives not only reduces the auto-determination and the set of the possibility of expression – receiving the benefit, the intrinsically motivated person feels as reduced the possibilities of manifesting a behaviour which is coherent to his/her value system¹⁵ – but also it undermines the *self-esteem*: receiving money for an action the subject would have done anyway, decreases the social consideration, and so the *social reward*. In addition, it always hides a power relationship, because it remarks that there are no reasons to do what someone was asked to do, so that his/her decision has to be, somehow, “bought”.

3) *The explosion of expressive and identity needs*

People claim their identity – for example religious, ethnical or gender identity – till its acknowledgement, not only in the individual and private sphere, but also in the economic and public one.

A reason why the thought about the civil economy is re-emerging nowadays, is represented by the awareness that, in order to face the conflicts of identity¹⁶, people have to find new ways and approaches, and that the traditional solution proposed by markets cannot be followed. The market logic in this context does not work since identity cannot be sold.

The problem is that, today, our societies do not pay adequate attention to identity. The lack of attention to the fraternity dimension led, and is still leading, to the explosion of the conflicts of identity within our societies.

The conflict of identity should not be confused with the conflict of interest. Industrial society was essentially focused on the conflict of interest. Nowadays, in our developed societies, this new category of conflicts cannot be solved with the instruments used to face the conflict of interest, which is concerning the “having” field. The conflict of interest turns in a conflict among those who has and has not, among who has more and who has less, while the conflict of identity concerns the “being” field, among who is and is not, among who is recognized or not. We should not think to solve the conflict of identity – concerning the “being” area, and so to the existential dimension – with the typical approach used for the conflict of interest.

4) *The re-equilibrium of the consumptions between utility and happiness*¹⁷

It is worth to think of the two dimensions of the well-being: the acquiring dimension – a person feels better if he/she has as more goods, income and service as possible (the utility dimension) – and the expressive one, that is the way we establish relationships with other people (the happiness dimension). To accomplish the acquiring dimension we need “material”¹⁸ goods, while concerning the expressive dimension we need “relational” goods.

Often, the utility deriving from the thing to be acquired is considered the unique element of the motivational system concerning the consumption act. The trend is to confuse happiness with utility, but the difference is enormous. Utility is the feature of the relationship between person and thing (or person considered as thing!), while happiness is the feature of the relationship between person and person. In the industrial society, utility and happiness, in some way, overlapped. In other words, the consumption of objects, while enhancing utility, let to open the spaces for happiness. It is not difficult to understand: if we are hungry and we receive some bread, bread is useful, but, at the same time, makes us happy because if we were hungry we could not be happy. What is new is that, in the post-industrial society, we keep on thinking that utility could go together with happiness, but it is a mistake. Utility can be maximized while minimizing happiness, since utility regards things we consume, while happiness is linked to interpersonal relationships.

Nowadays, we experiment the trap of the social poverty: yesterday, it was the result of a scarcity of material goods; today, it is characterized by the paucity of relational goods¹⁹.

The problem stands not in the decrease of consumption levels, but in the change of their composition. We are consuming too many things for our utility and not those one assuring us happiness, that is the relational goods. Recalling Aristotle's thought, it is worth to understand that "*man was born for happiness*". We will never find a human being saying he would never look for happiness: we will rather find people saying they could live without utility, but not happiness. We arrived to a social development stage where the fundamental and primary needs are, or can be, satisfied, but we do not manage to give an answer to the demand of happiness. We are in the post-industrial era where the main requirement is expressiveness. Obviously, we have – and it will always be – acquiring needs.

We perform our demand for identity and for *expressive consumptions* in two ways: the *positional* approach and the *relational* one.

In Frank's work (1999)²⁰, in the developed society, the arising demand is for *positional goods*, which bestow utility according to the *status* they create, the position in the social scale they grant to occupy. Positional goods, instead, bestow a utility which is not particularly linked to their use, but rather that their consumption represents a label according to which someone is positioned with respect to the others.

It must be noticed that even these goods are, in some ways, "relational", because in order to have benefits from them, some one has to watch their consumption; while in the relational goods, the presence and the relationship with the other is cooperative, reciprocal (from a friendship all the partners increase their "utility" "consuming" the relationship itself: therefore, it is a game with a positive sum), in the positional one the main feature is the "positional" competition (it is a game with a zero sum)²¹.

The logic underlining the positional approach is "destructive" of authentic human relationships. The positional goods answer to an expressiveness requirement, but they deteriorate and diminish the position of the others. Which are the most garish effects of the positional competition? On the first side, consumerism: since what is of relevance is the relative level of consumption, the positional competition takes to a challenge within which one has to consume more than others; on the other side, the systematic destruction of relational aspects. As a consequence, the conjunction of these two effects shows that, beyond certain levels of consumption, the growth of the expense does not increase "happiness".

In the last few years, an emerging paradox is that the income growth is not always followed by the augment of happiness, but in some cases, it can lead to its reduction. Markets and the society in general promise a happiness depending on the consumption of positional goods: this takes to sacrifice relational aspects in order to get the income needed to acquire positional goods (think about the increasing time work steals to families and friends). But, since happiness mostly depends on those "sacrificed" aspects, then we have the aforementioned paradox, for which we are richer but less happy. In short, utility and happiness are not coextensive, they do not co-imply. The betray of individualism stands here: it makes people believe that happiness stands in the increase of utility, and so in the consumption of goods. Even though utility can be maximized in solitude, happiness asks for two people, at least.

The real problem is to make expressiveness – a notwithstanding need inside every one – take the relational way, instead of the positional. This is the road to civilize markets.

What is a *relational good*²²? A good is relational when the benefit deriving from its use depends on the relationship established among two or more people. Relational and private (or public) goods differ because, in the first ones, the quality of the relationships which is established among the parts is an essential element of the utility it performs. Consider trust, but even any service to a person. In the relational goods, it the *same relationship* which constitutes the economic good.

Now, we can comprehend why the consumption of relational goods presumes reciprocity. Consequently, their fragility is revealed as they cannot be individually dominated, as I can do with private

goods, because the relationship depends on the others' freedom, too. In relational goods, it is the *relationship* itself to be the good: they rise and die inside the relationship; they are *founded on reciprocity*.

Definitely, the main property of the relational goods is the following: the advantage deriving from its use by each consumer cannot be separated from the advantage the others gain from it. We could state that everybody's interest is realized *together* with the other's one, and not *against*.

As Bruni (2001) well puts into evidence, many people are unhappy of one of the main dogma always repeated by mass-media: consumptions have to increase otherwise national economies cannot grow, and so we enter economic recession. "Much more consumptions": on the demand side, utility/well-being/people's happiness increase; on the supply side, workplaces are created for the families (which is translated into the use of the produced income to buy more and more).

Anyway, as previously mentioned, it is less and less true that augmenting the consumptions is related to that happiness we are looking for though them. Furthermore, "consuming more" does not mean to consume more "goods". We can "consume more" "consuming better" (if we regard to the environmental and energetic aspects), consuming in a different manner (think to the challenge of the "critical" consumption), dedicating more time to the others, and so on. Goods have always been, and in particular today in the post-industrial economy, are symbols. Once having satisfied our primary needs, we do not buy goods because we are interested in them *per se* but because they "mean" something, they take us to something else. In this context, it is worth to transform the *positional consumption* into the *relational consumption*; the need for the other's approval has to be oriented to the private and public happiness.

Beyond corporate "social" responsibility: to humanize the market "civilizing" the economy

What can we do in order to make market return to be – as it was during the civil Humanism – the means able to reinforce the social constraint through the promotion of both practices of re-distribution of the richness using its mechanisms to achieve equity, and of an economic space where citizens can regenerate those mechanisms (as gratuity, trust, and so on) without which the market itself could not last for long? The condition is that an economic space, formed by subjects whose acts are inspired by reciprocity, has to be affirmed *inside* the market, and not outside or, worse, against it.

We do not have to forget that what "undermines" the social link is not the market *per se*, but a market reduced to a solely exchange of equivalents; and so, not the civil, but the "uncivil" market because not built on the fraternal virtue, as well known by civil Humanists in the XV century.

The challenge is to overcome the two opposite visions on the market we have already seen, which are both reductive and limiting even if for distinct reasons. The vision, according to which market is the place for those organizations looking only at profits, is to be overcome. The worst effect of this approach is to make us believe that any behaviour inspired by values different from self-interest relentlessly leads to economic disaster. Encouraging people to expect the worst by others, this vision makes the worst inside each one to emerge. The trend should be to realize the conditions for a "human" market economy. Recalling Zamagni's work (2005a), it is **human** the economy enhancing three functions interrelated.

1) The market becomes an institution able not only to product richness efficiently, but also to re-distribute it with respect to some equity rules.

As even Adam Smith remarked, the institutional arrangement of the society has to be shaped to favour the diffusion of the civic virtues among citizens (seen also as economic actors). If the economic actors do not take account in their structure of preference, those values wishing to be affirmed in the society, there won't be much to do. Due to the ethics of the virtues, in fact, the execution of the norms depends primarily on the people's moral constitution; that is of their internal motivational structure, even before the external enforcement systems. Consider, in order to make a relevant example, the theme of the **Corporate Social Responsibility** (see Zamagni 2005b). It is because there are subjects with ethical preferences – who attribute a value to the company persecuting equity *independently* from the material benefit deriving from it – that, for instance, the ethical code followed by the company will be respected *even* though following it could result to be inconvenient.

Equity, nowadays, is reasonably possible through the Corporate Social Responsibility, in a logic of multi-stakeholding governance. The standard way of understanding "social responsibility" deals with ethical codes, social accountability, and similar tools. In fact the "social" dimension does not imply necessarily face-to-face or personalized relationships. In this context, a company is socially responsible when it follows objective standards of social quality, based, mainly, on the equity principle²³.

2) The market becomes the place where autonomously and independently, even economic players – not interested in profit – can operate and generate value, and so richness. These are the operators composing the universe of the social economy (cooperatives, social cooperatives, community foundations, etc.). In fact, the defense of the reasons for freedom needs pluralism to be protected not only in the political area – which is obvious – but even in the economic one. The economy where many principles of economic organization take place, going from the search for profit to the reciprocity²⁴, is pluralistic and democratic.

3) The market is the place where the consumer is a citizen, and so a subject having rights respect the product of the economic activity – goods or service – but even in the production process of that product. It is a matter of fact that today consumers pay attention not only to the lowest price granting the same quality. They rather want to express on the nature of the goods and services to be produced. In short, the matter is to grant the consumer not only the choice within a specific menu, but also to let him/her to express his/her opinion on the menu composition.

From this point of view, the example of the “civil companies” (such as social cooperatives) is paradigmatic: they are those expressions of civil society that are capable of inventing an institutional framework and a governance able – in particular – of making the consumer responsible. The difference between civil and socially responsible companies, in particular according to the Civil Economy movement, is the following: while, on the one hand, the socially responsible companies focus on the supply side with the aim of “humanizing” the production, civil companies act also in the demand side, with the aim of enabling consumers, *considered as citizens*, to interact relationally with the supply. So, besides the CSR, we need also a “Corporate Civil Responsibility” (CCR)²⁵.

To conclude, again taking back to Zamagni’s thought (2005a), we can state that all the matters that have been discussed in this paper lead to the ultimate question: which universal principle should be posed at the basis of the social order. If **efficiency** should be chosen, then each one who prevails only using his/her efficient attitude as a competition level to serve the market, creates a fair competition that the counterpart (both a profit or non-profit company) must accept. If, instead, the universal and shared principle is the **reciprocal respect** for the values of each one, and so of the priorities each subject is intended to follow, then the market must serve, clearly and efficiently, these priorities and it has not to be substituted to them²⁶. Take into the mind that, as prophetically asserted by Emmanuel Mounier, “*Une structure économique, pour rationnelle qu’elle puisse être, si elle est basée sur le mépris des exigences fondamentales de la personne, porte en elle-même sa propre condamnation*”²⁷

¹ This paper is simply intended to present shortly the essential and relevant elements, from an ethical viewpoint, of the perspective of the so called “Civil Economy” by an economic thought emerged in Italy since ten years ago, whose major representatives are Stefano Zamagni and Luigino Bruni, authors in particular of Bruni, Zamagni (2004); and – among others – B. Gui, P.L. Porta, P.L. Sacco, V. Pelligra, economists, and some others scholars studying the relational approach in sociology as P. Donati and I. Colozzi. We drew in handfuls particularly from Zamagni’s and Bruni’s works, as cited in the references.

² We refer to Polanyi (1944). Today, a representative of this thought is, for example, Serge Latouche (1998, 2003) and the MAUSS movement in general.

³ This is an idea already present in Polanyi 1944 (see Cella, 1997), and reconsidered also by the MAUSS movement (see Caillé, 1998; and Godbout, 2000), but Zamagni’s and Bruni’s interpretation is different. See Bruni’s critic (2005a) towards Latouche and the MAUSS.

⁴ In order to go beyond the market, only intended as exchange of equivalents to grant the “freedom to achieve” life objectives, which is distinct from the “freedom of choice”, see Sen (1994a).

⁵ As put in to evidence by Bruni and Zamagni (2004), with the advent of the economic thought built on the thesis of Bentham’s utilitarianism, the word “reciprocity” was erased. Wicksteed (1933) was who did this operation. In Wicksteed’s opinion, the economic argumentation ends when the economic agent finds in the other person a “you”. In other words, “business is business”. In order to make business, we do not have to look at anyone’s face because, if this occurs, I find your face and we could not act a profitable economic transaction. In short, to achieve a profit, I must forget about your identity, and even mine.

⁶ “*Giving-receiving-reciprocating*”, as evidenced by all the scholars of the “gift”, as Godbout for example (1992). The literature on the gift is immense. We can anyway cite Mauss (1950), Godbout (2000), Caillé (1998), Anspach (2002). To have a philosophical synthesis on the “gift” see Currò (2005) and Labate (2004), for a sociological synthesis see Bassi (2000).

⁷ On trust as an “immaterial” economic and social resource, the literature is endless. For four different viewpoints (anthropological, sociological, political and historical) see Gambetta (1988), Luhmann (2000), Fukuyama (1995), Peyrefitte (1995).

⁸ See Bruni, Zamagni (2004), capp.2,3 and Bruni (2004a).

⁹ We are obliged to refer to Nussbaum (1986): “*The Fragility of Goodness*”.

¹⁰ Adam Smith is considered by Bruni and Zamagni (2004, cap.4) as closer to the “Civil Economy” tradition than he was considered from the following economic thought. Sen (1994b) and Sugden (2004) are very interesting, too.

¹¹ Private and public goods – as evidenced by Zamagni (2005) – have a common feature since they do not suppose sharing and the knowledge of the others’ identity.

¹² See Zamagni (2003c).

¹³ Within the endless literature on globalization, Bauman (2000), cap.2, has to be cited: he explicitly recalls Polanyi, when considering globalization as the “Great Transformation, n.°2”.

¹⁴ See Zamagni (2006a, 2006b).

¹⁵ Richard Titmuss (1970), an English sociologist, was the first one to make social scientists pay attention to the fact that the promise for a payment for blood donation diminished the number of donations and reduced the quality of the given blood (in Zamagni, 2006a).

¹⁶ See Zamagni (2005c).

¹⁷ Luigino Bruni (see Bruni, 2002, 2004a, 2006b) is undoubtedly the main Italian scholar of the relationships between economy and happiness. A good synthesis on the “economy of happiness” is in Bruni, Porta (2004). Scitovsky’s pioneeristic work (1976) is fundamental. For the analysis here presented we referred to Bruni (2001).

¹⁸ It goes without saying that here, we are talking about “material” goods *latu sensu*, of products (even “immaterial”) which are distinct from the relationship supporting them.

¹⁹ Material poor people do not suicide because they hope future to be better. Rich people suicide because of relational poverty. In the last years, depression and psycho-somatic diseases have increased a lot.

²⁰ Cited by Bruni (2001)

²¹ Why is positional competition or the consumption of positional goods typical of societies with high incomes? Anthropologists say that in all kind of societies the positional consumption exists, and often, the same gift practices have the purpose to “boast” high levels of consumption, and remark the social status. In his “Theory of the Leisure Class” (1899), Veblen offered an interesting answer: it is the depersonalization of interpersonal relationships typical of modern societies which leads to a higher positional consumption. In villages, or in small communities, the status is shown through personal networks, and the means to boast their own social position are many. In anonymous contemporary societies goods are almost the solely means to say who we are, and to have a social collocation: the positional competition in anonymous societies is fed *just by goods* (see Bruni, 2001).

²² Bruni (2000a) – making a synthesis of the features of “relational goods” – finds in Nussbaum (1986), Donati (1986), Gui (1987), Uhlaner (1989) those who firstly introduced this category of goods. To make some examples (see Zamagni, 2002b), we can refer to education. Can we educate without knowing the other’s identity? We can train, but not educate. These two concepts should not have to be confused. Education is more than training. Where is the difference? In order to train, we just need a teacher good at explaining, and others, more or less passively, listening to him/her. This is not education, since it supposes a reciprocal involvement. To educate, is not sufficient to teach, but sympathy have to occur with the student who listens and with a relationship is established. Other examples of relational goods are social or health services. We can cure a sick in two ways: giving him/her, if possible, the best diagnosis and medicines in a hospital, making him/her feel practically a number (or a body, rather than a person). Or, a relationship can be created with that sick, with the same diagnosis and therapy, based upon a dialogue, treating his/her as a person (having relational needs of dignity, respect, etc.). This is of relevance even from a medical point of view, as it is assured that lot of diseases can be cured with relationship, and not only simply with medicines.

²³ See Bruni (2005b)

²⁴ See Bruni, Zamagni (2004), cap.7, Zamagni (2003b).

²⁵ See Bruni (2005b).

²⁶ On this topic, there is an objective convergence between Zamagni and Malone (2004).

²⁷ “*an economic structure, for as rational as it could be, if based upon the contempt of people’s fundamental needs, takes with it its condemnation*” (cfr. <http://perso.orange.fr/nouvelle.cite/rvue-dossier3-03-11.html>)

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