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Music Festival Weeks. Thanks to a massive presence of big names they have recently reached a level which can be compared to the most renowned auditoria in the world. Smaller set-ups – almost family businesses – are working somewhat more modestly, but with no less enthusiasm, like, for instance, the Dimitri-Theatre, which recently moved to Ascona, where the Theatre San Materno is also active. The theatre of the famous clown with his white face and broad smile takes turns with performances of the

Verscio theatre school with those of foreign artists and of Dimitri himself.

Besides numerous musical presentations, the San Materno Theatre, housed in the former theatre of the great Russian dancer Charlotte Bara, organises an annual international puppet festival. This is chiefly thanks to the limitless energy of its animator, the puppeteer Michel Poletti.

A final mention must go to the Monte Verità, where many twentieth century artists lived and worked. Harald Szeemann

has been trying to reawaken this magic for years. Besides the big exhibition of 1978, he has managed to convince the authorities to turn the houses Selma and Annatta into museums, and he organised the exhibition of Baron Von der Heydt's collection. So there is something happening in this drowsy Ticino, and if this display of goodwill continues, one will soon be able to say: not just a pretty face.

Christina Owens-Foglia

The Economy

On the way to a new centre?

Practically no Swiss canton has changed as drastically as Ticino since the Second World War. Professor Remigio Ratti, Director of the Institute of Economic Research in Canton Ticino, uses three models to illustrate the new reality and demonstrates that several well-loved clichés about Ticino ought to be changed.

The ever increasing attention being given to Ticino makes it seem advisable to look at the only Italian speaking canton in Switzerland from a different perspective. This approach far exceeds the traditional image of a peripheral and isolated Ticino. The Financial Times, for example, devoted a three page Special to the Ticino on 8 March 1985 entitled 'Ticino: more than a pretty face'. The 'open region Ticino' is a quantifiable fact. The population of the canton has increased by two thirds over the last forty years. Its labour force has doubled in the same period. Ticino is now a region of immigration, rather than one of emigration, which provides jobs for 32,000 border workers from Italy as well as for nearly 700 commuters from the Grison area of Mesolcina. With its total population of 275,000 people (4.2 per cent of the national population) the economic potential of Ticino corresponds to a region having about 350,000 inhabitants.

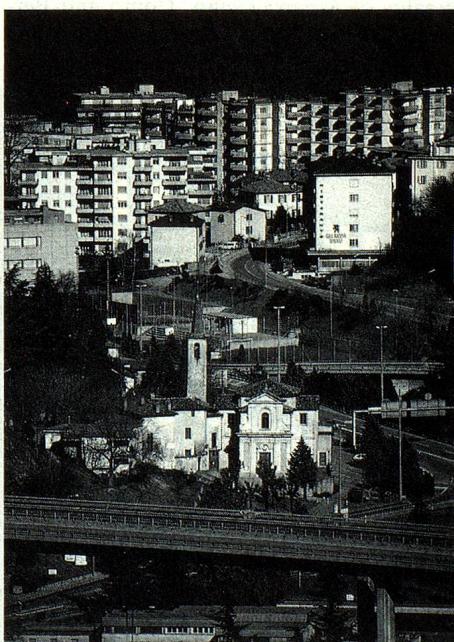
These figures illustrate the far reaching development of the territorial organisation of the canton. Ticino, one of the most mountainous regions of Switzerland, is today also one of the most urbanised (76 per cent of the population live in the four agglomerations of Lugano, Locarno, Bellinzona and Chiasso). It differs from the other Swiss Cantons through its new transborder reality: Approximately 650,000 people live in a strip 10 km wide on each side of the border.

I will give three model ideas in this article

which are suitable to question the image people, even unconsciously, have of Ticino:

Model Nr. 1: A peripheral region

The traditional image of Ticino portrays the small dimensions of an alpine canton, cut off by the Alps and the border to the south, and sees the reasons for its unsuccessful and precarious development mainly in geo-



Urbanised Ticino: 76 per cent of the population live in the agglomerations. (Lugano, photo: Giosanna Crivelli)



Protest against car commuters in Malcantone: 'Let's fill the cars and not the streets.' (Photo: Ely Riva)

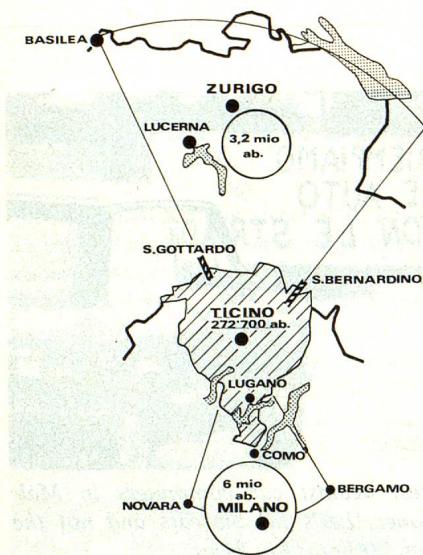
graphical and political invariants. (Bottinelli 1984).

Unfortunately, this situation lasted for more than a hundred years. The formation of effective national borders between Switzerland and Italy, the economical and political fluctuations in Italy (first protectionism, then fascism) were reflected in a border which acted as a barrier until after the Second World War.

Characteristics of pre-railway and pre-industrial Ticino were a spatial organisation with closed areas and the lack of a true centre. There was no fixed political capital until 1878 and the cantonal administration changed periodically between Bellinzona, Locarno and Lugano. This image portrays Ticino at the time of the emigration, firstly to California and Australia and then to the aspiring industrial cities of Switzerland north of the Gotthard.

But even if the opening of the Gotthard-Railway Tunnel (1882) provided Ticino with a central link between Airolo and Chiasso, it did not enable the canton to achieve real integration into the Swiss economy. This was quite clearly a dualistic phase: One part

of the canton continued to live relatively self-sufficiently, whilst the development of cities such as Lugano and Locarno, which were linked to the growth of tourism and economy, was chiefly due to outside factors. This was to be the first indication, although still unclear, of the attraction of the lakeside areas. Subsequently, industrial subsidiaries of companies north of the Alps, looking for an abundant and cheap workforce, settled in Ticino. This function is today essentially satisfied by the frontier workers.



The demographic weight of Ticino compared to the neighbouring regions.

Model Nr. 2: An integrated periphery

This image is illustrated above by the picture showing an open Ticino which is directly linked mainly to North East Switzerland (Approx. 3 million people) and to the southern region of Lombardy (nearly 6million people). It becomes evident that the principal role of Ticino is to be an economical, political and social intermediary between the regions north and south of the Alps. This connecting function could, unfortunately, not become reality until the phase of economical liberalism in the post war era, when Ticino and Lombardy became more easily accessible to one another through road and motorway connections. Relating to this, I would like to draw to your attention the fact that the main economical effect of the N2 motorway came more from the south and through the connection between Milan and Lugano, than from the link up to the north, symbolised by the Gotthard motorway tunnel (1980).

The picture of Ticino as an integrated, or rather, as an integratable periphery with

respect to the centres to the north or to the south becomes clearer when considering the development of the tertiary activities. According to the results of the 1980 census, two thirds of the active Ticino population worked in the service sector compared to 55 per cent for Switzerland as a whole. In Sottoceneri, i.e. the two southerly districts of Lugano and Mendrisio-Chiasso, this figure was as high as 72 per cent. The growing activities in the banking, finance and advisory sector were decisive for the rise of Lugano in the hierarchy of Swiss cities.

The success of the regional Crossair flights departing from Lugano shows the strength of the attraction and integration of the tertiary sector within the Ticino economy. The transborder region of Ticino has become very open with the general use of cars: 650,000 and 1.2 million people live in the 10 and 20 km zones on either side of the border respectively.

The new situation as a connecting area and integrated periphery makes it necessary to introduce a new transborder politics as do, for example, the regions of Basle and Geneva.

Model Nr. 3: An emerging peripheral development centre?

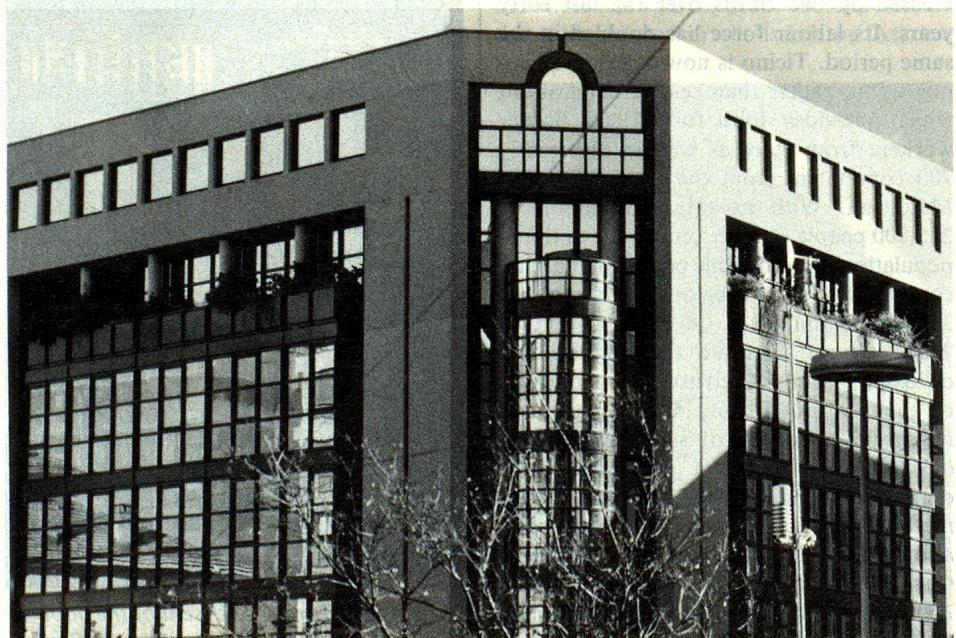
The Geography Department of the University of Geneva has recently published a map showing the alpine regions which could become locations for small and medium sized high-tech industries (emerging peripheral development centres). Of special interest are the following regions: the Prealps of Milan (Ticino, Como and Bergamo), the regions of Grenoble and Nice,

the transborder region of Geneva, the triangle Lucerne, Zürich and St Gallen, the Bavarian Prealps and the Austrian region of Linz. The new technologies do indeed create certain privileged peripheral regions (good residential location, availability and adaptability of the workforce, presence of educational and research centres) with the possibility of taking on and establishing new small and medium-sized companies. It should be remembered that several large agglomerations and traditional industrial centres have felt the negative effects of their growth and are now undergoing a restructuring process. This makes a phase of relative decentralisation possible.

A survey shows that innovative activities have emerged and developed within the chiefly traditionally structured industrial sector of the Ticino economy in the last few years. Contrary to the traditional model of Ticino economy as being only a branch of Swiss industry, the new openness and the attraction of the canton have made it possible for about forty companies to become integrated in the present development dynamic.

Besides this, the relationship between Ticino economy and Italy, which had for long been hindered by the barrier characteristic of the frontier, has now taken on a change for the better. A survey has shown that research and development companies do not discriminate between the regions of Lombardy, the German or the French speaking parts of Switzerland. Who would have been able to prophesy that even a decade ago?

Remigio Ratti



Lugano, the banking city. (Photo: Luca Martignoni)