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Logics of rule and intervention: a theoretical framework
and an empirical observation of the Italian regional reforms

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1. Introduction

The new forms of organising and delivering welfare tend in many ways to move from hierarchic standpoints, frameworks and ways of distribution of power and resources. On one hand, introducing market or quasi-market instruments to rule the distribution of resources and new relationships of competition and cooperation among the actors. On the other, promoting new forms of governance and multi-level governance based on the co-participation of different social, institutional and political actors. Finally, trying to support and exploit the activation of the informal resources of citizens, families and local communities.

Forward, on, in recent years, a growing rhetoric about the welfare reform in the European countries, has been going at emphasising some particular perspectives: first, the new and empowering role of demand within the processes of supply formation, and the supposed and consequent ending of the institutional self-reference of the latter. Second, the growing role of the local actors, particularly the private and nonprofit ones, in the decision making processes around policy strategies and management. Third, the acknowledgment of the fundamental role of families and local communities to supply care and better conditions of socio-economic life and to participate in the local welfare designing.

In accordance to the main literature, these kinds of perspective are on, assumed in the new legislative designs and/or set running within the welfare national and local institutions and structures. Nevertheless, what, in some cases, literature fails to point out are some important issues at stake; particularly with regard to way the forms of interaction between citizens and institutions are affected by the practical design that emerges from specific combinations of ruling and delivering logics. To understand what happens about citizens' rights and duties and to any or possible shifting in the distribution of power, it does not appear completely satisfying any analysis based on the dualisms market-state or market-hierarchy, nor the types of ones that introduce the role of associative frameworks and of local communities. Particularly, if these do not explore the combined effects and differences produced by the logics that give form to these categories. And if the analyses don't take account of the latter at both levels of governing and delivering.

The paper aim at describing a possible theoretical framework useful to deal with the complex dynamics of change and, therefore, at pointing out some results emerged in a study on the new regional rules of the Italian social assistance construction¹. The core of the analysis moves from the idea that is possible to get more information about the forms of interaction that the new rules are going to drive, favour or settled down. And, for this aim, it draws inspiration from some principles of the theory of the logical types in the way Gregory Bateson has done, of the "formal" sociology of Georg Simmel and of the principles of the socio-economic exchange according to the thought of Karl Polanyi; and draws inspiration from the recent studies on rationality of Antonio Damasio. Stemming from these viewpoints, the paper will describe and discuss what we call *logics of rule* and *logics of intervention*.

The firsts are defined and distinguishable on the basis of the ways the forms of exchange of resources, the principles of belonging and the types of power are regulated and legitimated. Modes, that are recognizable in the ideal types of social institutions: *state*, *market*, *community* and *association*. Then, the logics of intervention, are defined and distinguishable, not depending on contents, needs and aims, but referring to the way the interactions between citizens and institutions are pre-structured by the same three macro-variables. Following that, it is possible to identify four different logics: *service*, *project*, *utility*, *support to the reciprocal action*.

In particular, the paper tries to figure out what kind of local equilibriums in distribution of power are, and could be made, possible combining these different logics. And, hence, what kind of change for recipients and institutions are pursued, also highlighting consequent contradictions and paradoxes. Firstly pointing out some theoretical issues; secondly, analysing the logics and, finally, briefly discussing emerging constraints and opportunities.

2. Theoretical issues

Welfare reforms are often based on widespread rhetorical discourses not clarified in their normative and theoretical assumptions. Thus, to avoid the probable consequent traps, it seems important to discuss the main

¹ See Costa (2009). The discussion is also based on the outcomes of preceding researches (Villa e Clerici 2007, Sabatinelli e Villa 2005).

theoretical statements and conjectures, more or less explicitly put on the field. Three of them, in particular, are briefly examined as follows.

2.1 The problem of rationality

Welfare analysis and discourses usually presuppose a lot of assumptions about rationality and consistent applications on matters such as human and social behaviour, choice, organisational strategies and so on. What also happens in the Italian regional laws on social assistance, where these kinds of assumptions are assumed, for instance in the application of some market or quasi market instruments, forms of incentive and obligation and anticipations on people and claimants behaviour.

These assumptions tend to exploit the orthodox economical approach based on the concept of *pure rationality* or, at best, in alternative, close to the idea of *bounded rationality*, in which scholars acknowledge the importance to consider the many social, emotional and cultural factors that affect rationality. But even the latter, in our opinion, stems from an incomplete and incorrect assumption: the one that means emotions and environment such as factors that bounds and reduce the level of rationality in human beings². An idea, particularly respecting emotions³, that seems rather embedded in the sociological field too. And which main effects are the tendency to treat it as a narrow field of research, and not as a determinant of the human being and behaviour in itself. One of the reasons why a different standpoint seems necessary.

For the aim of this paper, it can be only superficially explored, as here we do stemming for the metaphor offered by the movie “*Star Trek. Generations*”. In the third scene, a joking staging on the occasion of an official promotion, a human-looking android named Data is involved in a very curious episode, particularly embarrassing for the other characters (the crew members of spaceship Enterprise). What happens, is due to, as Data himself asserts, his inability to understand jokes and every humoristic event or saying. His development as an artificial form of life – says - is deadlocked, and now, to overcome the point, he thinks necessary to resort to an emotional chip, an electronic mean to let androids to feel emotions. The chip, for instance provides the ability to understand the sense of jokes, even the ones heard many years before but not understood at that time; and, above all, it provides the ability to feel emotions such as joy and happiness, pain and regret, fear and sense of guilt.

The life in this new condition, in its first steps, appears bewildering, exciting and painful at the same time, insomuch that Data will ask to remove the emotional chip. But for many reasons this will not happen and, at the end of the movie he will declare to have experimented 256 different emotional conditions: a sort of path of learning, developed through times of joy, pain, regret, fear, excitement, satisfaction, competition, etc..

In this time, the emotional dimension seems to play two different roles: on one hand it stirs up feelings of uneasiness and panic or of sudden joy and exultancy, that appear to thwart him in his tasks and to break his self-control. On the other, it enables a different level of understanding and learning, not only in the day by day and informal relationship with human beings, but also in the ability to manage the technical, formal and functional role. In short, the application of the emotional chip seems to conduct Data towards a completely new mental condition, that opens to scenarios and potentialities even not conceivable before, even if these require hard settlements and the pursuit of a new and different equilibrium, form him an his companions.

Coming out from the metaphor, we can recollect the scattered thoughts it has provoked to lead them to a more scientific elaboration. To do this, without dwelling too much in many details, we resort to the work of Antonio Damasio and other neuroscientists on people that suffered particular types of brain damages⁴. What they have shown⁵ depicts an extraordinary base for a scientific explanation of the events that involved Data, and offer many arguments to discuss the meanings of rationality, in general and with regard to its role in social policy. We synthesize the arguments as follows, drawing inspiration from the provisional conclusions of the neurobiologist with particular regard to the functioning of the mind (Damasio 1994 and 1999).

² See, e.g., Elster 1989, Provasi 1995, Simon 1982.

³ Apart from a not wide number of scholars. See, e.g. Hochschild 2003.

⁴ Particularly interesting, and particularly frightful for the people involved, is the fact the these damages, caused by accidents, traumas and tumours, have put themselves in a condition describable as “deprivation of the emotional chip”. A condition that allows to understand the intellectual content of actions, things, images, songs, etc. but not to feel anything at the emotional level. A sort of – affirms Damasio – “knowing without feeling”.

⁵ That, in our opinion, finds many consistencies with the work of Gregory Bateson. See, in particular, Bateson 1972, 1976 and 1979.

First. The different brain's functions (motor, sensorial, emotional, rational, etc.) are not placed in separate regions of the brain itself, as generally supposed. They are the realization of a cooperative activity that involves, at the same time, a lot of cerebral structures situated between the sectors of entry and exit, and of many communication schemes of huge complexity; and that, even if some regions are particularly dedicated to the synchronization of specific neural activities. This kind of functioning, that Damasio names "integrated mind", also involves, first, the body, since brain and body are indissolubly and reciprocally integrated by neural and biochemical circuits and, second, the environment. With the latter, in particular, the organism (the association body-brain) interacts in many ways as an only one thing, developing mental processes that combine both native and acquired functions and abilities and manifold levels of learning.

Second. The ability of taking decision, organisation, planning, etc., for themselves, the one's own relatives, the one's own organisation, etc., are based on the interaction between the elaboration processes of sentiments and reason. Surprisingly, the effects of the brain damage above described were not only noticeable in the emotional sphere: they were as much as serious in these aspects, that we usually tend to believe less dependent from the latter. So the interaction between sentiments and reason appears essential to make the reasoning not bounded in the exclusive logic of cost-benefit computation, and to avoid the risk to push ourselves into a regressive spiral to infinity, something that could happen every time we have to take a choice of a certain level of complexity. This because, the *differences* that can help us to discriminate *in* the context and to classify the contexts and levels of context, are not discernable and comprehensible with the limited support of a mere technical-exploitable rationality. In fact, we usually resort to not-merely-pure-rational *context markers* to take decisions, even if we ourselves are not always and fully aware of this fact⁶. Above all, this allows to take for granted high levels of complexity in which we include many data detectable at different level of context, context of context and context of context of context⁷. That is impossible by means a pure rational computation.

Third. Following Damasio, the concepts of reason and rationality are to be distinguished: the first, to identify the ability to carry out inferences in a logical and ordered way; the second one, as the quality of thought and behaviour produced by the continuous adapting of reason to a personal and social context.

Fourth. Also emotion and sentiment are to be distinguished: the first as a type of change that take place in the body and in the brain as a reaction to a sort of stimulus due to a particular mental content; the second one as the perception and the experience of these type of changes. In short, it is a different activity and logical level of the mental process.

Fifth. Mind is not something different and separated by the body and its physical and neurological activity. Still, it is not something strictly different by the social action of individuals in interaction with other human beings and environment. Instead, it is the product of the interaction between these different elements, usually separately handled in different scientific fields of research: body, brain, relations, environment or context.

Sixth. Several are the emotional level implied in whatever process of rationalization in the human being, and, to simplify the discussion, we could outline the chief ones, on the base of a hierarchic scale of logical types: emotion, sentiment, consciousness of sentiment, awareness of the way to be conscious, etc.⁸. A sort of scale of the "emotional intelligence".

Thus, a completely different notion of rationality, drawing comparison with the ones mentioned above, come into sight. Instead of "pure" or "bounded", we could define it "ecological" and/or "reflexive"⁹.

Ecological, in so far as it is based on the interaction between systems that include body, brain and environment, each part with a fundamental role in the carrying out of neural-biological and social-cultural processes. Consequently, a better or purer rationality is not achievable bounding the "interferences" between these different elements and processes, or "emancipating" the rational dimension from the influences of the emotional feeling and of the social-cultural and normative context. Therefore, a coherent reflection should involve the theoretical thought in sociology and economy: granted that, in some cases, these influences could be harmful or unconstructive, appear to us a logical error to treat them as something different and else from the rational. In fact, it is *through* and not *out of* them that the human rationality is normally fulfilled. And, it is in this ecological relationship that the quality of rational in the human being become comprehensible.

⁶ See also Bateson (1964-1972) with particular regard to the concept of "context" and "context marker".

⁷ See also the Bertrand Russel's Theory of logical types (Russel, Whitehead, 1910).

⁸ See Damasio 1999 : 53.

⁹ Of course, for us, this depicts a first step into a work that need to be studied in depth.

Reflexive, because the idea of pursuing higher level of rationality is not incompatible with this hypothesis, also if it appears embedded in a completely different paradigm, that doesn't exclude emotions and sentiments. On the contrary, the rationality is said "reflexive" for, in this standpoint, it appears feasible within, and not out of, the relationship between emotion and conscience, at different level, such as: feeling sentiments, to be conscious of that feeling, understanding the own way to feel and, even, building individual or collective theory about it.

Hence, following these still rough hypotheses, some questions emerge. In particular, remaining in the wake of the metaphor above exposed, we could try to understand if: (1) is it possible that, not a neurobiological damage, but a social situation, context, trajectory, etc, could lead to a deprivation or a weakening of the functions of the "emotional chip", with all the kinds of above mentioned consequences. (2) Is it possible to apply and try out the hypotheses, not in relation to an individual but to a social context? In other words, is it possible a social and relational context deprived from the emotional chip? And with what kind of consequences? (3) In this regard, what conditions and features the different welfare measures put on the field, to affect and/or support and/or improve the – often frail - rationality of clients and claimants?

2.2 Freedom of what?

A second important issue concerns the concept of freedom. Following the current political trends, among the main principles laid down by the Italian regional laws, a strong role is conferred to the freedom of choice for citizens. The welfare regional systems are expected to become a sort of services social market, where people, claimants and users have partial rights to take decisions on measures and providers.

Nevertheless, also these kind of assumptions appear to be incomplete, also if not incorrect, in so far as the kind of freedom discussed are strictly connected to the hypothetic innovations introduced by means of market mechanisms. As if, other kinds of socio-economic mechanisms, would not be able to provide the necessary conditions to exercise one sort or another of freedom.

A first distinction can help us in this matter. Drawing inspiration from the work of Karl Polanyi (1977), with particular regard to the two definitions of "economic", we can outline as many consistent definitions of freedom.

The first, chiefly assumed by the regional laws, can be defined as *formal*. It moves from the theoretical assumption of *scarcity*, that depicts a cornerstone in the theoretical framework of the market paradigm and of the rational choice theory. In the welfare rhetoric it is guided by the idea of a growing power of demand at determining and affecting quality and variety of supply. For, it implies a political pressure to enlarge variety and numerosness of producers and products and the rights of citizens to choose among them, but on the base of a pre-defined logic (see § 3.3) and within a restricted and predefined field of items and opportunities. These conditions, in particular, gives room to criticism at identifying this change as apparent, or too limited, and only as a different way at continuing to give power to actors on the supply side¹⁰.

The second one, as suggested by Polanyi himself, can be defined as *substantial*. It moves from his theoretical assumption of *institutionalized interaction* and, then, from an acknowledgement of subjectivity in the reciprocal relationship between citizens and institutions. It implies a not granted and predefined logic of interaction between the latter and a strong effort at searching for different and better schemes of answer with regard to socio-economic mechanisms, concepts of care, strategies, types of learning and change, etc.. That not excludes a possible use of market strategies and instruments and the adoption of the freedom of choice idea as above described. Nevertheless, the latter depicts an option among the others, where the relationship citizens-institution forms a field of action where different logics are accessible to actors. In other word the necessity and even the obligation to choice is not excluded but placed in a lower logical level within a more complex system that provide the opportunity to adopt quite different logics. That is, the freedom of choice is only a type of freedom among the others. And, within the second meaning of it (substantial), the first one is included, depending on the strategies adopted.

Moreover, giving credit to the second meaning allows to observe the relationship citizens-institutions on the base of different aspects: socio-economic, cultural, psychological-educational, and so on. What seems to lack in a big part of the sociological literature on welfare system, more inclined to chiefly analyse the first one.

¹⁰ See, e.g., Ferlie (1997), Lowery (1998).

However, given that we have set the two meanings of freedom at different level, where the first is included in the second one, it should be necessary to understand what other types of freedom could be placed within the latter at the same logical level of the first one. That seems not so difficult, turning to the well-known typology of socio-economic reactions, exit, voice and loyalty, set by Albert Hirschman (1987).

The three categories of action depict and mould as many types of potential freedom (and power) for actors to act within a given socio-economic relationship. The reaction *exit*, first of all, that means getting free from a relationship, presupposes a context where it is possible to choice among alternative relations with different actors, if able to provide what it is defined or perceived necessary. The reaction *voice*, secondly, that means arguing in different ways on the modes of relations, presupposes a context where this not necessarily lead to a breaking off of the relationship itself. The reaction *loyalty*, finally, if not fulfilled as a blind loyalty or a form of total or strong dependence, implies or produces a sort of belonging and sense of belonging where exit and voice are not excluded.

In short, as easily understandable, these categories imply three main types or components of freedom: freedom of choice, freedom of expression, freedom of belonging. Which particular combination in a given context can help us to observe and define what kind and level of institutionalised freedom is set and/or possible for the actors. That is, trying to understand the consequences of the presence, or of the absence, of one or plus of these possible kinds of freedom for people, claimants and organisations, in a welfare system or in a particular context within it: a neighbourhood, a community, a public or private social service, an institutional workgroup, etc.

2.3 Change and learning

Welfare systems and measures aim to produce small or large changes in lives and conditions of individuals, groups of people, local, regional or national contexts. The main principles, laid down by the normative framework, generally underline what kinds of change are pursued. But, to find out the hidden effects of the day by day institutional functioning, it is important to go beyond the official rhetoric and try to analyse the underneath logics that guide these systems.

So it is in the new Italian regional welfare system, where, as we will see in the next sessions, different new logics of rule and intervention are clearly outlined or summarily sketched out. Going deeply into the matter, however, require to better fix some theoretical assumption developing the previously examined issues with regard to the problem of change. Just because every theoretical standpoint on this issue, strongly affects the way we weigh the policies and their consequences.

Thus, if we give credit to the idea of an ecological and reflexive rationality and take account the different components of freedom (choice, expression, belonging), a whatever idea on the construction of change cannot be merely based on obligations (norms) and incentives (exchange) how the restricted assumptions of pure or bounded rationality, and of freedom of choice, tend to legitimate. That is, what the research continues to point out by assuming the dualism market-state as a focal point of the evolution of the welfare systems.

In the case of Italian regional laws, this kind of dualism is just – apparently - overcome: the texts take into account the potential role of other integration and exchange forms in delivering and ruling welfare (chiefly, association, family and community). And, even if the process of fulfilment of these kinds of expectation appear rather faint, at local and regional level different attempts, experiments and transformations are on. So we should analyse these new forms, whether well-established or in more probable faint processes of trial.

To do so, we have to analyse the relationship citizens-institutions leaving a mere individualistic approach based on the rational choice paradigm; first, including the environment (for, we intend to turn to the batesonian concept of context), second, considering the wider idea of rationality previously described and, third, taking account of the different aspects that could give form to the relationship itself, also providing various modes and degrees of power and freedom to actors.

Chiefly, we will resort to the batesonian contribute on the logical types of learning¹¹, a typology that allows to link the theoretical issues relevant to change and context (and, then, to put into connection the problems of individual action and behaviour and of the environment). And, hence, to try to understand what type of learning is implied in the system or in the specific situation considered.

¹¹ In its turn, in part based on the previously cited Bertrand Russell's theory of logical types.

As a matter of fact, the concepts of *learning*, *change* and *context* seem to be tightly linked. Learning is connected to the problem of habits, that are usual or institutional ways to act, construct information, behave, choose, satisfy needs, etc.. These are applicable to entire classes of problems, allowing people to interact in situations that hardly ever change. Human beings, in fact, use the *context* as a guidance to discriminate between views and manners (Bateson 1972 : 247)¹². This is due to the “*repeatability*” of the context, that constitutes the structures and the transformational rules that allow to interact with institutional forms and information. Furthermore, the repeatability of the context contributes to the formation of self and of social organisation (Goffman) and, consequently, to the development of the fundamental mechanisms of reproduction of trust (Bagnasco & Negri 1994 : 35-36)¹³.

Then, it is possible to mean «“context” as a collective term for all those events which tell the organism among what set of alternatives he must make his next choice» (Bateson 1972 : 335): it becomes the ambit where the processes of learning are the result of the reciprocal adaptation to the typical sequences of the learning context itself.

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|------------|---|
| <i>0</i> | <i>Zero learning</i> is characterized by <i>specificity of response</i> , which - right or wrong - is not subject to correction. |
| <i>I</i> | <i>Learning I</i> is <i>change in specificity</i> of response by correction of errors of choice within a set of alternatives. |
| <i>II</i> | <i>Learning II</i> is <i>change in the process of Learning I</i> , e.g., a corrective change in the set of alternatives from which choice is made, or it is a change in how the sequence of experience is punctuated. |
| <i>III</i> | <i>Learning III</i> is <i>change in the process of Learning II</i> , e.g., a corrective change in the system of sets of alternatives from which choice is made. (We shall see later that to demand this level of performance of some men and some mammals is sometimes pathogenic.) |

Table 1. Classification of four of the logical types of learning (Bateson 1972)

Moreover, levels of learning can be different and hierarchically classified, depending on the types of error the context itself allows to make and correct (Bateson 1972 - Table 1). For example, an action can be an answer among others in a set of well-known alternatives regarding simple and reckonable problems. In this case, a mere capability of choice within a class of variables is required, that is a type of change internal to a finished system. Otherwise, an action can be an answer to more general problems that requires the capability to change the class of variables, that is to choose among different classes and, then, a change in/of the system that binds the choice options: a jump in the logical type.

The first is defined by Bateson (1972 : 207) “proto-learning”, while the latter is called “deutero-learning”, that means the rate of variation of the proto-learning, that is *learning to learn*¹⁴. Deutero-learning allows change of elementary habits, that is acquisition of different transformational rules and change of typical sequences of the preceding context.

Thus, the levels of learning are linked to levels of context: learning to consider a wider spectrum of class of variables, means extending the level of perceived and experimented context: choice and behaviour options increase due to a growing consciousness and capability to *rationalise* on the lower classes and levels, and to interact with a more differentiated communicative system. And thus, we can add, the type of rationalization implied seems to be consistent with the definition, cited above, of ecological and reflexive rationality.

With regard to the present paper, it is important to highlight the differences among the first three levels of learning and, in particular, to the higher of the three, the Learning II, that logically identify what is meant with deutero-learning¹⁵. Moreover, its definition is consistent in many aspects with the one of Change₂ of

¹² It's also used to distinguish between couple of opposites, attributing meanings like “normality” or “pathology” to situation that are not always thus different as they appear. See Rosenhan (1973).

¹³ See also Bateson (1972 : 334-5).

¹⁴ Deutero-learning is definable as a sort of metachange (Watzlawick) or, in other words, a change from a transformation to another (Ashby, in Watzlawick et al. 1973 : 26).

¹⁵ Learning II «can all be included under the rubric of changes in the manner in which the stream of action and experience is segmented or punctuated into contexts together with changes in the use of context markers», while «Learning III is likely to be difficult and rare even in human beings» for «the self-validating character of premises acquired by Learning II» (Bateson 1972 : 339 and 348). Moreover, we have not considered the class “learning IV”, briefly described by Bateson in the same text.

Watzlawick (1973 : 28-29), concerning the processes of formation and solution of psycho-social problems. In its work, Watzlawick suggests to distinguish between the categories *change₁* and *change₂*, in order to avoid some recurring mistakes, typical within difficult situations in which institutional solutions are applied. The risks is to form or strengthen the problems instead to produce the desired change. What frequently happens when the institutionalised process reproduces mechanisms that contradict the expectation enacted; for instance, producing passivity and dependence instead of activation.

Examples are the welfare measures, particularly when, against the obligation to access to work, people cannot experiment different patterns of solutions, contexts and rules and get more consciousness on the own, typical or contextual way to manage situations. In these cases different factors of *invariance* do not allow to generate *change₂*, that is not a simple change of action, but a change in the contexts, patterns and ways that rule the action itself¹⁶. The end of welfare programmes (end of the stimulus) theoretically could¹⁷ signify the end of the change (end of effects), like in the experiments where the kinds of answer required allow no shifts to a higher logical type.

From this standpoint, a whatever welfare program could even make up the conditions of a regressive context that negatively affects the capability to act in terms of trial/error/correction, the self-esteem, the personal network and sense of belonging, and so on. Following Watzlawick (1973 : 22 and 37), it could represent a *zero effect*, in which a shift from a condition to another (i.e.: unemployment > employment) does not produce at all a change in the variables (factors of invariance) that negatively affect the hard situation.

While different results could be obtained allowing the experience of higher levels of complexity in the sequence trial-error-correction and in the relationship self (body-brain, reason-emotion)-context, that is allowing to act and reflect on transformational rules *on* action, e.g. by means participation in the valuational process, so completing the trial-error sequence as follows: trial-error-*valuation*-correction.

3. Logics of welfare systems

3.1 Power, exchange and belonging

The national reform of social assistance in Italy¹⁸ put into the field a large scale attempt to modify the previous national framework: decentralising many rules and policy functions, redistributing power and responsibilities and assuming new paradigms of intervention and ruling¹⁹. Furthermore, as a consequence of the recent federalist constitutional reform²⁰, a lot of legislative competences are now imputed to Regions that, as first act, had to enact a general policy regional law on the matter. Unto the end of 2008, only eleven on the twenty Italian Regions have respected this indication, also if some of the others, just had formerly promulgated some legislative acts to coordinate the issues implied in the matter.

What is at stake in this picture, is the redefinition of the schemes of rights and duties at two different levels: the forms of ruling and coordination of policies, and the modes of planning and delivering measures. At the first level, the issues involved chiefly regard the roles of the social institutions – state, market, community and association – their reciprocal and systemic relationships and their own logics of functioning²¹. At the second one, the roles of actors and the main frames of reference, approaches, strategies, kind of measures, are subjected to many pressures and trials to move towards partial new logics of action. In part, as a consequence of the shifting and changing processes at the previous level; in other, as a result of many new policy tendencies that dispute the preceding assumptions on passive role of citizens, and of the inefficiency and illegitimacy of them, their family and the economic institutions to take care of it.

Due to the complex dynamics involved, in order to better understand what's happening, it seems particularly important to focus an adequate level for the analysis: useful to observe the complexity of the ongoing processes, to include the issues previously discussed but, at the same time, to provide a lithe framework to

¹⁶ The factor of invariance, according to Watzlawick (1973 : 31), is something that prevents on behalf of the system to generate inside itself the conditions to change.

¹⁷ Of course, we are describing a theoretical process. In a real situation the effects are more complex and contradictory.

¹⁸ National Law n. 328/2000.

¹⁹ At least in part consistent with the European trend on the matter.

²⁰ National Law n. 3/2001.

²¹ See, e.g., Ferlie (1997), Haque (2001), Kazepov (2008 and 2009), Lowery (1998).

research. Thus, we have chosen to define and distinguish the logics that guide these changes: taking account the contents but without focusing on them, and paying instead particular attention to some issues previously discussed: contexts, patterns and ways that rule and legitimate the different types of action. So that, with regard to the logics of rule, we'll try to describe and distinguish them by means of the ways they are regulated and legitimated with regard to three macro-variables: the forms of exchange of resources, the principles of belonging, the types of power²². And, then, we define and distinguish the logics of intervention, not on the basis of variables such as contents, needs and aims, but referring to the way the interactions between citizens and institutions are pre-structured by the same three macro-variables. What has brought us to identify four different logics: *service, project, utility, support to the reciprocal action*.

3.2 The logics of rule

The setting up of the three macro-variables in the case of the logics of rules, leads to focus on just well-known distinctions²³, that we recap as follows.

Within the logic of the state, the forms of exchange of resource, the principles of belonging and types of power match, respectively, to the types (1) of polanyian redistribution, (2) of status (citizenship, residence, categories of need, persons or population, other distinctions provided by given thresholds) and (3) of the hierarchic or bureaucratic-administrative power. With the market logic, instead, (1) demand and supply become the main determinants of the exchange, (2) the legitimate principle of belonging assumes the contractual form (related to the keeping of contingent commitments and conditions) while (3) the power of addressing contents and strategies become more “anarchic”²⁴, partially dependent on the autonomous and competitive choices of dispersed actors. Thirdly, in the logic of community, (1) exchange is more dependent on the mechanisms of reciprocity²⁵ among actors that (2) share appurtenances of status (of blood, history, social context), identity and sentiment (sense of community and belonging, solidarity and obligation, affectivity), while (3) the type of power is more linked to traditional roles, charismatic figures, honour and to the emotive-affective dimension. Finally, with the logic of association, the configuration of the three variables is to observe at a different logical plane, as it is based and formed on the basis of a (more or less) rational negotiation on the variables themselves: the forms of exchange, the principles of belonging and the types of power afferent to the other three logics of rule. Association could be described as a reflexive interaction among different actors (public or private, formal or informal ones) that can set up to different and mutable forms of rule to exchange and distribute resources. These forms are based on negotiated multiple belongings and on decision-making processes, at least, partially implemented by means of democratic-cooperative relationships of power and, then, on heterarchic (Jessop, 2002) distributions of the latter.

These distinctions are handled by the regional laws with different modes and criteria. What is worth a particular attention are the very various or too slight statements on four particular matters: concepts and definition of community and agency, participation processes and regulation mechanisms of market.

(1) *Community*. The term “community” is repeatedly taken up in the texts, but with many various and often not explicit meanings and with different degrees of importance attributed: as a mere physical-administrative reference, as an important actor in the planning process, as a relationship context to exploit and improve in some way, as a source of belonging and of reciprocal support that could give effectiveness to social reintegration and home help programmes. Only few regions partially acknowledge the non-logical equivalence between the administrative boundaries, the spatial dynamics of phenomena and the organisational spatial references for the institutional intervention.

Furthermore, the regional designs couch few general principles and a good deal of rhetoric, against slight efforts to put them into effect (e.g., clear lines of action and application hypotheses). While the ambiguities on the meanings of community, as sociological concept or as distinction of the physical space, does not help to distinguish features, potential roles and power positions of the local actors (individuals, families, informal groups, nonprofit organisations, local institutions), with some risks of exclusion of the more marginal ones.

²² See, e.g., Polanyi (1977), Weber (1922), Simmel (1908).

²³ See, e.g., Streeck, Schmitter (1985).

²⁴ Jessop (2002).

²⁵ Here based on the polanyian definition.

(2) *Agency*. Strictly connected to the previous one is the problem of agency. In fact, against the opportunity of democratization of the policy making processes²⁶, the involvement of new actors risks to produce an uncontrolled differentiation in the social rights and conditions, also due to the growing importance of the procedural, interpretative and inter-subjective ways do determine them. Focal points at stake are the local capabilities to mobilize resources and actors, to promote and organize collective actions and decision making processes, and the type and level of *autonomy*, meaning the latter as a non-pre-structured way of interdependence between the negotiated and the normative action²⁷.

Under this view, in the context of the Italian reform process, some risks emerge: first, for the absence of definite references on the guaranteed rights – that should have been decreed by the state – that give a high level of uncertainty to the possible upshots of the negotiated planning processes²⁸. Second, because the regions do not provide enough criteria to organise the relationship among the different levels of agency and to involve the different actors, so leaving an uncertain and though experimental situation to handle by the local institutions.

Nevertheless, it has to be said that here, the Regions, have done a certain effort to put in order some important issues: to identify actors, institutional contexts, objects and tasks of negotiation, and to underline the needs to go towards a more integrated system. Even if, with many differences in the quantity and quality of inputs. And even if, some lacks are to point out, chiefly in terms of contributions to identify effective methods of planning, to develop the local offices of coordination, to promote forms of agency where they are not present, to involve the less organized groups, the kind of relationship to pursue between representative and participatory democracy.

(3) *Participation*. Against the high level of rhetoric, the laws provide few elements to deal with the complex and problematic mechanisms of participation, risking to push toward strong feelings of discontent. The regional designs outline a too static picture, disregarding or taking for granted the many variables implied (norms, binds, patterns of decision making, strategies and stiles to run the processes). In particular, three issues seem underestimated:

1. The necessary skills to promote and support participation.
2. The necessary criteria to build time articulations and streams consistent to the needs of gradualness, organisational learning and innovation of the institutional processes.
3. The necessity to build up valuation systems on the latter, taking account, at least, three different conditions: to fulfil them trough cyclic sequences, to build up reflexive capacity to provide correctives (e.g., by means “trials–errors–valuation–correction” sequences), to develop the ability of institutions to learn (learning to learn).

In short, it appears more and more necessary to acknowledge that not only the structure but also the process has its formal requirements (Bateson, 1979). And that is more and more necessary to take care of what Simmel (1923) define the “conflict between life and the form”, for, they cannot restrict themselves to rule the second, while they should promote and exploit the first one, guaranteeing the second too. If not, many paradoxical effects could be emerge, in so far as, an underestimation of the process could easily produce an over-determination of the process itself in the production of the institutional outcomes²⁹.

(4) *Market*. Here ,we can only point out the not many suggestions provided to rule and manage instruments of the so-called quasi-markets³⁰. With the latter, the Regions aim to increase the effectiveness of the public-private management of services, to better select the actors on the supply side and to introduce new modes of regulation in the relationships between public institutions, private organisations and citizens and, hence, between demand and supply of social services. The differences among the regions are more clear on the second and the third of these points, where some of them try to introduce these instruments in more binding and extensive ways.

Among the awaited outcomes, a higher level of freedom of choice for citizens is the most cited. Even, five Regions establish the freedom of choice as a right (also if qualified on the basis of available resources and technical requirements) while, all of them, aim at increasing the role of demand at steering the social planning. Nevertheless, in our opinion, this is a further source of ambiguity, due to the intrinsic nature of the

²⁶ Cerruti (2002).

²⁷ Ancona (2000).

²⁸ The so called “Livelli essenziali di assistenza” (“Essential levels of assistance”) where to be established by the National Government, as the only one competence that the constitutional reform left to the State. Nevertheless, since 2001 this task have not been accomplished.

²⁹ Villa (2007).

³⁰ See, e.g., Ferlie (1997), Lowery (1998), Le Grand (1991).

quasi-markets themselves. The general assumption that, by means of them, the demand can get a relevant weight getting free from the supply side influence, the bureaucratic-administrative mechanism and the political power is, to say the least, controversial. In fact, the functioning of quasi-markets appear rather diverging to the market theoretical mechanism, depicting a different and particularly individualised redistributive pattern, that switch on claimants strongly tied up economic resources previously allocated to the institutional structures.

In short, the individualization of the redistributive relationship, the specific stiffness of use, and the mechanisms of meta-allocation (e.g., the local and regional planning), seem to obstacle an effective empowerment of the demand side. What does not exclude that, these kinds of means, can help to improve efficiency and efficacy of welfare provisions.

3.3 The logics of intervention

As mentioned before, with “logics of intervention” we mean the modes of implementation of measures, not in terms of contents of policies, needs and demands, but with regard to the ways the relationship between citizens and institutions is arranged in terms of exchange of resources, roles implied and context³¹. To distinguish and analyse them, we have identified a series of variables, listed in the first column of table 2. These are related to the three macro-variables just previously adopted: forms of exchange of resources (var. 1), principles of belonging (var. 2-4), types of power (var. 5-9). To choose them we have put particular attention to the way the relations of power and responsibility are distributed among the roles and to the rate of possibility, for these relations, to change, when actions of designing, realization and/or evaluation are being carried out. That is, the rate of pre-structuring measures (Kazepov 1999), an important indicator of the given room at building up processes of change and learning.

This is a different logical plane as regards to the previous one (the logics of rule), even if they affect each other. The kind of influence depends on how the main factors concerning the three macro-variables are promoted arranged and legitimated, and on the mechanisms of retroaction triggered³².

But, first of all, we define the logics of intervention as follows (see table 2).

(1) The logic of *utility* (prestazione), firstly, implies a kind of intervention based on the drive concept of *action* and strictly pre-defined from a qualitative, quantitative and economic standpoint (subject; duration, frequency and number; actors and roles; costs). Apparently, it allows a low level of informative asymmetry that makes it adequate to be exchanged through the market. Furthermore it seems to increase efficiency and reduce uncertainty in the distribution of resource, while it increase the opportunity to decentralise and outsource the delivery functions, giving more flexibility to the system. In particular, making more plural the whole of the actors, it should help competition among them, freedom of choice for citizens and consequent raising in the quality of the services offered.

The logical frame of utility does not include the management, organisational and planning functions. These are due to a higher logical and organisational plane, referred to a complex structure adequately equipped to manage and deliver a plurality of utilities. In practice, utilities can be described as finished actions (with regard to a given number of hours and/or a given monetary cost) delivered by means of “social titles” (e.g. vouchers) or other ways, in narrow and predefined sets (from 1 to n): from 1 to n interviews (e.g. for guidance or consultation), from 1 to n domiciliary visits (e.g. for nursing or social reasons), from 1 to n therapeutic-rehabilitative sessions, treatments, payments, etc..

(2) The logic of *support to reciprocal action*, describe the other innovative way to deliver welfare measures. It is a type of intervention that try to “exploit” and improve the educational, solidarity and *reciprocity* resources within families, networks of closely related people and neighbours, local contexts and communities. It is ipso facto determined in the relation between two interdependent but, at the same time, autonomous planes, that is important to distinguish. On one hand are the one’s own context factors of living with their expressed or potential informal resources; on the other, any possible institutional support rationally implemented.

³¹ To observe that, the issue, in general, is beforehand become important in the health system in Italy, due to the reform of 1992 that introduced the “utility” (prestazione) as a mean to better manage or cut down the public expenditure. See also Villa, Clerici (2007 : 85 ss.).

³² Bateson (1972 : 251).

| Variables | Logics of intervention | | | |
|--|--|--|---|---|
| | Utility | Service | Project | (Support to) reciprocal action |
| <i>0. Drive concept</i> | Action | Function | Strategy and change | Reciprocal action |
| <i>1. Prevailing forms of socio-economic exchange³³</i> | Redistribution Market | Redistribution | All (Redistribution, market, reciprocity, association) arranged in different ways | Reciprocity (Redistribution Market) |
| <i>2. Elements of the sociological fields of realisation and evaluation of interventions</i> | Individual/s | Individual/s and/or groups | Individuals, groups, organisations and environment (context) | Individual/s + belonging ties |
| <i>3. Criteria of access</i> | Strictly predefined and subordinate to budget binds | Predefined with variable elasticity related to the roles of management and subordinate to budget binds | Depending on aims and resources | Informal, related to belonging ties (+ depending on the form of support) |
| <i>4. Criteria of citizens inclusion</i> | Eligibility Rights + Conditionality to contractual terms | Eligibility rights | Features of clients variable in the given context in base of the aims | Belonging ties (+ Eligibility rights) |
| <i>5. Rate of pre-structuring and pre-determination of budgetary expenditures</i> | Maximum | Medium-high and variable within the limits of the institutional task | Medium-low and variable within the limits of the institutional strategies | Minimum (+ depending on the form of support) |
| <i>6. Steadiness of relation form/content³⁴</i> | Maximum. The variability of the content does not affect the form | Medium. The variability of the content can partially affect the form | Variable. The form changes in relation to the varying of the contents within the limits of the institutional strategies | Variable – tending to zero. Form is elastic as regards to the content on the basis of the situation of the reciprocity ties, though remaining consistent in some features |
| <i>7. Rate of discretion</i> | Minimum | Variable to a limited extent on the basis of the function and on the kind of relationship social worker - user | Variable on the basis of the role of the social workers, of their rate of autonomy and on the institutional strategies | Maximum (+ depending on the form of support) |
| <i>8. Participation (power and responsibility) of users at defining and designing measures</i> | Tending to zero | Bound to the features of functions | Variable on the basis of methods and strategies | Depending on the kind of social network (+ the form of support) |
| <i>9. Time and space depending on....</i> | Features of measures | Elasticity of management and features of institutional functions | Relation between resources, strategies and context | Context: cycle and rhythms of life of families, communities, etc. (+ the form of support) |

Table 2. Logics of intervention

This logic, in fact, is based on the interdependence between the two planes and on a consensual or compulsory contract. Some examples can be: measures to support caregivers, family kindergartens, family care relationships, etc..

More traditional for welfare systems are the next two logics: *service* and *project*.

³³ See Polanyi (1977 : 61).

³⁴ See Simmel (1908).

(3) The first one establishes a system of actions of which several elements are predefined, such as resources, competences, main tasks, types of users, functions and more or less predefined sets of possible actions. The formal frame is made of a complex arranged structure of the whole of roles and functions (management, administration, designing, realization, evaluation). Hence, it implies the presence of a certain degree of flexibility in decision making and implementation depending on the level of political and economic autonomy and power.

The logic of service is therefore based on the drive concept of *function* that must be reproduced, not necessarily aiming at whatever change. Time and quantity criteria, in fact, probably concern frequency more than duration or number. Some example can be: general social services, day and aggregation services for young or elderly people, psycho-social day services for people in condition of mental uneasiness, etc.

(4) The project, that also is accredited of manifold potentials of innovation³⁵, establishes a system of actions which level of pre-structuring and pre-definition can be extremely variable, in relation to many different factors. It is based on the drive concepts of *strategy* and *change target*, which definition regards the relationship among users and non-necessarily institutional context (e.g. elderly people and family network and/or neighbour; young people and the neighbourhood, the city or the local labour market; etc.) and define the criteria of expenditure. The project is accomplished through processes of which some sequential terms of evaluation are set up. Some example are local actions in defence of public health, to prevent drug addiction among young people, to support the cultural and economic integration of excluded people, etc.

These ways to define the logics and identify their features (table 2), is an attempt to build a classification of “pure types”. Nevertheless, in the real world they are recognizable in variously combined forms, such as services or projects organised also to deliver utilities; or, interventions which logics of utility, service, and/or project are adopted to implement measures at supporting the reciprocal action. However, distinguish among different logics seems important to comprehend how are settled down, and with which types of organisational resources, the care functions and the relationships between citizens and institutions, besides the official and institutional definitions. With particular regard to what meaning to this relation is accredited and which variables, resources and strategies are clearly or hiddenly set to this end.

From the analysis of the laws it has been hard to distinguish among the principles of functioning here discussed. Nevertheless, we have tried to discern the more characterizing aspects as follows.

1. The use of the term *prestazione (utility)* appears pervasive but without precise meanings and definitions, while the adoption of the logic seems taken for granted without particular attempts and efforts of elaboration. Here, in many cases, the term is merely indicative of the making up of the supply side, setting aside from the principles of functioning. In this picture, some exceptions are present. The main of them is the case of Lombardy Region, which pervasive use of the term seems deliberately aimed at setting up the conditions for a system strictly based on an extensive supply of utilities.

Furthermore, Regions do not generally use the term to distinguish among different logics of intervention: few of them try to do it, underlining that the local planning should guarantee the integration between utilities and services, but without making clear what they mean with the twos.

Finally, few Regions dwell upon the issue of the quasi-market tools, such as vouchers and contracting. In some cases they point out few features, just useful to identify them (e.g. Basilicata and Lombardy) while, in others, these tools are taken into consideration as a priority condition and mode to collaborate among public institutions and private accredited subjects or as a criteria at gaining access into public proceedings (e.g. Basilicata and Emilia Romagna). But without put attention at discriminating the main principles and the possible desired effects.

2. The logic of *support to reciprocal action* is very often, in many ways and with different definitions, quoted. Common in all the texts, in particular, is the idea to exploit family and local solidarity network and to make it one of the priority and legitimate ways of institutional action³⁶. Differences are instead noticeable with regard to particular issues such as, parenthood, rights of children and wardship, family self-help and cooperation, women rights, protection and support (e.g. Friuli V.G., Emilia Romagna, Campania, Puglia, Tuscany).

³⁵ See, e.g., Donolo (2005).

³⁶ See in particular the laws of Emilia Romagna, Lombardy and Friuli V.G..

On some of the principles that govern the logic of reciprocal action the Regions express a high level of rhetoric, leaving out, at least in part, conditions and needs at promoting effective processes; stemming from the definition of family and community. In fact, they do not pay attention to all the kinds of social, political and cultural transformations that risk to make unclear or ambiguous any use of the concepts: in particular the processes of fragmentation and weakening of the multigenerational ties, and of differentiation in composition and culture that dispute resources, conditions and manner of the reciprocal action itself.

With regard to the institutional support side, the laws appear rather deficient in clarity of references, assumptions and requirements of the institutional action (with and towards the family) and certainty of power and possibility of action at supporting their economic, social and cultural conditions necessary to an effective reciprocal action.

As a result it is not clear what kind of perspective is going to be settled down among institutions, families or communities, between *delegation* and *support* of the responsibilities to care. More frequently, in fact, the Regions sketch out clear lines of institutional support towards particular groups of individuals (e.g. in condition of complete or partial non-self-sufficiency, drug or alcohol addicted, disabled or excluded people, etc.). While few of them aim to improve structures, conditions and coordination of family participation and support, and to develop local communities.

Finally, it is interesting that forms of support to reciprocal action are promoted at different logical, social and territorial level, turning to different logics, even in some cases combining different types of them (see § 4).

3. The logic of *service* is not deeply discussed, at least with regard to its main principles. As for the logic of utility, against the widespread use of the term the only attentions are put on administrative issues. A part from the Sardinian law, that precisely describes the essential qualitative criteria to manage social services.

All the Regions point out aims such as: homogenisation and integration of access criteria; development of an homogeneous level of general local social services; promote multidimensional and integrated types of intervention, particularly among social and health services. Nevertheless, the same, due to their vagueness, apply to all the logics. For example, in some cases, citizens are allowed or stimulated to participate in planning and delivery services, that should depict a very high level of change and innovation. But the discussion remains vague, increasing the just high level of lavished rhetoric.

At least, the very difficult logical and practical connection between principles and organisational levels, should deserve a deeper elaboration, on account of the importance they assume in all the regional reforms. Some example could be: the problem of professional culture, the implementations procedures, the different approach to promote social participation, etc.

4. The logic of *project* is handled in a similar way. The various contributions do not treat of logics of intervention and related issues, introducing instead plentiful examples of functions that the Regions intend to accomplish by means of regional or local projects. The latter, also in order to complete the so called “livelli essenziali di assistenza” (essential levels of assistance) in a flexible way.

More frequently the logic of project is adopted to accomplish individualised and personalised actions, in order to better meet particular conditions and needs (e.g., prisoner, victims’ relatives, foreigners and women in frail conditions, etc.) and to experiment a different and crosswise viewpoint in welfare delivery³⁷.

Half of the analysed Regions (Friuli V.G., Piemonte, Sardinia, Tuscany and, in part, Calabria and Campania), aim to accomplish manifold and various functions by means of projects at different institutional levels: in order to deal with pressing need situations, to put in practice better condition of access to services, to promote experiments and innovation, to modify culture and beliefs on some specific social problems (security, deviance, etc.), to promote actions aimed at gaining high levels of knowledge on them, to act at different and flexible level of rescaled local planning, to integrate different policies, to promote participation of families and third sector local actors within innovative planning processes.

4. Constraints and opportunities in the regional welfare designs

The Regional welfare designs produce new constraints and opportunities for all the actors. To better understand some non-obvious effect, we put on the field the following reflections.

³⁷ See for instance Van Berkel, Valkenburg (2007).

4.1 Mix of different logics

In theory, interesting and experimental combinations of public and public-private intervention, utilities and quasi-market instruments and various forms of reciprocal action are possible. In particular to make achievable higher level of autonomy for elderly, disabled or partially non-self-sufficient people.

The diversification of aims, relational structures and processes, manners and actors involved, makes more flexible the institutional and technical action, supple the matching supply-demand and allows defined rates of freedom of choice. In other words, under this view a growing level of independence from the hierarchic-bureaucratic mechanism seems to be in progress, producing fresh combination of redistribution, reciprocity and market at redesigning the local welfare systems. But this, firstly, depend on the ability to integrate different means and logics; for instance: utilities and strongly pre-structured measures within personalised projects. And, hence, on stable and effective “key structures”, able to acknowledge the features of the context, to build up meaningful local relationships and to integrate processes, methods and instruments. Something that nowadays is chiefly on the shoulders of local institutions, while Regions require to implement general social services with few resources and indications at supporting innovations.

Secondly, it depends on the ability to rearrange the different logics, according to interacting but distinct logical and organizational planes. The more innovative logics (utility and support to reciprocal action), in fact, cannot replace the “traditional” ones (service and project) which, on the contrary, are constitutive of the conditions to make effective the firsts, in terms of structures of implementation, organization, local embedding, strategic development. Nonetheless, at this level, few Regions put attention at distinguishing among the different level involves. Most of them limit their action at defining criteria to allocate the economic expenses and investments, without taking in the right consideration the different logical planes involved, and, in some cases ideologically pushing to adopt the “innovative logics”.

4.2 Freedom of choice

As just pointed out, in the Regional designs the “freedom of choice” is considered a key-concept to innovate the welfare system and to deal with bad situations and needs. It is generally treated as a right to take up an option among different offers, available local resources permitting. But looking back to table 2, where a different allocation of power and responsibility appear to be consequent to different types of logics, the logic of utility shows the more restricting features within its formal frame; this depending on the high level of institutional pre-structuring. A paradoxical upshot, thinking to the underneath political idea of letting more room to market relationship through it and, hence, to the freedom of choice for citizens.

To solve the paradox we need to consider the two following aspects: first, the type of contract, that could be open to the sensitive elements of the relationship (citizens-institutions) and to the broad sense of rationality above discussed³⁸ or, on the contrary, tend to the strict rational criteria of the so called insensitive block contracts³⁹. Second, the type of institutional process that govern the planning and rule the negotiation among the different sources of power: demand, supply, state institutions, intermediate institutions, local community. These two classes of factors help as to point out the relationship among the two classes of logics, of rule and of intervention, where it seems rather clear how we cannot be satisfied with an observation of only one of them, in so far as the equilibrium among the powers and the consequent upshots, e.g. in terms of freedom of choice for citizens, depends on what is at stake and how it is ruled on both the levels. Where citizens cannot exercise their voice in ruling local welfare strategies, e.g. by means of methods to apply the logics of community and/or association and, are not supported to exercise voice, to learn, to experiment higher level of complexity, etc., any idea of freedom remains restricted in the formal configuration mentioned above, substantially dependent on the powers of state and supply.

Instead, the consideration of both the classes of logics, allow a more accurate observation of the complex dynamics that contributes to produce different kinds of processes and upshots in relation to the welfare design, the measure applied, the rate of potential, effective and expected autonomy of citizens and claimants. It follows that the problem of freedom cannot be treated only in relation to the kinds of measures and to the kinds of logics of intervention the same are based. How part of the Regions seem to be. While it has to be noticed that, some of them (Calabria, Friuli V.G., Sardinia, Tuscany, Piedmont, Puglia, Basilicata), put a

³⁸ See the section 2.1 and the provided definition of ecological and reflexive rationality.

³⁹ Ferlie (1997).

certain attention to this fact: first, do not taking for granted the conditions in which an effective form of freedom can be pursued; second, intervening on the demand or the supply side; third, trying to connect the ways of expression of the first with the professional analysis of the needs; fourth, operating on the conditions to support bottom-up political participation; fifth, providing criteria of plurality, appropriately, transparency and competence for the supply side actors.

4.3 Care: a matter of cost or a matter of worth?

As just discussed, the regional laws acknowledge that the welfare provisions are not exclusive competence of professional and institutionally funded interventions, although with recurring non-solved ambiguities on the kinds of expectations are put on the shoulders of families and local communities: support them or free oneself of part of institutional responsibilities and tasks?

Besides, it is not clear if, this kind of acknowledgement, depicts a first upshot of an effective transition towards a sort of “promotional welfare state”, at least in part addressed to change or improve conditions, capabilities and quality of life within given contexts⁴⁰, or if it is still going to prevail a traditional “repairing viewpoint”, exclusively based on interventions addressed to needy and deprived individuals and families⁴¹.

As a matter of fact, the institutional acknowledgement of presence and potentiality of the informal resources within the society, foreshadows two diverging prospects. The first opens up to broad meanings of citizenship, such as the ones legitimated in the rhetoric on participation and subsidiarity. Under this view, the process of decentralization of political powers to Regions and local public authorities, and the privatization of part of the welfare delivery functions, is too limited to address an effective change. Since, the latter should move from a turnabout in a bottom-up sense of the processes of policy making and fulfilling⁴². That means: first, an increasing of the potential reciprocal roles of citizens and institutions, where all the ones considered in the logics become possible, and where supporting citizens and their organisations not necessarily claims a whatever form of direct counterpart; second, serious attempts to match representative and participative democracy needs.

The second prospect, on the other hand, moulds institutions to exploit all the types of resources. Under this view, the welfare reform become a way to answer to the purely economic contradiction of *scarcity*, in this case, of monetary resources⁴³, against the continuous increasing of unsatisfied needs and demands. For institutions, it is not important to put their-selves too many questions on human nature and needs and on the way to deal with them⁴⁴; neither to look for different comprehension proceedings as regards the ones based on aggregation of individual behaviours into formal categories. The chief aim, in fact, become to solve the relation between aggregate demand and supply, looking for an optimum equilibrium among rights and burdens.

Hence, if the seconds are set as the independent variables of the equilibrium, as in this case happens, it becomes very hard to solve it, unless driving a strong conditioning on demand, or exploiting the non-monetary resources as a legitimate and regulated part of supply. Nevertheless, the practical exercise and the interiorization of the dualistic scheme “demand-supply”, within a scientific and political frame characterised by the “repairing viewpoint” and by the rational choice approach, make difficult both the hypotheses, since these types of assumption tend to strengthen and reproduce either a stigmatizing vision of people (as dependent, inadequate, incompetent, able only to express demands, etc.), or a self-legitimation of institutions as the only one actors fitted out of power, competences and resources. In this way, in spite of the rhetoric, institutions learn to find solutions only by extending the offers at covering the presumed increasing needs (Watzlawick et al., 1973), so encouraging a sort of schismogenetic⁴⁵ process that produces complementary rises of levels of aspiration, incapacitation and demand dependence and subordination (Villa 2007, 2009). Something that, theoretically, could lead to a breakdown of the system.

Setting aside improbable catastrophic scenarios, at least three type of unwelcome consequences should stir up our attention: (1) a growing “care deficit” (Hochschild 2003), (2) a growing deficit of legitimation and

⁴⁰ As some of the laws state, meaning to proactively act on the features of the socio-economic and cultural context, also developing forms of integration with other kinds of policies (e.g. Basilicata, Campania and Puglia).

⁴¹ See table 2, var. 2.

⁴² See Ancona (2000).

⁴³ See Polanyi (1977 : 47).

⁴⁴ See Polanyi (1977 : 54).

⁴⁵ See Bateson (1979 : 143, 256).

trust (also due to practical lack of interest and capability to promote participation and autonomy), (3) a growing tendency of the supply to “create” the demand, unlike the declared political expectations and consistently with the entrepreneurial philosophy of the recent capitalism.

5. Conclusions: Hierarchy, anarchy, heterarchy or what?

In this picture, the new forms of the relationship citizens–institutions rise in a continuous waving among innovative attempts to modify the modes of policy-making processes towards an heterarchical, anarchic and subsidiarian approach, and hierarchical reactions to guide, curb and select the demand.

To overcome this uncertain situation become much more important to tie principles and logics of rule and intervention. Firstly, taking some steps beyond the demand-supply scheme, promoting the reflexive capabilities of actors and workgroups involved in the ruling and intervention functions on factors that spread conditions of wellbeing or uneasiness. That is, providing methods, competences and resources to build up the conditions for voice and for effective associative making-policy processes. Secondly, providing the conditions that allows the “emotional chip” to work, to avoid the loss of fundamental information e resources. Thirdly, providing revisable schemes of right and duties to act on these factors and conditions and not only on visible effects and explicit demands.

In this frame, the so-called “livelli essenziali di assistenza” (essential levels of assistance) could be put forward in the form of steering-criteria to apply the most consistent logics in combined form within the different situations, also aiming at promoting and improving the informal resources of society and, hence, reducing the persistent instrumental vision based on deficiency of people, scarcity of resources and strictly pre-defined visions of freedom. For instance, giving more room and legitimation to: (1) initiatives and projects aimed at developing local communities, networks, mixed forms of auto-hetero organisation and employment in the management of services and utilities; (2) activation strategies at supporting individual and collective learning within context of growing complexity⁴⁶, etc..

Over one hundred years ago, Simmel (1907) wrote that many aspects of our life and of economic exchange are not expressible and computable by money, particularly when these involve personal commitment and actions. Still, there are a lot problems to give evidence to this fact: while monetary and extraneous criteria tend to prevail at defining the value of care, the latter risks to remain only meant as a cost, curbed into the predefined “limits of the available funds” (as many regional laws incessantly repeat), thus ignoring the same principles established.

As discussed, this also depends on the types of logics not always consciously applied. Logics that still tend to be strictly pre-formed on the economicistic assumptions of pure or bounded rationality, formal freedom of choice and mechanisms of change depending on incentives and obligation. What, in our opinion, requires to be debated in order to overcome the dualism state-market.

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⁴⁶ See Villa (2007 and 2009b). As mentioned before, only few Regions with a not high level of conviction, try to pursue this kind of perspective.

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