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Sommario/riassunto	Palermo is a city characterised by illegality, criminal or otherwise, and by significant institutional mismanagement: clientelism on the part of local government and weak and inefficient public services. This essay, which addresses planning and management in the city of Palermo since the end of the Second World War, reveals the complexities of the mechanisms at work in the urban area which are responsible for the deterioration of the territory and the living conditions of the city's inhabitants. The author establishes links between two areas of research. The first deals with the political culture of local government: a culture based on practice, traditions and performance, but also on links with the territory, the citizens and the common good. The second involves the policies implemented by these same authorities and the techniques of government to which they resort. The study uses a global approach to analyse the day-to-day reality of the city as well as its major developments. The conduct of the public authorities is addressed in relation to urban planning policies and, more generally, urban services (water, waste disposal) and the different interventions which

shape the territory. Providing an important contribution to our understanding of the realities of contemporary Italy and the Mezzogiorno in particular, the volume provides keys for reading a city which amazes and bewilders visitors. Beyond that, this essay uses the case of Palermo to identify avenues for researching a model of local government in Southern Italy.

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