

Maurizio Maggi, Stefano Piperno
**TURIN: THE VAIN SEARCH
FOR GARGANTUA**

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via Nizza 18
10125 Torino
Tel. 011.66.66.411, fax 011.66.96.012

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Questo lavoro costituisce il primo contributo dell'IRIS Piemonte per un programma di ricerca comparata sulle dinamiche istituzionali nelle regioni urbane in Europa, iniziato nel 1996 e svolto attraverso una rete di istituzioni di ricerca in Francia, Inghilterra, Germania e Olanda. Sono state analizzate, oltre a quella di Torino, le regioni urbane di Bologna, Lione, Bordeaux, Rotterdam, Stoccarda, Manchester, e del bacino lemanico. Il Laboratoire de recherches Interdisciplinaires Ville, Espace et Société de l'Ecole Nationale des Travaux Publics de l'État di Lione è stato il capofila del programma di ricerca finanziato dalla Agence Rhône-Alpes pour les Sciences Sociales et Humaines. La versione definitiva di questo lavoro è contenuta nel rapporto finale della ricerca recentemente pubblicato in Francia (B. Jouve, C. Lefèvre, a cura di, Villes, Métropoles. Les nouveaux territoires du politique. Paris: Economica, 1999).

Turin: the vain search for Gargantua

*Maurizio Maggi**

*Stefano Piperno**

Introduction

The decision to use the case of Turin in a comparative study of metropolitan governments in Europe might appear an anomalous one. More than anywhere else in Italy, the problem of governing the Turin urban area has, de facto, been

erased from the political agenda of the principal local institutions. Vice versa, it may be useful to attempt a parallel reconstruction of the theoretical and institutional debate on the prospects of metropolitan governance and the initiatives of the principal wide area service policies to answer some of

* Istituto di Ricerche Economico-Sociali del Piemonte - Turin.
E-mail: maggi@ires.csi.it
piperno@ires.csi.it

the questions posed by the overall research project.

The first of these questions concerns the emergence of a model of governance to replace traditional government. The fact that the term 'governance' is so hard to translate into Italian gives some idea of the difficulty which this new paradigm is meeting here in Italy, although awareness of this need is now precisely felt in the Turin area. The concept of metropolitan governance implies governing a metropolitan area without a formal local government organisation. It is thus possible to verify whether a model of this type, albeit partial and embryonic, has emerged in the Turin area.

The second question concerns the development of the system of intergovernmental relations in Piedmont. Relations between the various levels of government have a specific regional dimension: they vary, that is, from one part of the country to another according to existing socio-economic and politico-institutional conditions. The fact that metropolitan governance has developed one way in Turin and another in Bologna confirms this hypothesis¹.

The third question is about institutional innovation. It asks: is innovation possible without a for-

mal general metropolitan government structure?

This report is split into four parts. The first sketches an extremely schematic outline of the parallel institutional and socio-economic development of the area over the last thirty years. The fact is that Turin as a city is a symbol of the post-war Italian economic miracle and national urbanisation, just as it has since become a typical case of deindustrialisation, in which new models of urban development have begun to emerge and the need for institutional change is sharply felt.

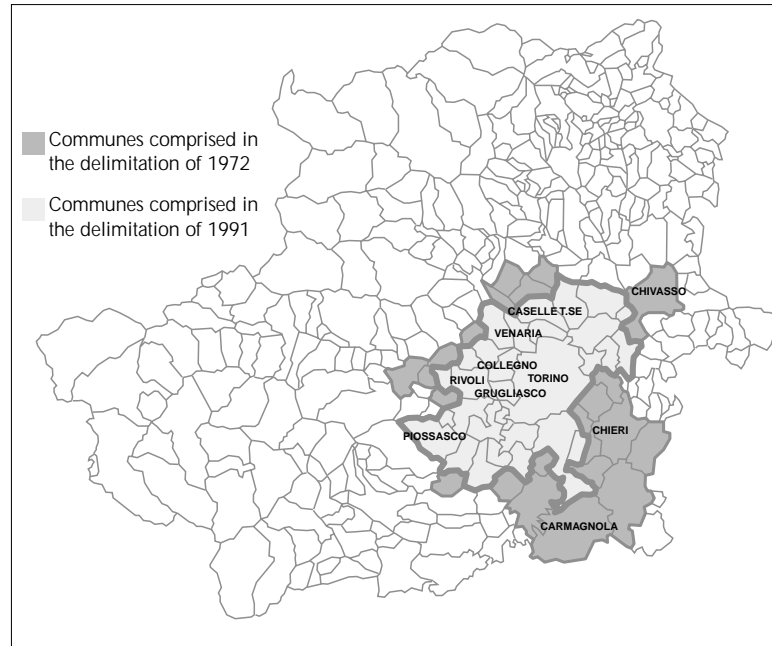
The second part describes how the principal networked services – the ones, that is, which ideally require a wide area institutional organisation – are run, verifying the advantages and disadvantages of the functional models currently being adopted.

The framework which emerges is still unclear. The fact is that local elites' awareness of the problems of urban governance within the new context of international competition and their capacity to come up with strategic new projects are still conspicuous by their absence. In the third part of the report, we seek to understand why.

The fourth and final part addresses the basic question of

¹ It is interesting to note that this is the second time that the two cities have been compared in an international comparative research project (cf. Euricur, 1996).

Figure 1 Administrative borders of the Turin metropolitan area



whether Turin needs a new model of urban government or not. Or, alternatively, are minor corrections to the policies in progress all that is needed?

1. Institutions and economic development in the Turin metropolitan area

1.1 Socio-economic trends

What exactly is the Turin metropolitan area? It would take a whole report on its own to answer

this one simple question. Geographers, sociologists, economists and urban planners have argued over what criteria to use to delimit the plausible boundaries of the area without ever coming to any unanimous conclusion. For our purposes, we follow the only existing administrative delimitation (fig. 1), which dates from 1972², and which comprises 52 of Turin's neighbouring 'comuni', or communes, in two concentric circles.

The demographic and econo-

² An area comprising the commune of Turin and another 52 communes on the basis of DPCR No. 719 of 1972 issued by the Piedmontese Regional Authority.

mic evolution of Turin over the last thirty years reflects some of the typical phases in urban development: urbanisation, suburbanisation, deurbanisation and reurbanisation.

“In the urbanisation phase, population and economic activity concentrates in urban centres. In the suburbanisation phase the growth of the suburbs outstrips that of the city centre and, eventually, there is a shift of population and jobs to the suburbs. In the deurbanisation phase the wider conurbation as a whole loses population, smaller urban areas grow and a more decentralised urban system develops. In the reurbanisation phase, cities which have been losing population begin to grow again” (Commission of the European Communities, 1992).

In the seventies (in some cases even earlier), the population of the central city of the metropolitan area began to decline, while the growth of that of the inner urban rings also began to dwindle. At the same time, the population of the external rings and often also of the periurban agricultural belts has increased, with a consequent diffusion of residential settlement and production activities. Since this is not the place to address the causes of the phenomenon – which stem from transformations in urban

Table 1 Population patterns in the Turin metropolitan area (1971-1995)

	No. communes	Population 1995		Population 1991		Population 1981		Population 1971		Growth '71-'81		Growth '81-'91		Growth '91-'95	
			%		%		%		%		%		%		%
Turin	1	923,106	50	962,507	52	1,117,154	57	1,167,968	61	-4.4	-15.9	-4.1	-4.1	-4.1	-4.1
First ring	23	523,445	28	526,310	28	494,922	25	446,885	23	10.7	6.4	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5
Second ring	29	258,967	14	242,222	13	231,917	12	187,870	10	23.4	4.5	6.9	6.9	6.9	6.9
Third ring	56	139,694	8	134,194	7	124,587	6	110,473	6	12.8	11.4	4.1	4.1	4.1	4.1
Total	109	1,845,212	100	1,865,233	100	1,968,580	100	1,913,196	100	2.9	-5.2	-1.1	-1.1	-1.1	-1.1
Total area '72	53	1,705,518	92	1,731,039	93	1,843,993	94	1,802,723	94	2.3	-6.1	-1.5	-1.5	-1.5	-1.5

Source: Istat, Population Census Data. (For 1995 data see: Conforti - Davico - Mela, 1997).

Table 2 Migration from and to Turin

	Immigrants to Turin		Emigrants from Turin		Balance
		%		%	
Rest of metrop. area	33,661	35.7	65,118	49.9	-31,457
Rest of Piedmont	15,186	16.1	26,365	20.2	-11,179
Rest of Italy	33,632	35.7	34,906	26.8	-1,274
Abroad	10,435	11.1	3,472	2.7	6,963
Not determined	1,247	1.3	517	0.4	730
Total	94,161	100.0	130,378	100.0	-36,217

Source: Conforti - Davico - Mela, 1997.

economic bases, production technologies and real estate markets – we refer the reader to the vast literature which already exists on the subject. For our purposes, it is sufficient to stress that Turin is not devoid of this tendency, although it does display peculiarities with respect to other Italian and European metropolitan areas.

In 1951, Turin had a population of over 700,000 inhabitants, in 1961 of more than a million, and the number continued to increase continuously until 1974, when it reached a peak of 1,205,000 inhabitants (urbanisation). The trend was subsequently reversed and Turin's population began to decrease; since 1990 it has dropped below one million.

In the same years, the population of the suburbs grew (suburbanisation) to such an extent that

it set off the drop in the number of inhabitants of the central commune, but this only happened until the eighties. Subsequently, the growth of suburban areas ceased to compensate for the decrease in Turin so that, in 1991, the population of the metropolitan area fell by more than 100,000 inhabitants – a clear symptom of deurbanisation – although between 1981 and 1991 the growth rate of the population in the first ring exceeded 6.4% and that of the second ring 4.5%. Yet it would be premature to interpret this trend as a sign of reurbanisation.

The most recent migratory trends (1991-'95) show (see table 2) that the drop in population in Turin stems from the exchange with other Piedmontese communes and between the latter and the extended metropolitan area³.

³ Composed in this case of the 52 communes of the original delimitation plus another 56 bordering communes (cf. Conforti - Davico - Mela, 1997).

Table 3 Level of education in some metropolitan areas in Italy (percentage of over six by degree of education) 1991

	Graduates	High school	Lower middle	Elementary	Without qualifications
<i>Central cities</i>					
Turin	6.0	21.9	34.0	29.0	8.8
Milan	9.3	27.7	32.8	23.6	6.4
Bologna	9.6	24.2	27.5	30.6	8.1
Rome	8.5	28.3	30.2	24.3	8.7
<i>Provinces</i>					
Turin	4.0	19.7	34.3	32.2	9.0
Milan	5.2	23.4	33.8	29.4	8.0
Bologna	6.0	21.4	28.7	33.0	10.9
Rome	7.0	26.2	31.1	25.8	9.9

Source: Istat. Central cities: data refer only to the biggest municipality in the area; provinces: data refer to the provincial administrative area.

Against an influx of 94,000 new residents, the city registered an outflow of 130,000 people. Breaking down the total figure by areas of origin/destination, it emerges clearly that the drop is largely due to the population exchange with communes in the metropolitan area (31,467 inhabitants). As a consequence, a dynamic trend in population was recorded only in the second and third rings (table 1), and this, in turn, suggests that the deurbanisation phase is persisting.

Within this framework of demographic decline, one important new development is the growth in the inflow of immigrants from countries outside the EU. In Sep-

tember 1996 17,000 non-EU citizens – 33% of whom from Morocco – were registered in Turin. The figure considerably underestimates the effective presence of foreigners, failing to take into account the number of illegal immigrants (at least 10,000). Although it corresponds to a relatively low percentage of the total population of Turin, and is hence by no means comparable with other European metropolises, it has been large enough to trigger a good deal of social tension. The 1997 election campaign in Turin, for example, was dominated by the question of urban safety, relegating serious problems such as that of economic development to a secondary role.

Table 4 Occupation in firms and other activities in Turin and its rings

	1981					
	Industry	%	Others	%	Total	%
Turin	212,490	49.8	262,735	71.5	475,275	59.8
First ring	136,269	32.0	64,798	17.6	201,099	25.3
Second ring	59,446	13.9	29,420	8.0	88,880	11.2
Third ring	18,203	4.3	10,733	2.9	28,940	3.6
Total	426,408	100.0	367,686	100.0	794,194	100.0
Total area '72	408,205		356,953		765,254	
	1991					
	Industry	%	Others	%	Total	%
Turin	147,455	43.8	277,719	67.4	425,218	56.8
First ring	119,018	35.3	84,117	20.4	203,170	27.1
Second ring	52,478	15.6	36,329	8.8	88,823	11.9
Third ring	18,020	5.3	13,974	3.4	31,999	4.3
Total	336,971	100.0	412,139	100.0	749,210	100.0
Total area '72	318,951		398,165		717,211	

Source: Istat, *Industrial Census Data* (agricultural occupation not considered).

This process is transforming the urban area of Turin from a 'monocentric' structure to an increasingly 'polycentric' one in which the emerging 'subpoles' are displaying growing autonomy with respect to the central pole. This has undoubtedly hampered the building of a metropolitan identity, aggravating the fears of surrounding communes vis-à-vis the risk of exploitation by Turin, as we see below.

The way the economic structure has developed also reveals a gradual transformation from an eco-

nomie system based on industrial activities to one dominated by tertiary services, even though the Turin area continues to be much more industrialised than other metropolitan areas in Italy. This translates (table 3) into a lower level of education in the Turin metropolitan area due to the increased importance of relatively skilled occupation in industry.

A brief glance at tables 4-5 shows how the importance of occupation in the various economic activities, in industry especially, has gradually increased in the pe-

Table 5 Percentage of occupation in industrial firms in Turin and its rings

	1951	1981	1991
Turin	82.1	52.0	46.2
First ring	12.4	33.4	37.3
Second ring	5.5	14.6	16.5
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: Istat, *Industrial Census Data*.

ripheral rings. Hence in 1991 (table 5) the two rings outstripped Turin in terms of their share of industrial occupation (53.8%). Following a perfectly symmetrical trend (table 6), Turin became a largely service-based city as early as 1981 (55% of employment), whereas the metropolitan area of 53 municipalities (TMA) registered the primacy of service occupation in 1991 (55%). Between 1981 and 1991 the metropolitan area lost about 90,000 jobs in industry, most of them located in the central city.

This series of transformations has been widely interpreted as a symptom of the decline of the area following the decline of the traditional production base, centred round the mechanical engineering industry and means of transport. In the early nineties, the high rate of unemployment, which has risen from an average of 8% in the late eighties to 10,5%, the constant drop in the number of industrial workers and firms and Turin's descent in classifications of Italian provinces in terms of income per capita (figu-

Table 6 Share of occupation in industry and services in 1981 and 1991

	% Industry		% Others	
	1981	1991	1981	1991
Turin	44.7	34.7	55.3	65.3
52 TMA*	67.5	58.7	32.5	41.3
Total	53.3	44.5	46.6	55.5

* TMA: Turin metropolitan area.

Source: Istat, *Industrial Census Data*.

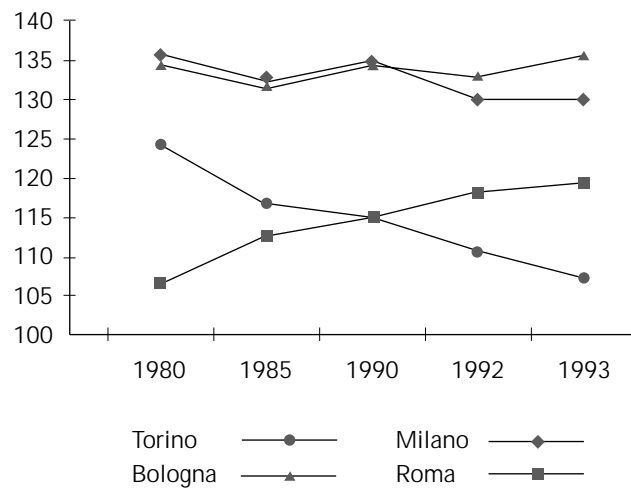
re 2) were signs of a situation of stress against which no new form of metropolitan polarisation through the development of technological/managerial managed to emerge. Another sign of the problems of transition of the Turin economy was the fact that, in 1994, the city and its province were earmarked as one of the regions covered by objective 2 of the European Union's structural policies.

Whether the economic revolution was doomed to progressive decline or whether instead it concealed positive factors for elements of reorganisation and productive conversion is still a

subject of analysis and discussion. In the period from 1992 to 1995 the prevailing feeling in Turin was undoubtedly one of pessimism, but in recent years a significant shift has taken place, bolstered by some of the strong points of the system.

The area's industry still looks abroad a lot. Between 1988 exports from the province of Turin accounted for 9% of the Italian total; in 1993, the figure had fallen to 6.9%, although it has subsequently risen again, thanks initially to the devaluation of the lira, returning to 8% in 1995 and 7.9% in 1996, thus offering proof of the competitive capacity of firms in the area.

Figure 2 Added value per capita per inhabitant in four provinces (index with respect to the Italian average = 100)



Furthermore, on the basis of recent projections, from now until 2000 exports from the province of Turin will show an annual growth rate in excess of 8%. The most recent estimates of provincial revenue for the same period show growth rates significantly higher than in other areas of the country (i.e., the North-east and the Centre).

A recent survey by the Turin Employers' Association revealed that industrial firms in the area are extremely internationalised, not only in terms of the export-production ratio. One firm out of every five interviewed has decentralised production phases abroad, 17% receive funding outside Italy, 23% use foreign technicians and 37% buy in technologies from abroad.

Last but not least, 67% of so-called 'innovative firms' registered in Piedmont in all size classes are concentrated in the province of Turin⁴.

Turin is thus by right one of the European areas most heavily affected by economic globalisation processes and the competitive stress which they generate. Compared with those of other regions

affected by deindustrialisation processes, the local economy shoulders the burden of over-specialisation in some mature production sectors, as well as Turin's image as a 'one company town'. It is a well known fact that other old industrial regions with more differentiated economic structures have suffered the reorganisation-redevelopment-image relaunch process much less (Chinitz, 1961). Fiat's economic weight in the Turin area has nevertheless decreased considerably. According to IRES estimates, between 1986 and 1996 employment generated by the Fiat group decreased from 92,000 to 47,000 units, falling from 25% to 15% of total industrial occupation (craft-based enterprises excluded).

Generally speaking, the occupational importance of small and medium enterprises increased. Between 1981 and 1991, the percentage of people employed in firms with fewer than 100 employees increased from 55% to 64%. In the metropolitan area, made up of 53 communes, the incidence of occupation in innovative segments of the service sector (financial, business and professio-

⁴ Cf. IRES, 1997, and CCIAA, 1996. Analysis of the information pool produced by the Observatory of the diffusion of innovation, set up by the Chambers of Commerce of Piedmont and built on the basis of a set of selection criteria, highlights how, of the 2,600 firms recorded, about two thirds make use of leading-edge technologies and acquire technological knowhow through an autonomous research centre. To give an idea of their relative incidence, suffice it to think that in the 1991 census about 13,000 manufacturing firms were present in Piedmont, about 7,000 of them in the province of Turin.

nal services) increased from 24% to 30%.

As a consequence, processes of reorganisation of the social morphology of the city and its metropolitan area due to post-industrial transition are also less evident than in other urban areas. More specifically, analyses of 1991 figures highlight the fact that Turin displays none of the conspicuous phenomena of urban dualism⁵ which have characterised the largest European metropolitan areas (Ires, 1995b).

In conclusion, all the classic indicators highlight that the Turin metropolitan area is passing through a phase of demographic and occupational stagnation, accompanied by processes of redistribution of population and local economic business activities. This socio-economic and spatial reorganisation involves a redefinition both of the reciprocal roles of Turin and its external rings to relaunch both the economic attractiveness of Turin in terms of high quality service activities and its residential attractiveness for the population working in these sectors. In this respect, it is worth pointing out how Turin's transition into a post-Fordian metropolis has been littered with hold-ups and difficulties. Over the last

few years, this diagnosis of Turin has been relatively widely shared and has influenced the debate on metropolitan institutions: the halting of the economic decline of Turin and its metropolitan area and its relaunching on new economic bases was one of the key messages of the 1993 electoral campaign (the first to envisage the direct election of the mayor), which saw the victory of an unorthodox centre-left coalition led by a university professor, Valentino Castellani, from outside the world of politics.

1.2 Institutional trends

The framework of intergovernmental relations in Italy is a complex one. The debate on a possible federalist-oriented reform of the Italian state has now brought the entire three-tier Region-Province-Commune system under review. For our purposes, two basic aspects deserve mention. The first is the growth of the political clout of medium-large cities thanks both to electoral reform and renewed commitment to local development policies. The dynamism of such cities has been evident in the initiatives of their mayors, of the National Association of Italian Communes (ANCI) and of the Union of Italian Pro-

⁵ By 'urban dualism' we mean the concentration in the central city of population of high social class and groups with low, irregular income, with an accentuation of the process of suburbanisation of the middle classes and blue-collar workers in the Fordian sector.

vinces (UPi). The latter two organisations are powerful national lobbies which have fostered the setting up of a new intergovernmental decision-making and advisory body, the State-City-Autonomies Conference, alongside the pre-existing State-Regions Conference. Basically speaking, local authorities are unwilling to accept any form of subordination to the Regions, a *sine qua non* for federal reform.

The second aspect is bound up in the phenomenon of the growth of functional administrations (health, hydrogeological and environmental protection, water cycle management and so on), as we see below *vis-à-vis* networked services in the Turin metropolitan area. Combined with privatisation processes, this tends to strip local government of technical and managerial-type activities, with the risk, on the one hand, of camouflaging forms of creeping re-centralisation and, on the other, of eroding citizens' control over activities of public interest. Both aspects have weighed negatively on metropolitan reform in Italy.

In Turin, the process of urban development described in the previous paragraph has had notorious institutional consequences. The lack of cohesion between administrative units and the urban system within which all the functional interdependencies of a given community happen demands a reorganisation of local government according to alternative models which can be either structural or functional⁶. Our research hypothesis was to verify the extent to which, whereas the Turinese political-institutional debate over the last thirty years has, theoretically, been dominated by the need to arrive at a structural solution of metropolitan governance, we have, *de facto*, witnessed the gradual emergence of a type of metropolitan governance that we might define as implicitly functional.

Albeit approximately and extremely synthetically, it is worth identifying some of the phases of the institutional debate that are connected with the phases of the economic and urban development that we saw above.

⁶ Given the aims of this seminar, the differences between the structural and functional models of metropolitan governance are taken as understood. The structural solution is based on the creation of a new level of government to carry out a plurality of functions at metropolitan level; the functional solution, instead, identifies the different procedural and administrative structures to address the main metropolitan problems; for example, general associations among local authorities, a transport authority, miscellaneous agreements among local authorities for specific policies, programme agreements, etc. These models stem also from the intercommunal and supracommunal models presented in Lefèvre, 1996.

During the industrialisation and urbanisation phase (which lasted until the mid seventies), the debate focused on institutional hypotheses based on co-operative models – especially at the planning level. An initial proposal for an intercommunal planning scheme (envisaged by the town planning law of 1942) can be traced back to 1951. It was subsequently to develop through a series of projects up to the Turin municipality's approval of the scheme in 1964, although only a few communes in the metropolitan area were to follow the city's lead. The experience had no practical consequences⁷, one of the reasons for this being that, throughout the period in question, single communes had pursued planning policies totally at loggerheads with the aims of the scheme. Parallel collaboration initiatives were developed among the communes of the ring administered by left-wing majorities, often in conflict with the decisions taken in Turin which, until 1975, was governed by centre-right and centre-left majorities. An important factor in that period was the approaching birth of regional authorities. Although some participants in the cultural debate argued in favour of experiences of metropolitan governance along the lines of European

and Canadian models or, at all events, of the debate in the Anglo-Saxon world, the prevailing hypothesis was to assign the regional authority the role of managing the planning of the metropolitan area as part of the urban planning competences envisaged by art. 117 of the Constitution.

As the process of industrial development and urbanisation came to an end, so an important new player – the regional authority – appeared on the stage. The period between 1975 and 1980 (the second regional legislature) was arguably the most florid for the various regional authorities, in terms both of their institutional planning capacity and their ability to influence central government and other local autonomies. The regional authorities – and Piedmont's fits perfectly into the model – began by reorganising the system of autonomies, introducing new intermediate levels of government ('comprensori', or local districts, including that of Turin) to downgrade the role of provincial authorities, seen more as decentralised offshoots of central government than as local government bodies. Clearly, a strong level of governance of the metropolitan area, especially its structural variant, was seen by the regional authorities as a hindrance to the implementation

⁷ For an effective reconstruction of the Turin intercommunal planning scheme episode, see *Urbanistica*, Nos. 50-51, October 1967.

of its local policies. This contradiction arose in those years and, as we shall see, still continues to this day.

1980 marked an important political and economic turnaround for Turin. It was in that year, in fact, that Fiat embarked upon a major reorganisation process based on massive lay-offs. After blocking production for almost a month, the unions were forced to accept a compromise. Industrial occupation began to fall in the metropolitan area, and the process of industrialisation/expansion of the service industry typical of many European cities and towns speeded up.

From an institutional point of view, 1980 also marked the beginning of the third regional legislature (1980-'85). This was a period in which regional authorities lost much of the planning vigour they had shown in the previous five years and, at the same time, traditional local autonomies – provincial authorities and, above all, communes – reasserted their influence; directly aided and abetted by the political parties they were able to leapfrog the regional authorities and deal directly with central administrations.

In Turin, the 'Fiat shock' triggered a debate, which was to develop in the course of the eighties, against the paradigm of re-equilibrium which had dominated regional policies in the previous five-year period. It soon became clear that the big risk for the metropolitan area lay not so much in phenomena of congestion and external diseconomies caused by an excessive concentration of production activities as in the gradual economic and social decline to which it was prone (as had been or was the case in other European urban areas) due to the decline of traditional industries – the car industry, first and foremost.

As early as 1982, Turin was swept by a series of scandals which caused a political crisis in the left-wing municipal administration, subsequently replaced by a centre-left administration in 1985 (and the same happened at regional level). The following years were marked by instability and the communal government's activism – alas, without any strategic planning or agreement with other communes in the metropolitan area – on major infrastructural and real estate projects⁸.

⁸ One of the most important investments in Turin was made in the new municipal stadium, built for the 1990 World Cup. Turin's leading soccer club, Juventus F. C., are currently involved in a dispute with the franchisees over excessive rental costs, and are threatening to play their matches in other stadiums elsewhere in Italy unless they are granted permission to build a new smaller stadium with additional commercial centre functions (on the Dutch and British model). This is one example of the consequences of the euphoric climate of those years (cf. Ires, 1989, 1995a).

The nineties, finally, have been characterised by two major reforms of the system of local government in Italy – Law No. 142/1990 and Law No. 81/1993 on the direct election of mayors – which have changed the institutional reference framework profoundly. More specifically, the figure of the mayor has become much more representative, capable of promoting significant innovations in the local political system – but also many an illusion and unrealistic expectation – at least until further reforms of the local administrative system⁹, under review by parliament in recent months, are passed. It is also true, however, that the direct election of the mayor has returned the commune ‘to the centre of the institutional system’, further depleting the institutional clout and prestige of the regional authority and, secondarily, of the provincial authority. In the final analysis, the problem of the metropolitan area was shelved in the eighties due to institutional conflicts between the various levels of government. But, as we shall see, this did not mean that no metropolitan policies were implemented with regard to networked services.

So how has the problem been addressed over the last 30-40 years? It is worth stressing that, in this period, the metropolitan problem has been formulated in different ways with contradictory institutional effects.

For brevity’s sake, we built the model shown in table 7 in which we outline the institutional development of Turin in relation to its economic and urban development and some reference paradigms of possible conceptualisations of administrative challenges.

Institutional innovations stem directly from the analytical reference categories which can be used to define the metropolitan area concept. Bruno Dente’s effective classification (Dente, 1989), widely used in the debate over the last few years, identifies three main innovations: ‘big village’, ‘functional region’ and ‘capital city’. Below we provide a brief outline of Dente’s theory, but anyone wishing further details should see Dente’s essay and the now very extensive literature on the subject¹⁰.

The first identifies the metropolis as a ‘big city’, with an ‘outsize urban settlement’, characterised

⁹ See the recent book by Luciano Vandelli, 1997, a brief and effective reconstruction of the effects of the electoral reform of 1993.

¹⁰ Cf. Dente, 1989. The literature on metropolitan areas is very rich indeed: see the bibliography contained in Dente’s article and Ires’ two previous studies: Ires, 1991a and Ires, 1991b.

Table 7 Economic growth, urban growth and institutional change in Turin: a preliminary and tentative analytical framework

<i>Economic growth</i>	<i>Urban growth</i>	<i>Years</i>	<i>Institutional change</i>	<i>Administrative challenge (paradigm)</i>
Industrialisation	Urbanisation-suburbanisation	1955-1975	Weak intergovernmental (vertical and horizontal) co-operation	'Big village problems'
Deindustrialisation	Suburbanisation	1975-1985	Regionalisation	'Urban agglomeration problems (functional region)'
Growth service industry	Suburbanisation-deurbanisation	1985-1995	Stronger intergovernmental (horizontal-functional-indirect) co-operation	'Capital city problems', 'big village problems'
Post-Fordism	Deurbanisation-reurbanisation	1995-...	Strong regionalism or functional flexible metropolitan governance	'Capital city problems'

by a high concentration of population, extra-agricultural activities and infrastructure around one main urban pole. The principal problem of metropolitan governance is to produce public services efficiently, capturing economies of urban scale and taking into account the effects of service overflows.

The second identifies the urban metropolitan area as a complex, integrated set of several interdependent centres, each of which

characterised by a functional specialisation vis-à-vis residential, productive and, in general, 'environmental' functions (to describe the phenomenon, we also speak of functional or urban regions). This set of interrelations demands the governance of interdependencies at a supramunicipal level by planning an area vaster than the one linked to the urban agglomerate itself.

The third, finally, identifies metropolises as places characterised

by the presence of advanced functions connected with strategic decision-making activities and innovation-intensive technological processes demanding a specific socio-cultural environment and high quality urban infrastructure. In this case, the metropolis has a radius of influence which transcends the regional and national dimensions and develops a network of relations with metropolises of comparable rank.

Over the years these three images of metropolitan problems in Turin have succeeded one another, thus creating the need for special institutional solutions. Only rarely, however, have they been addressed together.

Only the administrative challenge of wide area services has allowed major steps forward to be made, as we see in the section that follows.

In Turin's case, the questions of the functional region and capital city role were addressed as part of the debate on the implementation of Law No. 142/1990 during the 1990-'95 regional legislature, although at the outset they ten-

ded to get mislaid in a dispute over the boundaries of the new authority. In 1991 the regional junta presented a bill proposing a relatively small-sized metropolitan area of 33 communes by way of application of the structural model envisaged by Law No. 142/1990.

During the ensuing debate a regional position developed in favour¹¹ of the setting up of an experimental form of metropolitan governance based on association, beginning as a consortium and subsequently becoming a conference of metropolitan communes; here we saw explicit acceptance of a functional (intercommunal) model. In 1995, the new regional junta suspended all institutional initiatives in this direction, and since then central commune has adopted a wait-and-see stance, although it officially favours a functional approach. The mayor Valentino Castellani has explicitly referred to the experience of the Agreement for the Metropolitan City in Bologna¹².

The role of the province of Turin has also been marginal,

¹¹ This position emerges with some force in a document published by the regional authority (cf. Regione Piemonte, 1994) proposing the setting up of an association for the Turin metropolitan area made up not only of the regional and provincial authorities and communes in the area, but also the Chamber of Commerce, universities and research establishments, non-profit associations, banking foundations, interest groups and public and private firms. This is the only explicit proposal to date for a model of 'metropolitan governance'.

¹² "Now, luckily, a new school of thought is prevailing: the one of a bottom-up functional approach. In this way we can deal with a variable geometry geographical structure" (cf. Castellani, 1996, p. 111).

although by virtue of its increased functions it might be able to unlock the situation of institutional stalemate in the future.

This is why institutional changes (table 7) since 1995 only show an increase in forms of technical-functional horizontal co-operation, developed largely through municipal concerns, and a question mark looms over the scenario of intergovernmental relations that can be hypothesised in the near future.

Ultimately, the case of Turin effectively shows how the monopoly of geographical representation by existing institutions has de facto blocked processes of institutional innovation.

2. The development of the main networked metropolitan services

Even without an institutionally structured governmental authority, since the second half of the nineties the principal networked services have been developing in implicit accord with a metropolitan reference scale. This type of development was led by public and private sector entities with different forms of management (franchises, contracting, reliance on municipal concerns or consortia, tenders, production through communal municipal concerns and so on). The services that are most interesting to analyse from an economic point of view are

those of the so-called 'water cycle' (aqueduct and effluent water softening services).

2.1 The aqueduct service: municipal concerns, private firms, communal management

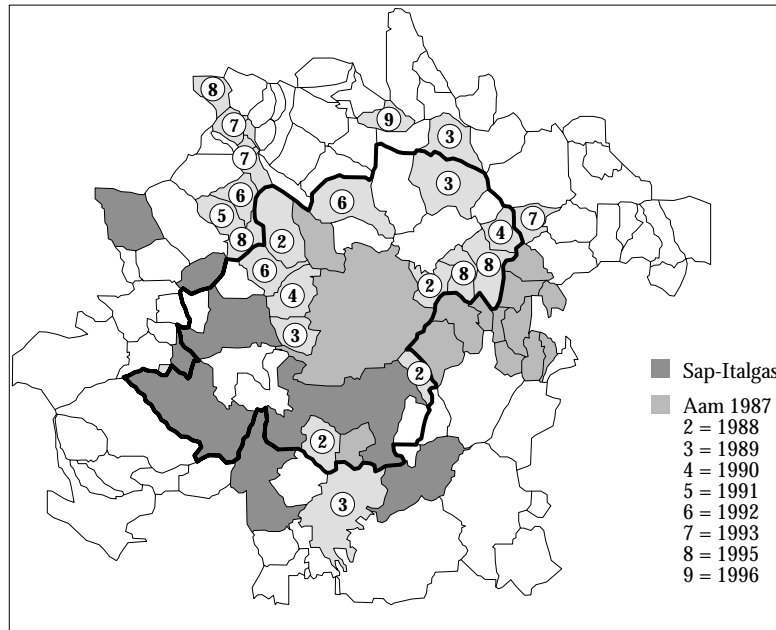
Drinking water supply services in the metropolitan area are operated by a plurality of bodies adopting different management models. Services are currently supplied by:

- a municipal concern in Turin and another 11 communes, which represent 45% of the population of the rest of the area;
- private firms in 12 communes accounting for 46% of the population outside Turin;
- direct production by the commune in 8 communes.

In addition, a mixed private-public company with a majority communal stake operates for the aqueduct of Alpignano. The early nineties saw increases in the number of inhabitants served by the municipal concern of Turin and SAP-Italgas, which replaced direct managements and the drinking water company.

The water company considerably enlarged its area of activity in 1982, first to small hillside communes and then, from the late eighties, gradually to other communes in the area. The process of extension continued until recently (figure 2), especially outside the metropolitan area.

Figure 2 Expansion of the municipal aqueduct concern in the eighties and nineties



The lack of a structured metropolitan area appears not to have given networked service the much feared 'leopard-spot' configuration.

If anything, the real problem is that, despite the presence of two concerns which compete against each other (AAM and SAP-Italgas), communes appear not to have reaped the benefits of competition. One explanation for this might be the administrative naiveté of communes, undemanding when they stipulate contracts. Another might be the lack of transparency of the main bidders.

An oligopolistic concern, be it public or private, can achieve economies of scale even without structured metropolitan governance, but the problem of consumer guarantee and protection remains open.

2.2 Effluent water softening services

Technological and operational unhomogeneities also exist for services related with effluent water (the collection and softening of water from civilian and productive installations, the disposal of softening muds and so on). The

quality of communal sewage networks varies greatly; this partly depends on their degree of wear and tear and the separation between water for civilian use and water for industrial use. The networks are almost always operated by the communes themselves with their own personnel and periodical interventions by specialised firms; only in a few cases is the service completely delegated to private firms through special conventions. Water softening, instead, is almost entirely publicly operated, carried out largely by the Azienda Po Sangone which, through a network of sewage collectors, receives the effluent water of 18 communes in the area other than Turin, and covers 85% of the population. Three consortia also operate on behalf of 6 communes (10% of the population of the area). In the remaining 9 communes, water is softened at small communally-owned plants self-managed by private firms. In two cases, a single firm operates both aqueduct and sewage networks, as well as softening plants.

The water softening concern has expanded considerably in recent years, especially outside the metropolitan area. A total of 31 communes have joined the consortium and, in 1997, five communes in the area stipulated an agreement with the company for the management of sewer networks.

2.3 Other services

The area in which solid waste cycle and transport activities operate has also expanded.

The collection and transport of urban solid waste apparently requires minimal ceilings of users served to enable the operating firm to use the capital allocations needed optimally. It is also felt, however, that it fails to give rise to sizeable economies of scale above this level (minimal ceilings are, nonetheless, low, fewer than 100,000 inhabitants). A large number of private and public firms in the area provide a service similar to that of the municipal concern of Turin, with comparable cost burdens, calculated in terms of spending by quintal collected or inhabitant served, and chargeable to the communes involved.

Less homogeneous procedures are adopted to dispose of waste. In certain cases, the service is integrated into municipal concerns or consortia which already handle the collection of solid urban waste and dispose of it within the area of the commune; in other cases, disposal is totally delegated to the solid urban waste collection contractor.

The other services considered – street cleaning and washing and differentiated collection – are provided virtually everywhere.

Albeit without expanding, the transport service also has become

more integrated, especially through tariff innovations.

This service boasts a multiplicity of operators in the area, and the transport supply is largely radial, converging on Turin. It consists of both rail and road transport.

The rail service is made up of 10 lines belonging to the Turin Fs State Railway division and the Turin-Ceres and Canavesana lines operated under franchise by Satti. Road transport is differentiated into an urban/suburban service (more frequent and continuous with a basic fixed fare) and an intercommunal service (less continuous with a fare system based on block distances). The suburban service largely covers the first ring of Turin. Forty-seven companies provide the local transport service in the area. In view of the mobility and commuter-type travel round the node (Turin), not to mention the present complexion of the transport supply, the area clearly has the right characteristics for the integrated control of mobility. The metropolitan city configuration which emerges is almost circular in shape with a radius of 15-20 km and is made up of 35 communes besides Turin. The single basic fare policy was launched in 1996 under the 'Formula' project. The distinction between urban, suburban, intercommunal and rail fares was eliminated so that any user can travel on any means of public tran-

sport, be it rail or road, simply by buying one unified travel document (ticket or season ticket).

2.4 Privatisations in progress

Law No. 142/1990 has laid the bases for a large number of communal activities to be performed through autonomous forms of organisation, thus creating a new model of communal management which has been dubbed in some quarters as 'the Commune cum holding company'. It is argued that the Commune ought to behave like a parent company which performs no direct production and trade activity, but confines itself to directing subsidiaries. From the point of view of the economy of local government, these innovations are of broad interest for at least two reasons. In the first place, a sizeable part of the activity carried out by Communes could be privatised: the economic criteria used to choose between public and private sector for the supply and production of a given service are thus of considerable operating importance. Secondly, the legislation in question stems from the gradual cutting of costs of the so-called natural monopolies as a result of a series of technological innovations, which now tend to make forms of competition possible even in sectors (water, electricity, etc.) traditionally entrusted to communal monopolies. As in Bologna, the

municipal concerns of Turin were also swept by a wave of 'neo-liberalism' – validated by the Partito Democratico della Sinistra – which led to the setting up of a specific communal department as early as 1993. Now, four years on, the gradual introduction of municipal concerns onto the market (quotation on the stock exchange cannot be ruled out in the future, but for the moment the Commune is holding onto a majority stake) is, de facto, only just beginning. The Commune has now converted the water and electricity concerns (AAM and AEM) into limited companies, while the urban transport and urban hygiene concerns (ATM and AMIAT) have stayed under communal control with 'special company' status. Only in the case of the electrical concern has a minority share of the capital been put on sale to the private sector. Delays have been caused both by political forces in the city council and by the trade unions and managers at the concerns themselves, who are favourable towards leaner forms of organisation but also determined to maintain the balance of power of the monopolistic management of services. Concerns have seen the reform as an opportunity to implement their strategies more effectively in a supracommunal perspective, further developing the implicitly functional model referred to above. The 'società per

azioni' (limited company) model offers them three types of advantage. First, it facilitates the recourse to indebtedness (through forms of project financing, for example) or, in any event, capitalisation to make the investment necessary to develop networks and service areas. Secondly, limited companies are no longer subject to legal constraints from the geographical point of view; more precisely, unlike municipal concerns they can provide their services anywhere. Thirdly, the choice of limited company legal status ensures greater transparency in patrimonial and financial dealings with the Commune, although it reduces competition for the service, which may be entrusted directly without a call for tenders.

The social connotation of the public services to be entrusted to limited companies demands an effective control system to assure the public interest and ensure service quality. Whereas in the case of disposals (entrustment to third parties), these guarantees are contained in the deed of concession, in the setting up of limited companies the control is envisaged in the convention which accompanies the entrustment of the service and is also guaranteed by the powers attributed by law to the communal assembly.

Two final considerations may be pertinent to the analysis of our

research project. First, the concept of the metropolitan area as a tool for solving the problems of big cities through the direct production of public services exploiting economies of scale and scope loses further ground. In contrast, greater recourse to the market through privatisation stresses the need for an authority monitoring efficiency, guaranteeing competition, controlling quality and protecting consumers over an area that is probably larger than that strictly needed to achieve economies of scale. Secondly, the difficulties encountered in the process of privatisation reveal the ongoing mutual diffidence and impermeability of public and private actors. Hence the problems involved in building coalitions of interests at an urban level. It is no coincidence that certain under-the-surface signs of interest for the municipal electrical concern from Fiat group companies were not received with overt enthusiasm in the city's political debate.

3. In search of political leadership

Why doesn't the metropolitan question figure in Turin's political agenda?

The answer lies in the insufficient initiative of local public and private élites in building what, in other parts of this study, has been defined as a 'public policy com-

munity'. Big industry plays a major role among private local élites in Turin. The saying 'If Fiat is well, Turin is well too' shows how the city was long identified with the large-scale enterprise round which its economic and, in part, political systems rotated. In recent years Fiat, which, it would be wrong to forget, is Italy's largest private industrial group, has fully integrated in globalisation processes, successfully installing new production locations in Asia (India) and South America (Brazil, Argentina). Turin, of course, is more than just Fiat and, as we have seen, the area boasts a technologically rich industrial fabric. In the services sector, it boasts the recently privatised Istituto Bancario San Paolo which, in terms of assets, is Italy's largest banking group. Private players have failed, however, to perform an active role in building a system of metropolitan governance. The most attentive observers of the Turin area as a local society (Bagnasco, 1996, 1990; Gallino, 1990) have long been agreed that difficulties of policy-making are due to the political subsystem's weakness with respect to the economic system. "Turin emerged from Fordism with an urgent need to rebuild politics" (Bagnasco, 1990, p. 17). From this point of view, the absence of an explicit metropolitan government is simply the other face of the absence of what

has been defined as 'orgware'¹³: namely, organising capacity or "the ability to enlist all actors involved, and with their help to generate new ideas and develop and implement a policy designed to respond to fundamental developments and create conditions for sustainable development" (Van den Berg - Braun - Van der Meer, 1997, p. 256), a concept which can easily be traced to that of governance¹⁴. It is also true, however, that it is not easy to weld the economic strategies of the leading local private sector and political actors (Mazza, 1990). The first are part of a network of international economic relations which inevitably pushes them away from their local roots, given the lack of a lucid political-institutional strategy capable of fostering the co-

operation of private interests, especially through real estate and infrastructure policies (i.e., transparent governance of the urban revenue). For example, the Fiat's old Lingotto car production plant, built in the twenties and a splendid example of industrial archaeology, was converted into a service centre without a clear urban development strategy on the part of the city of Turin and still shows unsatisfactory economic returns (Bobbio, 1991; Van den Berg - Braun - Van der Meer, 1997).

Will the new municipal political class in the Turin area be capable of recovering these delays? In Italy detailed analyses have yet to be made of the effects of communal electoral reform on the local political class¹⁵. In Turin and some

¹³ The reference is to a study carried out by Euricur on behalf of the Eurocities Association based on eight European cities, among which Turin, Bologna and Rotterdam. The study sets out from the model of Porter (1990), who identifies three types of factors underlying competitiveness in the different areas: tangible, 'hardware' factors such as labour, capital and infrastructure; intangible 'software' factors such as those connected with the quality of life; and, finally, 'orgware', the ability to handle urban hardware and software effectively. Leadership, vision and strategy, strategic networks, political support and societal support emerge as the critical factors for a successful organising capacity in an urban area.

¹⁴ Attempts have been made to overcome this delay. The first was based on a cycle of seminars, 'Discussions on Turin' promoted by economic actors (including Fiat, GFT, Banca CRT, Istituto Bancario San Paolo) in 1988 and 1989, which sought to encourage scholars, administrators and firms to open a debate on the future of the city (cf. Bagnasco, 1991). In 1992, through the Torino Incontra Association, the Turin Chamber of Commerce presented a dossier of proposals to relaunch Turin (Torino Incontra, 1992), involving all the strategic local economic and political actors. A similar initiative was launched in July 1997 (Torino Incontra, 1997). The aim of these initiatives was precisely to identify a shared vision of the future of the area, but they appear to have had no political fallout to date.

¹⁵ The most recent was that of Bettin - Magnier, 1995.

communes of the metropolitan area, two elections have already been held under the new rules. It is thus possible to ask to what extent this has affected the prospects for a new metropolitan government. Various Italian studies have shown how, in the first 25 years in the life of the Republic, the mayors of large cities displayed all the characteristics of local notables, but were actually selected through intermediation by the parties¹⁶. In the sixties, a new type of mayor emerged, more closely tied to the phenomenon of the professionalisation of politics as a consequence of the growing role of political parties in Italian society. The 1993 reform, combined with the intense process of delegitimisation of traditional political parties increased the clout of mayors and city spokesmen arriving directly from civil society, although empirical evidence shows that the channels of recruitment are still very often, directly or indirectly, linked to the political parties. What would appear to be becoming more consolidated is a managerial-entrepreneurial vision of the mayor's role, an experience to be exploited subsequently not so much in high-level political posts as in managerial

activities in civil society, especially in the world of economics. Politics is no longer defined as 'the capacity to deal with men but to deal with the rules and financial resources offered by the communal machine with a view to achieving short-term concrete objectives' (Bettin - Magnier, 1995, p. 116).

In reality, the failure to solve the problems of a large urban area such as Turin confirms how the 1993 reform has mainly influenced forms of communal government, stabilising executives and helping bipolar electoral models to emerge, but also that this is a necessary but not a sufficient condition to perform a role of governance. In other words, it has influenced the capacity to solve collective problems such as the promotion of an adequate process of development of a metropolitan area¹⁷. As analysis of other study cases shows, local institutions must be capable of governing a complex network of interactions among the principal public and private players inside a metropolitan area. Indeed, in Turin the partial 'de-professionalisation' of politics is, in all likelihood, in paradoxical contrast with the need for a 'metropolitan political entrepre-

¹⁶ See Bettin - Magnier, 1995 and Spreafico, 1963. For differences between French and Italian mayors, see the now classic study by Tarrow (1979); on the effects of the 1993 electoral legislation, see Vandelli, 1997.

¹⁷ For an analysis of the problems connected with the decision-making processes of Italian communes, see Bobbio, 1997.

neur' capable of building a new supracommunal political space and creating a specific coalition of interests – a sort of Turinese urban growth machine – specifically for the purpose. The lack of a strategic metropolitan planning scheme as a symbolic foundation for the new political space is further proof of the fact. The absence of a clear metropolitan political leadership – a feature clearly evident in the other case studies, with the exception of the Geneva-Lausanne metropolis – is probably the main cause of Turin's institutional stagnation.

All of which is bound up with the problems, outlined above, of intergovernmental relations in Italy, where existing institutions are an objective obstacle to metropolitan reform – and not only in Turin, as the history of Bologna shows.

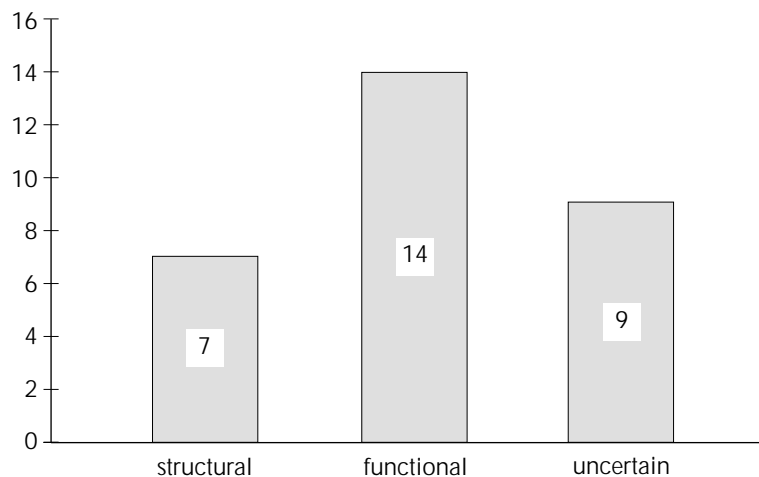
The picture we have outlined here would be incomplete without a brief reference to the conduct of the mayors of the communes in the metropolitan area. In a recent Ires survey on the 42 mayors of communes in Turin's two concentric suburban rings¹⁸, the absence of a metropolitan political space – i.e., a context of preferential co-operative relations – clearly emerges. Relations between satellite communes

and the central commune itself are regarded by mayors as difficult and conflictual and the image of the commune of Turin which emerges is one of a subject with hegemonic intentions, keen to dump the negative effects of its own policies on bordering communes. The meagre technical-political interactions which take place are concentrated exclusively in the communes of the first ring. Vice versa, networks of relations based on mutual confidence have developed among the various groups of communes of the metropolitan area, which often correspond to the administrative spaces previously occupied by local health units. Likewise, it is worth noting that these co-operative formulas are often designed to promote economic development initiatives. If friction sometimes arises among communes, it usually stems from differences in size (i.e., small communes versus large communes).

Answers to a specific request for an assessment of the metropolitan model reveal the existence of three categories of mayors: those in favour of structural solutions, supporters of a functional-type solution and mild opponents, those with strong doubts but, nonetheless, open to a functional solution, which thus gains majority

¹⁸ Cf. Ires, 1998.

Figure 3 Opinions of mayors in the metropolitan area about models of metropolitan government



approval (figure 3). All, however, betrayed a certain unwillingness to side with one solution rather than another out of fear of larger entities such as the Commune of Turin and the Provincial and Regional Authorities. This diffidence also derives from the fact that mayors have very vague knowledge – if any at all – of metropolitan government reform proposals or of the experiments in progress (in Bologna, Rome and Florence).

Conclusions

The Turin area has long experience of the problems caused by the two main types of institutional fragmentation: namely, func-

tional and political. The problem of metropolitan governance has invariably been addressed in terms of the second. The special authorities set up to solve sectorial/functional problems have, vice versa, low political visibility. There is more talk about the inclusion of Poirino (a commune on the outskirts of Turin) in the metropolitan area than the extension of the aqueduct service thereto by the city of Turin's municipal water company. In this sense, the technical bureaucracies of special companies have played a major role, fostering the emergence of what we have defined as an implicit functional model through a variable geometry geo-

graphical structure. This model looks bound to be consolidated vis-à-vis an emerging phenomenon mentioned above – that of the privatisation of some networked services – which makes the problem of co-ordinating local public services among the various communes of the conurbation less important, irrespective of certain aspects of strategic policies in the area (for example, choices for water sourcing or the location of refuse disposal sites).

The consequence of political fragmentation has been poor cooperation between the central commune and the communes in the area, which have always felt 'exploited' by Turin (in the field of public building policies, for example). This has hindered the development of a 'metropolitan community'; as a result, today the metropolitan problem is one of governance and, as such, cannot be easily solved using the original proposals envisaged by Law No. 142/1990.

The sad fact is that Turin has failed to respond equally well – returning to Dente's effective terminology – to the problems of the 'big village', the 'functional region' and the 'capital city'.

Our initial research leads us to feel that the 'big village' challenge has been partly addressed and won. The management of large-scale networked services in the Turin metropolitan area would

appear to rely more on privatisation and market decentralisation than on the building of new public co-ordination structures at the metropolitan level.

There can be no doubt, though, that responses to the 'functional region' and 'capital city' challenges have fallen short of the mark. The need for co-ordination of land planning policies (the functions communes are most jealous of!) has yet to mature, with the consequence that there is no shared vision of the future of the area – a necessary premise for any attempt at strategic planning (it is important to note that this state of affairs exists despite the fact that, politically, the local government majority is relatively homogeneous). There are contradictory signals that the need is now beginning to be felt. For example, an agency (Agenzia per gli investimenti a Torino e in Piemonte) has been set up to promote investment in Turin and Piedmont, through a partnership among the Region, the Province, the municipality of Turin, the Chamber of Commerce and some industrial associations; a convention has been stipulated between the Commune of Turin and 17 communes in the surrounding area to co-ordinate cultural policies, but the new urban policy planning and co-ordination mission recently established for the CIT (the Turin Intercommunal Consor-

tium, an association of 17 communes in the metropolitan area) so far has been unsuccessful. It is, nonetheless, significant that in the election programmes of the candidates of the two major political groupings (Polo per le Libertà [Pole for Liberties] and L'Ulivo Alleanza per il Governo [Olive Tree Government Alliance]) in the recent mayoral elections in Turin, the metropolitan issue was entirely marginal. The programme of the outgoing mayor Castellani (re-elected on May 11, 1997) only speaks of the hypothesis of building a 'forum for development' to promote Turin's development on new economic bases, open to entrepreneurs, social forces, cultural institutions and universities, without any mention of the other communes in the metropolitan area¹⁹.

A variety of different explanations can be put forward for all these hold-ups. First and foremost, comes the conflict between regional authority and local authorities. For the regional authority, the birth of a powerful metropolitan local government would seriously jeopardise its role. If Italy were to embark on the road towards a strong regional model, we would most likely be faced

with weak metropolitan governments (along the lines of Germany and Spain). If, vice versa, the regional experience were to progressively decline, we might find ourselves with a network of large cities allied with their respective provincial authorities, which would negotiate directly with the central government over the most important urban policies. Likewise, there continues to be reciprocal diffidence between Turin and the communes of its various rings, which are afraid of being dominated by the central commune, seen as a sort of 'big brother'. The interviews with the mayors show that the climate of diffidence is caused not only by objectively bad past experiences, but also by a lack of mutual contact and information; the fact is that no federal model can be introduced if there is no entity to promote a network of trust (although it is not clear what that entity should be) similar to the one that has underpinned the Bologna experiment. After all, the failure of the project to set up a new province in Rotterdam²⁰ shows just how hard it is to build a model of consensus round the government of a large urban area, even when external conditions are

¹⁹ The proposal is contained in a paragraph in the programme entitled precisely 'A capital city'.

²⁰ Cf. Te Velde, 1996; Vergès, 1997; Van der Veer, 1998.

exceedingly favourable, as well as the importance of effective public communication when undertaking courageous institutional innovation; last but not least, the lack of visible political leadership.

In conclusion, to use the ever effective metaphor of Ostrom, Tiebout and Warren²¹, no one in Turin is waiting for Gargantua to solve all its metropolitan problems, but the emergence of a metropolitan governance model is still a long way behind schedule. Nonetheless, over the last two or three years there has been a clear tendency – at least in the cultural debate – to question the structural model envisaged by

Law No. 142/1990 and replace it with contractual/federative-type hypotheses²² consistent with the proposals of national laws, identifying what we have called the ‘capital city challenge’ as the crux of the metropolitan problem. A new proposal is under the scrutiny of parliament and, if approved, could open a new way for the building of a functional flexible model.

It is hard to say, however, if and when the issue will be addressed. Only when the future development of regionalism in Italy becomes clearer shall we be able to understand the direction that policy will move in.

²¹ Cf. Ostrom - Tiebout - Warren, 1961.

²² For a reconstruction of the problem of the government of metropolitan areas in Italy, see Ferlaino - Piperno, 1996.

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