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Power and Governance: Metropolitan Governance in France

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Summary. The system of metropolitan governance in France has undergone a series of rather dramatic changes over the past 40 years. Where central cities and their powerful mayors once enjoyed a privileged position over other territorial actors, they now find themselves depending upon these other authorities to fulfil many basic governance tasks. Moreover, a layer of organisations, agencies and networks has formed to co-ordinate the collective action of these actors in areas of mutual concern. The increased importance of co-operation and partnerships in metropolitan governance has led to the prominence of the concept of functionalist power (interdependency and co-operation) in many of the analyses of metropolitan governance. By contrast, distributive conceptions of power (hierarchy and conflict) have largely been suppressed, weakening the abilities of scholars to account for a key component responsible for shaping the relational space of actors. The objective of this paper is to develop a conceptual framework that accounts for both aspects of power, and to use this framework to explain changes in the French governance system. In addition, the paper presents the case of Toulouse to provide a concrete illustration of how local actors have responded to changes in their governance systems.

Introduction

The system of metropolitan governance in France has undergone substantial changes over the past 40 years. Where once big city mayors used their privileged contacts with the central state to assert their power in their metropolitan areas, they now find themselves embedded in complex networks with multiple territorial authorities. While the mayor of the central city remains the pre-eminent figure within this system, he or she has become increasingly dependent upon regional councils, departmental councils and competing peripheral municipalities to pursue projects and develop policy agendas for the metropolitan area. A series of organisations and institutions has developed to co-ordinate and integrate this network of actors. Thus, a principal change in the structure of metropolitan governance has been the increased prominence of a network of territorial authorities in steering the metropolitan system.

The heightened degree of multiactor agency (in France and elsewhere) has led some observers to claim that governance relations are no longer structured through bureaucratic hierarchies but through a series of overlapping networks (see Le Galès, 1995, 2002; Amin and Hausner, 1997; Jessop, 1997). The prominence of networks has prompted a shift in the central question of urban political theory from 'Who rules?' to 'How is governance achieved?'. This shift signals a new emphasis in how we conceptualise power relations in the modern metropolis.

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Whereas the question of 'Who rules?' draws attention to the unequal distribution of power, institutionalised hierarchies and ensuing conflict; the question of 'How is governance achieved?' draws attention to interdependencies, mechanisms that co-ordinate and integrate actors, and co-operation. The shift in attention has provided a number of rich conceptual tools; however, renewed attention to functionalist power (interdependency, co-operation) has overshadowed the continued centrality of distributional power (hierarchy, conflict) in shaping governance systems. As a result, the dynamism underlying urban governance has been eviscerated, leaving us with a static picture of multiple actors negotiating and co-operating to achieve common goals for their metropolises. The objective of the paper is to swing the pendulum to a middle ground, where both aspects of power (interdependency and hierarchy) are viewed as co-determinants of metropolitan governance. The paper achieves this by developing a conceptual framework where both elements of power are dialectically linked, using the framework to explain changes in France's governance system and examining how particular actors in Toulouse have responded to these changes and, as a result, affected the particular form of metropolitan governance in their city.

The first section of the paper weaves two concepts of power into a single conceptual framework. The second section analyses the transition in governance systems from one where the central city and their mayors played the principal steering roles in metropolitan governance systems (1940s to 1970s) to one where this steering role has been diluted by the empowerment of other territorial authorities (1970s to present). Responsibility for this transition is placed on the diffusion of state power away from the central city and the increased importance of markets in France's urban system. These two events have created opportunities for other territorial authorities to bypass central city control over state resources and increase their own revenue, responsibilities and administrations, thereby providing them with the means to debate the priorities of their metropolitan systems. The third section examines how territorial authorities in Toulouse have responded to these new opportunities.[1]

Power and Governance: A Conceptual Framework

While most scholars continue to recognise the importance of hierarchy and conflict in shaping the relational context of actors, there have been very few attempts to analyse systematically how both aspects of power are responsible for producing the relational context of metropolitan stakeholders. This section examines the writings that have been most influential in the 'co-operative' turn in urban political theory and outlines a framework that bridges between functionalist (power to) and distributive (power over) notions of power.

Power and Governance in Clarence Stone's Theory of Urban Regimes

The writings of Clarence Stone have been particularly influential in turning urban scholars towards issues of co-operation and collective action. Although other scholars of the 'New Urban Politics' (Elkin, 1987; Fainstein, 1994) have contributed to this turn, Stone has made the clearest and most direct case for why co-operative power should stand at the centre of urban political theory.

Stone entered the urban politics debate by directing the question away from 'Who governs?' to, 'How is long-term governance achieved in complex urban systems?' Stone posits that, in a complex society, the state simply cannot function either as an authority of control or as an arbiter of competing interest-groups (Stone, 1986, 1989, 1993). Under such conditions

> Politics are about establishing overarching priorities and the issue is how to bring about enough co-operation among disparate community elements to get things done (Stone, 1989, p. 89).

Stone begins his investigation into stable governing arrangements by drawing upon a pluralist conception of authority. As Harding observes

> they (regime theorists) accept that liberal democracies have two interdependent systems of authority: one based on popular control (i.e. the various organs of representative government) and the other based on the ownership of private productive assets (i.e. largely on the business community) (Harding, 1994, pp. 359–360).

These areas of authority are sources of 'systemic power', providing the actors who control them with increased influence in the urban system. However, alone these actors lack sufficient levels of power to generate and implement an overarching agenda for the urban system. To achieve this, powerful actors must co-operate and pool their individual resources.

These actors are 'naturally' drawn together by their structural interdependency (control over state and economy). However, their power to act is contingent upon their abilities to fuse their different resources and powers.

> What is at issue is not so much domination and subordination as a capacity to act and accomplish goals. The power struggle concerns, not control and resistance, but gaining and fusing a capacity to act—power to, not power over (Stone, 1989, p. 229).

Stone highlights a series of co-ordinating mechanisms that bind actors to one another. In particular, he draws attention to the formal (contracts and institutions) and informal (social networks) mechanisms that foster a collective sense of purpose and identity, on the one hand, and that stabilise divisions of labour between coalition partners, on the other hand.

At the centre of the theory stands three basic principles: the principle of differentiation: actors are differentiated by their control over different kinds of systemic power (economic and political); the principle of interdependency: élites possessing different kinds of systemic power depend on one another and therefore must co-operate in order to generate agendas for their cities; and, the principle of secondary ties: a series of mechanisms (formal to informal) is required to integrate these actors into a collective actor.

Politics without Conflict? A Critique

Stone's theory is built on the rationale that co-operation amongst differentiated élites is necessary for achieving stable policy agendas. In this theory, conflict is present but it is not a central or necessary part of the story. Stone provides a 'structural' rationale for co-operation (principle of interdependency) while not providing a similar rationale for conflict. Conflict is contingent in this account because it does not result from unequal positioning within urban power structures (structural rationale for conflict),[2] but from disputes over the details of the policy-making process. While co-operation is certainly important in urban politics, by placing it at the centre of a theory and by reducing conflict to a contingency, regime theory has generated a static portrayal of the urban political field. In keeping with the observations of prominent conflict theorists (Mann, 1986; Giddens, 1987), the behaviour resulting from power hierarchies (conflict) infuses stable social arrangements with the dynamism that leads to their innovation and/or collapse. Just as the concepts of interdependency and system maintenance have weakened the abilities of functionalists to explain for change in national politics, Stone's emphasis on co-operation and integration leads to some of the same problems.

Stone's harshest critics have argued that his theory of urban political regimes does not apply to countries with strong state traditions (Harding, 1994; Strom, 1996; Harding and Le Galès, 1998; Dowding *et al.*, 1999; Stoker, 1995, 1999). Although local capitalists can be found actively participating in making and implementing urban policies, they are often absent from the governing coalitions cited by Stone and his colleagues. This absence can be explained by the state's enhanced role in the economic and political

functions of European cities. Actors who exercise a degree of control over state power stand at the centre of governing coalitions, explaining the persistent importance of political parties and national and local functionaries in local-level politics. Despite its importance, this critique fails to target Stone's overemphasis on co-operative power. As a consequence, these scholars have adjusted his theory to account for European particularities, while uncritically integrating his functionalist conception of power into their analyses.

Responding to functionalist power, Mann (1986) stresses that power bears both co-operative (power to) and distributive elements (power over). Rather than viewing these as separate and unrelated, they should be viewed as dialectically linked elements of a single dynamic force

> In pursuit of goals, humans enter into co-operative, collective power relations with one another. But in implementing collective goals, social organisation and a division of labour are set up. Organisation and division of functions carry an *inherent tendency* to distributive power, deriving from supervision and co-ordination. For the division of labour is deceptive: Although it involves specialisation of function at all levels, the top overlooks and directs the whole. Those who occupy supervisory and co-ordinating positions have an immense organisational superiority over others (Mann, 1986, p. 7; emphasis added).

Politics are therefore balanced between the contradictory pressures to act in co-operative pacts in order to achieve basic goals, *and* to conflict with others over positioning within the organisations that frame co-operation. Thus, political and social relations are shaped by the necessity to both co-operate and conflict.

Conflict and Co-operation: A Framework for the Analysis of Urban Politics

Mann's insights into the dialectics of power and Stone's insights into collective action are combined here to create a modified framework for the study of urban politics. This framework is built upon three basic premises.

(1) Differentiation and interdependency: functionalist power. Urban stakeholders are differentiated by the *kind* and *degree* of systemic power they control. With regards to the first, we draw from Stone's contention that there are two basic sources of systemic power in cities: market and state. Actors who exercise control over markets are powerful because they affect the wealth and revenue of cities. Actors who exercise control over the state are also powerful because they have the authority to regulate the behaviour of residents and businesses and to distribute public goods and services. Actors are also differentiated by the degree of power they possess: large/small capitalists; large/small authorities. In most cases, the power of individual stakeholders is not sufficient to set the policy agenda for their cities. As a result, they depend on one another to create such an agenda and to address issues of common concern in the areas of economic development, transport, housing, etc.

(2) Organisation and hierarchy: distributive power. As actors possessing different kinds and degrees of power gravitate toward one another, an organisational infrastructure develops to co-ordinate their collective action. The organisation provides a division of labour which assigns different and unequal roles to each of the participating actors. Whereas some roles provide actors with greater abilities to steer and supervise, other roles require actors to implement tasks. How actors are sorted within this hierarchy depends on the relative importance of markets or states for the life of a particular city and the degree of market or state power controlled by the partners (more control, higher the position). Larger local authorities and officials with ties to central state ministries tend to play more dominant roles in cities where states predominate (European case) and large capitalists tend to play more powerful roles in cities where private

markets dominate (US case). Those occupying a higher position are better able to benefit more from the fruits of collective labour than those occupying a lower position. As a consequence, conflicts over who dominates and benefits necessarily arise from organised collective action (Mann, 1986). Co-operation enables actors to achieve goals they could not have attained otherwise (functionalist power), but in so doing, it introduces new cleavages that directly affect how actors co-operate (distributive power).

(3) Between cohesion and fragmentation: collective action problem. Because the structural contexts of stakeholders motivate them both to co-operate and to conflict with one another, the particular form of metropolitan governance varies from highly cohesive metropolitan regimes, at one end, to highly atomised stakeholders operating against one another, at the other end. The path taken is contingent upon three factors. First, the benefits of participation of any given actor (large/small, capitalist/public official) have to outweigh the costs. Stakeholders, no matter their positioning within a coalition, have to perceive that they stand to gain more from participation than they stand to lose.[3] If not, participants are likely to go their separate ways. For example, William Fulton (1997) argues that the demise of Los Angeles' 'growth regime' largely resulted from voter discontent over uncontrolled urban development. Citizen discontent made the cost of participation for many public officials too high, forcing them to retract their support from the development regime. Secondly, stakeholders stick with collective action if they cannot achieve their goals any other way. Urban stakeholders co-operate on projects when they have no alternative way of producing desirable services, goods and infrastructure. Thirdly, because governance regimes and coalitions are unstable, leaders are necessary to ensure their maintenance (see Baraize and Négrier, 2001a; Borraz and John, 2004).[4] Strong leaders play two strategic roles: they work diplomatically to focus the attention of individual stakeholders on long-term benefits of co-operation rather than on their short-term losses; and, where short-term losses of an individual are perceived to outweigh long-term benefits, leaders ensure co-operation through the distribution of "selective material incentives" (Stone, 1989, pp. 186–187).[5] When these three factors are present, there is a greater likelihood that actors will continue participation in collective action. By contrast, where these qualities are not present, governance is likely to result from the unintended actions of fragmented and conflicting stakeholders. Between these two extremes, various arrangements can exist where stakeholders co-operate on some policy fronts while conflicting on others, creating an array of particular policy communities with no general regime to integrate and steer the different parts.

Power is deployed here as a dialectical exchange between two structural forces: those that create strong interdependencies and those that create hierarchies. Actors positioned in this structural context are compelled both to co-operate and to conflict with one another. This logic stands at the centre of the conceptual framework outlined above.

The Changing Nature of Metropolitan Governance in France

Governance systems in large French cities can be divided into two distinct periods: a period when central city mayors dominated metropolitan governance (1940s to 1970s) and a period when their privileged position has been offset by the rising power of peripheral municipalities and departmental and regional councils (1970s to present). Two structural shifts in the French urban system bear primary responsibility for this transition: the diffusion of state powers to other territorial authorities (peripheral municipalities and region and department councils), on the one hand, and the increased importance of private markets for municipal revenues, on the other hand. These structural shifts provided opportunities for some territorial authorities to acquire the revenue, bureaucracies

and authority needed to become powerful metropolitan players in their own right.

State Power and Central City Dominance in Metropolitan Governance

The basic elements of a modern 'municipal government' in France can be traced to the early 20th century (Borraz, 1993, 2000). For Borraz, four interlinking dimensions of local life structured municipal government: the local political field which covers political actors pursuing their electoral and partisan activities; the municipal administration which covers the local public administration and services, paramunicipal and private organisations carrying out municipal functions; urban society which covers economic, social and associational interests; and, finally, the financial and institutional framework of the municipality, which includes state structures as well as its relations to other territorial authorities (Borraz, 1993, p. 18). At the intersection of these four dimensions, an organisational structure took shape which consisted of the mayor, a municipal council, the mayor's adjuncts and his political and policy networks. The mayor was positioned at the top of the organisational hierarchy, using the instruments at his disposal to integrate these four elements of municipal life. Thus, in this instance, governance was achieved through an organisational hierarchy that centred on the mayor. The privileged position of the mayor was a state mandate, being the only actor to bear the authority to act on behalf of the state. Municipal councils and adjuncts, while important, could only play consultative roles (Dion, 1986, pp. 7–8). Mayors of central cities were able to extend their power outside their particular jurisdictions and into their surrounding urban areas by heading many of the planning and development agencies charged with designing metropolitan-level schemes (Keating, 1993; Le Galès, 1993). As a consequence, metropolitan forms of governance were from an early date, characterised by the prominence of central city mayors positioned at the head of the organisations, albeit incipient and weak, charged with steering the system.

The privileged position of the central city in France's burgeoning metropolises was largely favoured by the structural centrality of the state in the urban system. Juridical authority and financial power were concentrated in the hands of the central state while the role of local authorities was limited to fulfilling state mandates. While central–local relations were officially based on asymmetrical powers, the ability of the central state to achieve its territorial goals depended upon the active consent and co-operation of local elected officials (Grémion, 1976; Mabileau, 1991). This system of 'mediated regulation' (*régulation croisée*) provided local authorities with the power to play a broader role in territorial governance than just implementing state mandates. Such a system was built around a series of relations (from personal to institutional) between local officials and different elements of the central state. A 'good' mayor developed personal relations with the prefect and local state administrators, targeted strategic ministries and agencies to lobby for increased state resource[6] and held a seat in parliament and the department council ('*cumul de mandat*') (Grèmion, 1976; Keating, 1993; Duran and Thoenig, 1996; Michel, 1998).

This system was reinforced with the emergence of the post-war modernist state. Many of the state's largest modernising projects directly involved or depended on the support of mayors from medium and large central cities: mass production and distribution of housing, efforts to deconcentrate industry and administrative agencies from the Paris region and major urban planning programmes (Wakeman, 1997, p. 105). For example, the state's massive projects in public housing depended upon a system of complex relations for its success: between private-sector builders and state planners, on the one hand, and between local elected officials and state agencies, on the other hand (Maury, 2001, p. 33).[7] This system of complex relations was responsible for producing almost 3 million (2 876 000) public housing units between

1958 and 1975 (Maury, 2001, pp. 62–65), contributing significantly to the 9.2 million housing units built between 1945 and 1976 (Lorrain, 1989, p. 8). Another state modernising project initiated in the 1950s sought to rationalise the administrative functions in the provinces by creating administrative regions. The strategy, as outlined in the 1955 Commissariat General du Plan,[8] consisted of demarcating administrative regions (22 administrative regions in all), naming a city within the region as its capital and organising the distribution of public goods and services through the regional capital (Keating and Hainsworth, 1986; Mazey, 1989). Urban hierarchies at the regional level became institutionally fixed through this intervention, with the capital city of the region becoming the gateway of central state resources to the regional hinterland. Another state modernising project that enhanced the power of some central cities was the creation of Délégation a l'Aménagement du Territoire et l'Action Régional (DATAR) in 1963. DATAR was conceived as a national agency that would co-ordinate the territorial development projects of numerous state ministries. In its first project, the agency designated 13 cities as economic development poles (pôles d'équilibre), directing ministries and agencies to provide financial and institutional support to the industries in the designated territories. The designation of a particular city provided it with prestigious industries and positioned the mayor as a privileged negotiating partner of the central state. Thus, these and other projects were efforts designed by the state for the purposes of enhancing its own political and economic power. However, in pursuing its objectives, the state enhanced the power of central cities by reinforcing their control over how public goods were distributed in their territories and by increasing the influence of their mayors. Each advance in the power of the state therefore also increased the power of central cities in metropolitan systems.

This relation not only provided the central city with greater control over the downward flow of state resources, essentially making it the territorial gatekeeper, it also contributed to fuelling urban growth, of which the central city was often the primary beneficiary. By 1936, France was the least urbanised of western European countries: 52 per cent urban, compared with 70 per cent in Germany and 80 per cent in Great Britain. This was to change during the following decades, with the urban surface area in France almost doubling between 1954 and 1975. Much of this expansion occurred during the 1960s, when the urban surface area in France grew by 52 per cent (Lorrain, 1989, p. 8). This rapid urbanisation was accompanied by unprecedented growth of local administrations. Measured in terms of the number of employees, local administrations grew from 272 000 employees in 1950 (0.65 per cent of the national population), to 420 000 in 1971 and to 833 400 in 1983 (1.5 per cent of the national population). And, in terms of budget, local authorities in 1976 already enjoyed a relatively large budget of 134 billion francs compared with the state's budget of 392 billion francs (Lorrain, 1989, p. 10).

Local administrations have not only grown dramatically during this period of time, but they have also undergone a process of rationalisation and technical sophistication. The policy-making process of many cities underwent a process of sectoral differentiation, where mayoral adjuncts assumed greater responsibilities over distinct policy areas. As Borraz notes, the governments of central municipalities increasingly displayed organisational features similar to those of the central government, with adjuncts playing similar roles to those of governmental ministers (Borraz, 1993, p. 331). In addition, these adjuncts became responsible for services that grew significantly in their technical sophistication, reducing local dependencies upon the state's technical services. As Gaudin notes, "It was during this period that the technical capacities of the local authorities became more substantial, comparable to those of the state" (Gaudin, 1999, p. 25; author's translation). Particularly important in this respect were services related to urban planning and management, giving cities possessing these

services a clear advantage in creating planning schemes for their metropolitan areas. Thus, the privileged relation between states and the central cities contributed to fuelling urbanisation as well as the mass expansion and rationalisation of central city bureaucracies. Consequently, access to state power provided central cities with clear structural and strategic advantages over other territorial authorities (peripheral municipalities and departments) in metropolitan systems.

How were other territorial authorities in the metropolitan field positioned with respect to the central city? First, municipalities on the periphery had long been rural areas which provided the central city with food for its residents and labour for its businesses. Conflict between city and countryside did not result from the city's power within the metropolitan system, but from the city's demands for the countryside to subsidise city growth. When peripheral municipalities finally began to urbanise following the war, they remained weak entities because of the state's continued focus on the central city. As a result, they were denied the resources needed to develop administrations and technical services of their own, leaving them dependent on the central city. Thus, in this instance, the central city's continued control over state resources restricted newly urbanised municipalities from gaining governance and political power within the metropolitan area.

Secondly, department councils were historically charged with administering agrarian services to the hinterlands of cities. Although departments were historically important territorial units of the Napoleonic state, their weak resource base, underdeveloped administrations and limited scope of action prevented them from entering contests with mayors of the larger central cities (Wright, 1983; Mabileau, 1991). The only administrative function they possessed which directly affected the central city was the distribution of social aid to 'excluded' members of the population. However, because this function did not cover significant portions of the population before the economic crisis of the 1970s, their influence over the central city remained limited (Autès, 1999). With regard to the regional council, it was still far too underdeveloped in the years preceding the decentralisation reforms of 1982 to have any impact upon the dominance of centre city municipalities.

Shifting Sources of Power: More Market Forces and Diffusion of State Power

The structural basis of central city dominance in metropolitan governance systems—i.e. their privileged relation with the state—underwent a series of dramatic changes in the late 1970s. Whereas the modernising projects of the state benefited mayors of central cities in the post-war era and allowed them to exercise a high degree of control in their metropolitan areas, the increased importance of markets and the diffusion of state power through decentralisation challenged this control.

Beginning in the 1970s, the state partially ceded control over local economies by increasing the importance of local tax revenues and providing territorial authorities with increased instruments and power to contend with market forces. In terms of local taxes, in 1976 the Giscard–Barre government implemented a local business tax (*Taxe Professionnelle*). By allowing all municipalities (central and peripheral municipalities) to tax businesses, dependence on state grants and subsidies for revenue decreased.[9] Ten years after its introduction, local taxes accounted for 54 per cent of municipal spending.[10] The corporate tax alone accounted for 40 per cent of all local tax receipts (Preteceille, 1991, p. 135).[11] Moreover, municipal expenditures on enterprises accounted for 15 per cent of spending, making the corporate tax a lucrative source of revenue (Keating and Hainsworth, 1986).

A series of decentralisation laws passed in the 1980s enabled municipalities to increase their engagement with market forces.[12] These laws provided municipalities with competencies over planning and zoning. Regions were the only territorial authorities allowed to provide direct subsidies to businesses, but municipalities were given wide latitude to

provide indirect subsidies, including adjustable tax rates, subsidised loans, the provision of undervalued properties and the development of industrial and technological parks (Dumont, 1993, p. 149). Thus, the increased importance of locally generated taxes, more power in the domain of economic development and better policy instruments to exercise this power provided the motive and the means for municipalities to become increasingly engaged with market forces. As Levy notes, "The fiscal logic makes shaping the locational decisions of private enterprises the top priority of municipal authorities" (Levy, 1999, p. 141).

Whereas well developed networks with the state bureaucracy once gave central cities clear revenue-generating advantages over their peripheral neighbours, enterprising municipalities are now faced with an alternative source of revenue. Municipalities that could offer more fiscal incentives (because of fewer services demanded by residents) and less expensive real estate have held a clear advantage over central cities (higher demand for services and higher price of real estate) when competing for investors. Successful municipalities have been able to use their new sources of revenues to create sophisticated administrations and services of their own, providing them with a base to take a greater stake in metropolitan governance. As Lorrain observes, "The economic development of the urban agglomerations has given more importance to peripheral municipalities as territorial actors" (Lorrain, 1989, p. 11; author's translation). Peripheral municipalities have pursued these tactics individually and, increasingly, through intermunicipal syndicates. With growing clusters of peripheral municipalities bearing broader revenue bases, more sophisticated services and administrations, and independent strategies of economic development, the role of the central city as the principal steering agent of metropolitan governance has been increasingly contested.

While the market contributed to increasing the power of some peripheral municipalities, decentralisation in 1982 (Deferre Laws) diffused state power to department and regional councils, bolstering their positions in the metropolitan system. Decentralisation enhanced the responsibilities for territorial authorities of overlapping jurisdictions (central city, peripheral municipalities, department and region) while failing to provide a clear chain of command between them. The region was endowed with economic development functions, the department with social welfare functions and the city with urban planning and development functions (Keating and Hainsworth, 1986). In response to this widening set of responsibilities, each authority experienced a degree of growth and increased technical sophistication. Mabileau comments that this process was particularly beneficial for departments

> The department has profited from the transfer of personnel and services, and also from the state functionaries who have been absorbed by the department council. One observes the formation of a veritable techno-bureaucracy in the department (Mabileau, 1991, p. 58; author's translation).

These authorities were also provided with more autonomy to carry out their new responsibilities

> Decentralisation gave local collectivities the instruments and necessary resources to exercise autonomous authority: block grants that reduced their dependence on state ministries, control over their own bureaucracy, that is, the means to execute their own decisions, and the abolition of the prefectoral *tutelles* (Duran and Thoenig, 1996, p. 591; author's translation).

Thus, the diffusion of state power to several territorial authorities (including but not limited to central cities) endowed these authorities with increased resources, larger administrations and more autonomy over policy sectors of crucial importance to the metropolitan system. Consequently, the central city's control over state power has been weakened, providing other territorial authorities with increased leverage over metropolitan governance.

The lack of an enforceable division of labour or chain of command amongst

territorial authorities has encouraged competition and conflict over positioning within a still undetermined hierarchy. Two factors have aggravated the competitive/conflictual edge. First, the Deferre Laws increased the authority of executives of municipalities (mayors) and departments and weakened the authority of their councils. Observers have noted that this has contributed to the 'feudalisation' of local politics, with 'big men' (council executives) and their clans engaging in constant conflicts over their positioning in the metropolitan system (Mèny, 1992). Secondly, the increased importance of national parties in the local political field since 1977 ('the nationalisation of local politics'; Preteceille, 1991) has also aggravated conflictual relations between local authorities. The competition over positioning in an ill-defined hierarchy has therefore been personalised and politicised.

In a context of heightened conflict and competition, the diffusion of revenue and responsibilities to different territorial authorities has required them to co-operate in areas of mutual interest including economic development, poverty management, waste management, transport and environmental planning. Various policy communities and networks have been the vehicles through which territorial authorities can act collectively in areas of common concern (Lorrain, 1989; Le Galès, 1995; Gaudin, 1999). Policy communities have taken the shape of formal agencies with decision-making bodies, internal divisions of labour, administrative apparatuses and technical services responsible for implementing tasks. They can assume different forms including intermunicipal organisations (Etablissements Publics de Co-opération Intercommunale, EPCI), public–private organisations charged with specific development responsibilities (Sociétés d'Economie Mixte Locales, SEML), and contract-bound committees (*politique de la ville*, an example of the latter) (Caillosse *et al.*, 1997; Gaudin, 1995, 1999). They have been delegated the authority to develop and implement policies by territorial authorities (municipalities, departmental and regional councils). The state prefect participates not as an overseer but as an initiator and facilitator of collective action (Donzelot and Estèbe, 1993; Estèbe, 1999).

This urban governance system therefore faces an institutional contradiction. On the one hand, institutional factors have generated a context where strong political executives use their base in territorial authorities to increase their power in both metropolitan and national political arenas. This context encourages zero-sum competition over control of the metropolitan system. On the other hand, the diffusion of revenue, services and responsibilities to different territorial authorities has meant that co-operation is necessary to fulfil basic governance tasks. Authorities are required to participate with one another for the pursuit of economic development, poverty management, waste management, transport and environmental planning, and a series of other concrete tasks. This co-operation takes place within a wider context of competitive struggle, which influences how the partners of collective enterprises choose to co-operate with one another. Grémion and Muller describe this relation in the following way

> The single thread running from the central State to the Prefect to local elected officials is being replaced by a complex weave, in which everyone is both solicitor and distributor, in which municipal, department and regional councils, prefects, European authorities and administrations craft one-time, temporary bargains, in which multiple financing and accidental co-operation co-exist with the most intransigent competition and rigid, egotistical parochialism (Grémion and Muller, 1990, p. 41; author's translation).

Therefore, contradictory incentives toward conflict and co-operation are the central relational logic underlying many of the metropolitan governance systems of France.

In sum, shifts in the basic sources of power (more market and diffusion of state power) have diluted the privileged position of central cities as the primary steering agent of metropolitan governance and have opened

up new lines of conflict between local authorities. However, these authorities are also required to co-operate on a variety of projects of mutual concern. Policy communities and networks have been created for the purposes of co-ordinating collective action on several different fronts. Thus, urban governance in France is characterised by tendencies that favour increased conflict between multiple territorial authorities (fragmentation), on the one hand, and, increased co-operation in areas of mutual concern. It is precisely within the structural context of conflict and co-operation that stakeholders produce policies for their metropolitan areas.

Between Cohesion and Fragmentation: Metropolitan Governance in Toulouse, France

The last section examines how actors in Toulouse have responded to the increased importance of market forces and to the diffusion of state powers. In addition, it examines how their actions have resulted in a particular form of metropolitan governance.

Metropolitan Governance in Toulouse

Two areas on Toulouse's periphery have accumulated the revenue and administrative sophistication necessary to become powerful stakeholders in metropolitan governance. The first area is in the north-west (Colomiers and Blagnac)[13] of the metropolitan area and the second is in the south-east.[14] I will restrict the analysis to the south-east area because of its pronounced activism in metropolitan politics.

The south-east corner of the Toulouse metropolis is under the control of a syndicate of municipalities. In the late 1960s and early 1970s, this part of the metropolis attracted a new population of residents made up of highly trained intellectual workers employed in the nearby university and several public research facilities. The municipalities receiving this flow of people offered services designed for a rural population and not for cosmopolitan intellectuals. The inability to provide appropriate services sparked efforts by these newcomers to take control of the municipalities (Tomas, 1997; Garès, 1998). Following their success, the leaders of these movements found that the inability to provide better services resulted not from the incompetence of their predecessors, but from their lack of revenue. To increase their resource base, in 1975 mayors from six municipalities formed an intermunicipal syndicate (Syndicat Intercommunal de la Vallée de l'Hers, SICOVAL) to pool their collective resources. Their first collective venture was to attract large retail outlets which could provide residents with convenient shopping opportunities and municipalities with a strong tax-base. Following the success of their first venture, new revenues provided the means to finance better services and to launch a technology park that would raise more taxes. This park became one of metropolitan Toulouse's most successful technology parks, housing over 350 small, medium and large (mostly) high-technology firms in less than 10 years after its debut.

Efforts by Toulouse to reassert its dominance in metropolitan politics led SICOVAL to embark on a major expansion. During the 1990s, SICOVAL added 28 municipalities, 3 new technology parks including the highly successful Le Parc Technologique du Canal, and new competencies in the areas of economic development, environmental management, urban planning, poverty, waste management, culture and sports, and transport. This rapid expansion has naturally led to growth in its bureaucracy, growing from only 40 employees in the mid 1980s to over 350 in the mid 1990s. The south-east corner of the Toulouse metropolitan area is controlled by this highly competitive and strategic collective actor. Its success can be attributed to the strategic abilities of its leaders to maximise opportunities made available by markets and state reforms. In particular, it has made effective use of enhanced authorities in the area of economic development to create several highly successful technology parks.[15] While no match for Toulouse in terms of wealth, administration and population, SICOVAL's broad tax-base,

its strong administrative and service capacities, and its organisational efficacy have made it an important force within the local political and economic field.

However, expansion has introduced several internal problems that have, according to some, reduced its abilities to compete and govern effectively. First, the expansion to 34 members has introduced new cleavages between more and less developed municipalities. SICOVAL's general plan restricts the development of 60 per cent of all lands under its authority. The plan designates larger municipalities as economic development zones and smaller towns as environmental zones. As one disgruntled mayor notes

> While we are compensated financially for abiding by the regulations, it is nevertheless frustrating to have the possibility of economic development closed off. I mean, what if we want to do more than just be the preferred hiking grounds of the engineers from the larger towns? (Karsenti, Mayor of Pechabou, 2002; interview).

This cleavage has led small-town mayors to form a caucus of small municipalities.

Secondly, the organisation has also experienced rapid expansion of its competencies and its staff. The expansion of the bureaucracy has, according to some members, reduced its abilities to respond to business and resident needs. The Director of Communications for SICOVAL observes

> We have assumed many competencies in a short period of time. This has meant that things have become a lot more complex especially in terms of deciding and administering our projects. The difficulty today is to remain responsive to the needs of our residents and firms residing in our territory (Subra-Mazoyer, 2002; interview).

Alan Garès, the former General Manager of SICOVAL, cites the organisation's inabilities to solve transit problems as a reflection of its diminished capabilities

> The transit project was supposed to have started in 2001 and end in 2003 but there has been nothing so far. This has given the impression, for the first time in its existence, that SICOVAL is unable to keep its promises. Why has it been unable to keep its promises? Because it has so many other things to do and so many interests to please (Garès, 2002; interview).

Thus, while the expansion of SICOVAL has enhanced its positioning as a prominent political and economic force in the Toulouse metropole, it has also introduced new problems that threaten its once highly regarded governance capabilities.

The negotiating position of the department has benefited from the diffusion of state powers through the decentralisation reforms. Antagonisms between the city of Toulouse and the department have a long history (Broquin, 1986), but the department's position has improved following the expansion of resources and responsibilities. The Deferre Laws not only provided the department with a budget and an administration approaching that of Toulouse, it also expanded its social service responsibilities to include areas that directly affected the interests of the city. In 1999, the city of Toulouse housed 55 787 direct and indirect beneficiaries of 'social minimum benefits'—i.e. 15 per cent of its total population. Because the department is charged with distributing these benefits, their policies directly affect the fate of the central city. As a consequence, the department has asserted itself as a legitimate partner of metropolitan governance, especially in the areas of welfare and social services. Lucien Delthil, the department's Director of Urban Planning, observes

> The dominant power (Toulouse) has a difficult time sharing power with the other partners. There are frontiers to protect. This is the core of the quotidian 'violence' between the department and the city. The department wants to be a dominant actor but it is dismissed as exaggerated, incongruous. As we (the department) are younger and less structured, we make more noise. We

> jump on the table like an adolescent who wants to be invited to the table of the adults (Delthil, 2002; interview).

These cleavages have been aggravated by personal and political rivalries between the executive of the department council (Socialist) and the mayor of Toulouse (centre-right).

As the department and some peripheral authorities have attempted to augment their power *vis-à-vis* the central city, they are also required to co-operate with one another in areas of mutual concern. Policy communities have formed in areas of economic development (Technopole de l'Agglomération Toulousaine, Grand Toulouse), urban poverty management (*politique de la ville*), and transport planning (Société de Métro de l'Agglomération Toulousaine, SMAT). In addition, territorial authorities have collaborated on several big development projects including the creation of the Aeroconstellation complex in the municipality of Blagnac,[16] and the promotion of a biotechnology development pole. The high cost of these latter projects has been the principal motivating factor behind these collaborations. Claude Ducert, the founding president of SICOVAL, explains his organisation's participation in the biotechnology project in the following way

> Today, we are working with Grand Toulouse and the region to develop a biotechnology pole in the area. The goal is to develop another sector other than aeronautics and space. SICOVAL has long sought to create an incubator for biotechnology firms, but to really develop a biotechnology sector we have to go beyond the incubator approach. This requires a substantial financial investment, which no single entity possesses alone. Thus, if we want to see a biotechnology sector develop, we have to work together to make it happen (Ducert, 2002; interview).

Despite the new cleavages between metropolitan actors, the inability to achieve governance tasks and projects alone requires co-operation in several different policy areas.

In spite of new forms of co-operation, conflicts over the distribution of power directly affect the internal relations of policy communities. Partners are required to balance between their interests of fulfilling the narrow aims of the policy community (leading to co-operation) and their interests of maintaining or increasing their power in the metropolitan field (leading to conflict). Complicating matters has been the common practice of using policy communities to increase one's position in the metropolitan field. This has been the case of the policy community charged with urban poverty (*politique de la ville*)

> The city and the department both use *politique de la ville* for electoral purposes, to say they do good things in the neighbourhoods, to gain new bases of support (Boukais, 2002; interview).[17]

At times, these types of concern can lead to the outright dissolution of the policy community. Jean-Claude Georgelin, a sitting vice president of SICOVAL, explains how such conflicts led to the dissolution of the economic development community of Technopole de l'Agglomération Toulousaine,

> We did not believe that an alliance dominated by Toulouse was something we wanted for the metropolis. We have always been strong advocates of intermunicipal co-operation that benefits all partners equally. We reject forms of intermunicipal co-operation like TAT that aim to increase the power of one actor over its partners (Georgelin, 2002; interview).

Despite the fact that these communities are sites where the relational logic of co-operation must outweigh the logic of conflict, they nevertheless take shape in a highly conflictual context, which affects how the different actors choose to co-operate with their partners in areas of mutual concern.

The particular conditions discussed above have restricted the formation of a cohesive regime that could integrate and steer the different elements comprising the governance system. While actors have a direct interest in

co-operating in narrowly defined policy communities, there is no compelling material interest to co-operate in broader coalitions. Political and personal conflicts have also weakened the ideological or emotional ties that facilitate broader forms of co-operation. In addition, no leaders have emerged who are capable of ensuring metropolitan-level co-operation through diplomacy and the distribution of 'selective material incentives'.

However, in the 1980s, the city of Toulouse was approaching a position of uncontested dominance (Estèbe and Jaillet, 1999). Following the 1970s, the population of professional occupational groups increased dramatically throughout the metropolitan area.[18] The moderate-right mayor of Toulouse, Dominique Baudis, was gaining popularity amongst this segment of the population (the 'Baudis effect'). In 1986, his list won the regional election, providing him with an opportunity to consolidate power over the metropolitan area. The mounting political power of Toulouse's mayor and his popularity amongst important constituencies in surrounding jurisdictions compelled the department council and peripheral municipalities to take a more conciliatory stand with respect to Toulouse. Baudis used this period of conciliation as an opportunity to develop the policy community of the Technopole de l'Agglomération Toulousaine with Blagnac, Colomiers, l'Union, Balma, Cugnaux, Ramonville–Sainte Agne and SICOVAL (Estèbe and Jaillet, 1999). Although political leaders shared enough interests to co-operate on economic development, structural and political conflicts undermined Baudis's goal of turning the organisation into a mechanism for steering metropolitan governance. After several campaigns to sell the Toulousain metropole to the outside world, the organisation collapsed. Thus, Baudis and his allies attempted to create a governing coalition but deep cleavages ultimately undermined their abilities to do so.

In sum, many territorial authorities in the Toulouse metropolis have responded to opportunities made available by the increased penetration of market forces and to state reforms. SICOVAL responded by attracting high-technology firms to their territory in order to expand their revenue-base. This provided the resources to finance new services for businesses and residences, and the expansion of its administration. They have responded to institutional reforms by extending their membership-base and assuming more responsibilities over territorial management. Consequently, SICOVAL has become a powerful territorial actor, directly controlling one of the most productive territories of the metropolitan area. The diffusion of state power through decentralisation has also benefited the department by providing it with more resources, a larger and more sophisticated administration, and more responsibilities in policy areas that directly concern Toulouse. As a result, the department has actively sought to increase its negotiating position in policy matters, while the city of Toulouse has resisted. In both instances, we find that shifts in the sources of systemic power (market and state) have provided opportunities for some actors to increase their power *vis-à-vis* the central city, resulting in new conflicts over who should dominate the metropolitan governance system. However, the governance system of Toulouse cannot be reduced to this layer of zero-sum conflicts. Territorial authorities are required to co-operate in areas of mutual concern, which has led to the formation of a series of policy communities and networks. The governance system of Toulouse can therefore be characterised as a two-layer system: one layer where actors compete with one another over their positioning in the metropolitan hierarchy; and the second where actors co-operate in narrowly defined policy areas and economic development projects. Co-operation and conflict are central relational dynamics at both levels, but conflict is the predominant dynamic at the first level and co-operation at the second. While conflict between territorial authorities has hindered the formation of a cohesive regime able to steer the governance system, co-operation in policy networks and communities has mitigated against total fragmentation and atomisation.

Conclusion

The primary objective of the paper has been to explain the transition in France's system of metropolitan governance by drawing upon a conceptual framework that links both distributional (power over) and functional (power to) forms of power. The framework stresses that governance systems are underlain by structures that lead actors both to co-operate (structured interdependencies) and to conflict (structured hierarchies). Forms of metropolitan governance within these structural contexts can vary from highly cohesive to highly fragmented forms. Such outcomes are largely contingent upon the perceived benefits of collective action and the roles of leaders to convince partners that co-operation is worthwhile. The advantage of this framework over alternatives is its ability to capture the dynamism of stability and change underlying these particular modes of collective action. Although this framework has been used to explain change in French urban governance, it remains a general framework that can be used to build theories in different national contexts.

The framework was used to identify and explain basic changes in France's system of metropolitan governance. Whereas metropolitan governance was once characterised by an organisational hierarchy that privileged the central city, it is now characterised by several territorial authorities actively engaged in shaping their metropolitan futures. The diffusion of state powers and the increased importance of market forces are the primary factors responsible for this transition. These factors have opened up new opportunities for some territorial authorities to augment their revenues, administrations and authority in the metropolitan area, providing them with a basis to stake a claim in the governance of their metropolises. While the central city and newly empowered authorities have shown great ability at co-operating in narrowly defined fields and on short-term projects, they have shown greater resistance to co-operating in metropolitan coalitions that could integrate and steer the different parts of the system. In this context, leadership has become increasingly essential for the formation of metropolitan coalitions.

In Toulouse, we found that such leadership has been lacking, which has led to a form of governance where actors conflict over positioning in the metropolitan system while co-operating in projects and policy communities. The lack of co-ordination at the metropolitan level and continued mistrust amongst metropolitan authorities have negatively affected the quality of public policy produced by policy communities. In terms of urban poverty, constant conflict has undermined the policy community's hope of achieving its goal of neighbourhood development. Instead, the members of the policy community satisfy themselves with containing the negative effect of concentrated poverty (Estèbe, 1999). Also, in the area of economic development, projects aimed at promoting Toulouse to the outside world (TAT) have largely faltered because of conflicts between the partners. In addition, the lack of a metropolitan co-ordination between policy communities, agencies and networks minimises the abilities of metropolitan authorities to develop comprehensive strategies for treating pressing issues such as new inequalities and uneven territorial development. Thus, while we can identify a heightened level of co-operation between territorial actors, the quality of such co-operation has been compromised by continued conflicts and lack of co-ordination at the metropolitan level.

Notes

1. The section on Toulouse relies on secondary scholarship from the Laboratoire d'Etude et de Recherche sur l'Economie, les Politiques et les Systèmes Sociaux (LEREPS) and Centre Interdisciplinaire des Etudes Urbaines (CIEU), both at the University of Toulouse. It also depends on administrative documents and 49 semi-structured interviews performed with metropolitan stakeholders. nine of these are directly used in this paper.
2. Such an approach stands in contrast to both Marxist and Weberian traditions of political sociology which identify the structural bases

of both conflict and co-operation (see Mann, 1986; Giddens, 1987). Marxists have done this through such concepts as 'social relations of production' and exploitation (see Wright, 1997) while Weberians have done this through the concepts of class, party and status.

3. Here we are in complete agreement with Stone (1989, p. 187): "Emotional commitment has long been regarded as inferior to material incentives as a way of building a durable political organization". While material incentives bring actors together and provide strong reasons for staying, emotional, ideological and friendship ties facilitate transactions and make it easier to stay.
4. Baraize and Négrier (2001a, p. 24) stress that leaders can come in different forms—i.e. political parties, functionaries, state prefect, capitalists, trade unions, etc.
5. Stone notes

   The traditional solution to the collective-action problem has been selective incentives; that is, to supplement group benefits by a system of individual rewards and punishments administered so as to support group aims (Stone, 1989, p. 186).

6. According to Duran and Thoenig

   The problem of local elected officials was therefore one of mastering the decision-making circuits and having access to the good 'window' (*guichet*). The logic of this arrangement imposed a situation whereby its efficiency depended on exchanges between elected officials and state functionaries. This practice and its continued legitimacy led to a strong degree of opacity (Duran and Thoenig, 1996, p. 588; author's translation).

7. At the end of the Second World War, France experienced a severe housing crisis with 400 000 units having been destroyed and 1.5 million severely damaged during the war. The crisis was made worse when housing demand increased rapidly with urban migration from the countryside and Algeria (French nationals and Algerian migrant workers). The private sector's inability to fill the gap required the state to play an active role, leading to the adoption of mass production techniques by the de Gaulle regime in 1958 (Maury, 2001, pp. 62–65).
8. Storper and Salais define the Plan in the following way

   The Plan depends on an objectivizing description of present and future reality; it defines goals, means, and their mutual coherence, as well as the hierarchy of levels of intervention (national, sectoral, regional, and so forth) and the commitments (goals and means) of the different 'partners' to each type of policy (Storper and Salais, 1997, p. 234).

9. The tax was calculated on the number of employees and capital assets of a business.
10. Other sources of income are state grants and loans, accounting for approximately 30 per cent and 15 per cent of the local budget.
11. The other important tax is the housing tax (*taxe d'habitation*) which accounts for approximately 25 per cent of local tax receipts.
12. The law of 2 March 1982 on 'the rights and liberty of municipalities, departments, and regions'. This legislation is more commonly known as the Deferre Laws.
13. The airport and a cluster of aeronautics firms have provided these two municipalities with the revenue to become important players in metropolitan politics. Of the two municipalities, Colomiers has been particularly active in its attempts to increase its influence in the face of Toulouse.
14. Municipalities in the north and south have also formed syndicates (SYBERGIE in the south and SIDEN in the north), but these syndicates have been used primarily to provide services to their residents and not as vehicles to increase the power of members (Estèbe and Jaillet, 1999, p. 12).
15. What is particularly interesting about SICOVAL is that it has not only shown great ability at responding to state reforms, but it has also been active in initiating state reforms that have empowered local authorities. For example, the practice of sharing business taxes amongst members of intermunicipal syndicates was prohibited in the 1970s. SICOVAL's president, Claude Ducert, responded by successfully lobbying parliament to legalise the practice (Law of 10 January 1980).
16. This complex was built for the assembly of the oversized passenger plane, the Airbus 380.
17. Echoing this sentiment, another commentator notes, "Each actor tries to have their names associated with this or that project to increase their chances of winning the next election" (Latgér, 2002; interview).
18. As a percentage of the actively employed population, professional workers (high and medium skilled) in the metropolitan area increased from 25 per cent in 1969 to 50 per cent in 1999 (Nicholls, 2004).

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