

**METROPOLITANIZATION AND POLITICAL CHANGE IN FRANCE
IN A COMPARATIVE PERSPECTIVE: THE INTERNATIONAL
METROPOLITAN OBSERVATORY (IMO) PROJECT**

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This paper presents in very general terms the conditions under which the new international comparative research program IMO (International Metropolitan Observatory) has recently been developed in an international comparative perspective including China. The author apologizes for the many linguistic deficiencies that remain in this text. He also finds necessary to stress the great value of the contribution to this ongoing project of the CASS Institute of Political Science and in particular of Professor Dong Lisheng.

Compared with the North American patterns of urbanization, metropolitanization is a more recent phenomenon in many countries, especially in Europe. It has attracted in the last years much attention from academics and practitioners. In that sense it seems useful to remind in a first section how analyses and debates about metropolitanization have recently emerged and gained in momentum in Europe through the French case, before introducing the main objectives and stages of the new IMO project.

I. Metropolitanization: or how a phenomenon perceived as typically North-American increasingly affects other postindustrial nations

Big European cities have undergone fundamental socio-demographic transformations since the 1980's, which have forced us to break with the realities, perceptions and representations which had been associated with them traditionally. In this section we will specifically focus our attention on the French context. Dupuy (1997) sums up this disappearance of references resulting from the increasing complexity of urban societies: « Clearly the city no longer has any limit, hardly any centre, density is no longer an absolute value, the vacuum is now an integral part, urban life is mobile, the district is dying, urban organisation is transitory, ephemeral, unstable, power is multiple and split ». From this point of view it is hardly an exaggeration to talk about a certain form of *Americanisation* of big French cities, even if they conserve certain quite specific characteristics and structures which prevent us from comparing Paris with New York or Bordeaux with Philadelphia. The very use of the term *Americanisation* can admittedly be contested insofar as this expression has been much abused by the media, which do not hesitate to make dubious comparisons. But there are a certain number of recent phenomena in French cities which appear to echo a series of characteristics of the cities in North America.

By *territorial heterogenisation* we mean the constitution of vast urban areas which are strongly contrasting in terms of population, occupation and use of space. This process has constantly gained in force since the 1980's, as is shown by the comparison of the results of the last censuses. That which was the foundation of the traditional identity of the European and French city for centuries, the agglomerate model with its concentric circles - symbolised by fortifications, then city gates, barriers and ring-roads - around which gravitated a rural environment which was economically and administratively distinct, this relatively closed and definable reality today belongs to the past (Cattan et al. 1994). Whereas just a few years ago, the city-dweller could easily identify the frontiers of his city, today he has only the vaguest awareness of the limits of the territory of the city in which he lives. The loosening or the urban spread which has become general is the later equivalent of the American phenomenon of *urban sprawl*, which started in the first half of the XXth century, the time difference being largely due to the difference in the development of generalised motorised transport. A single example: in the last twenty years, the motor traffic between Montpellier and its outskirts has increased by 120%. Between 1954 and 1990, the proportion of the population of the city centre in relation to the conurbation as a whole has constantly decreased in many big cities: from 44% to 23% for Paris, from 73% to 33% for Lyon and from 62% to 30% for Bordeaux.

Suburbanisation, that is to say the creation of urban zones on the outskirts (called *suburbs* in North America), has now been accompanied for the last twenty or thirty years by a movement towards increased peripheral urbanisation of rural zones settled by residents working in the city (similar to the *exurbs* of the United States). It is precisely the peripheral urbanised rural *communes*, generally situated in the circle of influence of big cities, which are today growing fastest, with their growth being largely fed by the arrival of families with young children who are looking for more spacious homes. The inhabitants, these « new country-dwellers » who have generally left the city centres and the traditional suburbs to settle in these outlying *communes* (part of industrial and urban residential zones (Zones de Peuplement Industriel et Urbain (ZPIU)), or of rural areas), still remain very dependent on the city centre for work and collective services (Pumain and Saint-Julien 1989). In this way the urban infrastructure continues to spread and to stretch, rendering the use of the term city largely obsolete, as it is based on the assessment of the continuity of built-up areas, and forcing us to refer also to the criterion of the intensity of commuting between the centre and the outskirts. The big, contemporary city must thus be understood in this movement of extension and diversification of its structure and its form, pushing its limits further and further

out. Significantly, geographers and town-planners use a whole series of qualifying terms in their attempts to express the metamorphosis which is underway in the big city : emerging city (Dubois-Taine and Chalas 1997), city-archipelago (Veltz 1996), metapolis (Ascher 1995), urban area (Le Jeannic 1996, Le Jeannic and Vidalenc 1997).

Metropolitanization is the reflection of the accentuation of the disparities in dynamism and growth, on one hand between the different urban areas, and on the other between the urban poles and their hinterlands. The first phenomenon includes a contrast which has been amplified over the last few years, between progressing cities and regressing cities, and which is common to the whole of Europe (Wegener and Kunzmann 1996). From 1982 to 1990 the Ile-de-France region recorded a positive balance of 371,000 jobs, that is to say more than half of the global French balance, which was 703,000 jobs. Alongside Ile-de-France, the zones which gained the most jobs during the 1980's, particularly strategic jobs, were those in the Rhône-Alpes urban network, the strip of cities along the Mediterranean coast, Toulouse, Bordeaux, Rennes, Nantes and Strasbourg (Veltz 1996). We thus find in the leading group the biggest metropolises, which increased their lead over the other cities, mainly due to the strategic behaviour of entrepreneurs and employees. Concerning entrepreneurs, the biggest cities guarantee a reduction in uncertainty, as they are the only ones in a position to offer a whole range of essential resources : services for companies, multiple sub-contracting, availability of varied and skilled labour, exchanges with higher education and research. Employees also prefer these growth areas, which concentrate a great number of opportunities in terms of jobs, revenues and education for their children (Cattan et al. 1994, Veltz 1996). However, the economic dynamism of the cities does not necessarily lead to that of their hinterland, in contrast with the industrial reorganisation of 1955-75 which benefited whole regions. In this respect growth is today much more selective and targeted, thus contributing to the widening of the gap between the metropolis and its « regional periphery ».

The territorial heterogeneization of the big French cities goes hand in hand with their *social heterogenisation*. This leads to a process of differentiation between the role and the status of the populations of the city. This became visible in France, as in most European countries, from the end of the Second World War onwards, that is to say twenty to twenty-five years later than in the United States. Martinotti (1997) defined the different stages of this trend towards differentiation into four successive circles of population : residents, the working population which commutes daily between their home and their place of work, users of the

services and spaces of the big city, and finally the group of travelling executives and businessmen who no longer live in one particular city but in cities, or who spend their time travelling from one metropolis to another. To this strong trend from the traditional city to the metropolitan area and then to « the global city » are added the effects on the social structure of the cities, of the deep contemporary economic transformations, caused in particular by the extension of the service sector, the use of new technologies and the automation of work.

Although they remain far from the American urban reality in terms of their social physiognomy, the big French cities have nevertheless become closer to the cities of the United States over the last few years, at least in one crucial characteristic : the accentuation of intra-metropolitan social disparities. This phenomenon reflects the varying social impact of the economic restructuring underway since the 1980's and its retinue of symptoms : increasing unemployment, growth of precarious and part-time employment, the reduction of the « social safety net », all due to the withdrawal of the welfare state.

The « crisis in the suburbs », which has been so much written about since the 1980's, bringing back into fashion the theme of urban segregation, summarises this breaking up of urban social cohesion. In contrast to the United States, which would be marked by the pauperisation and dereliction of the city centres, whose rich population would have escaped to the cosy suburbs, the big French cities would remain rich while their peripheral *communes* would be weakened by the effects of unemployment, high-rise town-planning, and the accumulation of serious social problems. Although a handy simplification would be to say that they are halfway between the Latin model and the Anglo-Saxon one, such an image is obviously misleading, or even erroneous. Indeed, a look at the spatial distribution of the average income of tax units in 1990 reveals that the periphery of most of the provincial big cities is in fact richer than the centre (Nicot 1996). In general, only certain suburbs are poor, especially in the east of Lyon (such as Vaulx-en-Velin), in Seine-Saint-Denis and in the north of the Hauts-de-Seine, and the average suburb of Lyon or Paris is richer than most city centres in the provinces. The reversal of the American dichotomy is meaningless, as most big cities are composed of districts which are, socially, highly heterogenous, and are surrounded by suburbs with greatly differing levels of prosperity. The continuation of the trend of urbanisation and the increasingly dense population of metropolitan areas tend to make them appear more and more like socio-territorial mosaics.

An important dimension contributing to the social heterogenisation of the big French cities must be finally underlined : the emergence of ethnic issues. Contrary to beliefs held by xenophobic movements such as the Front National, whose regular progress in elections since the 1980's is a sign of the spreading and the acceptance of their arguments by a growing number of citizens, immigration has not suddenly erupted into France. Immigration is an ancient phenomenon that has remained, in terms of quantity, relatively stable throughout the XXth century. The percentage of immigrants¹ has hardly varied since the 1930's : 6.6% in 1931, 7.4% in 1990 (Daguet and Thave 1996). From the arrival of foreigners from North Africa to the end of the 1960's, and counting only the ten largest cities of over 400,000 inhabitants, it appears that the size of the immigrant population remains, on one hand quite small in comparison with the main European and North American metropolises, and on the other hand little changed. From 1968 to 1990, half of these cities recorded growth in this area, only notable in Paris (from 8.9% to 13.1%), while limited in Lyon (from 9.9% to 10.2%), Lille (5.4% to 7.6%), Bordeaux (4.5% to 5.5%) and Nantes (1.3% to 2.7%). The other half showed a decrease : Marseille (7.2% to 5.5%), Toulouse (6.5% to 5.9%), Nice (9.1% to 7.8%), Toulon (5.2% to 5.0%), as well as Grenoble (13.5% to 9.8%) (Chenu 1996).

If the proportion of immigrants has, all things considered, only varied very little, the way they are received and the conditions of their integration into French society have radically changed. Economic change and unemployment generally affect them more directly than the rest of the population. The immigrants of North-African origin are particularly numerous in the sectors - mining and processing industries located mainly in the North-Western part of the country, building and public works concentrated in the Mediterranean cities - and the professions - especially blue-collar - that are the most fragile and the most threatened by the economic restructuring underway. The serious social problems which affect districts with a large North African population are caused by many things, among which are town-planning which is destroying social cohesion and a dangerous decline in the feeling of solidarity between people « of French stock » and immigrants. But the economic context of restructuring entire sectors makes this crumbling of social relations all the more probable.

Comparison with the negative image of the American ghettos rapidly becomes limited, as the French districts in difficulty are ethnically a lot less homogenous, far more integrated,

¹ immigrants are residents of France who were born outside France, whether they have acquired the French citizenship or not.

socio-culturally, into the rest of society, and the subject of more attention and more measures in their favour from the public authorities (Dubet and Lapeyronnie 1992, Wacquant 1996). However, since the 1980's two aspects of the ethnic side of American cities have started to show in the French metropolises, though in different ways and forms.

The first is ethnic diversification, with, in the United States, the rise of the Hispanic and Asian minorities², and in France, the increasing percentage of Asian, Black African, Central and Eastern European immigrants, due to the change in demand from manual work in industry to services. Thus, over the last few years, the proportion of North Africans among the foreign population of the big cities has tended to go down, while that of foreigners from countries other than those of the European Union and North Africa has strongly increased (in Paris, for example, from 24% in 1968 to 41% in 1990) (Chenu 1996).

The second prominent change is the emergence of ethnic issues on the urban political scene. Although still relatively timid or sporadic compared with the activism and the influence that ethnic groups enjoy in many American cities (Clark and Ferguson 1983, Peterson 1994), the articulation and organisation of specifically ethnic demands have appeared, essentially since the 1983 municipal elections. The profound transformation of the French model of integration - which has been a particularly complex and antagonistic process leading to a redefinition of the foundations of « lay and republican France » inherited from the IIIrd Republic and which is on the way to rapid pluralisation - has brought, on the municipal scale, new opportunities to immigrants to affirm their own identity.

The problems facing French cities over the last twenty years have worsened and become increasingly marked. Indeed, far from softening, the present *socio-political conflicts* have been subjected to a process of differentiation and growing intensification. Bell's thesis (1960) on the end of ideologies, like Kirchheimer's (1965) on the attenuation of conflicts in industrialised democracies, or that closely associated with an asthenia of democracy due to insufficient antagonism, have not been confirmed and seem instead to have been invalidated by reality. New cleavages are appearing, piling on top of the old ones, leading to situations marked by a structure of ever-varying conflicts.

² as Mollenkopf and Castells state (1991 : 15) : "The terms minority, black and Latino have become misleading abstractions. The so-called new immigration has overwhelmed these categories, dividing them by ethnicity and nativity".

Three main types of conflict can be distinguished. Territorial conflicts stem from the historically determined domination in urban areas of the peripheral communes by the central city. In many cases, the near-monopolistic position of the ancient city in relation to its environment has progressively diminished. Territorial conflicts have in general considerably increased and differentiated over the last few years. Economic and political competition, often ferocious, now brings cities that are less and less « centres » into conflict with *communes* that refuse to be just suburbs or satellite towns. Never has the theme of fiscal exploitation been so systematically and ritually waved about, in one direction then in another, both accusing and defending the big cities, as, one by one, measures for resource balancing within the communities are experimented with. To these economic and fiscal resource-sharing conflicts can be added socio-territorial tensions, brought about by an intensifying of the process of social, ethnic or ageist segregation. We are witnessing a convergence of models, the European one and the American one, with the evolution of an urbanisation that is marked by increasing socio-spatial polarisation in both the *commune* and the metropolis.

A second category of conflict is building up around the socio-economic issues, one which frequently transcends territorial affiliation. These conflicts have also become more complex over the last few years, in that they cannot be reduced to clear and simple opposition between the interests of capital and those of labour, even if the most active promoters of the institutionalisation of metropolitan government are being preferentially recruited among the chiefs of big and medium-sized companies, whether or not they are brought together within consular chambers or corporative organisations. The most determining contemporary divide is based not so much on antagonism between social classes, but on a radical divergence of the ideas of economic development, between the groups in favour of strong and continuous regional growth (notably the leaders in the economic sector) and the partisans of growth limits, that is to say a controlling hand on the extension of economic and real estate activity (represented particularly by associations for environmental protection and neighborhood groups). The agenda of urban political leaders is being increasingly dominated by these new issues - which also include the social and political integration of ethnic minorities - and the conflicts that they bring.

The third cleavage is an ideological one and is based on the opposition between the programmes and strategies of the different parties. Its importance varies according to the

country - it is rarely noticeable in the United States, which explains why it is hardly ever mentioned by American political scientists - and to the territorial context. It should not necessarily be confused with the other two conflict categories, even though the three types of cleavages interact.

Here again, our main hypothesis is one of a trend towards « conflict sophistication ». It can be seen in the first place in a widening of range from the parties and political groups represented at the local assemblies, as well as in their manifestos. New organisations, especially ecological or extreme right-wing ones, are now competing in many big French cities with the traditional parties from the right, the left and the centre. These newcomers are destabilising the traditional single or two-party domination and are contributing to the fragmentation of the local party system. It is not only the party system but also the parties themselves that are being subjected to this process of ideological and strategic differentiation, with the formation of factions or intra-party clans, upsetting the cohesion of even the groups said to be the most solidly or most hierarchically organised.

II. How the IMO project emerged?

Under the impulsion of Jefferey Sellers (University of Southern California) and Vincent Hoffmann-Martinot (CERVL-CNRS, Bordeaux), an international group of social scientists, mainly political scientists, decided to meet in September 2002 at the University of Stuttgart and to constitute the International Metropolitan Observatory (IMO). Most of them already knew each other as they had previously worked together in common international programs on local government and urban politics and policies, in particular in the *Urban Democracy* project (Gabriel et al. 2000).

The main motive of their decision to build the IMO and to develop “comparative metropology” was to overcome the limitations they experienced in analyzing the increasingly crucial issues related to metropolitan change. In fact they observed that the existing research production in that field was essentially:

- restricted to a given nation
- focused on a couple of case studies, often dealing with the same metropolises

- not or only loosely comparative
- underdeveloped in most European countries, and even absent in Nordic, Mediterranean and Central/ Eastern European countries
- mainly limited to institutional analyses and governance mechanisms reforms (see the synthetical essay of Brenner 2003)
- insufficiently multidisciplinary

Supported by the International Political Science Association (Research Committee No. 5 *Comparative studies on local government and politics*) and the French research group GRALE (*Groupement de Recherche sur l'Administration Locale en Europe*), IMO aims to conduct international comparative studies on metropolitan change and politics based on systematic analyses at the metropolitan and municipal/ county level. All the metropolitan areas with a population of over 200.000 inhabitants of the involved countries are included. The countries covered by IMO are China, Canada, US, European countries, Israel, and South Africa.

For conducting reliable and systematic international comparisons, it was particularly important in a first stage to know what are the various official or most current definitions of what is meant by “metropolitan area” in the various countries. Some similar attempts were initiated in the 1960s and the 1970s but were apparently not really pursued, like the International Urban Research (see Gibbs and Schnore 1960, Weiler 1971). While metropolitan areas have been statistically defined for decades in countries like US and Canada, they have been only recently introduced in census statistics in other like France and Spain, or not yet in Eastern and Central European nations. As it appeared quite impossible to apply a unique definition to all countries, demographic size and daily commuting to the central city (30-40% of the suburban population) were selected as the two main delineation variables of metropolitan areas.

To address the full range of questions where research at the local and metropolitan level is intended, an urban database is in constitution with three main types of data: socio-demographic data, including economic conditions, political data, and data on outputs.

For socio-demographic data, previously existing databases provide much of the information that the proposed database is likely to require. In particular, very rich census

databases are available in Netherlands, Norway, or Sweden. In France, INSEE data have been made recently accessible to CNRS researchers as well as fiscal data at the municipal level (for 36.500 communes). For the United States the State of the Nation's Cities Database has systematically assembled an extensive array of figures on the largest 74 metropolitan regions and their central cities. The database can combine these results with the parallel systematic data from the State of the Nation's Cities database in the United States. Compiled under the sponsorship of the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development in the 1990s, this data set represents by far the most systematic collection of census and other indicators on U.S. cities, with 3.100 variables and for some of them coverage back to 1960. Unfortunately, this database has not been updated through the 2000 U.S. Census. But the Lewis Mumford Center for Comparative Urban and Regional Research at the State University of New York at Albany has collected and made available via internet part of the same data for the 331 metropolitan areas the Census Bureau counted in 2000, with metropolitan populations as low as 100,000. This data centers most around ethnic categories and ethnic and housing segregation indexes. The U.S. Census website itself as making the data publicly available as the reports on various topics are issued.

Note that in some cases the territory of the urban agglomerations corresponds to easily identifiable metropolitan governments (e.g., some urban communities and districts in France) or to generally accepted census definitions (e.g., United States), but not in others (e.g., the more heterogeneous context in Germany).

Data on politics, administration and state-society relations remains less systematically available at present than social and demographic information. Here the Observatory will make a contribution to research that goes well beyond synthesis of existing datasets. In this area, the new database necessitates an extension of existing cross-national data sets in several broad areas.

A wide variety of institutional arrangements apply to the politico-administrative organization of metropolises in Western countries, not just in federal countries but also in unitary ones. A precise, systematic census of systems of government by metropolitan areas and functional areas as well as by country should furnish an indispensable but heretofore missing basis for comparative analysis of metropolitan governance.

A second objective is to assemble data on local elections into a more systematic, comparable set of data than has so far been attempted. Ideally, such an effort would extend beyond the executives and legislative assemblies of municipalities to metropolitan structures above the level of individual communes and neighborhood electoral districts or wards within municipalities. A successful exploratory effort toward international comparison was carried out in *Urban Democracy* under the direction of Oscar W. Gabriel, Vincent Hoffmann-Martinot and Hank V. Savitch (2000), and is currently extended and systematized. Expertise in this area from additional countries, notably that of the Local Government Chronicle Elections Center at the University of Plymouth under the direction of Colin Rallings and Michael Thrasher, assist in this process.

Urban Democracy also marked a start toward the systematic collection of partly or wholly comparable data on civil society at the local and metropolitan level (See also Sellers 2002, Chapter 5). Cross-national research has increasingly recognized the role of associations and other groups within cities and urban regions as well as in policymaking more generally. Effective comparative research on this role still requires more systematically comparable data at the local and metropolitan level.

One of the most important reasons for greater attention to the metropolitan and municipal levels stems from the importance of decisionmaking and implementation within urban regions for carrying out a wide variety of policies. To enable systematic assessment of the performance of policymaking at higher as well as lower levels of state-society relations, indicators of local environmental, social and economic outputs need to be developed. Information on outputs should also ultimately furnish a basis to assess the consequences of politico-administrative and socio-demographic variables. In several policy domains the growth of statistical information has accelerated over the last decade. The use of these data to analyze policy performance and the politics of local governance depends on greater systematization and integration with the other types of data.

Although systematic data on outputs remains more difficult to assemble than much of the other types, the intensive interest among policymakers and administrators has given rise to several serious efforts that can furnish part of the material for an urban database. For the U.S. cities, the State of the Nation's Cities Database has combined numerous indicators of environmental quality, social inequality, housing provision, metropolitan segregation, and

municipal spending. The Urban Audit reflects a partly successful effort to assemble comparable data from different European national categories. Since 1996 the International City Manager's Association has also developed a set of indicators for local officials to apply in evaluation of local performance. The OECD also maintains a set of urban-level indicators of environmental, social and economic results for a small sample of the largest cities.

We also anticipate that a wide array of budgetary, personnel and other figures can be obtained from official or equivalent sources at the national level for many of the relevant countries. For France such figures include municipal personnel from the CNFPT (Centre National de la Fonction Publique Territoriale) or information on local services (via Vivendi and EDF). For the United States, the *City and County Data Book* published by the Census Bureau in 1988, 1994 and 2000 offers a substantial array of local government finance, expenditure, personnel and other data. Part of this material for earlier years has already been incorporated into the State of the Nation's Cities database.

For additional local budget data, a vast amount of material was collected over the 1980s and 1990s through the international Fiscal Austerity and Urban Innovation Project. Although this material may require updating in some instances, it will be available from Terry Clark in the University of Chicago Department of Sociology.

III. The IMO research program

•Phase one : Metropolitanization and political change

The first phase of research began with the preparation of papers and associated data for the 2004 Bordeaux meeting itself. VS, the German academic publisher, is about to publish revised versions of the papers from the meeting in English as a collected volume entitled "Metropolitanization and Political Change".

In light of the findings in the papers and presentations at the meeting, this volume is organized around a more focused analytical framework than the original call for papers

elaborated. This reorganization also enables part of the material collected by a number of participants for the Bordeaux meeting to be turned into the starting point for papers in subsequent meetings. Rather than simply reflect a U.S. or North American model, we believe that the findings support a more general set of hypotheses about the evolution of metropolitan areas and the associated political change. The analysis of the revised papers, in reflecting this, are reformulated to test several hypotheses:

H1: Metropolitan areas, consisting of cities and suburban peripheries or interlinked cities, increasingly dominate advanced industrial societies (metropolitan dynamics are also increasingly present in developing countries).

Minimal tests: time series of rates of urbanization and metropolitanization in relation to overall population and land area, by country and, where relevant, by region

H2: Suburban settlement (relatively low-density (“sprawl”), outside central city or urban center) is increasing as a proportion of metropolitan areas, and absorbing growing proportion of populations.

Minimal tests: measure growth of suburban areas outside central cities, compare population and density.

H3: With the increasing expansion beyond central city boundaries, metropolitan areas are increasingly geopolitically fragmented.

Minimal tests: Among indicators of political fragmentation, participants should aim to collect at least the central city proportion of population and land area, the number of local general-purpose governments in the metropolitan area, and the Zeigler/Brunn index.

H4: Along with the above dynamics, social and economic polarization has proceeded among places within metropolitan areas, especially between cities and their peripheries.

Minimal tests: Test by aggregate city/suburban indexes (using as many as possible of the six Nathan-Adams variables, plus any other relevant ones used by other papers, such as

university education, criminality), to be supplemented by municipal- and neighborhood-level indexes of hardship indicators, class and ethnonational/racial groups.

H5: Political orientations in areas outside central cities follow distinctive patterns that can be taken to have an increasing influence on politics at all levels

H5a: The rise of middle and upper-middle class areas outside central cities has created new bases of support for conservative parties.

H5b: New areas outside central cities demonstrate more independence from established party orientations or greater volatility.

H5c: Expanding new areas outside central cities manifest declining levels of political participation and engagement.

Minimal tests: National and local election voting, turnout rates compared for local jurisdictions across the metropolitan area, with focus on central city versus suburbs. Note that testing in this phase will remain somewhat exploratory and focus on mapping the outlines of the patterns. Closer causal analysis of ecological and other data will await subsequent phases.

All tests include comprehensive data for all metro areas wherever possible, but also illustrative case studies. Case studies also include at least one of the biggest metropolitan regions in the country as well as at least one mid-sized or smaller one (these will necessarily be defined differently with the countries). In addition, discussion of the substantive results takes into account of the way variations in the definition of metropolitan boundaries (e.g., units or criteria used) may affect the results.

Several further substantive recommendations guide participants. First, they are encouraged to pursue not only the tests of the hypotheses but comparative assessments in relation to data in the other contributions. Although we put the comparative framework initially in terms of correspondence with the U.S. “model”, there are clearly an entire range of regional and national patterns to be compared. Second, the hypotheses are formulated so as to capture some broad patterns, but are in no way intended to encompass everything. We to identify where the hypotheses do not apply, and any bases for alternative hypotheses, as well as where they do. Finally, we try to consider how the size of metropolitan area makes a difference for these patterns. Many of our analyses have found divergences in results according to this variable, and the size of metropolitan areas also varies by country.

- *Phase Two (2005 conference): The Political Ecology of the Metropolis*

The next phase shifted to comparison of patterns of political behavior and their relation to shifts in the conditions of localities or neighborhoods. A number of participants were able to incorporate portions of their analysis and data from the Bordeaux 2004 papers into the paper for Phase Two. Beyond consideration of suburban political areas alone, however, comparisons focus on shifts throughout metropolitan areas. Based on the first phase, a set of cross-nationally applicable categories of neighborhoods or types of places have been set out and identified in different places. These include such types as peripheral housing estates, exclusive elite communities or urban neighborhoods, developing bedroom suburbs, ethnic enclaves, depressed neighborhoods of poor, disadvantaged residents, fiscally “at-risk” older inner suburbs, affluent job centers (“edge cities”), and possibly university communities.

These spatial patterns are considered alongside social characteristics for relations to political participation in local politics and national and other levels of elections in each national system. In particular, this enables refinement and more precise testing of Hypotheses 5a-5c from the first phase.

A central concern is to inquire how far ecological data can address the difference that place, as opposed to the characteristics of residents, actually makes for political behavior. For this phase, local case studies are a central element. Wider statistical analysis of patterns of voting and their relation to spatial and social conditions, using an augmented database, set the case studies in context. Each participant again draws on a range of different metropolitan areas chosen to capture variations in metropolitan size, and patterns of, e.g., party support are compared across either samples or the universe of all metropolitan areas.

- *Phase Three: Metropolitan Governance in Context*

For the third and fourth phases, participants have pointed toward two alternatives. The most frequently mentioned of these, drawing on the data and analysis of the first two phases, would incorporate additional data to be collected over the interim on metropolitan institutions and governance. We would study the relation of context to the construction of both general-purpose metro governments (where relevant) and cooperation around specific policy

questions. Elaboration of this phase and its basis will require precise formulation of common analytical criteria.

- *Phase Four: Survey Analysis of Political Behavior and Place in Metropolitan Areas*

The second possibility, a survey analysis, would be a logical follow up to the ecological analyses. Adopting established survey instruments and consistent cross-national procedures, a survey would furnish data at the level of individual citizens that could be keyed to the attributes of their communities, workplaces, and other spatial variables. Most likely focusing on the comparative case study sites, the survey would sample on such variables as different types of residence and patterns of contact. Questions would include largely standard batteries such as interest in politics, participation patterns, civic engagement, or political preferences. As this project would depend heavily on the availability of funding (preferably a source that would be willing to pay for surveys in more than one country), it remains somewhat more contingent.

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