The Politics of Rome's International and Transnational Agency

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The Glocal Mayor.
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ABSTRACT

This paper focuses on the questions arising from the many international and transnational activities increasingly carried out by Rome's political, economic and social actors. The research, the results of which are presented here, is part of a comparative analysis on the topic Cities as International and Transnational Actors. *Within this larger work Rome's international agency was analysed for the period 1994-2005 so as to answer questions about "why" and "how" a city's international and transnational strategy emerges, and about its specific nature and orientation. The emergence of a single strategy capable of bringing the international activities carried out by the many urban actors in Rome under a common legitimating "umbrella" can be explained by the role played by the city's political leaders. In the period under observation Rome's "glocal Mayors" pursued political strategies in which international and transnational issues became increasingly important, and for which they also controlled sufficient institutional and political resources to be able to put them on the political agenda.*

Rome's central strategy shifted from a more "economic" (pro growth) to a more "political" one (aimed at improving the city's position in the global and European order) and later to a more "social" orientation (centred on solidarity, peace and human rights concerns). Factors explaining such a change are to be found in a variety of independent variables, such as the conditions influencing the city's marketing potential and the way these are perceived by urban actors, the nature of urban society within the city (the nature of its economic interests and of civil society itself and the spread of social values), the nature of those horizontal and vertical intergovernmental relations that the city government is involved in, the nature of the urban political system, as well as the city's geo-political position and its international history. Analysis of the relationships between the prevailing strategies and the factors they depend on has shown that the "politics of policy making" for the city's international agency clearly reveals the explanatory factors and the way they are related to each other.

1. INTRODUCTION: A CITY'S INTERNATIONAL AND TRANSNATIONAL AGENCY AND THE ROME CASE STUDY

As happens in other European cities and in many other urban areas all over the world, the political agenda of Rome's city council abounds with international issues and urban policy-making has many objectives that go beyond the confines of the Italian State. The globalisation of economies and the transnationalisation of political power - the greatly changed ability of nation-states to provide society with effective regulation and to control economic flows, as well

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as the emergence of new and still uncertain regimes of global governance [Held, 2004] - have transformed the role that cities play in the wider world, along with some of their internal processes. For example, global economic competition between cities and regions has brought issues such as economic restructuring and city marketing, as well as new kinds of problems related to social cohesion, onto their political agendas. In order to address these internal issues, cities look for different kinds of resources, which increasingly come not only from domestic contexts, but also from regional and/or global economic and political arenas. Cities also try to exert pressure on supra-national authorities and international organisations, like the European Union (EU) and the United Nations (UN), in order to reshape the global political order and above all to enhance their role within it.

So cities, on the one hand are becoming transnational actors as part of a wider phenomenon of transnationalisation and global networking which includes political experience and identities [Sassen, 2002]. On the other hand, a city's agency can also be defined as "international", since it also performs "paradiplomatic" activities in the field of international affairs, an arena where once upon a time state governments alone had a sovereign role[2]. Even though trans-border activities are not entirely new for cities, these two roles are essentially a change for them when compared to their experience in other periods of history such as pre-modern ones [Saunier, 2002]. So far a city's contemporary international and transnational agency has not been the subject of all-encompassing research. Ongoing research within the social and political sciences is instead proceeding along parallel paths, mostly dealing with specific topics, such as:
- The nature and role of "global" or "world" cities [Friedmann, 1986; Sassen, 1994, 2001; Short and Kim, 1999; Knox, 1995; Fainstein, 2001];
- The nature and role of "entrepreneurial cities", dealing with the eco-

[2] The two dimensions were both the subject of a comparative analysis carried out by the research network CITTA (2003-2005) of the European Science Foundation (CITTA stands for *Cities as International and Transnational Actors*: www.diesonline.it/citta-esf; www.esf.org. Rome was one of ten case studies (also including Amsterdam, Birmingham, Budapest, Madrid, Manchester, Montreal, Paris, Vilnius and Zürich). In the presentation of the comparative results [d'Albergo and Lefèvre, 2006] the distinction between the international and transnational dimension is not given an interpretative meaning, as all the cities' activities and strategies beyond national borders are referred to as "international". The distinction will be illustrated in this paper (see below).

nomic opportunities and risks deriving from globalisation [Scott, 1998; Ohmae, 2001; Keating, 2001; Sebastiani, 1999], and the differentiated types of strategy that cities may pursue in order to cope with the forces of the global market place [Savitch and Kantor, 2002];

- "Paradiplomacy activities" (mostly of regions): a generic and rather ambiguous concept, as it covers almost all kinds of international activities, and is interpreted, above all, as a means of challenging nation states and affirming the political autonomy of sub-national government [Saunier, 2002; Krippendorff, 2000; Keating, 1999; Lecours, 2002];

- The way intergovernmental and supra-national organizations, such as the EU, are to be considered as structures offering opportunity to local actors, both at the regional and city level [Le Galès, 2002; Schultze, 2003];

- The nature of direct connections between cities (twin cities, city networks, decentralised cooperation), which are both increasing in scope and changing from bilateral to multilateral relationships and games [Benington and Harvey, 1998; Perulli, Rugge and Florio, 2002; Borja and Castells, 1997]. The questions posed concern the analogies and differences between present-day activities and those of the Middle Ages and the Renaissance, e.g. the *Hanseatic League* [Perulli, 1998; Pichierri, 1998; Saunier, 2002], as well as of the 19th and 20th centuries (e.g. the Expo networks). They include network aims (such as lobbying supranational institutions, identifying common interests, sharing information); their composition; the structure of their internal relationships, etc. A specific aspect to be mentioned concerns the role of "global civil society" and non-governmental organizations (NGOS) in the shaping of particular kind of "trans-state" flow and city network [Taylor, 2005]. Ad-hoc city networks are also regarded as possessing cognitive resources and as facilitating learning processes, policy transfer and "institutional transplantation" [Dolowitz and Marsh, 2000; de Jong, Lalensis and Mamadouh (eds.), 2002] as a means of bringing about innovation in urban policy-making and governance;

- Finally, a specific theoretical issue which produces differing responses concerns a city's "actorness". The question is "under which conditions is it possible to consider cities as collective actors?". This is something that has rarely been addressed through the use of empirical and comparative analysis [Pichierri, 1998; Marcuse and van Kempen, 2000; Le Galès, 2002].

All these above-mentioned studies analyse individual aspects of city international activity and its changing role in the restructuring of the global (and regional) order, but so far a comprehensive interpretation of city international and transnational agency is lacking. The most important questions concern on one the hand the nature of this agency, and on the other hand two different kinds of impact, that are either external or internal. External impact means the actual capability of cities to counteract, negotiate or steer the processes of economic globalisation and the transnationalization of political power through their international agency, thus indicating the extent of change in the international and transnational arenas brought about by a city's actions. Internal impact, on the other hand, means the consequences within each city's system of governance of actions aimed at transnational arenas. At a lower explanatory level questions can be asked about the "how" and "why" of city international and transnational agency, such as the nature of this agency, the reasons why a specific type of activity is developed in a city, and by whom.

 Assessing the impact of city agency on the regional or global scale is understandably difficult, also because globalisation and Europeanisation appear in this scheme as variables that both derive from a city's agency and also influence it at the same time. This would imply research that is quite different from our research, the results of which are presented here. Moreover, analysing internal impacts would require a very difficult, long-term observation of policy outcomes, such as the possible changes affecting a city's position in the global market place, or the changes in a city's leadership brought about by the political use of international and transnational issues. Besides, questions about the divergence and/or convergence of different cities' roles as transnational actors can only be addressed through comparative analysis focusing on the type of international actions and strategies followed by different cities. This paper aims to present the results of a more limited research into the transnational and international agency of the city of Rome over the last 15 years. It also focuses only on the nature of Rome's international activity, and not on its impact [3]

Since Rome is Italy's capital city, international activity on the part of local

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[3] The research was carried out over the period 2003-2005 through the analysis of official documents, articles in the mass media, and about twenty interviews with people engaged in international activities, both inside and outside the Rome administration, namely mayors, deputy mayors, executives administration managers, members of interest group organizations and representatives of civil society groups.

actors is not new, and in fact has been part of its institutional duties toward the nation state since 1870, however, trans-border agency has taken on new forms and meanings since the early 1990s. Previous international activities in the course of the XX century, such as big sports and culture events, bilateral and multilateral initiatives, belong to another historical phase, even if some of them - such as the twinning with Paris and membership of several European and world city associations - are still active today. There a number of reasons for this change, some of them having a local or domestic nature, whereas others are due to the way the city of Rome has reacted to factors affecting its wider political and economic environment, such as processes of globalisation and European integration.

This paper has to a large extent the same interpretative approach taken by the larger comparative research project of which the Rome case study forms a part (see footnote no. 2). The approach is based on dependent and independent variables [d'Albergo and Lefèvre, 2006]: the first of these regard the nature of a city's transnational and international strategies, which are themselves subjective attempts to reach coherence between the goals, means and underlying values of a set of activities carried out beyond national borders by a city's actors. Various situations may occur within a city: there may be no strategy or several fragmented strategies as well as a "prevailing strategy", the latter being either "a strategy that aggregates a significant part of the international activities of an urban area, and/or dominates the agenda because it is highly visible and is promoted by a strong actor or a group of actors". The role of strong urban leaders, typically mayors, proved to be important in facilitating the emergence of a strategy that clearly prevails over others.

Such a strategy may be orientated in different directions. The results of the comparative study of which this research forms part, shows that there may be three kinds of prevailing strategy: firstly an "economic" one, when the strategy is oriented toward growth and competitiveness; whereas in the second case a strategy is "political" when it is dominated by concerns related to the position and role of the city within its political environment. This type of prevailing strategy usually aims at changing the rules of the global and/or European order and of multilevel governance systems by achieving a greater role for the city (and more generally for cities) within them. A more limited and less ambitious political strategy goal may be that of obtaining a range of differing resources from supranational institutional. In the third case a "social" orientation prevails when the agenda is dominated by issues such as the fight against poverty and social inequality, as well as the fight for sustainable development or that for

human rights and peace. One of the prevailing aims of this "solidarity" or "cosmopolitan" agenda is to change or influence the neo-liberal policies followed by transnational regimes [d'Albergo and Lefèvre, 2006].

In the case of Rome, as will be shown below, it is possible to find all three kinds of transnational and international actions, even though the prevailing strategy shifted in the period under observation from an economic one, firstly to a mainly political one, and then to a predominantly social orientation. What does the existence of prevailing strategy depend on? The variables used to explain "why" one particular strategic orientation prevails over others, are based on the model that H. Savitch and P. Kantor [2002] developed in their comparative study of urban development in the context of globalisation, and which included questions about why and how behaviour and development policies in western cities converge or diverge. Assuming that cities do have strategies to deal with global economic forces, they analysed four independent variables market conditions, intergovernmental support, "popular control" systems and local culture), which form a "bargaining situation" between cities (namely political elites) and major economic actors. In the end, they found that there is significant variation in city strategies and that global restructuring has not homogenized local politics and policies.

The comparative research that this case study forms part of has tried to answer the questions of how and why cities have international and transnational strategies by selecting some of the above mentioned explanatory variables, partially adapting and modifying them and by adding others. The resulting set of independent variables consist of: the city's market conditions, its urban society, the nature of intergovernmental relations, the kind of political system, the geopolitical dimension and the city's international history. Consequently, this research into Rome's international and transnational agency focuses on the relationships between the prevailing strategies and the various factors on which they depend.

In this paper questions such as "What is the City's strategy, given the presence of different international activities?" or " How and why do one or more strategies prevail over the others?" are answered in paragraph 2. This is done through an analysis of the political and institutional conditions that make it possible for international strategies to emerge and, above all, of the role of Rome's "glocal Mayor", which provided them with cognitive (visions) and political (legitimacy) resources.

Paragraph 3 concentrates on the economic orientation of the city's international strategy, namely the economic promotion of the urban system and the

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search for financial resources in global markets. It illustrates why these transnational activities, although important, cannot be considered to have been either prevalent for a long period of time, or to be among the most innovative of those pursued within the city. Paragraph 4 deals with political and social orientations, focusing on their specific features and on the factors that, so far, have given increasing importance to what can be called a Europeanist and non-materialist agenda. Finally, some conclusions are drawn concerning the overall nature of Rome's international agency, the analogies, differences and interplay between the different orientations of the strategy and the ways the above mentioned internal and external variables influence its social and political construction.

2. THE PLURALITY OF ROME'S INTERNATIONAL ACTIVITIES AND THE SHIFTING "UMBRELLA" STRATEGY

Within the city and the wider regional/metropolitan area of Rome many local government actors engage in international activities, each of them using different means and being motivated by differing objectives. Besides this, economic actors and those within civil society also carry out their own international activity as well. The differentiated setting for such activities is a result the multifaceted nature of local society and of the administrative polyarchy in the metropolitan area, within which there are four different levels of governing bodies: the Lazio Region, the Province of Rome, and then the Rome City Council, followed by its 19 sub-municipalities that were the result of the City's own policy of decentralization. Although the system is fragmented and multilayered, so far the international activities carried out by these actors have been neither competitive nor, in fact, coordinated, but rather coexistent and parallel even though they differ substantially as far as their weight and importance on the urban political agenda are concerned.

The territorial, demographic, economic, political and administrative dominance of the core city[4] explains why there can be no real competition between the international activities carried out at this level and those of other actors in

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[4] Demographically the central city of Rome accounts for the half of the Region's and 68.8% of the Province's population, and it also represents 63% of regional and 81% of provincial GPD, 80.5% of provincial employees, 67.3% of firms, among which the most innovative. This data comes from Provincia di Roma [2004] and CENSIS [2006]. The central city authority (Comune di Roma) also controls the strongest governing power within the existing tiers of sub-national government.

the metropolitan area: the city council is the strongest institutional actor that can actually speak on behalf of the whole urban region, both to economic interests and to inter/supranational political powers. Therefore, there is no question about the greater importance of its international activities. Even though in the last fifteen years the issue of boundary revision for metropolitan government (territorial rescaling) has held a quite an important place in Rome's political agenda - although so far no actual reforms have occured – compared to other European cities [d'Albergo, 2002], public discussion of this issue has been only weakly connected to those activities aimed at adjusting to the competitive economic environment brought about by globalisation.

The international activities carried out by the city council are many and of various kinds, and reflect the fragmentation of political, administrative and social structures in the urban system and of the public policies that are developed within it. Such activities are listed below for the 1994-2005 period:

- The creation of special bodies for economic development and city marketing (*PromoRoma*; *Risorse per Roma*; *Fiera di Roma*);
- The setting up of forums for discussions and initiatives involving economic interests (*Roma prossima*; *Progetto di Roma*, which did not lead to any actual strategic planning);
- The international financial rating of the city's public finances (IBCA and Standard & Poor's) and the council's bond issue;
- Bilateral relationships with other cities (such as the "exclusive" twinning with Paris from 1956 on; friendship pacts with New York and other cities, such as Tokyo, Moscow, Sarajevo, and Tunis);
- Multilateral political relations with other cities and mayors, above all the vice-presidency of UCLG (*United Cities and Local Governments*), and its previous membership of IULA (*International Union of Local Authorities*), of CCRE (*Council of European Municipalities and Regions*), of WACLA, FMCU, UCUE (*Union of Capital cities of the EU*), and of *Eurocities*;
- Multilateral functional relations with other cities, through participation in some European "sector issue" city networks (and a leading role within some of them);
- Membership of the European Committee of Regions;
- Participation in EU funded programmes, such as *Urban I* and II, *Urb-Al* and in structural funding programmes;
- Participation in UN initiatives and the co-organizing of UN agencies' fora and "Agenda 21" for the Mediterranean coast countries;
- Initiatives involving "foreign policy from below", such as the Office for

Peace in Jerusalem, the hosting and organization of secret meetings between Israeli and Palestinian diplomats and the annual World Summit of Nobel Peace Laureates (Nobel Peace Prize Winners);

- Several direct initiatives involving decentralised co-operation, some of them supported by the UN and/or the World Bank.
- Repeated initiatives aimed at putting Africa's social and political problems on the international agenda;
- Organising and bidding for big international events, such as the 2000 Jubilee and the (failed) 1994 candidacy for the 2004 Olympic games, which has recently been proposed again for 2012 and 2016;
- International visits by the mayor, together with council policy directors (*assessori*[5]) and either businessmen, the Chamber of Commerce or NGOS;
- Official meetings with foreign mayors, representatives and heads of states, and international vips in the fields of politics and culture.

Is this list simply the sum of individual unconnected activities, the significance of each depending on the approach of a single political actor whose aim is to meet the specific demands of their "clients" in urban society? Or is there anything more integrated, such as an international policy? Is there any coordination or coherence among these activities, or at least a shared vision, which could be properly considered to be an international strategy?

In fact, something that tries to bring together the different aims and meanings of the city's international activities does emerge: it is the role of the mayor, to be precise the roles played by Mayor F. Rutelli (1994-2001) and Mayor W. Veltroni (2001-2005). In both cases the Mayor's strategy can be considered as the city's prevailing international and transnational strategy[6], even if it did not operate as an absolute constraint on other actors' activities. It is, rather, a cognitive framework of reference and an "umbrella"[7] of political legitimacy, which

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[5] An "*assessore*" is a politically appointed member of the mayor's team with responsibility for policy decisions in a specific sector.

[6] The existence of such prevailing strategies was identified through: (i) an analysis of local media (newspapers) coverage, especially regarding the 1998-2004 period. Of these newspaper articles, the majority were about the mayor's activities and many were written by the mayor himself, presenting his own international initiatives; (ii) an analysis of the city council's and city executive board's formal decisions regarding international activities; (iii) a number of interviews with political and administrative actors managing international activities and with the associations of economic interests.

[7] The main statute governing the city council's activities provides a legal and insti-

gives a minimum covering coherence to almost all contemporarily occuring international activities. Within this framework some council policy directors may pursue their own international objectives individually, but the end results often gain the support of the mayor and the executive board of directors, the latter usually making decisions in full session. The mayors' desire to play an important influential role in the international field is also revealed by political attempts to steer individual activities into the Office for International Relations, which reported directly to the mayor himself in the 1994-1997 period and again[8] from 2001 on.

Why is the mayor's role so important in Rome? First of all it depends on the nature of the city's political and institutional system, which also helps to explain the shifts in international strategy that have occurred over time. Since the introduction of a new national law in 1993, the mayor of Rome (as in all the Italian municipalities) has been directly elected by the population and this has produced a personalised leadership with great formal power, attracting contenders from among national level politicians[9]. An important factor is the relationship between this sort of "presidential" mayor and the urban political system. Political parties – above all the two mass-parties (Christian Democrats and

tutional legitimacy for this: «the City of Rome is committed to promoting co-operation with other local governments within the processes of European integration and international interdependence, according to the European Charter of Local Authorities principles» (Statute of the City of Rome, art. 2)

[8] During Mayor Rutelli's second mandate (1997-2001) international functions were distributed between two departments, each of them politically dependent on a different policy director: one of these departments, whose functions concerned tourism, the 2000 Jubilee and International Relations, was managed by a council policy director belonging to the same political party as the mayor and personally chosen by him. The other department dealt with relationships with the EU and EU funding. Other administrative units (often few people) within both sector departments and council policy director's departments (*assessorati*), as well as within sub-municipalities (political and administrative bodies at the neighbourhood level) manage their own international activities.

[9] The two mayors (as well as some of their electoral opponents) share the important attribute of being political figures at a national level. Both F. Rutelli and W. Veltroni had been members of Parliament before becoming members of the Rome city council and are now, respectively, leader of "la Margherita" political party and Cultural Heritage Minister, and mayor of Rome. The former became a candidate for the prime minister's office in 2001, whereas the latter had been Cultural Heritage Minister in the centre-left government and one of the national leaders of the Ds (Democrats of the Left) Party.

Communists) - had been the backbone of the city's political system in the 1946-1992 period. After the national political crisis of the early 1990s their nature and role changed. Nowadays, new parties have emerged both on the left and on the right. Even though less important than in the past, they still provide the main political basis for bipolar coalitions, choosing and supporting the candidates for the office of mayor. Even though international activity - just like any activity within any policy domain - does not need to be directly negotiated among the political parties, the role of their representatives within the city council and above all on the executive board (*giunta*) still matters. The "right" of each council policy director (*assessore*) to manage one or more policy areas - including any related international activities, as long as they fall within the Mayor's strategy umbrella - comes informally from their unofficial status of "representative" or "delegate" of the political party they belong to. This is above all the case when considering participation in city networks[10] and sub-municipality international activities[11], such as decentralised cooperation projects and relationships aimed at promoting international solidarity. Council policy directors with responsibility for specific sectors then negotiate their own international activities with the Mayor, which seem to be approved as long they fall within his "umbrella" strategy.

What is the nature of this mayoral "umbrella" strategy? Has it changed over time, and if so how? In the 1994-2005 period the presence of international issues on the council's political agenda increased. They were characterised by a coexistence between the three main orientations mentioned above (respectively, of an economic, political and social kind). In the mayoral elections of 1994, 1997 and 2001 the candidates' electoral programmes gave importance to these three goals, but these orientations failed to carry the same weight when a strategy was produced. As a result, the international prevailing strategies developed from the 1990s on have partially changed in orientation, both if compared with the past and also if merely looking at the specific period studied. In the pe-

[10] For example the European Urbact city network (established in 2004) can be considered as the international projection of participatory democracy projects promoted by a council policy director belonging to the most left-wing political party in the mayor's coalition, and whose aims were approved by the mayor.

[11] For example, the most central sub-municipality of Rome signed a cooperation agreement with the Manhattan district (New York); and the sub-Municipality of "Garbatella" did the same with the "Belleville" neighbourhood of Paris.

riod under observation, there were three phases in particular, coinciding with the first (1993-1997) and the second (1997-2001) of Mayor F. Rutelli's mandates and also that of Mayor W. Veltroni (2001-2005). Apart from incremental changes affecting the nature of the activity within each orientation, the activities undertaken always had economic, political and (to a lesser extent) social components, however, the changes in emphasis that occurred in the three phases did not bring about a complete change of direction but, rather, a shift in the balance between them.

The first phase began right in the middle of the greatest transformation seen in the Italian political system since the second World War. A new mayor was elected in 1994, with new "presidential" powers, within a new "bipolar" political system and supported by a centre-left political coalition, which itself also represented a political change for Rome[12]. During this phase, the balance between the economic and political orientations of the council's international strategy was weighted mostly towards the economic side, while political activities were mainly oriented toward Europe, the Mediterranean and the "Northern" zone of world politics. The second phase began with Mayor Rutelli's second mandate (1997)[13], an intermediate stage that saw a less important change in the council's international strategy, which was already heading towards a more balanced equilibrium between its political and economic orientations. The third phase began in 2001 when W. Veltroni was elected Mayor[14]. Following his appointment the prevailing strategy became mostly oriented in a political and later a social direction (although without disregarding economic issues), as its geographical target shifted towards the Mediterranean, the "Global South" - that is to say Africa, and the least developed countries. EU issues continued to be important, although less so than before.

[12] F. Rutelli, was supported by a centre-left coalition, and defeated G. Fini who was later to become Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs (2002-2006).

[13] F. Rutelli was confirmed in his position after the first round of voting in 1997, supported by a coalition enlarged to include the neo-communist party. They took 60% of the vote, against a right wing coalition led by a local entrepreneur.

[14] Mayor W. Veltroni of the moderate left party (DS) was elected after a second round of voting, taking 52.2% of the vote, supported by the same enlarged centre-left coalition that had won the 1997 elections. He was elected again in May 2006, but with a larger proportion of the vote (after the first round with the same coalition and 64.1% of the vote, against the former Italian Minister of Agriculture G. Alemanno, who obtained only 37% of the vote).

In order to explain the shifting balance between the economic, political and social orientation of the council's international strategy it is useful to go deeper into the issue, asking further questions about its nature (what the aims, resources, and means used were), also investigating what these elements and the changes that occurred depended on.

3. A "MIMETIC" ECONOMIC STRATEGY

From the 1990s on, attempts to create a permanent discussion forum and to build agreement between the political actors and the economic environment about urban development in Rome, failed to lead to either a genuinely market-oriented or pro-growth policy paradigm, or to a comprehensive strategy that might be described as strategic planning. Nor have the city's internationalisation and international activities actually been key issues in the process of bargaining and making agreements on general and specific affairs concerning urban development[15]. The attempts that were made in the direction of improving the city's international competitiveness were weak, if compared to those of other European cities, even though traces of such a vision can be found in Mayor Rutelli's (1993-2000) strategy. The privatization of local public utilities was also part of this vision and after Mayor Rutelli's election some of these utilities, which had been previously owned by the city, became public companies in which the council's only controlling interest was as the key shareholder. As will become clearer below, this was part of the city's increasing openness to the global market place.

The strategy regarding economic internationalisation had two aspects, especially during the first phase: on the one hand it addressed economic growth while on the other it focused on the aims of local public finance. During Mayor

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[15] During the second Rutelli mandate, *Roma Prossima* (1998-2000) was a discussion initiative that brought the city authorities into contact with with various firms, associations, banks and a large number of experts. It aimed at building a common vision of the future in strategic planning style. It continued in the years after 2001 through *Progetto di Roma*, a discussion committee composed of political and administrative representatives from the council, all kinds of economic association actors, trade unions and universities, and resulted in the signing in 2002 of a "pact for development" which was then coordinated by the deputy mayor. All the city's main strategic decisions - such as the master plan, the plan for urban mobility, the city's budget and social policy plans - were informally discussed and agreed on within this committee, but the only international issue dealt with was that of tourism.

Veltroni's subsequent term in office the economic orientation of this international strategy was influenced more by the new overall interpretation he gave to the city's economic development. This was based on the need to integrate economic growth and social cohesion, and this approach has been called the "Rome model". In Mayor Veltroni's words, «Rome is a capital city open to the horizon of an united Europe and a global economy, with diversified economic bases, advanced infrastructures and high technology. For us it is fundamental that all this is happening without departing from the principle we considered as a basis for our action: there is no economic development without social quality, and a city does not really grow if growth regards only a part or a sector of it»[16]

3.1. Economic internationalisation as a path to growth

Economic internationalisation as a path to urban growth was addressed through different activities which resemble a broadly based urban-competitiveness-for-growth approach, although adapted to the Roman context. The most important initiatives were:

- The setting up of a special agency (*PromoRoma*) within the Chamber of Commerce, to promote the internationalisation of local firms, providing them with information and technical assistance in order to foster their competitiveness in the global economy[17]. These activities, which were to a large extent oriented toward the Mediterranean area[18], were mainly

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[16] Mayor W. Veltroni's speech at a meeting *Rome in 2015. Scenario for the City's Future*, dedicated to a discussion with various economic actors about the prospects for the city's future (Rome, 18.1.2005).

[17] In order to promote the internationalisation of firms, Promoroma «identifies the requirements expressed by firms for chosen geographic areas which might be suitable for investment projects; promotes co-operation aimed at assisting entrepreneurs wishing to develop their businesses abroad; establishes permanent contact with European and non-European Chambers of Commerce as well as with organisations representing various business concerns in the chosen geographical areas; and supplies all the support and assistance required to firms expanding into foreign markets».

[18] Entrepreneurial activities aimed at internationalising the economic system were systematically undertaken in the 1990s, when as a result of national legislation, the Region was able to provide its economic actors with some assistance (funding of firms' projects). After the mid 1990s, as happened at the Barcelona conference when a decision was taken about a free-trade Mediterranean area (to be established in 2010), associations representing local firms gave priority to this area (Morocco and Tunisia, most of

addressed to SMEs, since large firms seemed able to perform at an international level by themselves[19]. These kinds of initiative were important, even though not directly involving the city council, because they also represented a platform for further entrepreneurial pressure on local government policies regarding the internationalisation issue;

- In 2000, another special body (*Risorse per Roma*) was set up in response to an explicit reference in the mayor's programme in order to «strengthen the city's position in the international competition that increasingly involves metropolitan areas». It was given responsibility by the city council for the «promotion and support of economic local development, through local marketing activity, through policies aimed at attracting and promoting investments, and development projects», through «participation in city networks, and the management of relationships with international organisations»[20]. Subsequently, activities were carried out to market the city and these also included partnerships such as that between the city council, Risorse per Roma, the Chamber of Commerce and with another organisation responsible for building a new and bigger trade fair centre;
- The mayor's international visits were another means of promoting the city's economy, the most important of these being those to New York, London and Moscow (but also Beijing, Lebanon, etc.). Other local institutional actors in the urban region around the city engaged in similar activities without there being either any collaboration or conflict of interest with those mentioned above, but which were instead parallel activities[21].

All these activities were based on an attempt to build common visions and shared aims between the political and economic actors. Thus, the partnerships were based on various shared cognitive and strategic elements concerning (i) the place of Rome and of its economy within the European urban space and (ii)

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all, as they are considered to be those countries where investment is at lowest risk).

[19] Interview with the Unione Industriali (Association of Industrial Firms) of Rome, October 2004.

[20] Municipality of Rome, City Council Decision n. 1035/2000.

[21] For example, associations representing businessmen and firms took part both in international visits by the mayor and by the president of the region aimed at promoting local business abroad.

the perceived conditions of the urban economy.

3.2. The place of Rome within the European urban space

Rome is economically weaker than other big European global and industrial cities, even though the presence of large former state-owned enterprises still gives its economic environment, to some (lesser) extent, the ability to exert economic and financial control over the national economy. As happens in other capital cities, Rome's economic international "openness" depends more on its political and administrative functions than on the economic weight of the metropolitan area. Rome does not occupy a high position in the hierarchy of "global cities", nor is it economically competitive compared to other big cities in Europe. According to a comparative analysis [Sassen, 2001], a central urban hierarchy connects the major cities in Europe (such as Paris, London, Amsterdam and Zürich), which are part of a wider network of European financial, cultural and service capital cities with some "global" functions. Among these, Madrid and, in Italy, Milan are gaining place while Rome is not. This is confirmed by the results of other research. For example, the *GaWC Inventory of World cities* (122 cities in all) classifies Rome as a "third class" city as far as corporate service firms (accountancy, advertising, banking and law) are concerned[22]. Data coming from a private sector survey on business opinions confirms that in the overall and multifactor rating of the best European cities in which to locate a business, the top cities are London and Paris, while Rome ranks only 25th (while Milan ranks 11th) [Cushman & Wakefield Healey & Baker, 2004][23].

Even though this survey is not based on "objective" data, but only businessmen's perceptions, it confirms the available figures about direct foreign investment in Rome, which is growing, but is not comparable for example with

[22] See http://www.lboro.ac.uk/gawc/index.html.

[23] In particular, in a ranking of cities using the key factors that transnational companies consider when deciding where to locate, Rome ranks 13th in Europe as a good city for conferences and exhibitions, 23rd in terms of both easy access to markets and availability of qualified staff, 15th in terms of external (international) transport links, 24th in terms of quality of telecommunications, 17th in terms of cost of staff, 25th in terms of the climate governments create for business through tax policies and availability of financial incentives, 28th in terms of value for money for office space, 29th in terms of available office space, 27th for internal transport, 12th in terms of quality of life for employees, and 26th in terms of freedom from pollution.

Milan[24] . This is in line with an awareness - not always explicitly stated publicly but widespread in Rome among both political and economic actors, as the interviews for this research revealed - that the Italian capital city cannot compete with European "global cities". Rome's international competitiveness is negatively affected by its geographical position, which is on the periphery of the London-Paris-Frankfurt triangle, but close to some other "central cities" as far as accessibility and infrastructure are concerned. This does not mean that the keywords "urban competitiveness" have not appeared in public debate: on the contrary convergence between political and economic actors frequently centres on the creation of an adequate business climate and on environmental factors concerning the siting of such businesses (infrastructure, the dismantling of bureaucratic hurdles, initiatives for facilitating and promoting the establishment of progressive enterprises and favouring business start-ups) [OPCE, 2002: 13]. According to associations representing economic actors in Rome, a holistic strategy is needed to achieve all this, based on connections between the most dynamic clusters in the local economy and those resources in the urban environment that could support them as sectors of excellence. This, for example, could be a role for the "culture-training-research area" [UIR, 2001]. Initiatives for internationalisation should be addressed not only towards firms, but also to the entire local economic system in the Rome urban region, and be based on the requirements of the business community [UIR, 2000]. Local government should also be a catalyst to unite fragmented urban economic and financial interests, and should create a shared vision of internationalisation through projects based on public-private-partnerships [Manzocchi, 2001: 9] and by giving priority to Mediterranean relationships .

The geographical dimension makes it possible for the economic and political orientations of the city council's international strategy to come together in this wider regional area. The Mediterranean is considered to be the best-option for internationalising Rome [UIR, 2003] so that it can become a "regional metropolis" and not simply recede towards "local city" status [Manzocchi, 2001],

[24] According to ISTAT-Sviluppo Lazio-ICE-Politecnico di Milano data, there were 431 firms in the Rome region in 2003 employing 90,000 people in which international capital had a controlling interest (7.2% of the total in Italy, with 5% in manufacturing industry, while in Milan they were 3,179 such firms, 53.5% of the total in Italy, with 43% in manufacturing industry and 61.7% in the software sector). By the beginning of 2005 the number of such firms had increased to 550, with more than 100,000 employees.

and this can improve the city's ability to connect to the more important economic (trade, investment, information) networks and flows among European cities. On the political side, the initiatives started by the mayors of Rome have also viewed this zone as a favourite target. So, the geopolitical vision shared by both political and economic actors suggests that Rome should concentrate on playing a significant role at the centre of the Mediterranean basin. This is considered both as a political arena and as a place of contact between the EU and the southern shore of the Mediterranean as regards commercial relationships, which are expected to grow in the coming years in view of the free trade zone status expected in 2010. This indicates a clear coherence between the city's economic programmes and its political activities aimed at influencing EU policies and relationships with North Africa and the Middle East, and also in relation to initiatives aimed at preventing war and coping with the immigration problem. The economic and social development of the southern Mediterranean countries is seen as a resource for peaceful coexistence, while peace and security are considered to be preconditions of profitable trade relations, and also as advantageous for the economy of Rome.

3.3. The urban economic condition

In the building of an international economic strategy, the structural condition and performance of a city's economy are a fundamental cognitive reference point. They are on the one hand the object of "objective" measurements, while on the other hand they are the result of a social construction process, which can be understood by looking at the way economic issues are formulated within a city's political agenda. Rome's economy has never had an industrial basis, as is clear from comparison with, say, the metropolitan areas of northern Italy (Turin and Milan). The economic system and the structure of the employment market in Rome are highly diversified and characterized by the prevalence of an advanced tertiary sector (21.3% of Rome's employees) and a public administration which has increasingly reduced the number of its employees[25]. This

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[25] In 2003 there were 221,130 active firms in the Rome metropolitan area (while in Milan there were 326,000). Of these, only 10.5% were in manufacturing (the lowest number of all Italian metropolitan areas, while in Milan they formed 15.5%), construction firms were 13.5%, the trade sector 36,6%, the transportation and communication sector 6%, and the financial area 2.9%). Service firms in Rome were 8.5%, while in Milan they represented 7.6%. The majority were small firms (98% of firms had less than 16

situation has allowed Rome to avoid being badly hit by those relocation processes typical of industrial cities affected by globalization, and has also meant that it has not suffered from the burden of a Fordist past.

Rome has not had to face the uncertainty associated with a long period of economic decline caused by exposure to international markets, and this is especially so because of the highly fragmentated nature of its economy which is due to the great number of small firms which are supported by quite a stable local demand. In the early 1990s the Rome area experienced a serious economic crisis, which was also felt in all other parts of the country. After 1995, post crisis economic growth permitted the city's economy to react, showing higher positive trends than the national average. Because the short-term crisis was particularly bad, this positive reaction by the city's economy can be seen as a very dynamic growth response in comparison with other Italian cities. In the years that followed the economic performance of the metropolitan area was better than that at regional and national level, as far as employment, creation of new firms, tourism and exports are concerned. All figures show a dynamic rate of growth and a rebound from the negative economic cycles of the early '90s and were remarkably favourable for the advanced tertiary sector firms. At the end of the 1990s a new balance was reached: a reduction in the size of the public administration and state industry was made up for by the creation of new firms in the private service sector [Aronico, 2003]. Rome's percentage share of Italian GDP was 6.3% in 2001 and 6.7% in 2005, while the growth rate during that period was 6.8% in Rome and 1.4% in Italy overall. In that same period the unemployment rate went down from 11.1% to 6.5%, a better performance than the national average (from 9.1% to 7.7%), with a rate of growth in employment of 13.7% [CENSIS, 2006]. If compared to other European capitals the growth in employment was better in Rome (+13.7%) than in Madrid (+11,2%), or in London (+2%) or in Amsterdam (+0,2%).

These figures make it easy to understand why actors in Rome consider their economic urban system to be insufficiently strong enough to engage into open competition with European "global cities", but also not as much in decline economically as might normally be the case for a city engaged in international market-oriented strategies. This explains why, on the one hand, international

employees), with 25% of some 1,400,000 employees in Rome working in independent economic activities (a level similar to the Italian average), an important percentage in the innovation sectors (providing services to companies).

competitiveness has been part of development strategy but not to such a fundamental extent as it has been in other European cities. On the other hand, this explains why economic growth and competitiveness was not the focal point of the city's international and transnational strategy and why their importance decreased during the period under observation.

3.4. Economic international activities as instruments for local public finance and investments

Another special reason for opening the city's economy to global markets, concerned the situation prevailing in the city's public finances. From the 1990s on, public investment programmes in the city increasingly needed financial resources, which previously had usually been in the form of grants from central state coffers. In 1994, however, Rome's first "presidential" mayor found that the city accounts did not balance and a smaller amount in grants was coming (and could be expected) from national government. In order to make up for the lack of these "ordinary" grants the mayor produced a threefold strategy: firstly a special policy for the 2000 Jubilee[26], by which he managed to obtain additional resources from the state for a programme of urban renewal and infrastructure development; secondly the privatisation of the city's public utilities (these were transformed into enterprises competing in the international marketplace for utilities such as water, energy and environmental services, and thereby obtaining investments from national and international financial markets); and thirdly the issuing of bonds on the international financial market, with the mayor paying visits to the London and New York stock exchanges in order to promote their launch. After the city's budget crisis had been resolved this kind of international activity continued during the following decade to finance further investments, especially in the field of public works[27]

This initiative must not be interpreted only as a mean of resolving a bad fi-

[26] The coordinated multi level administrative policy for the Jubilee of 2000 was managed by the mayor of Rome, who was also able to coordinate state administrative activity and to negotiate with the hierarchy in the Holy See [d'Albergo 2000].

[27] A programme of Eurobond issues for investment purposes and to rectify the situation in the municipal finances (Euro Medium Term Notes) was launched in 1999 (issuing 500 million Euros per year) and updated in 2005 (issuing 1 billion Euros per year), and produced a good financial response. The city's good international finance rating was linked to this. In November 2004 Standard & Poor's international agency rated Rome's long term issue as "AA".

nancial situation; the political leadership's aim was also to restructure the inter-play between political and financial power in the city. The opening of the city to international investors, both through public utility shares and city bonds, also raised the prospect of marginalising or reducing the power of some in the city's private financial sector, such as banks and landlords. Until the 1980s both of these had been strong if not dominating partners in a coalition between land-lords (often connected with the Church), property entrepreneurs, the building sector and the Christian Democratic Party (*Democrazia Cristiana*), which had been ruling the city. Thus, exposing the city's finance to the open competition of international markets it was hoped might also have an impact on the city's political and economic power game.

The failed bid for the Olympic games of 2004 can be considered an initia-tive[28] aimed at both promoting the city's image internationally and obtaining additional funds for urban renewal from the state. The international contest to acquire the games - for which a city must present itself as an integrated[29], as well as accountable and effective actor – symbolized by the bidding procedure, had an internal effect at local and national level. In fact, it was used as a com-municative resource to strengthen the leadership both in political competition at city level and in the national domestic arena.

History is quite an important non-material urban asset that was brought into play in the making of Rome's international economic strategy. It's unique nature was used to highlight the city's identity within the international envi-ronment, especially as far as tourism is concerned. Both because today's image of the church and that of its past, the Holy See has taken symbolic precedence over that of the ancient Roman Empire, but both of them together offer a cul-tural and artistic heritage that obviously forms the core of tourist policy and is

[28] The Olympic bid was promoted in 1996 by the Mayor and supported by a local coalition between political and economic actors. Rome's actors had learned from experi-ences in the recent past (1960 Olympic games; 1990 Football World Championship; 2000 Jubilee) that hosting big international events is usually associated with national policies, supporting the city with infrastructure investments and facilities and increasingly giving city actors a major role in determining and managing such programmes.

[29] Even though the 2000 Jubilee and the 2004 Olympic candidacies were considered important opportunities, they also met opposition, but only from a minor part of public opinion and civil society, worried about possible damage to the environment and the city's cultural heritage that might have been caused by public works and the presence of millions of pilgrims and tourists

«a natural and inimitable competitive advantage for Rome»[30]. But there is another side of this coin, a sort of globalization of the Sacred that goes with the globalization of the touristic city: the Jubilee 2000 policy was a way of promoting Rome's image as the City of Faith, City of Solidarity, City of Culture and Nature, a Modern City [Czarniawska, 2002; Czarniawska, Mazza and Pipan, 2001]. Political use was made of it, but it was also interpreted as an economic opportunity both to invest in infrastructure and to improve the international image of the city.

In conclusion, a pro-growth international strategy was important at the beginning of the period studied but then became less and less important. However, it was of a "mimetic" nature. The city's actors tried to use practices and strategies taken directly from the international environment and from the experience of other cities, such as the different ways of encouraging urban competitiveness, but without drawing up really imaginative policies - perhaps with the exception of aspects of public finances – and without adopting an integrated strategic planning approach. The activities that made up the economic orientation of the city's international strategy remained more or less the same, even though they were part of a changing general political position within the government of the city. Development strategies shifted over time, being less (at the beginning) or more (later) strongly "socially" oriented, according to the particular mayor in office and the social and political coalitions supporting him. Thus, activities in favour of economic competitiveness gradually became less important and visibile, even though the change they underwent affected their meaning and their centrality on the city's agenda more than their actual implementation.

4. "GOING GLOCAL": A EUROPEANIST AND NON-MATERIALIST POLITICAL AGENDA

In the period examined, political and social orientations became increasingly important in the city's international activities, particularly as far as the mayor's "umbrella" strategy was concerned. The first shift was from an economic to a mainly political orientation. The geopolitical targets of this type of strategy are to be found in regional, European and world wide political arenas, which are increasingly sources of regulation as well as structures offering opportunity for local government [Le Galès, 2002].

The position of a city in world and regional political arenas creates both

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[30] Interview with Mayor W. Veltroni.

constraints and resources. These undergo different processes of representation and social construction within the city, depending on the type of prevailing political culture. In Rome those aspects concerning the EU and the Mediterranean are especially relevant. The EU has become an institutionalised component in the intergovernmental environment of European cities and a structure offering specific opportunities. This is the reason why cities are involved in the building of the EU and negotiate its institutional order, as happened when the concept of subsidiarity was formulated in the 2004 "constitutional treaty". Being part of the EU does not only mean obtaining funds but also legitimacy resources and a position for lobbying and negotiating regulatory and distributive policies. This happens even though cities have no institutional status within the EU, but only consultative access to the Committee of the Regions. This lack of formal access points to the EU makes it more useful for cities to belong to European city networks, thus giving themselves the opportunity for a louder voice in the European arena. This is quite evident in the case of Eurocities, the most important network for big European cities, which lobbys the European Commission and Parliament. Both of these two institutions need to interact with actors who can represent geographically widespread interests within Europe and they both also require expertise (knowledge and information) in order to decide and implement policies and regulations affecting cities. In fact, the typical model of neo-corporatist policy-making, based only on sectors, has been eroded by neo-liberal agendas. Cities can also act as "watchdogs" for the European institutions in their game play with the member states over issues such as the implementation of EU policies involving multilevel partnerships,.

In Rome some of the council's political strategy objectives remained the same while others changed. The city's constant aims have been those of achieving a role for itself, and for cities in general, in international and European systems of governance, and of influencing political agendas in policy domains that involve transnational policy-making. What changed over time were the priorities and some of the means of achieving them as well as the locations targeted. As a consequence there was an increasing modification of the overall political and cultural meaning of the strategy. The main features of these changes and the reasons behind them will be illustrated below.

Both the first phase (1993-1997) and the subsequent one (1997-2001) were strongly characterised by the political objective of strengthening the role of the city - and more generally of cities - within the EU. The mayor of Rome led an attempt within the European Committee of the Regions (COR) to include a European urban policy, quite distinct from a regional policy, in the Amsterdam

Treaty[31], but in the end was not successful. Another type of activity with the same purpose is that of promoting and joining coalitions of cities, mostly through participation in and leadership of "political" city networks. For example, the Mayor W. Veltroni is one of the eight vice-presidents of UCLG (*United Cities and Local Governments*, the president of which was the mayor of Paris)[32]. Also participation in *Eurocities*, the most important European political and multisectoral city network, was especially intended to gain political benefits, such as a louder voice when lobbying the EU[33].

Other benefits that have come to Rome from taking part in city networks are of a cognitive kind, through the exchange of practices and know how to resolve problems in urban policy making. This happened through participation in single-issue city networks of a "functional" nature[34], which makes it easier for city actors (both politicians and top civil servants) to reduce the transaction costs of innovation, through processes of policy transfer and learning [Lotrecchiano, 2004]. This functional objective, together with more political and sym-

[31] F. Rutelli was member of the EU Committee of Regions and President of its Commission for Urban Policies (1994-1997). An Opinion on Urban development and European Union was approved in Rome (4.4.1995). The role of the mayor of Rome was also recognised by the Italian local governments' association (ANCI), which appointed him to coordinate its European and international policies.

[32] The network is the result of the unification of the two largest non-specialist international local government associations, the International Union of Local Authorities (IULA) and the United Towns Organisation (UTO/FMCU). It has members in over 100 countries in all parts of the world, representing over half of the world's total population. Rome also takes part in UCUE (Union of capital cities of the EU).

[33] For example, during the European Convention Eurocities was especially active in lobbying Convention members and raising public awareness of the need for a more inclusive and participatory approach to the governance of the EU, and to give constitutional recognition to the role of local and regional authorities.

[34] In the period 1994-2004 Rome was involved in many European "functional" city networks, the major ones being: *Ariane* (space transport); *Cities* (Information technology for the public administration); *Civitas* (Urban transport); *Energie-cités* (Sustainable mobility); *Global cities dialogue* (Information technology); *International association of Educating Cities* (Education and development); *Majorcities* (Information technology); *Medcities* (Sustainable urban development); *Metrex* (Development at metropolitan level; the Province of Rome is a member); *Telecities* (Information technology); *Urbact* (participatory democracy); ICLEI (International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives; and ECDP (European Cities on Drug Policy; the Province of Rome is a member).

bolic ones, is also achieved through bilateral relations with other cities (in the case of Rome twinning and friendship pacts, such as those with Paris and New York, Tokyo, Brasilia). European-wide city networks also facilitate the building of partnerships among cities to apply and manage EU programmes[35], such as structural funding and Communitarian Initiatives like *Urban I* and *II.*

If Europe was an important target for Rome's international strategy during the entire 1993-2005 period, this was because of the ambivalent meaning of European integration, which was interpreted not only as functional, but also as symbolic. As far as the political culture of the city's actors is concerned, Europe is not only a structure offering opportunity, but also a value in itself. Europeanism and "Euro-optimism" are widespread political values and attitudes at both national [Cotta, Isernia e Verzichelli (eds.), 2005] and city[36] levels. Rome, being the capital of Italy, was part of the EU from the very beginning. Also for symbolic reasons (the 1957 Founding Treaty and the 2004 "Constitutional" treaty were both signed in Rome at the City Hall in the *Orazi e Curiazi* chamber) being part of a political Europe is interpreted by the city's actors as of fundamental political and historical value and, as Mayor Veltroni said, «Rome is proud to feel itself the house of Europe»[37]

But from an international strategy standpoint, this view of Rome's geopolitical position quite soon increased in importance due to the fact that, apart from being in the EU, the city is also part of the region around the Mediterranean basin. As mentioned above, this has proved to be a policy generating idea, both of an economic and a political kind. On the one hand, the Mediterranean has been interpreted by the city's actors as a offering greater opportunity to co-operate and compete with similarly ranked cities, (e.g. Madrid, Barcelona, Athens) more than with world cities in northern Europe. On the other hand, city-to-city relationships in the Mediterranean - and business in this area as well - have huge cultural and political problems that need to be solved. Thus, initia-

[35] In 2002, for example the City Council approved and funded participation in 45 EU programmes. See City Council Decision no. 965/2002.

[36] In 2000 the City Council established the association *Cantiere Europa. L'Europa delle città e della cittadinanza*, in partnership with the three universities in Rome. Its mission was to promote knowledge and skills in the field of Europeanization processes. See City Council Decision no. 202/2000.

[37] W. Veltroni, *Welcome speech given at the Constitutional Treaty Signing Ceremony*, Rome, October 2004.

tives such as Rome joining the Medcities network[38] and the work of the ECOMED agency[39], as well as the city's *Office for Peace in Jerusalem*[40], are concrete examples of this geographical shift of attention.

A further and more relevant geopolitical shift in the political orientation of the city's international strategy is seen in the new centrality given to cities and countries of the "Global South", namely Latin America and (most of all) Africa. This change occured in the third phase along with a major refocusing of the mayors' strategy goals. Since 2001 these goals have turned more resolutely toward the promotion of transnational agendas for sustainable development, social justice, peace and human rights. This is what can be called a *social* orientation. Activities that are included in this form of orientation are often initiatives of a "foreign policy from below" type, such as the *Office for Peace in Jerusalem* mentioned above and the *World Summit of the Nobel Peace Laureates*[41] (which was launched for the first time in 1999 by the previous mayor). On the other hand there are also initiatives in support of the Least Developed Countries, such as *Italia-Africa*[42], the *Glocal Forum*[43] and in support of solidarity activity in the

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[38] *Medcities* is a network of Mediterranean coastal cities created in 1991 at the initiative of the *Mediterranean Technical Assistance Programme* (METAP), established in 1990 by the World Bank, the European Investment Bank, the European Commission and the UNDP. The goals of the networks are to strengthen the environmental management capability of local administration, through decentralised activities involving technical assistance, and also to reinforce awareness of interdependence and common responsibility regarding the policies of urban environmental conservation in the Mediterranean basin. In 2005 the mayor of Rome was President of the Network. See: www.medcities.net).

[39] ECOMED (*Agency for sustainable development of the Mediterranean*) was established in 1995 as an initiative of the Mayor, through a partnership between ACEA and AMA (public utilities in the sectors of water, energy and urban hygiene). See: www.romacivica.net/ecomed/it.

[40] The Office for Peace was established in 2002 in Jerusalem at the initiative of the mayor of Rome, in order to support dialogue and cooperation between Israeli and Palestinian organizations. Its activities are based on partnerships with local municipalities, civil society associations, religious centres, the World Bank and UN agencies and local offices.

[41] The *World Summit of the Nobel Peace Laureates* has been organised every year in Rome since 1999 in collaboration with the *M. Gorbacev Foundation*. See: www.nobelforpeace-summit.org.

[42] The *Italia-Africa* initiative was launched in 2004 by the Mayor of Rome, together with the Italian trade unions, the Catholic NGO *Sant'Egidio Community*, UNICEF, FAO,

field of decentralised cooperation. At times these initiatives are carried out through partnerships with intergovernmental organisations (the World Bank, UN agencies etc.) while at other times they are the direct personal initiatives of the mayor himself in collaboration with various NGOS and without the involvement of the City administration, as happened in the case of co-operation with Maputo (Mozambique) [Colonna, 2005][44].

Consequently, Rome promotes both direct solidarity activity with the Global South and advocacy initiatives addressed to intergovernmental organizations. The latter have a double significance, as they concern the priorities to be adopted in transnational policies to fight global inequality and poverty[45], and also concern global governance order. The main policy goals are: to dramati-

environmentalist associations and other Italian NGOS. More than 150,000 people took part in the final event. A second gathering (*Same planet*) took place in May 2005. See: www.italiafrica.it.

[43] The *Glocal Forum* is an annual meeting of 50 mayors from both the northern and southern hemispheres, debating and taking initiatives for peace and against poverty and the foreign debt of the less developed countries. Founded in 2001, it encourages global powers to have broader respect for local powers and cultural diversity in a process defined as "glocalization". The *Glocal Forum*'s city-to-city approach brings together mayors, international institutions, private sector leaders, citizens and youth in a global-local coalition of forces. The resulting concrete projects focus on socio- economic development, tourism, youth, sports, culture, media and information technology. There are more than 300 *Glocal Forum* members from 134 countries in all five continents. See: www.glocalforum.org.

[44] The long story of co-operation started in 1992 after the signing of Mozambique peace agreements in Rome and continued with participation in a World Bank *Municipal Development Program*me for sustainable development and urban hygiene in Maputo, managed by the Rome city council through the ECOMED agency. The subsequent co-operation project between schools in Rome, NGOS and Maputo to build a school was very special. At the personal initiative of the mayor, rather than of of the city council, funds were raised among students (20,000 copies of a CD compilation personally chosen by the mayor entitled *Me We* were sold). This drew wide media coverage in Rome, which continued on the occasion of the visit of the mayor and some students to Maputo.

[45] According to the mayor, «we ask all the governments of the world and in particular Europe to put Africa at the first place in the international political agenda, to change the route and to implement very different policies from those that so far have caused disasters and a humanitarian catastrophe that often is forgotten» (Interview with the Mayor W. Veltroni).

cally increase the size national and international funds for public development aid to a level of up to 0.7% of national GDP for the developed countries; to change international trade regulations (starting with HIV related medicine trademarks and agricultural subsidies); a total embargo on selling weapons in Africa; and a moratorium on foreign debt owed by poor countries.

The governance objective translates into the recognition of a central role for cities in the politics of the globalised world and in transnational governance regimes, through a "glocalization" strategy. This is considered to be a process that treats cities as central players in international relations and finds local solutions to the global challenges of peace-building and human development[46]. At an international level, the mayor of Rome believes that, «rules, places and decisional power are needed in order to avoid any abuse of power», and not only «cities and local governments may play an important role, for example through decentralised cooperation actions»[47], but «(b) the only real and concrete things are done by cities, NGOS and the most sensitive international organisations. Only the alliance between these three actors can produce results (e.g.) the possibility of survival for children in poor countries»[48]. These political goals were also explicitly stated in the final document of the second annual *Glocalization conference*, which called on mayors and cities «to lobby at both the national and international levels» for an «increasing city participation in international forums and global institutions». Integrating city-to-city cooperation programs and local actors together in peace treaties and negotiations would be necessary, as «dramatic recent failures in peace-building efforts highlight the need to renovate the traditional tools of national-level diplomacy, with the recognition of the crucial role local authorities and communities play in peace-building»[49].

Both interests and values influence the transnational and international strategies of cities, and within every city a prevailing strategy needs to balance the relationship between interests and values (e.g. materialist and non materialist), in order to introduce a minimum level of coherence. But this doesn't mean that a coherent strategy simply consists of putting together different objectives

[46] For a sort of official *Glocalization Manifesto*, see http://topics.developmentgateway.org/glocalization/rc/.

[47] W. Veltroni, Speech at the 5th *World Summit of Peace Nobel Prizes*, Rome, November 2004.

[48] W. Veltroni, Speech at the 5th *Glocal Forum*, Rome, May 2004.

[49] Rome, 24-26.5.2003 (www.citymayors.com/features/glocal_conference.html).

and actions. Just as in other big cities, urban society in Rome contains a spread of both materialist and non-materialist values. But the shift from an *economic* to a *political* and then to a *social* orientation within the prevailing international strategy, reveals the increasing prevalence of non-materialist and cosmopolitan values. Issues such as peace and war help to clarify the subtle difference between the *political* and *social* orientation of the city's international strategy. When these issues are part of the city's agenda under a *political* orientation the geopolitical concerns prevail, with a self-centered and "strategic" (in the traditional international relations sense) meaning, as happened over the question of peace in the Mediterranean basin or in the Balkans. Within a *social* orientation, peace and war issues are more based on "altruistic" and "common good" values and this is a remarkable aspect that makes the international role of cities different from that of states. It also is a basis for a city like Rome to build coalitions with other cities in order to stress the need for a major role for cities in the system of global governance.

What explanation is there for the increase in priorities so loaded with non-materialist values such as sustainable development, solidarity, peace and human rights within the "umbrella" strategy of Rome's glocal mayor? The reason can be found in urban culture and values, and has a twofold nature. It reflects, on the one hand, the unique cultural and historical nature of Rome – that of being the world centre for the Catholic Church – and on the other hand it reflects the role and the cultural and political nature of civil society in the city, something which is not only strong but is being involved in the social and political governing coalition and in public policies networks.

4.1. Religious and secular cosmopolitanism

An important aspect of Rome's cultural uniqueness comes from its history. The unfolding of Rome's international relations have been coloured by the city's long history which in the distant past was the centre from which radiated the Roman Civilisation and later, without interruption become the centre of the Christian Civilisation [Gaspari, 2004]. The city's past could be considered «a possible source of path dependency, a normative model that makes difficult to invent new strategies, based on shared visions of possible futures, beyond tourism attraction» [Donolo, 2005]. But as far as policy strategies are concerned, history itself has to be considered as a product of social and discursive construction. On the one hand it is influenced by contemporary political attitudes and cultural points of view, but on the other hand it may also induce awareness in the political leadership about how the city's identity can be a political resource

of an innovative and progressive kind.

One of the most important cultural aspects is connected to the presence of the "headquarters" of «the largest global institution in terms of active membership» [McNeill, 2003][50] – the *Holy See* – as well as of several international organisations, mainly belonging to the UN system [FAO, IFAD, WFP and many other minor agencies)[51]. This dual-faceted institutional presence makes the city of Rome at the same time the world centre of Christianity and a place of secular cosmopolitan values. These two facets coincide above all on questions such as peace, social justice and solidarity, presented as moral as well as political issues. It's remarkable how an awareness about the city's cosmopolitan identity turns into a political vision of its international role, strongly affecting both Catholic and secular political actors. In the 1970s and in the following decades opposition between traditional Church culture and the new approach taken by *Vatican Council II* (1962-1965), allowed a progressive and community based Catholic movement to play a new role, which also affected the city's political system (favouring the political left)[52]. The ideas later developed by Pope John Paul II and also expressed in the 2000 Jubilee did not, however, lead to a total reduction of space for progressive Catholics in civil society, since peace and solidarity were constantly underlined as a response to both the failure of war and of the market.

So far, the historical and contemporary non-materialist identity of Rome – portraying it as the city of spirituality, solidarity and peace – seems to have been interpreted as a politically valuable resource for the city. It communicates images that have been present in the international activities of both mayors, although with rather different importance and emphasis. As mentioned above,

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[50] The secular nature the *Holy See's* presence must be considered for reasons other than its symbolic aspect. Apart from the fact that the centre of Catholic Church itself should be considered a strong factor in the city's internationalisation (pilgrim tourism), it should be remembered that the Church's ownership of land and property has influenced Rome's economy and politics over the centuries.

[51] For the complete list of the 26 official international organisations based in Rome see CESPI, 2004.

[52] This is noteworthy, as the Church's role in Rome had been a very important component of the dominant social and political coalition built around the Christian Democratic party for a long period. This party was the absolute centre of political power in the post second world war period, combining a "black aristocracy" with populism [Porro 1993].

this affected Mayor Veltroni's international strategy (*third phase*) more than it did for that of the previous mayor.

4.2. The cultural and political role of civil society

Apart from its effect on this last matter, the prevalence of non-materialist aims in Mayor Veltroni's international strategy has to do with the relationship between his own political background and culture, the nature of the political coalition supporting him and the fabric of civil society in Rome, which is as well organised as it is culturally and politically differentiated.

As Rome is not an industrial city, at least compared to other big Italian and European cities, labour-capital conflicts have not been present as the main or unique division in society. Modern contemporary urban conflict has been of a deeply politically and culturally rooted nature, despite the presence of strong employment unions, especially those representing employees in the public and construction sectors. Nowadays there are no emerging social movements specifically associated with purely "internal" urban issues in Rome, apart from the housing problem. In recent years, the most important form of social mobilization has been that of people taking part in the so called "alter" [Farro (ed.), 2006] or "new" [della Porta, 2003] global movement. This is connected with transnational networks, drawing on different cultural and political areas, and also gaining support from some of the trade unions. The so-called "global civil society" [Anheier, Glasius and Kaldor, 2001], which partially overlaps this movement, does not only make demands when engaged in cultural and political struggles against neo-liberal globalisation, but also plays an advocacy role. Part of the movement also plays an active part in UN and city council programmes against poverty and in support of human development, contributing through these to the formation of a type of local political subjectivity that is different from that which is usually considered to be local [Sassen, 2004].

Within the city these actors engage in common "glocal" activities, even though they do not have a common identity, belonging as they do to both the radical-left and to the solidarity (either secular or Catholic NGOS) areas. However, they share a common attitude towards political power, which they believe should be neither overthrown, nor taken (through revolutions or elections), but rather democratised and "used" to effect policies for the common good [d'Albergo, 2006]. This explains why actors within civil society in the city have either (although rarely) gained themselves positions within local government, or (more often) established operational partnerships with the city administration. Both strategies are interpreted as a way of pursuing local activity against

neo-liberal globalisation and in favour of peace, human rights and human development.

Many of these civil society associations support the mayor – and also have representatives on the council and in the local municipalities (at local community level) – and draw from him the legitimacy to pursue their political and policy aims by staying very close to his "umbrella" strategy, thus being allowed access to various institutional resources. For his part, the mayor of Rome spoke at the second (2002) *World Forum of Local Authorities*, a meeting held in parallel with the *World Social Forum* in Porto Alegre, Brazil (the most important annual event in the "alterglobal" movement's calender), and also officially signed the resulting *Charter of Local Authorities for Social Inclusion*[53]. He has opened up the possibility for compatible local involvement within the city administration, such as in participatory budgeting [Smeriglio, Peciola and Ummarino (eds.), 2005; d'Albergo e Moini, 2006]. So, the "Manifesto-objectives" of those international activities that fall within the umbrella of the mayor's *socially* oriented strategy go a long way towards meeting a large part of civil society's demands, proposals and direct action.

Thus, in its international strategy, non-materialist values are presented through activities and networks of relationships within which social and institutional actors (often) become involved together and where their roles (infrequently) coincide. Civil society networks are favourite objectives in Mayor Veltroni's consensus building strategy, more so than for the previous mayor. This has allowed organisations within local civil society to really become involved in the development (decision and implementation) of the city's international activities, especially as far as decentralised cooperation is concerned.

5. CONCLUSION: THE POLITICS OF ROME'S INTERNATIONAL AND TRANSNATIONAL STRATEGIES

As it has been shown above, during the period studied the city of Rome pursued different international aims, using many different methods. During the 1994-2005 period the prevailing strategy shifted from an *economic* to a *political* and then to a *social* orientation. Analogies, differences and interplay between the three orientations, as well as the reasons for the shifts that occurred will now be considered in the following concluding reflections.

The most important analogy between the three orientations taken in the

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[53] Municipality of Rome, City Council Decision no. 762/2001.

city's international strategy is to be found in the fact that they all derive from the highest level of city politics and policy making. The "presidential" mayor provided the major source of legitimacy for international activities, be they either of an *economic*, *political* or *social* kind. However, each orientation is based on its own specific set of actors, as well as on distinct political and cognitive processes. These dissimilar ingredients explain what seems to be the most important difference among them: the *economically* oriented strategy is more *reactive* and, as mentioned above, *mimetic*; the *politically* and the *socially* oriented ones are rather *proactive* and *inventive*.

The reactivity and proactivity of these international strategies come from the different subjective interpretations the actors involved give to the possible role that they themselves and the city – as a sort of collective actor – may play in international and transnational environments. In other words, they are related to the particular social construction of the structure-agency relationship that is produced in the making of the international or transnational strategy. A reactive strategy tries to avoid constraints and to obtain resources from the existing external environment, interpreted as a primary source of opportunities (and risks) but for the most part unchangable. A proactive strategy instead tries to change the surrounding order, enhancing the position of the city within it, e.g. through removing or reducing constraints and/or creating new institutional opportunities or improving the existing ones.

When an *economic* orientation is prevalent in the city's international strategy it can be considered more reactive than proactive, since it aims above all to make the best of various resources and assets found within the urban economic system and that also derive from its geographical position. The city's economic and political actors offer no plausible possibility of introducing important changes in the external environment of Rome. This would obviously exceed any agency possibilities that a single city might have, but to some extent might fall within the aims of coalitions formed between cities e.g. in the development (upward phase) of EU economic policies. What the city of Rome was able to do – especially in the *third phase* – to maintain its own path when faced with international economic forces and regulations, was to try to follow a transnational strategy that fitted in better with the so-called "Rome model", a sort of "third way" within which social quality and cohesion should *actually* be the priority of urban development[54]. As has been stated in a recent study of trends in Rome,

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[54] According to Mayor Veltroni «today Rome's foreign policy and the development

the city is characterised by a «pattern of urban system that was discovered to be more competitive without giving way to hyper-liberal velleity or enticement and to be more modern, without renouncing the building of networks of solidarity and inclusion» [CENSIS, 2006: 7]. This may also explain why, despite the rhetorical arguments that are sometimes used in relations between political and economic actors, only a few steps forward have been made along the path of urban competitiveness. Thus, economic strategy has shown both what could be called a "mimetic isomorphism" face and a "plastic" or malleable capability to adapt discourses and practices, such as means of competitiveness, to goals that appear more politically "sustainable", given the internal political conditions and the nature of the urban economy and society.

The *political* orientation of the city's international strategy showed more proactive features, since it was based on the aim of changing not only international political agendas, but also some aspects of transnational governance regimes at both European and global levels. Another aim of this strategy is that of "exporting" the "Rome model" of socially inclusive development and its related know-how and practices to the LDC countries, through city-to-city relationships.

In doing this, Mayor Veltroni's approach of "foreign policy from below", especially, seems to have been more able to imaginatively make the best use of Rome's historical and contemporary identity. In order to carry out what in this paper has been called a *socially* oriented strategy he also established a privileged alliance with local (but transnationally connected) civil society, and in this process moral issues and social networks have been transformed into political resources. Through this "glocalization" strategy the Rome city council takes action in international and transnational arenas with its own system of alliances, trying not only to define the stakes for transnational policies but also to push for reform of existing governance regimes. According to the mayor: «city part-

strategies pursued at the local level are strictly connected. Welfare policies are a government priority and Rome's new welfare model must take into account both the needs of the economy and social demand. Local development must point to GDP growth and to bettering the 'human development index', paying attention to the poorest and to who is at a risk of being excluded. It's what we call the 'solidarity city' […], which pursues a balanced and sustainable growth. This strategy has a 'global' value, as it is good for administering Rome's territory and every territorial community. […] We must put this experience at the disposal of all, supporting its transfer into other places, it doesn't matter how small or far from us» (Interview).

nerships can produce concrete projects and actions, a strong network with a more and more acknowledged prestige, which works together with the great organizations of the international community in order to build a new global governance, a world open to change, integration of economic systems, but with rules that prevent everything from becoming subject to a competition where the strongest and the richest prevail»[55].

In Rome *economically*, *politically* and *socially* oriented international activity is often carried out at the same time, but by very different political and administrative actors, or by policy-networks including different non-institutional actors. These activities share the mayor's "umbrella", a resource that is more of an institutional than of an organizational kind. This general strategy has provided the greater part of the activities with political legitimacy and backing, but not actually with coordination resources. So, between the different international and transnational fields of action there are neither interorganizational joint structures, nor unifying procedures, with the exception of the role played by the *Office for International Relations*, which answers directly to the Mayor. But this office only gives assistance to other policy directors and departments when they engage in their own international activities. Thus, interorganisational relations within the city's administration are mostly bilateral and not multilateral, and very rarely of a directive kind. As a result, it is impossible to portray Rome's multifaceted international strategy as integrated, since three parallel trajectories coexist within it, each of them having prevailed during a different phase. Apart from coordination, and a common source of legitimacy, they have some shared visions about particular resources (such as the role of the city's history and cultural heritage) and about some geopolitical orientations (such as the emerging importance of the Mediterranean area).

Many factors help to explain the shift in Rome's international strategy, but not all of them have the same explanatory force. Taking into account all the components that have been mentioned above – that is considering what in policy studies is usually called the *politics of policy making* – should highlight the predominant elements and the way they are related to each other in quite a comprehensive manner. The politics of a city's international strategy depends on clusters of variables such as intergovernmental relations, politics and political leadership, as well as the nature of policy networks and urban cultures.

Intergovernmental relations concern the relationships between the levels

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[55] Interview with the Mayor W. Veltroni.

of government in cities, regions and the nation state. In the case of Rome these relations render the city's political space for international activity an open and for the most part cooperative one. Being a capital city gives Rome a certain degree of political internationalisation that comes from non-local or non-urban factors. However, this also brings some specific questions about the way relationships between sub-national and central government affect the city's international policies. The international activities of sub-national governments are considered as "paradiplomacy" activities primarily aimed at challenging the uniqueness of state prerogatives in the field of foreign policy [Aldecoa and Keating (eds.), 1999], thus being often perceived as menacing the nation state. Until some years ago international activities on the part of both regional and local governments were not encouraged by the Italian government. Nowadays, national and sub-national international activity can be considered cooperative[56], even if a governments' political colour, as much as its position on international issues is often different (e.g. over the issue of the Iraqi war the position of the Italian right-wing government and that of the mayor of Rome were diametrically opposed). Not only do the Italian regions and official association of municipalities have their own offices in Bruxelles, but the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs also provides diplomats "on loan" to those major regions that ask for them, as they also do for those cities at the centre of the bigger metropolitan areas[57].

As far as the local government system in Rome is concerned, the international activities and strategies of various governmental actors (namely the City of Rome, the Province and the Lazio Region) enjoy a non-conflictual co-existence. At metropolitan level there is neither a single strategy combining common and co-ordinated efforts, nor any conflicting activities, each institutional actor's initiatives being independently and quietly parallel [58]. So far, this

[56] Initiatives for peace in the Middle East are an example of cooperation between the Italian cities, the regions and the national government, through a coordination board – called *Le ali della colomba* (The Dove's Wings) – whose aim is to bring coherence between state foreign policy and local government activity.

[57] The City of Rome is among the few sub-national governments that have already taken advantage of such an opportunity. So, since 2001 the director of the city council's *Office for International Relations* had been a state diplomat, chosen by the Mayor and appointed by the Minister of Foreign Affairs.

[58] For example, businessmen and firms associations take part both in the mayor's and in the president of the region's international visits aimed at promoting local business

has not been hampered by the existence of different political coalitions governing the three levels. The situation is helped by the fact that, as far as the international promotion of local economies is concerned, the Italian State offers programmes and means to assist in the internationalisation of firms but these are not provided in a way which would create competition between sub-national institutions.

Obviously, in determining a strategic orientation *politics* matters, but in this case its importance has to be considered in quite a wide sense, especially as far as normal relationships between politics and policies are concerned. Even though apparently piecemeal and fragmented, Rome's international activities are not politically self-referential, as each one also draws its meaning from its coherence within the overall governing (political) strategy. That is to say, its coherence within the orientation given to the more important urban policies, whose emerging preferences are structured on the basis of network processes, political consensus and (rarely) conflict. The types of relationship between international and transnational activities and other policy activities reveal a difference between an *economically* oriented strategy and *politically* and *socially* oriented ones. An *economically* oriented strategy does not entail the existence of those typical components that make a public policy and its application actually distinct and autonomous from other policies (such as specialised actors, stable patterns of cooperation or conflict, legal and cognitive frameworks for collective action, specific institutional places for decision making, continuity across time). The city's international *economic* strategy is more an external projection of internal policy-making concerning economic development than a distinct economic policy. Typical policy characteristics are more perceivable when the prevailing strategy has a *political* or a *social* orientation. These are of the type that occur when a policy has its own features and is structured on its specific network and is therefore distinct from others. In this case something comparable to the institutionalization process within a policy sector seems to be under way. This is probably due to the similarity between this kind of city international agency and the long-established process of foreign policy development at national level.

As far as politics is concerned, the *political leadership* variable is about the key role the political leaders and the party coalitions supporting them play in orienting public policy development (e.g. towards neo-liberal vs. third-way

abroad.

policies). Strongly related to the characteristics of the local political system, the nature of the leadership may explain both the existence and orientation of a prevailing international strategy. Moreover, international activities may provide actors involved in the competition for the territorial leadership with additional resources that are useful in this arena. As a result of the institutional, political and cultural factors mentioned above, urban development policies in Rome are produced under the mayor's policy umbrella and must be considered – adopting Savitch and Kantor's definitions – far more "social" than "market" oriented. Usually changes affecting the political leadership bring about substantial policy changes of greater or lesser importance. Taking the 1994-2005 period as a whole, the amount of change was not comparable with that which is expected to occur when the political shift is either from a right wing to a left wing administration or vice versa. In the *third phase* especially, international activities and the prevailing strategy (shifting from a *political* to a *social* orientation) were coherent with the political slant of the council's public policies, which were typical of the "third way" paradigm. When dealing with transnational problems they can be placed within the normative approach to globalization that is typical of "global transformers" [Held and Mc Grew, 2002: 107].

The *policy network* variable is about the way those action networks used to carry out international activities are composed and actually work. Within these networks, cultural and cognitive dimensions are at least as important as convergence or conflict between political or economic interests. As has been shown above, carrying out international and transnational activity meant that the city council established active partnerships with non-public actors. Those mainly involved in the city's transnational economic activities are business actors, whereas civil society has more importance when the *social* orientation prevails. This aspect is evidently related to the social alliances on which the political leadership is built. Because the *economic* and *social* orientations of international activity run in parallel without ever meeting, actors from within both business and civil society may be involved at the same time, but this never happens within the same line of action at the same level in the city council's international agency. The importance of activity aimed at economic internationalisation was higher on the city agenda in the *first phase* than subsequently, because it was a period of tighter relationships between economic and political actors. In the *second* and especially in the *third phase*, civil society organizations became more deeply involved in the city's international and transnational activities and

this partnership was also subject to a certain degree of institutionalisation[59].

Finally, the *urban culture* variable is about the way the various cultures found in the city influence the social construction of the aims and objectives of the city's international strategy, not only through ethical and political values but also through having greater or lesser degree of innovative knowledge, and through skill and language. The accord between part of the cultural forces in civil society – not forgetting the presence of the Catholic Church – and the mayor and his political coalition is an important condition for cooperation and political consent. Civil society in Rome has had an increasingly influential effect on the making of the council's *politically* and *socially* oriented international strategy. Since this regards not only social legitimation and values, but also cognitive resources, it also helps to explain why, so far, the *political* and *social* orientation of Rome's international strategy have been more imaginative and proactive than its *economic* one.

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[59] This happened through the establishment of a *City Committee for Decentralised Cooperation and Solidarity* (2002), in which the city council, NGOS, private firms and Rome universities take part.

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