

frastructure for more modern medical care by tightening the administration of Turin's hospitals to accentuate the professional role of the doctors, curative care, and research, while reducing the presence of the Catholic clergy and the charitable functions of these institutions. Thus, they designated the city's major hospital, San Giovanni, a national hospital under the control of the Ministry of the Interior in Paris. The reorganized medical center specialized in curable and non-infectious diseases, while new institutions were created to assume its former responsibilities for the incurably ill and for other categories like pregnant prostitutes, poor women, unwed mothers, and abandoned babies.

In a similar vein, French administrators moved aggressively to deal with Turin's perennial problems of over-crowding, poor nutrition, inadequate public hygiene, and pauperism that had endangered public order in the past and contributed to the spread of infectious diseases such as typhus, pleurisy, and smallpox. Already in 1801, a new Superior Council of Health (*Consiglio superiore di Sanità*) was set up to inspect hospitals and other related public health institutions, to regulate medical practitioners, to collect data on physical conditions of the population, and to adopt measures to control the spread of disease. To reduce the consumption of rotten or spoiled foods, for instance, public health officials imposed tighter regulations on the city's markets and butchers. Napoleonic administrators achieved their greatest success in combating one of the most feared infectious diseases, smallpox. In 1804, committees were set up to implement a program of mass vaccinations. Despite initial fears of the population and opposition from the Catholic Church, the committees persisted in their campaign and were rewarded for their efforts in 1813 when the numbers of deaths from smallpox fell from an average of several hundred in previous years to a mere twenty-three. French administrators were equally systematic and ambitious in their efforts to bring care of Turin's indigent, elderly, handicapped, and orphans under the control of the secular state. New institutions were created to identify, count, and classify these groups, and to develop appropriate reward or punishment mechanisms to instill the values of family and work in the recipients of their services.

The imperial ambitions of the French regime also extended to the cultural life of the Piedmontese capital. As part of a larger strategy to rally the more enlightened elements of the local nobility to the Empire, Napoleon enlisted the support of prominent reform-minded figures from private intellectual circles in Turin like the *Accademia dei Concordi* and the *Pastori della Dora*. The emperor nominated Prospero Balbo, scion of a distinguished old family and former Savoyard government minis-