

6. *Turin Under Fascism.*

Nevertheless, the transformation of Italy's constitutional parliamentary democracy into a full-fledged Fascist dictatorship did impose profound changes on the political routines and rituals of the city after 1925. New laws banned all opposition parties, unions, and associations. Other measures replaced elected mayors with state appointed officials and expanded the powers of the prefects over provincial life. The authorities devoted special attention to Turin's industrial workforce. Not only did they close their old socialist and union circles, but they replaced them with new mass organizations that promoted the goals and values of the regime.

The ensuing decade of Fascist rule did not alter, however, a number of long-term economic and demographic trends in the Piedmontese capital. During the inter-war years, the engineering, chemical, and electrical sectors all continued to expand, supplanting textiles, clothing, wool and leather as the leading local industries. Economic specialization and concentration also proceeded apace, especially in the automobile industry, where Fiat came to enjoy a virtual monopoly of production and provided employment for roughly a third of the industrial workforce in the city by 1939. The Great Depression of the early 1930s actually bolstered the position of Fiat and the automobile industry as the center of economic power in Turin by bankrupting or forcing the restructuring of the other three industrial giants in the city: the telecommunications firm, Sip, Riccardo Gualino's diversified conglomerate, Snia, and the large holding company Italgas. A similar pattern of concentration occurred in the banking sector, where two institutions with close ties to Fiat, the Cassa di Risparmio and the Istituto San Paolo, came out of the depression years as the pillars of the regional credit system.

Despite the efforts of the Fascist regime to block migration from the countryside to the cities, Turin's population also continued to grow, rising from half a million in 1920 to nearly 700,000 by 1939. Immigration continued to account for most of the demographic expansion, since the city had the lowest birthrate among Italy's large urban centers. At first, the bulk of these new arrivals came from the surrounding region of Piedmont, but by the late 1930s, there were sizable communities of immigrants from other northern regions as well as from the south in Turin. Much as their predecessors, they settled in the working-class neighborhoods, which steadily expanded. As a consequence, demographic growth reinforced patterns of residential segregation in the city with the work-