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PLACE-FRAMING BY COALITIONS FOR CAR ALTERNATIVES

A COMPARISON OF MONTREAL AND
ROTTERDAM THE HAGUE METROPOLITAN AREAS

Par

Sophie L. VAN NESTE

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Par

Sophie L. VAN NESTE

a été évaluée par un jury composé de

Gilles SÉNÉCAL, directeur de thèse, INRS-UCS

Virginie MAMADOUH, co-directrice, Universiteit van Amsterdam

Julie-Anne BOUDREAU, examinateure interne, INRS-UCS

Richard MORIN, examinateur externe, UQAM

Nik LUKA, examinateur externe, McGill University

RÉSUMÉ

L'objectif de cette thèse est de considérer l'apport des discours de 'cadrage des lieux' (*place frames*) dans l'action collective en matière de mobilité. La mobilité en milieu urbain et métropolitain est étudiée ici comme sujet de débat et d'action collective. Les modes alternatifs à la voiture sont maintenant revendiqués pour une diversité de raisons et par une pluralité d'acteurs. Dans cette thèse, l'hypothèse est posée que des *place-frames*, en tant que visions rassembleuses et stratégiques sur un espace, permettent de transformer les discours dominants en matière de mobilité. La littérature sur la mobilité ne rend pas encore acte des processus complexes d'action collective et de représentations à l'œuvre dans ce domaine (Cresswell 2010).

Un cadre conceptuel est élaboré pour comprendre les processus à travers lesquels les coalitions se construisent et élaborent des discours communs sur l'espace. Deux concepts principaux sont mis de l'avant. Premièrement, les coalitions sont conceptualisées comme des réseaux d'affiliations (Simmel 1955), avec chaque participant ayant ses propres loyautés et motivations. Des acteurs intermédiaires sont nécessaires pour construire des liens et assurer l'unité à travers le temps. Deuxièmement, la théorie du discours de Laclau et Mouffe (1985) et la notion de répertoire interprétatif (Potter 2005) sont utilisées pour enrichir la notion de 'framing', de cadrage d'action collective.

Ces concepts servent à étudier des réseaux sociaux et processus de mise en coalition supportant l'élaboration et la diffusion d'utopies spatiales dans la mobilisation pour des alternatives à la voiture. Ces *place-frames* sont négociés autant à l'intérieur des coalitions qu'en relation avec les autorités publiques, dans des partenariats, mais aussi dans des débats et des controverses. Ils sont constitués dans des chaînes d'équivalence discursives (Laclau et Mouffe 1985) et se modulent en divers répertoires interprétatifs (Potter 2005). La thèse étudie les processus de *framing* et de *brokerage* dans des coalitions à l'œuvre dans deux régions métropolitaines, soit à Montréal au Canada et à Rotterdam La Haye aux Pays-Bas. Les études de cas ont été documentées avec un total de 40 entretiens, 4 groupes de discussion, l'analyse de discours de 15 transcriptions de débat public ainsi que l'analyse de discours des documents d'acteurs civiques et publics. Les cas diffèrent selon leur degré de conflit et l'accès aux autorités publiques dans chacun des systèmes de gouvernance. Les coalitions dans une position de collaboration avec les autorités publiques demandent des mesures d'apaisement de la circulation à Montréal et des mesures entrepreneuriales de lutte à la congestion routière à Rotterdam La Haye. Les coalitions dans une position conflictuelle s'opposent à des segments d'autoroutes, à Montréal et à Rotterdam La Haye. Il en résulte une comparaison qui met de

l'avant l'utilité du cadre conceptuel élaboré et les particularités des cas étudiés. Les *place-frames* étudiés, bien que structurants pour les coalitions d'alternatives à la voiture et l'évolution de leurs champs discursifs, ne modifient par contre pas nécessairement de manière substantielle l'action publique en matière de mobilité. Le place-framing constitue tout de fois un outil d'action collective, à travers lequel les acteurs peuvent agir sur les conflits dans l'organisation de l'espace, et sur les opportunités de changement dans la géographie de leur gouvernance.

Une synthèse plus longue de la thèse, en français, est disponible en Appendix 1.

Mots-clés : Coalition de discours, framing, cadrage, brokers, place, place-frame, échelles, action collective, antagonisme, mobilité, alternatives à la voiture.

ABSTRACT

The objective of this thesis is to consider how the constitution of specific types of discourses, place-frames, are involved in collective action in the field of mobility. The literature on mobility does not yet take account of the complex processes of collective action and representations in this field (Cresswell 2010). In the regions of Montreal and Rotterdam The Hague, I investigate the discourses and networks from coalitions aiming at transforming dominant discourses on mobility and the city, for the promotion of car alternatives. These coalitions are situated in different contexts varying in the axes of antagonism and opportunity.

A framework is elaborated to understand the processes through which the making of coalitions and the construction of discourses take place. Two main concepts are used to do so. First, coalitions are pictured as constituted within a web of affiliations (Simmel 1955), with each participant having his or her own loyalties and motivations. Brokers are needed to bring these actors together and maintain the coalition united. Second, the discourse theory from Laclau and Mouffe (1985) is used to enrich the notion of 'framing'. This theory posits that the force of an idea resides in the linkages it makes among different elements. When the meanings of the different elements become disconnected, the force of the political idea is reduced. And when this political idea, or frame, was the glue uniting actors together in a collective, then the collective will likely dissolve. Yet, the frame can be adapted in different interpretative repertoires (Potter 2005), and endure through time. This is, in short, the essence of the approach to coalitions and discourse that I propose in this thesis.

This framework is used to investigate the use of specific types of spatial claims, place-frames. Place-frames, as strategic representations of sites used to transform dominant discourses, are defined and discussed in relation to other notions in the literature. Place-framing is the process through which such counter-discourses are constituted. Place-framing is dynamic because it is elaborated in relation with the different motivations of the participants to the coalition, and in relation with the discourses external to the coalition.

The four cases studied were investigated with a total of 40 semi-focused interviews, 4 focus groups, some direct observation of events, a discourse analysis of 15 (transcribed) debates, varying in length and corpus, and a discourse analysis of a series of documents produced by members of the coalitions and public authorities.

The coalitions studied asked for traffic calming measures in Montreal and for an entrepreneurial tackling of congestion in Rotterdam The Hague. The more contentious coalitions opposed highway segments in both regions. If place-framing structured the work of these coalitions and the evolution in the discursive field, it did not in all cases modify in substantial ways public policy in regard to mobility in the city. The thesis ends with remarks on place-framing as a tool of collective action, through which actors can act on the conflicts experienced in space, and the opportunities of change within the geography of its governance.

Keywords: discourse analysis, framing, brokers, discourse coalitions, politics of mobility, car alternatives, spatialities of contention, collective action, place, place-frame, geography of governance.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ABCN	Actiecomité Blankenburgtunnel Nee (resident action committee against the Blankenburgtunnel in South Holland)
AMT	Agence Métropolitaine de Transport (Metropolitan Transport Agency)
BAPE	Bureau d'audiences publiques sur l'environnement (Public hearing commission on the environment, province of Quebec)
CEUM	Centre d'écologie urbaine de Montréal (Montreal Urban Ecology Center)
CMM	Communauté métropolitaine de Montréal (Montreal Metropolitan Community)
CRE-Mtl	Conseil régional de l'environnement de Montréal (Environmental Regional Council, Montreal)
DSP	Direction de santé publique de l'Agence des services sociaux et de la santé de Montréal (Montreal Public health agency)
GRUHM	Groupe de recherche urbaine Hochelaga-Maisonneuve (Urban research group from Hochelaga-Maisonneuve)
MIM	Ministerie van Infrastructuur en Milieu (Ministry of Infrastructure and Environment)
MTQ	Ministère des Transports du Québec (Ministry of Transport, province of Quebec)
NWO	Nieuwe Westelijk Oeververbinding (New west river-bank connection)
PSWST	Platform Slim Werken Slim Reizen (Platform Smart Working Smart Travelling)
RWS	Rijkswaterstaat ('water state agency', executive agency of the Minister from Infrastructure and Environment)
VdM	Ville de Montréal (City of Montreal)

INTRODUCTION

How often is it argued, in public debates, that an issue would be better handled by considering a broader territory, or by refocusing the spatial understanding of a phenomenon? The boldest participants even argue for a new distribution of political power: for a better or more coherent intervention, we would need only to give more power to their neighborhood, city, or to the metropolitan agency. Although spatial claims abound, we understand little about their use. How are they formulated, who do they convince and for what effects? How do they relate to the participants' own relation to place and to tactics to manoeuvre in a given political context? Do spatial claims ask for radical, incremental or cosmetic changes to institutions and the content of policies?

This thesis explores these questions through the investigation of coalitions for car alternatives in two metropolitan areas. Mobility in the city is studied as a topic of contention and collective action. In the regions of Montreal and Rotterdam The Hague, I investigate the discourses and networks from coalitions requesting other modes of mobility as well as another making of space for this mobility. In short, the coalitions studied aim at transforming dominant discourses on mobility and the city. These coalitions are situated in different contexts, providing interesting contrasts on the challenges faced by such coalitions.

A framework is elaborated to understand the processes through which the making of coalitions and the construction of discourses take place. Two main concepts are used to do so. First, coalitions are pictured as constituted within a web of affiliations (Simmel 1955), with each participant having his or her own loyalties and motivations. Brokers are needed to bring these actors together and maintain the coalition united. These brokers also face the challenge of elaborating an efficient counter-discourse to the dominant ones, a counter-discourse able to pull together the different motivations.

Second, the discourse theory from Laclau and Mouffe (1987) is used. This theory posits that the force of an idea resides in the linkages it makes among different elements. The concept of community, for example, is a strong political idea only because of the elements to which it is associated, giving it significance in the political discourses. When the meanings of the different elements become disconnected, the force of the political idea is reduced. And when this political idea was the glue uniting actors together in a collective, then the collective will likely dissolve. This is, in short, the essence of the approach to coalitions and discourse that I propose in this thesis.

This framework on coalitions and discourse is used to investigate the use of specific types of spatial claims, place-frames. Place-frames, as strategic representations of sites used to transform dominant discourses, are defined and discussed in relation to other notions in the literature. Place-framing is the process through which such counter-discourses are constituted. Place-framing is dynamic because it is elaborated in relation with the different motivations of the participants to the coalition, and in relation with the discourses external to the coalition.

The thesis starts with an introduction to the politics of mobility in cities and metropolitan areas, with particular attention given to the Dutch and Québec cases. The second chapter discusses the literature on social networks, discourse, and space. It ends with a synthesis of the conceptual framework used in the investigation of the case studies. The third chapter presents the methodology and data collection tools, as well as the comparative research design. The heart of the thesis is made of four case-studies, two in the region of Montreal and two in the region of Rotterdam The Hague. The four cases correspond to different building-blocks for the study of place-framing. They differ in the relation of the coalition to conflict and in the opportunity of alliances with public authorities. Two case studies are presented at length, with the brokerage observed and the detailed analysis of the context. Two other case studies, one by city-region, follow the same analytical process but are presented more synthetically. These shorter cases are there to offer a contrast to the longer cases. They supply another perspective in the same region.

The cases were investigated with a total of 40 semi-focused interviews, 4 focus groups, some direct observation of events, a discourse analysis of 15 (transcribed) debates, varying in length and corpus, and a discourse analysis of a series of documents produced by members of the coalitions and public authorities.

The case studies begin with the discourse coalition for the promotion of spaces for car traffic calming in Montreal, in chapter 4. This first case presents a collaborative type of collective action linking together regional civil society actors, working as brokers between the public health sector and local community organizations in neighborhoods. They developed a place-frame of a dynamic local community enabling the practice of walking and cycling. The second case study is shorter, but presents a no less fascinating discourse coalition (chapter 5). The coalition opposed the reconstruction of the Turcot highway complex as designed by the Ministry of Transport of Québec. The members of the coalition argued for a multi-scalar place-frame linking local conditions of inhabitation with the need for an efficient metropolitan public transit axis.

The third case study carries us to the Netherlands, in the region of Rotterdam The Hague (chapter 6). This longer case study is a contentious case where a coalition opposed a new highway segment in between the two agglomerations. The discourse coalition defended a place-frame supporting the preservation of a 'natural' place targeted by highway extensions, Midden-Delfland, and linked place preservation to a wider territoriality to the decision-making process. We will see the key similarities and differences in the challenges faced by this discourse coalition and the one against Turcot in Montreal.

The fourth and last case study, in chapter 7, is a shorter case on a collaborative discourse coalition working in close partnership with the national government in an entrepreneurial tackling of road congestion. The place-frame argues for a flexible work space and a mixed public-private-civic regional governance of investments in transport infrastructure and mobility management.

After the four case studies are presented in their own context, each with their own sequence of discourse and network evolution, the cases are contrasted in chapter 8. In chapter 8, the discussion follows the order of the propositions that are formulated at the end of chapter 2 (the conceptual chapter). The thesis ends with a general conclusion. For French speakers, a 20-page synthesis of the thesis in French is provided in Appendix 1.

CHAPTER 1. THE POLITICS OF (AUTO)MOBILITY IN CITIES AND METROPOLITAN AREAS

Mobility is part of daily practices and of our experience of the city (Orfeuil 2008; Cresswell 2010; Desrosiers-Lauzon and Boudreau 2011). Mobility is enabled and constrained by the provision of transport infrastructure and services. Transport infrastructure participates in important ways in the production of urban space, affecting the shape of the metropolitan area and the conditions of residence in it. Choices in transport investments mean choices in the mobility modes financed and promoted by the state, and their associated hold on public spaces (through parking spaces, the width of streets and of side-walks, etc.). Choices on transport infrastructure also influence the level of car traffic in the city and the sprawling of the metropolitan area, affecting both urban and global environmental conditions. Transport infrastructure are also determinant for accessibility to destinations. They construct disparities in accessibility, and disparities in the attractiveness and liveability of urban places (Young and Keil 2010; Graham and Marvin 2001). Transport and mobility in the city thus imply important collective choices, which are the topic of public debates and of more or less open decision-making processes.

I am interested in the making of urban space for mobility as an object of contention and collective action. Contention in the shaping of urban space for mobility is experienced at different levels. Desrosiers-Lauzon and Boudreau (2011) have suggested that mobility is involved in three 'rhythms' of the construction of metropolitan space: the rhythm of daily life, of the cyclical occurrence of events of debates, and of institutional change. Indeed, mobility is part of the daily experience of the city. There are conflicts in the daily use of urban space between different mobility modes, and in the overlap of the mobility flows with other uses in places. Mobility is also part of political debates on the form of the city and, as we discussed above, the provision of infrastructure. The making of space for mobility is regulated by certain norms and forms of expertise. On the topic of transport, there has particularly been an institutionalization of norms with the traffic engineers framing in a certain way the 'urban transportation problem' (Hanson 2002). These norms have been debated among experts of transportation planning in interaction with users. Indeed, the conflict between car mobility and the other uses and desires for urban space has triggered much public debate. These expertises in transportation planning has sedimented in certain institutions still regulating transport infrastructural decisions today. In addition, mobility debates also include challenges for the urban political institutions, mobility

patterns trespassing political boundaries and forcing some form of coordination between public authorities.

In this chapter, I present the problem-setting of making urban space for mobility. I introduce it first as an object of contention, within a broader politics of mobility and automobility. I then present the urban transportation problem from a historical perspective. This serves to introduce the social construction of mobility in the city, and the different institutions regulating it in Montreal and in Rotterdam The Hague. I follow with a discussion of the metropolitan context. The chapter finishes with a summary of these elements of the governance context and how they constitute a set of opportunities and constraints for actors defending car alternatives.

I start by defining the terms 'mobility', 'politics of mobility' and 'automobility'.

1.1 The politics of mobility, automobility and car alternatives

Drawing on Cresswell (2006, 2010), I define mobility as 'socially produced motion'. Mobility consists in the movement of individuals and goods through space, as an empirical reality, but which takes numerous meanings and strategic representations in the realm of ideas and discourse. This movement of individuals and goods is also experienced in different ways depending on mood, affect, social position and the relation to the place crossed (Cresswell 2006, 3–4; 2010, 22). Cresswell cites Delaney to emphasize mobility as movement and as a meaning-giving activity : “human mobility implicates both physical bodies moving through material landscapes and categorical figures moving through representational spaces”(Cresswell 2006, 4). The production, organizing and 'encoding' of movement constitute the politics of mobility(ies). The politics of mobility produces and is produced by disparities in privileges and social power (Cresswell 2010, 22).

In the daily experience of urban space, we can experience several aspects of this politics of mobility, as discussed by Cresswell (2010). In the making of space, there has been selective choices, and hence potential conflicts, pertaining to the justification, channelling and designing of movement : “Why does a person or thing move?”, “How fast does a person or thing move?”, “What route does it take?”, “How does it feel?”, and “When and how does it stop?” (Cresswell 2010, 22–26). These questions cover a very broad scope of issues at different scales. I

concentrate on the urban and metropolitan spaces, and specifically on the conflicts related to automobility and its alternatives.

Automobility has been defined as the whole regime supporting and “making the use of cars both possible and in many instances necessary” (Bohm et al. 2006). This includes ideological, political and technical dimensions supporting the dominance of cars in our (urban) life styles (Bohm et al. 2006; Conley and McLaren 2009; Henderson 2013). The critical literature on automobility identifies major problems which the dominance of cars bring in our society : congestion, environmental degradation, dependency on oil (and associated geopolitical problems) and road accidents (Bohm et al. 2006, 9-10). In addition, Bohm et al. argue that automobility is impossible “*in its own terms*”, because of the combination of autonomy and mobility, which would be constituting the culture of automobility.

Cars need roads, traffic rules, oil, planning regulations, and the representation of car driving as autonomous movement involves disguising such conditions. It seems obvious that the more cars are around, the more rules have to be invented (eg, congestion charges and motorway tolls) to allow the regime of automobility to work ‘normally’, even though this ‘normality’ might be contradictory to the image of a completely autonomous movement. (Bohm et al. 2006, 11)

In this context, the authors argue that, “[t]he task of politics is precisely to ‘make up’ automobility, that is, to set the limits and thereby gloss over the particular antagonisms of automobility”, to reform automobility in order to reduce its negative impacts (idem, 14). The other path is the search for alternative modes of mobility. Walking and cycling, railways and tramways, all have long histories in cities (Urry 2007; Flonneau and Cuicueno 2009). These alternative modes have had a much more privileged position in urban mobility practices in the past. But the growth in the use of cars has changed cities and the conditions for other modes of transportation. With the explosion of cars and highways came movements to ‘reclaim the streets’ and oppose the destruction of urban heritage areas. The disciplines of urban planning and urban design now make a plea to make ‘cities for people, not for cars’ (Gehl 2010).

Although there have been improvements in the inclusion of public transit, walking and cycling in central areas of cities, Henderson still speaks of a ‘street fight’ in San Francisco (2013). Even if this City is perceived to be a front-runner of sustainable mobility, urban dwellers practicing alternative modes of mobility need to mobilize to ensure a place for car alternatives on the

streets. The struggles to make room for car alternatives in the city are met by opposition and dismissive claims.

Loud opposition to removing car space and parking permeates the discourse on mobility in San Francisco. The preservation of automobility is often justified on claims that transit systems are slow and impractical and that bicycling is unsafe and things are too far apart to walk. All of this is true to a certain extent [...] but it is a self-reinforcing feedback cycle. To break the cycle requires a rethinking of urban space and perhaps a moment of inconvenience for the motorist. (Henderson 2013, 193).

The claims to reorganize urban space around alternative modes can signify a quite different form to cities. Each mode has its own requirements for urban space, and its own set of infrastructure needed to sustain it: trains need train stations and railways, cars need parking spaces, walking and cycling need calmer streets with mixed and dense urban environments (Henderson 2009, 71). Spatial planning, but also economically regulated spatial development, participate in the structuration and reproduction of these mobility regimes. Car alternatives thus include not only the alternative modes of mobility, but also the organization of urban space making the practice of these alternative modes possible. Patton gives an example of a different kind of city in which the pedestrians would be at the top of the hierarchy of urban mobility:

As a thought experiment, imagine a city in which the sidewalks were continuous; in which the streets were interrupted at every intersection by sidewalks; in which drivers crossed sidewalks rather than pedestrians crossing streets. In effect, such a city would replace every crosswalk for pedestrians with a speed hump for drivers. It would manifest one kind of reversal in the hierarchical ordering of motor-vehicle flows over pedestrian places. Such a city is radical, visionary, or inconceivable because it would constitute the material manifestation of a very different rationality. (Patton 2007, 932)

I now propose to problematize the making of urban space for mobility from a historical perspective on the debates regarding the inclusion of car infrastructure in cities.

1.2 The framing of the urban transportation problem

The conflict between the planning for cars and the planning for people (or, more precisely, people's other valuations of daily space) in the city is far from new. In fact, historians present it

as the core debate in the parallel evolution of traffic engineering and urban planning, and their adjustments in the face of public debates (Hebbert 2005; Mom and Filarski 2008; Norton 2008; Brown, Morris, and Taylor 2009). In this section, I present this evolution and introduce how it historically played out in the planning of car infrastructure in the two regions investigated for my case studies.

Cities have for long been confronted with the crowding of roads making the circulation of persons and goods unefficient. Beaudet and Wolff (2012) recall the measures taken to solve this problem in the Rome of Julius Caesar and in the London of Henry VII. There was already then an issue with the accessibility of goods and persons to the city. The massive growth in the use of motorized vehicles, however, added another crucial element to the problem: the danger of high speed (Hebbert 2005, 40). In a historical study of the street in American cities of the 1920s and 1930s, Norton (2008) discusses the evolution of the traffic engineering's expertise in interaction with changes in the prevailing social meaning given to the street. In the 1920s, cars were first seen as intruders in streets where all other kinds of uses were legitimate.

With the sudden arrival of the automobile came a new kind of mass death. Most of the dead were city people. Most of the car's urban victims were pedestrians, and most of the pedestrian victims were children and youths. Early observers rarely blamed the pedestrians who strolled into the roadway wherever they chose, or the parents who let their children play in the street. Instead, most city people blamed the automobile. City newspaper headlines, editorials, letters, and cartoons depicted the automobile as a destructive juggernaut. (Norton 2008, 11)

In that context, the engineers' work was to reduce the negative impacts of this minority of car users on the vulnerable and rightful majority. But then Norton identified a transition in the understanding of the street through "a struggle for legitimacy, culminating in a new effort by automotive interest groups to question pedestrians' customary rights to the streets" (17). The congestion and crowdedness in the streets correspond to inefficient uses of space. The new discipline of 'traffic control' is born in that period (mid 1920s) with engineers hired by business associations and city authorities to make plans for traffic efficiency. Norton describes a last round of discourse on the street, in terms of freedom: "Through this problem definition, it could characterize low limits as oppressive – an impediment to freedom." (Norton 2008, 6)

From an original focus of traffic engineering on traffic safety, was added a focus on fluidity, encouraging even further the separation of the different mobility modes. In planning too, notions were developed to ensure safety and liveability of residential neighborhoods. The unit of the neighborhood preserved from transiting traffic was introduced already in 1920 by Perry (Ben-Joseph 2005, 64–65).¹ Principles of the fluid 'townless highway' and of the protected 'highwayless town', merged into a system of road hierarchy segmenting cities in spaces of movement and spaces of stay (Hebbert 2005, 40). For Hebbert (2005, 40): "Road hierarchy has provided a robust basis for managing the risk of a motorized society." The modernist architects who published the Athens Charter in 1933 also pushed for the segregation of urban spaces following their functions : inhabit, work, recreate and circulate. This separation of functions was closely tied with hygienist objectives to make the city a more sanitary, aerated, and healthy de-concentrated space, separating residential zones from polluted industries and roads. The different forms of circulation also ought, in their model, to be segregated. Through the norms of road hierarchy and the separation of functions in functionalist planning, we see that both traffic engineering and urban planning developed codes and standards coming from mixed societal objectives of fluidity, traffic safety and public health. These objectives converged in a segregation of spaces of fluidity and the rest of urban life.

The separation of car traffic from the rest of urban life for safety and fluidity purposes was however contested and reinterpreted in different urbanistic ideals (Beaudet and Wolff 2012). Jane Jacob criticized vigorously urban renewal programs and the development of urban highways bringing 'The Death of Great American Cities', for the costs they impinged on the dense and mixed urban fabric, fabric which for her was closely tied to the dynamism of urban social life. She precisely valued the non-separation of different functions. Jacobs considered it was not the cars at such that had been the problem, but the transformation of the city for their circulation, with priority spaces for fluidity 'eroding' the city liveliness. If the cars would be allowed to function in the urban morphology as it was, then a process of 'attribution' would reduce their use to a minimum, naturally, for a compromise to preserve the dense and lively urban streets. "How to accomodate city transportation without destroying the related intricate and concentrated land use? - this is the question. Or, going at it the other way, how to

¹ Perry developed in 1920 a series of criteria, that, amusingly, are the almost identical to the criterion defining the 'green neighborhood' protected from through traffic from the City of Montreal, which we will discuss in Chapter 3 : size, presence of a school, boundary on all sides marked by arterial streets, internal street system 'designed to discourage through traffic', public spaces, institutional site and local shops (Clarence Perry, "The Neighborhood Unit", p.33-34, cited by Ben-Joseph (2005, 65).

accommodate this intricate and concentrated city land use without destroying the related transportation.” (Jacobs 1961, 340)

Jacobs wrote her book during the postwar period in which traffic engineers came to take more importance in the debate of transport in the city. Vigar (2001, 270) recalled that in the 1950s onward was an era of 'heroic engineering' during which it seemed that all problems could be solved by engineering solutions. Traffic engineers had developed “simple forecasting techniques whereby recent demand history for each mode was simply extrapolated to provide a picture of future demand” (Vigar 2001, 283). Those forecasting models justified the construction of new roads, especially inter-urban highways: “Rail use was falling, road use increasing. Broader social and environmental objectives did not play a part in trying to shape these demand profiles. In effect, policy was driven by past demand, not shaped by broader objectives” (idem, 283). This paradigm of transport intervention was coined by Vigar 'predict and provide'. In the context of increasing power from the traffic engineers in national departments, and their reliance on such approach, there was nevertheless a more multi-modal approach in certain cities, which in many instances had some room of manoeuvre (Vigar 2001; Mom and Filarski 2008).

There were thus debates, in several countries, on the manner to resolve the tensions created by the desire to have fluid spaces of mobility and the other desire to preserve other values given to urban (and nature) spaces crossed. The famous report 'Traffic and towns', published in 1963 in Great Britain (and translated in French and German), show how much these issues were discussed. The Buchanan report had been commissioned by the Great-Britain Ministry of Transport to find solutions to the problem of road congestion. The report framed the debate in a clear choice, with two variables. On one side there were environmental zones (or neighborhoods) to preserve. On the other there was car circulation that could benefit cities. It was about choosing “an acceptable balance between environmental quality and accessibility” (SKM Colin Buchanan 2013, 14), a balance that should be decided by each local community. Although the report was nuanced and showed different costs and benefits, the reconstruction of towns around a hierarchical road system, with urban freeways, was the key message which stayed and stirred debates (SKM Colin Buchanan 2013; Beaudet and Wolff 2012).

The Dutch compromise: sparing cities from highways

In the Netherlands, the Buchanan report on 'Traffic and Towns', and especially its conclusion on urban highways, associated with the American model, provoked heavy criticisms. A renowned transportation planner stated that “[t]he European cities have been less plagued by the war than

many American cities by motorization” (Goudappel, cited by Mom and Filarski 2008, 348). Planners argued instead, at this same time in the Netherlands, for the pedestrianization of downtown areas of Dutch cities. Yet the federal department *Rijkswaterstaat* was also developing a vision of highway development, with pressures from several groups in civil society. Road policy became more and more embedded within *Rijkswaterstaat*, the executive agency of the then Ministry of Transport, and now Ministry of Infrastructure and Environment. *Rijkswaterstaat* (RWS) was founded in the 18th century with a mandate to build and manage waterworks in the Netherlands. It later became the planner and operator of the highway system. It has been the locus of the Dutch engineering flourishing, especially in water and dam projects, and afterward in the post-war re-building efforts. In the 1966 national planning document were 'spatial policy' and 'road policy' for the first time recognized as policy topics of equal value (idem, 323). RWS was devoted to the more technical aspects of transportation planning, such as prognostics (the prediction of demand) and the standardization in the design and speed of roads. The policy of RWS was however heavily contested in the 1970s for its too little consultation of citizens and the emphasis on the car road network (Geels 2007; Mom and Filarski 2008).

The expansion of highways was particularly visible *between* urban agglomerations of the Randstad (area formed by the four largest cities of the Netherlands). But the City of Rotterdam was particularly affected. Largely destroyed during the Second World War, it was rebuilt with a form very different from traditional Dutch cities. This happened with the support of the local economic and political elites who, already in the 1930s, had wanted to give an image of modernity to Rotterdam. The city became the experimental locus of the highway network from the Netherlands (Mom and Filarski 2008). The highway network built in and around the city participated to the national and international transport network. This extra local function became ever more important in the following decades with the Port of Rotterdam's growth as a key economic engine of the Netherlands, linking local transportation issues with Europe and beyond. The expansion of the highway network around Rotterdam will be the topic of one of my case study, in chapter 6.

According to Mom and Filarski (2008), the expansion of the highway network in the Netherlands was kept in check by planners, especially in regard to its influence on urban areas. There were also oppositions to the “modernization of cities”, which led to streets' occupations and civic unrest (Mom and Filarski 2008; Mamadouh 1994; Rooijendijk 2005). The local bylaws also gave a tool to activists to contest the construction of highways in their local environment, as well as to

preserve natural and open green areas (Mom and Filarski 2008, 364-365). One such case is the decades long opposition to the A4 highway between Rotterdam and The Hague, which we will speak of in one of our case study, chapter 6.

Besides heritage conservation, protestations to the modernization of cities for cars had for topic the liveability of urban life with children, that was threatened by increasing car traffic. In the end of the 1960s, residents started to put plant pots and garden benches on the streets, in front of their houses, to limit the passage of cars and show that it was an inhabited space. Those initiatives evolved into experiments on the concept of the 'woonerf', supported by local municipalities (de Wit and Talens). The concept of 'woonerf' was introduced in 1976 in the national road safety code. In 1978, 175 municipalities (20%) had designed one or more 'woonerf' (Mom and Filarski 2008, 340). The 'woonerf', which we can translate by 'inhabited space', consists in the design of a street that allows the careful passage of cars: cars are guests in an inhabited space, with vegetation, benches, play areas and parking. Other measures of traffic calming were also implemented at the time in neighborhoods (Kraay 1986). The issue of traffic safety was also central in the struggle to preserve space for cyclists, and led to the re-implementation of dedicated cycling paths. At the national level also, organizations requested new measures and standards to ensure traffic safety. Historians conclude from this period that the spatial planning tradition and the public uprising participated to the focus of traffic engineering on the safety issue in the Netherlands (Mom and Filarski 2008).

In sum, "traffic engineering in the Netherlands is an episode in a tradition largely determined by spatial planning" (idem, 358). Planners and traffic engineers came to a compromise, in the tradition of the polder model of Dutch governance which I will describe below, leading to constraining cars for the objective of preserving not only safety but also the urbanity of cities (idem, 359). The compromise consisted in constraining cars *within urban agglomerations*. Car infrastructure *between cities* did however develop into one of the densest and more congested highway networks of Europe (Mom and Filarski 2008, 397). The expansion of the Port of Rotterdam and of the airport Schiphol also justified increased inter-urban highway development in the following decades.

Montreal's first highways and their urban integration

In Montreal, there was first no such strong reticence to highways in the city. The first highway plans were designed by Montreal planners. In the context of the little involvement of higher state authorities, Poitras (2009, 111-112) explained that Montreal planners, with the help of

international consultants, took the lead in the making of plans to improve transport in the city. In 1948, the City planners presented the under-ground metro system as well as the making of two freeways (autostrades), one north-south and one east-west, as solutions to the mass transportation problem. But the freeways were also described as opportunities of urban renewal and urban development, an association which has been documented also in the United States (Gagnon 2007, 124, Poitras 2009; Jacobs 1961; Altshuler and Luberoff 2003; Mohl 2004). The urban planners desire for urban development and sanitary improvements of housing in the city converged with the quest for traffic fluidity.

The concept of highways was used for the first time in the province of Québec in the 1950s, the first highway linking Montreal to the northern cottage area in the Laurentides. When the first highways were built in Montreal (Décarie, Métropolitain), there were negotiations between Montreal planners and the Ministry of Roads on the better routes and design to minimize the fracture of the urban fabric (Noppen 2001; Gagnon 2007; Desjardins 2008a). The provincial Ministry of Roads had experience in building roads in rural areas. From 1936 to 1959, it was responsible of the wide road development linking all regions of the province (Desjardins 2008a, 102).

From the 1960s onward the Ministry became only responsible for the rapid road network and left local roads to municipalities (Desjardins 2008a, 107-108). In 1973, the Ministry of Transport (MTQ) was created and replaced the former Ministry of Roads. It then integrated public transit in its mission. Its previous history of road provider, however, showed in its following interventions. In his history of the recent highway projects from the MTQ, Desjardins argued that a technical vision of road projects remained dominant, and that there is “a tendency from the MTQ to present these norms [technical norms of highway design] as almost immutable in face of the public” (2008b, 300–301).

The link between freeways and the urban form was for the first time publicly debated in Montreal when the provincial government started the destruction of neighborhoods to make way for the east-west freeway. Previous urban highways had not triggered such opposition. The coalition 'Front commun contre l'autoroute Est-Ouest' united about 60 associations opposing the highway, asking for a democratization of transport policy, more public transit and the renovation and construction of housing for families with low revenues (Poitras 2009; Desjardins 2008a, 118–119). This social mobilization was complemented by groups of urbanists and architects opposing the highway on the ground of heritage protection. After large opposition and the election of a

new provincial government, the highway construction was interrupted. The provincial government commissioned a study to decide on a policy for transport in the region of Montreal. The solution of an 'urban boulevard' was preferred to the freeway (Gagnon 2007; Noppen 2001). The study also recommended a quasi-moratorium for the construction of new highways, effective from 1977 to 1985. It was not before the mid 1990s that new concrete plans of highway development were debated again in the region of Montreal. The contemporary debates on the Notre-Dame highway and the Turcot complex, which constitute respectively the eastern part and a west section of the previously planned east-west freeway, will be discussed in one of the case studies, in chapter 5.

The debates and fierce oppositions to the east-west freeway in the 1970s re-articulated the negotiation of car circulation and visions of urbanity in Montreal, forcing a greater concern for heritage conservation. The debates also coincided with the institutionalization of spatial planning in the province of Québec and the introduction of participatory obligations in spatial, environmental and transportation plannings, with legal frameworks adopted in the end of the 1970s. The Ministry of Transport, created in 1973, had afterward to conduct public debates and environmental impact assessment. Nonetheless, the City of Montreal and the Ministry of Transport have, since the end of the 1990s, grown more apart from each other in their proclaimed visions of the future of transport in the Montreal metropolitan area.

I wish to draw a few conclusions from this historical perspective on the integration of car infrastructure in the cities of my case studies. The two disciplines of traffic engineering and urban planning influenced one another and evolved in reaction to the public oppositions. Societal objectives for fluidity, but also very much for traffic safety and public health, were part of norms defining transport in the city. According to historians however, traffic engineering evolved in the post-war period into a specialized field relying on technical predictions of traffic, with the model predict and provide. The standards and plans developed were criticized, with opponents asking for other articulations of the objective for fluid circulation with other values given to place. The outcome of these debates depended of the context. The power interplay between planners and engineers, and between local authorities and central state authorities, was repeatedly identified by historians as a key issue in the making of the city for car mobility (Vigar G. 2001; Mom and Filarski 2008; Brown, Morris, and Taylor 2009; Geels 2007; Desjardins 2008b). Decisions on the making of urban space for mobility were affected by the power differentials between state authorities at different scales, and their interaction with actors outside the state.

Since highway development projects have started again with new speed in both sides of the Atlantic², new environmental and participatory regulations have been put in place; and the transport departments integrated in their mission a multi-modal approach to the urban transportation problem. Yet, the provision of infrastructure and services for other mobility modes has been for the most part delegated to other authorities outside the Ministries of Transport. Hebbert note that “a dangerous gap is now opening between the street paradigm and the inertia still embodied in official highways standards. Institutionally, most new thinking has been sponsored by non-transportation branches of government” (2005, 55).

The urban transportation problem has become a metropolitan transportation problem, which has additional characteristics. For one, the reflection about the localization and design of roads and freeways should not rely on a simple opposition between urban versus rural areas. In contemporary debates, highways in metropolitan areas are also discussed in terms of polarities between the central city and the suburbs, or between the different centers of a polycentric metropolitan region. In addition, mobility poses new challenges, practical, political, and institutional challenges, because mobility patterns go well beyond the limits of specific municipal authorities. To some extent, this was already an issue in the 1940s when the Montreal urban planning department was designing a metropolitan transportation plan going beyond its own municipal limits (Poitras 2009), and when in the 1950s the Rotterdam highway network was planned to deliver goods and persons throughout the country and Europe. Yet, the current metropolitan dynamics involve new political and governance issues linked to mobility, which I introduce below.

1.3 The politics of (auto)mobility in the metropolitan context

Mobility is now understood as a principle organizing the metropolitan space (Bourdin 2007; Sénécal 2011). Mobility patterns shape metropolitan areas. Fillion and Kramer describe the picture of 'dispersed urbanization' having led to “heavy dependence on the car, relatively low density, rigid functional specialization and a scattering of structuring activities” (2012, 2238). They discuss how this dispersed urbanization came to be, with two parallel planning and regulating processes. The first process, described above, is the transportation engineering

² The abandon, delaying or reduction of highway development from the end of the 1970s to the mid 1990s was not only attributed to opposition and contestation, but also to economic reasons, with the important reduction of transport investments in the two cases discussed.

planning in terms of predicting mobility demand and providing roads for it, which lead to heavy highway development from the 1950s to the 1970s. The second process is the more fragmented spatial and housing provisions, i.e. the adoption of bylaws by municipalities allowing for sprawl and the dominance of low-density housing. Low-density housing and the scattering of activities through space led to a dependence on the automobile, further encouraged by a growing highway network. “Once its fundamentals were in place, urban dispersal engaged in a self-reinforcing process whereby most subsequent transport and land use changes further entrenched dispersion” (Filion and Kramer 2012, 2239).

A comparison of North America with the Netherlands, however, requires caution on the weight given to (the absence of) planning in dispersed and car-dependent urbanization. The Netherlands has a long tradition of spatial planning trying to control the evolution of urban form, which I summarize here by relying on the synthesis from Schwanen and colleagues (2004). In the 1970s and early 1980s, the Dutch implemented a national spatial planning policy of 'concentrated decentralization' aiming at concentrating suburban growth within identified growth centers accessible by train. The objective of this control of urban growth was to reduce urban sprawl, and especially its effect on the 'Green heart'. The 'Green heart' refers to the green (and relatively) open area in the center of the ring of the largest Dutch cities. In the beginning of the 1980s however, inner city decline pushed planners to question their policy of 'concentrated decentralisation', which had successfully concentrated, but nevertheless encouraged, suburban development. They adopted instead, from then on, a compact city policy: further growth ought to be concentrated within existing cities or in close-by greenfield sites. The focus on housing development, however, left commercial development and especially employment centers develop outside the core cities. Shopping malls outside the city boundaries were however prohibited. Taken together, these planning measures encouraged the use of walking and cycling in cities, especially for shopping and daily activities. But many employment centers were scattered outside urban centers. In addition, the suburban growth centers encouraged the use of cars, in addition to the development of the inter-urban highway network facilitating it. The same phenomenon occurred in several of the more recent brownfield developments close to urban center, where the accessibility to public transit was low during the development phases. The coupling of mobility and land-use in planning is far from an easy business. Schwanen, Dijst and Dieleman conclude that “notwithstanding its strong planning tradition, commuting patterns in the Netherlands are not exceptionally efficient”. (Schwanen, Dijst, and Dieleman 2004, 594) “The

policy has to be supplemented by investments in relatively high-speed public transport systems, such as intercity trains at the national level and light-rail and metro systems at the conurbation level". (idem, 598)

In Canada, large metropolitan areas are turning to solutions similar to the growth centers used since decades in the Netherlands, but with a combined focus on fast public transit links connecting those 'nodes' (Filion and Kramer 2012). The transit nodes are seen as the new solution for the reconciliation of sustainable mobility patterns and land-use.

Yet, the current context seems much less favorable to a transition in the way urban space is designed for mobility, than during the period of highway development (Filion and Kramer 2012, 2239). The postwar era was characterized by healthy public finance and an adherence to a keynesian economy favorable to large state investments. Policymakers now deemphasize state intervention, due to weak financial capacity and the widely shared belief that the market can best fix problems. Yet, research on this belief has argued that the 'actually existing neoliberalism' does not correspond to a disappearance of the state, but to a re-organization of the state around the facilitation of economic growth and competitiveness (Brenner and Theodore 2002). Hence, when a transition to sustainable forms of mobility is favorable to business interests and the entrepreneurial spirit, local and nation states, with their economic partners, may be prone to embark in it (Jonas, Goetz, and Bhattacharjee 2013). Some authors have also argued that while national governments used to finance national industrial development, they now shifted their focus on 'champion' cities and metropolitan areas to increase their economic competitiveness (Crouch and Le Galès 2012). But the discourse of a lasting shortage of money for state investments and the focus on profitable equipments have reduced, in some cities, the scope in the choices of infrastructure (and services) and the inclusion of environmental and social goals (Grengs 2005; Farmer 2011; Haughton and Mcmanus 2012). This trend varies however sensibly across political contexts. In Montreal, there was a drastic reduction in the financing of public transit in cities by provincial and federal governments alike from 1992 to 2004 (ATUQ 2011). In Rotterdam The Hague, it is the contemporary period which is the most affected by budget cutbacks in public transit in large cities.

The context of dispersed urbanization, metropolitan wide mobility patterns and lower investments from higher state authorities fuelled thorny debates about the metropolis. In certain cities, metropolitan institutions or city-regional networks of collaboration were put in place to try to tackle metropolitan wide issues of transportation, spatial planning and economic development.

Regionalists and new regionalists argued that central cities and suburbs shared common interests, like the development of public transit (Orfield 1998; Wesley Scott 2007). The argument has also been recently made that bottom-up city-regionalism, that is the association of elites and civil society advocating for a joint city-regional agenda, could be a strategy to receive more transportation funding from higher state authorities:

In this context, the assembly of governance around larger city-regional structures can be seen as the latest attempt to overcome not only the territorial-fiscal discrepancies arising from the political fragmentation of metropolitan areas (Teaford, 1979) but also shortfalls in federal funding for transport infrastructure. (Jonas et al. 2013, 5)

The new city-regionalism rhetoric is also used by social justice community organizations in the United States, which forge alliances between the central city and suburban groups to advocate more successfully for better public transit (Pastor et al. 2009). In contrast, transportation debates also show some desires of disaffiliation, a politics of racist or anti-urban secession being part of oppositions to new rapid transit lines connecting sectors of metropolitan areas (Henderson 2006).

New regionalism or state-led reforms for metropolitan institutions aim thus at enhancing the capacity to act, deliberate, share resources and joint objectives at the city-regional (or metropolitan)³ scale, this including economic development, but also spatial planning and transportation projects. Have such governance efforts been part of the transport and mobility debates in Montreal and Rotterdam The Hague regions? Have changes in the urban and metropolitan governance of these areas contributed to the development of public transit and other car alternatives? I now turn to the governance context of the two regions.

The governance of transport and mobility in Montreal

In the Canadian constitution, municipalities are 'creatures from the province'. This means that the provincial governments can decide of their existence, can change their boundaries, powers and competences (Prémont 2005). This fact explains why, in the early 2000s, the Québec provincial government consolidated several municipalities into larger cities even though opposition was fierce. This has meant complex territorial reforms for the Montreal city-region from 2002 to 2006: the consolidation of many municipalities into one mega-city, the creation of a metropolitan institution at an even larger scale; but also a round of disaffiliations from some former incorporated municipalities, after referenda against the consolidation (allowed by a newly

³ City-region and metropolitan area are used here as synonyms.

elected provincial government) (Bherer 2006). The new mega city was subdivided in 27 boroughs (19 after the disaffiliations) to ensure some level of autonomy in service provision and local democracy to the constituent parts of the new mega-city, partly in reaction to the opposition to the consolidation (Collin and Robertson 2005). Paradoxically, in terms of urban planning, the consolidation changed the portrait from a centralized urban planning department in the City of Montreal, to 19 urban planning departments, one by borough, each adopting its own plan and bylaws for urban design and the local street network, but with some obligations to follow guidelines from the central city (Trépanier and Alain 2008; Van Neste, Gariépy, and Gauthier 2013). For civil society and public participation, this decentralization of planning was considered both as an opportunity (new local interlocutors and new arenas of public participation) and a difficulty (multiplicity and overlap of public authorities) (Trépanier and Alain 2008; Latendresse 2004). The central City of Montreal did produce steering documents for the 'new city': among them an urban Master plan in 2004 and a transportation plan in 2008, for the whole Montreal agglomeration (the whole island, including the disaffiliated municipalities). The transportation plan was enthusiastically received by actors of the agglomeration and included ambitious goals to increase the share of public transit and improve the conditions of walking and cycling in Montreal.

Meanwhile, the Montréal Metropolitan Community (CMM), which includes the island of Montreal and the southern and northern suburbs, was mandated at its creation to produce a Metropolitan Land Use and Development Plan (PMAD) for the metropolitan territory composed of 82 municipalities; which was finally adopted 10 years after, in 2012. Up to now, the CMM has had very little influence on transport and mobility issues. Being a forum of elected representatives from the constituent municipalities, it is a space of tensions between different points of views and interests, particularly between central-city and suburban perspectives; and between the different territorial interests of the southern and northern suburbs (Tomàs 2011). The CMM was also added to an already crowded landscape of territorial institutions. The new institution has stayed weak, and has struggled over its share of responsibilities with the public transit agency from the provincial government, the metropolitan transit agency (AMT) created in 1996 (Boudreau and Collin 2009). The AMT is responsible for metropolitan public transit, the CMM for metropolitan-wide spatial planning, municipalities (and boroughs) for local spatial planning, the delivery of public transit and of the local road network, and the MTQ for the highway network.

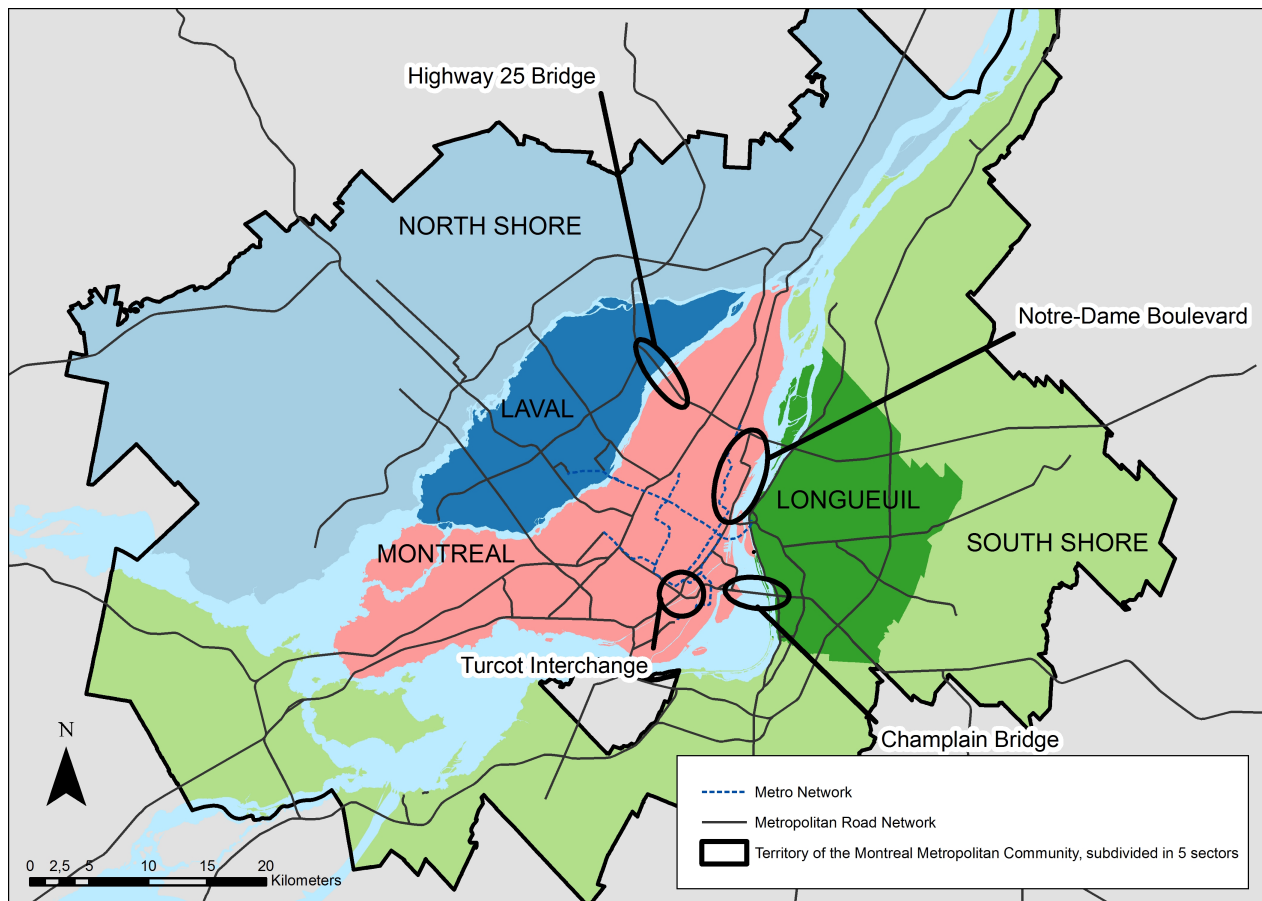


Figure 1.1 The territory of the Montreal Metropolitan Community (CMM), with its 5 main sectors and important transport projects discussed (Source: Pier-Olivier Poulain, INRS-UCS, 2012. Right to reproduce.)

The AMT was created in 1996 after a large reflection from a working group on the ways to increase metropolitan-wide cooperation. The report from the working group (rapport Pichette), handed in 1994, “insisted on the necessity to foster metropolitan policies in order to alleviate Montreal’s economic crisis” (Boudreau et al. 2006, 24). Before actually taking concrete steps toward metropolitan political institutions for the city-region, the provincial government decided to first bring one function of the city-region at the metropolitan scale: public transit (Junca-Adenot and Jouve 2003, 9). The agency had for mandate to develop an expertise on public transit for the urban agglomeration and its surrounding suburbs, and to withdraw public transit from the political tensions between the different territories (Junca-Adenot and Jouve 2003; Boudreau et al. 2006). The agency was meant to offer technical solutions to metropolitan public transit challenges. What is peculiar with the AMT is that, although it does consult local authorities, it mostly has to answer to the provincial government (when created, it was under the authority of

Municipal Affairs and Spatial Planning, and later under the authority of the MTQ). In its board of directors, there are three members from the CMM, but four members, including the president, are chosen by the provincial government. The creation of the AMT also meant that the expertise in the planning of urban and metropolitan public transit in the provincial government was taken out of the MTQ. Yet, the MTQ still has decision powers over policies and investments in transport, including public transit (Int AMT; VdM 2008, 59).

The AMT led to a growth of public transit (infrastructure and use) in the end of the 1990s and early 2000s. Notable in this period was the development of a network of suburban trains which increased public transit supply in the context of urban sprawl. The AMT has also been involved in the planning of extensions to the metro network and the development of new public transit modes, such tramways and light rails. Since the creation of the CMM however, the political leaders of the metropolitan area have demanded more political power over public transit.

In the last decade, both the City of Montreal and the CMM have indeed stressed the fragmentation problems in the governance of transport in the city-region, and the low accountability to local instances (Bernard 2002; CMM 2005; VdM 2008, 58–65). If within the city-region there are political tensions, Montreal is also caught in a difficult relation with the provincial authorities, especially with the MTQ. In 2009, the Auditor General from the Quebec government published a report criticizing the lack of coordination mechanisms between the provincial Ministry of Transport and local and metropolitan authorities in Montreal (VGQ 2008).

This research was conducted during a period when the Montreal metropolitan space, either through the institutions of the CMM or AMT, seemed to have no direct and autonomous regulatory powers on the issues at stake for activists⁴. The top-down creation of the metropolitan institutions by the provincial government seems to have limited its appropriation by economic and political elites. This is what Boudreau and her colleagues (2006) concluded from a comparison with the city-region of Toronto. In Toronto, there was no metropolitan entity created, but the city-region figured in the discourses, projects and spatial imaginaries from the political and economic elites. It was also invigorated by civil society debates, on the protection of Oaks Ridge Moraine for example, or on the promotion of public transit:

⁴ The Metropolitan Land Use and Development Plan was adopted by the CMM in the end of 2012. The large public participation it involved and the tense but successful municipal negotiations leading to its approval are perhaps an indication of a new beginning in terms of a 'metropolitan consensus'. But there is still no political power on matters of transport to the CMM.

For both the economic and technocratic elites and the stranded citizens on the highways and in buses and trains, the region is an alleged wonder-scale where dreams of mobility could be resolved. The trouble with this thinking is, of course, that both groups imagine quite different kinds of solutions at the regional scale. (Boudreau 2006 et al., 46)

In Montreal, the metropolitan scale has been less promoted as a tool to conceive mobility dreams, outside the state. Yet, in the last decade, public debates over transportation infrastructure and the planning of mobility made governance arrangements a topic of dynamic interactions between public authorities and civil society (Sénécal 2011). Since 2002, there has been six public hearings on transportation projects, to which the MTQ, the City of Montreal and the AMT participated, as well as other public authorities and a large variety of civil society actors. Also since 2002, seven coalitions have been formed to advocate for car alternatives, whether in terms of infrastructure, public transit or traffic calming. Within these public debates and in these coalitions, civic actors have proposed solutions and tactics for a governance favorable to the development of car alternatives, as we will see in chapters 4 and 5.

The governance of transport and mobility in Rotterdam The Hague

The Netherlands is composed of a tier-level political system, with municipalities, provinces, and the national state that ought to function in a spirit of 'co-governance'. In comparison to Canada, the municipalities in the Netherlands have more autonomy and power. I rely here on the explanation of Denters and Klok to show the nuances in the position of municipalities:

In theory, in short, municipalities are free to define tasks and to use all their powers, as long as these do not conflict with national or provincial statutes. [...] The constitution also stipulates that municipalities should, whenever possible, be involved in the implementation of national legislation at the local level (co-governance) and with the expansion of the welfare state most activities of municipal governments have been based on such co-governance arrangements. The results have been a highly complex system of shared responsibilities in which hardly any policy sector is the exclusive domain of one tier of government. (Denters and Klok 2005, 66)

Dutch municipalities receive the majority of their revenues from the central government, in the form of grants. This feature has been discussed as a sign of the 'subordination of Dutch municipalities to central government' (idem, 68). In addition, there has been, for several

decades, discussions to create a metropolitan or regional tier of government in between the cities and the provinces.

In regard to transportation and the development of highways, the Ministry of Infrastructure and Environment⁵ (and its executive agency Rijkswaterstaat) is *the* actor in charge. In the process of elaborating plans for a highway, the Minister is in contact with local authorities, to agree on the localization and on the integration in the landscape. The local authorities are often the urban agglomerations.

Urban agglomerations have become prominent since the end of the 1990s. Salet (2011, 61) comments that “a strong relationship with national government has slowly taken shape. In short, urban agglomerations play a major role in spatial planning, and they are developing strong institutional ties (at least within the public sector)”. Urban agglomerations have for territory one central city and its surrounding suburbs. This territory corresponds to what can be called the ‘daily urban system’, inside which “by far the most commuting takes place”(idem, 60). Urban agglomerations were created in the 1990s after the failure of the attempted territorial reform to make large ‘metropolitan provinces’ in the largest cities of the Netherlands.⁶ The national government imposed from then on a cooperation body between the main city and its directly surrounding municipalities (Schaap 2005). If cooperation was first difficult and the municipalities resented the obligation, after some years they joined in a strategic agenda of economic development (Salet 2011, 61).

For Salet, however, these cooperative bodies are conservative forces in regard to the development of a sustainable spatial and transport policy. He writes that “[t]he major urban central municipalities play a conservative role in the shift from a unipolar central city policy and urban agglomeration policy to a policy aimed at multipolar urban network quality at the level of the conurbation” (64). The major cities are indeed very close geographically. Only about thirty kilometers separate downtown Rotterdam from downtown The Hague. Together, these two

⁵ The Ministry of Infrastructure and Environment is the combination of the Ministry of Transport and Waterworks, and the Ministry of Planning and Housing, which were, before 2010, two separate ministries. The new cabinet decided however not to include landscape and nature protection within this new Ministry, although public officers had suggested to do so (ObsTH). It is not yet clear how this change has affected policies, planners arguing that the ‘Infrastructure’ and ‘Environment and Planning’ parts of the Ministry have stayed firmly segmented (ObsTH, Int SB).

⁶ The proposal was to replace existing provinces, with low power, with metropolitan provinces, to simplify the institutional field and to foster more metropolitan accountability. In 1995, the populations of both Rotterdam and Amsterdam strongly voted against the proposal, considering it would mean the disappearance of the central City identity to the advantage of the surroundings (Dijking and Mamadouh 2003, Schaap 2005). The municipalities respected the vote and did not further support the reform.

agglomerations form the southern 'conurbation' of the Randstad, the Randstad being a metaphor term (ring city) to denote the most urbanized section of the Netherlands, comprised of the four major cities around the Green Heart.

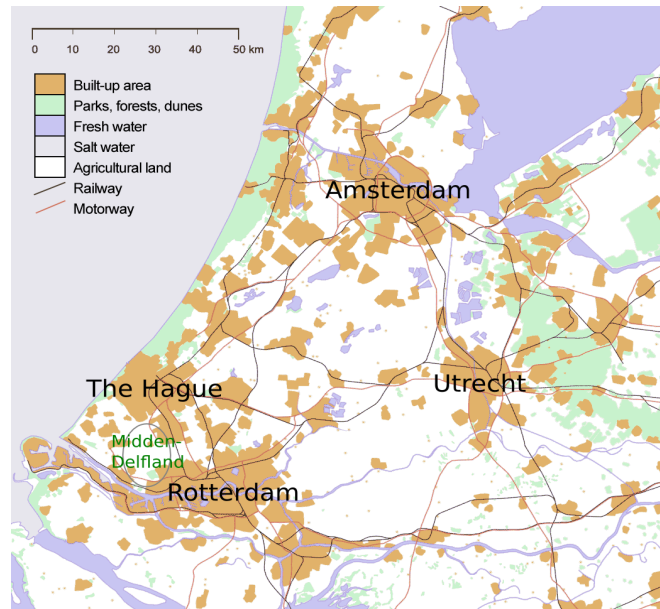


Figure 1.2 *Randstad, with its four main cities*
(Source: Wikipédia, Creative Commons. Modified by F. Claveau)

The Randstad has no formal political entity. The southern and northern conurbations of the Randstad neither, although their territory do come close to the territories of the South Holland and North Holland provinces. But in these urbanized parts of the country, the provinces have little power on policies, the central cities dominating the agendas and relations with the national government (Salet 2011, 2006). The point that Salet wants to make, when speaking of urban agglomeration cooperative bodies as conservative, relates to what he calls “the institutional policy dilemma of the compact city”, i.e. whether the policy from the national government should continue focusing on central cities and their agglomeration or act rather on conurbations.

The fundamental difference between these two options is not one of scale but of the spatial structure envisaged. In the former case, the new urban areas (residential or otherwise) in the urban agglomeration are attached unidirectionally to a dominant central city, while in the latter case, new spatial conditions are created at the network level, so that the new hubs in a regional network can be connected in multiple directions to the system as a whole. (Salet 2011, 63)

In his opinion, the current power of urban agglomerations, and mostly of central cities therein, reduces the possibility of thinking about the spatial and mobility relations between core cities. This takes particular importance when thinking of all the residential and employment developments at the periphery of agglomerations, in between two central cities. From this periphery, residents participate to the whole conurbation markets of housing and employment. The development of a conurbation-level public transit network would be necessary to ensure that those households do not overly rely on the use of automobile.⁷

In the southern conurbation of the Randstad, Rotterdam and The Hague are known to be reluctant to cooperate (Spaans et al. 2012, Kreukels 2003). From a spatial planning point of view, their growth priorities are quite different: the 'thinly' built area of Rotterdam still has space for new building inside the urban boundary to build (and is more prone to modernistic high density buildings), while the historic The Hague lacks space and is favorable to periphery brownfield development. This difference would cause tension in the shared spatial planning agendas at a conurbation level. From a public transit point of view, the two urban agglomerations quarrelled for a long time on the connections between their respective networks, Rotterdam privileging the extension of its metro underground system and The Hague the development of its tramway network. In 2003, they finally agreed on a connecting network of 'Randstadrail' (financed in large part by the national government), which had been discussed since the end of the 1980s.⁸ This system was considered a breakthrough in terms of a more metropolitan or Randstad level of cooperation and public transit connection allowing to develop public transit 'nodes'. In addition, the province of South Holland is working on further public transit-oriented development between the two agglomerations. Albeit the potential of these new developments, Randstadrail is still considered an anomaly in the metropolitan landscape of planning authorities. For Salet (2011), the length of its planning process is a testimony to the dominance of core cities in the co-governance with the national government on spatial and transportation planning.

The importance of urban agglomerations in decision-making processes is also judged unsatisfactory from a democratic point of view. If opposition parties and the public can ask

⁷ Efficiency in the delivery of public transit and in economic development has been one argument for the 2010 and 2012 Dutch cabinets to propose the disappearance of urban agglomeration cooperative bodies, and put in place a metropolitan authority in South Holland (<http://mrdh.nl/>). The proposed territorial reform did not have implications for the case studies I investigated in 2011 and 2012, except for the discrete opposition of municipalities to such new arrangement.

⁸ The light-rail system connects the two core cities since 2010, going through the suburban field in between them. It is connected at each pole to the urban network, to the Rotterdam metro and to the tramway network in The Hague.

questions and raise issues in municipal councils, this is not possible in the urban agglomeration bodies. The council consists in representatives of each municipality, it is thus organized along municipal, and not party lines (Schaap 145). The agglomeration cooperative body does not allow much room for debate or access from external actors, with few meetings open to the public (Schaap 2005).

In Rotterdam, the presence of the port is also an important element in the governance landscape. Kreukels (2003, 192) explains that:

A strong coalition between the municipal port authority and the city administration in close connection with the 'harbour barons' (the group of the strongest entrepreneurs in the port of Rotterdam) was the motor behind the expansion of Rotterdam, first as the main port for Western Europe (Europort) and subsequently as an outstanding world port from the late 1950s onwards.

The Rotterdam Port Authority is currently “a non-listed public limited company. Shares in the Port of Rotterdam Authority are held by the Municipality of Rotterdam (approx. 70%) and the Dutch State (approx. 30%)” (Port of Rotterdam 2014). It remains very important on the political scene, and especially on matters of transport. The main representative of the local political community on transport infrastructure is the alderman of the urban agglomeration of Rotterdam, specifically the alderman on matters of the 'Port, regional economy, transport and mobility'. This title of the alderman is telling much about the links made between transport and economy in Rotterdam and the role of the port therein (in The Hague, the alderman is just the alderman of 'transport and mobility'). The alderman from Rotterdam is de facto the alderman of the urban agglomeration.

Since 2010, this alderman is from the People's Party for Freedom and Democracy (VVD). The Minister of Infrastructure and the Environment is also from this party and it is the leading party of the Dutch cabinet. This shared affiliation makes it very difficult for actors not in agreement with official transport policy to oppose it locally. Nevertheless, we will see in the case studies that civic actors have proposed alternative governance arrangements and have tried to have an impact in the current political context.

1.4 Mobilizing for car alternatives in Montreal and Rotterdam The Hague: the political opportunity structure

I have presented the governance context of transport in the Montreal metropolitan area and in the Rotterdam The Hague region. These landscapes of governance, with overlapping authorities and inter-scalar relations, are essential elements to understand the mobilization for car alternatives in those regions. To summarize these governance contexts and to situate them within a broader picture of the democratic systems of Québec and the Netherlands, I borrow from the social movement literature the concept of political opportunity structure (POS). POS has been used to account for the emergence and effectiveness of social movements. Meyer (2003, 19), summarizing Tarrow (1998), listed the following elements of POS : “the degree of openness in the polity; the stability of political alignments; the presence of allies and support groups; divisions within the relevant elite and/or its tolerance for protest; and repression or facilitation of dissent by the state”. Kriesi (2004) added the degree of centralization of the state and the culture of party politics. Meyer (2003) specifically argued that POS had to be considered in terms of a nested scalar structure, different opportunities being located at different scales of government, which interact together. This seems to be relevant for the issue of mobility in the city. Indeed, the previous sections showed that opportunities for opponents in the Netherlands and Canada were different. These opportunities may depend, for instance, on the interplay between planning and traffic engineering and their institutionalization at different scales of government.

In their influential text on POS, Gamson and Meyer (1998) suggested to distinguish between stable and volatile elements. Stable elements are 'relatively inert aspects of opportunity', like institutional structures and political systems, and volatile elements are for example alliances and public policies. They argue that if stable elements of the POS can situate comparisons across countries, the consideration of the volatile elements is essential to capture dynamic processes of activists in relation with the state (1998, 278). The cases of Montreal and of Rotterdam The Hague region are similar in certain stable elements of their POS and differ in other stable and volatile elements. These elements are presented here, but will be recalled in the methodological section on the comparative research design, and at the beginning of each case study.

The similar aspects of the POS have been already introduced. First, there is a powerful regulating authority at a provincial or national scale: the Ministries of Transport or of

Infrastructure and Environment. The fact that this Ministry is provincial in Québec and national in the Netherlands is not a relevant difference. The road network is of provincial jurisdiction in Canada. The Ministry of Transport in Québec is thus autonomous in regard to its highway network, and has no obligations in regard to the federal government. It would be different if my case studies involved some of the bridges around Montreal, which exceptionally are a responsibility of the federal government. But the regulating power over the highway network is otherwise completely in the hands of the provincial Ministry of Transport, with environmental impact procedures also regulated at the provincial level by the Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development. The federal government has however financially contributed, from time to time, to the building or refecton of road infrastructure, and to the development and maintenance of public transit services (Desjardins 2008, 133-135). In the Netherlands, the Ministry of Infrastructure and the Environment is a national entity, and the provinces, as we saw, have little powers. The nature of the two institutions – the Ministry of Transport in Quebec, and the Infrastructure section of the Ministry of Infrastructure and Environment in the Netherlands – are hence very similar with respect to the regulation and planning of transport infrastructure. In both of them is concentrated a department of traffic engineering which dominates the field of transport policy by its road standards and its hold on budgets. Both of them have faced oppositions by local authorities and the public to their highway plans and the manner they were imposing them. Both of them must now submit their plans to a procedure of environmental impact assessment and a process of public participation.

In addition to the strong national transport regulating authority, there is also, in both regions, some power to the central city(ies) of the agglomerations. The central cities constitute the primary public interlocutor for the Ministry of Transport/ Infrastructure.

In both cases there is also a vague promise of an in-between metropolitan scale which is more difficult to access for civic actors, and more difficult to influence. This is in part because the processes of decision-making at this scale are not following rules as clear as at the other more institutionalized scales, because there are political tensions among the municipalities constituting the metropolitan area, and because the existing metropolitan authorities (in the case of Montreal) has actually little regulating powers on matters of transport. The urban agglomeration cooperative body in Rotterdam is more focused on the core city and the Port, and not on inter-relations with the periphery and links with The Hague.

All of these characteristics of the political opportunity structure refer to similar institutional dimensions, although in both cases the aspects concerning the urban agglomerations and the metropolitan scale have known changes and contestation in the last 15 years (Collin and Robertson 2005; Boudreau et al. 2006; Dijkink and Mamadouh 2003). Hence, they are not necessarily considered fixed and immutable by actors participating in the transport and mobility debates. The opposite is true for the Ministries at the national scale: they appear immutable, fixed in time.

The regions of Montreal and Rotterdam The Hague differ, however, in how this scaled governance structure is now offering certain concrete opportunities for activists. This is related to both volatile and stable elements of the political opportunity structure. The volatile element concerns how the two areas differ in the relations between the Ministry and the central city(ies) of the urban agglomeration. In Montreal, the last decade has been characterized by conflictual relations between the Ministry of Transport and the City of Montreal on matters of transport and particularly highway development. In contrast, in the Rotterdam The Hague area, the City of Rotterdam is allied with the Ministry of Transport and shares the political affiliation of the main party in the national cabinet. This alliance offers a very different political opportunity structure for coalitions for car alternatives.

In addition to volatile elements of the POS differentiating the two areas, there are also stable elements from the political system reinforcing the effect of those different alliances in Montreal and Rotterdam The Hague area. Though the Ministries are similar institutions and have similar regulating powers, they are embedded in different democratic systems. This has to do with a fundamental difference in political contexts that Kriesi synthesizes as majoritarian versus consensus democracies (2004, 71).

The province of Québec functions with a parliamentary system where two, or at times three, parties dominate. Since the 1980s, the bi-polarization of the party system is explained by the issue of independence, one major party defending the independence of Québec (Parti Québécois) and the other (Parti Libéral) promoting a renewed federalism with Canada (Lemieux 1992). The leading party most often has majority in parliament. In the period I look at, the Liberal Party had majority in parliament.

In great contrast to this system, the Netherlands is characterized by a multi-party system with proportional voting (Timmermans and Andeweg 2003, 357). The roots of this multi-party system

would come from a 'pillorization' of the Dutch society in four pillars: Protestants, Catholics, Liberals and Socialists.

Not one of these groups was powerful enough to rule or govern the others. As a result, each group focused on organizing itself, thereby leaving the others in peace. At the top, however, there were extensive contacts between the pillars (group leaders), where they sought consensus and compromises on issues that were seen as relevant for the well-being of all inhabitants. Dutch society is apparently based on a tradition of collaborative coordination. (Karsten et al. 2008, 41)

This is called the 'polder system' in reference to the historic model of the water committees collaborating to organize dams and drainage channels. By in large, the Netherlands would thus be characterized by a political culture of dialogue, compromise and concessions. This polder system is also applied to the Dutch economy in an institutionalized system of collaboration among labour unions, employers' associations and the government. Regarding transport and mobility, Mom and Filarski (2008) emphasized this will to establish compromises between different visions of transport in the city. The planning system is also constituted by several mechanisms of coordination and communication (Hajer and Zonneveld 2000). Yet, those mechanisms occur between state authorities and elites. Hajer and Zonneveld argued that the spatial planning system would need checks and balances from outside those big players, within civil society. Much politics happens through administrative procedures or through the interaction and lobbying with political parties.

Coalition governments have been the norm in the Netherlands, when in other European countries they are occasional (Müller and Strom 2003). This gives a specific role to political parties in the Netherlands since they are the 'building blocks' of the strategies and political games of coalition governments (and of the lobbys). Each election is followed by a period of few to several months during which the formation of the cabinet is negotiated. Political parties negotiate a coalition agreement that includes elements to which participating parties will be tied. Timmermans and Andeweg (2003, 358) evaluate that the "effective number of legislative parties, a measure of the size of the bargaining system, has varied between four and six parties" from 1945 to today. The negotiation between political parties to participate in a coalition and agree on the 'coalition agreement', as well as the day to day compromises that participant parties to the coalition make for parliamentary decisions, are important. They make political parties crucial actors and open a window of influence for civic actors.

When the Ministry of Transport in Québec takes a decision, there is room for opposition, but no room for parliamentary maneuvers, since the leading political party usually has majority. In contrast, in the Netherlands, a project from the Ministry of Infrastructure and Environment needs to be voted in the Second Chamber of parliament, and the outcome of the vote is affected by the decisions of several political parties. Sometimes, the votes from the parties in the cabinet are determined by binding commitments in the coalition agreement. In other words, in the Netherlands there are veto players within the national political system, with which the biggest party has to negotiate (Tsebelis 1995). In Québec, in contrast, this idea of veto exists more in relation to the other authorities, with for example the occasional opposition from the City of Montreal, but is relatively weak. The Ministry of Transport can overpass the opposition from those authorities. Hence they do not have a real political veto, although their opposition can have effects in the discursive field. In the Netherlands, the real veto that local municipalities had on infrastructure projects from the national government was withdrawn with the recent Crisis and Recovery Law, as we will see in chapter 6.

In sum, the two metropolitan areas are similar in regard to stable institutional elements, more specifically in the scalar structure of the governance of transport issues. Yet they differ in the alliances within this scalar structure, because of volatile elements (relations between the core city and Ministry of Transport) and more stable ones (political systems generating veto players within parliament or outside of it). These elements of the political context will constitute the background of my analysis of coalitions for car alternatives in Montreal and Rotterdam The Hague, as further discussed in chapter 3.

In this first chapter, I have presented the making of metropolitan space for mobility as an object of contention and possible collective action. The collective action I will consider are collective efforts to promote car alternatives. I have started by presenting this issue in relation to the politics of mobility. I then presented the historical framing of the urban transportation problem. This part appeared important to historize the discourse of car traffic fluidity and the institutions promoting or contesting it, in both regions that I will investigate in my case studies. The contemporary metropolitan context also had to be introduced. In the literature on sustainable mobility, the metropolitan scale is idealized: it is presented as an *ideal* scale to best organize the provision of sustainable transport infrastructure in connection with a more concentrated land-use development. Yet, in both of my cases, the metropolitan political institutions are weak or absent.

This does not mean they cannot be used rhetorically by actors mobilizing for car alternatives. This chapter has shown, however, the importance of the relation between the core cities and the national ministries of transport, with tensions structuring the discursive field and the actual production of space for mobility in both regions.

In this context, advocacy for car alternatives faces multiple spatial puzzles. A key question for activists is whether they should start locally in developing their own alternative forms of mobility, whether they should patiently advocate for the long-term metropolitan transport and dense land-use planning or whether they should play the even bigger game of mobilizing for a shift in national transport investments. This is a real dilemma, both from a mobilization and a planning point of view: which of these options should be prioritized? How are the choices linked with the framing of the problem, the different actors they can work with and their relation to the place?

The question, however, is not only about where activists decide to start or which public authority they target. It is also and foremost about what kind of discourses they promote in order to re-frame the urban transportation problem, gain adherents and oppose the dominant discourses on mobility.

CHAPTER 2. THE CONSTITUTION OF PLACE-FRAMES: NETWORKS, DISCOURSE AND SPACE

How is space involved in the utopias, representations, dreams and claims of mobilized collective actors? How is it used and experienced to build alternatives? These questions relate to a long standing interrogation in urban studies. The 'urban question' as formulated in the 1970s pertained to the explanatory position of 'urban space' in political mobilization. In the 1960s and 1970s, so called 'urban movements' broke from traditional social demands organized around class issues and quantitative demands for higher wages. Demands for a better quality of life dominated the agenda, what both Lefebvre (1974) and Castells (1983) characterized as the organization of the city for the residents' use value. The quality of urban space, as the 'context of social life' and the space of daily routines, was posed as an object of mobilization and political participation, to counter imposed values given to space by functional urban planning and the industrial organization of daily life (Donzelot 1999). If at first urban space was considered only a container of social, economic and class-dominated relations by Castells, in opposition to Lefebvre in the *Urban Question*, Castells also later on emphasized the particularity of urban movements' in the making of the city. The diverse movements he studied in *The City and the Grassroots* mobilized for an alternative world through enacting an alternative city. Doing so, he argued, they participated in the production of the city and the transformation of urban meaning (Castells 1983, 318–331). Yet, they constituted only “the live schools where the new social movements of our emerging society are taking place, growing up” (331). They were only 'embryos' of what effective social movements could reach because confined at an inadequate scale 'for the task' (Castells 1983, 331). The importance but limits of the urban space as an object and tool for political mobilization was then a key concern.

More recently, a literature on socio-spatial mobilization has developed to account for the diverse ways space comes into play in processes of collective and contentious action, including phenomena of scale and place (Jessop, Brenner, and Jones 2008; Leitner, Sheppard, and Sziarto 2008). Within the social movement literature, space started to be accounted for in terms of relational processes : how space is involved in processes of network building. Nicholls (2008) for example discusses how the city has specific spatial qualities allowing the right combination of social network ties for social movements to emerge. Martin and Miller (2003) discuss how space and scale come into play in processes of brokerage (intermediaries within broader networks). In

this thesis I build on these literatures, in making specific links between collective action networks and the production of space.

My angle on the production of space comes from discourse. The 'spatialization' of claims and demands from activists is posed as a question mark: is it a relevant tool of collective action? I particularly consider specific types of spatial claims, which I coin 'place-frames' (Martin 2013; Pierce, Martin and Murphy 2013).

I first need to introduce the way I conceptualize networks for collective action, discourse and their links with space. My conceptual framework is uniting three different strands of theory. Discourse, networks and space are discussed and defined in relation to their relevance and use by actors mobilizing for alternatives. Discourses and networks of collective action are not considered in a static way : they are analyzed as dynamically constructed and negotiated. I need tools to be able to study these phenomena, which is why there are sections devoted to defining notions from these fields. Actors construct and negotiate networks of collective action. Actors construct, negotiate and diffuse discourses. And the construction of the discourses and of the networks are, I wish to argue, co-constitutive.

At the end of this chapter, I provide a synthetic view of discourse coalitions and of the process of 'place-framing'. 'Place-framing' will then be the focus point of my empirical analyses and of my comparison. In the next sections, the existing literature on networks, discourse and space are discussed. The goal is to show the foundations of my conceptual framework in the literature. I start with concepts related to social networks and the building of coalitions, to follow with discourse and finish with the notions of space and place.

2.1 Networks of collective action

Cefaï (2007), in the beginning of an extended review of theories of collective action, proposes the following basic definition of collective action : "The concept of collective action points to all attempts of constituting a collective, more or less formalized and institutionalized, by individuals trying to reach a shared goal, in contexts of cooperation and competition with other collectives" ((2007, 8). Leitner et al. (2008, 157), positioning themselves in the anglophone social movement literature, define concerted social action as "forms of contestation in which individuals and

groups organize and ally, with various degrees of formality, to push for social change that challenges hegemonic norms”.

This section on networks will investigate how networks (in their different forms) participate in the capacity for collectives to contest dominant norms. This capacity is easily apprehended in social movements, which have been analytically defined as collective action forms directed toward clear opponents, with participant actors sharing a joint identity (Cefaï 2007; M. Diani and Bison 2004).⁹ Yet, in other forms of collective action, partnerships and coalitions not clearly driven by conflict, there may also be a building of, and lobbying for, alternatives. In other words, even when there is a cooperation with the state and an institutionalization of 'movements', there is the possibility of counter-power in civic associations, who can change the content of policies and transform the democratic process (DeFiloppis, Fisher, and Shragge 2010). The ambiguous relation with the state is a fundamental characteristic of non-governmental and non-profit associations today (Bacqué 2005; Swyngedouw 2005; Fontan et al. 2009; Trudeau 2008). Studying concerted social action against hegemonic norms exclusively in a social movement lens would not allow the analysis of such ambiguity. As Cefaï (2007) noted, we need to go beyond the distinction of insiders and outsiders to the political system. I will argue that we need to look at the zones of conflict to identify the dominant and counter-discourses, the actors enacting them and their power differentials. Nevertheless, many conceptual tools from the social movement literature are useful in reflecting on networks of collective action. I will rely on them in my literature review.

In addition to the generic term of collective which I use to account for the diverse types of groups and network forms in collective action processes, I will be particularly interested at processes of coalition building. As I explain further below, Lemieux (1998) offers a definition of the coalition as a temporal and concerted ensemble of actors with cooperative and conflicting relations in regard to their social bonds, transactions and control and who search for a structuration of their power on their adversaries so that they have more advantages than if they were not part of the coalition.

⁹ Although I provide here a simple definition offered by the cited authors, the term social movement has been used and defined in different ways, and was characterized as ambivalent both in term of concept and category in the real world (Maheu 2005; Fontan, Hamel et Morin 2013). There has also been a large literature on the transition from classical 'class-based' social movements and more fragmented, new social movements, grounded on demands for identity, culture, and the qualitative conditions of life (Lee 2007). But my intention in this chapter is not to trace the debates about social movements, but rather to discuss what in this literature is useful for the study of coalitions opposing dominant discourses on mobility. The different perspectives on social movements have provided important clues to study collective action, such as the discussion of political opportunities, the mobilization of resources, and the processes of framing.

I start this review by discussing networks in their most basic significations – the presence of relations and their strength. This serves to introduce the key challenges of building and maintaining a coalition through time. Through these topics I present a more 'cultural' approach, giving attention to discourse and meaning, the stuff exchanged and produced within social networks. I then pay attention to the role of particular actors in collective action networks, the brokers, and the different ways they have been described in the literature. The interrelation of civic collectives with state authorities is then discussed. I finish the section in presenting framing processes in such dynamic collective action networks.

An ideal relational structure for collectives?

Research on the relational structures of collective action, and by that I mean the pattern of social relationships, groups, institutions, and arenas of interaction and communication that can serve collective action, has been important in theories on both social movements and coalitions.

Until the mid 1960s, social movements were studied as episodes of social disorder in a time of rapid social change. They were studied as psychological (and not political) phenomenon, as sorts of therapeutic manifestations from individuals trying to cope with change and the feeling of disorder (McAdam 2003; Cefaï 2007). Since “the turbulence of the 1960s [...] made the apolitical view of social movements increasingly untenable” (McAdam 2003, 282), the structural research program which followed sought to consider social movements as political phenomenon, structured by a political opportunity structure and the availability of resources. The scholars involved showed, through various empirical studies, how movements emerged not out of social disorder but, quite the opposite, from stable social structures – within stable neighborhoods associations, religious institutions, university campuses, associations of previous movements, etc. The existing relational structure, what was called the 'mobilizing structures', allowed for a collective action to emerge and be sustained.

In the theories of coalitions, the inquiry about the function and structure of networks has also been key (Lemieux 1998; Mische 2008; Van Dyke and McCammon 2010). Lemieux proposed to theorize the emergence and maintenance of coalitions according to three types of social ties present within them and in relation to the outside : affinities and sense of belonging, transactions and control. Mische (2008) speaks of how actors have to deal with the overlap of different social relations to enable coalitions. I will later come back in more details to these contributions.

Social network analysis has provided tools to characterize the relational structures involved in coalitions and social movements (Cefaï 2007, 366–403). Social network analysis consists in examining the existence of connections (relations or “ties”) between individuals (or other types of nodes, like organizations), and the strength and/or type of connections. The distinction between strong and weak ties, for example, has been associated with discussions about the intensity and density of relations within a collective or social movement, and its scope.

Granovetter (1983) made the famous distinction between strong and weak ties in arguing for the importance of a trade-off between them in one's social network. Strong ties are those in which actors develop trust, common norms and joint interpretative frameworks (Nicholls 2008, 846). For Granovetter, strong ties come from the “combination of the amount of time, the emotional intensity, the intimacy (mutual confiding), and the reciprocal services which characterize the tie” (1983, 1361). Strong-ties groups can however become closed on themselves, creating distance from other groups. Weak ties are less intense, but can make possible the exchange of resources and ideas in the context of job search. Granovetter argued (in contrast with previous studies on communities emphasizing strong ties) for the necessity of weak ties to have a broader network giving access to information. But if identifying the strength of ties in terms of strong or weak appears simple, it is in reality much more complex. There is a heterogeneity in network ties : they do not all fill the same functions (friendship, exchange of information, advice, political support, etc.), have the same degree of commitment nor are associated with the same social projects or goals (Stevenson and Greenberg 2000; Scott 2000).

Building on Simmel, Lemieux argued that not all social relations constitute network relations : network relations would concern relations of *identification*, but not relations of indifference or differentiation. Among these relations of identification, Lemieux (1998) proposed to distinguish between three types of relations which can be at work within a network : 1) relations of social bond, such as identity, the sharing of affinities, loyalties or motivations and a sense of belonging; 2) relations of transaction, i.e. exchange of resources (information, money, political support, etc.); and 3) relations of control, when actors can regulate a situation, behavior, or the use of resources. The combination of the three is particularly important in dynamics of coalitions, as I will further discuss below. I privilege the discussion of network ties with those three types of relations identified by Lemieux, rather than with the weak/strong differentiation from Granovetter.

Scholars have also discussed the balance between informal personal ties and formal organizational ones. Informal ties participate in the resilience of a collective action network over

time and can be re-mobilized to form new formal coalitions or alliances at different moments in time (Lemieux 1998; Diani and Bison 2004). Formal organizational ties, through an inter-organizational coalition for example, are more binding in terms of possibilities of action and statements, but they are more specific to a particular topic. When the coalition is broken, the informal personal ties may (or not) be affected. Individual and organizational network ties overlap in complex ways (Diani and McAdam 2003). I will come back to the dynamics of coalition-building below.

Social network analysis is also used to study the particular importance of certain key actors. In social network analysis, the number of ties of an actor gives information on his access to resources and power, it corresponds to its centrality. A central actor is from this point of view the actor with the greatest number of connections (centrality can be measured in a number of different ways, see Scott 2000, 82–99). A network can be centralized around some key actors who have significantly more ties than others, or be rather decentralized (Diani 2003, 306). This has important impacts on the control of information and of decisions, the centralized network being more associated with a hierarchical network of clear leaders and followers. A 'clique', or dense network, in contrast, is a “decentralized, reticulate network, where all nodes are adjacent to each other”, and where there is a redundancy of ties (actors having several common ties with others) (Diani 2003b: 307).

In addition to studying the density of a group and the centrality of certain actors in it, some sociologists started giving more attention to the lack of ties in certain areas of a network, what Burt has called structural holes (Burt 2000, 200; Knox, Savage, and Harvey 2006, 120). He argued that actors with more power in the network were not the ones with more connections, but rather the ones who connected different groups otherwise not connected. Brokers are those actors connecting different separated groups within a larger network.

“People on either side of a structural hole circulate in different flows of information. Structural holes are thus an opportunity to broker the flow of *information* between people and *control* the projects that bring together people from opposite sides of the hole” (Burt 2001, 35)

“Accurate, ambiguous, or distorted information is strategically moved between contacts by the *tertius*”. [...] Thus, individuals with contact networks rich in structural holes are the

individuals who know about, have a hand in, and exercise control over more rewarding opportunities (36).”

The third characteristic in the relational structure (after density and centrality, described above) is thus the network segmentation : “the extent to which communication between actors is prevented by some kind of barrier” (ibid); leading to sub-groups within a larger network. A partially segmented (but centralized) network is one composed of distinct groups, but which are nevertheless linked by brokers bridging across the structural holes. In contrast, a segmented but decentralized network would correspond to autonomous groups or organizations which are not, or little, in contact. The brokers, linking different otherwise separated groups, and the leaders, actors with more ties within a denser group, may or not be the same actors (Diani 2003).

The barriers leading to network segmentation can be ideological, can relate to different issues of concern or can be related to spatial distance (Diani 2003; Nicholls 2009). Within the city-regional and urban context, certain segmentation lines, that actors are struggling with in the course of collective action, have been documented (Van Neste and Bherer 2013) : 1) between a particularized (local) and a transversal mobilization (Harvey 2003; Ansell 2003), 2) between activism in central city and in suburbs (Pastor, Benner, and Matsuoka 2009) and 3) between different sectors of intervention (Weir, Rongerude, and Ansell 2009). A major challenge of collective action is to bridge across those segmentation lines, or retain the cohesion within a collective containing them. We need a sociological understanding of networks to understand these processes.

The web of affiliations and the constitution of collectives for action

How is a collective constituted and maintained through time? To explain group formation, social network analysts refer traditionally to two basic processes : homophily (we make friends with people sharing with us similar traits) and transitivity (the friend of a friend becomes a friend) (Bruggeman 2008; Borgatti et al. 2009). Those two processes are also outlined in the structural social movement research introduced above : “recruits to a movement tend to know others who are already involved”, and they “spread along established lines of interaction” (McAdam 2003, 285). The cultural approach adds to these basic social processes of group formation the aspect of discourse and communication, the stuff exchanged between actors of a network. Representatives of this discursive and cultural approach to social networks, Mische and White (1998; Mische 2003; 2008) propose to go beyond the emphasis on the connections between individuals, and explore “how actors are positioned in social space by their relations and

affiliations, as well as how they endow those relations with meaning through mutual orientation and discursive positioning” (Mische 2008, 48).

In her work using both network techniques and cultural forms, Ann Mische (2003; 2008) refers particularly to concepts from Georges Simmel, who is also cited in analyses of social movements (Cefaï 2007; Diani 2000). Simmel offers a metaphor of a web of affiliations that can be used to understand networks of collective action.

Simmel speaks of groups and individuals as the intersection of different social circles. In modern times (which Simmel compares to previous historical periods), one individual may have several affiliations to different groups, as long as their purpose and demands to the individual are not “too far apart” (1955, 146). These affiliations define the individual's personality and the norms, values and obligations she is dedicated to. In certain occasions, the norms of one group may conflict with another group affiliation of the individual, who has to deal with such conflict. The individual may have to choose in a given situation between the primacy of one affiliation over another. Using such framework, Gould documented in his study of the uprising in the Paris Commune, how the republican guards' allegiance of proximity to their neighborhood took more importance in times of greater danger than the allegiance to the organizational networks around the general interest of patriotism, when they quitted their posts to reach their own neighborhoods (1995; reported by Cefaï 2007, 369–370). This basic social reality of overlapping affiliations described by Simmel as a 'core problem of modern life', gives us a hint of the tensions for one actor to participate in several sub-groups of a network, with different priorities or loyalties.

The notion of the intersection of social circles has implications not only for the individual actor, but also for the collective group. Mische (2008) used the work of Simmel to conceptualize 'interstitial spaces' where activists could temporarily 'suspend some aspect of their identity and involvement' to make possible relationships and the existence of a broader collective project (Mische 2008, 19–24). Groups are formed by the individuals who compose them, and to maintain their unity have to deal with the diversity of their members (which have a diversity of affiliations). In this perspective, it is not, generally, the multiple social ties that count; but how those social ties participate to the constitution and negotiation of groups. This constitution of groups is negotiated both in terms of the identities of the participating members and in terms of the unitary identity of the group. And the over-lapping of groups within society form a web of affiliations which is rich and partly unpredictable; because of the diversity of the group and the intersection of different social circles within an individual. Simmel discusses this web from the

point of view of individuals and their participation to groups. But it is possible to extend it for a sociological conceptualization of coalitions composed of different actors and organizations (such as suggested by Diani 2000).

Simmel discusses how the negotiation of the group's identity and hence constituency may respond to different degrees of elasticity or rigidity, depending not only of internal dynamics, but also on the broader relational context (1955, 87–107). This context (which Simmel exemplifies with war, conflict, common opponent, strategies of the opponent, etc.) may, for example, lead to a need for the group's centralization or, in the opposite, a greater elasticity of the group to rally more members around a common opponent. This relation between a group's constituency and the outside was formalized by Lemieux in his specific definition of coalitions.¹⁰

Building on the three types of relations presented above, Lemieux (1998) offered a definition of coalition as a temporal and concerted ensemble of actors with cooperative and conflicting relations in regard to their social bonds, transactions and control and who search for a structuration of their power on their adversaries so that they have more advantages than if they were not part of the coalition. The social bonds refer to the existence of an identification tie, which implies some sharing or convergence of affinity. This convergence may be linked to ideology, loyalties or motivations (39-47). It relates to the negotiation of the individual's projects and affiliations in relation to those of the group, as presented in Simmel's metaphor of the web of affiliation. The transactions refer to the exchanges of information and resources (enabling or constraining) through the bonds. Control refers to the power an actor has on himself or others : “an actor exercises control when it conforms to his choice its resources or those of other actors”¹¹ (1998, 50). Hence it is the combination of social bonds, transactions and control within the coalition which gives it sufficient advantage in relation to the exterior to be worth it.

There are always, within coalitions, not only consensual but also conflicting elements that have to be dealt with. This comes from the diversity of affiliations and projects of the participants (Nicholls 2009; Mische 2008). To allow a coalition, the internal conflicting elements have to be less important than those between the members of the coalitions and opponents (Lemieux 1998). Yet, groups and coalitions vary in the extent and scope of the 'binding' and restricting

¹⁰ “[U]ne coalition ne se forme et ne se maintient que si la possibilité du pouvoir conjoint entre les acteurs, et donc l'existence de liens d'affinité entre eux permettent de structurer l'environnement interne en un seul bloc [...] les acteurs adhèrent à une coalition ou y demeurent s'ils estiment, en tenant compte du pouvoir conjoint ou unilatéral, qu'ils peuvent exercer dans l'environnement externe, que les avantages actuels ou éventuels dus à la coalition sont plus grands que ceux qu'ils obtiendraient s'ils ne participaient pas à la coalition.”

¹¹ “[u]n acteur exerce du contrôle quand il conforme à son choix une opération qui concerne ses ressources ou celles d'autres acteurs”

effects a participation to them implies. Formal coalitions are conceptualized as negotiated in alliances, with explicit participation terms. For Lemieux, the coalition is a temporary but formal network, which may be supported by a more permanent informal network between actors. Social movements in contrast are united rather around a joint (even if broad) identity with inter-mingled informal ties and spontaneous groups going beyond agreements among organizations (Diani and Bison 2004). Yet, in looking at concrete cases of apparent 'movements' in cities of Europe, Diani and Bison remark that different forms of collective action were present in the networks and evolved; it is thus dynamic and multi-formed.

How is the evolution of collective action in different forms linked with specific relational structures (more or less centralized, with presence or absence of recognized leaders, more or less segmented, with presence or absence of brokers; or with certain arenas and channels of interaction)? In the approach of the mobilization of resources, presented in the introduction of this chapter (McAdam, Tarrow, and Tilly 2001), collective action emerges when there is a sufficient 'mobilizing structure' to launch and sustain collective action (McAdam 2003, 285). Relating this to my discussion about coalition-building, I can hypothesize that coalitions emerge from previous ties that are then formalized or strengthened around one issue, recruiting also new ties, in building on the previous ones. Previous ties can include institutions, associative forms, or trust or joint experience among certain actors or organizations ('strong ties').

But McAdam now argues that depending on the political context, existing relational structures are not always enabling. They may also constrain new collective action, and have to be transformed. "It is not prior ties or group structures that enable protest, but rather the interactive conversations that occur there and succeed in creating shared meanings and identities that legitimate emergent collective action" (2003, 290). He cites the example of the Black church in the United States, which was considered a conservative institution; yet it helped in launching the civil rights movement through its re-appropriation. McAdam proposes then to understand the emergence or re-structuration of collective action through the following steps : first the joint attribution of threat or opportunity (actors construct together a joint sense of a need/opportunity for collective action), second the mobilization of sufficient resources (which involves an appropriation of current relational structures), and third innovative collective action (2003, 291–293).

The process through which actors participate in the formation and sustainment of coalitions, and the appropriation of previous relational structures, involves not only calculations and negotiations

(which are emphasized by (Lemieux 1998)), but also the actors' discursive capacities and concrete interactions with each other and with their context of action.

Different types of brokers

We have seen that the formation and sustainment of collectives may demand to bridge 'structural holes', to calculate the benefit of alliances, to deal with the different affiliations of constituent members and to appropriate existing relational structures. Let us now consider how this is accomplished by looking at the work of key actors involved in these processes, commonly called the brokers.

Brokers are actors with a particular type of influence, because of “their capacity to relate to different sectors of a movement, and their potential role as communication link” (Diani 2003, 107). They may also be particularly important because of their capacity not only to pass information, but for their ability to bridge across social or political barriers that have divided before the larger network (McAdam, Tarrow, and Tilly 2001). Several authors have discussed the work of brokerage and have insisted on different aspects of it.

In social network analysis, brokerage refers to transfers of information through previously unconnected actors or social sites (Diani and McAdam 2003, 107, 294). In contrast, diffusion refers to the transfer of information or norms through already established lines of interaction. Central actors (often coined leaders), which have the greatest number of ties within a network, may contribute more to diffusion along existing lines, while brokers create new social ties to do so. Within a social movement or a coalition, brokers and leaders need not be the same actors (Diani 2003).

The work of brokerage may necessitate particular discursive 'mediating' capacities. Mische emphasized these capacities in her work on the diverse movement to re-build democracy in Brazil. For Mische, these discursive capacities are derived from the actors' personality, positioning and their experience of network “cosmopolitanism” (participating in multiple groups) (Mische 2008, 35–55). In her cultural approach, the broker of social network analysis becomes a mediator, who articulates within the discursive field “communicative practices at the intersection of two or more (partially) disconnected groups, involving the (provisional) conciliation of the identities, projects, or practices associated with those different groups. There is a decidedly cultural and performative component to such mediation” (Mische 2008, 50). Mische identifies a series of skills activists used to allow the formation and maintenance of coalitions. A

first skill is 'identity qualifying', when an actor announce in the name of which affiliation she is currently talking and may switch through the conversation. This identity qualifying is both to ensure internal coherence of the statements vis-a-vis the 'strong tie' group and stay open to a wider audience. Another mechanism is 'temporal cuing', which consists in focusing on the short or long term perspective of a potential joint project, depending on what is more consensual among the actors present. Mische also discusses 'generality shifting' and 'multiple targeting', which are ways to play on the scope of one's discourse depending on the situation (Mische 2003, 268–273). Generally, actors can make choices on the commitments or ideologies to put at the front or in the background of their cooperation with other actors. In the years of coalitions building for democratization in Brazil, the brokers used such tactics and arranged for neutral 'interstitial' spaces of discussion between factions of the coalition where no identity would seem to predominate.

Routledge, Cumbers and Nativel (2007; Cumbers, Routledge, and Nativel 2008) have also discussed the role of brokering actors who act, in the cases they studied, as 'network imagineers'. Network imagineers are actors with more resources, able to move (physically and discursively) from one context to another, and who thus have large influence on the 'imaginary' of the collective action network, and on its diffusion. In the global civil society network that Routledge, Cumbers and Nativel studied, these actors “frequently act as the agents of moments and strategies of translation, displacing the network's collective visions from one context to another in order to further the processes of connectivity and affinity” (2007, 2587). Routledge and his colleagues (2007) thus refer to the construction and diffusion of narratives by mobile leaders of a movement. The 'network imagineers' have a particular control over the content of the movement's grievances and demands (2588), while the mediators of Mische seem to have resources to ensure cohesion to act in concert within a more decentralized network with several brokers.

There are also other forms of brokers who act less in public and more in the shadow. Within the field of public policy, Nay and Smith (2002) described the particular roles of intermediaries at the passage points between state institutions. Actors from the public sector who by their position or through their specific resources (the ability to function in different contexts and within arenas with different rules and procedures) can circulate ideas between institutions as well as negotiate compromises at the margins of those different institutions. Nay and Smith (2002, 11–17) distinguish between two forms of action from these intermediaries. They can act as 'generalists',

and build common sense repertoires between the different milieux. Generalists are engaged in 'ideological bricolage' and in translation. Intermediaries can act also as brokers looking strategically for solutions to disagreements between different milieux, linking actors together in a win-win situation. Interacting within sections of the state but also at the margin of the state apparatus (with associations, for example, or the private sector), intermediaries do not necessarily have high hierarchical status, and do not necessarily gain in being visible.

Similarly to Nay and Smith who considered the spaces at the margins of institutions, Evans and Kay (2008) speak of the different 'fields' and the architecture of their overlap. Evans and Kay discuss how environmental activists used particular forms of brokerage to gain influence on the content of the NAFTA trade agreement. The debate about the NAFTA trade agreement in the United States included the following four 'fields' : the US trade policy field, the US legislative field, the transnational trade negotiating field, and the grass-roots politics field (2008, 975). The authors argue that environmentalists succeeded better than labor unions in winning negotiations concessions because of their use of the following leverage points in the fields' overlap. The first leverage point is rule linkage, which activists used in modifying some rules (informal, operational, jurisdictional or regulatory) changing a field and its relation with other fields. The second is network intersection, which activists can act upon by alliance brokerage. The third is resource interdependence. Activists can export resources from one field to another. The fourth leverage point in field overlap is frame adaptation, where actors of a field work to adapt or re-conceptualize key political ideas or discourses to make it concordant with or to translate it for another field.

This contribution from Evans and Kay is in many aspects close to the political process approach on contentious politics from McAdam, Tarrow and Tilly (2001) (although Evans and Kay have the particularity of focusing on fields including state actors). In their political process approach, McAdam and his collaborators discussed the role of brokerage as a transversal mechanism at work in collective action processes, which can take different forms.

In creating new or modified connections, brokerage is a significant mechanism in the scale shift of a movement, argued McAdam, Tarrow and Tilly (2001, 331–336; McAdam 2003, 293–296). They described the expansion of a movement as starting by brokerage or diffusion, but brokerage ensuring greater scope because of the new actors involved. Then, there needs to be what they call an 'attribution of similarity'; since it is not enough to be simply made in contact or to share information. To actually involve new actors in the collective action, there needs to be a

process of frame bridging : the claims and discourses need to be sufficiently similar to encourage coordinated action. Institutional equivalence may also play therein a role : the same sector, or the same type or organization, may cooperate more easily.

In sum, there are different types of brokerage and scholars have focused on somewhat different moments of brokerage in collective action. Mische (2003; 2008) emphasizes the mediating abilities of brokers, and the neutral spaces they can construct to enable the maintenance of coalitions over time, despite different identities and projects. Routledge, Cumbers and Navel (2007) referred to the mobility of brokers and their ability to forge and maintain a joint imaginary for a movement. Nay and Smith also spoke of their role in making compromises, in moving through one (state) arena to the next. Evans and Kay add to this the ways in which activists can change the game in linking separate 'fields' through not only alliance brokerage and frame adaptation (as discussed by the other authors mentioned) but also by rule making (which can connect fields together) and resource brokerage. Those last two series of authors also show that this brokerage is not done only outside the state by activists, but also within and in relation with the state, through its different sub-fields.

In a general manner, brokers diffuse information and bridge across barriers of different kinds, which may be segmenting a larger network. This can work on the three (inter-related) types of social relations distinguished by Lemieux. First, on the level of social bonds, affiliations and motivations, brokers can work to ensure cohesiveness and broaden the possibilities of belonging to a group. Second, on the level of transactions and the sharing of resources, brokers can attract resources from one group to help another; they can motivate the integration of new constituencies bringing new resources to the collective. Third, brokers can also have a control over the shared projects and political claims, and on the resources giving further performativity to the claims, so that the claims gain sufficient power in regard to the coalition's adversary. In sum, this multi-formed brokerage can create new collective actors.

Relations between civic actors and the state

Collective action can hardly be discussed today without acknowledging its relations with the state (Goldstone 2004; Bacqué 2005; Renaud and Trudelle 2012). The boundary between the insiders of the political system and the 'challengers' should better be conceived as a porous one, which needs to be problematized (Goldstone 2004; Cefai 2007). While the institutionalization of social movements was seen by some social movement scholars as a negative outcome, for others it has been a measure of success and of recognition (Fontan, Hamel, and Morin 2013,

19–20; Goldstone 2004). In any case, many associations and non-governmental organizations today receive funding (and associated agenda setting) from the state. Also, even if episodes of social movements go beyond those formal organizations and state-funded associations, their diffusion and dissemination goes through existing relational structures most often linked to the state in some ways (DeFiloppis, Fisher, and Shragge 2010, 173–177). Finally, the state is composed of a variety of fields and authorities within which civil society can find supporters for their cause, as illustrated by the case of Evans and Kay above. The relations between activists and political parties can also be key in the evolution of a cause (Goldstone 2004). Hence it seems that one cannot study networks of collective action without an attention to how civic actors are tied to the state.

There has been two conflicting theses on the link between collective action and the state (Fontan, Hamel, and Morin 2013; Trudeau and Veronis 2009; Bacqué 2005). The first thesis interprets this link in a negative way, in seeing the NGOs increasing financial dependence on the state as reducing their advocacy and independence. The institutionalization of social movements was seen as threatening the emancipatory and counter-hegemonic potential of projects from social actors (Fontan, Hamel, and Morin 2013, 30–31). The second contrasting thesis sees institutionalization as a success and a sign of recognition. Trudeau and Veronis (2009), citing Salomon (1995) describe the positive perspective on the cooperation between civic actors and the state as a 'paradigm of partnership', in which NGOs and state authorities are seen as complementary in their actions, and as cooperating for instrumental reasons (financing, political legitimacy) on the basis of their shared goals. NGOs would operate in “a niche created by the failure of the market to provide services for the least well-off and the failure of the government to provide services in ways that are responsive to the needs and preferences of particular communities” (Trudeau and Veronis 2009, 111).

This 'niche' for civil society actors is seen much more negatively by critical scholars of the regulation school (Swyngedouw 2005; DeFiloppis, Fisher, and Shragge 2010, 124–125). The financing of civil society is linked to the downsizing of the state and the outsourcing of the welfare services from the state. This point was made in regard to local community organizations in the province of Québec (Hamel and Jouve 2006). In this perspective, civil society is part of a neoliberal agenda of reducing the size of the state and making citizens self-reliant, encouraging community associations and volunteers to engage in collective services ensuring the social security net, instead of the state. Civic (and often community-based) organizations appear as

tools of neoliberal governance accomplishing services previously done by the state and in becoming, through those tasks, mainly operational and a-political. Through this process they would lose their contesting edge.

Related to this interpretation is another one of a 'shadow state'. NGOs financed by the state, in this thesis, would have become regulatory agents from the state extending its power on everyday life in the shadow, and in recent times to enact neoliberal policies (Trudeau 2008). This thesis emphasizes not the disappearance of the state but its restructuring, with increased power over and through NGOs. Wishing to nuance the thesis, Trudeau (2008) and Perkins (2009), argue that civic actors make strategies on and negotiate their relation to the state in the funding they accept and the constraints or leverage it brings them in terms of agenda setting. The concrete relations between civic actors and state authorities thus need to be understood. Perkins (2009), based on research in the field of environment and urban parks management, and Trudeau and Veronis (2009), in the field of immigration, further note that civic actors, in accepting more responsibilities in a context of reduced state engagement, may also gain in legitimacy and in concrete leverage on the content of the policies they operationalize.

When carefully considering actual experiences of collective action and of community organizing, the dichotomies between institutionalization and counter-power, partnership and contestation, community organizing and community development seemed to several authors somewhat misleading (DeFilippis, Fisher, and Shragge 2010; Trudeau 2008). Innovation may still come from community organizing, even in context of increased collaboration. And there is still the possibility of conflict and of more radical politics, although it is not characteristic of most cases observed in institutionalized community organizations (DeFilippis, Fisher, and Shragge 2010). Citing Laclau and Mouffe (1985), Fontan, Hamel and Morin argue that the signification of collective action is never pre-given (2013, 31). Roy (2011) emphasizes the diversity of non-profit organization intersecting in one cause, with a continuum of actors closer and farther from the state authorities, with different complementary strategies in regard to this relation. This is similar to Trudeau (2008) emphasizing a continuum of state-civil society relationships.

Building on this literature, I propose to see the relation with the state, the actors' position as relative 'insiders' or challengers of the political system, as one norm to negotiate within the collective. Also, the interaction with the state may be the particular competence of one actor or organization within a larger network, which specializes in this brokering with the state authority.

This collaborative versus contentious relation will be important in my comparative research design.

This relation with the state is also part of a mixed inter-play between bonds of shared motivation (affinity and belonging), of the sharing of resources and information (transactions), and of control, as distinguished by Lemieux (1998). The question is to what extent civic and public actors can share a sense of belonging to a group, and under what relations of control can they share resources for collective action. How, through the diverse relations civic actors have with state actors, can they influence the content of the agendas and policies? And, conversely, how do public actors control the agenda of civic coalitions through their web of relations?

Framing and collective action frames

The notion of framing refers to a specific branch of social movements that studies the importance of uniting discourses, or 'sets of beliefs and meanings' called collective action frames (Benford and Snow 2000). This frame perspective is one of the first attempts to bring back the questions of culture, identity and symbolic resources in social movements (Cefaï 2007, 469; Mische 2003, 258; Snow 2004). Frame analysis is inspired by the work of Goffman (1974) who spoke of frames as mental cognitive schemata through which individuals make sense of situations. As Johnston (2005, 239) summarized it : "The central premise of Frame Analysis is that we glance at nothing without applying primary frameworks (or basic everyday frames). Simply put, we could not negotiate daily encounters as culturally competent actors without them." With the notion of collection action frames, frames are transfered from the individual to the collective level.

Before the emergence of the frame perspective in the social movement literature, the formulation and diffusion of grievances by activists was taken for granted (Snow 2004). The objective of the frame perspective was thus to problematize how actors produce and maintain meaning in collective action (Benford and Snow 2000, 613). Framing is used to denote the active construction of meaning by activists. The products, collective action frames "are action-oriented sets of beliefs and meanings [...] that render events or occurrences meaningful and thereby function to organize experience and guide action, [...] but in ways that are intended to mobilize potential adherents and constituents, to garner bystander support" (Benford and Snow 2000, 614).

Benford and Snow (2000) have summarized the core tasks that a collective action frame can include. First, it includes a diagnostic which describes the problem and the victims of it. Activists also often attribute the responsibility and blame to a cause or an authority, although research showed that this attribution of responsibility was often contested and conflictual, different factions emphasizing different predominant targets of blame (2000, 616). Second, there is the prognostic frame which includes certain solutions to the identified problems, or at least a strategy to contest the problem. Again here, a collective may include sub-groups with different strategies of action (but which may agree on the diagnostic). Third, the motivation frame consists in “the rationale for engaging in ameliorative collective action” (2000, 617). In her study of frames used in neighborhood collective action, Martin (2003, 736) further specifies that motivation frames “define the community that acts collectively, describing the group of actors and potential actors and exhorting people to act”. Those different frame components are constructed, negotiated and disputed within a collective. Benford and Snow discuss how frames may vary in resonance, that is in their mobilizing capacity, depending on the credibility of the claim makers, the credibility of the “frame articulators” (those actors more involved in discursive production) and on the empirical credibility of the claim in relation to the experienced reality (2000, 619–622). The ‘saliency’ of the frame for the targeted audience affects also its resonance, and depends on the centrality of the issue in the audience’s lives and the fidelity of the narrative in comparison to their other engagements and affiliations (2000, 622).

The research project of the frame perspective thus includes two components : one on the content of the frames themselves, the other on the processes of their negotiation and construction, the processes of framing. In responding to critics, Snow and Benford (2000) have emphasized that sociologically the meaning of collective action frames resides in social interaction; hence privileging the second strand of research, on framing. The discursive studies of the frames themselves should consider the contested and interactional contexts of their emergence and constant evolution (Snow 2008, Snow and Benford 2000; Steinberg 1998). The authors present three types of framing processes. First, discursive processes, which include processes of frame articulation and frame amplification. Frame articulation consists in the ‘connection and alignment of events’ or of elements of the lived experience in a novel assemblage (Benford and Snow 2000, 623). Frame amplification consists in putting more emphasis or ‘saliency’ on one element or issue. Those discursive processes of framing have been little studied by scholars in comparison to the strategic processes introduced below

(Benford and Snow 2000; Cefaï 2007). And they are also distinguished, in the article from Benford and Snow, from what they call 'contested processes' which refer to frame disputes. Frame disputes happens in the relation between a social movement and its outside (for example due to a different framing by the media than the one promoted by the movement actors), or internally in the definition and negotiation of a frame within a social movement. To follow the stress Snow and Benford want to make on the interactive construction of frames, it seems that discursive and contested processes of framing should be analyzed simultaneously. In the perspective of an interactional context of framing, frames are discursively articulated through disputes, often with strategic goals in mind. Gamson and Meyer (1996) have also noted that it is rarely possible to talk of one social movement frame, but rather of different interpretations or positions relative to a frame.

If the frame perspective has been heuristic and has lead to multiple studies of collective action frames, it has also received criticism. Cefaï argued the frame perspective was too much focused on the construction of social movement by an elite of entrepreneurs which can 'manufacture discontentement' (2007, 475). Although Snow (2004) emphasizes the dynamic and interactional aspect of framing, Cefaï note that the studies undergone in the frame perspective are very static. The activists' diverse regimes of engagement are too little investigated, and the grammars of arguments too neatly 'packaged' in a simple motto (Cefaï 2007; Steinberg 1998). It is for Cefaï (who advocates for more ethnography in collective action research) not context-based enough to capture the fine negotiations within concrete situations of disputes and antagonism. Benford and Snow (2000) acknowledge that this intensive type of study is less often conducted because it is very labour intensive.

Williams (2004) and Steinberg (1998) also offered criticisms, this time more sympathetic criticisms, of the frame perspective. For Williams (2004) the studies on frames and framing are for the most part much too movement-centered, discussing the elaboration and contestation of frames within a collective without considering the external context. Steinberg also makes the same type of argument. He proposed in fact to change the focus of the frame perspective from 'coherent packaged frames' to the discursive repertoires used by activists within and in interaction with the discursive field. The discursive field is the "discursive terrain(s) in which meaning contests occur" (Snow 2004, 402; also Steinberg 1998, 748).

Snow (2004; 2008) has acknowledged the promise of situating framing processes within the discursive field. The concept of discursive opportunity structure was proposed by Gamson and

Meyer (1998) to consider what set of opportunities was present in the broader discursive field for activists to seize and adapt their frame of action in relation to it. This has been more investigated in relation to messages portrayed in the media (Koopmans 2004). Yet, Snow (2008) emphasizes that one can not assume all discursive fields are equally dynamic. The dynamism of a discursive field, whether the narratives and discourse structuration change or stay stable, may be a function of the stream of events and of organizational and institutional structures. A new event may bring much discourse production and a dynamism in the discursive field. Both organizational and institutional structures could work to stabilize it, or in the contrary, a new institution may enable an opportunity for discursive change. In any case the time of analysis must be well specified. The second point emphasized by Snow (2008) is that not all discursive fields are contentious. If discursive change can occur through opposition, a new discursive opportunity may also come by an openness in the institutions or organizations. Yet if a discourse field is completely consensual in all political spaces this would mean, in the words of Laclau and Mouffe, that there is an objectified definition of an object, without any diversity and contestation of its constituting elements. I give more insights on discourse theory in the next section.

I have gone through a series of concepts to be able to characterize and discuss the relational processes involved in collective action. The aim was to have the tools to respond to the question of how actors constitute themselves in collectives for joint action and around a joint discourse of alternative. The first part considered relational processes – processes related to the web of relations between actors of a coalition, and the final part considered framing processes – especially the elaboration of discourses to trigger and focus collective action. In this research, I will consider how both types of processes participate to the dynamics of coalitions. I will do this in focusing on brokers. Brokers may be involved in relational processes – bridging across segmentation lines and 'structural holes', increasing the scope of a collective and the adherence to a shared goal, and working for the exchange of resources. And by their crucial position, they might be in a special position of control over shared projects and over the coalition's frames of action. The elaboration and negotiation of these frames within the discursive field remain yet underdefined, but will be considered at length in the next section devoted to discourse. This will lead us, at the end of the chapter, toward my conceptualization of two types of brokering mechanisms : relational brokerage and discursive brokerage.

2.2 Discourse theory and discourse analysis

The field of discourse analysis is a vast one. In fact, one could argue that far from being one field, it is rather several research teams and sub-disciplines which have used the same term to refer to different theories of the social and the political, with different analytical strategies.¹² Yet, they do have shared characteristics. Discourse is conceived as a set of patterns in language linked with certain practices and a context of enactment, and their relation with social meaning and/or political action. This contextual feature of discourse analysis is what distinguishes it from what is known as content analysis, the interpretation of textual materials in terms of the number or intensity of meaningful categories which are standardized (Johnston 2002, 77). In contrast, discourse analysis “emerged from linguistic understanding of naturally occurring speech in which the context of speech or textual production is emphasized as a vehicle for meaning and understanding” (2002, 77). The context considered in discourse analysis ranges from very narrow to very broad, depending on the approach. In all approaches, an important starting point is that language fills different functions. The speaker does not only say something, he also does things with it. Discourse analysts speak of three functions of language (Fairclough 2003; Gee 2011; Hajer 1995; Jorgenson and Phillips 2002; Potter and Wetherell 1987; Wooffitt 2005). First, language builds/acts upon social relations. Second, language works on identity. Third, language works on the meaning of ideas and understandings of the world. In addition, language is not only constructive, but also constructed. The manner in which this work of and on language is studied varies considerably. The differences touch on theoretical and analytic choices which have been the subject of fierce debates (Howarth 2010; Wooffitt 2005; Chouliaraki and Fairclough 1999). Yet, many researchers now make a plea for the combination of methods that work at different levels, allowing for different insights in a research (Jorgenson and Phillips 2002; Wetherell 1998; Torfing 2005).

In this chapter, I present different approaches that I mean to combine, but with an emphasis on the discourse theory of Laclau and Mouffe, a key reference in contemporary discourse theory (Torfing 2005). The choices of theories and techniques reviewed are linked to my research endeavour : to understand the dominance of certain discourses over others and the emergence

¹²In this chapter, I present several discourse approaches, but with no pretention to exhaustivity. The approaches presented (or briefly introduced) serve to present the main challenges and disagreements on discourse theory and discourse analysis and the different empirical focus points (as presented in reviews by Torfing 2005 and Jorgenson and Phillips 2002), in order to capture the interest and specificity of the approach chosen.

of counter propositions. The counter discourses may be viewed as collective action frames, as considered in the previous section. The discourse theory behind the constitution of such frames need further development. Laclau and Mouffe's theory conceptualizes the constitution of discourses in a field of antagonism. Conflict and antagonism does not preclude solidarities, the constitution of groups, and the power of convergence. To locate the precise points of antagonism of a debated issue is a way to see the obstacles around or against which the counter discourse is working to establish itself.

I will thus look at the construction of meaning by political actors in situations of antagonism. It is an anti-essentialist account of reality, in which the meaning of things and identities are not pre-determined, but socio-politically constructed through (relational and discursive) political acts of inclusion and exclusion. Yet discursive formations (certain ways of understanding (a subset of) the world and the set of relations supporting it) do act as structural constraints in particular socio-spatial-historical situations : they sediment and lead to certain institutions and practices associated with them, but can be contested by new discursive formations. Discourse theory, especially the one which will be outlined from Laclau and Mouffe, gives us such an understanding of the world. The theory situates discourses as producing certain realities, and as being produced by the set of already existing relations.

On an analytical level, I also need to find tools to locate empirically the discourses in their uttering context. These finer tools are not always spelt out by post-structuralists like Laclau and Mouffe. Complementary tools on an interactional and argumentative level exist that are compatible with the theoretical assumptions presented. To make clear the link between theory and analytical tools, I will go back and forth between them in presenting the different discursive approaches.

There are two main disagreements among the different discourse approaches. First, on what constitutes a discursive element and what is outside of discourse (what is the data, how is language used, what more than language is included in discourse)? Second, how can one relate observed discursive elements to broader social and political meaning (through questions of agency, subjectivity, power and hegemony)? The responses of each approach to these questions give us an indication of the compatibility between them. The different approaches have different empirical focuses which imply both strengths and weaknesses : on grammar, on interactions within conversations, on rhetoric and argumentation and on the production of hegemony.

Linguistic approaches and conversation analysis

Saussure (1960) is a good starting point that shows the linguistic origin of many discursive approaches. Saussure's linguistic theory can be summarized by the metaphor of a fishing-net, the linguistic signs being knots in the net, "deriving their meaning from their difference from one another, that is, from being situated in particular positions in the net" (Jorgenson and Phillips 2002, 25). It is thus a web of meaning in which the meaning of each element is defined in relation to the other elements of the web. But post-structuralists have emphasized how this meaning-fixing is changing through language use. Language use includes constant negotiations of new relations between the elements of the web.

The dynamic language in use is likely to be affected by particular practices and socio-cultural habits. Socio-linguistics started to include such context of language in use. Socio-linguistics linked particular linguistic patterns with socio-economic characteristics of the speaker and with the different social contexts in which it is uttered, for example in a primary school setting. These scholars want to understand social inequalities in a specific context, and uncover dogmas and unconscious habits in certain milieux (for example, in pedagogy) (Gee 2011). The focus of their study is on "organizational features of language", at the grammatical level (Torfing 2005, 6). But yet, through this organization of language and the context of utterance they try to respond to the question of how language "does things" (reproduce discrimination, for example) and "build certain relations" (Gee 2011).

In contrast with a strict emphasis on grammar, conversational analysts focus on the organization of utterances in brief interactions. The order, simultaneity, intonations and responding traits of the utterances are studied in detail with certain typologies or patterns of turn taking in conversations. In this micro analysis, the interactional context is the key element, and the goal is to capture the stakes of a conversation. Major criticisms formulated against their analysis concern their reluctance to include any element of the context of the conversation, and their consideration of participating members as equal producers of the conversation (Wooffitt 2005). Because of these analytical choices, they are said to ignore unequal relations of power (Torfing 2005). Yet conversational analysts insist on the fact that power relations are visible in the conversation and can be finely analyzed in focusing on the interactions.

Situated discourses and argumentative discourse analysis

With the speech act theory of Austin (1975), the focus changes from linguistic and utterance structure to the strategies of the speakers. Rhetoric analysts will explore this idea of 'speech act'

in looking at how speakers consciously re-frame the style and content of the conversation to increase the force, performativity and eventual consequence of their speech. But it is not only about rhetoric. Variability in the discursive accounts of the actors, and the study of ideological dilemmas are also investigated to understand the production of discourses (Billig 1987).

Inspired by speech act theory, psychologists have developed a field of 'discursive psychology' to emphasize that "mental processes and categories are constituted through social, discursive activities rather than as 'internal', as in cognitive psychology and psychoanalysis" (Jorgenson and Phillips 2002, 96). Potter and Wetherell (1987), particularly, emphasize how specific discourses and codes take form in concrete social contexts. The notion of interpretative repertoires refer to these 'local' discourses, discursive resources that actors can use in certain situations (Potter 1996). They are "recurrently used systems of terms used for characterizing and evaluating actions, events and phenomena", often "organized around specific metaphors and figures of speech" (Potter and Wetherell 1987, 149), and which do not need to be explained at length – one word/idea may invoke one interpretative repertoire to other participants. Trying to distance themselves from an abstract or reified vision of discourse, they emphasize the flexibility of discourses as "situated and 'occasioned' social practices" (Jorgenson and Phillips 2002, 104) . In their perspective, actors are not always coherent in using interpretative repertoires, depending on who they are talking to. In fact, variability and inconsistency are studied as a rhetorical strategy in the language in use (Potter and Wetherell 1987; Wetherell 1998; Jorgenson and Phillips 2002, 106–108).

Wanting to go farther in what discourses mean for collective action in the policy world, Marteen Hajer proposes his own argumentative discourse analysis (1995; 2005). His argumentative approach extends beyond arguments and rhetorics, and considers how affinities in the arguments of different actors link them together in discourse coalitions. These discourse coalitions are structured around a common construction of a problem, a storyline. Different actors will meet in a discourse coalition not necessarily because of interests, or social bonds, but because of the discursive affinity of their storyline. The storyline conceals the complexity of a problem and seems a "communicative miracle", considering the diverse backgrounds of the actors and the different scientific models and types of knowledge most often involved (Hajer 2005: 304). Yet, actors meet through an affinity in the conceptualization of the world. Hajer gives the following example :

An important example from pollution politics is the discursive affinity shared by the moral argument that nature should be respected, the scientific argument that nature is to be seen as a complex ecosystem (which we will never fully understand), and the economic idea that pollution prevention is actually the most efficient mode of production (this is the core of the discourse of sustainable development). The arguments are different but similar: from each of the positions the other arguments 'sound right'. (Hajer 2005: 304)

Hajer argues that in the political process, discourse coalitions simplify the cognitive processes involved in the decision-making over complex problems, thanks to their storyline. In sum, discourse coalitions are defined as "a group of actors that, in the context of an identifiable set of practices, shares the usage of a particular set of story lines over a particular period of time" (Hajer 2005: 302). When institutionalized, discourse coalitions lead to concrete practices which frame public policy : how problems are stated, measured, acted upon, etc., and are then concrete obstacles to the emergence of counter-discourse coalitions. The framework, however, tells us little about how particular actors make those coalitions hold together, and how a discourse coalition comes to dominate a field. Hajer states that central actors need to adhere to the storyline for it to structure the discursive field (2005: 305). But how does this occur and following what kinds of social processes? In the last section of my conceptual framework, I develop on this question to explain my use of discourse coalitions.

More recently, Chateauraynaud (2011; 2007) also proposes an analytical approach to the study of argumentation in public debates and controversies.¹³ His contribution is particularly focused on the context of enunciation and discourse production. He proposes to study in depth argumentative forms in the trajectory of actors and arguments in different arenas of debate. Hence, arguments are studied through their passage in a series of tests through which they can be modified, re-constructed or annihilated. These 'tests' are characterized by the types of arena (more or less codified arenas of debate and interaction) as well as the asymmetry in the positions of actors enacting them, which will affect the 'power of expression' of arguments. Hence the content of the arguments counts, but within a sociological and institutional field of constraints. For Chateauraynaud, the fine analysis of the content of arguments and of the frame

¹³ Chateauraynaud speaks of a study of argumentation and not of discourse, since he considers that discourse analysis does not include the context of enunciation and the practical milieux where controversies and debates are played out, referring in this criticism to the work of Angenot and Maingueneau ((2010, 24-25). Still we see in this chapter that many discourse analysts include the context of enunciation and even for some the practices and norms associated with language (see also the book from Torfing et al. 2005). The context of enunciation is in fact part a basic definition given to discourse analysis by numerous authors. But Chateauraynaud may feel many discourse analyses do not take seriously (and broadly) enough the context. The manner and extent with which this context of enunciation is considered varies quite a lot, as we said, depending on the approach. Chateauraynaud devotes his book to a conceptualization of a "balistique" of contextual variables on argumentation.

given by the type of arena allows a better understanding of the positioning of actors. There are different 'planes' of debate with different codes and references (from informal discussion to politicized public arenas). "The argumentative agency reveals itself as a political work more complex than the sole act of taking position in public, since it means also developing articulations between the planes"¹⁴ (2011, 158). For Chateauraynaud, these articulations of arguments in the different arenas of debate vary on two axis. First, the articulation may depend on the level of conflict and politization of the actors involved. Second, the content of the arguments depend on two constitutive poles : internal coherence for the collective and the relation with the external epistemic world. Protagonists move through the arenas and find ways to better push their arguments (2011, 158–159). We will see that there are similarities and useful complementarities between this approach by Chateauraynaud and the discourse theory of Laclau and Mouffe, described below.

Critical discourse analysis

In parallel to these argumentative and situated approaches to discourse, another approach was developed to explicitly link language with the larger socio-political context (Torfinn 2005). Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), "is characterized by the common interests in de-mystifying ideologies and power through the systematic and reproducible investigation of semiotic data (written, spoken or visual)" (Wodak and Meyer 2009, 3). The focus is thus on documenting how language in different forms supports the reproduction, or contestation, of ideologies. CDA is a heterogeneous group, with different definitions of power, discourse, practices; and with different tools (Wodak and Meyer 2009). In CDA, Fairclough has developed a detailed and comprehensive set of discourse analytic techniques (2003). Some of his concepts have become used outside CDA and across different discourse analyses studies, such as the notion of intertextuality (Jorgenson and Phillips 2002). The notion of intertextuality concerns the external voices and texts which are referred to in one's text or speech, the way these are reported, and the web of connectivity this creates (Fairclough 2003, 46–61).

If CDA is inspired by the work of Michel Foucault, it rejects, like many other discourse analysts, his transcendental definition of discourse (Fairclough 2003; Torfinn 2005; Jorgenson and Phillips 2002; Marten Hajer 1995). As Jorgenson and Phillips argue "they all diverge from Foucault's tendency to identify only one knowledge regime in each historical period; instead, they operate with a more conflictual picture in which different discourses exist side by side or struggle for the

¹⁴ "L'agir argumentatif apparaît ainsi comme un travail politique plus complexe que la seule prise de parole en public, en développant les articulations entre les différents plans."

right to define truth". There remains in CDA an objective to see how ideologies are maintained and how "truth" is constructed, especially to advantage certain social groups. Yet, if the semiotic analysis of CDA goes far in details, the manner in which the discursive is "dialectically" related to the non-discursive, that is to the broader social and political power, is unclear. For many, this is linked to the fact that the analytical distinction between what is a discursive element and what is not is ill defined. Should the economy, or the state for example, be treated as a non-discursive or a discursive element, and where to draw the line (Jorgenson and Phillips 2002, 90; Torfing 2005, 9)? For Laclau and Mouffe, it makes no sense to define the economy as exterior to the realm of discourse as it makes it a naturalistic determinant of everything else. They would argue that it is all discursive : part of the economy being discursive moments (and associated practices) still debated in discursive struggles, part of it being discourses that became objectified and that sedimented in institutions.

The issues of the construction of identity and social relations, and their link with discourse, are also little explored in CDA. Thus, the discursive elements uncovered to illustrate a certain ideology, for example with the notion of intertextuality, seem insufficient to account for the establishment of the discourse and the effectivity of the ideology in the world. Processes of agency leading to such establishment are not discussed. This is at the basis of fierce criticisms that judged CDA's interpretations of a text to be only the result of their presuppositions (Wooffitt 2005). Yet, several scholars outside CDA have also argued for the importance and value of studying how language (and its associated practices) re-produce power relations and create hegemonic interpretations of an object. The scientific conflict concerns the how to do it. Howard (2010), Torfing (2005) and Wetherell (1998) propose to draw from the post-structuralist discourse theory of Laclau and Mouffe.

Laclau and Mouffe's discourse theory

Laclau and Mouffe¹⁵ propose a discursive theory of the world which tries to explain hegemony through investigations of discursive struggles, a theory with no distinction between the discursive and the non-discursive. Many have dismissed the theory on this account, taking it as implying

¹⁵ The discursive theory of Laclau and Mouffe is mostly described in their work *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy : Towards a Radical Democratic Politics* (1985), where it is presented in a historical and marxist tradition (of which they deconstruct many assumptions, which has made it notoriously difficult to read). Our interpretation of their theory is based on a close reading of this text (re-edited in 2001 with a new introduction), as well as other work from Mouffe (1999, 2005). We also relied on interpretations and uses of Laclau and Mouffe's theory from Jorgenson and Phillips (2002), Torfing (2005), Wetherell (1998), Purcell (2008) and Howarth (2010).

that there is no material reality. Yet, as Laclau and Mouffe argue (2001, 103), (and this is an important point for discourse analysis in general) :

The fact that every object is constituted as an object of discourse has nothing to do with whether there is a world external to thought, or with the realism/idealism opposition. An earthquake or the falling of a brick is an event that certainly exists, in the sense that it occurs here and now, independently of my will. But whether their specificity as objects is constructed in terms of 'natural phenomena' or 'expressions of the wrath of God', depends upon the structuring of a discursive field. **What is denied is not that such objects exist external to thought, but the rather different assertion that they could constitute themselves as objects outside any discursive condition of emergence.** (emphasis added)

Another way to put it is that the world always has an “argumentative texture” to it (Wetherell 1998), and that any human communication about an object (or practice constituting an object) passes through a field of discourse which affects the nature of the object in the conversation. This argumentative texture has to be understood as a powerful act in the sense that discourse allows “inclusion/exclusion that shape social meaning, identity and the conditions for the construction of social antagonisms and political frontiers” (Torfing 2005, 23). Discourse put this way is directly linked to social and political power.

Laclau and Mouffe's discourse theory is particularly rich and interesting as a theory of the political world composed by antagonistic views which enter discursive struggles. Certain discursive elements will at times crystallize into specific meaning, sometimes long enough that we forget that this meaning is not the object per se, and that other interpretations are possible. “Objectivation” is observable when an object evolved to be interpretable in only one way, because a hegemony has formed around it, after a while the “traces of power [are] erased”, and the political construction of it forgotten (Jorgenson and Phillips 2002, 38; Laclau and Mouffe 2001). In other words, it has become so natural that other potential interpretations are not thinkable. One example is the way children are treated as a different category than adults in our contemporary world. This has become so natural for us that we forget this was not so in the Renaissance, only paintings remind us of this.

Sedimentations of meanings are always partial and temporary. New or revived antagonisms may be formed in moments of dislocation of the dominant discourse formations, through “articulation”.

Articulation happens in discursive struggles when nodal points of a discourse are being given a new or modified meaning. Nodal points are 'key signifiers' in the organization of meaning, within a discursive field (for example, the concept of liberal democracy, or of community). Articulations consists in organizing and articulating elements together around a nodal point to construct meaning. In the discourse theory of Laclau and Mouffe, discursive formations are established through chains of equivalence. During discursive struggles, different actors want to change the meaning of a nodal point, and they do so by defining it in relation with other entities. The meaning of a nodal point is empty in itself (this is why it is called a "floating signifier" when it is not (partially) fixed in a chain of equivalence), but the different actors attempt to link it to a web of significations, to establish a chain of equivalence. Equivalence consists in the linkage of different particularities in a common identity, to structure a discourse. By doing so, the differences between the elements or particularities are made less visible; it is the resemblance, condition of equivalence, which is put forward. By resemblance, Laclau and Mouffe mean that they come to acquire a similar political meaning. The authors give us an example.

In a colonized country, the presence of the dominant power is every day made evident through a variety of contents: differences of dress, of language, of skin colour, of customs. Since each of these contents is equivalent to the others in terms of their common differentiation from the colonized people, [...] the differences cancel one other out insofar as they are used to express something identical underlying them all. (2001, 127)

This does not mean that the meaning of each individual element disappears, but that the joint meaning that the elements acquire together is emphasized by the actors within the discursive formation. There is a constant tension in the chain of equivalence. Each element of the equivalence can be contested if the denial of difference (the individuality in meaning of each element which is subverted by the equivalence) becomes unacceptable for an actor, who may break the chain of equivalence and re-articulate the discursive formation. Thus, "the logic of equivalence is a logic of simplification of political space, while the logic of difference is a logic of its expansion and increasing complexity" (Laclau and Mouffe 2001, 130). Articulation is the process of negotiating these equivalences and differences giving meaning to nodal points.

The external discursive field represents the surplus of meaning to which a discursive formation is referring to and constituting herself in relation to. It is the outside, in relation to which the discursive formation acquires an apparent unity, but which constantly works on re-defining the

relations of meaning within the discursive formation (2001, 135). If Laclau and Mouffe's concept of articulation follows the linguistic web of meaning of Saussure, in which the meaning of each element is defined in relation to the other elements, it emphasizes not the closed, but the changing and dynamic facet of this relational meaning-fixing. Each element can take a new meaning when put in new relations with other entities. And when different potential meanings (through different relational equivalences) of one nodal point are reduced to a dominant one, it can become temporarily fixed as a hegemonic, and eventually, objectified discourse.

The central question of Laclau and Mouffe is : how “does a relation between entities have to be, for a hegemonic relation to become possible?” (2001, x). What are thus the relational conditions through which a dominant meaning becomes attached to an object? In contrast with “objectivation”, hegemony is visible when there are dominant discourses but still “antagonistic forces and the instability of the frontiers which separates them” (2001, 136). Laclau and Mouffe re-introduce and expand the concept of hegemony developed by Gramsci. The specificity of their contribution is that they open up the hegemonic field in denying the a priori definition of the social (i.e., by class) and the necessity of one single hegemonic center with “the division of a single political space in two opposed fields” (2001, 137). They argue rather for the prevalence of “democratic struggles where these imply a plurality of political spaces” (2001, 137).

Very much related to the idea of a plurality of struggles, Laclau and Mouffe's discourse theory is special for its emphasis on what they call the “over-determination of the subjects”, or the “split subjects” (Laclau 1990; Torfing 2005). It resembles very much the notion of affiliations from Simmel which I have presented before in the Networks section. Laclau and Mouffe consider subjects¹⁶ as being defined by many different identities (other than just class). In any situation, the position an actor will take on a discursive chain of equivalence could depend on the predominance of one of its many identities (women, immigrant, worker, resident of this neighborhood...), but the actor's position can not always be easily predicted, especially when several of his or her identities are affected. As I said earlier, each element of the discursive chain of equivalence may be contested for a greater logic of difference, or to be put in relation with another element in the discursive field. Different elements of the chain of equivalence may “affect and penetrate in a contradictory way the identity of the subject itself” (2001, 131). Hence, the actor's potential contribution is “over-determined” by his different identities and their potential meanings in the discursive field.

¹⁶ While Laclau and Mouffe use the term subject, we use rather the term actor to emphasize the agency in discourse production and negotiation.

Jorgenson and Phillips (2002, 43) note that “for Laclau and Mouffe, collective identity or group formation is understood according to the same principles as individual identity”. In the context of a myriad of overlapping possible identities and thus positions from an actor, group formation happens through “a process by which some possibilities of identification are put forward as relevant while others are ignored” (2002, 44). This would happen through the establishment of a chain of equivalence. Thus, the constitution of discursive formations constitute at the same time the political actors, i.e. the groups enacting and producing the discourse (as interpreted by Jorgenson and Phillips (2002), Purcell (2008) and Howard (2010)). Group formation thus work by excluding some identities and alternative interpretations.

From the principles of articulation and over-determination (of individual actors and groups) follows the notion of “contingency”. The evolution of a discursive formation is not totally pre-defined. It will depend of the identities that will predominate in each specific situations and of the manner elements are put in relation, i.e. how new equivalences and antagonisms will come into play. This contingency has been particularly criticized by Chouliaraki and Fairclough (1999), who argued this was a denial of structural constraints on discursive formations. For them, actors cannot pick from a vast array of potential positions, since they are constrained by unequal relations of power. Chouliaraki and Fairclough also argue that contingency gives a false picture of easy change and constant flux; while there are clear structural permanences working against change in dominant discourses. I would respond to this criticism that there is a difference between contingency (from Laclau and Mouffe) and constant flux – there are different paths to change (which is contingency, as opposed to determination) but, still, there is a large baggage of sedimented discourses which are in a sense “structural” constraints to the emergence of new hegemonic formations (Laclau and Mouffe 2001; Jorgenson and Phillips 2002, 54–55; Torfing 2005). In addition, Laclau and Mouffe do not pretend every subject (I prefer to use the term ‘actor’) has the same identities and capacity to formulate a counter-discourse, but they emphasize the diversity of identities within each actor.

This principle of contingency opens the door to the *dislocation* of hegemonic and even objectified discourse formations, and to the re-articulation of the discursive element. Laclau discusses dislocation as more susceptible in two types of situations (as summarized by Torfing 2005, 16–17). Most discourses are capable of including many elements and justifications in their chains of equivalence. But when a new event or conjuncture happens that cannot be accordingly explained or represented by the dominant discourse, the nodal points of the discourse can be

contested and there will be struggles on how to define the problem and solutions, with “a proliferation of floating signifiers” (Torfing 2005, 16). Alternative discursive equivalences may then be forged. A dislocation can also occur when actors are put in new relational situations where their different affiliations come in a new juxtaposition. These new relational situations can trigger new negotiations on the terms of equivalence in the discursive formations and in relation to the external discursive field.

I have gone through different discourse approaches, some of which will be used in this research. The discourse theory of Laclau and Mouffe is the overarching theoretical framework under which are organized the other conceptual and analytical resources on discourse. I use the framework of Laclau and Mouffe for two reasons. First, their theory corrects the lacuna of the framing perspective in the social movement literature, which was accused of considering too little the external discursive field and the dynamic construction of frames in contested processes. The discourse theory from Laclau and Mouffe picture the political world as composed by a plurality of antagonistic views meeting in discursive struggles. Discourses produced by coalitions and groups and thus relationally constituted in the discursive field. When collective action frames are indeed considered chains of equivalences, then the dynamic notion of articulation precises what the constitution of discursive frames implies.

Yet, Laclau and Mouffe say little about the concrete ways through which discursive formations are being put to test. This led proponents of situated approaches to discourse to criticize their approach as abstract, reifying discourses as actors in themselves (Wetherell and Potter 1992). Yet, Wetherell (1998) has later proposed ways to combine their own situated approach to discourse with the approach from Laclau and Mouffe sensitive to the power-laden 'argumentative texture' of the social. I agree that the theory of Laclau and Mouffe needs to be complemented with finer tools to account for the situated manner in which discourses constitute themselves. Their theory leaves a door open to this refinement in emphasizing the always un-fixed and contestable content of discourse and the complexity of actors and groups.

Laclau and Mouffe speak generally of (a test of) antagonism, through which the discursive formations are constituted, and of certain situations where hegemonic discursive formations are being dislocated, because subject to new antagonism and articulation [when a new event cannot be explained, or with new configuration of actors' affiliations and identities]. The

conversational, situated and argumentative approaches reviewed above have emphasized the heuristic of looking at moments of debate, of conversations, and of argumentative interactions. The model of Chateauraynaud, which considers how arguments collide and are transformed through the trial of different arenas of debate, is a useful addition to concretize the approach of Laclau and Mouffe. Looking at the trajectory of a discursive formation through a series of arenas of debate is a way to capture the interaction between a discursive formation and its external discursive field. In these arenas of debate, groups are not only internally discussing their own chain of equivalence, they are advocating it in front of others. In these arenas I will locate where the antagonism lie in relation to the other discursive (at times hegemonic) formations. Even though Chateauraynaud makes no reference to Laclau and Mouffe and may consider himself far from their theoretical apparatus (with their Marxian origin), I think his pragmatic perspective open to the contingent (but constrained) trajectory of actors and arguments is very well compatible with the discourse theory of Laclau and Mouffe. Finally, the notion of interpretative repertoires (Potter and Wetherell 1987) is also useful to account for variability in the discourses of actors in different contexts.

The second reason for choosing Laclau and Mouffe's discursive theory is that it is a relational one in which the process of articulation is grounded in the negotiation of chains of equivalence by actors, and in the contingency of their overlapping identities. This means it is compatible with the sociological conceptualization of networks, social relations and group formation outlined in section 2.1, around the web of affiliations from Simmel. And it richly invigorates the negotiated nature of collectives and coalition-building (Mische 2008). As Purcell (2008) and Featherstone (2008) have proposed in their work, Laclau and Mouffe's chain of equivalence can be used as a network concept to study how activists connect together discursively, while acknowledging the ambiguities of their individual versus collective objectives, in the trade-off between the affirmations of equivalence and of difference. To conceptualize explicitly this link between discourse and social networks I will use the notion of discourse coalition from Marteen Hajer (2005), further developed below. Discourse and coalitions are key elements to link together in the study of politics. Like Torfing (2005, 23) remarked : "A final response to the question of what discourse theory brings to the table is to stress its interest in the driving forces behind the formation and cohesion of political alliances, governance networks, political communities, social groups, and so on. "

2.3 Mobilizing in space, producing places

Before the so-called 'spatial turn' in social sciences (Warf and Arias 2009), the spatial context of collective action was little discussed (Tilly 2000, 2; Martin and Miller 2003). Far from being trivial, this overlooking of the spatial context often assumed a particular spatiality to phenomena. The community, for example, was assumed by sociologists to exist only within neighborhoods (Wellman and Leighton 1979). Citizenship was assumed to be only national (Neveu 2005). And 'local' collective action was assumed to be exclusive and self-centered (Massey 1994). Problematizing space in these phenomena could broaden their understanding (Massey 1994; Massey 2005). Problematizing space can lead to different responses to research questions on the meaning and processes of collective action.

Until recently, the geographers' discussion of socio-spatial relations and of contentious action was dominated, in the anglophone literature, by the rediscovery of the notion of 'scale' as a social and political construction. Scale was seen as a way to understand the contemporary transformations of the state in a context of globalization, with the much discussed notion of the 're-scaling' of the state from the national to the metropolitan scale (Brenner 2004). It was also used in analyses of social movements and place-based mobilization thought to be in need of scalar shift or scale-jumping (Marston 2000, Cox 1998). Multi-spatial frameworks aiming at going beyond the perhaps too great enthusiasm on the politics of scale have been developed, re-problematizing the notions of place and territory in relation with scale and networks (Jessop, Brenner, and Jones 2008; Leitner, Sheppard, and Sziarto 2008). In the French literature in comparison, it is more the notions of territory and territorialization which were more thoroughly discussed, as we explain below.

Before going further, I think it is necessary to provide some definitions, taken that the geographic literature is replete with different spatial categories (and that there are still discussions about their use and definitions). The definitions I provide have for objective both to represent the spatial categories' (or spatialities') most recurrent uses in the literature and to distinguish them clearly from one another. Yet, just the comparison of the francophone and anglophone literatures provides a serious challenge to that purpose. I do think however that each of these notions have their own contribution in our problematization of space: they constitute different inputs on the debates about collective action and the production of space, as argued in recent publications

(Leitner, Sheppard, and Sziarto 2008; Jessop, Brenner, and Jones 2008). I thus present them here very briefly, see Table 2.1 below, to include more details in the following sections.

Table 2.1 *The meaning of different spatial categories*

Spatial category/spatiality	Meaning
Space	Generic and non specific spatiality, “one of the axes along which we experience the world” (Massey 1994, 251)
Territory	Area (with boundaries) which is socially, culturally, or politically appropriated. Ex: the territory of the state, or of a community, the territory for planning, etc.
Place	Concrete localization (situatedness), a site which is appropriated and given meaning to (the sense of place);
Scale	Positionality in a configuration of vertically embedded spatial constructs in relation with one another

Source: Agnew 1987, Massey 1994, Debarbieux 1998, Howitt 1998, Di Méo 2003, Mamadouh et al. 2004, Leitner et al. 2008, Jessop et al. 2008; also in Van Neste and Bherer 2013.

When I use the term space it is to denote a generic and non specific spatiality. Space is “one of the axes along which we experience and conceptualize the world” (Massey 1994, 251). It is for Lefebvre a crucial dimension because “socio-political contradictions are realized spatially” (1991, 365, cited by Martin and Miller 2003). 'Place' and 'territory' are more specific spatialities meant to denote spaces socially, culturally and politically appropriated (Di Méo 2000; Jessop, Brenner, and Jones 2008). Space is a broader generic term and place a more grounded and appropriated spatiality (Martin and Miller 2003). Place is more often thought as a concrete site or situatedness with special meanings for daily life; while territory is associated, at least in the anglophone literature, with a *bounded* area¹⁷ with social and political meanings (Leitner, Sheppard, and Sziarto 2008). Scale corresponds to a positionality in a configuration of vertically embedded spatial constructs in relation with one another. Scales are co-constituting one another. The interest in scale-oriented research is for example to consider the ways processes situated at the national scale produce some of processes situated at the urban scale, as well the other way around (Mamadouh, Kramsche, and van der Velde 2004; Brenner 2001; Howitt 1998).

¹⁷ At least in the anglophone literature, I come back to the french versus anglophone understanding of territory below.

In this section I discuss the construction of space from the point of view of collective action and discourse. First, I consider how, as scientists studying the city and social relations, our conceptualization of the spatial context affects the manner collective action phenomena are interpreted. I present literatures having problematized the meaning of the spatial context, first in urban sociology, then in political science, in geography and finally in the study of social movements, in order to discuss the different visions they give us of collective action. Second, I present concepts to think about how space is being produced and transformed through the making of political claims. This is first explored through the work of Henri Lefebvre, and further investigated in the geographic and planning literature on place-making and place-framing.

The community un-bound

Are strong social ties bound to occur in certain types of spatial arrangements more than others? Is it possible to conceptualize collective action with no problematization of space? To discuss these questions I make a small detour by an old debate in urban sociology on the community question. The community question consists in a long-standing interrogation asking whether primary strong social ties of 'communal solidarities' survived industrialization, urbanization and modernization (Wellman 1979, 1204). The community represented for urban sociologists a key sociological unit of solidarities allowing for the building of alternatives to the state centralized bureaucracy. The interest of this debate for my purpose lies in the tendency of sociologists, discussed by Wellman and Leighton, to look for those strong community bonds exclusively within neighborhoods.

According to Wellman and Leighton, communities were commonly defined in urban sociology with the three following components: "networks of interpersonal ties (outside of the household) which provide sociability and support to members, residence in a common locality, and solidarity sentiments and activities" (1979, 365). Hence the search for social ties and solidarities was bounded to a joint locality, the neighborhood. Wellman and Leighton questioned this assumption in a critical discussion of three (ideal-type) figures of response to the community question. The first, the community lost, is a theoretically-driven argument which comments on the loss of communities within cities because of large scale social change and the appearance of social disorder in urban environments. The second, empirically-driven figure of response, shows remaining sites of local solidarities in urban neighborhoods, which exemplifies the saved community. The urban village from Gans (1962) and the lively urban street from Jacobs (1961) (1961) are key examples of this. If the lost and the saved community figures had different

conclusions on the existence (and survival) of strong bonds in cities, both of them were looking for them in the sphere of the neighborhood. In the third figure, the liberated community, communities still flourish in the contemporary city but rarely within neighborhoods. The separation of residence, workplace and family affiliations means that urban dwellers participate in multiple social networks; but these networks are likely not to be communities in one site, spread across distance and a diversity of social circles (Wellman 1979, 1206). It is a 'community without propinquity' (idem, 377).

The overall lesson that Wellman and Leighton drew from this literature on the community question is that the distribution of strong bonds is not necessarily local, and can go beyond proximity (Wellman 1979). The point I want to take away from this debate, however, is not about the empirical finding that geographical proximity would not count for strong social bonds leading to collective action (in fact the recent literature discusses how proximity does seem to play an enabling role (Nicholls 2008). I rather discuss this question to problematize space in two ways. The first point, emphasized by the discussed authors, is that focusing on one spatial lens might lead to an inadequate (or at least only partial) answer to a research question (like the fact that community is lost if not in the neighborhood). Wellman and Leighton showed that the community was not a priori bound to the space of the neighborhood, and that space had to be part of the problematized elements. They used the scope of social networks to problematize the spaces of the community.

The second point, however not tackled by Wellman and Leighton, is that the 'space' of the community is also a social construct which has to do not only with the distribution of relationships through space but also the meaning exchanged and produced in them (i.e. the cultural approach to networks). In the saved community, the urban neighborhood and the street (as discussed by Jacobs, 1961) might be actual reasons to gather together; space as a motivation, utopia and social construction of the 'desired community' can be a cohesive agent for the groups. In the liberated community, one could ask if a larger spatial scope is a defining and meaningful characteristic for the community, or if space has lost such cohesive meaning. In other words, if the researcher needs to problematize the spatial reach of community bonds, it may also be important to problematize the meaning space has for the group of actors constituted, and for their political claims.

The optimal territory for public action

Space has also meaning for the state and the organization of public action. In political science, it is the notion of 'territory' which has been the most discussed and debated, at least in the French literature. France has been studied by many scholars on its « territorialisation » of public action, a shift from public policies applied by sectors to public policies applied by territories. There is a large body of literature on the local politics emerging from these territorial reforms in France (Vanier 2009; Melé 2008). Territorial reforms around the world have been preached with the intention to fit the territory of the institution with the optimal territory to tackle public problems. In a critical appraisal of these efforts in France, Offner (2006) argued that the search for the optimal territory was a myth, but nevertheless an 'operating myth' (mythe opératoire). If no one territory is best fitted to tackle all public problems, Offner argued that the search for the optimal territory leads to debates and changes in relations between actors and institutions. They thus carry a potential of renewal for public action.

The search for the optimal territory has been very much discussed as a technical one. In regard to urban and transportation planning for example, the metropolitan or city-regional scale would best allow for a coherence between spatial development and transport infrastructure (Gallez 2010). Jouve emphasized that the re-territorialization of public action does not respond, however, only to “functional and efficacy imperatives to de-sectorialize public action, but constitute one of the essential elements of the political regulation of our societies” (Jouve 2005, 330)¹⁸. Changes in territories of public action are not only technical choices, but are also conducted for political reasons and political agendas. They constitute the arrangement through which the state regulates different issues in society, and mean a particular distribution of power among the different authorities. These arrangements may be the object of contestations. Debarbieux defined territorialization as the “ensemble of actions, techniques, dispositives of action and of information shaping the nature or sense given to a material environment to conform it to a territorial project” (2009, 29)¹⁹.

The territories chosen for public action and institutional delimitations (for municipalities for example) are not devoid of consequences. They can be associated, in addition to specific

¹⁸ Jouve compared the French literature on territorialization and the anglophone literature on scale, argued that the later emphasize more the political aspects of changes in territories of public action.

Citation translated from the French : “impératifs fonctionnels et d'efficacité visant à « desectorialiser » la puissance publique, mais constitue un des éléments essentiels de transformation de la régulation politique des sociétés”

¹⁹ “l'ensemble des actions, techniques et des dispositifs d'action et d'information qui façonnent la nature ou le sens d'un environnement matériel pour le conformer à un projet territorial”

political projects and the supposed coherence and efficacy in public policies, also with more or less power on certain issues, more or less taxes and higher state investments, and different democratic procedures (Bherer et al. 2005; Estèbe 2008). Some call these elements issues of territorial politics, others have described it as a politics of scale (A. Jonas and Ward 2007; Boudreau 2003). I speak more of the politics of scale below. But in both cases, what is emphasized is that the boundaries, delimitations, inter-relations and dispositives through which political institutions act and establish themselves have consequences for the unfolding of politics.

Thinking about place and scale in processes of collective action

From the perspective of collective action and social mobilization now, let us look at geographers who have struggled with the meaning one should give to 'place' and 'scale' with regard to the effectiveness of place-based collective action in the context of complex arrangements of political institutions at different scales.

The first issue with place is that the term actually has several inter-twined meanings. Several authors have cited Agnew (1987) on this (Castree 2003; Nicholls 2009; Pierce, Martin, and Murphy 2011). Agnew distinguishes between three understandings of place : place as a localization, locale and sense of place. First, place is sometimes used to speak of a location – a specific point on the earth. Place is also discussed as a locale, that is a site, a 'setting and scale' at which daily practices and interactions are experienced (Castree 2003, 155). Place is also used as a sense of place, which is the subjective meaning given to the site and/or the situation. Those three dimensions can be more or less integrated in the analyses. In the French dictionary of geography and the spaces of society (2003), Entrikin (2003) makes a review of the notion of 'lieu' close to the anglophones' categories outlined below on 'place'. He further emphasizes the double meaning of the sense of place : the subjective human relation to specific locales, but also the collective construction of the sense of place (through processes of agency, discourse and identity building) (also in Lussault (2003), and Pierce, Martin and Murphy (2011)).²⁰

The meaning given to the notion of place has also evolved in its position in relation to broader processes and spatial categories (Agnew 2011; Castree 2003; Entrikin 2003; Massey 1994). This evolution was related to debates between the role of structures versus that of agency in social and political phenomenon. If specific and unique places were the focus of geographical

²⁰ Lévy (2003) for his part discusses 'lieu' with the concept of co-presence. For Lévy, the characterization of a space as a 'lieu' happens when the distance does not count analytically, but where the co-presence of phenomena are investigated.

studies as a science of places (*science des lieux*) (Vidal de la Blache), the focus changed to the national and even global phenomena. Massey deplored that in most analyses, globalization and global geographies came to be studied in their impact on places. As a consequence, places were devoid of any remaining form of agency (Massey 1994; Massey 2005; Castree 2003). Also, the 'sense of place', the meaning of sites, was associated with nostalgia and an eroding authentic character of places. In the last two decades, the salience (and agency) of place-based politics came back on the agenda with humanist geographers. Castree (2003) argued that there remains a structure/agency dilemma, certain scholars emphasizing the constraints of structures while others emphasize the diversity of places and the importance of political processes in situ.

Those debates have their importance in the study of collective action. In the literature on collective action, place-based collective action is discussed in different ways, at times negatively and at other times positively, depending on how much the grounding in one site seems limiting or enabling. There are in this diverse literature three recurrent figures : the bounded place of mobilization²¹, the (connected) relational place-based mobilization and the hybrid/heterogeneous social movement space (Pierce, Martin, and Murphy 2011; Nicholls 2009; M. Jones 2009; Routledge 2003).

The bounded/territorial conception of place-based mobilization consists of collective action organized in particular sites (Nicholls 2009, 79–80), around a joint spatial identity, for example for a neighborhood (Martin 2003) and sometimes around marked boundaries (Jessop, Brenner, and Jones 2008). Harvey (1996) and recently Nicholls (2008) picture place-based mobilization as building on long-standing relations of proximity where trust, loyalty and joint interpretative frames developed through shared experiences of local struggles. Place-based mobilization can be organized around the protection of a particular sense of place, or to keep control over a territory. The motivation is either the preservation of a place or the place is part of a strategy to preserve something else, locally (redistributive or ethnic/cultural issues) (Purcell 2001). Such bounded place-based mobilization has been criticized because it is said to be often based on exclusionary senses of place and in isolation from the surrounding context (Massey 2005). With the notion of 'militant particularism' from Williams (1985; 1989), Harvey (1996, 19–45) noted the ambiguity of place-bound mobilization. It would be a requisite for broad generic collective action,

²¹ Certain scholars have coined this the 'territorial' view on place-based mobilization, in referring to the English literature defining territory as the social control over a delimited space. Yet, there are other visions of territory, especially in the French literature (see Murdoch 2012, Painter 2010, Debarbieux 1999) closer to the relational perspective, and which have known growing interest in the English-speaking literature recently (Murdoch 2012, Painter 2010).

with strong local bonds around shared experiences of place being the seed of mobilization. Yet it would also contain the risk of division around particularist localized causes (commented by Nicholls (2009, 80)). Harvey discusses how militant particularism involves predominant loyalty to place, which would involve a different type of abstraction than universal claim-making. As Featherstone critically summarizes : “his account is structured by a constitutive separation between ‘the militant particularisms of lived lives’ and ‘the struggles to achieve sufficient critical distance and detachment to form global ambitions’ (2008, 17; Harvey 1996, 44).

Swyngedouw (2004) has further interpreted this tension as a scalar issue for activists, who need to adopt scalar strategies and organize around coalitions beyond particularist localism. Place-based mobilization is put in a hierarchical nested scale structure in which activists may need to constitute new ‘spaces of engagement’ beyond their ‘spaces of dependence’ that they want to protect (Cox 1998). They need to jump scales (Cox 1998), or to find appropriate brokers to link place-based politics with another necessary scale of engagement (Harvey 2003; Sallie A Marston 2000). Yet, Cox (1998) and Jonas (2006) note that the movement is not necessarily from the local upward. The nation could be the space of dependence of an organization (where lies its main concern, mission, utopia), who tries to defend it within the urban context, its space of engagement.

A relational conception of place-based mobilization offers a different reading to this tension between place and more universal claim-making. Instead of picturing place-based mobilizations as needing a scalar shift toward the scales of regulation, with the building of coalitions and an upgrading from localized particularist to more universal claim making, this conception depicts place-based struggles as already negotiating between different scales and different territorial claims. The argument is that individual actors who live in the same site and are involved in place-based mobilizations come from different trajectories, histories, and have different social and spatial affiliations, connecting the site to other sites in various ways (Featherstone 2005; Nicholls 2009; Pierce, Martin, and Murphy 2011). Different scalar and territorial perspectives are negotiated in each place. Regulatory decisions are being contested within places, regulation being seen relationally in networks of connection meeting in specific locations²² (and not in some external scales out there) (Amin 2004; Allen and Cochrane 2010). Amin (2004), and Massey (2005), in particular called for a plural vision of place which acknowledges this open and un-

²² This resembles the manner Lévy (2003) discusses ‘lieu’ with the concept of co-presence.

bounded characteristic of places and regions, in which diverse perspectives and relations to space meet in particular debates, sites and institutions.

I want to argue that a relational reading of cities and regions offers a very different reading of place politics, one that is neither a-spatial (i.e. where the local is reduced to a mere stage) nor territorial (i.e. where the geographical local is all), but topological (i.e. Where the local brings together different scales of practice/social action – see Agnew 1994). [...] The politics of propinquity, then, may be read as a politics of negotiating the immanent effects of geographical juxtaposition between physical spaces, overlapping communities, contrasting cultural practices. (Amin 2004, 38–39)

Featherstone has also been at the forefront of this relational argument, looking for the actual geography of connections and at the claims made through them. With contemporary studies of global action networks and historical studies of laborers' collective action in the 18th century, he shows how activists located in particular places have important relations with other place-based struggles (previously, for example through correspondence, Featherstone 2008; 2005). This leads him to the argument that place-based collective action can be part of spatially stretched networks, and that it has happened for quite some time. It has been an important part of the history of what he calls subaltern politics.

The examples of Featherstone also show how it might be difficult to differentiate between place-struggles and a larger, more 'universal' cause, place-struggles being the un-folding of causes fought locally, in several sites. The example of the immense mobilization against the deforestation of the old forest of Clayoquot Sound, in Canada, is an illustration of a struggle to protect a place, which can hardly be understood as a strict local object. In fact, Magnusson and Shaw (2003) argued that the global can be read through the controversy of Clayoquot Sound, with the intersections of multi-national logging companies, the global environmental movement, aboriginal people (and the associated colonial history), the media. Together they were participating in not only debating the future of Clayoquot Sound, but the vision of nature, resource management and property in a globalized world. If place-based struggles are also broader struggles, through the connections to other sites and scales intersecting in each place, Massey (1994, 2005) argues they are also all unique, depending on the constellations and overlap of the perspectives and connections present in each place, with the power asymmetries involved.

In an integrative perspective between the bounded and relational visions of place, Nicholls (2009) and Routledge (2003) discuss how even if the relational view is key for the understanding of collective action, territorial and scalar aspects of place are also a constituting part of it. The extent to which a collective action is bounded (to clear spatial limits or an exclusive and localized sense of place) or rather including different spatial perspectives depend on who is taking part of it and of the interactions and power differentials between them. The socio-spatial positionality of actors count: the embeddedness and position of actors in spatialized groups (in terms of their sense of belonging and network of social relations), or in territorialized organizations (Leitner, Sheppard, and Szarto 2008; Pierce, Martin, and Murphy 2011). Those different socio-spatial affiliations mesh in one group, and the participating actors have to negotiate the implications of those differences for the collective project. This takes us back to the Web of affiliations from Simmel (1955), in taking into consideration now the diverse spatial affiliations of actors.

In addition to this argument of socio-spatial positionality, a nuanced view of scale and place-based collective action can be found in the literature on discursive scalar politics. This literature explicitly considers the contestation of scale by activists (Leitner et al. 2008, McCann 2003, MacKinnon 2011). The discursive approach to scalar politics responds in part to the following criticism of scaling theory, formulated by Marston, Jones and Woodward (2005), and summarized here by Moore (2008, 206) : “that the conceptual bases of hierarchical scale are politically regressive because they unhelpfully reproduce socio-spatial inequalities and choke off possibilities of resistance.” The discursive approach is also an example of investigating scale as a 'category of practice' (Moore 2008). This literature builds on the proposition from Jones that scale could be characterized as a 'representational trope' used in political debates (K. T. Jones 1998). As Kaiser and Nikiforova (2008, 541) argue : “Scales do not exist as ‘things out there’ that stabilize political, economic, or cultural relations. Rather, scales are performed by sets of actors through the scalar stances they take in particular socio-spatial contexts as they engage in the politics of everyday life”.

In addition to being a function of the socio-spatial affiliations of participants, of their power differentials and of their discourses, the extent to which place-based mobilizations will include different spatial perspectives may depend on the political institutional context. Nicholls (2008) and Germain, Morin and Sénécal (2004) gave illustrations of the state's programming of civic organizations, requesting them to function at the scale of the neighborhood, for example. Scalar politics has been particularly discussed in this way by the scholars of social movements : “To the

extent that contentious politics interacts with the state, therefore, the strategies available will be shaped by state-constructed scalar configurations and the different conditions of possibility within local places” (Leitner, Sheppard, and Sziarto 2008, 159).

In sum, the problems with some relational readings of place-based contentious action is that the emphasis on flows and networks may lead to downplay the fixity of certain relations and power differentials. Jones (2009) argue for a relational reading of place but which recognizes embedded scales and territories, embedded in political institutions part of the history of places. The actual articulation of the relations of power constituting place, and collective action in place, are contingent and contextual.

As Davies (2011, 11), cited by Miller (2013, 287) summarizes :

The relationship between territoriality and relationality then is something of a false dichotomy as we see elements of both with the same organization/event... The key for understanding political action is to uncover when and (more crucially) why either of these spatialities becomes pre-eminent.

I have presented different ways to conceptualize place-based collective action, either as points of intersection between different spatial and scalar perspectives (the relational view) or as collective action grounded in joint spatial-experience, pending scalar shift (the bounded/territorial view). I argue that both may occur in place-based collective action processes; the relative dominance of one or the other may depend on the participating actors, their set of relations, the discursive politics at play and the political opportunity structure.

But how do these actors participating in the collective action and the state actually construct space and specific places? How are places, as sites and scales of daily life, and the sense of place, to recall the distinctions from Agnew (1987), are constructed by the negotiations and the brokerage I have talked about in collective action networks? How are spaces and scales produced through the making of political claims and discourses? The work of Lefebvre will serve as an introduction to the processes involved in the production of space.

The production of space

Lefebvre's production of space

The term production of space was coined by Henri Lefebvre, who wanted to “get out of the confusion that (social) space and (social) time are either considered facts of 'nature' more or less modified, or simple facts made of 'culture' – in considering them rather as products” (Lefebvre

1974, XiX)²³. Lefebvre advocated for considering space as a product of social and political relations, a product made of the physical space, of its representations, and of its appropriation. Space is produced just as much by the daily practices in space, than it is by (scientific, technical or state) representations of it, and by the representations and expectations of it from users. Most importantly, space is produced in the interrelation between the three aspects. Understanding the production of space, for Lefebvre, was an academic and a political project. As an academic project, he emphasized the fragmentation in the study of space and the absence of a theoretical reflection over the 'production' of space.²⁴ As a political project, Lefebvre's contribution in the *Production of Space* is to situate the use value of space (its use by users/inhabitants, its appropriation) above its exchange value (for economic purposes) and above its use for the state's regulation and domination purposes (1974, 425, 435–442).

But how, in the words of Lefebvre, is urban space produced exactly? Production is first discussed by Lefebvre with the distinction between a product and a work of art (1974, 83–94). The first can be repeated by human work, the second is unique and irreplaceable. Lefebvre remarks that in many senses, a city seems a work of art and not a product, being unique and original (1974, 89–90), the work of history (Lefebvre 1968, 44–45). Yet, one could not say the city was conceived intentionally in its totality, like an artist conceiving his piece. Its making comes from an ensemble of overlapping spatial practices and strategies of production, regulation and appropriation of space (1974, 90, 449–451). The city, also, has components that correspond to his definition of products, since some urban places are conceived by architects and planners or state agents, leading to homogeneity and repetition in urban landscapes. Yet this homogeneity is diverted by users in their appropriation of the space in daily life (1974, 449–450). The city as an object is not a thing or a sum of things but is a set of relations with 'mediations and mediators' (1974, 94); social work and political claims produce it and transform it. Production in the sense of Lefebvre is far from being just an economic phenomena associated with workforce or capital, and it is also not fully a work of art, but a product of social and political relations. The power-differentiated social and political relations are 'producing' space. This produced space is then a context for further social relations and further transformation in spatial practices, appropriation, domination, etc.

²³ “D’où l’effort pour sortir de la confusion en considérant l’espace (social) ainsi que le temps (social) non plus comme des faits de “nature” plus ou moins modifiée, et non pas comme de simples faits de “culture” - mais comme des produits”.

²⁴ If Lefebvre pushes the need for such 'universal' theoretical investigation on the production of space, he also discusses how each society has its own history of space production.

The production of space is formally conceptualized, by Lefebvre, as the relations among three elements of a spatial triad : conceived space, lived/represented space and perceived space. Those three elements intervene differently in the production of space, and their inter-relations will vary depending on the societies and on the time period (1974, 56–57, 90–96). Conceived space refers to the space as it is conceptualized by architects, urbanists, map makers and other bureaucratic professionals. It refers to the abstraction of space, but also its consequent traduction in real space (through representations of ideology, power or knowledge in buildings or places for example). Lefebvre also refers to this element as a space of 'competence' (418). The lived space, also called by Lefebvre 'spaces of representation', corresponds to the inhabitants' representations of everyday experience : the urban places of memory, of significance, of dream, or of strategic representation, which he qualifies as being most often out-spoken by artists and writers. In contrast to the abstract space of competences he said, this is a space of 'performances' (418). Lastly, perceived space (actually the 'spatial practices') corresponds to the ordinary everyday usage of space, the urban reality of daily routines.

Lefebvre is cautious to note that the relations among the three elements of the triad are not simple, automatic or stable through time (1974, 57). In criticizing their presumed adequation by planners, Lefebvre looks at the tensions and contradictions between them. He puts emphasis on how urban places, which were conceived by architects or regulating agents, are diverted and transformed through daily spatial practices of their users. But he emphasizes also how often users are subject to a domination through abstract conceived space.

The role of the 'spaces of representation' is not discussed at length by Lefebvre. Can the 'spaces of representation' be a tool of re-appropriation for inhabitants? Can inhabitants use not only their daily practices, but also the realm of language and discourse in their political claims over their lived space? Lefebvre starts his argument in stating that those spaces of representation are not productive, that they are not coherent (52), but that they clash with the representations of the elite, of the powerful and of the experts. Yet, he recognizes that maybe a reversing of this situation could be happening, i.e. a productivity of the users' spaces of representation (53). When Lefebvre speaks about the need of a 'morphological invention' for groups wanting to successfully re-invent society on a new basis, he alludes also to the role of language and representation in the formation of coalitions for counter-spaces (1974, 437–439). If inhabitants are usually silent, their voice on lived space framed as a proposition of a counter-space can have a powerful effect (1974, 441–442). The Right to the City of Lefebvre has also

been interpreted, not only as the physical access and appropriation of urban space, but also as the effective envisioning and claim-making on the future of the city (Lefebvre 1968, 96; Purcell 2008; Marcuse 2009).

One interpreter of Lefebvre, Andy Merrifield (2006, 109), remarks that the spatial triad which form "the epistemological pillar of the Production of Space", is sketched out "only in preliminary fashion, leaving us to add our own flesh, our own content, to rewrite it as part of our own chapter or research agenda". Lefebvre's vocabulary of lived and perceived, for the representational and the practices, can be confusing. Further, I would argue that the pillar of the 'spaces of representation' is left without much connections to the other pillars (conceived space, perceived space) in terms of productive political engagement on space.

The work of Lefebvre on the production of space is useful for its discussion of the contested and on-going processes of the production of space, which comes about through mediations, contradictions, and mutual contestations in the making of space through appropriation, conception, and symbolism. Yet, he leaves several issues open. First, how exactly do those spaces of representation function in the production of space? Second, he also tells us little about how citizens and users constitute themselves in groups and collectives to make claims about space. Third, he reduces the different potential perspectives on space to two or three poles only: the users versus the architects and bureaucrats, or the users vs. the actors exploiting the exchange value of space. Analyses of place-making speak of a diversity of claims to space (Mitchell 2003; Pierce, Martin, and Murphy 2011). The users themselves may actually have different and divergent desires for the future of the spaces they practice (Purcell 2006). Nevertheless, Lefebvre's stress on the fact that certain actors have more power than others in the production of space is useful, and has been integrated by planners as a call to include more the users' perspective in their spatial strategies (Healey 2007). A literature has developed to account for the political debates on space and their effect on specific sites, with geographers defining politics as "the processes of negotiation over the terms that govern the use of space and place" (Pierce, Martin, and Murphy 2011, 55). In addition to geographers, planners have also discussed the role of discourse to shape the future of a place. I now present both perspectives on the production of space by relying on key examples in planning (with particular emphasis on Healey 2007) and in geography.

Place production in planning

Patsy Healey has been one of the scholars in planning theory most engaged in debates on the socio-political production of space. In 1999, with Stephan Graham, and in 2004, she noted critically that planning practices still relied heavily on an Euclidian and objectified definition of space²⁵, one which envisioned absolute ways in which space order social relations. Graham and Healey (1999, 625) noted that this view

supports the idea that single, unbiased representations of places are possible, even desirable. Rob Shields (1995) reminds us that when planners analyze the 'city', their depictions, descriptions, plans and images are themselves partial perspectives, chosen through 'treacherous selective vision' (p. 245), which, in turn, become embroiled in the social production of the 'urban'. Such acts of depiction and discourse are therefore necessarily power-laden acts which highlight certain parts of the urban 'story' whilst inevitably neglecting others.

Discussing Lefebvre, Healey first makes the point that the 'conceived spaces' from planners and architects are deeply related to the spaces of representation and the practiced spaces from users. They, in fact, "are not outside these realities and images but *draw on them selectively* to create and reinforce the conceptions they develop in their role as experts and policy-makers" (2007, 206, emphasis added). In particular, Healey considered how this selective inclusion functions in the process of strategic spatial planning (2007; 2004).

The process of strategic spatial planning, for Healey, includes several steps, which are very much related to acts of discursive framing and the building of networks. First, planners go through a process of filtering and sorting ideas, including and excluding some. This process, she argues, occurs through debates, claims and counter-claims, involving planners and included stakeholders (2007, 187-188). To analyze this process, Healey suggests to ask when the filtering process occurs, where it occurs (in which arenas and institutions), who is filtered and who is excluded (idem, 188). Second, a focus is determined, which will become the frame, and which may directly challenge a previous frame in the planning practice, or reinterpret it. This focus may be inspired by strong discourses in the discursive field. Third, there is the 'generation of

²⁵ In her book in 2007 (208), Healey cites Massey and Amin to further explain the distinction between Euclidian and relational conceptions of space : " In the geography of physical patterns, places, peoples, cultures, etc. become objects located on a surface. 'They lie there, in place, without trajectories' (Massey 2000, 128) [...] The patterns affects each other through physical proximity, which effects between one and another are varying with simple linear distance. In a relational geography, in contrast, 'cities and regions are seen as sites of heterogeneity juxtaposed within close spatial proximity, and as sites of multiples geographies of affiliation, linkage and flow'. (Amin 2004: 38)."

'mobilizing force', in which planners work to have support for their frame. Healey traces an evolution in planning theory and practice, from a belief in the mobilizing force of legal obligations and statutory duties, to the focus on other elements : the adherence of strategic actors, the building of discourse coalitions through the imaginative power of the frame, and the reliance on forces with economic interests (2007,192-195). Lastly, there should be an institutionalization into routines and practices, but leaving room for reinterpretations of the framed strategy. If Healey describes this desired process of strategic spatial planning, hoping that planners, with a broad constituency, can participate in processes of space production, she acknowledges the uncertainties, complexities, and, inevitably, the selectivity in actors and spatial perspectives included. The production of space so conceived relates closely to the discursive and relational processes that I presented.

Similarly to Healy who argued that planners' strategic planning selectively draws from the visions of space from citizens, Boudreau argues that the political elite in Toronto constructed a city-regional political space in interaction with non-state actors: promoting spatial representations having a resonance in the political culture and spatial practices of inhabitants. In addition, she argues that the spatial imaginaries deployed by state authorities and the political and economic elite created a new strategic political space around the city-region, making more feasible the priority these actors had for the region. The spatial representations of Toronto as a global city-region promoted a network form of governance and a priority to economic competitiveness, the two reinforcing each other. Jensen and Richardson (2004) made a similar argument in regard to practices and discourses of spatial planning constructing the political space of Europe, and giving it content.

In commenting on the production of space in planning practices, it may be important to note that the turn to strategic spatial planning and a greater reliance on strategic tools and discourses was a response to pressures on comprehensive land-use planning, which had focused on codes and zoning bylaws on the built environment. The traditional land-use planning had been criticized for its limited scope and lack of flexibility. Strategic spatial planning brought a new focus on the mobilization of strategic actors and the elaboration of visions and frames with imaginative power (Motte 2007; Albrechts 2004; Faludi 2004). This includes a closer coupling of spatial and economic development strategies (idem), in some cases in a 'politics of city-building' closer to the interests of developers (Kipfer and Keil 2002, citing John Friedman). If the relying on strategic visions served an agenda of planning for the competitive city, spatial imaginaries could

also be used by civil society and grassroots actors to push counter-claims on the production of urban space (like in the cases presented in the next section).

While there is this recent reliance on visions and imaginaries in planning, some authors emphasize how existing codes and regulations still produce the spaces of our daily life, in terms of what a neighborhood should look like and the allowed and forbidden uses (Ben-Joseph and Szold 2005). There remains regulatory codes operating on the production of place, sometimes with planning ideals seemingly out of date, and which may be discriminatory (Proudfoot and McCann 2008; Ehrenfeucht 2013). Traffic planning regulations, for example, separate the spaces of urbanity and the spaces of mobility, and concentrate transiting traffic in certain spaces distinct of the city (Brown, Morris, and Taylor 2009). Traffic engineering is known to be particularly reluctant to change and influence from the public, even when new governance structures are introduced to improve its openness (Weir, Rongerude, and Ansell 2009; Perl and Kenworthy 2010; Henderson 2011). Codes and standards produce space and come from a series of discourses, sometimes old sedimented discourses, on how activities in space should be organized (Ben-Joseph 2005; Loukaitou-Sideris and Ehrenfeucht 2009). These codes can be the object of political claims and pressures for change. But they can also work more insidiously to naturalize and empower certain practices regulating space as *the only option*, especially when users of the space are under-informed about the possibilities to reform them (Forester 1989).

In sum, the literature on planning emphasizes two moments of space production : framing processes (through imaginative spatial visions with the potential to mobilize support for implementation) and its translation into practices and normative standards. This can work on the actual production of places, and also on the production of new governance spaces (like city-regional political spaces).

Place and scale framing

In geography, a myriad of different spatial categories such as place, region and scale have been discussed as socially produced : “as historically contingent social processes emerging as a constellation of institutionalized practices, power relations and discourse”(Paasi 2004, 540). In critical studies of urban politics, particularly on gentrification, participatory planning, or homeowners' mobilization (Purcell 2001; McCann 2003; Martin 2003; Fraser 2004; Hankins and Walter 2012), geographers have looked at competing representations of place and their confrontation in particular debates. In a review of this literature, Pierce, Martin and Murphy define place-making as the “set of social, political and material processes by which people

iteratively create and recreate the experienced geography in which they live” (2011, 54). Place-framing is for them a sub-set of place-making directed toward social and political goals.

To discuss such processes, scholars have relied on the concept of collective action frame from Benford and Snow (Martin 2003; McCann 2003). Recall that collective action frames are a set of discourses “intended to mobilize potential adherents and constituents, to garner bystander support” (Benford and Snow 2000, 614). They are interpretations of the reality articulating convincing stories on the motivation for collective action, the diagnostic of the problem and the solution. Frames are elaborated in interactions and negotiations among members of the collective; and their resonance will depend on the credibility of the frame producers, of the claim makers and of the salience of the frame for the audience. Place-frames as discussed by Martin (2003) organize collective action through the particular representation of a place. Particular aspects of a place are emphasized to make demands for that place in the future. Martin considers the resonance of the place-frame in relation to its salience for the subjective experience of the place for participants of the collective, and its negotiation in relation to the participants' own affiliations and primary loyalties in regard to that place (for example : a fight against gentrification for social justice, or a will to ensure a peaceful neighborhood). Going further in a relational understanding of place (following Massey), Pierce and his colleagues analyze framing as the “iterative co-bundling process through which social and political negotiations result in a strategic sharing of place” (2011, 60). By 'bundling' they wish to emphasize the diversity of affiliations to space and of connections with different sites, which intersect in one place, and which are selectively and strategically chosen for the elaboration of place-frames for collective action.

Pierce, Martin and Murphy emphasize the great diversity of relations to space from individuals. To give an example, an actor may experience in an adverse way the overlap of car circulation with family housing on the same street (the politics of overlap in the same 'turf', Amin (2004)). Yet, another may consider it the instantiation of a desirable connectivity with the rest of the city-region (politics of connectivity, idem). And these subjective senses of place may be affected by the affiliations of each actor with other citizens and groups. But to act and be heard on such place, one needs to find allies with which to share a sense of place or minimally an objective regarding that place. The place-frames of Martin (2003) and Pierce, Martin and Murphy (2011) represent this further step of giving collective meaning to a space and mobilize adherents around strategically chosen goals. This strategic collective construction of a diagnostic and

prognostic on space makes this type of discourse corresponds to the definition of collective action frame from Benford and Snow (2000).

In her identification of place-frames, Martin distinguishes, in the discourses from actors, between motivation frames, diagnostic frames and prognostic frames (following the categories of Benford and Snow 2000). What diagnostic and prognostic frames correspond to in place-frames is quite clear. Diagnostic frames include the description of the problem in space. It “articulate the tensions between geographical ideals and grievances about failures to attain them” (Martin 2013, 89). Prognostic frames correspond to the solutions in space. But motivation frames? They correspond to the individual agendas, which need to be bundled. If diagnostic and prognostic frames appear to be selective and strategic acts of discourse, the motivational frames represent the range of agendas and experiences of place that are selectively trimmed and merged into the diagnostic and prognostic frames. In discussing those three types of frames, Martin (2003, 2013) emphasizes the passage from multiple relations to space and multiple agendas of different organizations in a neighborhood, to a set of diagnostic and prognostic frames trying to get influence in a debate on place. I will speak of this passage from motivations to joint diagnostic and prognostic frames in the process of place-framing. Both diagnostic and prognostic frames are in contrast components of the collective discourse on place, components of place-frames. The diagnostic frames concern the identification of the problem in space. The prognostic frame concern the identification of the solution in space. They are claims to participate in the place-making of a site, alongside traditional planning authorities which I have spoken of in the last section.

This making of collective place-frames, as narrated by Martin (2003, 2013) and Pierce, Martin, and Murphy (2011) emphasize the joint definition given to place and its spatial organization. It explains how contentious politics participates in place-making through discourse. In contrast, McCann (2003) focuses on the scalar aspects in the use of discourses, i.e. how they relate to the scaled political opportunity structure. McCann suggests three key characteristics defining what he calls 'scalar frames' in urban contentious politics.

- 1) “These practices are designed to convince a constituency that particular policies are best implemented and discussed at a specific scale and not at others”;

2) “scale only makes sense in relation to others”, the urban/region is discursively put in relation to another scale, for example the global scale which would economically reduce the room of manoeuvre of cities, or the national scale is determining transportation planning in cities;

3) they are enacted in contexts of on-going or potential changes in the scales of regulations (re-scaling of the state and other regulating authorities), which imply a re-structuring of networks and of the political opportunity structure (McCann 2003, 163).

Both Martin (2003) and McCann (2003) speak of debates about competing representations of a neighborhood. But McCann situates more the framing practices in a context of a changing scalar opportunity structure, which opens up a different space for debate about the neighborhood. Scholars focusing on scalar frames have been criticized as imposing their scalar vision of the world on the presumed categories of actors (Moore 2008). Do actors really think in scalar terms? This criticism echoes the already mentioned debate about the vision of place-based mobilization pending scalar shift. The problem with scale is that for many it objectifies a certain form of governance, with a reductive hierarchy instead of a much more complex geography of governance. For others, scale is not necessarily reductive, but need to be examined at greater depth through how it is used in practice (Kaiser and Nikiforova 2008).

Martin (2013) suggests, building on Moore, to consider if scale (like a perceived need to jump scales) is present in the categories of practice from actors. The point made by McCann is important: acting on the opportunity structure may be part of the framing of activists. This argument was also made in the social movement literature : activists can mobilize to change the political opportunity structure, this may be part of their collective action frame (Gamson and Meyer 1996). Social actors perhaps do use scalar imaginaries. Whether they are reductive of reality or not, they could be productive in a debate. Scalar frames point to how, in discourses, scales of regulation/planning/power are associated to certain normative ideals and the barriers to reach them.

If Boudreau (2003, 2004) does not use the concept of collective action frame, she does make a similar argument than Martin (2003) and McCann (2003). Boudreau shows demands from activists to transform territorial boundaries in order to reach their goals. Boudreau analyzed secessionist mobilization in the San Francisco Valley (in Los Angeles) as a territorial strategy to redefine the space of social redistribution in accordance to the space of collective identity, within smaller municipalities than the large and diverse Los Angeles. In another article, Boudreau also

discussed demands for local autonomy as a territorial strategy associated with the defense of a cultural identity and community, with the case of Anglo-Montrealers wishing to preserve their municipalities and not be integrated within the mega-city of Montreal (2003). Her major argument in both articles is that territory now “is defined as more than an area to be governed or controlled (its classical definition in political science and political geography), but as an instrument used to attain a broader goal (such as quality of life, social justice, identity)” (idem, 184).

Featherstone argues in more general terms that in contesting norms and hegemonies, activists often also contest particular geographies of power shaping those norms (2008, 50–53). Featherstone presents for example of the contestation of Coca-Cola's violations of human rights with workers in third-world countries, by student associations boycotting their products in their universities and beyond. What was contested is the violation of human rights, but also the unequal geography of power associated with it: the unequal treatment of human beings in different locations and the absence of regulations on multinationals in certain contexts where populations have less powers (2008, 128–129). The collective action frame is thus likely to also include some aspects relating to the geography of power.

To bring attention to this type of claims, without assuming a scalar view of the world, I suggest to look at the 'geography of governance' as part of the place-frames of activists. The specific spatiality that this geography of governance takes whether scaled, territorial, network-like, locality-based is an empirical question (Martin 2013, 90-91; Leitner et al. 2008). The term 'place' (in 'place-frame') can include both the concrete organization of a site, and its embeddedness in a scalar, network or territorial arrangement (Massey 1994; Paasy 2004; Pierce, Martin, and Murphy 2011), as discussed in the previous section. **The geography of governance relates to the location or geography of the regulatory powers over the contested norms for a space.** The use of including it as a potential component of the place-frames is to consider clearly what relations of political power are advocated by activists for their ideal to come true. The geography of governance is a way to capture the experienced geography of the political opportunity structure of activists, and their demands to change it.

The term 'geography of governance' was mentioned by Jonas and While (2005) in an essay arguing for the recognition of the geography of political power, even in a picture of governance beyond the state (the state having been associated with territory in political geography). Even with more actors involved into other kinds of regulation modes and partnerships, there is nevertheless a certain geography (with differently located powers) to these (new or not so new)

political modes of coordination beyond the state (also in Allen and Cochrane (2010)). In fact the term governance may help to problematize better how space comes into play in political processes.

Thinking in terms of governance shifts the emphasis away from state territory as a fixed spatial container to the networks and relations that, when constituted spatially, enable and empower. Thinking in these terms also helps to place governance more centrally in the frame of understanding the state as a contested socio-territorial ensemble. (Jonas and While 2005, 78)

Having provided this introduction and definition to the broad term of geography of governance, I now come back to place and scale frames, and the way that they were discussed by Martin (2003) and McCann (2003). I wish to argue that these authors in fact emphasize two different objects in the activists' frames : 1- the norms embedded in space (framing of a problem and solution in space in concrete sites²⁶) 2- the geography of its governance. Although they emphasize one or the other, Martin and McCann discuss both. Martin (2013), although she emphasizes the first, also discusses how place-frames is related to a structure of opportunity and an affirmation of neighborhood political power. And McCann also discusses how the scalar frames are tied to certain desires, from hispanic communities, for the planning of Austin 's neighborhoods. The two objects were also present in the planning literature I discussed in the previous sub-section. I think that the two objects need to be conceptualized together from the start, to consider how debates on a norm can affect its geography of governance and vice-versa. Situating immigration policy and its regulation of space in a narrative of nationalism, or of localism or globalism may have particular political impacts (Leitner et al. 2008). Situating desired mobility practices in a narrative of local community or city-regional identity may also have a particular political impact.

What I wish to take from this debate is the following. Analyses of the production of space suggest that *co-constitutive claims* about a norm in space and its geography of governance, increase the power of the claims in the political realm. But I need to clearly distinguish them to consider how they are part of the categories of discursive practices from actors, *and how they might be inter-related* in their discursive practices. The discourses are negotiated and produced in concrete contexts of social relations and of discourse production.

²⁶ In the French literature, we would speak about the territorialization of their claims.

To sum up, the process of place framing is a contingent, grounded and situated process of the production of space. **Place-frames are peculiar in that they include claims for the grounding of norms in space, and claims for a geography of governance.** I thus consider place framing as a specific type of collective action process involving the production and diffusion of those place-frames, a process which I wish to understand in different contexts.

2.4 Discourse coalitions built around place-frames

At the basis of my conceptual framework lies fundamental definitions of networks, discourse and space. First, networks of collective action are conceptualized as webs of affiliations à la Simmel, which means that collectives are constituted by actors, each with their diversity of affiliations, who negotiate their differences and selectively establish joint meaning and common aims. In addition, I argue that certain actors, the brokers, are more important than others in this task. Discourse, following the discourse theory of Laclau and Mouffe, implies a chain of equivalence between different elements constituted through antagonism with the larger discursive field, with power being exercised in the ability to include and exclude elements in the discursive formation. The political work of elaborating discourses and networks are inter-related, and can participate in the production of space, particularly through what I have defined as place-frames, following Martin (2004, 2013). Place-frames are discourses which include claims for new spatialized/territorialized norms and a new geography of governance, with implications on specific sites. They are elaborated in a process, which I call place-framing, and on which I will here provide further indications.

Before I go on further, two precisions need to be given. First on my definition of 'actors' (and 'civic actors'), and second, on what I mean with the notion of power.

Throughout this chapter, I have put emphasis on social networks and coalitions, but in mentioning they were made by a diversity of actors with different affiliations. What do I mean, then, by actor? The following definition of agency fits very well with the relational approach of this thesis : “the capacity of socially embedded actors to appropriate, reproduce and potentially to innovate upon received cultural categories [norms] and conditions of action in accordance with their personal and collective ideals, interests and commitments” (Emirbayer and Goodwin 1994, 1442). Two elements are emphasized in this conceptualization of the actor : the project of the actor and its definition in his or her social (and I add spatial) context. Simmel's web of affiliation adds to this an account of both the individual actor and the group (which in our case also means of the organization and broader coalition). With the overlap of group affiliations, Simmel acknowledges the role of the actor in dealing with multiple affiliations. The outcome of this depends of the actor's capacities and of the accordance of the personal/organizational

project with the collective project (Emirbayer and Goodwin 1994; Emirbayer and Mische 1998; Mische 2008).

The actors I will speak of in the case studies are, for the most part, actors mobilizing to transform dominant discourses about mobility, or a certain making of the metropolitan space for mobility. From time to time I will thus name them 'activists', to denote this effort to transform dominant discourses, even if they act in a collaborative mode. I also use the term 'civic actors' to speak of the category of actors outside the state and the private sector, what is also coined by some 'civil society'²⁷ (Anheier 2004), and which for me regroup non-governmental organizations, local community-services associations and resident committees. Yet, as I have presented in the section 2.1, the relation with state authorities is an ambiguous one, which needs to be considered as such in the case studies. Public actors are in some instances part of the discourse coalitions. Many of the civic actors I study also have some ties (through funding for example, or partnerships on certain projects or service delivery) with the state. Lastly, I focus on a specific kind of actor, the brokers. The particularities of brokers, in comparison to other actors, are stated below.

The second precision relates to the notion of power. I just mentioned power in relation to discourse, but it has implications for networks and space production as well. Power is not something that can be possessed, but a relational property coming from a position in a field of social relations, it is a "relational effect of social interaction" (Allen 2003, 2). Power is thus not everywhere and encompassing, or only in centralized (economic or bureaucratic) giants, but in social relations; its geography depends on the reach of social relations and interactions. Allen (2003), building on an important review on the subject, argues that there are two types of power. One that is instrumental "where power is something that is held over you and used to obtain leverage", and one that is associational, where "power acts more like a collective medium enabling things to get done or facilitate some common aim" (2003, 5). For my purpose these two meanings are important because they specify that power is not only pervasive, but also enabling, through the power of convergence in common aims and joint meaning (Allen (2003, 51-59 refers specifically to the work of Arendt on this). At the same time, one relation or configuration of relations can be interpreted as instrumental or associational power depending on the position you take, and it may start as one and evolve in the other. Within a collective, the frame adopted to mobilize is a collective construction that includes and excludes certain

²⁷ Anheier define civil society as "the sum of institutions, organizations and individuals located between the family, the state and the market in which people associate voluntarily to advance common interests" (Anheier 2004, 20).

alternatives. This act of inclusion and exclusion, a key characteristic of discourse production, is associational in the way it enables a collective active frame around a 'chain of equivalence', but may be an act of domination of one participating actor over another, reducing the logic of difference. Likewise, the same logic occurs in a network and coalition-building perspective, as I emphasized before. The relative elasticity of a collective depends on the inclusion or exclusion of certain members and of certain perspectives. Also, its longevity may depend on the authority and centrality of certain actors, which can be both a mean for associational power, participating members respecting and acknowledging the qualities of a leader as enabling their collective action (as interpreted by Arendt), and become an act of domination and of reduction of possibilities in the collective. The collective includes, minimally, differentiated levels of controls : certain actors having more control than others on the resources and discourses produced. Lastly, in regard to space and the production of place-frames, the same negotiation will occur on the content of the place-frame to enable collective action. There might be a dominant interpretation of a place in a collective discrediting certain spatial representations and loyalties. But a joint representation of a place among members of a collective gives an associational power of convergence, which can be productive politically in relation to the outside.

Building on the notions we have seen and on their interrelations, I will now present further my own definitions of discourse coalition and of place-framing, with the relational and discursive mechanisms of brokerage involved.

Discourse coalitions

Discourse coalitions are defined by Hajer as 'a group of actors that, in the context of an identifiable set of practices, shares the usage of a particular set of story lines over a particular period of time' (Hajer 2005: 302). The group of actors is linked, in Hajer's approach, by a discursive affinity. For Hajer, the actors' understanding of a policy problem need not be exactly the same, but their simplified representation of it converge in a similar storyline. This is an interesting perspective from the point of view of collective action and the negotiation of difference. In my view however, the processes of adhesion and negotiation to a common storyline by actors are under-defined in Hajer's work. He states that a discourse coalition does not have to involve the building of social relations, but works on the level of discourse and the adherence to metaphors.

Yet, as Szarka (2004:319) argues :

The value of this approach is that it illuminates how discourse becomes a means to political action. However, the problem with Hajer's formulation is that he underplays the notion of 'coalition'. Coalition behaviour is generally understood as concerted action directed at mutually beneficial goals. Yet he claims that actors can 'reproduce or fight a given bias without necessarily orchestrating or coordinating their actions' (Hajer, 1993, p. 48). This conceptualization helpfully widens the remit of 'discourse coalitions' to cases of 'objective alliances' or 'strange bedfellows' [...]. Nevertheless, it blunts the cutting edge of the coalition idea as concerted action.

Hajer's conceptualization put forward the political power of discourse, but underplays the importance of agency in the elaboration, negotiation and adhesion to these discourses. Yet, in the spirit of the chain of equivalence from Laclau and Mouffe, a discursive chain of equivalence contains not only discursive articulations around equivalences, but also produces new group identities re-assembling the discursive and the socio-political fields; this is why discourse has been characterized as a key tool for the study of coalition processes (Torring 2005, Howarth 2010). The political power of discourse does not just happen magically: it is crafted and negotiated by actors and groups of actors. Yet, not all actors adhering to a discourse necessarily share a relation or personally agreed on the topic with one another. The discourse comes to have its own life and power of persuasion also. Nevertheless, I think there are actors involved in giving it sufficient power to participate in the structuration of the discursive field. In my conceptualization, this work is done by brokers.

Two different types of brokerage are defined: relational and discursive brokerage. They have two different objects, but participate both to the broader process of place-framing. The first links actors and the second links discursive nodes into a chain of equivalence. But they are both necessary in the place-framing process: the relational broker needs the discursive broker to produce the collective action frame, and the discursive broker needs the relational broker to ensure adhesion to its chain of equivalence. The absence of one or the other form of brokerage would limit the ability of the place-frame to structure collective action. The relational and discursive brokers may actually be the same actors. The way they juxtapose and combine will be explored in the concrete case studies; but I further present their work and enabling characteristics below.

The process of place-framing

Borrowing from Chateauraynaud (2010) the idea of 'tests' in the trajectories of actors and their arguments, I argue that place-frames have to respond and adapt to a series of tests, coming from the fact that they are the products of a group of actors, a discourse coalition, wanting to structure a larger discursive field. We have seen how coalitions come from the political work of negotiating the affiliations, transactions and control in participating members to have advantage over the actors outside the coalition. I argue that discourse coalitions organized around place-frames have a similar challenge. This challenge relates to the dynamics within the collective and in relation to the exterior discursive field.

The place-frame has to be negotiated among the different spatial affiliations in the collective. It has to find resonance and acceptance with the claim makers, those who will mobilize and diffuse the frame on the ground, in different groups, communities and institutions. This may depend on the centrality of the issue in the audiences' lives and the fidelity of the narrative in comparison to their other engagements and affiliations (Benford and Snow 2000, 622; Routledge, Cumbers, and Nativel 2007; Pierce, Martin, and Murphy 2011). The diverse 'loyalties' of the activists in their web of affiliations (Simmel 1955) and their motivations coming from their particular link with the space (Harvey 1996), may put certain chains of equivalence at test.

The place-frame is also constituted in relation to the discursive opponent. It is the test of antagonism in relation to the external discursive field, through which the place-frame is constructed. Following the approach of Laclau and Mouffe, discourse analysis first consists in locating the antagonistic elements in the discursive field, i.e. the conflicting elements on the topic on which the collective is mobilized. The collective is building an alternative to the dominant discourse in using space to construct an alternative possible world, which contradicts the dominant discourse.

This discursive framing of reality creates a vision of the future that, through its very construction, places other possible visions outside the bounds of discussion. Thus, while the framing is enabling for those who construct it, it limits other actors' ability to influence urban policy (McCann 2003, 162).

This building of an 'alternative world' is done through the constitution of a chain of equivalence. But each equivalence can be contested in different arenas of debate. It may be de-constructed

by opponents or have no effect on the dominant discourse. We can see in Table 2.2 the synthesis of the process of place-framing and the content of place-frames.

Table 2.2 *The dimensions of place-frames and place-framing*

Content of place-frames	Norms embedded in space
	The geography of their governance
Process of place-framing	Internal test of bundling the different motivations, affiliations and loyalties from participating actors
	External test of antagonism with the external discursive field

The process of place-framing leads to the production of spatialized discourses, place-frames. These discourses can always evolve through additional 'internal' or 'external' tests. Activists thus develop a type of 'pure chain of equivalence' which bundles as best as possible the constituting affiliations in the discourse coalition, and strategically positioned in relation to the external discursive field. But it may have to be further adapted in relation to the external discursive field, or after internal contestation in the discourse coalition. To capture this dynamic adaptation in the face of the two 'tests', I distinguish between two levels of discourse.

Laclau and Mouffe's discourse theory emphasizes the new meaning which nodal points take when put in a chain of equivalence. A chain of equivalence is potentially always fluid, since any new emphasis on an equivalence or difference in the web of significations, could modify it. There is nevertheless some stability that comes from the strength of the equivalence itself, as a political idea. The two levels of discourse capture this duality. First, a utopian chain of equivalence, and second, a series of interpretative repertoires manifesting the tensions and re-articulations among the nodes of the chain of equivalence. The nodes of the utopian chain of equivalence remain the same in the interpretative repertoires, giving a certain longevity to the utopian chain of equivalence, but they are articulated in somewhat different ways.

Why do I use the term 'utopia'? Utopia is typically known as an evocative imagination of a future, sometimes pejoratively considered as an unattainable fantasy. The term is used at times to speak of a politically charged ideal, while others have discredited it as a form of escape (Mumford in Levitas 2010, 17–20; Castells 1983, 318-327). In any case it is linked with a critique of the present world and dreams of how it could be better (Friedman 2000; Levitas 2010). Ruth Levitas, after an indepth review of the analyses of utopias, suggest the analytical definition of utopia as “the imagination of alternative worlds intended to represent a better way of being”

(207).²⁸ Furthermore, Levitas considers that utopia can be linked with collective and political action : “ sometimes utopia embodies more than an image of what the good life would be and becomes a claim about what it could and should be: the wish that things might be otherwise becomes a conviction that it does not have to be like this” (2010, 1).

Pierce, Martin and Murphy (2011) suggest that certain brokers may be in a good position to switch from one place-frame to another depending on the situation and the arena of debate. The utopian frame may then remain the key uniting objective in the collective, with different interpretative repertoires. This switching among interpretative repertoires may enable coalitions. Wetherell and Potter (1992, 92; cited by Jorgenson and Phillips 2002, 107) describe interpretative repertoires as “an available choreography of interpretative moves [...] from which particular ones can be selected in a way that fits most effectively in the context”. The choices in the interpretative repertoires can be related to compromises and selective choices to bridge between different existing groups. It can also serve to adapt to the external discursive field and gain more impact. I consider interpretative repertoires as parallel narratives working under the general utopia, but providing alternative resources, depending on the context and power dynamics at play in different arenas (Potter 2004; F. Chateauraynaud 2011).

I thus define the process of place-framing as the dynamic constitution of place-frames by brokers of a collective, through a series of tests with the external discursive field and the internal bundle of individual affiliations, and which leads to a flexibility in the actual discourses produced, i.e. a production not only of a utopian frame, but also of interpretative repertoires. To keep the discourse coalition together around this flexible discourse, the work of brokers is presumed to be important.

The roles and enabling characteristics of relational and discursive brokers are presented in Table 2.3; they constitute elements from the literature presented in section 2.1. We see that relational brokerage includes two sub-dimensions. The first sub-dimension is called 'resource brokerage'. It denotes the capacity to develop new relations with actors, with resources or control on the contested norm. Those resources can be information, material resources, financial resources, or political support. The second dimension relates more to the mediating abilities put forward by Mische: the capacity to bridge selectively across different cultural and political projects,

²⁸ This definition leaves open the form and political function of utopia. For exemple, it is not necessarily oppositional (228). The term 'utopia' fits with the particular discourses we pay attention to. Place-frames are discourses intended to produce new norms and governance within space, they fall under the definition from Levitas. The organization of space, within the realm of planning, has also significantly relied on utopian forms of thought, from utopians of the industrial area (Chouay 1965) to the modernists like Le Corbusier and Howarth (Fishman 1982).

affiliations and loyalties to constitute a broader network around a common project. The literature on social networks indicates certain characteristics that would enable actors to fill those brokerage roles. First, their structural position in the network, as intermediary filling a 'structural hole'. Second, the number and types of ties give legitimacy to an actor. It can give him 'social capital' and leadership, but also network 'cosmopolitanism' (if linked with diverse sub-groups, Mische 2008). But this network 'cosmopolitanism' can be restrained by the inherent mission or identity of the actor, if for example his leadership is associated with a particular mission or identity, restricting his ability to link with certain actors.

Table 2.3 Types of brokerage involved in the process of place-framing

Type of brokerage	Sub-dimensions	Enabling characteristics
Relational brokerage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Resource brokerage: developing new relations with actors with resources and control • Cultural and affiliation brokerage: developing new relations with actors to increase the adherence to the chain of equivalence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Position of intermediary : linking actors or sub-groups otherwise not connected • Ties supporting the actor and giving it legitimacy in a sub-field • Fit between the identity and mission of the actor vs. the identities and missions of the other actors
Discursive brokerage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Articulation = ability to produce new discursive chains of equivalence • Argumenting in different arenas of debate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowledge of different discursive elements otherwise not or little connected • Knowledge of situated discourses • Control over the production of discourse in the collective

Source: Laclau and Mouffe 1985, Lemieux 1998, Diani and McAdam 2003, Mische 2008, Potter and Wetherell 1987, Chateauraynaud 2010, Pierce, Martin and Murdoch 2011

The second brokerage type is discursive brokerage. It consists in the ability to produce new discursive chains of equivalence, thus to give new meaning to nodal points in associating them in a chain of equivalence. This is possible when an actor is aware of different discursive elements that *are not linked* in dominant discourses. This capacity from the broker may come from his awareness and acquaintance with situated discourses. The articulation process of constituting new chains of equivalence involves selecting from the 'discursive surplus' in the

discursive field, and assembling it powerfully to dislocate the dominant discursive formation. In addition, discursive brokerage also involves the capacity to argue in different arenas and planes of debate, as put forward by Chateauraynaud (2011), and to discursively link them together into one discursive field on which the discourse coalition can act. The articulation and argumentation across different arenas depend on a certain level of control over the coalitions' produced discourse.

To sum up, I define a discourse coalition as a group of actors linked by a common (utopian) frame, but which is open to different interpretative repertoires, thanks to the work of discursive and relational brokers (Benford and Snow 2000, Martin 2003, Potter 2004, Hajer 2005, Pierce et al. 2011). I focus on discourse coalitions linked by place-frames. Besides the identification of place-frames, it is overall the *process of place-framing*, the dynamic production of place-frames by brokers through a series of internal and external tests, which is the focus of this research. This process of place-framing happens in a context of antagonism, and with different opportunities in the political context. I provide final precisions on this below, and then conclude with the research question structuring the analysis of my case studies.

Opportunities and antagonism

We have up to now discussed the articulation of discourse in contexts of antagonism, following the theory of Laclau and Mouffe. This antagonism relates to the equivalences actors want to defy. But it does not mean *per se* that the discourse coalition is in conflict with all state authorities, or function in a contentious or conflicting mode in most of its interactions. As discussed previously, civic actors choose between strategies of collaboration and contention, to advance their utopian frame²⁹. Even a discourse coalition establishing close partnerships with state authorities constitutes itself in a larger antagonistic discursive field: the antagonism may be outside of this partnership. If there was no counter-discourses and no antagonism, we would have an objectified and naturalized idealization of the object, which does not seem presently to be the case on the topic I investigate. Actors are mobilized to challenge the existing norms on mobility in the city. The discourse coalition may choose to act as an 'insider' of the political system and adopt a collaborative attitude with certain authorities, and yet be in sharp conflict with other political authorities at other scales, in other territories, or with other actors or factions

²⁹ The cases I chose in my comparative research design are not at the farther end of the contentious attitude. None of the investigated discourse coalitions took the radically contentious position in which reaching out to public authorities is *de facto* considered a detrimental strategy for their cause. None challenge all authorities, they are rather challengers of norms, and are strategically choosing with whom they will make alliances, and from whom they can gain political support.

in the population. This corresponds to the plurality of political spaces as argued by Laclau and Mouffe.

This plurality of political spaces is conceptualized by the notion of geography of governance. In a given geography of governance, there are several political arenas, institutions, channels of interaction and of regulation. Within this set lies, in one or several points, regulatory powers over the contested issue. Civic actors, and their discourse coalitions, are engaged in searching for and creating opportunities within that geography of governance, in order to transform dominant discourses.

Research question and propositions

I can now state the research question and propositions that structure the analysis of my case studies.

Through what processes do coalitions for car alternatives articulate counter discourses challenging the dominant discourses on mobility?

[On discourse coalitions] Proposition 1: Coalitions articulate, mainly through the work of brokers, a joint discourse which re-organizes networks of collective action in order to transform dominant discourses.

[On place-frames] Proposition 2: Coalitions produce, for this joint discourse, strategic representations of places, i.e. place-frames linking in a chain of equivalence the desired norms for a space with the geography of its governance.

[On antagonism and the chain of equivalence] Proposition 3: Coalitions deal with antagonism through the constitution and constant re-interpretation of their utopian place-frame. The breaking of the utopian chain of equivalence, linking the two components of the place-frame (hyp. 2), reduces the capacity of a coalition to act and transform dominant discourses.

These propositions state ways through which coalitions can transform dominant discourses on mobility. They also serve as guides for the reader in pointing to the key elements of my interpretative framework. The propositions, in these senses, serve as hypotheses, but the term

proposition is preferred.³⁰ Although they can be confirmed or infirmed (i.e. we can verify whether specific coalitions instantiate or not the propositions), the interest is not primarily to show their occurrence in real life. It is rather to investigate, if they are observed, how they vary in different instances. In other words, the primary goal is to understand better the process of place-framing by mapping the variability in its constituents. This approach is explained in the next chapter, in terms of a process-based research with a building-block comparison. The methodological chapter will further present my research design and the structure of the comparison. The corpus, data collection techniques and methods of analysis are also discussed.

³⁰ Miles and Huberman (1994, 75), as well as Maxwell (2012, 63), discuss the use of the term proposition instead of hypothesis. They explain that, in contrast with the use of hypotheses in *quantitative* research, propositions are often developed after the research has begun, in an interaction between the data and the theories considered, in order to develop new concepts and ways to understand the world, and then to further investigate them in a variety of cases. [The term 'hypothesis' is often also used with this meaning in qualitative research, but sometimes with confusion with regard to the expectations from quantitative research]. In his study of coalitions, Lemieux (1998) also formulated 'propositions' with the intent of considering their application on a diversity of concrete coalitions, to later improve these propositions, and reach a better conceptualization of coalitions (Lemieux 1998, 83-84).

CHAPTER 3. METHODOLOGY AND DATA USED

3.1 Research design : process-based explanation, building-block comparison

We have seen in the conceptual chapter the project of a combined analysis of network, discourse and the production of space through place-framing. This research is structured by a process-based account of phenomena. An increasing amount of social science research is structured around mechanistic or process-based explanations (Hedström and Swedberg 1998; Tilly 2001; McAdam, Tarrow, and Tilly 2008; Gross 2009). Instead of attempting to test a general theory or model of the social and political world, or to test the influence of certain variables, a process-based account is an analysis of “delimited sorts of events that change relations among specified sets of elements in identical or closely similar ways over a variety of situations” (McAdam, Tarrow, and Tilly 2001, 25). Several mechanisms can interact in episodes of collective action and their consequences vary with their combination and the interrelation with the context. Regular sequences of mechanisms are named 'processes' by McAdam, Tarrow and Tilly; processes are thus broader than mechanisms. Mechanisms and processes are used as explanatory tools for specific cases, but they also serve to reach a level of generalization and comparability. The analysis can be structured by the sequences through which they occur and their different combinations depending on the initial conditions (McAdam, Tarrow, and Tilly 2001, 13).

A comparative research design can serve well a process-oriented research. Indeed, comparative case studies have been identified as a promising way to capture specific social mechanisms, such as brokerage and framing processes, in their varying instantiations in different contexts (McAdam, Tarrow, and Tilly 2008; Howarth 2005; George and Bennett 2005; Nay and Smith 2002).

The case study method allows to dig into the particularity of the situations studied with rich and detailed data. But for the case studies to be usable in theory development and generalization, it also needs to be 'focused and structured' around key research questions and a research design which can be replicated in other contexts (George and Benett 2005). Also, as Yin (2009, 61) argues, « the analytical benefits from having two (or more) cases may be substantial », since the comparison of a similar phenomenon but in a different context can offer heuristic contrasts. A comparative case study research design can be built in the perspective of 'building-block', where the phenomena is studied in various contexts corresponding to different occurrences or types of

a more general kind (George and Bennett 2005). Platt and Small, in thinking about the epistemic value of case studies, also suggest choosing cases with differences in a range of possible instances (Platt 1988; Small 2009). Each chosen case presents a variant on characteristics judged important for the phenomenon studied. George and Bennett describe the building-block type comparison.

Each block - a study of each subtype - fills a "space" in the overall theory or in a typological theory. In addition, the component provided by each building-block is itself a contribution to theory; though its scope is limited, it addresses the important problem or puzzle associated with the type of intervention that led to the selection and formulation of the research objective (George and Bennett 2005, 78).

Studying a process in different contexts can thus participate to a building-block type comparison, contributing to a broader understanding of this process, which can be studied in other occurrences by other authors. Comparisons across cases are then focused on particular processes to see their occurrences in different initial conditions, how they combine, in what sequence, and how they produce different outcomes (McAdam, Tarrow, and Tilly 2001, 37; Martin and Miller 2003, 145).

For both single and comparative case studies, methodologists stress the importance of thinking about the choice of cases from the beginning and in relation to concepts used in the research, although unanticipated findings may come up in the empirical work (Yin 2009; George and Benett 2005; Platt 1988). The principle of random sampling used in quantitative studies should not be used in case studies, which function more with a logic of analytical rather than statistical inference (Yin 2009, 23; Pires 1997, 150). Sampling is rather analytically chosen, a strategic choice of the cases in relation to the research questions and hypotheses (or propositions), for the 'blocks' of the building-block strategy to be filled (George and Benett 2005).

In a research design of comparative case studies, one difficulty comes from the 'comparability' of the cases and of their different dimensions. Generally speaking, the design of the research project aims at identifying cases that relate to similar phenomena and scope, and data collection tools that are equivalent. A comparative design traditionally supposes that most variables between the two cases are similar enough while the variables of interest to test the hypothesis are different (Denters and Mossberger 2006, 553). For Tilly (2008), whether two cases appear "comparable" in a priori evaluations is not the main issue. Analysts should identify, through the

process-oriented research, the types of initial conditions by which a general process is locally different. I now turn to the identification of the differentiating characteristics between my cases, and the ways they constitute different conditions for the process of place-framing.

Both cases were chosen with the hypothesis that the process of interest, place-framing by brokers of discourse coalitions, was present in the phenomena investigated – collectives for car alternatives in metropolitan areas. The comparison is thus structured around the observation of place-framing in different contexts.

The cases are situated in different metropolitan areas in different countries, thus in different political contexts. In Chapter 1, I presented the characteristics of these political systems, particularly with regard to the governance of transport. I showed that the two metropolitan areas are similar for certain aspects of the political opportunity structure but differ on other aspects. The similarity in the two cases concerns the dominance of the regulating powers from the Ministries of Infrastructure/Transport. In both cases, the governance of transport also involves some power to the central city of the urban agglomeration. There is also in both cases a fuzzy metropolitan in-between, which is difficult to access and to grasp, and with little actual regulating powers.

Montreal and Rotterdam The Hague differ, however, in how this scaled governance structure is offering certain concrete opportunities for activists at the present. This is related to both volatile and stable elements of the political opportunity structure (POS) (Gamson and Meyer 1996). The volatile element is that the two areas differ in the relations between the Ministry and the central city(ies) of the urban agglomeration. In Montreal, the last decade has been characterized by a conflictual relation between the Ministry of Transport and the City of Montreal on matters of transport and particularly highway development. In contrast, in Rotterdam The Hague, the City of Rotterdam is allied with the Ministry of Transport and profit from the same political affiliation. This alliance offers a very different political opportunity structure for discourse coalitions for car alternatives. In addition to volatile elements of the POS, the nature of the democratic systems also gives other opportunities. In the case of the Netherlands the national government works in a multi-partite coalition system, where the leading party is vulnerable to demands from diverse political parties to ensure majority in parliament. In contrast, the province of Quebec functions in a parliamentary system where two, or in some cases three, parties dominate. In the period considered here, the Liberal Party had majority in the parliament.

Taken together, those differences in volatile and stable elements of the political context mean that activists may find opportunities of a counterweight to the power of the Ministry of Transport or Infrastructure in different sites. In Montreal opportunities of a political counterweight lie in collaborations with the City of Montreal while in Rotterdam The Hague allies might rather be sought for in parliament. In addition to the location of the openness in the system of alliances, the discourse coalitions themselves may create or profit from new opportunities in the system of civic alliances.

These similarities and differences between Montreal and Rotterdam The Hague are useful parameters to consider in the investigation of place-framing for the following reasons. The dominant discourses on mobility are in both cases grounded in one powerful institution with a similar position, history and practice of governance and transport infrastructure delivery. In both cases there is the same type of institution, the Ministry of Transport or Infrastructure apparently dominating the field and the framing of the infrastructural and normative choices of mobility. This similarity is very important since our research question is how can coalitions transform dominant discourses about mobility. The fact that the dominant discourses are similar and are deployed by a very similar type of institution facilitates the comparison of coalitions attempting to transform those discourses.

The differences are also useful because they provide different positions for the discourse coalition in relation to antagonism, and in relation to the political opportunities for a counterweight to the dominant discourses. Snow (2008) argues that the degree of contention in the discursive field is a dimension which should be considered in studies of collective action frames. The use of place-frames may involve a differentiated process when the discourse coalition is in position of collaboration and partnership than when it is in a position of contestation; hence the interest to consider it explicitly in the comparison. But if a discourse coalition has a collaborative attitude with the state, the antagonism (and the hegemony) may lie elsewhere. The interest of the building-block comparison is to study the same process, place-framing by coalitions for car alternatives, in contexts differentiated by certain criteria. The criteria here concern the position of the discourse coalition in relation to antagonism and opportunity.

With these two criteria of antagonism and opportunity, we will look at four building-blocks. To use the comparison design at its maximum – that is to build on similarities and differences of the cases to compare process of place-framing – I chose two cases (one by region), where the discourse coalition is in a position of direct antagonism, and two cases (one by region) where the

discourse coalition is in position of indirect antagonism. A position of direct antagonism means that the discourse coalition is confronting directly the major authority (Ministry) and the dominant discourses on mobility. A position of indirect antagonism means that the discourse coalition is not directly confronting this authority and its dominant discourse, addressing conflict from another political space. This choice of two cases of direct and indirect antagonism allows, first to compare cases with the same relation to antagonism, but with a different opportunity in the political system (because in different country and region). Second, this allow to consider and contrast, for each region, one discourse coalition of direct antagonism and one discourse coalition of indirect antagonism. This comparative research design, based on the building-block model, is summarized in Table 3.1.

Table 3.1 *Dimensions of the building-block comparative design*

	Location and scale of opportunity	Case studies in the two regions
Indirect antagonism	Opportunity in the neighborhood political spaces	Chapter 4. Spaces of traffic calming in Montreal
	Opportunity with the entrepreneurial tackling of congestion from national government	Chapter 7. Spaces of innovation in Rotterdam The Hague : "Smart working = smart travelling"
Direct antagonism	Opportunity of alliance and counterweight with the City of Montreal	Chapter 5. Spaces of (car/public) transit in Montreal : the Turcot interchange
	Opportunity of alliance and counterweight with opposition parties in parliament	Chapter 6. Spaces saved from cars in Rotterdam The Hague : Midden-Delfland and the Blankenburgtunnel

The position of the discourse coalition in relation to antagonism is thus an important characteristic differentiating my case studies into different 'building blocks' of the process of place-framing. The relation to antagonism, whether the discourse coalition faces it directly or indirectly, is linked also to the opportunities seized by the coalition and its localization in specific political spaces. A broad governance structure within a metropolitan region offers different points from which to mobilize, different points from which to brokerage. The collectives act from a certain position, privileging certain relations, in the governance system. This is why a second case within the same region appeared crucial : to see the discourses from another point of view in the governance system, where the power of the different discourses and protagonists may be different. In a metropolitan region there are various possibilities and opportunities of place-

framing : within political spaces having different relations to antagonism and with the dominant authority on matters of transport and mobility.

The comparative research design aims at investigating four different building-blocks of the process of place-framing by discourse coalitions. In this process, I particularly look at the role of brokers. But brokers may accomplish quite different tasks in situations of direct versus indirect antagonisms, when they function in a contentious or in a collaborative mode with their main state interlocutor. This is one more reason to make the relation of antagonism an important feature of the comparative research design.

Out of the four case studies presented, two are longer (chapter 4 and 6). The main reason is that the two longer cases provide more information on brokerage. In the chapter on the discourse coalition for traffic calming in Montreal (chapter 4), I discuss at greater length the brokerage accomplished by civic brokers with public authorities. In the chapter on the coalition opposing the Blankenburgtunnel in Rotterdam The Hague region (chapter 6), I discuss at greater length the brokerage accomplished to hold the discourse coalition together around the utopian frame, and maintain the opposition. In both of these longer cases I also include network representations illustrating the positions of the brokers. The two other contrasting cases also provide insight on brokerage. But my data for these shorter cases had provided less detailed information on it. The nature and evolution of the discourse coalitions in these cases had made brokerage a more sensitive issue for participants to the coalition. Nevertheless the data and analysis provides clear contrasting results with the longer cases, which is the objective.

The presentation of the four cases follows the notions and steps outlined in the conceptual framework : the context of opportunities and the observed dominant discourses, the constitution of a discourse coalition with actors with different motivations and resources, their joint utopian frame composed of a discursive chain of equivalence, its evolution into interpretative repertoires and the impact on the dominant discourses. The presentation of the cases of direct and indirect antagonism differs in the first part. In cases of direct antagonism, the utopian frame from the discourse coalition is a counter-discourse to the dominant discourse. Hence the dominant discourse needs to be presented first. In cases of indirect antagonism, the utopian frame does not function as a direct counter discourse, since it aims at avoiding such direct conflict. Yet, the constitution and evolution of the utopian frame involve antagonisms which I consider at length in the latter sections of each chapter.

Each case study is first presented on its own. The comparison among the four building-blocks comes after, in a separate chapter.

3.2 Data collection

I now present the data collection techniques and the analytical strategies used. I start by justifying the choice of my respondents. I then present the design of my interviews, focus groups and direct observations. The documentary analysis is discussed in the following sections on discourse analysis and network analysis.

Choice of respondents

The choice of participants to the interviews and focus groups was based on purposive sampling, i.e. a deliberate choice of respondents to correspond to my research question and investigation strategy. My research investigates two types of populations: first, actors mobilized for car alternatives within the civic sector (resident associations, non-governmental organizations, community groups), and second public authorities involved in interactions with these civic actors or being the target of their demands. For the first population, there is a large set of participants to coalitions for car alternatives. I focused on one category of actors, characterized by their position in the collective action network and their role in discourse production: the brokers. My focus on brokers is a theoretically-driven choice. In my conceptual framework, I focus explicitly on the role of brokers in processes of place-framing and coalition building. Relational brokers are in relation with a greater portion of sub-groups in the discourse coalition and outside of it. This means they are the principal players in the negotiation of different affiliations and objectives of sub-groups, which are mechanisms I am interested in. Discursive brokers are the ones producing discourses and defending them in arenas of debate.

Within the group of discursive and relational brokers, I used two criterion to further specify the respondents. First, a criteria of intensity of brokerage. The most active discursive brokers, in terms of the amount of plans, documents, press releases and briefs published, were identified and contacted. The most active relational brokers, in terms of actors steering together coalitions or collaborative programs, were also identified and contacted. Besides this criteria of most active brokers, I also wished for a diversity in types of organizations represented. I wished to meet participants from professionals (paid employees) and voluntary organizations, from sectoral and

place-based (for example a neighborhood) association, as long as these organizations were active brokers on the topic at stake.

The choice of participants was done with the help of the documentary analysis, allowing to identify potential discursive and relational brokers. The actors identified were then met for interview and their role of brokerage could be further documented in these interviews. A few brokers were also identified during the interviews because they were named by other participants as being important linkages for the coalitions or collaborative projects.

Focusing on brokers means I have much less information of peripheral and less powerful actors in the collective action network. It also means that certain projects in which brokers were less involved, because it was more a decentralized type of project, were less studied; my account of it had to depend on documentary sources and the interviews with brokers. I tried however to compensate for this in some interviews as well as within the focus groups, where those under-represented actors were also invited. Less central actors in the network could provide a follow-up on de-centralized projects, as well as another perspective more detached from the core of the collective action network.

In Montreal for example, the program from Vélo-Québec with 68 schools in Montreal was only investigated, first, through documentary sources and interviews with two professionals from Vélo-Québec being brokers of this collaborative program. Representatives of school committees were not met (while for another project from the *Centre d'écologie urbaine*, not only this broker but also three of the four local leaders were interviewed; this was possible because the local brokers were fewer). Regarding the *Vélo-Québec* program however, a parent member of a school committee and a school commissioner were participants in my focus group.

Finally, I also met professionals from public authorities. This was very important to analyze the relations between civic actors and public authorities in and at the margin of the discourse coalitions. It was important also to have more information on the process of discourse transformation. The professionals I met were either persons individually involved with the civic actors in the coalition or collaborative program, or representatives of the public authorities which were targeted by their demands. They were thus urban and transport planners, organizers of public participation, engineers and project managers.

In total, I had three categories of respondents: brokers, peripheral actors giving another perspective on the collective action and discourse coalition, and public authorities (either involved in collaborations or targeted by the demands).

This meant a total, in Montreal, of 20 interviews and 16 participants to two focus groups (10 in the first focus group on traffic calming, 6 in the second on Turcot). In the 20 interviews, 13 were civic brokers of different kinds, 4 public actors, and 3 were peripheral or less active brokers for the programs and coalitions studied. For the focus groups, 6 participants were active brokers, 6 were representatives of public authorities (in relation with the civic actors within collaborations or targeted by their demands), and 4 more peripheral actors (one of which from the public 'school board'). From the 16 participants to the focus groups, 5 of the individuals had been met already in interviews.

In Rotterdam The Hague I conducted 20 interviews and 13 persons participated to the two focus groups (6 and 7). In the 20 interviews, 11 were *civic* brokers of different kinds, 2 brokers between public and private actors (I include in this the Rotterdam Port Authority, which links with private companies in the port, and one of the mobility managers spoken of in Chapter 7), 5 were public actors and 2 were peripheral or less active brokers for the programs and coalitions studied. For the focus groups, 5 participants were active brokers, 5 were representatives of public authorities, and 3 more peripheral actors. From the 13 participants to the focus groups, 4 of the individuals had been met already in interviews. The details of the actors selected for interviews and focus groups are provided in Appendix 2.

The list of brokers consisted in a list of organizations, but for the most part specific names of individuals were attached to it. Usually, in a professional or a resident association, there was one person more in charge of the brokerage tasks on the issue, and I tried to meet that person. In some cases, there were two different persons for brokerage toward different types of actors, or who had changed through time; I then tried to meet both. Throughout my analysis, I usually speak in organizational or group terms. If I speak of the organization itself as a broker and actor expressing certain points of views in debates, I am conscious that it is not organization, but individuals that speak. Yet the discourse (except when I specify otherwise), has become an organizational discourse which individuals are transmitting (Martin 2003, Benford and Snow 2000). Of course, there are also individual persons and personalities which can play a key role. The individuals speak for the organization but may bring their own grain of salt to it. When relevant, I did mention in my analysis the importance of individual affiliations.

Throughout the text, specific references to content obtained from interviews or focus groups are indicated in parenthesis, with the sign (Int) for interviews and (FG) for focus groups, with the acronym of the respondents (listed in Appendix 2).

Language issues

The comparative research design, with the choice of cases in different countries with different languages in use, has required to conduct the research in no less than three languages. I myself studied Dutch for four years, culminating in a national diploma of Nederlands *Staatsexamen II*. In Rotterdam The Hague, the interviews were conducted in English or Dutch. I preferred English but this depended on the extent to which participants were comfortable with this language. In Montreal, the interviews were conducted in French (or part French, part English, for one interview). Documents were for the most part in Dutch in the Netherlands and in French in Québec. In Rotterdam, the focus groups were conducted in Dutch with Dutch-speaking moderators, and in Montreal in French.³¹ I also received help in the transcription of interviews and focus groups, and this was an invaluable help, especially for the ones conducted in Dutch³².

In the analysis of my data, I functioned in the three languages. For the presentation of the results however, I had to make choices. I decided to write the thesis in English so that it could be read by participants, and fellow colleagues and professors, in both of the regions I investigated. I am conscious however of the effect this could have for the accessibility of the results not in the mother-tongue of most participants. The fact that English is not my mother-tongue either may also impose certain costs on the fluidity of the text. I am also conscious that in translating citations and excerpts from one language to another, I am creating some distortions (I am of course not a professional translator). I thus decided to provide the citations and excerpts in their original language in bottom-page notes, to make it at least available for those who can read them. The names of organizations (except for public actors and institutions) are presented in their original language (with the translation in parenthesis in their first appearances). All in all, I consider that the benefits of conducting comparative research is worthwhile the adjustments or distortions that a transfer from one language to another can produce.

This having been said, I now present the tools used for data collection: interviews, focus groups, some direct observation and documentary analysis.

³¹ I would like to thank very much Els Beukers and Roel ter Brugge, both from the University of Amsterdam, for their invaluable help. In Montreal the focus groups were conducted in French and were moderated by Gilles Sénécal and Jocelyne Bernier. I thank them warmly for their contribution.

³² The interviews and focus groups conducted in Dutch were transcribed by Roebin Lijns Huffenreuter. Some of the interviews from Montreal were transcribed by Louise LeBel. I thank them both for their work.

Semi-focused interviews

Semi-focused interviews usually serve to “make explicit the universe of the other”, and to give access to experiences not observable otherwise (Savoie-Zajc 2009, 343–344). The interpersonal setting allows to go in depth on certain issues. The ‘focused’ part of it consists in the guidance and animation of the interview following general themes. But it is ‘semi’ focused because the interviewer tries to create a conversation and ensure natural links between the different themes put forward, with a flexibility given to the participant’s way of telling his story and the uniqueness of the exchange at play (Savoie-Zajc 2009, 340, 355). In my research project, semi-focused interviews were very important to put my textual data into context. This context relates to both the discourse and the network analysis. For the discourse analysis, the interview served to have the interpretation of events where the chain of equivalence was put to test, and the conditions under which interpretative repertoires were elaborated (further details in the discourse section below). Hajer (2005, 306–307) suggests a similar use of interviews.

The interviews might also be used to get a better understanding of the meaning of particular events for the interviewees. It then becomes a ‘focused interview’ (Flick, 1998). How did they interpret a particular event? In doing this, one aims to reconstruct the discourse from which an actor approached the situation. We can also analyze how a particular cognitive shift came about. What led to the actual ‘reframing’? Was it reading a report (which is not very likely)? Was it a meeting? Or was it a confrontation?

For network analysis and coalition dynamics, interviews meant to get personal interpretations of the brokerage processes involved : what were the issues at stake for the actor’s mission and the coalition, what relations were put at test, and which ones were the most difficult to consolidate or maintain? Such brokerage processes are difficult to capture without interviews, since they often occur in private or semi-private interactions, in multiple arenas and between many actors. I discuss further this use of semi-focused interviews in the section on networks below.

To respond to these objectives, I conducted 20 interviews in each region, as presented above. The interviews lasted an average of one hour, ranging from 40 minutes to two hours. Participants were recruited by email or in the events I observed. After the interviews, I noted my first reactions : the atmosphere and openness of the participant, the emotions expressed, the questions sparking more reactions, the points emphasized, etc. The interviews were also recorded when I had the agreement of the participant (in two cases I didn’t, hence I took notes during the interview and re-constructed it in notes afterward). They were then transcribed. The

transcriptions were integrated in the software for qualitative analysis Atlas.ti for coding, a process that I describe below.

Two particular challenges identified in the literature with respect to the conduct of semi-focused interviews were cautiously considered. The first challenge is what Howarth called the problem of 'retrospective rationalizations' which involves a reinterpretation of a past event :

interviewees articulate well-rehearsed storylines that conform to the 'official versions' of the movement or oppositional group. For instance, it is well-known that participants in successful movements often erase difficulties and complexities in the name of seamless, teleological narratives that culminate in the realization of clearly defined goals, while activists in failed campaigns and movements are prone to stories of 'heroic failure' or 'leadership betrayal' (Howarth 2005, 338)

The main way to prepare for this was to have gained in advance as much knowledge as possible on the contested topic and the involvement of the actor there in, i.e. to have already not only general expectations but also concrete information, examples and hypotheses about that specific actor and his or her coalition. Before each interview, a file was completed that included the documents produced by the actor, his or her positioning in the debates on the topic, his or her expected position of brokerage, the tensions he or she may be aware of or has participated to, the main actors with who he or she collaborates, etc. This knowledge came from documentary analysis and from direct observation. This contextual preparation fed in the preparation of the questions and of their order. It was also used to show to the participant I had prior knowledge, in order to go further in the discussion than what was already available in the documentary data. In some exceptional cases, I also quoted anonymously reactions I had received from other participants to ask for their reactions on it. Nevertheless, even with this preparation, the participant may have modified his or her own understanding of a past event because he or she is now in a new context. It is then only through triangulation of the interviews, and of the interviews with the other data sources, that I could further try to limit this effect.

The second challenge, emphasized by Gordon (1980), is to anticipate and prevent the reticences from interviewees. When an interviewee finds a question inappropriate or too difficult to answer, he might participate little in the rest of the conversation. This challenge was particularly serious because of the controversial objects discussed in the interviews (especially

for the contentious discourse coalitions), and because brokers and targeted public authorities are aware of the political sensitivity of certain issues for their coalition or institution.

This challenge was first addressed in the design of the interview and in the order of the questions asked (Kvale and Brinkman 2009, 134–140). The interviews started from the concrete experience of the participants, in their organizations or associations. When the participants started to mention specific relations and networks of relations, I asked them to draw their network of collaborations on the topic, as explained below. The next topic was the concrete debates in which they were involved, starting by the most consensual toward the more controversial. I discussed tensions in coalitions toward the end of the interviews.

The second way to respond to this challenge was to have a tool kit allowing to initiate a conversation about the topic from the concrete experience of the participant. The toolkit was done also with the objective of not biasing toward certain conclusions. I had two tools that were suggested but not imposed to participants.

To speak about networks, I invited participants to draw the network of actors with whom they worked on this issue. Kesby (2000) remarks that participant diagrams made easier the discussion of sensitive issues. In their organizational study of firms, Cross and Parker (2004, 6–8) also identify this advantage of the diagram used in interviews. In addition, they also appreciate that it allowed the participants to best represent informal networks in the organization and reflect on them. In my field work, sometimes drawing the network facilitated the discussion, in other times not; in some cases participants refused to do it, in other cases they intuitively started doing it without my suggestion. I do not present explicitly the drawings made by participants in the case studies because they differed in content and style, and not all participants made them. But when they were made, they helped the discussion about social relations and brokerage.

The second tool was to bring maps showing geographic elements of the contested topic; maps either from their own making or from the making of other actors, such as public authorities. This was made to stimulate the discussion over the place-framing from their discourse coalition and their own interpretation of it. But my cases differ in the importance given to maps. In the Netherlands, there are numerous maps drawn and revised, and civic actors also use maps themselves to convey messages. The place-frame of the discourse coalition against the highways was explicitly represented in their personally designed maps; it was thus useful to

show them and demand reactions. Twice did participants specifically bring an old map to illustrate their point in the interview; sometimes participants also spontaneously drew a map representation in discussing their project. In Montreal, maps were also elaborated in programs of traffic calming, to show for example the localization of feelings of un-safety or of the occurrence of collisions. The maps however represented more the diagnostic than the utopia they wished for. In general, I only used these maps to suscite reactions when there existed relevant maps for the actor I met. I also brought more neutral maps from the territory discussed and used them if interviewees wanted to point at specific points in the space in question. This facilitated the discussion and my analysis of it, since the referencing to sub-neighborhoods or specific streets or highways was common in interviews.

Direct observation

Direct observation can be used as a dominant source of data, a way to be immersed in the field study, in ethnographic research. Direct observation can also be used as a complement to interviews, to gain more information about certain situations (Laperrière 2009). The second case applies to this research. Direct observation of civic meetings and public events served the purpose of getting to know the actors, see them in the concrete settings of interaction and see the setting of the debates they participated to. It was a tool to contextualize the information from documentary sources and prepare the interviews. But my observation could not cover all meetings and events, this being a big task requiring more long-term residence in one site and greater effort in a more ethnographic approach (I was commuting between the two cities). Nevertheless, I observed in each region two types of events to get a sense of their functioning. First, I observed participatory meetings from civic actors : in Montreal three meetings of the Green, active and healthy neighborhoods from the *Centre d'écologie urbaine*; in Rotterdam The Hague three meetings of the Green Metropolis and No Blankenburgtunnel campaign. Second, I observed public hearings in the two regions, to know more about the setting of the debate in which civic actors defended their chain of equivalence.

During the observation, I used a framework from Beaud and Weber (2010). It consists in drawing the physical setting, noting characteristics and number of participants, and noting the proceeding of the event. Finally, I noted elements learned with respect to the content (relations between participants, discourses put forward, tensions or conflicts) and the process (rules and organization of the debate). Some notes were taken during the event, and an observation report

was written right afterward. The report was then included in the written data to be coded (see below).

Focus groups

Focus groups are special types of data collection tools. What characterizes them is the interaction among participants, which gives rise to a specific type of data (Bryman 2008; Wilkinson 2006). Johnston (2002) argues that focus groups are especially interesting to study processes of social construction as it would happen in real life interactions. Yet, a focus group should not be analyzed as an ordinary conversation that actors would have in a 'natural context'. It is a constructed situation, affected by the setting, the questions asked and the participants present (Bryman 2008). In this constructed situation however, the focus group allows to "observe the extent and nature of interviewees agreements and disagreements" (Morgan 1996, 139), which makes it a relevant data collection tool for this research project. Smithson (2000) however has commented that what is difficult in focus groups is that dominant voices can take a lot of place while in fact they represent the opinions only of some more "vociferous members". Cefaï (2007, 481) noted that the dynamics of interactions in focus groups can lead either to the search for compromise and the avoidance of conflict or, in the contrary, at a radicalization of the arguments. There are moderating techniques that can be used to try to counter the dominance of certain voices (e.g. invite more silent participants to speak, re-frame the question) and to counter a too controversial or consensual setting (Smithson 2000), depending on the objective. The moderator can control the themes and/or the group dynamics (Morgan 1996). The analysis can also consider explicitly the factors affecting the propensity of participants to agree or disagree with others, as discussed below (Smithson 2000; Kidd and Parshall 2000). The choice of participants, moderation techniques and methods of analysis are thus three elements to consider in the use of focus groups.

The first objective for my focus groups was to confirm results obtained from interviews. These results pertain, for example, to zones of agreement and disagreement (or tensions) in the discourse coalition and at the margin of it. The second objective was to produce new results from the specific interactions stimulated therein, especially with respect to the positioning of the discourse coalition in the geography of governance. This last topic was more easily addressed in the focus group than in interviews, because actors with different positions and status were interacting with one another on this topic and trying to make sense of it together. The statements expressed by participants in focus groups can not however be interpreted as a de-contextualised

positioning of actors, and even less as an objective representation of the nature of their relations, the political opportunities and the impacts of their claims. It is rather a subjective and negotiated in situ representation which depended on the concrete interactions among the focus group's participants.

Two focus groups of two hours were conducted in each metropolitan region. They were moderated by a person prepared in advance to conduct such task. I was observing and taking notes on turn-taking and on non-verbal communication. The focus groups were transcribed.

The focus groups included public actors, civic brokers and a subset of peripheral actors who had not been represented in interviews, as explained above. They were all actors who had experienced the object in concrete multi-partite situations. This choice of participants was made in order to study how the brokers interacted in a conversation setting including other brokers as well as other actors with whom they themselves, or other brokers they were in contact with, collaborated. It was meant to simulate interactions not only among brokers, but with a broader representativity of the discourse coalition.

The distribution of participants in the civil society and public sector depended on the willingness of actors to participate to the focus groups. A majority of important civic brokers were present. But for the contentious discourse coalitions public actors were more difficult to recruit. In Rotterdam, we ended up having one focus group with only civic actors and one mixed group. In Montreal, both were mixed. The focus group on Turcot however did not include the major targeted public authority, the MTQ³³. The focus group on traffic calming included a good mix and diversity of participants which allowed a richer conversation about the links between brokerage and the geography of governance for traffic calming.

In order to hear the voices of all participants in the focus group, the moderators invited everybody to participate from time to time. But there was still room given to more natural group dynamics : participants were not interrupted and if the conversation was dynamic the moderator let people speak as they wished, but invited the interventions of participants who had not spoken. The content of each focus group was focused by suggesting two themes of discussion. Those themes were based on the analysis of documents and interviews: it consisted in convergent definitions of nodes or recurrently identified tensions.

³³ The Ministry of Transport, Montreal center, refused that their officials participate in the focus group (I received an official letter). Two public officiels did however participate to an interview.

The moderator used the technique of summarizing what seemed an expressed consensus or collective voice from the group of participants, and demanded to what extent this summary represented their view and how they could go farther on the topic. This technique could lead participants either to re-affirm the consensus or be the opportunity to affirm another voice.

At the time of analysis, I identified zones of agreement and disagreement in the transcribed focus groups. The focus of the analysis was to locate 'collective voices' and the expression of divergent voices or interpretations (Smithson 2000). As Kidd and Parshall (2000, 300) note, however, "identifying issues on which disagreements have been voiced is relatively straightforward, but with respect to agreement, the analyst must evaluate whether apparent agreement resulted from coercion or self-censoring of members with alternative viewpoints". I noticed in the focus groups a propensity for a majority of actors to present themselves as more in agreement than they did in interviews, with the exceptions of few actors who used the focus group to express their disagreement (linked for example with a recent event and state of affairs). The content of interviews, of direct observation and the broader context (on for example the current state of their relations or recent updates on the contested issue) were useful in the analysis, to consider the importance of those points of agreement and disagreement for the discourse coalition in the time frame I looked at.

3.3 Discourse analysis

In the previous chapter on the conceptual framework, I discussed the frame perspective, its evolution and the different focus points scholars have been giving to the approach. Snow and Benford (2005) emphasize that the frame perspective is promising for the study of the interactive process through which frames are constructed, disputed, contested and modified; and for the consequences this has for mobilization. In contrast, Oliver and Johnston (2005) see the interest of the frame perspective in studying the frames themselves (instead of the processes of framing) : cognitive schemata of individuals, organizations and social movements, which can be found with detailed textual analysis, and represent a snapshot of the frames at a point in time. The two approaches – focused on framing or on frames themselves – lead to different methodological strategies. To study framing, one needs to look at the sites of frame construction, debates, and disputes (Snow 2008). To study frames, one needs to emphasize in greater details the documents produced by organizations (Johnston 2005).

In the discursive section of my conceptual chapter it was explained that the framing process is my key concern. This is the reason why I pushed further the conceptualization of discourse with the theory of Laclau and Mouffe, who conceptualize the articulation of discursive chains of equivalence in a context of antagonism. In addition to this theoretical development, this choice to focus on framing has implications on the methods and data used for the discourse analysis, and on the manner the case studies are then presented and narrated.

We saw in the conceptual chapter a criticism to the literature on collective action frames : that it gave a very static view of discourse production. The arguments are presented as 'neatly packaged' in mottos by 'movement entrepreneurs', without the context of their negotiation in the coalition and with the exterior (Cefaï 2007; Steinberg 1998). Focusing on the process of framing is meant to present the frames through the actual tests that they went through, and that my data collection tools allowed me to observe. It is important to consider, in the spirit of Laclau and Mouffe, the hegemonic elements of discourse that are encountered by discourse coalitions in concrete situations (following their notion of articulation). My *parti pris* for the process of framing means that I present the case studies in a narrative fashion: the discursive categories from actors are presented in their dynamic context. Only afterward, in the chapter comparing the four case studies, is the process of place-framing, with its discursive and relational brokerage, considered in a more detached fashion from the detailed contexts of the case studies.

Argumentative discourse analysts have also argued for the value of looking at concrete sites of debates to understand the force of arguments and the constitution of discourse coalitions (Chateauraynaud 2011, Hajer 2005) :

Key to Argumentative Discourse Analysis (ADA) is the examination of what is being said to whom, and in what context. The axiom is that, in uttering statements, people react to one another and thus produce meaning interactively. This emphasis on argumentation as interplay in the context of practices puts methodological constraints on the way in which data can be interpreted and indeed accessed. Ideally, an argumentative discourse analysis is based on the detailed analysis of accounts of these interactions. (Hajer 2005, 305-306).

Debates offer a window to look at arguments put at test. A frame, constituted by a chain of equivalence, goes through a series of tests in relation to the larger discursive field and the different affiliations of participating actors. These tests can lead to the adoption of different

interpretative repertoires. To study framing as I have conceptualized it, I also identify frames (utopian chains of equivalence and their interpretative repertoires). I thus needed, for my analysis, both to rely on the analysis of concrete interactive debates *and* of “social texts that are collectively produced and generally accepted as representing a group's position” (Johnston 2005:240). Numerous texts referred to in the debates needed to be analyzed to further understand the stakes. In addition, interviews with participants are complementary data to the analysis of these produced texts, especially when interviewees can recall the tests their frame when through and their implications meaning for the collective they are part of.

Corpus of discourse analysis

The discourse analysis started with the analysis of the transcriptions of debates on the topic on which the collective is mobilizing. For each case, a two-year time frame was defined, based on the frequency of events related to the theme of mobilization. This restriction does not mean that the context from the previous years is not presented. In the contrary, I start each section by giving the context of collective action and how past events participated to creating a set of opportunities and constraints. This context is however presented using secondary sources, analyses from other authors on the question. For each case study, the discourse analysis is done in the identified time frame. This time restriction is important because the chains of equivalence continue to be contested and re-assembled. But I looked at a snapshot of these processes, snapshot representing periods of intense discourse production and contestation on the topic. In three of the four cases, this time frame of more intense debate coincided with my field work (field work which started in 2010 in Montreal, but was mostly conducted in 2011-2012); I could thus also conduct some direct (non-participant) observations of some events. In all cases, the events had occurred not too long ago, allowing interviewees to still have fresh memories of what occurred and how they and their coalitions were involved. In Rotterdam The Hague, the years 2011 and 2012 were chosen because they were rich in discourse production on transport issues; as evidenced by the number of infrastructure projects debated in the region and the opposition campaigns deployed in 2011 and 2012.³⁴ The time frame 2011-2012 is also

³⁴ Several projects of highway infrastructures were in the planning stage and had been introduced in previous arenas of debates in Rotterdam The Hague. The highway project NWO, that I consider in chapter 6, had been introduced in a Rotterdam masterplan participation, but this had been contested as insufficient to make a choice on the highway route. Hence, in the chosen time frame of 2011 and 2012, the project NWO was the topic of public consultations and several parliamentary debates, which I look at, and for which both public and civic actors produced much discourse. The civic coalitions also launched their campaigns in 2011. After 2012 some meetings and one debate were held on the integration of the highway in the landscape; other elements of the project were still contested, but there were no remaining public arenas of debates on the topic.

the period when the campaign 'Smart working = smart travel', was given more impulse³⁵. In Montreal, the number of events on the highway interchange Turcot pointed to the years 2009 and 2010 as a period of more intense discussion and discourse production³⁶. On the collectives for the promotion of traffic calming in Montreal, I was forced to consider two time-frames, because of how closely participants, in their documents and interviews, referred to the links between the present period (2010-2011) and the previous period of 2006-2007, when the topic had first been put on the agenda by actors from the health sector.³⁷

Besides the time period, the debates were chosen by using the following criteria : 1) issue (car alternatives) and presence of key actors from the collective studied, 2) opportunities for interactions on the issue (not only informative events, but room for debates, questions and interactions), 3) confirmation in interviews of the importance of the debate for the collective and their defense of their discursive frame (certain debates were abandoned after comments from interviewees, others were added), and finally 4) availability of the transcription of the debate (exceptionally, press coverage was also used).

We can see in Tables 3.2 to 3.5 the debates or discursive events studied for each case, and the nature of the data used for the discourse analysis of the debate. The material for the analysis of discursive events had to differ depending on the position of the discourse coalition – from

³⁵ The campaign 'Smart working = smart travel' started in 2011 and was subsidized by the central Dutch government until the end of 2012. 2011 and 2012 were thus years of more intense network building and discourse production. After 2012 the businesses took complete responsibility of this platform. Before 2011 mobility management with employers was also tackled but more through constraining contracts between regional public authorities and employers. In 2011, this way of proceeding was transformed into a more business led approach with the support of the platform just introduced.

³⁶ In the 2009-2010 time frame chosen, there were the following event related to the Turcot interchange : public hearings from the *Bureau d'audiences publiques sur l'environnement*, presentation of an alternative Turcot by civic actors (2010), presentation of an alternative Turcot by the City of Montreal (2010), presentation of the revised project by the Ministry of Transport, and reactions, in fall 2010. Before the 2009-2010 time frame, there were information sessions held by the Ministry and mobilization starting within the neighborhoods of the South West. After this time frame, GRUHM continued to produce documents and re-affirm its alternative, and there were participatory sessions organized to plan the arrival of new buses, involving *Mobilisation Turcot* and the *Centre d'écologie urbaine*.

³⁷ In 2006 was published the report from the Montreal public health agency on the health impacts of transport in Montreal, which was cited and used in the following years by civic and public actors. This report generated reactions in the press which we present. It also coincided with the start of the Coalition for traffic calming, with new funding made available by the Foundation Chagnon (Québec en Forme) for the promotion of active transport (both in 2007), and a provincial debate on the Highway Safety Code. The second time frame, 2010-2011, corresponds to the period of culmination when programs for traffic calming abound and become more structured, where a second debate on the Highway safety code occurs, and when traffic calming is the topic of antagonistic debates in the press; debates which are analyzed. 43% of the 178 journal articles citing traffic calming in local and regional newspaper in Montreal between 2007 and 2012 were published in 2011 (76 articles, in comparison to 16, 34, 23 in the previous years, and 16 in 2012) (using the database Eureka, which does not however cover the Anglophone journal *The Gazette*). Also, two of the three 'controversies' (one topic raising 15 articles or more) happened in 2011 and are presented (Plateau controversy and Firefighter controversy) as exemplary of the antagonism on traffic calming.

collaborative to contentious – and the types of arenas where antagonism manifested itself. In regard to the mobilization for traffic calming, the discourse coalition was in a partnership mode with the public authorities and there was no significant antagonism locally within arenas of interactions between public and civic actors. But there were important conflicts outside of their partnership on traffic calming, which were very much covered by the media. Hence in chapter 4, the antagonism is in large part considered through press coverage.

In contrast, the case of discourse coalitions against new highways went through several public debates that were very polarized and in which the antagonism is clearly visible. Overall the privileged source of data is the transcription of public debates on the issue, rather than media coverage. The reason this source of data is privileged is that those public debates directly involved brokers from the discourse coalitions I studied.

I complement these sources for the analysis of the debates presented in Tables 3.2 to 3.5 with documents and interviews (see below for more details on these two data sources). Here I speak not only of documents presenting at greater length the points of views from participant actors. There are also contextual documents that can inform about the “setting” and “staging” of the discursive event (Hajer 2005) : how is the event presented, who was invited, what was expected and were there some unexpected occurrences, what is the “procedure” for interaction, what maps and figures are presented, and what is presented as the relevant institutional and organizational contexts. These documents served to contextualize the debates and their meanings for the discourse coalitions.

The corpus for the discourse analysis consisted in the transcription of the debates and the documents presenting further the actors' points of view, as we see in Tables 3.2 to 3.5. It is especially the documents giving more information on the contested issues in the debates (what we will below characterize as the contested 'nodes') that were analyzed. I then traced back what documents had been produced by each actor explaining further his point of view on the contested node, or reacting on the conclusion of the debate regarding it. The documents' temporality varied more than the time frames of the debates : they could have been produced before that time frame or shortly after the debates I analyzed.

Table 3.2 *Discursive events analyzed for the coalition for traffic calming in Montreal*

Time	Debates	Documentary/filmed data of the debate	Additional documentary data on contested nodes
2006	Reactions to the report from Public Health Agency	Press coverage, documents from civic actors	
2007	Parliamentary commission on modification to Highway Safety Code	Transcription of debate with video (public)	Briefs submitted by brokers
2010	Second parliamentary commission on modification to Highway Safety Code	Transcription of debate with video (public)	Briefs submitted by brokers, Analysis and recommendations from the Table on Road Safety from the MTQ
2010	Public assembly on the assessment report of the Montreal transportation plan	Video of the event, document with synthesis of recommendations	Briefs submitted by brokers, reactions on their web pages and in press releases
2011	Controversies on traffic calming in the press (Plateau and Firefighter)	Press coverage (Eureka search, with local and regional newspapers)	Reactions from brokers on their web pages, in press releases and during observed civic events

Table 3.3 *Discursive events analyzed for the opposition to the Turcot complex in Montreal*

Time	Debates	Documentary/filmed data of the debate	Additional documentary data on contested nodes
2009	Public hearings on the Turcot project, Bureau d'audiences publiques sur l'environnement (BAPE)	- Transcription of the public hearings from the BAPE - Final report with synthesis and recommendations from the BAPE (public)	Briefs submitted by brokers
Spring 2010	Presentations of alternatives Turcot (Turcot 375 from civic actors and Turcot project from the City of Montreal), and reactions	- Press releases, video of press conferences - Parliamentary debate on budget study from the Ministry of Transport, including reactions on the Ministry's response to the alternative from the city: transcriptions (public)	Documents and web pages from brokers presenting further their alternative
Fall 2010	Presentation of revised Turcot project by MTQ, and reactions	Press releases, video of press conferences, web page of <i>Comité Vigilance Turcot</i>	Reactions from brokers on their web pages and in press releases

Table 3.4 *Discursive events analyzed for the opposition to the Nieuwe Westelijk Oeververbinding (NWO) in the Rotterdam The Hague area*

Time	Debates	Documentary data of the debate	Additional documentary data on contested nodes
January-June 2011	Participatory process over the NWO	Synthesis of the briefs from participants and response from the NWO project team, by the Center Public Participation	Reactions to the framing of the debate by discursive brokers, on their web pages and in press releases
June 2011	Debate on annual transport investment 2011 (MIRT), Commission on Infrastructure and Environment	Transcription of the parliamentary debate (public)	
December 2011	Debate on annual transport investments 2012 (MIRT), Commission on Infrastructure and Environment	Transcription of the parliamentary debate (public)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Documents published by the discursive brokers to influence the debate and inform parliament members, - Subsequent reactions to the debate on their webpages and in press releases
December 2011-March 2012	Questions and answer to the Minister of Infrastructure and Environment on the NWO	Written document with questions and answers	- Preliminary analyses published by discursive brokers and sent to parliament members to influence their position over the NWO
April 2012	Parliamentary debate on NWO (leading to the vote)	Transcription of the parliamentary debate (public)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Documents published by the discursive brokers to influence the debate and inform parliament members - Subsequent reactions to the debate on their webpages and in press releases
December 2012	Debate on Blankenburgtunnel (the NWO option chosen) during the Debate on annual transport investments 2013 (MIRT).	Transcription of the parliamentary debate (public)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Documents published by the discursive brokers to influence the debate and inform parliament members - Subsequent reactions to the debate on their webpages and in press releases

Table 3.5 *Discursive events analyzed for the discourse coalition 'Smart working, smart travelling' in the Netherlands*

Time	Debates	Documentary data of the debate	Additional documentary data on contested nodes
March 2011	Symposium over regional fast cycling routes	Summary of the presentations and plenary debates; documents of the presentations	- Fietsberaad's (Cycling expertise center) evaluation of the pilot projects of fast cycling routes
June 2011	Debate on annual transport investment 2011 (MIRT), Commission on Infrastructure and Environment	Transcription of the parliamentary debate (public)	
June 2011	Debate from the Commission on Infrastructure and Environment on the fight against congestion.	Transcription of the parliamentary debate (public)	- Letter from the Minister presenting her program 'Better Use' (Beter Benutten) - Reactions of <i>Platform Smart Working Smart Travelling</i> and <i>Natuur&Milieu</i> on the announced budget for the program 'Better Use'
December 2011	Debate on annual transport investment 2012 (MIRT), Commission on Infrastructure and Environment	Transcription of the parliamentary debate (public)	- Letter from the Minister presenting the measures chosen by the regions under the program 'Better Use'

The documents varied in forms. Certain actors important in discourse production had written reports and position papers (or planning documents from the public actors); others had briefs (in the public hearings) or only pamphlets, press releases or web pages. These different types of documents were used. They were archived in the bibliographic software Zotero before their inclusion in the software for qualitative analysis Atlas.ti, as explained below. Zotero is a bibliographic tool, which also allows to easily archive web pages. It was thus useful to keep the trace of otherwise changing internet pages and transform them in documents easily transferred to my tool of analysis.

Method of discourse analysis

The discourse analysis of each debate consisted in identifying the discursive 'nodes', that is the points that many participants aimed at giving meaning to. The nodes concern the definition of the problem in the public debate, definition that implies certain solutions and not others. For example, would road collisions and traffic unsafety be a matter of bad behaviours, in need of more regulations and sanctions, or a matter of bad street design? Is the reconstruction of a road interchange an isolated infrastructure question and status-quo procedure or an opportunity to change the mobility patterns in the city-region? Each discursive node, for example traffic unsafety, is defined in different ways by participants, within the debate. Chains of equivalence link several terms together, to give meaning to the node. We will see for example that regarding traffic unsafety, civic actors defined it in its relation to vulnerable populations, street design and local communities.

In each debate analyzed, the nodes were identified, together with their dominant and counter definitions. This was done through two rounds of reading and coding of the transcriptions: a first coding in the beginning of my analysis, and a second coding after documents and interviews had been analyzed. The first coding of the debates consisted in noting the *recurrent themes* and the *participants' positioning in relation to the issue*. The second coding consisted in identifying more precisely the actors' presentation or refutation of the utopian chain of equivalence.

At this point, let me restate the definition of chain of equivalence from Laclau and Mouffe. Equivalence consists in the linkage of different elements in a common identity, to structure a discourse in giving meaning to a node. Other discourse analysts also speak of 'Connections Building Tools', which consist in locating in texts how "language is used to connect or disconnect things and to make things relevant to each other or not" (Gee 2011, 126). When reading a text the analyst needs to ask herself or himself what elements are connected together in the arguments and stories presented; and more specifically what connections serve to define or re-define the contested node. When the data set is small, this can be done with small scale grammatical analyses on the type of language connectors, for example. But on large data sets it works on the level of political ideas: it consists in identifying when, within a statement of an actor, a link is made between two entities to support the actor's definition of the node.

The analysis of the debates did not always allow to capture with precision the chain of equivalence, but it pointed to the nodes contested and to key connections made. The debate also pointed to sources where actors further presented their position on those connections or

equivalence. To have a full account of the chain of equivalence, I needed to analyze the documents produced by the organizations and individual actors.

I followed a coding procedure inspired by grounded theory, which includes the most detailed procedure for the qualitative analysis of textual data (Saldana 2009; Bowen 2009). As I said, Laclau and Mouffe offer a discourse theory and methods at the conceptual level, but one needs to operationalize them. My procedure consisted in identifying in the data recurrent ideas, these recurrent ideas were categories that can vary in a range of different possibilities, sub-categories if you like. This is a standard procedure taken from coding methods from grounded theory (Saldana 2009, 8–11). For example, mentions of traffic safety, a contested node in the debate, were coded. Subsequently, the different ways to speak of traffic safety were regrouped in categories. This allowed to identify the chains of equivalence (what different elements traffic safety is linked to) for the utopian frame and the interpretative repertoires. Interpretative repertoires are interpretations of the chains of equivalence; they thus contain more information than the chains of equivalence themselves. The coding thus allows to go from a more general and abstract discursive level of the 'contested node' to a more refined level of chains of equivalence and even more grounded interpretative repertoires. Throughout the process, analytical memos (Saldana 2009, 32–44) were written and attached to specific quotations. They included notes on the identification, and on-going work of analysis, of what seemed recurrent chains of equivalence and interpretative repertoires, visible in different documents. They could be modified and further elaborated throughout the process, each time a new quotation brought a new perspective on the discourses at plays. These memos were opportunities to write notes on the commonalities found (same chain of equivalence); but also the flexibility and differences within it (leading eventually to the identification of interpretative repertoires). We can see an example of this process in the Table 3.6 below.

In addition, I also coded recurrent argumentative figures that could not yet be identified as an equivalence, but that later in the analytical process served also that objective. Such argumentative figures were for example : 'Public coordination takes time'; 'Need of radical action', 'Need to close the focet of new car circulation', 'Structural need for a new highway', or 'Need of a more regional/metropolitan approach'. In addition, I had codes referring to documents that actors pointed to in their argumentation. Finally, I also had codes related to the analysis of networks, partnerships and coalition processes, which I discuss below.

Table 3.6 *Coding technique for the discourse analysis*

Example of code	Position in the discourse analysis	Associated information also attached to the quotation coded
Traffic safety	Contested node in one debate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Actor (s) formulating the node/equivalence/ interpretative repertoire or contesting it; • Document(s) where it is found; • Associated discursive elements • Analytical memos
Traffic safety_vulnerability	One equivalence	
Traffic safety_street design or Traffic safety_behavioral	Two competing equivalences	
Traffic calming_spaces prioritized local	One equivalence	
Traffic calming_spaces prioritized_school or shops/ local streets/ arteries	Variations on the equivalence; leading eventually to the identification of interpretative repertoires	

To help in the coding process I used a computer-aided qualitative data analysis software, Atlas.ti. As Friese (2012, 1) emphasizes, to respond to some confusion in regard to the different possible uses of software in qualitative analysis, such software “does not actually analyze data; it is simply a tool for supporting the process of qualitative data analysis” . Atlas.ti allows to retrieve rapidly all quotations (and images and maps) linked to the code I myself first coded. It makes the analysis of many documents much easier because the software memorizes and organizes links between a selected quotation, one or multiple codes linked to it and analytical memos. It thus allows an organization of the coded data. Outputs can be printed out from the software per category, actor, or specific code. A printed output can include for example all quotations tied to one interpretative repertoire, with the identified documents, actors, and analytical memos.

The textual discourse analysis was also complemented by interviews. As Kvale and Brinkman summarize: “a discursive interviewer will be attentive to, and in some cases stimulate, confrontations between the different discourses at play”(2009, 156). The interviews were an opportunity to have participants express their utopian frame or interpretative repertoire in their own words, in situating it within a concrete situation for example, or in speaking of its elaboration or negotiation. This discourse was situated, often naturally by participants and sometimes by suggestive questions, in relation to other conflicting discourses. Potter and Wetherell emphasize that interviews, in discourse analysis, can serve to observe the diversity in the participants'

accounting practices (Potter and Wetherell 1987, 164–165). This function allows to locate the contested and negotiated nodes, and the presence of different interpretative repertoires. In an interview, this function can be facilitated by introducing and re-introducing a theme at different moments. Variability was observed in the way participants described their experiences of the different 'tests' their place-framing went through. First, how they experienced the different tests with the exterior of their coalition, how their utopian chain of equivalence was received in diverse debates. Second, how they experienced the modifications or transitions from the utopian frame into interpretative repertoires in their own group or coalition. Relevant parts of the transcribed interviews were coded with the same intent of identifying chains of equivalence and interpretative repertoires as described in relation to the document analysis. This coding was added to the codes from documents. Focus groups, also, allowed to cross-check results from the documentary analysis and the interviews.

The interviews with targeted public authorities included questions to capture, in particular, their discourse's imbrication and co-influence with that of civic actors. I speak of this process as 'discourse transformation'.

Measure of discourse transformation

This research endeavour implies not only the identification of the chains of equivalence and their interpretative repertoires. My research question is : Through what processes do coalitions for car alternatives articulate counter discourses challenging the dominant discourses on mobility? In challenging dominant discourses through counter discourses, coalitions wish to transform these dominant discourses. This change in discourses demands for some form of method to account for it. The method to account for discourse transformation is directly taken from the conceptual apparatus on discourse that I have presented. In the discourse theory from Laclau and Mouffe, the articulation process involves taking elements from the discursive surplus and connecting them with other elements to give meaning to nodes. This process is visible in the making of utopian frames and interpretative repertoires but also in the transformation of dominant discourses. The process of place-framing involves articulation. Through articulation, the new chain of equivalence, or interpretative repertoires of it, may change the wider discursive field and the definitions that the others make of the same contested nodes. Recall that what is peculiar about the conceptualization of articulation, is that frames and counter-frames struggle to define the same term, the node. In the process, they borrow more or less from one another in their

definition of the node, and this borrowing leads to transformations in discourse (Laclau and Mouffe 1987; Jorgenson and Phillips 2002; Esacove 2004).

A transformation of a dominant discourse thus includes change in the definition of a node and a change in the setting of the boundary between the hegemonic discourse and the counter discourse, each having possibly integrated elements from the other. At the most extreme case we would have a discourse dislocation, and the place-framing would have led to a new hegemonic interpretation of the object, with a completely new set of equivalences. Less extreme changes in some of the equivalences tied to a node, as visible in the discourses of actors, are also transformations. The transformation is even stronger if actors with control on the contested norm, and who can institutionalize and sediment it into rules and practices, adopt an equivalence from the discourse coalition. But it is not only about the institutionalization of new norms. It concerns also the publicly accepted definition of a node, how the issue becomes narrated differently after the debates and the work of the discourse coalition. Esacove (2004) speaks about this process of acceptance in her conclusion of the analysis of the framing and counter-framing process of abortion in the United States :

After years of exposure and repetition, the term and concept of PBA ['partial-birth' abortion] is widely accepted and integrated into the larger public narrative. Opponents of AR [abortion rights] almost exclusively constructed the social meaning of the term and when "partial-birth" is used, it evokes the larger discourse of AR opponents. This is not to imply that the meaning of PBA is not still a point of contention or that the term holds the same meaning for all (or even most) individuals. Rather, one can use the term with a strong degree of assurance that the reference and its associated allusions will be generally understood. (Esacove 2004, 94)

Esacove argues that discourse transformation, when following a discursive framing lens, can be observed also in the public narratives. When considering discourse transformation, he suggests we can look at changes of dominant discourses through new policy documents, but also through the manner certain controversies unfold, the ways they are reported in the press, or the manner individuals interpret them.

In the analysis of my cases, I identify dominant discourses, and their evolution in relation to the civic utopian frames, in the definitions of the contested nodes included in *public planning documents* or *argued for in the debates*.

3.4 Network analysis : studying coalition dynamics and relational brokerage

My analytical and data collection approach for social networks is directly linked to my combination of discourse, space, and network analysis. And particularly the fact that I focus on particular types of actors – the brokers – who are more determinant in terms of discourse production and coalition building. In the field of network analysis, Diani (2002) distinguishes between an interest in cognitive networks (perceptions of social relations by actors) and objective networks (structure of relation between actors). As a cultural approach to networks focusing on meaning production (Mische 2003; Mische 2011), this research combines an interest in both. The form of the network serves to understand what interactions and discourse production are enabled by the network structure, especially in terms of brokerage. The first objective of the network component of the analysis is to locate the key actors holding together the discourse coalitions : the relational brokers linking actors together through relations of trust, shared affiliations, exchange of resources and control. The second objective is to capture the dynamics and evolution of the coalition.

Delimitation of the social networks and identification of the brokers

How do I delimit the networks of actors under study? Two distinct approaches are used in network analysis to set up boundaries of a network (Marsden 1990; Diani 2002). The realist approach implies asking respondents the actors with which they share a relationship. A nominalist approach defines the network with a certain criterion, chosen by the observer, for example all organizations working on environmental issues in Milan; or all organizations having participated to a particular event (Diani 2002, 2003). I use a nominalist approach to set the boundaries of the networks, since I relied on documentary data identifying the participating actors to the civic programs and coalitions (this is often used in network analysis of social movements, Diani and McAdam 2003). I also asked, in interviews, questions on the embeddedness of participants in networks, but not to identify the networks. These questions sought to characterize the relations among actors, the perceptions of key actors, and the evolution of coalitions.

In my case studies, the nominalist criterion to select the actors were the following :

Chapter 4. Spaces for Traffic Calming in Montreal : actors participating to the programs promoting traffic calming in Montreal, in 2010-2011.

Chapter 5. Spaces of (car/public) transit in Montreal : actors involved in the opposition to the Minister of Transport's project for the reconstruction of the Turcot interchange, 2009-2010.

Chapter 6. Spaces saved from Highways in Rotterdam The Hague : actors participating in the coalitions opposing the new NWO highway connection, 2011-2012.

Chapter 7. Spaces of Innovation in work-related mobility, Rotterdam The Hague : actors participating to the mobility aspect of the campaign 'Smart working, smart travelling', 2011-2012.

My objective is not to offer a complete picture of all social ties involved in the activists' networks for car alternatives in Montreal and Rotterdam The Hague. This is far beyond the scope of this study and would have required a different empirical strategy (probably a standardized survey procedure). Even on the specific programs and coalitions of focus, I have not prioritized the study of social ties and their ramifications. Rather, I have prioritized the ties involved in the production of and adherence to place-frames, particularly the ones related to brokerage.

I focus on brokers, on their ties, and on the collective which is obtained from this brokerage, in dynamic terms. The scope of a collective is provided by the participating organizations identified with the simple criteria listed above. The network of actors identified by the nominalist criteria is not necessarily the exact same ensemble than the discourse coalition. The discourse coalition includes actors from outside the collective action network who may support the utopian frames : public actors or other civic organizations supporting certain discursive nodes, without actually being involved in the co-organizing and mobilizing process. I problematize the limits of the discourse coalition in two ways. First, through the brokerage needed for the coalition to maintain itself and include more participants; this is the relational part. Second, through the tensions expressed in the discourse coalition and the capacity of interpretative repertoires to hold the discourse coalition around the utopian frame; this is the discursive part.

Use of interviews, documents and focus groups for relational data

One origin of social network research is in qualitative and interpretative research, with the British social anthropologists' studies of communities (Scott 2000). Interpretative methods, as used here, are methods focused on the search for meaning produced in social relations. It is linked to the cultural approach to networks I have presented before, and of which the work of Mische (2008) – building on the web of affiliation from Simmel – is a good recent example. My data

collection techniques to capture brokerage and coalition dynamics, beyond the sole identification and delimitation steps already presented, are associated with this tradition.

To capture processes of brokerage and coalition dynamics, I asked a series of flexible questions in semi-structured interviews. Participants were asked, for example, to write or draw the actors with whom they worked on the topic. This question was not used to have the realist picture of the network, but to gain knowledge on their perception of the actors involved, and of their relations. I noticed in the first interviews how much participants reacted differently to the questions on their relations of collaborations. Some were very keen to speak about these relations and willingly drew all their network, discussing the influence, power and support of each actor; while other participants, often the most central actors, were much more cautious and feared that this depiction of their network could do them wrong. It was thus in other ways, through the discussion on the debates, discourses, or concrete projects, that I could get these participants to speak about their differentiated social relations and the perceptions they had of them. Those reformulations of the questions in relation to the reactions of the participants were meant to gather more from their perspective and avoid their reticences to speak, as introduced above.

This strategy contrasts with standardized survey questions used in network data collection, to identify a whole network from the same exact questions asked to each respondent. But research has shown that “people interpret relations in different ways; they forget people with whom they share relations, they misapprehend relations between their alters” (Marin and Wellman 2010, 21). And as stated, the network of actors had been identified in a nominalist fashion, with stated members of the collaboration projects in documents. Hence the interest was on the perception of the relations, especially in terms of affiliations, resources and control, as we will see below.

My interviews contained the following categories of questions on social networks and coalition-building :

- 1-The daily work (or engagement) of the person on the topic, in his organization;
- 2- The collaborations with actors outside his organization on this topic (naming the most important ones, discussing them, questioning about specific collaborations if not first cited);
- 3- The origin, objectives and evolution of coalitions (including how specific tensions are managed)
- 4- The perception of influent key actors, particularly the brokers in the collective, and the targeted authorities.

The interviews were transcribed and also coded in Atlas.ti, with a coding process similar to the one described in the discourse section, but this time on the topic of social relations and network dynamics. The relational coding included three types of codes. First a few codes came a priori, from the literature on concepts of collective action and brokerage, or from the problem setting on mobility (brokerage between scales, brokerage between local associations and regional organizations, brokerage between civil society and public authorities, mention of coalition and alliances). Second, most of the codes were inductive codes. What was at the beginning generally coded as brokerage became more refined into categories recurrently expressed in interviews, in the words of interviewees. The relation between actors 'interior' and 'exterior' to the neighborhood, for example, was coded. The phrase 'competition or complementarity between local actors' was also coded. Those codes could sometimes be related to relations and brokerage tied to specific interpretative repertoires I had identified in documents. In some instances an often mentioned specific breaking point in the coalition was coded as a relational event (and I considered the links with discourse). The third coding category consisted simply in coding references to actors. These codes gave a perspective on the most cited actors, but mostly on how certain key actors were presented by other actors in relations with them, on the topic discussed.

These three types of relational codes were used not only on the transcription of interviews, but also on the transcriptions of the focus groups and the transcriptions of the debates and individual documents. The way actors present and cite each other in documents and debates (and focus groups) provides information on their relations and on their exchange of resources and control.

Network representations

To represent synthetically the essential findings on networks in my case studies, I present schematic representations of networks. I show two types of network representations. In Chapter 4, I present a network of actors belonging to the same collaborative project. The actors participating to the same program for traffic calming are shown. This is based on the nominalist criterion presented above. The representation allows to see the more central and brokerage position of certain actors, the local leaders, and the diversity of their ties.

The second type of network representation shows the share of resources and the apparent levels of control from brokers. In these network representations, all the actors represented fill a certain brokerage role in the discourse coalition. The share of resources corresponds to what Lemieux discussed as "the transaction of habilitating or constraining resources from one actor to

another”, in the dynamics of coalition (Lemieux 1998:47). These resources can correspond to a passage of information, material and organizational resources, political support or relational resources coming from a large supporting network. This representation reflects coding results.

The ties of resources and control can be bi-directed or in one direction, if for example one actor is alone in providing resources in the relationship (Lemieux 1998). There might well be other relations that are not shown in the representation because they were not detected by my data collection techniques. Furthermore, the relations shown are only the ones relevant for the topic in question. If, for example, I discuss the networks involved in traffic calming, I will not show the relations and share of resources that relate to the opposition to highways, or to other community activities. The ties shown are selective : they represent the ties linked to the topic under discussion. More details and explanations are provided for each case; the network representation is only meant to schematically illustrate what is explained in the text.

Conclusion

In this methodological chapter, I have presented the process-based comparative research design, the choice of respondents, the data collection tools as well as the methods of discourse and network analysis. Document analysis, semi-directed interviews and focus groups provided for the data of this thesis, they complemented each other and allowed to conduct both a discourse and an interpretative network analysis of the four case studies. I provided details on the manner the field work and the analysis was conducted, and the ways I tried to overcome challenges associated with empirical work. The objective for the use of various data collection tools was also to triangulate the data, minimize bias, and arrive at a richer understanding of the phenomenon observed.

The results of the investigation are presented in the following chapters. Case by case, discourse coalitions are presented, in their context, their network of actors, their utopian frames and the interpretative repertoires. I start with the two case-studies in Montreal: first with the case on traffic calming, and second with the opposition to Turcot. I follow with the two case-studies in the region of Rotterdam The Hague: first with the opposition to the highway project of the *Nieuwe Westelijk Oeververbinding*, and second with the discourse coalition for 'Smart working smart travelling'. Each of these case-studies provides a unique story of collective action and discourse

evolution, which I try to show as such, in using the conceptual apparatus proposed. Their resemblances and differences, and the manner their convergence and variability give substance to the hypothesized process of place-framing, are discussed afterward, in chapter 8.

CHAPTER 4. SPACES OF TRAFFIC CALMING IN MONTREAL

The first mobilization investigated in Montreal concerns car traffic calming and the associated promotion of walking and cycling. In the last seven years, there has been in Montreal an impressive convergence of environmental, social, health and transport actors around a series of programs on this issue. Civic actors have grouped around a utopia of local alternatives to cars. This utopia was based around the creation of a utopian frame for the building of a local community which would enable walking and cycling. As we have seen in the chapter on the conceptual framework (chapter 2), this relational place-frame faces two tasks. First, there is the test of antagonism in the larger discursive field: how is traffic calming generally, and the utopian frame of civic actors more specifically, received in the larger public sphere? What hegemonic discourse can be heard in the public sphere and where does it weaken or invigorate the discourse of the discursive brokers? Second, the frame has to be grounded within the network of collective action and the different affiliations and loyalties from claim-makers, in a concrete urban context.

The first section of this chapter situates the collective action on traffic calming and slow modes in Montreal in relation to previous mobilizations on such topic. The second section introduces the contemporary programs and projects elaborated by civic actors, as well as the networks implementing them. The third section considers the utopian frame of civic actors. To do so, I analyze the discursive chains of equivalence that brokers have mobilized for traffic calming projects, and the extent to which they were contested in different arenas of debate. Fourth, I consider how this utopian frame concretizes itself in interpretative repertoires. Two interpretative repertoires are delineated: one already more institutionalized in current norms of traffic regulations and urban planning of 'protected neighborhoods', and a second repertoire of 'traffic calming on spaces of mobility'. These two interpretative repertoires of the place-frame offer a different solution to the controversy about the 'correct' spaces for traffic calming. The way these contributions from civic actors influenced the geographies of governance is the topic of the fifth and last section of the chapter.

4.1 Context of collective action : from user demands to environmental and public health-driven collaborations

The promotion of walking, cycling, and a reduced place to cars, is not a new field of activism in Montreal. Mobilization, however, was in the previous decades mostly user-based, asking for more and better infrastructure or services, with a cyclist advocacy group (*Le Monde à Bicyclette*, see Morissette 2009) and a public transit lobby (Dagenais 1982; Transport 2000 2011)³⁸. *Le Monde à Bicyclette* was created in 1975 to advocate space and facilities for cyclists in the city, with demonstrations, occupations of places and the painting of cycling paths on streets. Montreal was then experiencing a boom in the number of cyclists, but there was almost no bicycle paths, no bridge open to bikes to get out of the Montreal island, and the metro was forbidden with bicycles (Morissette 2009). *Vélo Québec*, an organization which previously focused on cyclo-tourism, extended its mission in 1979 to also work for the rights and security of daily cyclists (*Vélo Québec* 2013a). A similar user-based approach was visible in the public transit advocacy, with *Transport 2000* created in 1977 to secure funding from higher governments in public transit, especially to save existing train infrastructure, to demand metro extensions and more buses, and to request low fares (Int TR; Transport 2000 2011; Dagenais 1982).³⁹

The associative landscape on transport and mobility issues broadened through time, first with the greater involvement of environmental actors, and second with the involvement of public health actors (Int TR; Morissette 2009). For example, the transit-users lobby *Transport 2000* organized in the 1990s a 'pure air day' in partnership with ecological groups. *Le Monde à Bicyclette* also participated at that time in a larger environmental coalition with *Transport 2000* called "Coalition auto:stop". Environmental organizations started to focus more on transport and urban issues, which they related to climate change and air pollution by car vehicles. The Ministry of Environment also institutionalized civic platforms to promote regional collaboration in the realm of environmental protection: environmental regional councils. These councils were created in different regions of Quebec starting in the 1970s, but became recognized and funded by the provincial government in 1995 (Simard and Lepage 2004; RNCREQ 2013). In Montreal, the

³⁸ There was also the opposition to the east-west freeway to preserve Montreal urban neighborhoods from destruction, seen in chapter 1, which was not linked with the needs for infrastructure from users of alternative modes (as accounted in the text above), but to the other values activists gave to urban spaces (such as heritage and housing).

³⁹ This part on the history of activism on car alternatives in Montreal draws on collaborative work with Laurence Bherer in the preparation of a joint article. This work was however not included in the final publication (Van Neste and Bherer 2013).

environmental regional council, *Conseil régional de l'environnement de Montréal* (CRE-Mtl), was created in 1996. Another important civic organization, the *Centre d'écologie urbaine de Montréal*, was also created in 1996 to work on socio-ecological issues with community participation, and it eventually tackled transport issues. *Équiterre*, a provincial socio-environmental organization created in 1993 after the Rio World Summit, was based in Montreal and has been very involved on issues related to climate change. In this context, environmental actors came to take the leadership of coalitions on car alternatives issues in the 2000s, at the expense of user-based organizations, but in the spirit of always forming broad coalitions. The issue of social justice in the access and affordability of public transit was thus not the only and primary motive of mobilization on transport, like it has been the case in other movements in North America (such as the famous Bus Riders' union of Los Angeles (Grengs 2002)). Instead, environment and quality of life have been key issues.

Environmental actors first focused on public transit issues, with a *Coalition for public transit* from 2002 to 2005, and on the contestation of highway projects put forth by the Ministry of Transport (see next chapter). Then, CRE-Mtl, at the suggestion of the Montreal public health agency (DSP), took the mandate of boosting collective action in Montreal on the topic of traffic calming. As we will see, several of the afore mentioned environmental actors got involved on this issue and the related promotion of walking and cycling.

The appropriation of the theme of traffic calming by environmental actors happened in the context of a strong involvement of the public health sector on transport and mobility issues, both in the province of Quebec in general and in Montreal in particular. In Montreal, the public health agency (DSP) has been important both in terms of expertise and of the support given to mobilization. Its role is very much related with the creation of a new team within the DSP which focused on the determinants of health in the built environment (as opposed to a focus on populations). There is no comparable team in the other departments of public health in the province (Int DSP1&2). It was built in the early 2000s after discussions and conferences with environmentalists newly engaged in transport and planning issues at the urban level (Int DSP1). This happened also at a moment where the environmental determinants of health in the urban built environment was a field in emergence in public health research and intervention in North America. One major theme of this new team has been transport, the focus of their Annual Report in 2006. The report presented traffic issues as one of the most important cause of health hazards in Montreal, considering air pollution, collisions and the low physical activity associated

with car mobility (DSP 2006). The injuries caused by road collisions were considered “one of the biggest international epidemics, according to an expression used by the World Health Organization” (DSP 2006, 9). Hence, 'epidemiological' and field studies were conducted by the agency and its partners on the correlations of collisions with localization, the characteristics of the built environment and the amount of car traffic (King, Morency, and Lapierre 2005; Morency and Cloutier 2006; CEUM and DSP 2008; Morency et al. 2011; Morency 2012; Paquin 2012; Morency et al. 2013). The geo-localized data showed that in central boroughs of Montreal, collisions demanding hospitalization were reported for more than one fourth of all intersections. The reports argued that this result showed the extent of the problem, and called for broad and generic interventions in the built environment (Morency and Cloutier 2006; DSP 2006, 58).

This result is thus associated with specific strategies of action from the DSP. Directly in the chapter of the report documenting collisions, examples were given of traffic calming measures reducing the problem by redesigning streets (2006, 58). This emphasis on traffic calming was reiterated in the strategies of intervention at the end of the report, along with investment in public transit, dissuasive measures for car use (pricing use and parking) and dense urban development. In the 2010-2015 public health regional plan, these strategies of intervention were re-stated (DSP and Thérien 2012, 5). It was explained how the agency acted upon them through the following fields of intervention: acquiring scientific proofs, influencing public policies, supporting mobilization and evaluating the effects (2012, 9). The research results (the 2006 report and following studies going further on the geography of collisions, as cited above) and the associated strategies for a reduction of car use, gave fuel to mobilize for car alternatives for several years, with a scientifically 'demonstrated' link⁴⁰ between traffic unsafety and the physical designs of streets. Since 2006, the DSP itself presented its research results to civic and public actors on all potential occasions, especially during public hearings on car infrastructure and during meetings of residents' committees working on traffic calming⁴¹. As one central civic actor argued :

⁴⁰ On which researchers are still working within universities and in partnership with public health actors (Cloutier and Apparicio 2008, Morency et al. 2011, Morency et al. 2013).

⁴¹ Briefs from the DSP were submitted to the public debates on the following topics related to traffic calming and the promotion of active transport : Charter of the pedestrian (2006); Revision of the arterial network (2007); Transportation plan (2007); Provincial commissions on Transport Safety and modifications to highway safety code (2007), Organization of a Forum Transport (2007); Traffic calming measures around Notre-Dame (2008), Municipal consultation on regulations for cycling paths (2012) On urban redevelopments projects : Bonaventure, Outremont, Norampec, Griffintown; in addition to debates on highway segments which we will discuss in 4.2. They were also present in several assemblies of information for citizens, organized with the Environmental Regional Council or at the demand of residents' associations for traffic calming (Int DSP2, Int CRE1, Int MT).

Well the Public Health Agency, it's the motor of traffic calming. They also financed what we have done. Without them, it would not have reached such proportions... [...] I have the feeling that it would have taken much less importance. A group might have tried, with all its strength, to raise the issue, but otherwise... It really was them who tackled this issue from the beginning and pushed it.⁴²

This dedication of the DSP to the cause was not well received by everybody. An editorialist in Montreal's most read newspaper complained about the agency's alarmist comments on the invasion of streets by cars:

Public bodies also yield to the activists temptation and switch to political action, in taking advantage of their resources and credibility. We had a good example this week, with the Public Health Agency of Montreal who devoted its annual report to the mischiefs of automobile transport. (Dubuc 2006)⁴³

And a year later, in an article entitled 'Les fous de la santé':

This expansion in the field of action of the public health agency had perverse effects. [...] With the arrogance of those who are convinced to do good, public health is becoming a public threat, which goes in all directions, abusing the moral and scientific authority of the medical world. (Dubuc 2007)⁴⁴

The work of the DSP was thus perceived by some as a real threat in terms of changes in public policies regarding cars. However, the vast majority of the Montreal newspaper articles discussing the DSP's 2006 report borrowed the same alarmist tone of the agency, trusting its expertise and credibility, and thus called for action in regard to traffic safety.⁴⁵

⁴² "Bien la DSP c'est le moteur de l'apaisement de circulation, ils sont dans le financement aussi de ce qu'on a fait. Sans eux, ça aurait pas levé comme ça, ça aurait pas levé... c'est vraiment... ils se sont mis en place dans ce cadre-là. J'ai l'impression que ça l'aurait pu prendre beaucoup moins d'ampleur, peut-être fait à bout de bras par un groupe qui cherchait à faire ramasser le dossier mais si non... C'était eux qui ont pris le dossier au début et ils l'ont poussé."

⁴³ "des organismes publics cèdent eux aussi à la tentation militante et basculent vers l'action politique, en profitant de leurs moyens et de leur crédibilité. On en a eu un bel exemple, cette semaine, quand la Direction de la santé publique de l'Agence de la santé et des services sociaux de Montréal a consacré son rapport annuel aux méfaits du transport automobile."

⁴⁴ "Cet élargissement du champ d'action de la santé publique a cependant eu des effets pervers.[...] Avec l'arrogance de ceux qui sont convaincus de faire le bien, la santé publique est en passe de devenir un danger public, qui va dans toutes les directions, en abusant de l'autorité morale et scientifique dont jouit le monde médical."

⁴⁵ A press research with the search engine Eureka was conducted with the term 'Direction de la santé publique' for the years 2006 to 2011. The objective was to see reactions to the publication of their main report in 2006 and to other publications or events they organized on traffic calming related issues.

In parallel to this new expertise and advocacy, the public health sector played a role through the structuration of philanthropic funding for the promotion of healthy daily practices for the youth (Ducharme and Lesemann 2011; Charbonneau 2011; Ducharme 2012). This funding was secured by the involvement of a new large actor of private philanthropy in Quebec, the Chagnon Foundation. The non-profit organization *Québec en forme* (Québec in good shape) had been created in 2002 to promote physical activity for youth, with a partnership between the Ministry of Health and Social Services and the new private Chagnon Foundation. Wishing to work on the prevention of poverty (through the focus on youth education, good habits and a safe living environment), this Foundation increased significantly the funds available to community organizations since 2002, while steering their priorities in a certain direction (Ducharme and Lesemann 2011)⁴⁶. The law on the *Fund to promote daily healthy practices* instituted this mixed funding. Starting in 2007, 20 million is injected every year into *Québec en Forme* for a 10-year horizon, both by the private foundation and by the provincial government, for a total of 400 millions (Chagnon Foundation 2013; Ministère de la santé et des services sociaux 2013). The mission of *Québec en Forme* is described follows:

Today, in order to encourage young people to adopt and maintain a physically active lifestyle and healthy eating habits, *Québec en Forme* focuses on three key areas :

Helping to **mobilize communities**: The combined efforts of young people, parents, teachers, practitioners, stakeholders, school principals, mayors and health specialists can encourage communities to take action to ensure their young people will get moving and eat better.

Changing environments: Targeting individuals is not enough. We have to create the necessary conditions for young people to make healthy choices (making it easier to get to school using active transportation, for example).

Transforming social norms: Social norms are what influence our behaviour in society. Everyone agrees that it's a good idea to be more active and eat better, but is that actually the norm for our social behaviour? *Québec en Forme* is working to make that happen. (Chagnon Foundation 2013, citation provided in English on the website)

⁴⁶ A mixed managing committee (Société de gestion du Fonds pour la promotion des saines habitudes de vie) was created to manage the Fund and choose the funded projects. It is composed of four members chosen by the Ministry of Health and Social Services and four members chosen by the Chagnon Foundation (Ministère de la santé et des services sociaux 2013).

This mission implies that several civic organizations funded by *Québec en forme* had a strong incentive to frame their programs and interventions from a public health perspective, focusing on physical activity and the transformation of the built environment to favor healthy daily habits (Ducharme and Lesemann 2011). As we see in the quotation above, the Foundation and the non-profit organization *Québec en Forme* (co-created and co-funded with the government) also put much emphasis on local mobilization which is expected to allow local communities to eventually autonomously manage their projects. *Québec en Forme* thus finances projects only temporarily (Chagnon Foundation 2013; Ducharme and Lesemann 2011; Charbonneau 2011). This funding from *Québec en forme* became a privileged source of revenue for civic actors wanting to promote active transportation (walking and cycling), as well as car traffic calming making environments more favorable to walking and cycling.

To sum up, the new involvement of civic actors on traffic calming came in the following context: new funding, a greater involvement of environmental actors in broad coalitions for car alternatives (broader than transport users-demands), and a new public health expertise on the efficacy of targeting the built environments to increase traffic safety and the practice of walking and cycling.

In regard to the re-design of streets, the demands by civic actors associated with these new programs for traffic calming were not very different than the demands made by *Vélo Québec* and *Le Monde à Bicyclette* twenty to thirty years ago (bicycle paths, safer infrastructure for non-car users, reduction in the place devoted to cars). But these demands were put in a totally different spatial context, discursively constructed, of the neighborhood and of the dynamic local community. This spatial context was probably favored by the involvement of environmental actors and the guidelines of the public health funding and expertise (the mobilization of local communities is explicitly an objective for both). We will now look at the specific programs for traffic calming that civic actors elaborated in that context.

4.2 The civic programs for traffic calming

Brokers structuring collective action

In this context, several organizations from different sectors of intervention became involved on the topic of promoting walking and cycling. My compilation (based on data assembled from civic

actors' programs on this issue and a database from the DSP)⁴⁷ counts at least 165 civic actors (which include schools committees, community organizations and civic associations of various types) involved in the promotion of active transport and/or traffic calming on the island of Montreal from 2006 to 2011.

Environmental, transport-based and urban-focused organizations became particularly involved in the building of programs for the promotion of traffic calming. They developed a recipe for action, to be implemented in diverse neighborhoods with other groups. Among the organizations indexed in the repertoires cited above, only 25 (hence 15%) were not involved in the four civic programs⁴⁸. The civic actors designing these programs were thus structuring the discourses and practices of collective action, while following objectives from their funding agencies. These civic actors became real experts of both processes of participatory planning and of the design characteristics to make streets safe and liveable. The networks that they built for the implementation of their programs and the discourses they put in place worked on the two levels of local participation and change in the built environment. This created a utopian frame of a dynamic local community enabling walking and cycling.

Approaching traffic calming from different starting points, the four important programs were elaborated from 2006 to 2011, as we can see in Table 4.1. Except for the *Coalition for traffic calming*, the programs were originally promoting changes that would enable walking and cycling, while not specifically referring to the concept of traffic calming. For all the programs however,

⁴⁷The DSP has counted up to 144 NGOs (which include schools committees, community organizations and civic associations of various types) involved on the promotion of a built environment favorable to walking and/or cycling on the island of Montreal from 2006 to 2010, with 115 focusing on promoting alternative and active modes of mobility of which 80 more specifically on securing streets for walking and cycling. This database is gathered within the *Atlas Santé Montreal*, which contains a section on 'NGOs : projects on the built environment and sustainable mobility' accessible to the public : <http://emis.santemontreal.qc.ca/outils/atlas-sante-montreal/ressources/les-ong-projets-en-environnement-bati-et-mobilite-durable/>

To these 115 actors we can add 54 actors involved in the civic programs described below from 2005 to 2011 and in Neighborhood 21 program, and not counted in the repertoire from the agency. It gives us thus a minimum of 165 civic actors involved in the promotion of active transport and/or traffic calming on the island of Montreal.

⁴⁸ When I speak of the four civic 'programs' I speak of the Coalition on traffic calming and three other programs. The Coalition on traffic calming was an initiator of mobilization and helped on information sharing and coalition building, but did not include a formalized process for local actors like the three other projects, which are really 'programs' to follow by local groups (explained further in the text and shown in Table 4.1) Outside these four 'programs', other civic organizations within Montreal neighborhoods also became involved on those issues in responding individually to funding by the DSP and the City of Montreal (programs 'Design sustainable neighborhoods, and program 'Neighborhood 21', which was a funding envelope linked with the implementation of the Sustainable Plan from the City of Montreal), but with fewer specific guidelines than the civic programs. Several groups were first involved in civic programs and received afterward funding from the municipal fund 'Neighborhood 21' (see Table 4.3).

concrete recommendations concerned road sharing and the implementation of traffic calming measures.

Table 4.1 *Civic-led programs for traffic calming and the promotion of walking and cycling in Montreal*

Civic program or collaborative platform	Investigators / Funding	Year	Major spatial focus & territories reached	Final product
Coalition for traffic calming	Environmental Regional Council of Montreal / Public Health Agency, Fonds d'action québécois pour le développement durable	2007-	- Residential streets; - 7 boroughs reached and 42 participating groups, the majority being associations of residents or community groups (2007)	Repertoire of good practices and demands formulated to boroughs and city; Network constituted; Annual contest for boroughs with best traffic calming measures
On the Move to School	Vélo-Québec / <i>Québec en Forme</i>	2005, with a broader scope from 2007-	- 500 meters zones around schools - 68 schools in 14 different boroughs of Montreal (out of 19)	School travel plan for each school, with demands formulated to the school, the borough and the police; Mobilization of the 'school community' around active transport
I'm active in my neighborhood	Équiterre / Provincial and federal ministry of transport, Public Health Agency, Public Transit Agency	2006-	- Local commercial streets - 5 commercial zones in 5 different boroughs of Montreal	Network constituted; List of engagements and actions by shopkeepers, local institutions and borough elected officials
Green, active and healthy neighborhoods (GAHN / green neighborhoods)	Centre d'écologie urbaine (with Coalition on Obesity) / <i>Québec en Forme</i>	2009-	- 0,5-0,75 km ² zones in dense and deprived neighborhoods - 4 pilot projects in Montreal	Participatory planning with a diagnostic and a presentation of traffic calming solutions; Follow-up committee in each neighborhood

The investigators of the four programs worked in loose collaboration platform for active transportation and traffic calming, and were all partners (among others) of the Contest for the best traffic calming measures (first organized in 2011)⁴⁹.

⁴⁹ In this contest organized by the Environmental Regional Council of Montreal, the Coalition rewarded four measures, with the following categories : best project for the reduction of the speed of vehicles, re-design of

In the Contest for the best traffic calming measures, which was meant to publicize and encourage the accomplishments of boroughs on the issue, the following definition of traffic calming was used : “By traffic calming we mean actions that consist in designing streets to modify the behavior of car drivers and better manage circulation. The street, by its design, dictates to drivers what behavior they must adopt.”⁵⁰ Traffic calming measures consisted for examples in reducing the width of streets through wider sidewalks and public spaces, bicycle lanes or vegetation, curb extensions at intersections, speed bumps, changing one-way streets, blocking access to a residential street from an artery, etc.

The four programs are forms of participatory planning or public outreach on the promotion of car traffic calming, walking and cycling. The first platform, the *Coalition on traffic calming*, focused mainly on raising awareness on the issue of traffic calming, through contacting borough authorities and helping local groups and associations of residents to mobilize on the issue and request measures. It was conducted by the *Conseil régional de l'environnement de Montréal* (CRE-Mtl) which mission, let me recall, is to initiate and steer collaborations on shared environmental issues. The second project was launched in 2005 by *Vélo Québec*, the cyclist organization, with an inspiration from the British program “Active and safe routes to schools” (Vélo Québec 2011a). It aims at promoting walking and cycling to school by children. Activities are organized with parents, children and members of the school, and a 'school travel plan' is produced, identifying the dangerous spots for children in the schools' surroundings. After having conducted eight pilot-projects in Montreal, the program was funded by *Québec en Forme*. It grew both in Montreal and across the province to reach in total 210 schools in 2011, with 68 in Montreal (Vélo Québec 2011a; Vélo Québec 2011b).⁵¹

public space to the profit of pedestrians and cyclists, best measures for vulnerable users, and best urban integration project. The selection committee for the Contest was composed of the four civic brokers and the DSP, as well as the Table of Elderly of Montreal, and actors from universities and organizations involved on mobility issues.

⁵⁰ “Par « apaisement de la circulation », on entend l'action qui consiste à aménager les rues de manière à modifier les comportements des automobilistes et à mieux gérer la circulation notamment par le changement des parcours ou des flux de circulation. La rue, par son aménagement, dicte au conducteur le comportement qu'il doit adopter.”

⁵¹ Through their other campaign 'Active cities', Vélo Québec also built ties with municipalities and boroughs, especially in the region of Montreal. This campaign gave cities and boroughs a label of “Active cities” provided they followed certain actions in favor of pedestrians and cyclists, like the technical formation on design norms from Vélo Québec. This last initiative is not further presented here, since it involved mostly public authorities and not (or very little) civic or citizen, in opposite to the campaign 'On the Move to School!'. But it was definitely another opportunity for Vélo Québec to diffuse its frame for active transportation.

The third project in Table 4.1 was initiated by *Équiterre* to promote walking and cycling to local commercial streets. This was meant both to encourage shopping locally and to reach local services and shops by walking or cycling. The fourth project started in 2009 with a partnership between a provincial health lobby group working on public policies to reduce obesity, *Coalition Poids* (Coalition Weight), and a Montreal-based socio-environmental group with an emerging expertise in urban community planning, the *Centre d'écologie urbaine de Montréal* (CEUM). The CEUM wished to work on the definition of sustainable neighborhoods to influence the City of Montreal, which had promised in its transportation plan to promote the planning of green and traffic calmed neighborhoods. The *Centre d'écologie urbaine de Montréal* was introduced to the *Coalition Poids* by the DSP. Subsequently, they applied together to Québec en Forme for funding pilot-projects called "Green, active and healthy neighborhoods".

Converging motivations with local leaders

The four civic programs described were all based on the same model involving local actors. The four regional civic actors proposed a 'recipe' with specific tools and a discourse of justification for the campaign proposed, acting as real producers of discourse. Local actors were then in charge of actually conducting the campaign, rallying other local actors around it, and including members of the school/street/neighborhood 'community' in the process. Local leaders were thus important relational brokers. The programs did not directly provide financial resources to the local actors, although many actors subsequently received funding from the City of Montreal and the DSP to further pursue their collaborative work, through the program 'Neighborhood 21' from the City's Sustainable Urban Plan; and many did succeed in securing investments from their borough on concrete traffic calming measures. If not supplying direct financial resources, the civic programs provided credibility (with the names of the regional actor and of funding agencies), as well as expertise and guidance. The degree of guidance varied across programs. The *Centre d'écologie urbaine* was very involved, literally writing the final plan of the *Green, active and healthy neighborhoods* for each pilot project, with the diagnostic and solutions elaborated in participatory processes. *Équiterre* was only providing a campaign-organizing kit, and *Vélo Québec* elaborated a diagnostic of traffic safety around each school, as a starting point for mobilization and education (Int VQ1&2). Each campaign was built around specific local communities: resident associations or urban revitalization committees, for the *Coalition for traffic calming*, school's boards and parents for the *On the Move to School!*, organizations working on local economic development for the *I'm active in my neighborhood*, and diverse local organizations for the

Green, active and healthy neighborhoods (GAHN). This importance given to local actors was, of course, a key component of their utopian frame, further discussed below, of building dynamic local communities enabling walking and cycling. Furthermore, these local leaders then had to reach out to other actors within the 'community' to implement the program.⁵²

In Figure 4.1, we see the different forms of networks put in place by the regional brokers for their program, with the exchange in resources and the relations of control. In all cases, resources were provided to the regional brokers by funding from either *Québec en Forme* or the DSP. In the case of *Québec en Forme*, a form of control over the type of project conducted was also present, following its objective to mobilize local communities for healthy daily habits. Some regional brokers received complementary funding, such as the fund for the promotion of walking and cycling by the MTQ (Équiterre 2012; MTQ 2008). The network of the *Coalition for traffic calming* is not shown, because it included a wider network of actors going beyond the implementation of traffic calming locally, but raising awareness on the issue more widely. Their network included the sharing of resources with local resident associations, urban revitalization committees and boroughs, in addition to the partners for the Contest on the best traffic calming measures. The coalition's main goal was to increase awareness, mobilization and the sharing of knowledge on traffic calming.

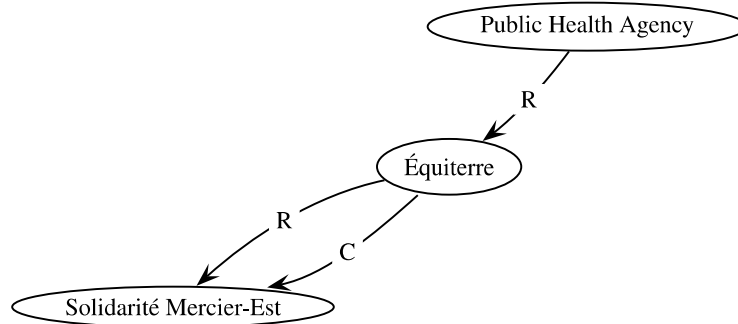
The three networks shown in Figure 4.1 concern programs from regional brokers involving specific local leaders. As we see, *Équiterre*'s networks for the campaign 'I'm active in my neighborhood' was limited: the broker put the campaign and local networking in the hand of the local leaders, with a limited number of guidelines, it consisted more in a 'toolkit'. *Vélo-Québec* ensured some form of brokerage for the local leader (the school committee) with the borough and the local police. The *Centre d'écologie urbaine de Montréal* (CEUM) is more explicitly connecting the local leaders with the borough, the City of Montreal as well as, when possible, external actors: the Metropolitan Transit Agency (AMT), the Montreal Transit Agency (STM), and the railway company (CP), brokerage of which we speak further in section 4.5. The CEUM also provides more control on the final product than other regional brokers (actually writing the end document on the diagnostic and proposed solutions).

⁵² This was a specific requirement except for the *Coalition for traffic calming*.

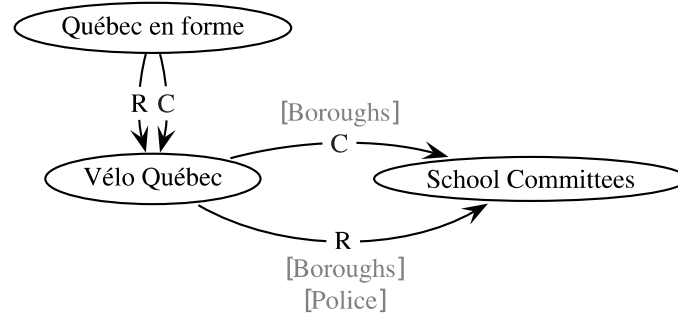
Figure 4.1 *Three broker-centered networks in programs for traffic calming*

(Source: Designed by F. Claveau. Right to reproduce)

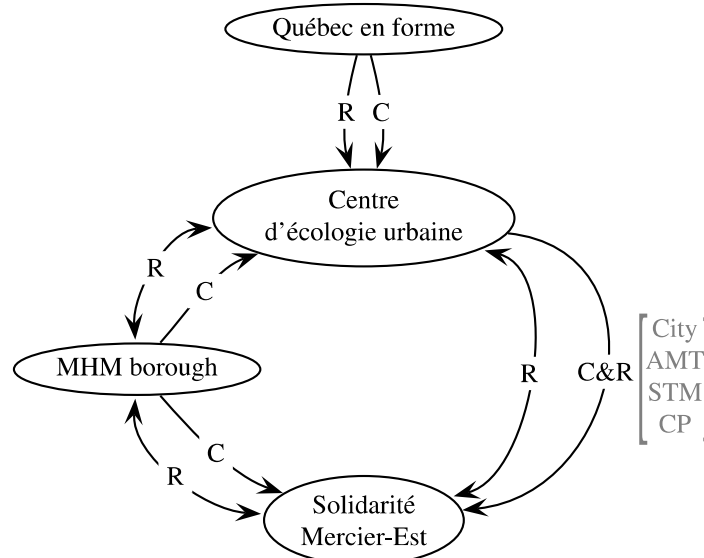
The letter R means a sharing of resources (financial resources, guidance, or political support), and the letter C means a form of control over the end product of the civic program.



a. *Équiterre's network for the campaign 'I'm active in my neighborhood' (ex. neighborhood Mercier-East)*



b. *Vélo-Québec's network for the campaign On the Move to School*



c. *Centre d'écologie urbaine's network for the project GAHN (examples for the neighborhood Mercier-East)*

In the cases of the CEUM and *Vélo Québec*, there were a sharing of resources and relations of control with the boroughs and the City of Montreal. Both civic actors made participatory plans with concrete traffic calming measures. If local actors needed the resources from the borough to implement the measures, the participatory plans also provided resources to the public actors. Indeed, the civic actors had built local consensus for certain traffic calming interventions. Yet it is the borough or the City⁵³ which decided, in the end, of the measures to implement and which recognized the plans (or only part of it) as effective guidelines to re-design the streets. I acknowledge this in showing the sharing of resources and their relations of control over the end product.

The movement for active transport and traffic calming did not only come from the discursive brokers. Local actors, which traditionally did not work on transport or mobility issues, actually received demands to address this issue. The three local leaders of the *Green, active and healthy neighborhoods* whom I met in interviews had received, in local forums, specific requests to work and mobilize on traffic-related issues, and the importance of this locally-generated agenda was emphasized during interviews. In the network representation shown in Figure 4.2, we see the actors with which the local leaders had been in contact regarding on traffic calming and mobility issues, before the GAHN project, and the actors they networked with in the context of the GAHN project. Each local leader had previous ties in its neighborhood, and had been a member of the Coalition for traffic calming. In addition, the local leaders had previously been involved in another program (from *Vélo-Québec* or *Équiterre*) or in broader transport-related coalitions (Notre-Dame or Mobilization Turcot).

The local leader in Plateau-Mont-Royal, *Maison de l'Aurore*, emphasized previous mobilizations in the borough. Starting from 2006, the *Maison de l'Aurore* had helped to gather local residents mobilizing for traffic calming in their streets. They had helped organize it in an association making demands to the borough. Traffic calming demands also came from the perspective of community-based planning for the sector Plateau-East. Residents came in local forums to include demands for traffic calming in the 'community' agenda. In sum, the leader of *Maison de l'Aurore* presented her organization's interest in traffic calming issues in terms of community-development – supporting agendas for the improvement of the built environment tied to priorities

⁵³ In the case of measures affecting arteries, the City (and occasionally other external actors named above, and discussed in section 4.5) would need to be involved. But boroughs are responsible for the design of local streets.

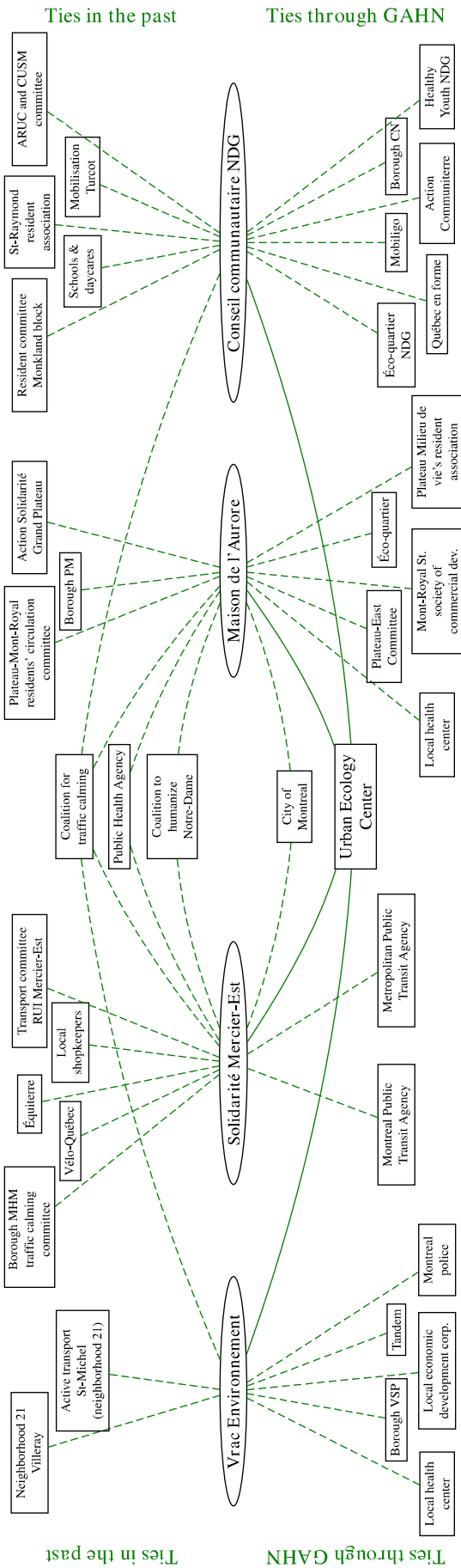


Figure 4.2 The network of actors related to the local leaders of the Green, active and healthy neighborhood projects
(Source: Designed by F. Claveau. Right to reproduce)

Explanation of the network representation

This network representation focuses on the ties from local leaders, and does not represent the ties *between* the other actors involved. The objective is to show the scope and diversity of actors involved in the GAHN project, as well as the previous social ties that local leaders had on transport and mobility issues before the GAHN project. The network representation is based on documentary information and interviews with the local leaders.

established with the 'community', and encouraging residents to be politically active for the design of their living environment (Int MA).

Similarly, another local leader, *Solidarité Mercier-Est* (which was actually involved in all four civic programs) emphasized how the programs of regional actors allowed them to work on their agenda of urban revitalization, for which they lacked resources. This agenda of urban revitalization included transport and mobility issues that had been raised over the years in community participatory forums : difficult access to local services by public transit, buses having regional (going downtown) rather than local routes, a railway track acting as a barrier to pedestrians, and, most importantly, the presence of the Notre-Dame Boulevard which cut through their neighborhood. In regard to this last road infrastructure, things were expected to get worse with the project of the Ministry of Transport, with an increase in traffic (Int S; CEUM and *Solidarité Mercier-Est* 2010).

The revitalization of the commercial zone was also an objective of the urban revitalization program of Mercier-Est, and the campaign 'I'm active in my neighborhood' allowed the group to work on creating a more dynamic local commercial street for the neighborhood. Active transportation and 'green neighborhoods', in many ways, were buzz words of funding agencies and regional environmental organizations, the community organizers said. Yet, accessibility to services was a real issue of social justice for those who could not afford cars, and similarly for the nuisances caused by Notre-Dame Boulevard. Hence, the promotion of walking and cycling and of safe environments to do so was part of key objectives for community organizers and the local urban revitalization agenda (Int S). Figure 4.2 shows the previous links *Solidarité Mercier-Est* had developed on issues of car alternatives before the GAHN project (we see the urban revitalization groups, called 'RUI', and the shopkeepers). They were already well connected on this issue, but the GAHN project allowed them to reach public actors outside the neighborhood.

A 'Green, active and healthy neighborhood' was also developed in the south-eastern part of Notre-Dame-de-Grâce, right next to the large highway interchange Turcot (the topic of the next chapter). The program was first taken in charge by a non-profit consultant organization for car alternatives, Mobiligo. After the production of the plan however, *Mobiligo* acknowledged that it was not well positioned in the community networks to work efficiently at its implementation. Hence, the *NDG Community Council* took the leadership of the follow-up committee. As host of the inter-sectoral community table, it was grounded in the local networks, and had been in contact with schools, daycares and resident committees on issues of traffic safety and

accessibility in the past. The GAHN program was an opportunity to work on these themes and link them to community-based issues of social and spatial justice (Int NDG; CEUM 2011b).

In the implementation of the program from *Vélo Québec*, the community-driven agenda for traffic calming varied depending on the schools and neighborhoods⁵⁴. Schools initiated the contact with *Vélo Québec*, through parents, principals or teachers wanting to mobilize their school around the issue of safe walking and cycling to school (Int VQ1). The extent to which the project of promoting walking, cycling, and changes in street design was grounded in discussions within the school committees and community forums in the neighborhood differed, but in comparison to the program implementation in the municipality Québec, the projects in Montreal were evaluated as significantly more connected with actors outside the school (Int VQ1; DSP-Québec 2011). Sometimes, this was coupled with the project from the *Centre d'écologie urbaine*, and was thus included in neighborhood community-based processes.

Many local leaders of the programs for traffic calming had thus received demands for traffic calming as part of the local agendas. The motivation was to improve community dynamism and the built environment favoring it. Traffic calming and better infrastructure for walking and cycling were seen as necessary tools to improve issues within the neighborhoods. In comparison, the regional brokers' primary motivation was the promotion of car alternatives. While they presented the dynamic community as a mean to reach the objective of walking and cycling, as we see below, local leaders presented the dynamic community as a motivation, an objective to reach through the promotion of walking, cycling, and traffic calming. There was sufficient proximity in their cause to form a structured collective action network.

This is not to say that there were no tensions between discursive brokers, the local leaders and residents demanding for traffic calming measures. For instance, a research from Gilles Sénécal⁵⁵ in the Villeray neighborhood show that requests from residents to act on traffic calming and the design of streets were first considered awkwardly by the neighborhood community organizations, used to work on more traditional social issues such as housing and the fight against poverty. Yet, the importance of this theme for citizens, framed in terms of quality of life, was such that it became imperative to back up these proposals for action. Furthermore, the goal

⁵⁴ There were 68 schools involved in the program in 2011. There were thus diverse situations, and this research could not go in detail on each case. We base this account on the interview with two professionals from *Vélo Québec* and a general evaluative report which was made on the program in 2011 (DSP Québec 2011).

⁵⁵ This insight from Gilles Sénécal's research comes from a collaborative article in the process of revision, entitled "Claiming a right to inhabitation and a right to mobility: discursive equivalences from Montreal civil society".

of developing green pedestrian and walkable ways seemed easier to reach than the larger social objectives of eliminating poverty. Traffic calming near schools became *the* main project of the Villeray Social Forum. This was facilitated by the civic participatory programs from regional brokers, presented above, and the enthusiasm of the borough promising investments in order for each school to benefit from traffic calming measures in its direct surroundings.

A second example of tensions comes from the concrete implementation of the first pilot-project of the Green, active and healthy neighborhood program. The local leaders pictured the *Centre d'écologie urbaine* as an expert in transport issues, which would help them argue against engineers of the borough for traffic calming. But the *Centre d'écologie urbaine* did not play this card of technical competence (at least no at the beginning), and rather wished to work on community participatory planning to identify the needs for traffic calming. A re-adjustment of the roles and expectations on both sides was needed, and eventually the *Centre d'écologie urbaine* developed participatory methods and interactive forums with traffic engineers in boroughs and beyond.

4.3 The utopian frame of civic actors

The four civic programs have several similarities in the way they promote walking, cycling and traffic calming. They put accent on similar elements, even though they do not focus on the exact same spaces (see Table 4.1). The programs created a utopian frame of a local community enabling walking and cycling, which is supported both by a discursive chain of equivalence and a network of actors grounding the projects in the local scene. Having already discussed the networks developed between discursive brokers and local leaders, and their motivations, I now present the discursive chain of equivalence of the utopian frame.

The discursive equivalences are presented through their contestation in argumentative events, when they are indeed the topic of antagonism. This enables to see where are the consensual and contested elements in their discourse, in relation to the external discursive field.

The chain of equivalence consists in the discursive linkage of a series of elements to give meaning to nodal points. Nodal points are themes of discursive contributions that many actors refer to. In this chapter, the quotations from the documents were not all included in the text, but rather provided in Appendix 3. Appendix 3 shows the identification of equivalences in

documents, and their variability among the four discursive brokers. The discourses of the four civic brokers converge in the following nodes: vulnerability, street design, and dynamic community. A chain of equivalence links these points in an utopian frame.⁵⁶

Vulnerability

First, vulnerable populations, active transport and traffic safety are linked together discursively. The vulnerable populations are either children or elders. These populations are more vulnerable on the street because of their use of the street and the risks of collision with cars, and because of their feeling of un-safety and lack of autonomy, linked to their age. In general, pedestrians and cyclists are also discussed to be vulnerable to car collisions. This aspect of vulnerability was particularly documented by the DSP, which the discursive brokers cite in their documents, often showing its maps on the geography of collisions (CEUM and Solidarité Mercier-Est 2010, 5–6, 22; CEUM 2011a, 2, 24–25, Annexe 2; CEUM 2011b, 2, 27–29, Annexe 2; CRE-Mtl 2006, 7, 13; Vélo Québec 2006, 22). Vulnerability is also associated, by the public health agency, to social inequalities in the access to mobility modes and in the felt impacts of transport infrastructure, which can further produce health inequalities (DSP 2006, 90-99). For example, collisions of cars with pedestrians necessitating hospitalization, for children less than 14 year old, were reported to be twice as importance in more deprived neighborhoods (DSP 2006, 95).

The question of traffic safety is thus seen from the perspective of vulnerable populations (the elderly, children). The practice of walking and cycling is dependent on more traffic safety, and on the perception of a safe environment for vulnerable populations.

Spontaneously, children are inclined to walk to school, but we note since several years a sharp increase in parents dropping off their children to school with their car, even when the school is near. [...] The feeling of security represents also a key factor in the choice of walking or cycling to go to school. (Vélo Québec 2006, 8)⁵⁷

In the argumentative events and controversies analyzed, this equivalence was not contested by other actors. In fact, the controversies in the press and the debates presented below show the force of the vulnerability argument (citing the needs of families for safe environments especially) to justify actions for better traffic safety.

⁵⁶ Each node, or nodal point, takes thus its meaning through a set of equivalences. Nodes are relate to other nodes within a wider chain of equivalence, constituting the utopian frame.

⁵⁷ “Spontanément, les enfants sont enclins à marcher vers l'école, mais on note depuis plusieurs années une nette augmentation de l'accompagnement en voiture par les parents, même si l'école est à une distance peu éloignée [...] Le sentiment de sécurité représente aussi un facteur-clé dans le choix de la marche ou du vélo pour se rendre à l'école.”

Traffic safety through better street design

Second, traffic safety is linked discursively to street design. A better street design (and not only speed limits or public education to favor better “behavior” from road users), and more generally the characteristics of the built environment (density, greening, etc.), lead to better traffic safety. This is the key argument for traffic calming : “The street, by its design, dictates to the drivers what behavior he must adopt. [...] It can signify to the driver, in reducing his zone of comfort, that he is not alone in his kingdom” (CRE-Mtl 2010). Some actors pushed only for this argument of better street design, with the idea that when streets are better designed for pedestrians and cyclists, they will be used by them. Others, like *Vélo Québec* and *Équiterre* also worked on convincing residents to take their bicycle or walk.

This second equivalence linking better traffic safety with changes in the built environment was contested in provincial arenas of debate, particularly in the parliamentary commissions of 2007 and 2010 on modifications to the Highway Safety Code⁵⁸ (which is actually the regulatory code for all roads in the province) and associated measures to improve traffic safety in the province. The reduction of traffic-related deaths and injuries had been a key objective of the government (CTE 2010; 2007). But in these parliamentary debates, the equivalence linking better traffic safety with a favorable street design, represented a marginal position. The majority of participating actors and institutions (among them associations for car drivers (CAA), youth, and for businesses and governmental agencies linked to transportation) emphasized more the behavioral causes of traffic unsafety (no respect of speed limits by car drivers, non-respect of regulations by cyclists, pedestrians, car drivers; use or not of helmets by cyclists, use of cell phones while driving, alcohol abuse, age of first driving license, etc.), than the built environment causes (width of streets, design of intersections, etc.). The proposed legal modifications were in fact framed around behavioral causes. The discussion and the questions of the members of the government were also generally framed around behavioral issues. Even representatives from the City of Montreal, who argued for enhanced measures for traffic safety *to make Montreal safe and attractive for families*, pushed the idea of reducing speed limits in the city's streets (from 50 to 40 km/h), but did not mention funding or traffic norms on street design (yet, they were

⁵⁸ Different modifications to the Highway Safety Code were discussed in 2007 and 2010, each with their own series of sessions in parliamentary commissions, to which any actor could sign up to make a presentation and submit a brief. In 2007, the DSP came and submitted a brief. In 2010, the civic actors came and re-stated the arguments presented by the DSP in 2007, with the nuances described in the text above. The way they were received was very similar in the two cases.

working on street design in non-public meetings between professionals from the City and the minister, Int VdM).

We can see in the debate of 2007 how much the DSP framed the issue differently from other public health actors. The *Institut national de santé publique* (a provincial institute with the role of documenting issues for public health agencies throughout the province), and the *Association des spécialistes en médecine d'urgence du Québec* (Association of specialists in emergency medicine), for example, discussed *only* behavioral problems to traffic unsafety, like the ones mentioned above. In contrast, Louis Drouin from the Montreal DSP said:

So, the first point is, I am a doctor, so I was always told : the dose makes the poison. [...] The augmentation of the automobile park, and of the number of trips and total distances in cars, exposes all road users, drivers, passengers, pedestrians and cyclists, to a greater probability of collisions, injuries, and deaths. [...] The second concept is the importance of environmental factors. Environmental causes are often under-estimated in the analysis of the causes of accidents. (CTE 2007)⁵⁹

The position of the DSP challenged car use a lot more than other actors' statements, on the restriction of cell-phones or on the levels of alcohol while driving, which situate the problem not in a mobility mode but in deficient behavior while using the mobility mode. The DSP (2007) and environmental or active transport civic actors (in 2010) asked for a change in paradigm. The representative of the opposition in parliament, M. Bergeron from the Parti Québécois, summarizing their position to which he was favorable, spoke of a necessary change in the culture and vision of the Ministry of Transport.

You are at least the fourth group to speak in front of this commission - I think among others of *Vélo Québec*, the *Fédération des sports cyclistes*, and *Vivre en Ville* – which proposes urban design to increase substantially the active and collective transports, hence the use of active and collective transports, and by way of consequence, a reduction of car circulation just as substantial, as a basic parameter to ensure better traffic safety for the population and the most vulnerable users of the road, which are

⁵⁹ "Donc, le premier constat, je suis médecin, puis ce qu'on m'a dit toujours: La dose fait le poison. [...] L'augmentation du parc automobile, du nombre de déplacements et des distances totales parcourues en automobile expose l'ensemble des usagers de la route, conducteurs, passagers, piétons et cyclistes, à une probabilité accrue de collisions, de blessures et de décès. [...] Le deuxième concept: l'importance des facteurs environnementaux. Les causes environnementales sont souvent sous-estimées dans l'analyse des causes d'accident."

pedestrians and cyclists. [...] A serious change of culture is needed within the Ministry of transport, that is obvious. (CTE 2010, 6-7) ⁶⁰

In 2010, the *Centre d'écologie urbaine* was represented by an engineer (mobilized on this issue for years and member of their executive committee), and accompanied by a doctor of the *Collège québécois des médecins de famille* (of which one member is very active on these issues) and the health *Coalition Poids* (their partner in the *Green, active and healthy neighborhood* program). Their perspective was compared to other actors from the health sector, who favored the obligation to wear a helmet (and them not). With an engineer, a doctor specialized in research on traumas from an association of doctors and a coalition from the public health lobby, they were in position to respond to that comparison and push for the street design perspective. In addition, the environmental organization *Vivre en Ville* included into the debate the issue of further investment in alternative mobility modes. Finally, *Vélo Québec* was the most prepared to frame the 'street design' argument of traffic safety in such a way that it could actually be included in the Highway Safety Code.

Even with these strategies however, and the support from the Parti Québécois, the utopian frame of the civic actors seemed out of place. They were told by Julie Boulet (both in 2007 and in 2010), the then Minister of Transport, that urban street design was not an issue of traffic regulations, but a design issue for municipalities. In some European countries, however, norms were included in the traffic regulatory codes to emphasize the priority to cyclists and pedestrians (like the "Code de la rue" in Belgium), as argued by Vélo Québec (this was actually the topic of a cyclist movement in Spain). The only built environment issue added to the Québec Highway Safety Code by the Minister (counter-flow cycling paths) was considered by civic actors ad-hoc and not included in a broader norm giving priority to the most vulnerable users. In this context, Vélo Québec, which usually adopts a very consensual attitude with public authorities, temporarily withdrew its participation in the provincial collaborative table on traffic safety, to contest the shallowness of the documentation of the active transport perspective in the debate and in the proposed modifications to the road regulations.

⁶⁰ "Vous êtes au moins le quatrième groupe à comparaître devant cette commission — je pense notamment à Vélo Québec, à la Fédération québécoise des sports cyclistes, à Vivre en ville — qui nous proposez des aménagements urbains qui visent une augmentation substantielle des transports collectifs... de l'achalandage au niveau des transports collectifs et des transports actifs, et par voie de conséquence une réduction tout aussi substantielle de la circulation automobile comme paramètre de base pour assurer une meilleure sécurité de la population et des usagers les plus vulnérables de la route, à savoir les piétons et les cyclistes. [...] On doit changer la culture au ministère des Transports, c'est bien clair."

In contrast to this positioning by the Ministry of transport, the necessity to work on the built environment to increase traffic safety was largely accepted in Montreal (although some were critical of the DSP going farther in its prescriptions than its expertise would allow, as presented in 4.1). It was explicitly part of transportation and mobility plans from the City (Charter for pedestrian 2007, Montreal Transportation Plan 2008, Guidelines for Local Mobility Plans 2011, Guidelines for Green Neighborhoods 2011, 2013). But, in Montreal, there was also the parallel strategy of regulating unsafe behavior: first, by reducing the speed limit in non-arterial roads (from 50 to 40 km/h); second, by punishing with fines unruly pedestrians and cyclists (crossing streets wherever and whenever). Those fines were much contested by civic actors who said the problem lay primarily in street designs. They argued that pedestrians and cyclists should not be punished for ill street design (and an excessive number of cars). During the 2010 public assembly on the assessment report of the Montreal transportation plan, they noted that reducing the speed limit would do little if the design of streets was not changed, i.e. the behavioral strategy could not be the only one. Modified street design (like speed bumps) worked 24 hours a day and without police enforcement, they argued. They thus asked for concrete funding for traffic calming.

Summing up, the first equivalence linked vulnerability, active transportation and traffic unsafety, and was largely uncontested. The second linked traffic safety with good street design. This was contested, especially in the provincial debates, and was the topic of close follow-up by civic actors in municipal arenas. The third equivalence built on the two previous ones. It consists in arguing that a dynamic and mobilized local community is conducive to more walking and cycling. This is where civic actors really innovated and went beyond the results of the DSP.

Dynamic local community enabling walking and cycling

The equivalence here is between quality of life, proximity in a local way of life and local political participation. Actors spoke of convivial public spaces, of healthy environments, of a diversity of urban functions in a dense environment (local shops, institutions, schools, services), of streets occupied by people and of local mobilization of residents and actors of the community. Each civic program focused on one aspect, but still in positioning it in relation to the others. In interviews, the discursive brokers noted how their colleague organizations had similar programs with the same philosophy of local active neighborhoods, but with different precise priorities (Int CRE2, Int VQ, Int E). The Coalition on traffic calming focused on the mobilization of residents for the quality of life in their streets, *Vélo Québec* on the mobilization of the school community for

more 'quietude' in the neighborhood, *Équiterre* targeted local shops and institutions in a local way of life, and the *Centre d'écologie urbaine* focused on the quality and greenery of public spaces. In promoting discourses on characteristics of a dynamic local community, they linked this characteristic of the ideal community with active transportation, through the local mobilization for a better built environment (street design) conducive to walking and cycling. Inhabited and dynamic streets come with street communities, à la Jane Jacobs (1967), where people walk and cycle, and where residents and users of the streets then mobilize to ensure the quality of life and safety of the space. For *Équiterre*, local shops and local institutions allows walking and cycling to these destinations, and create spaces of sociability leading to a sense of responsibility of both shop-keepers/institutions and their users, which encourages them to participate in their 'community' and demand better local environments:

Because there is a pretty flagrant difference between a citizen who goes walking to his bakery and says to his baker 'Eh, the bread you made, I really like it', and who then chats about his children and wife and then comes back home walking, meets his neighbor, goes to the dépanneur to fetch a juice or whatever. Than someone who takes his car, leaves his neighborhood to go shopping. The relation to the neighborhood is not the same.

So people in doing things which are pretty basic, like buying food or other goods, the fact of doing this in the neighborhood, well they are more susceptible to demand things for their neighborhood. If you go by bike to drop your children at the daycare center, and then go on to pick your organic vegetable basket, well probably that your journey on bike you will want it to be a pleasant one and surely, I don't know... if there is a corner that lacks flowers or is dangerous, well you may be more susceptible of speaking to your borough or to a citizen committee about it then if you take your car and come back without having consciousness of what is going on in your living environment. (Int E)⁶¹

⁶¹ "Parce qu'il y a une différence assez flagrante entre un citoyen qui va à pied à sa boulangerie pis qui dit à son boulanger : Hey, le pain que t'as fait là pis que tu fais le lundi, je le trouve vraiment bon, là qu'il parle de ses enfants pis de sa femme pis après ça il s'en retournent chez eux à pied, il rencontre son voisin, il va au dépanneur se prendre un jus ou peu importe. Et quelqu'un qui prend sa voiture, qui quitte le quartier pour faire ses commissions et qui revient dans son quartier pour défaire ses commissions. Le rapport au quartier est pas le même.

Donc les gens en faisant les choses qui sont quand même assez primordiales, soit acheter de la nourriture ou des biens ou des choses comme ça, le fait de le faire dans leur quartier, bien ils sont plus susceptibles de revendiquer des choses pour leur quartier. Si tu vas à vélo porter tes enfants à la garderie pis après ça tu vas chercher ton panier de légumes bio là, bien sûrement que ton trajet à vélo tu as envie qu'il soit agréable pis sûrement que si... je sais pas moi... il y a un coin de rue où il manque de fleurs ou s'il y a un coin de rue qui est dangereux, bien tu vas être bien plus susceptible d'en parler à ton arrondissement ou à un comité citoyens que si tu prends ton auto pis tu reviens pis tu as pas eu connaissance de ce qui s'est passé dans ton milieu de vie là."

The *Centre d'écologie urbaine* had a similar discourse, but emphasized the conviviality and identity of local public spaces, which would then encourage both the practice of walking and cycling and the development of a sense of belonging to the neighborhood. Hence, the characteristics of the local community, either with the presence of local shops or the conviviality of public spaces, would favor the practice of walking and cycling directly, by the characteristics of the built environment and the close destinations it creates for residents. These characteristics of the built environment of the community would will also favor walking and cycling indirectly, in encouraging local mobilization for an even better built environment and street design, leading to then more walking and cycling and an even more dynamic community, in a positive feedback loop. This means that traffic calming and better streets for walking and cycling would be chosen by local residents. The legitimacy of traffic calming was presented as stemming from the 'community' desiring a better living environment.

Was this third equivalence put to test in diverse arenas of debate? This aspect of the utopian frame was questioned in the most mediatized controversies on traffic calming in Montreal.⁶²

In 2011, the borough Plateau-Mont-Royal put in place a series of measures to reduce the amount of transiting traffic. These interventions for traffic calming were one of the main promises of the newly elected mayor in the borough, under the banner of the political party *Projet Montréal* (party for which reducing the place of cars in the city is a main objective). The previous borough mayor had adopted a plan to reduce transiting traffic and further promote walking and cycling, but he planned small and cautious steps on a long time frame, which was unsatisfactory for the residents mobilizing on this since 2005 (with *Maison de l'Aurore*). The justifications of the new borough mayor to act rapidly on traffic calming were the following: the neighborhood receives a lot of transiting traffic (84% of the circulation in the borough, according to the mayor), there had been tragic collisions of children with cars at the corner of a primary school in the Laurier sector, and increased metropolitan north-south traffic was announced in the upcoming years (Arrondissement Plateau-Mont-Royal 2011; Ferrandez 2011; Ferrandez 2010). In the Laurier sector, one-way streets were changed direction, the width of certain streets was reduced,

⁶² A press review of regional and local (borough) newspapers distributed on the island of Montreal on traffic calming from 2007 to 2012 shows the following distribution of topics, on a total of 179 articles. 61 articles present measures and future plans for traffic calming taken by boroughs, measures which are proudly publicized by boroughs in local newspapers. 46 articles present demands for traffic calming by local residents or groups. 61 articles also contain such demands, but are contested in the press coverage: they are situated in specific (and mediatized) controversies. In those 61 articles on traffic calming controversies from 2007 to 2012, 32 concern the Plateau controversy (in 2011) and 14 the Firefighter controversy (also in 2011). [The 11 remaining articles in the total of 179 accounted for were in a diverse category of 'other'].

and a bicycle lane was added; with the direct consequence that it became for a time very difficult to pass through this portion of the neighborhood in a car. Drivers had to take the 'correct' road for transiting traffic. This intervention had for objective safer streets around the primary school Laurier, safe and convivial access to parks and local shops, and the preservation of a mixed and vibrant neighborhood where people walk and cycle. We see the same discourse than the one promoted by civic actors, linking vulnerability, street design and a dynamic community enabling walking and cycling. The common sense of this appeared obvious for the mayor Fernandez and his team, who argued it was a good example for a 101 urban planning course (2010).

Yet, a major controversy erupted and Montreal newspapers covered the issue at length.⁶³ In public assemblies, the mayor met close to 300 residents, according to journalists, of whom many were very harsh, asking him to 'go back to Spain' (because of his name!), asking "people who want to live in a village to go live in a village", and saying that if "it's better on street A, it's worse on street B, C, and D" (as reported by Béland 2011a; Bisson 2011; CBC Montreal 2011; Bélisle 2011). The shop keepers' association, already at war against the mayor for higher parking fees, continued campaigning against him with petitions, facebook pages, and offensive banners posted in shops. The *Centre d'écologie urbaine* and the resident committee *Plateau Milieu de Vie* (with residents who had asked for such measures in the past) publicly expressed their support for the actions taken and praised the political courage of the mayor. They argued that the negative impacts were largely exaggerated, responding in opinion letters to analyses made in major newspapers (their letters were however not published) (Rabouin 2011; Plateau Milieu de Vie 2011; Angiolini 2011a). To increase acceptability, researchers from McGill University installed a counting engine, which did show the increased traffic of cyclists in the sector (Int CRE1; Béland 2011c). In October 2011, civic actors also rewarded the intervention as one of Montreal's best traffic calming interventions, in the contest from the *Coalition for traffic calming*, with judges from civic organizations, universities and the DSP.

But journalists of major newspapers called the intervention "The Great Upheaval" (Le grand dérangement), "Two streets, one revolution", a cultural war on what the city should be like, etc. (Cardinal 2011; Ouimet 2011; Boisvert 2012). To understand the controversy, the geographical

⁶³ The borough mayor was already well known and had been much discussed in the media already for increasing the fares of parking on commercial streets in the borough some months earlier, and for reducing snow removal interventions in the streets (which in Montreal is a large percentage of boroughs' budget), making it difficult to park or circulate by car days after snow storms. He is thus a known figure across the province, and the conflict with the created 'Association of shopkeepers and residents of Mount-Royal' touched also on other (but related) objects than traffic calming.

position of the borough Plateau-Mont-Royal in Montreal is important : directly north of downtown, it is on many citizens' path to the Montreal's neighborhoods north, and to the northern suburbs. Crossing the Plateau was made more difficult.

The first important element contested: the side-effects of the operation on a primary north-south artery. If transiting traffic was reduced on local residential and collector streets, more traffic was noticed on the artery (which was the objective). But the artery (called Papineau) had no excess capacity. Drivers consequently suffered heavier congestion. The car drivers transiting by Papineau *had not given their support to this measure*. Traffic engineers reacting in the medias argued that public authorities should have first intervened on arteries, to ensure they had the necessary capacity to absorb extra traffic (either through extra car space or through more public transit) (Bisson 2011). But boroughs have no powers on arteries, and extra car capacity on arteries would, in any case, not fit the intentions of the political party *Projet Montréal*.

Second, it was argued that the one-way street changes made it very difficult for drivers to come in the neighborhood by car, and to go to shops and restaurants. The population participating to the dynamism of the Plateau was far from being only local; it was regional, shopkeepers argued. Hence, this closure of the neighborhood was not legitimate if it was supported by local residents alone.

Third, the intervention also caused more traffic on other local residential streets eastward. Other local residents (and another local school) were affected negatively, in terms of the amount of traffic. Even though the borough implemented several corrective measures that resolved the problem around the school, it raised the issues of favoring certain streets over others locally, and of unintended consequences.

What was primarily at stake in this controversy was the demarcation between the interior of the neighborhood protected from transiting traffic and its exterior: which streets get to be 'calmed' or even blocked (with one-ways making it impossible to enter from arteries) and who suffers the impacts of these changes. But the strength of the antagonism and the scope of media coverage were without doubt not only due to the central position of the borough in Montreal (thus being a passage point), but also the personality of the borough mayor and his interventions on other related topics (see note above).

A couple of months later, the 'Firefighter' controversy erupted, as the title of this newspaper article summarizes it: 'The Firefighter goes to war against speedbumps' (Corriveau 2011b). It

happened in October 2011 when the executive committee of the City of Montreal proposed to change the existing norms, making it necessary for central-city boroughs to ask the permission to the Fire Department for any new traffic calming measure. The Fire Department had complained in a letter to the City manager that the proliferation of speed bumps and the lack of coordination of boroughs made it difficult to have the information on the location of speed bumps, which increased their reaction time and caused damage to their vehicles. The mayor of Montreal reacted promptly and proposed this bylaw which, for many, actually gave a veto to the Fire Department on any new traffic calming measure. This veto would only be effective in the boroughs Plateau-Mont-Royal, Rosemont-Petite-Patrie and Mercier-Hochelaga-Maisonneuve, three boroughs led by parties of the first or second oppositions in City Hall, boroughs which had been very active in traffic calming. They thus opposed the bylaw firmly. Civic actors (*Vélo Québec*, CEUM, CRE-Mtl as well as residents' groups, especially from the Plateau-Mont-Royal) also opposed it. Some actors saw this as a backdoor way used by Montreal's mayor to block the profusion of traffic calming measures in the Plateau. Political leaders and civic actors contested the reduction of security to the issue of fire extinction. They presented the traffic calming measures as working to reduce car collisions, and creating liveable environments for young families to stay in Montreal (and not flee to the suburbs) (Vision Montréal 2012; *Vélo Québec*, Conseil Régional de l'Environnement, and Centre d'écologie urbaine 2011; Arrondissement Plateau Mont-Royal 2011):

In our boroughs, parents from schools' committees and spokesmen from public health request traffic calming measures, such as speed bumps. These interventions are important for the security of our children, elders and families. (Vision Montréal 2012, first opposition party in Montreal City Hall)⁶⁴

If boroughs all agreed to include the Fire Department in their committees planning traffic calming (and especially in regard to the dedicated emergency road network, on which it was already consulted), they all refused that fire extinction ruled over traffic safety in local residential streets. This position satisfied the chief of the Fire Department, who said publicly that he never desired a veto, but only a little bit more coordination between the different entities in regard to street design (Corriveau 2011c). The mayor hence withdrew his bylaw.

⁶⁴ "C'est d'autant plus vrai que dans nos arrondissements, les parents des conseils d'établissement, ainsi que les porte-parole de la santé publique, réclament que des mesures d'apaisement de la circulation, telles que les dos-d'âne, soient implantées. Ces dispositifs sont importants pour la sécurité de nos enfants, des personnes âgées et des familles"

The way the story unfolded seems to confirm the support that elected officials and other third parties (including journalists) beyond civic actors gave to traffic calming measures in Montreal (which had perhaps become a way for municipal parties to demarcate themselves as defenders of Montrealers' quality of life). According to the unfolding of this controversy, it seems that traffic calming can occur in certain dedicated spaces, for the well-being of vulnerable residents: children, elderly, and families were especially cited. Putting the norm of the Fire Department, although it is a clear example of necessary speed and fluidity in the road network, above these legitimate considerations in residential streets seemed exaggerated to many actors taking position. This points to a particular geography of governance on the issue. Boroughs, with their partners (schools, public health and residents), were considered to have the power to decide over traffic calming measures on local streets. Central city authorities, such as the Firefighter Department, would need to be considered but not have a veto on the decisions. This contrasts with the Plateau controversy, where central city coordination seemed more essential to forecome 'radical' interventions. The leader of the first opposition in City Hall had argued in the press that the Plateau-Mont-Royal's mayor acted as a local baron and was wrong in thinking he could deal with transiting traffic by himself: some city-wide coordination was needed (Corriveau 2011a; Béland 2011b; Angiolini 2011b). We see hence that the perspectives on the geography of governance are not consensual nor necessarily coherent, and that it is deeply related with the antagonism on the 'correct' spaces of traffic calming.

In these two controversies, there is the narrative of a local way of life to be protected from traffic, just like in the civic utopian frame. In Plateau-Mont-Royal, the measures adopted were justified in terms of traffic safety in local residential streets and around a local school, with not only the argument about vulnerability but also the quality of life and the local support. In the Firefighter controversy, the demands of families and public health agencies were also prioritized over a 'speed bumps regulation' by the Firefighter, and put in context of a need to offer quality environments to retain families that might otherwise leave for suburbs. Civic actors, in developing their utopian frame of a dynamic local community enabling walking and cycling, were giving substance to this justification, in describing the attractive and engaging aspects of a local way of life. What was contested in the Plateau controversy was the streets that ought to be calmed and the ones that could not.

This tension on which streets ought to be calmed and the ones that could not is related to a desire from public actors to have some proof of local support. It is a common practice in

boroughs to consider traffic calming interventions only after having received demands and petitions from the majority of residents of a street. Very often, excessive speed and level of traffic on local streets are evaluated after formal demands and grievances from the streets' residents. Residents are thus encouraged to mobilize around the space of their street to make grievances to the public authorities. This street-based mobilization can be counter-productive for a neighborhood-wide plan, possibly pushing authorities to favor certain streets over others, in a type of clientelist regime (Int CRE1, FG A). The community planning proposed by the regional brokers were thus welcomed by public actors because they maintained the idea of a local participation and local adherence which public actors cherished, to legitimate politically 'risky' interventions constraining cars, but with less favoritism (Int VdM; Int CRE; FG2). As the interim director of the Transport Department of the City of Montreal, M. Carette, said in a conference on the Day without car (2010):

Traffic calming has good in it, but it needs an involvement of citizens, through committees, a strong involvement of the neighborhood, because the green neighborhood is meant to give greater accessibility to the neighborhood. Residents need to be ready to live with lower accessibility by car but greater accessibility in public transit and active transport. So it takes a mobilization of groups and citizens from the neighborhood to support that.⁶⁵

In the perspective of the City, traffic calming needed strong local support. And the programs from civic actors broadened the local adherence from one residential street to a larger neighborhood area.⁶⁶ Hence the civic actors developed a utopian frame (and associated civic programs) which responded to a malaise about street favoritism, while keeping the source of the legitimacy of interventions in local mobilization and local support. Yet, in the interpretation of this utopian frame, we will see that there was more negotiation on how to delimit and choose the spaces of the 'community' enabling walking and cycling. There were also discussions about the need to include external actors beyond the mobilized local community to actually implement traffic calming measures where needed.

⁶⁵ "L'apaisement de la circulation ça a du bon, mais il faut une implication des citoyens, via les comités, une implication forte du quartier, car le quartier vert, c'est pour donner une accessibilité accrue au quartier. Faut être prêt à vivre avec une accessibilité plus faible en automobile pour une accessibilité plus grande en transport collectif et actif. Donc ça prend une mobilisation des groupes et des citoyens du quartier pour ça."

⁶⁶ In the case of *Équiterre*, it was the area surrounding a commercial neighborhood street. For all programs, the territorial units on which they worked had to be selected, which meant that certain zones were not included. The exclusion of certain areas was deplored by participating residents in the Urban Ecology program (Obs1&2 GAHN).

To sum up, this discourse of the local community enabling walking and cycling has the following main linkages: 1) vulnerable populations, especially children and elders, and in general pedestrians and cyclists, suffer from problems of traffic unsafety, yet we want to encourage walking and cycling; 2) a better street design can lead to traffic safety; and 3) a dynamic and mobilized local community is conducive to more walking and cycling, either directly in enabling a local way of life (with local shops and public spaces), or indirectly through the local mobilization to change their local environment for a better street design.

If the first node on vulnerability was left uncontested, the second and third were not. The node on street design was considered irrelevant especially in provincial forums of debate on traffic safety with the Ministry of Transport; where deficient behavior was targeted rather than the deficiencies in the built environment. This focus has consequences on traffic regulations norms by the Ministry of Transport. The third node, of the local dynamic community enabling walking and cycling, was problematized in the Plateau controversy, since the measures affected more people than the 'local community', a local community which was difficult to neatly delimit. Yet the unfolding of the Firefighter controversy shows the uniting effect of the local community argument, justifying borough-regulated interventions (with no veto from the Firefighter) based on the needs for traffic calming requested locally, particularly in the context of retaining families in Montreal.

In the context of these zones of antagonism and convergence, civic actors were pushing for traffic calming interventions in their participatory programs in neighborhoods, adapting actually their utopian frame in different interpretative repertoires.

4.4 Two interpretative repertoires

When civic actors implemented their programs, they came across existing transport and urbanistic norms, concrete physical landscapes and a certain geography of governance. This lead to different interpretative repertoires of the utopian frame for which the spaces on to prioritize for traffic calming differ. Current norms favor traffic calming in protected neighborhoods, where transiting traffic is taken out of residential streets. But other groups came to emphasize the spaces of mobility, arteries, as the key priority spaces for traffic calming interventions.

Norms of road hierarchy and the program from the City : the protected neighborhood

The ideal of traffic calming has been present in doctrines and codes of urban and transportation planning (Ben-Joseph 2005). I described in chapter 1 how road hierarchy, a system of traffic and associated urbanistic norms, was first built with the objective of traffic safety. Road hierarchy is a functional classification of streets which determines the volume of traffic the street should accommodate according to its position in the transport network. Road hierarchy works on transport, urbanistic and governance definitions: it defines the role of a road within a larger circulation network, it defines the road relation to the urban fabric and it defines the public actor responsible of its management.

The norms for the whole province are determined by the Ministry of Transport. For the agglomeration of Montreal, more specific norms were agreed upon between municipal authorities and the Ministry at the time of the consolidation of all the cities of the island into one mega-city in 2002. The road classification corresponds to the following division: highways, principal arteries, secondary arteries, collectors and local streets. They can accommodate different flows of circulation according to their different traffic functions: transit, distribution and access to destination.⁶⁷ In Montreal, highways are the responsibility of the Ministry, arteries of the agglomeration (composed of the City of Montreal and other municipalities on the island) and the City Council of Montreal, collector streets and local streets of the boroughs.⁶⁸ Arteries thus differ in important ways from collectors and local streets because they are managed by the agglomeration or the City of Montreal, which have power over their signalization and the management of traffic fluidity. The City and agglomeration of Montreal also fund public works on arteries. Traffic calming operations on collectors and local streets are planned and funded by boroughs.

Arteries and highways have similar functions in the road network. They are supposed to remove the traffic from the other streets. Both highways and arteries have been described by engineers from the Minister and the City as aspirators which remove traffic from neighborhoods; this is how they are conceptualized in transport models (BAPE 2009; VdM 2010a; AECOM and CMM 2011). Their primary function is to host longer-distance traffic. On arteries, a series of measures are put in place to ensure the fluidity of circulation: synchronization of lights, ban on left turn, turning

⁶⁷ The different types of road can accommodate, according to the norms, the following flows of circulation: more than 30 000 cars per day for principal arteries, less than 30 000 for secondary arteries and between 10 000 to 15 000 for collector streets.

⁶⁸ Since 2013 however, the collector streets are also the responsibility of the central City or agglomeration.

bays, and sometimes one-ways (VdM 2010a). Ensuring the fluidity on arteries makes them more attractive for transiting circulation, thereby freeing local streets from car transit.

This road hierarchy goes hand in hand with an urbanistic vision of how the city should be organized. Planning documents have put emphasis, since the Urban Master Plan of 2004, on the valorization of living environments ('milieux de vie'). Within planning documents (VdM 2008; VdM 2010b), these living environments are pictured as neighborhoods freed from transiting traffic. It is also in this perspective that the concept of the Green neighborhood was introduced by the City of Montreal, concept in relation to which, let us recall, the *Centre d'écologie urbaine* has elaborated its GAHN program (to influence the City's green neighborhood vision).

The concept of Green Neighborhood, for the City of Montreal, would have emerged in the context of the project of "modernizing" the Notre-Dame road into a highway. After public hearings (with the provincial environmental impact assessment procedure) in 2002, the Ministry of Environment set as a condition for the Notre-Dame extension project that a program for traffic calming and local traffic safety be put into place in the surroundings, as a compensation for the increased car circulation. This meant the Minister of Transport had to give a budget to the City of Montreal for the implementation of measures ensuring that the traffic on Notre-Dame would not percolate in local surrounding streets in the borough Mercier-Hochelaga-Maisonneuve. The prime objective of this Green neighborhood was thus to preserve the local living environments stuck between Notre-Dame boulevard and down-town (VdM 2013a, 6; Int S).

Being associated with funding from the Ministry of Transport (as a mitigation measure for Notre-Dame), the notion of Green neighborhood stayed in the vocabulary of the City and was included as a broader objective of the Montreal Transportation Plan in 2008. It took several years before the City actually developed guidelines on its 'Green neighborhood' concept (drafts and preliminary presentations in 2010-2011, published in 2013). Boroughs are the public authorities in charge of those spaces, and the City of Montreal offered guidelines on how they should think them. In this Green neighborhood guide written for the benefit of the boroughs, we find the same definition of the 'green neighborhood' as a space freed from transiting traffic. In the process of choosing the best locations for Green neighborhoods, boroughs should follow criteria presented by the City: local residential streets with collective equipments, shops and public transit at walking distance. To mark the perimeter of the Green neighborhood, the planner should also look at physical barriers, the limits of the "felt" neighborhood" and particularly the hierarchy of the

arterial network (Tremblay 2011; VdM 2013a, 3.3–3.4). The densely built area of local streets⁶⁹ is pictured as delimited by arteries and faster roads, on which is concentrated the transiting traffic. Within this protected neighborhood should lie the vulnerable land-uses that local residents can access on foot, like schools. And within this neighborhood is an engaged population which can make the choice of a less fluid car mobility to improve the safety of walking and cycling in their living community (VdM 2013a, 4.3, 5.4, 6.1)⁷⁰. This definition is very similar to the one from civic actors of local vibrant neighborhoods (with lively commercial streets, convivial public spaces reinforcing the sense of belonging, etc.), and to what was advocated by the mayor of Plateau-Mont-Royal. The idea of a local dynamic and supportive community is present in the civic and public discourses.

The particularity of the City's model is to stress the reduction of transiting traffic in residential streets. Local safety is made possible because of the road hierarchy which concentrates traffic on arteries and highways. The arteries delimit the living environments, the interior and the exterior of the neighborhood.

Yet, although this is the primary definition of the green neighborhood by the City, and of traffic calming by the norms of the road hierarchy, the most dangerous intersections with arteries were also planned to be re-designed (a special program was put in place for that in 2008, but with actual annual investments smaller than promised, VdM 2008, 153; CEUM 2012a). And in the final version of its Guide, the City noted that green neighborhoods could also include arteries within their perimeters. It is stated in the guide that in the choice of the green neighborhood's perimeter, the borough should “consider the arterial network (without necessarily excluding it from the perimeter) and maintain its functionality, unless there is a counter recommendation from experts in circulation” (VdM 2013a, 3.4 emphasis added). A certain flexibility and zone of interpretation was introduced.

In the Plateau controversy, the discourse of traffic calming as 'protected neighborhood' had been put in doubt. The borough had followed the 'protected neighborhood' idea of traffic calming in pushing the transiting traffic out of streets that were identified as 'local' in the hierarchical network. Recall how the mayor considered it was an example of a 101 urban planning course

⁶⁹ Although the City also proposed green neighborhoods in less dense neighborhoods (VdM 2013).

⁷⁰ The figure of the 'protected neighborhood' in planning dates a long way back. In 1920, Perry defined the unit of the neighborhood preserved from external traffic with the same criterion than the 'Green neighborhood' from the City of Montreal: size, presence of a school, boundary on all sides marked by arterial streets, internal street system 'designed to discourage through traffic', public spaces, institutional site and local shops (Clarence Perry, “The Neighborhood Unit”, p.33-34, cited by Ben-Joseph (2005, 65).

(Ferrandez 2010, 101). Still, his intervention was heavily criticized. Getting transiting traffic out of residential streets meant there were (at least temporarily) more congestion on arteries, since they are already at full capacity in this sector of the city. It seemed that *arteries and residential streets could not be so easily treated as different and unconnected zones of intervention, in terms of mobility*, and that the borough could not act alone. Arteries and 'local residential streets' also seemed not that different in terms of spaces of inhabitation, in at least some interpretations of the civic-led programs for traffic calming, interpretations which I discuss below.

Another space of intervention: recognizing inhabited spaces of mobility

In their initial forms, the civic programs for traffic calming, walking and cycling also put forward a traditional image of a closed neighborhood protected from traffic. Following the planning tradition, the Coalition for traffic calming focused on transiting traffic in 'residential streets', the *Centre d'écologie urbaine* also used this image, although less often. The focus on schools by *Vélo Québec* was also interpreted as a program working in residential neighborhoods, since schools are, in the collective imaginary, thought to be safely located in streets with not too much traffic. This is at least what was represented in the Firefighter controversy, where civic and public actors demanded to keep their right of implementing traffic calming around schools on local streets. Yet, *Vélo Québec* and the actors implementing the program systematically looked at the traffic safety in 500 meters radius around schools, which in Montreal often includes high-traffic roads like arteries. Civic actors not only argued for traffic calming in residential streets of 'protected neighborhoods', following the norms and definition of the City of Montreal, but also asked for intervention on spaces of mobility.

A leader from CRE-Montreal, in a presentation of the Coalition for traffic calming during information sessions in the Plateau-Mont-Royal in 2008, spoke already of the tension in the current norms. "Arteries are living environments" yet, he cited the existing norms stating that "the primary function of arteries is to allow transit, no traffic calming measure can be there implemented on them"⁷¹ (Bouchard 2008). Two years later, a similar, but more pro-active message was presented during the *Centre d'écologie urbaine*'s meetings for the Green neighborhoods projects: "This [the principle of road hierarchy] is in fact contrary to the idea of intervening on sites where there are most accidents, since arteries are treated in terms of fluidity

⁷¹ "Les artères sont des milieux de vie" mais la réglementation stipule que "la fonction première des artères est de permettre le transit, aucune mesure d'apaisement de la circulation ne peut y être aménagée".

but it is where all transportation modes meet. That is where we should act in priority. (Obs NDG1, 2010)⁷²

It is most often in concretely thinking about the links between vulnerable populations and traffic safety, and between traffic safety and street design, that actors came to put more emphasis on intervening actually not on residential streets, but on inhabited spaces of mobility (arteries). This was clear in the diagnostics of *Vélo-Québec* within the 'school travel plans', which showed the origin of children and their necessary crossing of arteries to reach their schools. In the CEUM's Green neighborhood plans problems of pedestrian and cyclist access were described: un-safe cycling access from downtown to the neighborhood because of arteries, unsafe access to the metro station because of important road axis, etc.

In the framing of funding agencies (*Québec en Forme* especially) and consequently of both the *Centre d'écologie urbaine* and *Vélo Québec*, children were a priority. In addition to the objective of developing early healthy habits, children also represented vulnerable populations to traffic. The DSP had documented the localization of collisions with cars to make correlations with characteristics from the built environment, showing with maps published in Montreal's newspaper how many schools were situated directly on or at the corner of primary arteries (Gervais 2011). Other groups representing vulnerable populations also got involved⁷³, the *Table de concertation des aînés de l'île de Montreal* (Montreal Table for Elders) for example. Elders often had to cross arteries to reach hospitals and clinics; and so it had become for their organization a key issue of concern. Also, organizations for the rights of the disabled were active in the field of transport and had gained a direct contact with the City of Montreal through a special committee on 'universal acceptability'. All these influences which focused on vulnerable populations (the first and uncontested equivalence of the utopian frame), made interventions on arteries a priority space of intervention. A new interpretation had been built between protecting vulnerable populations and the design of streets, which focused on arteries.

Other major alliances formed in these programs for traffic calming led actors to question the previous vision of the spaces of intervention. As we had seen, the programs involved the close involvement of local leaders, which implemented programs locally. These local leaders were, for the most part, actors from the social justice and community development sectors. The *Centre*

⁷² "Ceci en fait est contraire à l'idée d'intervenir aux endroits où il y a le plus d'accidents, car en fait ces artères sont traitées en terme de fluidité, quand c'est là que se rencontrent tous les modes de transport. C'est là qu'on devrait agir en priorité."

⁷³ Not directly in the four civic programs, but in demands for traffic calming in different arenas of debate, and in the Contest promoting the best traffic calming measures from boroughs.

d'écologie urbaine, in their program GAHN, had especially asked for local actors working on deprived neighborhoods. The spaces they chose for their Green, active and healthy neighborhoods (GAHN) did not necessarily correspond to local neighborhoods that could be protected from local traffic, as presented by the dominant and normed discourse from the City of Montreal and the road hierarchy principle. They were spaces crossed by arteries and interchanges, in which a unit of neighborhood distinct from the spaces of transiting traffic was difficult to identify. Figure 4.3 shows the emphasis put on this type of unstructured neighborhoods by the *Centre d'écologie urbaine* in their plans. It was especially because they were so unlike to the image of a protected neighborhood that groups seemed to have chosen them as spaces most needing interventions.

Mobilized citizens and community organizers in the GAHN program have noted repeatedly issues of ill-designed corners, intersections, under-passes, all spaces of mobility and frontiers, for pedestrians and cyclists. Here are examples of statements criticizing the design of arteries in Montreal, taken from the diagnostic of the GAHN project for the NDG-South neighborhood.

The Montreal road network is hierarchized. [...] In Montreal, in the majority of cases, the classification was made after the layout of routes and neighborhoods, which explains the fact that certain streets do not have the adequate shape to absorb a high flow of circulation, or the fact that the authorized speed is 50 km/h albeit the presence of schools, health center or community organization on these arteries. [...] The axes the most affected by circulation and congestion (Sherbrooke and St-Jacques streets, Upper-Lachine, Girouard Avenue and Décarie Boulevard) limit active mobility [walking and cycling] by citizens. [...] Frequently used for transit, these streets also serve as a display for the neighborhood : their poor design contributes to the negative image that visitors can have of central Montreal neighborhoods. (CEUM 2011b, 5)⁷⁴

⁷⁴ “Le réseau routier de Montréal est hiérarchisé [...] À Montréal, dans la majorité des cas, la classification s'est faite bien longtemps après l'aménagement des voies et des quartiers, ce qui explique que certaines rues n'aient pas le format adéquat pour absorber un débit de circulation élevé, ou que la vitesse autorisée soit de 50 km/h malgré la présence d'écoles, de centres de santé ou d'organismes communautaires sur ces artères. [...] Les axes les plus affectés par la circulation et la congestion (les rues Sherbrooke et Saint-Jacques, le chemin Upper-Lachine, l'avenue Girouard et le boulevard Décarie) limitent les déplacements actifs des citoyens. [...] Fréquemment utilisées pour le transit, ces rues font également office de vitrines pour le quartier : leur pauvre aménagement contribue à alimenter l'image négative que peuvent avoir les visiteurs des quartiers centraux montréalais.”



Figure 4.3 Sample of pictures shown in the plans of the Green, active and health neighborhoods from the Centre d'écologie urbaine

Source: Centre d'écologie urbaine, reproduction permitted. From top left to bottom right, a corner within the Plateau-East GAHN (CEU 2011a, 35), two photos from NDG GAHN (CEU 2011b, 21), primary school at the corner of arteries St-Joseph and De Lorimier (CEUM 2011a, 26).

Civic actors thus articulated two different interpretative repertoires on the priority space for their ideal of a local dynamic community enabling walking and cycling: the protected neighborhood and the spaces of mobility. They created visions which offer different solutions to the controversy over the 'correct' spaces for traffic calming. The first respected the norm that certain places are dedicated to fluidity, and certain places are dedicated to convivial walking and cycling. The second took the point of view of the concrete experience of vulnerable populations and local dynamic communities in the current morphological organization of the city, and contested the

norm of certain spaces dedicated to fluidity which excluded measures for traffic calming. Although I have cited above the use of the interpretative repertoires by brokers, specific actors are not limited to the use of a single interpretative repertoire. This is not only because of their numbers and of the myriad of scenes of debate and interactions, but also because data on the GAHN suggest that depending on the physical context around which they mobilized, and the actors they were in interaction with, civic actors drew on a protected neighborhood or a space of mobility repertoire. This is also consistent with the concept of interpretative repertoire: the use of a repertoire is linked to the context (Potter 1996; Jorgenson and Phillips 2002). The artery is a source of greater antagonism. Civic actors, especially local leaders, thus used cautiously, depending on the context, the repertoire of 'the inhabited spaces of mobility'.

A local leader in NDG, for example, explained how they thought they would have to modify the perimeter of their *Green, active, and healthy neighborhood* to have less arteries and highway entrance in the perimeter (than in the first perimeter identified). Considering that spaces of mobility were non-intervention zones and would bring friction in their relation with the City, they chose one priority artery on which to work and mobilize within the green neighborhood process, adapting in the process the perimeter of the neighborhood to exclude other spaces of mobility (Int NDG). A similar situation was reported in Mercier-East, where the local leader reported negotiations with the City planner to change the perimeter which was too large and included too many big infrastructure issues (Int S).

In contrast, the *Centre d'écologie urbaine* was organizing events on the need to re-think the design of arteries (CEUM 2010a; CEUM 2012b), and the DSP was documenting and publicizing the problems with arteries as well (Morency and Drouin 2008; Gervais 2011; Morency 2012; Paquin 2012). There seemed to be a power differential in the capacity of actors to militate for interventions on arteries with the City, a differential linked with their brokering capacities in the geographies of governance, as I explore below. And the City of Montreal also seemed to play between the two interpretative repertoires of the protected neighborhood and of the spaces of mobility, depending on the occasion. Its more recent planning document (2013) left a zone of flexibility and of interpretation on what could be done on arteries within the Green neighborhood program, as discussed above.

4.5 Working on the geographies of governance

Acting on the spaces of mobility is definitely at odds with the norms of road hierarchy and in the original definition of the Green Neighborhood by the City of Montreal. It is a space of intervention that questions the 'normed' discourse on traffic calming, which assumed that only residential streets could be calmed. This dominant discourse has a distinct geography. The vision of traffic calming within closed protected neighborhoods pre-determines the types of urban spaces that can be subject to traffic calming, walking, and cycling, in excluding the spaces that are devoted or constituted by a transiting traffic. But it is where there is a large amount of circulation, in streets configured to favor fluidity, and in neighborhoods that are not a priori good spaces for walking and cycling, that the problems of collisions, feelings of unsafety, and non convivial environments were felt by some civic groups as the most important.

There is a close link between the norm that the repertoire of the spaces of mobility came to contest and the geography of governance advocated. In pointing toward arteries, civic actors asked, implicitly, for a multi-partite coordination between boroughs, the City, the transit agency, etc., to treat the most urgent problems of traffic safety. The artery was a new space of intervention requiring for new articulations in the governance system. Yet actors still acted locally, following the utopian frame, particularly through concrete local programs promoting walking, cycling and traffic calming in neighborhoods, and with participatory methods with residents. The utopian frame of the dynamic community enabling walking and cycling was transposed to arteries, which are also inhabited, with the same participatory methods. The interpretative repertoire of the spaces of mobility was advocated from the place-based experience of traffic: negotiating the intersection of the different scales of mobility (transiting and local mobility) in an inhabited space. The interpretative repertoire of the 'protected neighborhood' was kept as a minimal guarantee to offer protection from transit in residential streets.

How was this (double) framing of the geography of governance enacted and advocated by civic actors through brokerage mechanisms? And eventually, how was this framing of the geography of governance received by public authorities?

Networks and brokerage to act on the geography of governance

In all four civic programs, borough authorities were important partners with which civic actors worked in the hope of having their traffic calming ambitions realized. Boroughs had the power to

act on the design of local streets. The *Centre d'écologie urbaine* and *Équiterre* had made the borough's commitment to work on implementation a condition for their involvement in its territory; and the *Conseil régional de l'environnement* (CRE-Mtl) had worked also with boroughs on best practices. Boroughs were encouraged by the City of Montreal to elaborate and implement mobility plans favorable to walking and cycling (VdM 2008; VdM 2010a; VdM 2013a). Besides this partnership with the boroughs, civic actors worked further on two network building strategies. First, in the neighborhoods, they aimed at creating networks for a diverse local governance of these issues. Second, some brokers reached out to actors outside of the borough.

Table 4.2 *Involvement of local networks on mobility : civic actors contributing to a local governance of traffic calming*

Neighborhood ⁷⁵	Programs and platforms in which a diversity of local actors participated
Mercier-Est	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Green, active and healthy neighborhood (GAHN, Urban Ecology Center) - I'm active in my neighborhood (Équiterre) - My school on foot, on bike (Vélo-Qc) - Neighborhood 21 (City of Montreal and Public Health Agency)
Plateau-East	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Green, active and healthy neighborhood (GAHN, Urban Ecology Center) - My school on foot, on bike (Vélo-Qc) - Campaign zone 30, Colombo 'my survival in traffic' (Maison de l'Aurore)
Notre-Dame-de-Grâce (NDG)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Green, active and healthy neighborhood (GAHN, Urban Ecology Center) - My school on foot, on bike (Vélo-Qc) - I'm active in my neighborhood (Équiterre)
Parc-Extension	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Green, active and healthy neighborhood (GAHN, Urban Ecology Center) - My school on foot, on bike (Vélo-Qc) - Neighborhood 21 (City of Montreal and Public Health Agency)
Rosemont Petite-Patrie	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - I'm active in my neighborhood (Équiterre) - My school on foot, on bike (Vélo-Qc) - Neighborhood 21 (City of Montreal and Public Health Agency)
Ahuntsic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - I'm active in my neighborhood (Équiterre) - My school on foot, on bike (Vélo-Qc) - Neighborhood 21 (City of Montreal and Public Health Agency)
Lachine	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - I'm active in my neighborhood (Équiterre) - My school on foot, on bike (Vélo-Qc) - Neighborhood 21 (City of Montreal and Public Health Agency)

⁷⁵ There were more neighborhoods involved in the project My school, on foot or on bike, but I only show neighborhoods where other projects were also conducted.

Through the community-participatory programs, we have seen already that local leaders developed social ties with different sectors not traditionally working together on issues of mobility, sometimes in activating existing community networks on the mobility issue, sometimes in extending them further. Hence they constructed spaces of interaction, locally, in which the complexity of the issue of mobility could be discussed in relation to other issues. While this construction can be also interpreted as community 'opportunism' in order to receive funds from the public health sector, it still had the effect of activating networks locally on this issue. Very often, local leaders engaged their local networks in not only one, but several of the programs of the regional civic actors presented in 4.2. Or they went through one civic program and then asked for funding from the City and the DSP through the program 'Neighborhood 21', to ensure the longevity of the forum they had created on issues of mobility in the neighborhood, as we can see in Table 4.2. Hence, there were networks organized to ensure a locally-based governance of traffic calming and the promotion of walking and cycling (these local governance and self-reliance projects being also encouraged by funding programs from both the City with the DSP and *Québec en Forme*, as introduced in section 4.1).

Yet, civic actors did not all remain at the local level and in the competencies of the borough, especially when the focus came on arteries, frontiers of neighborhoods with railways or highway entrances. There, of course, boroughs were not the only responsible public actors. The City of Montreal, public transit authorities and even the Ministry of Transport or the railways companies often had responsibilities on matters at stake. How did civic actors deal with that? Only a very limited number of actors performed acts of brokerage with these actors outside the borough.

Within the *Green, active and healthy neighborhood (GAHN)* program, the *Centre d'écologie urbaine* had planned for each local project a follow-up committee in which the borough and different actors (including actors exterior to the unit studied) should take part. The central City, the Montreal public transit agencies and the Canadian Pacific Railway participated to different extents (while there was not even a try with the Ministry of Transport). Their participation was seen by the *Centre d'écologie urbaine* and local leaders as important to reduce the barriers to walking and cycling : barriers like a dangerous or unfriendly overpass, a large artery or a railway track. These barriers turned out to be a primary focus of the follow-up committees, along with the issue of traffic calming around schools. But the follow-up committees succeeded in securing the presence of these external actors in only two of the four projects. The low collaboration of the

federal railways companies (to adapt pedestrian paths to railways) was particularly denounced by the *Centre d'écologie urbaine* and the boroughs (CEUM 2012c; Delacour 2012).

In addition to this effort, the *Centre d'écologie urbaine* had organized, during the process of elaboration of the GAHN in Plateau-East and Notre-Dame-de-Grâce, two workshops for experts, to which in total 30 persons participated. The workshops were aimed at exploring different possibilities to re-design difficult spots of the future green neighborhoods, to then submit ideas to the residents and actors in the participatory processes. The difficult sites around which the *Centre d'écologie urbaine de Montréal* invited experts to discuss were arteries crossing the territories and overpasses with uneasy pedestrian access, two objects which do not fit the initial image of the green neighborhood by the City of Montreal. Yet, different experts (transport engineers, and different kinds of planners) with key positions in the City of Montreal, boroughs, the Montreal public transit agency, universities, the DSP as well as parent committees were invited to discuss and flesh out concrete propositions about these objects (CEUM 2010a).

The timing was good because the Montreal Public Transit Agency (STM) was drawing much attention on arteries, in planning dedicated lanes for buses on key arteries to augment substantially the use of public transit with a limited budget. Collaborations with local groups were needed to reduce opposition to the dense traffic of buses (and in some instances to remove parking spaces), and to improve the cohabitation with cyclists on the lanes dedicated to buses. Hence, the STM also got involved in discussions about good designs for “liveable arteries”.

These forums from the *Centre d'écologie urbaine* were smartly inserted in the participatory process. They highlighted the experts' knowledge (in presenting their ideas to the residents afterward), but they also forced them to consider explicitly issues that are usually left out of traffic calming plans (arteries and frontiers of neighborhoods). One employee from the CEUM noted that many expert-participants appreciated the forums since they had usually too little opportunities of discussions outside their own organization (Obs 60).

Through these 'expert' forums and the follow-up committees of the GAHN, the *Centre d'écologie urbaine* created links among different authorities, in order to allow for the securing of arteries for pedestrians and cyclists. This was not an obvious or easy thing to do, especially if we compare to the three other brokers. An evaluation report of the program from *Vélo Québec*, for example, reported that some participating schools and parents felt this link with external actors, especially the municipality, to work on regional aspects of mobility lacked; and too much was put

on the shoulders of the school or local actors, which had no power on the greater issues at stake (DSP-Québec 2011, 42–44, 50–51, 67–68). Also, a resident involved in the school committee of *Vélo Québec*'s program talked about his frustrations in the tedious process of demanding for a safe crossing of an arterial road to reach the primary school attended by his children.

To get just a little bit requires so much. What we are realizing now is that each school, one after the other, has to make its own committee, put pressure on authorities and write in the newspapers, to have its little speed bump for example, to have just a little bit done in the street. And we find it tedious each time to be forced to put so much pressure and put in place so many processes just to have a little bit of safe street design around a school when, hum... we would like it maybe that it'd be done more broadly (FG1).⁷⁶

Indeed, there were a lot of schools involved in the program from *Vélo Québec* (recall there were in 2011 up to 68 schools just in Montreal), each one with its own mobilization committee and its challenges. If a school 'community' organized around the program, *Vélo Québec* also helped linking each school with the borough (for traffic calming interventions) and the police department (to control car drivers' illegal behavior around schools), but not beyond that.

Équiterre was also not really involved in such brokerage between the neighborhood actors participating in its program and external public actors. Although present in arenas of debate at the municipal, metropolitan and provincial levels (like the other discursive brokers), its local campaign was isolated from such public stances, with distinct staffs in the organization devoted to each (Int E). *Équiterre*'s campaign 'I'm active in my neighborhood' meant to mobilize residents, shops and institutions for themselves to act and make representations to public authorities to improve their direct environment. Finally, CRE-Montreal started by linking local and resident associations with environmental organizations to share information and mobilize on traffic calming (in their Coalition for traffic calming); raising in particular the interest of organizations subsidized for urban revitalization. But they ended up finding it heavy to link those two categories of actors (local voluntary associations and professional environmental organizations) and left the field of action to the other civic brokers (except for the organization of the Contest of the best traffic calming measures) (Int CRE1).

⁷⁶ “pour avoir un petit peu ça demande tellement. On se rend compte que chacune des écoles est obligée, une après l'autre de faire son comité, faire pression dans les journaux, pour avoir son petit dos d'âne, pour avoir un petit peu d'aménagements et tout ça. Et on trouve que c'est fastidieux tout ça de à chaque fois d'être obligé de faire autant de pressions et de démarches pour être capable d'avoir un peu d'aménagements autour de l'école, quand euh, on aimerait peut-être que ça se fasse de manière un peu plus globale.”

The *Centre d'écologie urbaine* was thus the main actor concretely involved in brokerage between the local projects of traffic calming and external public actors. Other discursive brokers were not conducting such brokerage in the context of their local programs, but in parallel advocacy in public debates. The *Centre d'écologie urbaine* had also a close relationship with the City of Montreal by having a planner from the Department of Transport in its 'scientific committee'. This planner had followed closely the civic green neighborhoods in the making, in parallel to elaborating the City's guidelines about Green neighborhoods, for boroughs. The *Centre d'écologie urbaine* had hoped to influence the City in its evolving definition of the Green neighborhood, and expected that the neighborhoods it worked with could receive funding and recognition from the central City. In 2012, the City invited boroughs to submit Green neighborhoods that could benefit from the central City recognition. The four boroughs in which civic projects had been developed were keen to apply for this recognition. It would mean extra funding as well as the marking, on the entrance of the green neighborhoods. Such recognition from the City, both for political acceptability and funding, was valuable for borough authorities. To show it was active on those issues, the City had advantage of taking credit for the four pilot projects undergone with the *Centre d'écologie urbaine*; even if they did not correspond exactly to the City's definition. For civic and community actors, it meant they had an opportunity of pushing for interventions on arteries, since the City was part of the partnership. Yet, I spoke earlier of some negotiations on the spatial definitions of the Green neighborhoods receiving a recognition from the City, to reduce spaces of mobility included in the perimeter. Eight green neighborhoods (with four from the *Centre d'écologie urbaine* program) were announced in may 2013 by the City with a funding of 10 million dollars from the City (hoping the same amount in the following two years) to actually implement traffic calming measures, with the door left open to potential interventions on arteries (VdM 2013b).

In sum, local leaders mainly developed relations with actors in their boroughs, and wished to keep a cooperative relation with the borough. Local leaders reached public actors outside the borough through the help of brokers (or in some cases with borough authorities, when the borough also wanted the central city's involvement on arteries). This means that the second interpretative repertoire on the spaces of mobility was not directly available to them. Local leaders regretted that the spaces of mobility, arteries and underpasses, were placed on lists of priorities from public authorities outside of the borough, list of priority on which they had little leverage and oversight (Int MA, Int S, Int NDG). The previous quotation also emphasized that

this mobilization to reach actors outside the borough meant a lot of work for little small steps accomplished, when it even succeeded. The *Centre d'écologie urbaine* was the only broker really activating brokerage arenas to counter this phenomena. Its four one kilometer square projects were however far from reaching a large urban area. It is more at discursive and governance levels that the projects may inspire other actions.

Perceived geographies of governance

We have seen in the debates that not only the concrete spaces of traffic calming were contested, but also who had the political legitimacy to act. This was mainly posed in the dichotomy between the boroughs acting locally or the central city coordinating the different interventions (either for the Firefighter's concern, or to prevent traffic chaos in the aftermath of the Plateau's interventions). The model of a borough-centered action seemed to be somewhat questionable, although it was still the primary ground for action. The protests about the Plateau's interventions, which followed the norms of the 'protected neighborhood', suggested to some the necessity of Montreal-wide coordination. In the Firefighter controversy however, the boroughs managed to retain their powers on traffic calming measures by using the argument of local requests coming from families, schools, and the public health professionals. The utopian frame of the dynamic local community and the brokerage done to implement the ideal could increase the political legitimacy of acting on car alternatives locally. The second interpretative repertoire emphasized this same utopian frame but in intervening on metropolitan-relevant issues as they were experienced, the arteries raising the question of regional mobility versus local quality of life and safety for vulnerable pedestrian populations. Yet I have shown that only the *Centre d'écologie urbaine* has been actively involved in brokerage enabling the inclusion of public actors outside of the borough.

The transformative potential of the civic-public programs on the geography of governance was the topic of a focus group conducted in 2012 with local community-groups leader of such programs, resident association, parent and board commissioner of schools involved, as well as representatives from the DSP, the Montreal transit agency, the City of Montreal and the borough Plateau-Mont-Royal. In the focus group, the utopian frame presented above was stated and much emphasis was put on orienting and prioritizing interventions for vulnerable populations – the first equivalence from civic actors. Working on street design was judged necessary for better traffic safety, the second equivalence from civic actors. But the third equivalence on the dynamic community, linking local political engagement with more traffic calming and walking and cycling,

was again problematized. Participants expressed that local mobilization could not be enough to make things happen, and it was maybe too much to ask of citizens' groups to mobilize at multiple micro-local sites. Yet local mobilization seemed the most pragmatic way to enact change. Coordinating the metropolitan from the local was far from easy.

From the outset, the spokesman of the *Project Montréal* team from the borough Plateau-Mont-Royal said he knew that people considered that the borough should have acted in a more coordinated fashion with other entities to reduce the negative impacts on regional and local mobilities, and that he agreed that planning comprehensively from the regional downward was a laudable goal. Yet, he maintained that if higher authorities had no firm intention to act for car alternatives, local officials elected on a traffic calming program had to act on their own and on small and somewhat disconnected spaces.

Interestingly, the City planner responded that in theory the city asked boroughs to make comprehensive borough plans following guidelines from the City. Yet, she considered it in fact fruitful to start locally (as visible in the City's own Green neighborhood program). Starting from neighborhood units was for the planner a way to tackle the complex mobility puzzle from concrete cases, and to develop a local understanding and local legitimacy to act. She suggested it could then be easier to work on issues of regional mobility: starting from local neighborhood units and their challenges of mobility allowed to show the necessity of also working on arteries, the spaces of car fluidity, and contributed to make arterial interventions politically acceptable.

Somewhat in contrast with these remarks, the spokesperson from a resident association from Plateau-Mont-Royal noted that local actors needed external public actors to clearly announce their intention to support car alternatives and traffic calming. Otherwise, the political antagonism concentrated itself in the local communities, which was actually detrimental to social cohesion and the ideal of traffic calming generally. So public support from the exterior of the neighborhoods was needed to legitimize change. The fact that there was still antagonism on the spaces of traffic calming required the involvement from external authorities. In consequence, the resident emphasized multi-scalar involvement to reduce the pressure on local residents. The idea of a local support and local mobilization for traffic calming was very demanding for local community groups and resident associations (all busy in having petitions signed). A representative of the DSP also argued, reflecting on their own discourse and practice, that not all local place-based mobilizations were in favor of car alternatives. What will happen in places not only less active politically, but not supporting car alternatives?

Yet, the idea of starting from the local was perceived by several participants in the discussion as a pragmatic way forward. A regional civic actor, representative of one of the discursive brokers, said that working with a multi-site strategy represented, from her experience, the most pragmatic way to overcome sectoral, territorial and scalar segmentation lines inherent in organizations, which constitute barriers for car alternatives.

The ideal of an effective coordination between the different authorities was restated in several instances during the focus group. It was presented by many as a goal never completely fulfilled. This was also specifically associated with the moving governance context of Montreal, with a still embryonic structure. More than ten years after the territorial reform, the coordination and information-sharing between the boroughs and the central City, between the different departments of the central City, and with other transport and land-use authorities, was not smooth-running. This coordinating goal was for some participants a managerial and almost technical task, while for others it was also clearly political, with different authorities having different political agendas.

For a mobilized local resident, the coordination of state entities was an obvious, and even at times seemingly deliberate, force against change. He spoke about the norms from the Ministry of Transport which were impeding change (like norms setting a minimal distance between stop signs on a local street); and also of the coordination between the boroughs and the central City. Civic brokers helped residents to fight these obstacles, in articulating concrete programs and starting where some openness and political engagement were present. Residents mobilizing for car alternatives and traffic calming were, from his perspective, David against Goliath. Goliath being the bureaucratic machine against change: each public authority pushed the responsibility to the other, or constrained the other in its margin to enact change (the metaphor of David and Goliath was a figure used in a newspaper article commenting the difficulty of putting in place traffic calming (Gervais 2011)). Another local resident involved in the GAHN and *Vélo Québec* programs, cited above, expressed similar views. And so did a representative of the Montreal school commission authority, who emphasized how the lived reality in a neighborhood implied actors and connections far beyond it (not only in relation to the state coordination but also in the regulation of enterprises, for example trucks' regulation). There were, in these comments, not only disappointments and a feeling of powerlessness. There was also a promotion of brokers able to find some leverage points in this state structure. Civic actors participating to the focus group also voiced a demand to representatives of public authorities present (transit agency, city,

ministry of transport, borough) to contest and denounce the inertia stemming from inter-authority coordination. Reducing this inertia was seen as necessary to truly realize some sort of metropolitan-wide neighborhood traffic calming.

Starting with neighborhood units thus seemed to participants in the focus group a pragmatic strategy, but containing a danger of diluting forces in multiple sites which, in the end, all meet the same challenges in their relation with actors external to their neighborhood. In certain cases, mobilization also generated antagonism in local scenes. Yet, it seemed to some actors a window of opportunity, within the current context where boroughs were happy to collaborate, to develop a 'common language' on mobility issues and the building of expectations in terms of the involvement of external actors, to enable change.

Conclusion

Our general research questions was: through what processes do coalitions for car alternatives challenge the dominant discourses on mobility? Considering my propositions, we can wonder more specifically: how effective were the brokers' efforts of place-framing in that regard?

Regarding the spaces of traffic calming in Montreal, the use of a utopian frame of a local community enabling walking and cycling transformed discourses in three ways. First, the utopian frame facilitated the greater affirmation of the City of Montreal's discourse (still in construction) for traffic calming in residential neighborhoods, in making it an issue for several actors participating in neighborhood networks. Second, brokers promoting the utopian frame occasionally used it to contest the norms of road hierarchy, in order to have interventions on spaces of mobility. Third, the brokers concretized a governance of mobility from the bottom-up. In this case study, the link between a new norm for mobility and the geography of its governance became indeed experimented in concrete arenas and committees, involving some public actors with money and regulatory powers to implement, at least partially, the vision (partially, since these public actors depended sometimes on external actors).

We cannot conclude from these observations that civic actors are the primary source of this evolution in discourse. Indeed, the funding and expertise from the public health sector structured the discourse beforehand. Actors from this field wished to encourage local social capital on healthy daily habits. Also, planners from City of Montreal were favorable to traffic calming

interventions, but needed signs of support by citizens and local communities. Without doubts however, civic brokers have been involved in structuring collective action in this field, and organizing arenas and channels of interaction for its local and metropolitan governance. Public health institutions and planners from the City and borough were in fact part of the discourse coalition for dynamic local communities enabling walking and cycling.

The programs designed with public health funding were implemented by local leaders in different kinds of local associative milieux, some of which are not traditionally agents of collective action in Montreal (like schools), and others that are institutionalized sites of community organizing (inter-sectoral neighborhood tables, economic development corporations, local health centers). Actors of this heterogeneous collective were not tied by a political line of conduct, or by an opposition to a clear adversary. But the actors of this collective relied on a similar discourse of justification (adapted in each case), with similar network mechanisms (programs implemented locally by leaders constituting local networks), with the brokerage from civic actors with formal ties to state authorities (the DSP and the city of Montreal). In consequence, there was a joint identity around the utopia of finding spaces locally for car alternatives.

Although this heterogeneous collective action functioned in a collaborative fashion, the utopian frame was contested in various debates. The argument of protecting vulnerable users of the streets was very consensual. The association between traffic safety and street design, however, was not a given for representatives of the Ministry of Transport, who recognized that street design was a relevant tool for municipalities, but did not see its relevance for traffic regulatory norms. Yet those norms were often felt as obstacles to traffic calming and street design favorable to walking and cycling (FG A). We see thus the power of the Ministry of Transport which is absent from debates and programs on alternative modes of mobility in Montreal, but which can still affect them from a-far. Finally, the equivalence of a dynamic and engaged local community enabling walking and cycling is contested and negotiated in concrete implementations and in the coordination of interventions. Where should be this 'community'? On which street(s) and types of streets can the discursively emphasized 'community' needs (if we can speech of community needs as such) and sense of 'threat' be strong enough to counter the desire for car fluidity? And can local support still legitimize interventions touching on regional mobility? We saw how the discourse coalition structured the terms of the debate on the spaces for traffic calming. But not its univocal resolution. The resolution of these conflictual points came through the use of interpretative repertoires.

A dynamic community walking and cycling could be promoted in a vision of 'protected neighborhoods', residential zones freed from traffic. It could also be promoted in accentuating the need to act on the most dangerous spaces of mobility, which are also inhabited. This second interpretative repertoire requested the coordination of different public authorities and also contested the norms of mobility that dedicate spaces in the city to traffic fluidity. In this sense, some civic actors took their distance from the norms of traffic calming, but only in situations where it did not cause the withdrawal of the public authorities' support. While civic actors contested, cautiously, the dominant definition of the spaces of traffic calming, the City planners, several boroughs and external authorities became closely involved to improve the conditions for walking and cycling on certain arteries and frontier spaces. This involvement happened particularly with the brokerage of the *Centre d'écologie urbaine*, who put in place particular arenas to promote it. In other civic programs, the actors in the local networks were less equipped to do so. The focus on particular sites in a 'dynamic community' for the promotion of traffic calming seemed enabling for local actors, was accompanied by funding by the health sector, and sparked the enthusiasm of several boroughs which acted as partners. But the involvement of other public actors were in many ways needed, and that is where more resistance occurred. The responsibility of local groups to increase awareness and mobilization on not only local, but also regional mobility issues, was heavy.

Finally, this case study sheds light on the relation between the state and civic actors. First, it shows that the state is not a monolithic actor. My interviews suggest that the public health agency saw the local place-framing of car alternatives as a way for the public health sector to influence state actors having the mandate of transport policy. On the one hand, one could say that public health actors instrumentalized civil society for that purpose. On the other hand, the tensions among state actors provide diverse leverage points for civil society.

Second, this local mobilization constitutes a way for the state to delegate its planning role to civic groups. These groups produced plans with much less resources than public authorities. Yet, these plans served the boroughs and the City by increasing their political legitimacy to act on this contentious issue. Many authorities used these plans and the associated participatory forums in devising their actual interventions, for which they could then also receive credit. At the city level, the recognition from the City of Montreal of four civic green neighborhoods also shows how much the civic program was beneficial for the City.

Third, one can wonder if this place-framing contributes to keep people busy in small neighborhood units while the 'real' metropolitan issues are left undebated, and within the control of public authorities. This may have happened. Yet, civic actors, in some cases, managed to contest the norms for spaces of mobility. In consequence, the place-framing did not systematically take them away from metropolitan-wide issues. Civic actors seemed to opportunistically choose to stay at a micro-local level, within a repertoire of protected neighborhood, or rather to target the spaces of mobility. Furthermore, civic actors mobilized in parallel against large transport infrastructure (next chapter). They feared that the reconstruction of these infrastructure would annihilate all the efforts at the multi-local.

CHAPTER 5. SPACES OF (CAR/PUBLIC) TRANSIT IN MONTREAL: THE TURCOT INTERCHANGE

5.1 New alliances in a context of contention

In comparison to the discourse coalition for spaces of traffic calming, the discourse coalition on the Turcot interchange was in a clear position of contention. The opposition was directed at the dominant discourse of the provincial Ministry of Transport. The highway network in the metropolitan area is under its responsibility. The Ministry has made in the last decades several propositions for highway upgrades and extensions (after several years of moratorium), some of them in the inner city of Montreal. These have been fiercely opposed. The opposition to Turcot can be considered as one episode within this larger opposition to highway projects in the Montreal region.

In the process of environmental impact assessment, the highway projects have to go through public hearings. Public hearings are conducted by an independent commission, the 'Bureau d'audiences publiques sur l'environnement' (BAPE) and end with a report to the provincial government including a synthesis of the participants' views and the commission's own analysis and recommendations (Gauthier and Simard 2011; Van Neste, Gariépy, and Gauthier 2013). The Minister of Environment takes act of the report and, after the decision from the government, can include in the authorization decree conditions based on the report. Often an arena of polarized opinions, public hearings have triggered much media coverage of transport and mobility issues (Sénécal and Harou 2005; Gauthier 2005). Public hearings (and the civic meetings in preparation of them) provide a place for interaction and the constitution of alliances. In 2002, there was a large debate on the Notre-Dame highway, which was revigorated in 2008 when its local implementation and traffic calming plans were discussed. In 2005, the privately operated bridge 25 going to the northern suburbs, was also debated during BAPE public hearings. For both highway projects, coalitions of actors were formed to oppose them. The coalitions opposed more car capacity and its induced car traffic in the city, and demanded infrastructure for public transit on the concerned transport axes. The same demands were made for the Turcot interchange, within a broader place-frame which is described in this chapter.

I presented in the introduction of the last chapter how environmental organizations became involved on transportation issues in Montreal around the turn of the new century. I also

presented the birth of the 'environmental' team in the Montreal public health agency (DSP). Both of these actors have been crucial in the highway debates. The public health agency documented not only the distribution of car collisions and the need for traffic calming, but also the air pollution induced by car traffic. The agency argued in public hearings that "the doses makes the poison" (DSP in BAPE 2009, May 12th, 34; May 13th, 62; DSP in CPT 2007). This figure of speech was meant to show that increasing the car capacity of infrastructure increased obviously the detrimental health effects of motorization in the city.

In the series of debates on highways in Montreal, the alliance between environmental organizations and local actors, which I discuss in this chapter mainly in relation to the Turcot infrastructure, has not been automatic. Sénécal and Harou (2005) presented, in regard to the debates on Notre-Dame between 1999 and 2002, how the networks of institutionalized neighborhood organizations had first positioned themselves as partners of the MTQ on the Notre-Dame highway project, accepting more car capacity to obtain adjustments and compensations for the revitalization of the east of Montreal. The passage of port-related traffic was pictured as part of the economic vitality in the east of Montreal. In the justification for the project, the mixed economic and quality of life argument had been key (Sénécal and Harou 2005). It was also presented as a project to complete a highway network of which this unfinished segment was considered both unsafe and inefficient (Desjardins and Gariépy 2005). The MTQ emphasized the importance of the route linking downtown to the port area, and the possibilities of accommodations to improve local conditions. But when the debate was opened, through the public hearings and media coverage, the opposition from environmental actors gathered attention and became the seed of a new coalition. The actors demanding to 'humanize Notre-Dame', and rejecting the 'necessary ill' of the highway structured an anti-car discourse which had not been heard in Montreal before, according to Sénécal and Harou (2005) and Paulhiac and Kaufman (2006). Among these opposing actors were the *Conseil régional de l'Environnement de Montréal* (Environmental Regional Council of Montreal, CRE-Mtl) and the *Groupe de recherche urbaine Hochelaga-Maisonneuve* (GRUHM, Urban research group Hochelaga-Maisonneuve), supported by the newly constituted team from the DSP. The three were also key actors in the discourse coalition opposing Turcot. The case of Notre-Dame was a reference for many of the civic actors I interviewed on Turcot. A new phase of the Notre-Dame debate, and hence of the opposing coalition, had started in 2008 and was thus parallel to the early mobilization against the re-construction of the Turcot complex.

With the involvement of environmental organizations and the DSP, the local impact of more vehicle capacity was denounced and disseminated in the medias (Sénécal and Harou 2005). After the public hearings and the environmental impact assessment of the Notre-Dame project, the MTQ was asked by the Ministry of Environment (in its governmental decree) to reach an agreement with the City of Montreal on the design of the road. The agreement with the City was a compromise solution of an 'urban boulevard' (like thirty years before, see chapter 1), which would ensure car fluidity but also public transit as well as pedestrian and cyclist passage. This compromise, which is not yet implemented more than ten years later, was meant to acknowledge regional needs of an enhanced transport corridor, and the reduction of local and broader environmental impacts (Desjardins 2008b). In addition, the governmental decree forced the MTQ to finance traffic calming projects to diminish the negative impacts of increased through-traffic in the residential neighborhoods (MDDEP 2002). This compensation measure was coined 'green neighborhood', and inspired the planning of such traffic calmed neighborhoods throughout the city of Montreal, as explained in the previous chapter (VdM 2008). The idea of a necessary compromise between the MTQ and the more 'urban' perspective on mobility infrastructure sedimented in discourses.

Civic actors had thus allies within the DSP and the City of Montreal. The City of Montreal had pled for more public transit and for a reduced place for cars within the metropolitan area, both in its own transportation plan and in previous highway debates (2008). The City had explicitly endorsed the claims of the civic coalitions against Notre-Dame and the tolled-bridge 25. If the City had already distanced itself from the position of the MTQ in those projects, it continued in the Turcot debate. I have mentioned, in regard to traffic calming, the interventions in the borough Plateau-Mont-Royal from the political party *Projet Montréal*, whose platform focused on the reduction of cars in the city. In highway debates, *Projet Montréal* also played a role. The opposition party had a seat in the executive committee of the City in 2010. The party used this seat to push for less car capacity in the Turcot complex. Furthermore, a founder of *Mobilisation Turcot*, a coalition of groups from the adjacent neighborhoods to the interchange, was elected under the banner of *Projet Montréal* in 2009, as a borough representative in the South-West borough. The political party hence also participated to the discourse coalition that I present below.

5.2 The dominant discourse and the current geography of governance

The Turcot complex is the most recent piece of infrastructure that triggered a large debate, mobilization and the creation of alliances in Montreal. It is located in the South-West borough of Montreal. What is called the 'Turcot complex' is actually composed of four interchanges (the Turcot interchange, LaVérendrye, Angrignon and Montréal-Ouest), of which the most important is the Turcot interchange ensuring the junction between two major road systems, the north-south axis (Highway 15), and an east-west axis (Highway 20), and through which about 280 000 cars go daily. The territory considered in the debate is the area regrouping those four interchanges, forming a rectangle of about 10 kilometers east-west by 3 kilometers north-south. It is thus not only a node, but also an axis of ten kilometers of highway from the west of Montreal going downtown. The Turcot complex had to be re-built because of aging and advanced, even dangerous, deterioration. The infrastructure was presented in the debates as an issue of great economic importance: as the main mobility node of the Quebec economy. The needs of mobility were thus defined at the regional level, and beyond, especially for freight transport. Considering the strategic importance of the infrastructure in the traffic network, it would have had to be rebuilt with at least the current or additional vehicle capacity (BAPE 2009 May11th, 17, 45-46; May 13th, 13, 39-40). There were also engineering traffic arguments that related to the reduction of local stress. Engineers presenting the Turcot rebuilding project emphasized that highways were aspirators of car (and freight) transiting circulation. In their models, highways are reducing car circulation in local streets, thus reducing problems of traffic unsafety and air pollution in these streets, enhancing quality of life (BAPE 2009 May12th, 33, 51, 54; May 13th, 6, 36, 63). This is traditionally how the role of highways is conceived. In this system of traffic norms, vehicle circulation is assumed to be present, the question is where it will be channeled. Highways are better equipped to receive it.

The presumption that the role of the infrastructure is to attract cars away from local streets was embedded in norms but also related to the role of the Ministry. My respondents, from the MTQ, the Metropolitan Transit Agency and the City of Montreal have commented that this presumption is embedded in the institution of the MTQ, which mission is not perceived to include the planning for public transit. Desjardins and Gariépy (2005, 43) explain that in 1973, the Ministry of Transport (MTQ) replaced the former Ministry of Roads, and integrating public transit in its mission. But it was predominantly the highway heritage which structured the institutions' culture,

as shown by the dominance of engineers in its planning team. And this is still very much perceived to be the case, as we can see with this quotation from a representative of the City of Montreal, in one of my focus groups :

Member of a resident association : The MTQ, most often, maybe because it does not solicit enough the contribution of other organizations... But often I have the impression that the MTQ is an enemy, it is as silly as that. The adjustment is just too slow...

Planner from the City of Montreal : Where it does not work is that, effectively, the Ministry of Transport finances highways, it is its mandate. And we don't want highways downtown anymore, we don't want them. [...] I understand why the MTQ builds highways, it is its mandate. I mean, for them to work more on public transit we would need to change their mission. We would need to tell them: now, you need to put public transit on your highways. That would be something else⁷⁷

A representative of the MTQ indeed argued, in interview, that they were not responsible for public transit. This was a role for the Metropolitan Transit Agency (AMT) (see chapter 1 for a description of the AMT). In interview, the respondent from the AMT presented its agency as the little brother of the MTQ, who depended on the room the former left him. The Turcot project was a highway project, hence no integration of public transit had been planned. The AMT was working on a railway project in this axis, and presented it in the public hearings. But it was not supported by the Ministry of Transport and appeared uncertain.

5.3 Counter-discourse: The utopian place-framing from the discourse coalition on Turcot

From the beginning of more serious discussions about the rebuilding of the Turcot interchange in 2007, neighborhood associations were involved in opposition strategies : demonstrations in the neighborhood, on the interchange, in front of the mayor's house and occupying the Montreal

⁷⁷ "Le MTQ plus souvent qu'autrement, peut-être parce que ya un manque de , de, de sollicitation envers les autres organismes, mais souvent j'ai l'impression que le MTQ c'est un ennemi, c'est aussi bête que ça. L'ajustement est trop lent."

"Là où ça marche pas c'est qu'effectivement le Ministère des Transports, finance des autoroutes, c'est son mandat. Et on en veut pu d'autoroute au centre-ville, on en veut pu, on en veut pu. [...] Je comprends le MTQ de faire des autoroutes, c'est ça sa mission, je veux dire, pour qu'elle travaille plus en transport en commun, faudrait changer sa mission. Faudrait lui dire ben là maintenant, faut que vous mettiez du transport en commun sur vos autoroutes. Ah ben là, c'est autre chose. "

office of the Ministry of Transport. At stake were more than transport issues and utopias regarding a new paradigm of mobility : several local consequences of this Turcot re-building project were anticipated and criticized.

In this section, I synthetically present the utopian chain of equivalence. In the following section (5.4), the alliances and the brokerage constituting the discourse coalition are discussed. In this discussion, I give more substance to the utopian place-frame. Lastly, in section 5.5., we will see how the nodes of the utopian frame were put to test.

The chain of equivalence articulated in reaction to the Turcot rebuilding project from the MTQ includes the following elements: 1) unjust conditions of inhabitation 2) solutions through the re-design of the infrastructure and 3) a metropolitan community enabling public transit.

Unjust conditions of inhabitation

The first series of equivalence concerns the current and future conditions of inhabitation for residents living next to the interchange. I summarize by 'conditions of inhabitation' their claims for a right to clean air, for access to services and for a built environment not detrimental to social cohesion. These conditions of inhabitation are framed as issues of spatial injustice. The spatialized effects of the infrastructure on the close-by population are historically situated, by the civic actors, by going back to the construction of the highway interchange in the 1960s (Solidarité Saint-Henri 2009, Negley 2009, 2010, Mobilisation Turcot 2009). The neighborhoods close to the highway were partly destroyed and physically segmented. In short, they were described as having been socially and aesthetically disrupted by the new highway. Resident committees, as well as social justice and community work organizations, have been working since then on social cohesion and on social services for the inhabitants facing difficult living conditions (Solidarité Saint-Henri 2009, Negley 2010). The high flow of car circulation on the highway also means a concentration of certain pollutants in the neighborhood. Air quality, housing and community cohesiveness was expected to deteriorate with the project from the MTQ. Air pollution was particularly discussed, during the public hearings, in all its impacts on the local conditions of inhabitation. The data from the DSP were used to show the higher risks on children, pregnant women and elders in the 200 meter zones adjacent to the highway. Resident associations feared even the closure of two schools, one daycare and a large community-sporting center located in the 200 meters perimeter, for problematic air conditions (idem, Thiébaud 2009, Mobilisation Turcot 2009, BAPE 2009a). The leader of the resident association *Village des tanneries* argued that: "It takes a village to raise a child" (Negley 2009).

The redesign of the infrastructure

This leads us to the second component of the chain of equivalence: that the solution lies in the design of the infrastructure and in its role in the mobility regime. The design of the infrastructure is reconsidered in terms of its ability to improve urban integration and diminish the sense of 'enclave' of the adjacent neighborhoods: the elevated structure and the planned walls should be removed or better integrated, and there should be no expropriations (Mobilisation Turcot 2009, BAPEa). With respect to air pollution, activists feared that either the health of children, or the access to a daycare, school, and community center in the community would be sacrificed (BAPE 2009a, June 17th, 22, May 12th 82-83, May 13th 8-9). Only a redesigned infrastructure, with public transit and less car capacity, could solve these problems.

A metropolitan east-west commuting community enabling public transit

In the utopian frame, this solution is made possible by a metropolitan community (the third node). In opposition to the framing of the MTQ focusing on bounded segments of infrastructure, defining Turcot as a 'node' in the traffic network, the discourse coalition advocated for the whole east-west commuting axis on the island of Montreal to be appropriate territory to plan mobility. This territory would make possible to plan not just for cars but also for on-site efficient public transit, for commuters. This demand connected discursively the improvement of the local conditions of inhabitation with the metropolitan-wide conditions, through public transit. Local conditions of inhabitation would be improved, since more public transit implied less car capacity and thus a more compact infrastructure producing less air pollution. And the metropolitan region would avoid going a step further in a 'car-dependent' mobility system, detrimental to the whole region in terms of air quality and the quality of urban spaces. The City of Montreal also participated enthusiastically in this discursive node, in arguing during the public hearings on Turcot that a metropolitan network of dedicated lanes for public transit could reduce car traffic (June 16th BAPE 2009, 2).

In sum, the chain of equivalence in the opposition to Turcot consists in the linkage between unjust conditions of inhabitation (social and health conditions), the design of a highway infrastructure, and a metropolitan community enabling public transit.

5.4 The discourse coalition

This chain of equivalence emerged from new alliances and mobilizing structures. The multi-faceted spatial injustice, expressed in the first node of the equivalence, has been put forward by a diversity of local actors who converged to work together because of this generalized sense of threat. The housing and tenant association POPIR became very involved on the issue of expropriations; the neighborhood association *Village des tanneries* mobilized for a “healthy and cohesive community” (Negley 2009, with the support of *Solidarité Saint-Henri*). The urban revitalization committee *Opération Galt* denounced the impacts on air pollution and quality of life. There were thus three leaders reaching out to other local partners through the institutionalized neighborhood forums (the inter-sectoral tables) of Saint-Henri and Ville-Émard Côte St-Paul. They also organized expert conferences from the DSP, from university professors and from the *Conseil régional de l'Environnement de Montréal*. A broad collective, *Mobilisation Turcot*, was formed by these local actors to exchange information and oppose the project.⁷⁸ A feeling of local spatial injustice, heightened by the information they obtained from regional 'experts' they invited, became a catalyst for collaborations and strong mobilization (Int MT, Int CRE2).

At that stage, two regional brokers were also significantly involved: the *GHRUM*, which had been a leader 'citizen' expert in the debate on Notre-Dame, and CRE-Mtl. The two actors provided important resources in terms of information and solutions pertaining to transport. The leadership of the mobilization was however in the hands of local actors. When time came, in 2008, to draft a 'declaration of principles' for the new coalition group *Mobilisation Turcot*, the suggestion of CRE-Mtl to include public transit and less car capacity, was decisive, and truly became the seal of a local-regional alliance between different organizations.

When I read our first declaration of principles, in 2008 it was very influenced by a statement from CRE, who wasn't even there the day of the meeting, but who had said : 'the reduction of car circulation, that is a solution'. Before, we only had the problems. We had had analyses from experts showing this and that, which meant that the project

⁷⁸ The formal leadership was assumed by representatives from the two institutionalized community networks in the neighborhoods adjacent to the Turcot interchange : the inter-sectoral neighborhood table *Concertation Ville-Émard/Côte St-Paul* and the inter-sectoral neighborhood table *Solidarité St-Henri* (it changed from one to the other through time).

brought us much more trouble. But to know what to do to act on this problem, we had no idea at all. (Int MT)⁷⁹

Another understanding and a new articulation of the problems and solutions emerged. The transit solution became a goal for regional *and* local actors. The projected new Turcot was pictured as having direct multi-scalar consequences on the conditions of inhabitation. This articulation came from a diversity of actors involved, but the local leader emphasized particularly the role of CRE-Mtl and GRUHM. For CRE-Mtl and a number of environmental organizations, the connection between reduction of car circulation and an increase in the offer of public transit was natural. But the second and third nodes of the utopian frame went beyond pointing to public transit as a solution: they were about a reconceptualization of the infrastructure within the transport network. GRUHM was a key actor in this reframing. GRUHM was actually a very small group, which had been involved in the Notre Dame debate. The most active member, an engineer and architect, was very knowledgeable of technical issues regarding the highway infrastructure, its design, mapping and norms. For the benefit of *Mobilisation Turcot*, he produced a series of informative pamphlets “Turcot, did you know that?”, in addition to longer documents and briefs on the issue. Though this actor knew a lot, two things about his position and personality made it necessary for him to have the support of other actors in order for his information and alternative to be heard and endorsed by the discourse coalition: the lack of a ‘title’, being an expert resident and professional but with no formal organization, and little abilities for building relationships and manoeuvring in a politicized context. But several actors with legitimacy in the field endorsed and used his work: the professor Pierre Gauthier from University of Concordia, CRE-Mtl and the political party *Projet Montréal*.

One of the major contribution from GRUHM was to document the mobility flows passing through Turcot (many daily commuters in the east-west axis) and the nature of the infrastructure which could receive it. *GRUHM* proposed to consider the metropolitan community of people commuting through the Turcot everyday, on the east–west highway axis of which both the Turcot and Notre-Dame are part. Their commuting could be made by public transit.

With a related argument, CRE-Mtl focused not on the flow of mobility but on the governance of transport issues. The Auditor General from the Quebec government had recently published a

⁷⁹ “Et quand je lis notre déclaration de principes, donc de 2008, ça été très très influencé par un propos tenu par CRE, qui était même pas là le jour de la rencontre, mais qui avait dit que : « la réduction de la circulation automobile c’était une solution », nous on avait que les problèmes tsé, on avait eu l’analyse des experts qui disaient que ça, ça, ça et ça ça fait que le projet va nous poser plus de troubles. Mais de savoir quoi faire pour pallier au problème, on en savait rien du tout.”

report blaming the lack of coordination mechanisms from the provincial Ministry of Transport with local and metropolitan authorities in Montreal, and the problems of coherence in transport policy resulting from it (VGQ 2008). CRE-Mtl hence wanted that all transport and mobility plans and projects on this axis be discussed together, including public transport plans from the AMT and the airport for example. CRE-Mtl thus invited a large constituency of civil society actors to support the demand to consider the whole east-west axis as the appropriate territory to plan for public transit, including together the plans from all authorities. This territorial (re)construction⁸⁰ was supported by more than 50 actors which jointly asked to take it as a basis for the debate in public hearings, instead of the strict infrastructure of the Turcot interchange. This request was not formally accepted, and the more limited territorial framing of the BAPE commission affected the final recommendations in the report. Nevertheless, this demand still framed a lot of the debates during the hearings. The main brokers in the discourse coalition against the MTQ project for the Turcot complex are presented in Table 5.1. In addition to the contribution of these brokers, there were also actors not formally in the civic coalition, but who provided discursive resources for the discourse coalition nonetheless.

André Lavallée, in charge of transport and urban planning in the executive committee of the City of Montreal (the political leader behind the Transportation Plan adopted in 2008 by the City), supported the demand for a metropolitan planning of public transit in arguing for a network of dedicated public transit lanes, throughout the region:

It appears to us that the exercise of reconstructing the interchange offers to Montrealers and to the metropolitan region an extraordinary opportunity to ask the question : if we want to reduce the number of solo-vehicles on the whole network and thus in the interchange, we need to think about the whole network. (June 16th, BAPE 2009, 2)⁸¹

The Montreal Board of Trade also provided discursive support. The Board had published a report in 2006 (updated and republished in 2010), presenting the economic benefits of public transit. The major message of the report was that public transit ought to be encouraged by making it more competitive (more public transit, with better, more rapid and fluid services) and in changing the dynamics of public investment in transport infrastructure (which still favored road investments). Civic regional actors and the City of Montreal both cited this report in several

⁸⁰ I specify 're' construction because the advocated territory of analysis reminds us of the east-west highway of the 1960s and 70s, discussed in chapter 1.

⁸¹ "Donc, il nous est apparu que l'exercice de reconstruction de l'échangeur offre aux Montréalais et à la région métropolitaine une opportunité extraordinaire de se poser la question : si nous voulons diminuer le nombre de véhicules-solo sur l'ensemble du réseau et donc dans l'échangeur il faut penser à l'ensemble du réseau."

occasions to show the need of a coherent metropolitan transportation planning in which public transit would be the priority. It gave civic actors an economic argument to add to the social and environmental injustice claims.

Table 5.1 *Major brokers from the discourse coalition opposing the MTQ's Turcot project*

Broker	Position of broker, discursive and relational contribution
Mobilisation Turcot	Coalition functioning as the local voice in the opposition to Turcot, and regrouping local groups (Solidarité St-Henri, Village des tanneries, POPIR, Concertation Ville-Émard Côte-St-Paul, Opération Galt); Shaped the equivalence on 'unjust conditions of inhabitation'.
CRE-Mtl (Conseil régional de l'environnement de Montréal)	Environmental broker proposing to Mobilisation Turcot the link between unjust conditions of inhabitation and public transit with reduced car circulation on the interchange; Founder of Comité Vigilance Turcot, fall 2010.
GRUHM	Association formed during the opposition to Notre-Dame highway; A resident and 'technical expert' on the 'east-west' commuting axis; supported by university professor Pierre Gauthier.

In the public hearings on the Turcot complex, the economic rationale from the Board of Trade supported the node that a metropolitan framing of transport was needed to enable efficient public transit and enhance quality of life. Actors mostly used the numbers from the Chamber of Commerce in a narrative about a 'congestion crisis' (see references below). If congestion costed a lot of money and time, public transit could resolve the problem and bring economic benefits, as shown by the Board of Trade report. The mayor of Montreal, the opposition party leader, Lachine's borough mayor, the Montreal airport, the Montreal transit agency and M. Lavallée (the transport representative of the City of Montreal), used the congestion crisis argument in the public hearings to favor public transit for Turcot (BAPE 2009, May 14th 429; June 15th, 57; June 16th, 3, 6,15-16, 34, 50; June 18th, 3). Environmentalists used it also (Vivre en Ville, Équiterre, CRE-Mtl in BAPE 2009, June 17th,20-21; June 18th, 3, 61). While, as we will see in the next chapter, in the Netherlands the same argument of congestion crisis was justifying new highway segments, in Montreal it justified the need for public transit infrastructure, especially with the report from the Board of Trade.

This congestion crisis narrative thus supported the third node of the chain of equivalence. It advocated a metropolitan wide planning and investment in public transit. This was a complement to the argument from GRUHM and CRE-Mtl. For local actors this convergence on public transit

and the reduction of car capacity allowed a broadening of the movement. It was their key mobilizing point, because of its linkage with the improvement of local conditions of inhabitation through the redesign of the infrastructure in considering the broader mobility network.

The outcome of the public hearings of 2009 did not slow mobilization. The end report recommended to reduce negative impacts on the neighborhoods (reducing expropriations) but did not demand a revision of car capacity. The commission noted that, with the available data, there seemed to be an insufficient potential of modal transfer to justify a diminution in car capacity on the interchange, considering the predicted increase in mobility in the following years and the difficulty to model the impacts of the offer of public transit planned by the City of Montreal (BAPE 2009b, 110-112). The commissioners noted timidly that the MTQ should conduct a study on the possibility of a dedicated lane for public transit on the whole axis (BAPE 2009b, 112). The Minister of Transport (Julie Boulet) did use, in subsequent debates, this report from the BAPE, in opposing the BAPE's environmental expertise to the expressed desire of the City of Montreal.

The City wants to reduce highway capacity, and the BAPE tells us that we should not reduce it. You can understand that these elements make it difficult for the MTQ to position itself. The BAPE tells us we should not reduce the highway capacity but the city, her, wishes that we do. (CPTE 2010, 56)⁸²

Civic actors and the City of Montreal found the BAPE report disappointing. A representative from the City of Montreal responded to the report:

We have the conviction that the implementation of a real network of regional dedicated lanes for public transit, on the whole metropolitan network, would reduce circulation in the Turcot complex, without compromising its fluidity. (De Souza, City of Montreal, in Chouinard 2009)⁸³

CRE-Montreal commented the report "Good news: the MTQ needs to review their projects. Bad news: the BAPE refuses to judge between MTQ's vision of 25 000 more automobiles and the city of Montreal's vision to reduce circulation." (CRE 2009)⁸⁴

⁸² "La ville, elle, veut réduire la capacité autoroutière, et le BAPE nous dit qu'on ne doit pas la réduire. Alors, vous comprenez, là, qu'il y a des éléments qui sont un peu difficiles, là, comme positionnement pour le MTQ. Le BAPE nous dit qu'on ne doit pas la réduire, la capacité autoroutière, et la ville, elle, elle souhaite la réduire."

⁸³ "Nous avons la conviction, a déclaré M. De Souza, que la mise en place d'un véritable réseau régional de voies réservées aux transports collectifs, sur l'ensemble du réseau métropolitain, permettrait d'alléger la circulation dans le complexe Turcot, sans compromettre la fluidité"

The strength of the Montreal opposing coalition thus remained. It is later, when the revised project from the MTQ was made public in 2010, that the utopian frame from the discourse coalition was really put to test.

5.5 How the chain of equivalence and the coalition were broken

In 2010, civil society actors *and* the City each proposed their 'alternative Turcot', both following the utopian chain of equivalence.

The civic actors of the discourse coalition proposed an 'alternative Turcot' in the spring of 2010 (the GRUHM and a Concordia university professor, with the support of CRE-Mtl, the DSP, Mobilisation Turcot, etc.). The alternative included a fast public transit link between the east and west of the island of Montreal, and reduced the size of the highway interchange, shrinking car capacity by 40% and limiting the number of entrances to the highway. The alternative argued for was a simpler but well-designed infrastructure (the actual Turcot was a real spaghetti), and for modal transfer from car to public transit. The alternative 'Turcot 375' (for the 375th anniversary of Montreal) was presented as the alternative from Montrealers: "Montrealers are ready, only political will is lacking" (CREMtl 2010).

A month later, the City of Montreal proposed its own alternative to Turcot. This solution included a more compact design of a highway interchange in a circle, with less car capacity, a transit-efficient connection and room left for a large project of urban development (accessible by public transit). The possibility for urban development and tax revenues was, according to our interview, the decisive point with which Bergeron from *Projet Montréal* had convinced the mayor Tremblay (Int PM). These two alternatives, the one from civic actors and the one from the City, consisted in different interpretations of the utopia⁸⁵, but many actors in the discourse coalition said they would have supported both. At this stage the utopian frame, with an emphasis on public transit and the link with the improvement of local conditions of inhabitation, strongly rallied the members

⁸⁴ "Rapport du BAPE sur Turcot - La bonne nouvelle: Le MTQ doit revoir le projet - La mauvaise nouvelle: Le BAPE refuse de trancher entre la vision du MTQ de faire passer 25 000 automobiles supplémentaires et celle de la ville de Montréal d'y réduire la circulation"

⁸⁵ There are of course tensions between the two alternatives. The focus on bad air quality adjacent to the highway in the first is overlooked in the idea of building a dense urban development in the City alternative, focusing on urban development adjacent to the more compact Turcot. Those differences were not emphasized however, actors focusing on the consensual aspect of public transit present in both alternatives.

of the discourse coalition together. As a founder of Mobilisation Turcot summarized it : “It was written public transit and everybody had stars in their eyes!” (Int MT).

This sense of a Montreal consensus was visible in the provincial political arena, where the opposition party warned the government not to act against it:

The mayor Tremblay presented last week his project for the construction of the Turcot interchange. He received a strong support, this is more than rare in Montreal, from all stakeholders. There is a large, large consensus on the mayor's proposition. Well, it has not yet been quantified yet, and that does worry us. Nevertheless, we saw directly the conflict, the adversity in the medias from the Ministry of Transport [...] So we wonder when will the Minister give the numbers and sit with the City of Montreal to discuss together? Because it is a Montreal democracy. We should anyhow not confront this democracy. (CPAT 2010, 34–35)⁸⁶

The Ministry of Transport rapidly commented that the evaluated costs of this Montreal alternative would be 6 billion (twice their own project), arguing it made it absolutely unfeasible. Civic actors were very disappointed by the power of this argument (having no counter-expertise on costs). A few months later, the MTQ presented its revised version with little modifications. The number of expropriations were reduced, but highway capacity was slightly increased. The Ministry of Transport made a presentation of the new Turcot with enticing images of what the neighborhood could look like, including tramways. But what was agreed on was actually a (partially) dedicated lane for buses (without taking away a car lane), with no funds or plans made available for a transit system (train, tram, LRT) on the complete east-west axis.

For *Project Montreal*, the “unrevised” project was unacceptable. Yet the mayor of Montreal accepted it, stating that some of their demands had been met (Hamad et al. 2010), as we see in the following quotation from the question period at the Montreal City Council (November 23th 2010):

⁸⁶ “Le maire Tremblay a présenté... Vous avez parlé du maire Gérald Tremblay tout à l'heure. Il a présenté son projet, la semaine dernière, de construction de l'échangeur Turcot. Il a reçu un appui très... plus que rare pour Montréal, celui de tous les élus, tous les intervenants. Il y a un large, large consensus sur la proposition du maire. Bon, elle n'est pas chiffrée, et ça, ça nous inquiète tous, parce que ce n'est pas chiffré. Par contre, là, on a vu directement le conflit, l'adversité avec le ministère des Transports puis on a suivi ça par les médias, là, [...] Alors, quand la ministre va déposer les chiffres et va s'asseoir avec la ville de Montréal pour échanger ensemble? Parce que c'est une démocratie montréalaise, là. Il ne faut quand même pas confronter toute cette démocratie- là.”

Pierre Brisset, GRUHM: I wonder why we let go a project that was created with so much enthusiasm by your own urban planning service for a terrible project presented by the Ministry of Transport?

Mayor of Montreal, Gerald Tremblay : This is a project from the Quebec government, it is the Quebec government that pays 100% of it, the Quebec government emitted two decrees to put in place its Turcot project. This project, hum, responds in part to the demands that we had with regard to expropriations, urban development and public transit. It is a compromise which we find acceptable. We will accompany the Quebec government in the realization of this project [...] When we take the perspective of the Quebec government, it is perhaps preferable to have a project than nothing, and not only for safety reasons, but also for urbanistic reasons. And we will surely have the opportunity to work with the Ministry in the following year, because the decision is taken.⁸⁷

The leader of *Projet Montréal* resigned from his position in the City's executive committee, calling, in a press conference, the MTQ revised project and the mayor's acceptance of it a "sneaky, dishonest manipulation"⁸⁸ (Bergeron and Thiébaud 2010). Two months later, he published *Projet Montréal*'s own alternative Turcot, with the core principle of 50% investment in public transit infrastructure, and 50% in car infrastructure (Bergeron 2010).

In contrast, the environmental broker CRE-Mtl believed it was now time to negotiate improvements within the MTQ's project. For this broker, the opportunity of a significant change to the project had passed, considering the new deadline of construction for Turcot, the acceptance from the mayor and the resignation of Bergeron from Montreal's executive committee (Int CRE2). Instead of opposing, it thus pursued a new collaborative strategy with the Ministry, under a joint *Comité Vigilance Turcot*, which rallied several other actors, many regional environmental actors and actors from universities (Forum Urba). The *Comité Vigilance* tried to negotiate

⁸⁷ *Pierre Brisset, GRUHM*: "Je me demande comment ça se fait qu'on a laissé aller un projet qui était vraiment créé de tout enthousiasme de votre service d'urbanisme pour un projet qui est redoutable qui a été présenté par le Ministère des transports."

Le maire de Montréal, Gerald Tremblay : "Bonjour M. Brisset, c'est un projet du gouvernement du Québec, c'est le gouvernement du Québec qui paie 100% de toutes les dépenses, le gouvernement du Québec a émis deux décrets pour donner suite à sa volonté de son projet Turcot. Ce projet, euh, répond, en partie, à des demandes que nous avons au niveau des expropriations, au niveau du développement urbain, et au niveau du transport en commun. C'est un compromis que nous avons qualifié d'acceptable. [...] quand on regarde de la position du gouvernement du Québec c'est peut-être préférable d'avoir un projet que de rien avoir, et pas uniquement pour des questions de sécurité, mais également pour des raisons urbanistiques. Et on aura sûrement la possibilité dans la prochaine année de continuer à travailler avec le gouvernement du Québec, d'autant plus que la décision, elle est prise."

⁸⁸ "Les premiers mots qui me viennent en tête : sournois, malhonnête, manipulation".

modifications to reduce car capacity, such as the reduction in the number of highway entrances. Informed that traffic engineers within the City of Montreal had been pushing for a more car oriented infrastructure, with pressure of some borough authorities, the *Comité Vigilance* tried to meet all local public authorities to reduce, at the margin, increases in car capacity.

A majority of the local actors from *Mobilisation Turcot* saw this collaborative strategy from environmental organizations, including a key broker with which they had been in close contact. as an act of treachery. The volte face from the Montreal mayor was also considered an act of betrayal. Since there were no efficient public transit system or reduced car capacity, there was for *Mobilisation Turcot* no substantial reason to collaborate with the MTQ. It tried to continue the opposition, with the help of a new broker on Turcot, the *Centre d'écologie urbaine* (which believed that a diversity of strategies, including opposition, was still needed, and that *Mobilisation Turcot* needed help). With the *Centre d'écologie urbaine*, the strategy was to solicit the help of the DSP, in arguing more in terms of the first equivalence : local injustice and air pollution. Just after the publication of the report of the public hearings in 2009, the director of the public health agency had commented in the press that the project had to be modified to reduce the important health impacts and the 'environmental injustices' built in the Turcot project (Bisson 2009). Otherwise, the director threatened to use a legal procedure allowing the Agency to force actors to engage in a new process of 'searching for solutions' to reduce the negative impacts of the project on the health of the population (idem).⁸⁹

When the MTQ presented its revised project for Turcot, the *Centre d'écologie urbaine* thus approached the DSP in the hope that it would put their threat to execution. It also published an open letter, in the newspaper La Presse, supported by 40 organizations, asking the director of the Agency to intervene (CEUM et al. 2010). But the DSP director felt he was not in a position to actually use the legal procedure, given that there was no significant increase of the health impacts with the new Turcot project (the MTQ argued that pollution was bound to decrease with

⁸⁹ The article 55 states that : "When a public health director notes the existence or fears the appearance in his region of a situation presenting high risks of death, disability or preventable morbidity for the population or a group of individuals, and that in his opinion, there are effective ways to reduce or eliminate these risks, he may formally request the authorities whose intervention appears useful to participate with him in search of an appropriate solution in the circumstances."

Translated from Article 55, Loi sur la santé publique du Gouvernement du Québec.
http://www2.publicationsduquebec.gouv.qc.ca/dynamicSearch/telecharge.php?type=2&file=/S_2_2/S2_2.html :

"Lorsqu'un directeur de santé publique constate l'existence ou craint l'apparition dans sa région d'une situation présentant des risques élevés de mortalité, d'incapacité ou de morbidité évitables pour la population ou pour un groupe d'individus et, qu'à son avis, il existe des solutions efficaces pour réduire ou annihiler ces risques, il peut demander formellement aux autorités dont l'intervention lui paraît utile de participer avec lui à la recherche d'une solution adéquate dans les circonstances."

less polluting cars in the future). It was closer to a status quo. This status quo was for the health agency nevertheless problematic, but could not justify its legal intervention (Int DSP2). This last strategy to re-mobilize the equivalence on unjust conditions of inhabitation was hence unsuccessful.

In the following year, it became clear that the collaborative attitude from the *Comité Vigilance Turcot* would bear no fruit. This was a defeat in the struggle to include a transit-oriented infrastructure and reduce the negative local impacts of the Turcot infrastructure. More public transport was integrated in the 2010 revised project from the MTQ than in the original version, but it was limited to allowing more buses on a dedicated priority lane, that came in addition to existing car lanes. The buses could use a priority lane only up to the South-West borough of Montréal, and not further into the city center. Buses would be then rerouted to the nearest metro station. Before reaching this metro station, hundreds of buses would cause nuisances and pose a risk of collisions in local streets not designed to accommodate such traffic, argued *Mobilisation Turcot* with the *Centre d'écologie urbaine* and *GRUHM*. Once again, local residents and neighborhood groups felt that they would have to bear the costs of regional traffic.

Regional and especially local actors were disgruntled that the increase of public transit came solely through buses. They had hoped for a structural change in the infrastructure, with on site tram or train passing through the whole east-west axis, and for reduced car capacity. Even the Quebec network of engineers reacted positively to the MTQ 'revised' project, but demanded a rapid investment in massive rail transit infrastructure to reduce car use in the following years in Montreal (RéseaulQ 2010).

In limiting very much changes in the design of the Turcot infrastructure and in its function in the mobility system, but nevertheless in allowing for more public transit, the MTQ skilfully broke the chain of equivalence associating a metropolitan 'community' enabling public transit and the improvement of local conditions of inhabitation. The local and regional needs and impacts were dislocated. The chain of equivalence, and the coalition which had advocated it, was broken.

Conclusion

Our general research question is: through what processes do coalitions for car alternatives challenge the dominant discourses on mobility? Considering my propositions, what role did the

constitution of networks, the utopian frame on place, and its adaptation in interpretative repertoires played in the opposition to the MTQ's Turcot project? In short, how effective were the brokers' efforts of place-framing?

Our interviews suggest that the equivalence between a metropolitan community enabling public transit and better local conditions of inhabitation was key for the formation and maintenance of the discourse coalition, binding in a converging motivation environmental organizations, the DSP, the city of Montreal, the Montreal Board of Trade and social justice and community work organizations in the South-West neighborhoods.

The place-frame was also explicitly opposing the institutional and normative organization of transport planning and governance in Montreal. This planning was done segment of infrastructure by segment, with little metropolitan coordination. If the actual geography of governance was effectively impinging on the re-thinking of large transport infrastructure, contesting it in parallel to the norm of mobility as applied to a specific infrastructure made the struggle twice as much a challenge for the discourse coalition.

When the Ministry argued that the alternatives would be too costly, the different actors of the coalition re-focused on their own priority in the utopian frame. The *Comité de Vigilance Turcot* decided to put aside the bigger challenge of a metropolitan transit link in order to negotiate small improvements to the infrastructure. *Mobilisation Turcot* and the *Centre d'écologie urbaine* kept pushing the local injustice argument to force major changes in the infrastructure, but the actor on which they put their hopes, the DSP, had arrived at the limit of its discursive power.

The utopia had been very much oriented toward the resolution of current health injustice through modifying the mobility paradigm at the metropolitan scale. A major shift in the infrastructure would have been made possible, according to the discourse coalition, by a transformation of the geography of governance with more political power to the Montreal based coalition. But the Ministry showed that it could offer more buses without a fundamental shift in the infrastructure or in the share of responsibilities and decision-making.

The interpretative repertoires did not play a role for the maintenance of the discourse coalition. When the utopian frame was seriously put to test, at the presentation of the 'revised' project from the MTQ in fall 2010, the different reactions of brokers were interpreted as a dislocation of their utopian frame. They did not produce claims that could still hold together, at least from the point of view of the local actors and the political party *Projet Montréal*. For *Mobilisation Turcot* and

Projet Montréal the key battle, of substantially less car capacity and an east-west public transit connection, had had no clear effect on the project of the MTQ, hence only opposition was possible to stay true to the utopian frame. But the approval of the revised MTQ project by the City of Montreal completely modified the opportunity structure, weakened their utopian frame and, even more obviously, their coalition. In this episode we see how strong can be the relation between the opportunities in the political system, and the ability to hold a coalition around a discourse. This discourse, a place-frame, was built around an optimism for a change in the geography of governance: for a more metropolitan public transit approach with the leadership of the City of Montreal. But without the actual leadership of the City of Montreal, the claim was much weakened.

Can we conclude from this that there was no transformation of the dominant discourses? The three nodes of the utopian chain of equivalence were: 1) unjust conditions of inhabitation, 2) solutions through the re-design of the infrastructure and 3) a metropolitan community and Montreal political influence, enabling public transit.

In regard to the unjust conditions of inhabitation, the dominant discourse from the MTQ did evolve in important ways, after the report from the BAPE. The BAPE had emphasized in its recommendations the need to limit the further deterioration of the already deprived surrounding neighborhoods. The governmental decree required the MTQ to consult local populations for a better integration of the infrastructure in the environment (similarly to what was asked for the Notre-Dame project). And indeed the MTQ did consult and invest in plans to improve the economic and social developments of the surrounding neighborhoods. Yet, the discursive link from the utopian frame, between the amount of cars on the infrastructure and the deterioration of the conditions of inhabitation (through air pollution), was not accepted by the BAPE, nor the MTQ. This is confirmed by the fact that in the requested participatory exercises that the MTQ conducted in 2011, the building of playgrounds for kids and community gardens in the zone directly adjacent to the highway were proposed by the MTQ. Due to air pollution, this seemed a crazy idea to the borough and local community groups, and was opposed by the DSP and the City, exactly because of the heavy air pollution created by car circulation on the highway (Corriveau 2012).

The second node, that solutions lied in the re-design of the infrastructure to change its role in the broader mobility network was, partly, but not significantly, integrated. In response to oppositions, the MTQ proposed during the hearings to include a dedicated lane for public transit; hence

already in part responding to this demand. But the MTQ kept ambiguous whether the lane for public transit would be taken from the car lanes (reducing their numbers) or be added to them. The second option was chosen, which meant additional car capacity and an enlarged infrastructure, with a bus lane on only *part* of the trajectory to downtown. There was thus a redesign of the infrastructure with potential impacts in terms of mobility, but the utopian frame demanding reduced car capacity and a complete metropolitan public transit axis was denied.

The third node of the discourse coalition's utopian frame concerned the appropriate territory to plan, intervene and decide upon mobility. Civic actors and the City had promoted a massive metropolitan offer of public transit, through an east-west axis or a metropolitan network. The BAPE report had recommended studies on dedicated lanes for public transit of a metropolitan nature, and had recommended a public consultation on a metropolitan planning of transport from the MTQ. The public consultation was finally held in the spring of 2013. In addition to this demand on the territory of mobility planning, the discourse coalition also reaffirmed the desire for Montreal to get some political power on the infrastructure. With respect to the planning of Turcot, the MTQ had discredited Montreal's alternative project and expertise in 2010 by their high evaluation of the costs. Recently, in the fall of 2013, the government even adopted a project of bylaw removing the requirement to consult the City about building highways on its territory. The justification for this change was the delays created by the City's opposition and internal problems of governance (Corriveau 2013; Nadeau 2013). The demand for a political influence of Montreal on this topic has seemingly been totally ignored by the Minister of Transport.

In sum, the modifications in the dominant discourse of the government regarding Turcot have been minor. The modifications were enough for some civic actors to acknowledge there had been improvements for the neighborhood and for public transit. But the modifications included no significant redefinition of the project in the spirit of the discursive chain of equivalence from the discourse coalition.

CHAPTER 6. SPACES SAVED FROM CARS IN ROTTERDAM THE HAGUE : MIDDEN-DELFLAND AND THE BLANKENBURGTUNNEL

In 2011, eight hundred new kilometers of highways were planned in the most urbanized region of the Netherlands, the Randstad (MIM 2011g). Among these, two 'missing segments' were planned in the highway network of the Rotterdam The Hague area. Both impinge on green recreational and 'natural heritage' areas. Reacting to these projects, a coalition of civic actors has presented a counter-discourse putting forward a 'Green Metropolis' with no new highway and the preservation and accessibility of green open areas.

The debated highway segments were the junction of the highways A13 and A16, in the north-east of Rotterdam (A13-A16) and a new junction between the highways on the south (A15) and north shore (A20) of the Meuse river, on which is located the Port of Rotterdam. This New Western Riverbank Connection (NWO) is planned to go under water through a tunnel and come back to the ground level, in the form of a six-lane highway. It would connect with the highway 20 on the north shore, somewhere between Rotterdam and The Hague. Two options have been considered for NWO : a localization closer to Rotterdam (Blankenburg tunnel option) or closer to the agglomeration of The Hague (the Oranje tunnel option), as we see on the map in Figures 6. and 6.3. This chapter focuses on the debates over the NWO. The infrastructure project was discussed in the annual debates on the agenda of national transport infrastructure investments (MIRT) and through participatory events and parliamentary debates on specific choices for those highway segments, in 2011 and 2012 (see the timetable in Table 6.1). Movements of opposition were organized, and different positions were debated among members of the national parliament, as well as within the urban agglomeration arena.

The historical context of policy-making and collective action in the field of mobility in the Netherlands was provided in chapter 1. This historical context showed that the Dutch planners, engineers and the public arrived at a 'compromise' of extending the highway network in limiting the impact on cities. Planners and opposition movements mobilized to protect the urban or nature places they valued. In the more recent debates, the protection of place continued to be a key motivation in the mobilization against new highway segments. Opposition to the highway segment A4 in Midden-Delfland, a green open area between Rotterdam and The Hague, is exemplary of this. The history of collection action on this road segment went through different phases. After decades of opposition, some environmental and nature protection groups started collaborating in 2000 in the hope of preserving the green areas even with the building of the

highway segment. When the government confirmed the road would be built, but within a larger program for improving the quality of this area, they got involved in formal agreements to ensure the best possible integration of the road in the landscape, and to receive more nature compensation (MFZH 2010; Natuurmonumenten 2010b). The motto of the groups involved in this was : 'if the road has to come, we do not want to see it, smell it or hear it' (Stitching Batavier 2006). This was basically a demand for a tunnelled road. There were disagreements in the choice of this strategy of collaborating on landscape integration. In the end, the environmentalists involved were disappointed by agreements which were not respected by the government (no tunnel) (FG 2; Int MD; Int MF). The unfolding of the A4 debate affected the strategies adopted by civic actors in the highway segments debated afterward in South Holland, which I discuss below.

Figure 6.1 *Choices between the Orange and the Blankenburgtunnel, as presented by the NWO Project Buro for the Ministry of Infrastructure and Environmental*
(Source: MIM 2013, 52, re-working of MVW et al. 2009). Accessible at :
<http://www.rijksoverheid.nl/documenten-en-publicaties/rapporten/2013/11/05/rijksstructuurvisie-bereikbaarheid-regio-rotterdam-en-nieuwe-westelijke-oeververbinding.html>

In addition to the protection of place, debates also continued on the role of the national government to encourage or restrain car mobility, versus other mobility modes. Mom and Filarski (2008, 393-394) speak of this debate in the past period, from the 1970s to the years 2000s, also in terms of a policy compromise. The policy compromise at the national level concerned foremost the promise to eventually control car growth in pricing the use of the highway network, while in the meantime widening and extending it (Mom and Filarski 2008, Van der Vinne 2010). The pricing of the highway network, however, never actually became implemented.

The last episode of the political discussion (2003-2009), just before the period to which is dedicated this chapter (2010-2012), followed this same pattern. Public action to fight congestion was framed around three parallel strategies of public action : “bouwen/benutten/beprijzen”, which is to build new roads, use the existent infrastructure to its maximum, and price its use (MVW and VROM 2004). Several highways were decided to be broadened, while making political steps towards the adoption of a pricing system to reduce car use and car congestion, titled 'Paying differently for mobility'. This meant that car drivers were not to pay more, but to pay differently : less to own a car, but more to use it. It specifically meant to pay more to use a car at congested periods of the day. To arrive to the adoption of this principle, a commission with not only public authorities, but also civic organizations (from the environment and economic sector

and car drivers association) was formed in 2005 to arrive at a consensual proposition (Van der Vinne 2010, 219). Such consensus-making exercise was important because the implementation of such pricing system- a congestion charge – was a very political and sensitive issue, for equity, liberty and privacy issues⁹⁰, but also for fear it would endanger the economic competitiveness of the Netherlands in comparison to other European countries (van Lint and Marchau 2011; van der Vinne 2010). Nevertheless, in 2009 its implementation was planned for 2011, but the coalition in government fell before the actual implementation of it. In the subsequent coalition agreement from the new Dutch cabinet, in 2010, the congestion charge was removed from the agenda. The high levels of congestion, which in previous cabinets had been an argument to organize a pricing system, is now even more the argument for the development of new roads, to solve key “bottle necks” which threaten economic performance.

The governance context was also presented in chapter 1. For the benefit of the reader, this context is here very briefly summarized and situated in relation to the NWO highway project. I will present below the discourse from the Dutch cabinet, focusing on the Minister of Infrastructure and Environment (MIE). The MIE is the actor in charge of the highway network in the Netherlands. In the process of elaborating plans for a highway, the Minister is in contact with a local authority, to agree on the localization and on the integration in the landscape. In the case of the NWO, the local authority chosen to coordinate local input is the Rotterdam agglomeration cooperative body. There is a strong alliance between the City of Rotterdam (who dominates the urban agglomeration arena) and the national government on this. The Rotterdam agglomeration is formed of Rotterdam and eleven towns around it, and include the port area. The urban agglomerations are key in the planning of regional transport infrastructure. With regard to the NWO however, The Hague has been very little involved, the justification being that the major portion of the roads discussed are on the territory of the agglomeration of Rotterdam. The Hague and Rotterdam do not have to agree on spatial planning. In fact, they each agree they want to keep their spatial vision distinct, because they have different priorities for future development (Int NWO; Int SR). What is also particular in the current context is the removal of veto powers from municipalities to oppose the coming of a highway. Municipal opposition by jurisdictional means is no more possible with the Crisis and Recovery Law introduced in 2010, and which we describe below (Wheeler 2010). Municipalities, like the small municipalities in between Rotterdam and The Hague through which the highway would pass, have to express their disagreements and

⁹⁰ A sophisticated system was planned to track the use of the road by individual cars at different times of the day, with the objective of reducing spreading car traffic throughout the day.

reach compromises within the collaborative platforms between public authorities. This gave even more importance to the Rotterdam urban agglomeration.

I will now present the dominant discourse on transport infrastructure by the leading coalition in the Dutch national government from 2010 to 2012. I follow with the counter-discourse articulated by civic actors, a utopian frame of a 'Green Metropolis'. To understand the use and malleability of this utopian frame I will finally analyze the capacities of the discursive and relational brokers supporting it, and their invention of different interpretative repertoires.

6.1 The discourse of the governing coalition : a spatiality focused on profitable infrastructure segments

The governing coalition from 2010-2012 was led by the Prime Minister Rutte from the People's Party for Freedom and Democracy (VVD). The VVD is a right wing party committed to reducing state expenditures and selectively choosing investments according to their capacity to trigger economic development. In this period, investments in transport are justified by their necessity for economic growth, and are framed in a context of economic urgency to secure and extend the 'competitive power' of the Netherlands. This discourse happened in the context of the economic crisis from which Europe was suffering much more than North America. This context was presented in the introductory paragraphs of the major transport and land-use policy documents (MIM 2011a; MIM 2011b; MIM 2011d; MIM 2011c). The feeling of urgency also had impacts on the democratic and planning processes. Indeed, the Dutch parliament adopted in 2010 a law called 'Crisis and Recovery Act', which aimed at reducing the procedures for key infrastructure projects, so that they can start to be built earlier, to boost economic recovery. Infrastructure projects that fall under this (first temporary – but now permanent) law are the construction of highways, housing development projects, waterworks and windmill parks. Procedures for new highways are thus reduced – participatory processes, environmental impact assessments and

Table 6.1 *Timeline of parliamentary debates with discussions about the Nieuwe Westelijk Oververbinding, with the themes discussed*

Date and type of debate	Timing in decision-making process over the NWO	Themes most discussed (with number of occurrences coded in the transcription of the debate) ⁹¹
June 2011- Debate on annual transport investments 2011 (MIRT), Commission on Infrastructure and Environment	NWO is one of several transport projects discussed; in parallel occur the first participatory meetings on NWO	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Program Better Use (15); • Need for new highways (12); • Participation process NWO (6)
December 2011 – Debate on annual transport investments 2012 (MIRT), Commission on Infrastructure and Environment	Minister just announced her preference for Blankenburg over Oranje	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Weighing the two options for NWO (16); • Program Better Use (13); • NWO costs (13); • Need more information on NWO (11); • Need for new highways (11)
December 2011-March 2012 - List of questions (and answers) to the Minister on the NWO	Opposition parties ask questions before the vote on Blankenburg or Oranje	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transport analyses (broader scope of study) (35) • Nature and landscape integration (23) • Tol (14)
April 2012 – Parliamentary debate and vote on NWO	After being delayed several times, the debate leading to a vote from the Second Chamber	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nature and landscape integration (42) • Tol (14) • Citizen's variant for NWO (in a tunnel) (12) • Transport analyses (broader scope of study) (10) • Importance of NWO for economic growth (9)
June 2012 – NWO is considered to be included in the list of 'controversial projects' to be delayed to after the national elections	After the fall of the Dutch cabinet	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transport analyses (broader scope of study) : the reason cited by the PVV to vote with parties of opposition to put NWO in the controversial projects list
December 2012 – Debate on annual transport investments 2013 (MIRT), Commission on Infrastructure and Environment	After the elections, a discussion on the nature and landscape integration of the Blankenburgtunnel (which is part of the Coalition agreement)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nature and landscape integration (4) • Broader transport, mobility, and cost-benefit analysis (3)

Source: Tweede Kamer (2011a; 2011c; 2011d; 2012b; 2013), MIM (2012d)

⁹¹ The themes with 6 occurrences or more are presented, an occurrence being a statement coded on the theme (except for the last event, for which the numbers accounts for the motions demanded by political parties – 4 motions on nature and landscape integration, 3 on a broader analysis).

nature conservation provisions – in order to ensure the highway's construction in a shorter lapse of time (Verschuuren 2010; Wheeler 2010). Possibilities of appeal are also reduced.

Yet, public participation is meant to be 'quicker and better' (Commissie Elverding 2008; Rijksoverheid 2008). The process should integrate different stakeholders at the stage of values and broad objectives, to then reduce subsequent participation and possibilities of appeal in the concrete plan-making (Dijkshoorn 2011; Int PP). The objective is to reduce the 'barriers' to a rapid tackling of transport and mobility issues (Verschuuren 2010; MIM 2011g). The new government coalition also created much enthusiasm for a more entrepreneurial look on the fight against congestion, which the next chapter presents in more detail. The dominant discourse on mobility by the coalition in government was thus more complex than just an 'asphalt lobby', and included different inter-penetrating narratives on what constitutes 'innovative' and effective solutions to car congestion to boost economic performance. The discursive field on mobility was affected by the political positions of participating actors on the role of the state and on the societal function of transport infrastructure.

Like in many other countries of the world, the transport planning perspective of 'predict and provide', that is predict demand in mobility and provide *roads* for it⁹² (Vigar 2002; Perl and Kenworthy 2010), is still practiced in the Netherlands, although criticized. This is in the context where the Dutch were evaluated to be part of the Europeans spending more time each day in traffic jams (second country after Belgium, OECD 2010). The transport analyses and indicators of 'good accessibility to destinations' were framed around the fight against congestion and thus focused on the time of travel and on its reliability (KIM 2011a; MIM 2011e; MVW et al. 2009; MVW and VROM 2004; Stadsregio Rotterdam 2003). In policy and in parliamentary debates, 'accessibility' was a key concern, and referred to the possibility of reaching destination in an acceptable length of time. In peak hours for example, the time of travel should not be more than 1.5 times longer than in non peak-hours (MIM 2011e; MVW and VROM 2004). There were thus maps produced with segments of the road network that were predicted in 2020 and 2030 to be excessively congested. The segments not respecting the criterion are characterized as 'not in order', which can justify the building of new highway segments (MIM 2011e; MIM 2011c, 5,10; MVW et al. 2009, 4; StadsRegio Rotterdam 2011, 8).

⁹² Instead of 'predict and prevent', that is to work on reducing the demand for road infrastructures instead of increasing the offer (Vigar 2002). See chapter 1 for a broader description of the mode of intervention 'predict and provide'.

The necessity of fighting congestion was presented as an apolitical fact requiring urgent response (Tweede Kamer 2011a; MIM 2011d; Tweede Kamer 2011c). We see this discursive construction in the following quotations from a policy document on mobility in Rotterdam, and from the Christian Democratic party (in the governing coalition) in a parliamentary debate in 2011.

The problems of accessibility in the region of Rotterdam need to be smartly and rapidly tackled. For now and for later generations.[...] The fact that something needs to happen to make and keep the ring of Rotterdam accessible, is obvious for everybody (MVW et al. 2009, 4).⁹³

The reduction of traffic jams is not only a right hobby, but should speak to left parties as well. We all want to avoid that people stay often, long and needlessly in traffic. We want mobility. Netherlands has grown through mobility. Truly we want that mobility in a good and sustainable manner integrates itself and avoid traffic jams since they are not necessary (CDA in Tweede Kamer 2012a, 12)⁹⁴.

The goal of fighting congestion was wide spread and led to evaluations of times to reach destinations, not only on the road but also by public transit, especially in Rotterdam. It gave the emphasis on accessibility a universal tone from the point of view of planning : fighting congestion would improve the quality of life for populations of all socio-economic levels and whatever the mode of transport (StadsRegio Rotterdam 2011, 13). Precise indicators were given for accessibility by public transit and car circulation (StadsRegio Rotterdam 2011). In the “Masterplan Rotterdam Vooruit”, which is the multi-partite (national, provincial, agglomeration and municipal) plan adopted in 2009 to tackle problems of 'accessibility' in the ring of Rotterdam, ten statements were agreed upon, the first three being:

“1- We are working within an integrated broad vision of mobility for the future of the agglomeration of Rotterdam, with multi-modality (car, public transit and bicycling), sustainability and quality of the spatial planning. [...]

⁹³ “De bereikbaarheidsproblemen in de regio Rotterdam moeten slim en snel worden aangepakt. Voor nu en voor latere generaties. [...] Want dat er iets moet gebeuren om de Ruit van Rotterdam bereikbaar te maken én houden, zal voor iedereen duidelijk zijn. ”

⁹⁴ “Het terugdringen van de files is niet alleen een rechtse hobby, maar zou ook linkse partijen moeten aanspreken. Wij willen immers allemaal voorkomen dat mensen vaak en onnodig lang in de file staan. Wij willen mobiliteit. Daarvan is Nederland groot geworden. Wij willen die mobiliteit echter op een goede en duurzame manier inpassen en wij willen voorkomen dat er overal files staan terwijl dat niet nodig is.”

2- The Benelux tunnel and the connection of the Port complex have the priority. A second crossing of the river (NWO) is needed for the robust connection of the port, for a solution to the congestion in the Benelux tunnel and to ensure good fluidity in the A4 corridor.

3- An important improvement of public transit is needed in the south of Rotterdam” (MVW et al. 2009, 11).

Yet in the context of budget cuts, the priorities were further defined in relation to the sense of economic urgency and the search for economic growth. The second point from the “Masterplan Rotterdam Vooruit” statements above is particularly emphasized by the governing coalition in the time frame I look at, while the first and third points have been given less attention with the budget cuts in public transit funds. In 2011, 120 millions were announced to be cut from the annual budget for public transit for the three largest cities : Rotterdam, The Hague and Amsterdam. For the Minister of Infrastructure and Environment, the budget cuts were aimed at rationalizing public transport services and making them more efficient. The Minister stated it was not a disinvestment in public transit. On the contrary, it would be a new way to tackle public transit by focusing on quality, seeing that investments had grown in the last years but the clientèle did not. The Minister wished to favor highly used services and financed more the transfer points from car to public transit (park and ride facilities) (MIM 2011f). This was mostly tackled through the program 'Better Use', discussed in the following chapter. The mayors of two cities, public transit organizations and unions, as well as parties of opposition contested the budget cuts in public transit (Tweede Kamer 2011b; Rover 2011). An independent report stated that up to 40% of the bus lines would have to be cut in those cities (Conquist 2011; Sluis 2011). This implied consequences for less well-off and vulnerable populations who depend on those services. Besides the threat they saw for the economic performance of the largest cities, opponents, represented in parliament by the Labour Party and the Socialist Party, regretted the lack of equity considerations in the governmental choices of investments for 'accessibility' (Tweede Kamer 2011b).⁹⁵

The budget cuts meant that the development of public transit in the South of Rotterdam was delayed to 2020 or later, even though it had been presented in “Masterplan Rotterdam Vooruit” as necessary to satisfy accessibility criteria *now*, an accessibility issue linked also to socio-

⁹⁵ *Milieudefensie* was also involved in the opposition, but not the other nature and environmental groups of the Rotterdam The Hague area contesting the new highway segments. There were in fact little connections made between the two opposition campaigns, since the opposition to the highways come mainly from nature protection organizations, as we see below.

economic disparities in this part of Rotterdam. In comparison, the road development NWO was meant only to solve an expected problem in 2020 or 2030⁹⁶, but was prioritized, taking into account the delays before the building of new infrastructure and the priority not to have congestion on this segment (MIM 2012a, 12, MIM 2013).

Solutions for the Brienenoord and Algeira corridor and solutions to improve the access to Rotterdam South by public transit would also be significant for the economic and spatial structure of the city and region. But they are less significant for the functioning of the Rotterdam Main Port and Greenport Westland. (MIM 2012a, 12)⁹⁷

The NWO was considered a project falling under the Crisis and Recovery Act and was thus framed in terms of an urgency for the economic recovery of the country. The broad objectives of accessibility, to make sure all the population reaches its destination in an acceptable length of time, were thus narrowed down in the actual choices of investments to transport investments associated with economic growth.

Figure 6.2 *Representation of the highway network around Rotterdam, in the justification for the NWO by the Ministry of Infrastructure and Environment. Accessible at : <http://www.rijksoverheid.nl/documenten-en-publicaties/rapporten/2013/11/05/rijksstructuurvisie-bereikbaarheid-regio-rotterdam-en-nieuwe-westelijke-oeververbinding.html>*

We can see two existing highway crossings of the river Meuse (in blue and violet); the left one represents the Benelux tunnel, in the axis of the A4 highway. The latter crossing (in violet only) is the Blankenburgtunnel.

(Source: MIM 2013, 31, re-working of MVW et al. 2009)

Let me now give more details on the economically focused spatiality of the dominant governmental coalition. In the second priority stated in the Masterplan (see citation above), the Benelux tunnel and the Port of Rotterdam were used as justifications for a new road crossing of the river, i.e. a NWO connection. The Benelux tunnel is the major crossing for the river Meuse at the present, with other crossings being the older Maas tunnel and the bridges downtown and on the eastern side of the agglomeration (see Figure 6.2). The Benelux tunnel is particularly valued because it is part of the corridor of the highway A4, which traffic engineers would like to see become the major economic axis in the province South Holland, and toward southern countries

⁹⁶This evaluation changed through the course of the debates : the Benelux tunnel was predicted to suffer traffic unacceptable levels of congestion first in 2020, but the evaluation was delayed to 2030 with the economic crisis and the decrease in traffic growth.

⁹⁷ "Oplossingen voor de Brienenoord- en Algeira corridor en de OV-bereikbaarheid van Rotterdam Zuid hebben ook een grote ruimtelijk-economische betekenis voor het functioneren van stad en regio. Ze hebben echter minder betekenis voor het functioneren van de Mainport Rotterdamse haven en de Greenport Westland"

(MVW et al. 2009, 52). It is not yet an important axis because the A4 segment in Midden-Delfland just started to be built, after decades of opposition and delays (nevertheless the Benelux tunnel is used extensively by traffic within the agglomeration). The plan is to build the southern part of the A4, to make the A4 corridor (including the Benelux tunnel) the 'backbone' of South Holland and of the economic route toward Belgium (MVW et al. 2009, 17, 52; Kreukels 2003; MIM 2012a, 8–9; MIM 2012c, 3). For this to happen “there needs sufficient capacity in the Benelux tunnel” (MVW et al. 2009, 52). So a second crossing of the river, which is the project of the NWO, was presented as needed for the Benelux tunnel, and the future A4 economic corridor, to stay free of traffic jams (idem). In the NWO analyses, the Benelux tunnel became *the* highway segment political actors pointed to in speaking of the better performance of one NWO option over the other. The transport models showed the Blankenburg option (closer to the Benelux tunnel and Rotterdam) would be most effective in preventing congestion on the Benelux tunnel than the Oranje option (closer to the Hague and the Port's extension); it is actually the only advantage of it traffic wise (MVW et al. 2009, 53; MIM 2012a, 13). This narrow focus on the avoidance of future expected congestion in the Benelux tunnel as the sole measure of success for the new NWO road will be criticized. The focus on this axis meant a direct threat (in addition to the currently built A4) to the nature area that environmental actors wished to protect.

The Port of Rotterdam was also mentioned as a key reason for prioritizing the NWO connection (MIM 2011c, 5; MIM 2012a, 39; MIM 2012b, 15–18; MVW et al. 2009). The NWO was meant to improve the connectivity of the port “in the context of its development as an international economic center” (NWO Projectorganisatie 2011, 2). The Port of Rotterdam is the largest port in Europe and a key player in the national economy and in the local labor market (Kreukels 2003). The importance of the Port of Rotterdam has been evaluated at 3.7% of the Annual Gross Product of the Netherlands and the port provides direct employment to 90 000 persons and indirect employment to 55 000 persons (Van Den Bosch et al. 2011, ii). The Rotterdam Port Authority “is a non-listed public limited company. Shares in the Port of Rotterdam Authority are held by the Municipality of Rotterdam (approx. 70%) and the Dutch State (approx. 30%)” (Port of Rotterdam 2014). The Port has already recently obtained a €1,6 billion investment from the government to widen the main road used by the port traffic south of the river (the A15). But a large growth of the port is planned for 2030, *Maasvlakte 2*, with an extension of platforms in the sea, and hence more transportation is predicted. New road connections were considered necessary to ensure the port continues its activities without time lost in congestion, even though

increasing freight transport by rail and inland navigation (Port of Rotterdam 2011, Int PR; Transumo 2009).⁹⁸ Indeed, the Port of Rotterdam Authority committed itself to reduce freight transport by road and reduce the growth in air pollution with its Maasvlakte 2. This objective of 'modal shift' from road transport to other modes is described by the Port :

Creating better and more sustainable accessibility by shifting transport from the road to the cleaner modalities of water, rail and pipeline is a joint objective of the Port of Rotterdam Authority, government parties, local residents, customers and other stakeholders.⁹⁹ We call it the 'modal shift'. In 2012, within the scope of the modal shift, we set ourselves the goal of keeping the percentage of container volume transported by road from and to the Maasvlakte at or lower than 46.5%. Our aim with this goal was to reduce the percentage of containers being transported by road. (Port of Rotterdam 2013b, 47)

A new river crossing also appeared necessary for safety reasons, since there is at the moment only one main road to leave the port facilities. An additional exit in case of calamities is important for the justification of the NWO. It does not justify better the Blankenburg option over the Oranje however, the Oranje scoring better on this criterion (MIM 2012a; Transumo 2009, Int PR).

The Oranje option was actually the first choice from the Port authority up to 2009 (Transumo 2009, Int PR)¹⁰⁰. But according to my interviews, the agglomeration of Rotterdam (which holds

⁹⁸ In 2011, 55,20% of freight transport from and to the port was done by road, 33,4 % by barge and 11,40% by rail (Port of Rotterdam 2013a, 1). The objective of 'modal shift' from the Port of Rotterdam authority is to have less than 47% of the transport of containers by road, as described in the citation in the text (Port of Rotterdam 2013b, 47). The State agency on mobility states in its 2012 report that the growth in freight transport, especially water navigation, had returned after a decrease during the economic crisis, except for transport on road which was still below the level of 2008 (KIM 2012, 155-156). Hence a diminution in freight transport by road is both an objective of the Port authority and a recent trend since the economic crisis.

⁹⁹ *Milieudefensie*, a discursive broker for the utopian frame discussed below, is involved in discussions with the Port Authority on this issue of reducing freight transport by road, especially with the predicted increasing transport of goods with the growth of Maasvlakte 2 (an additional platform in the sea to host larger ships). *Milieudefensie* initiated a procedure in court because of the extent of the air pollution predicted with Maasvlakte 2 (South Holland is already not respecting the European norms of air quality). The two actors arrived at an agreement with measures to reduce extra air pollution expected with the Port extension by 10%, which included the reduction of freight transport by road (*Milieudefensie* 2011c, Int PR, Int MD). Still *Milieudefensie* is defending the implementation of a tax for the transport of goods on road, to encourage its transfer on waterways (*Milieudefensie* 2011a, 29).

¹⁰⁰ A large study was undergone by the Port Authority, a team from the Erasmus Universiteit of Rotterdam and diverse stakeholders on the improvement of accessibility from the port to its hinterland. The results were published in 2009 and included the national congestion charge (then still on the political agenda), the Oranje tunnel, mobility management, modal shift for freight transport and organizational innovation (Transumo 2009). The study was not used in the justification of the NWO by the NWO project team from the Minister of Infrastructure and Environment. Geerlings, in charge of the study at the Erasmus Universiteit wrote : "What is interesting is that the project Transumo A-15, for which I was the project leader, had also a west riverbank connection proposed. Our model calculations led us toward the building of the Oranjetunnel because it responded better to the necessity of a robust transport network." (Geerlings 2012, 40) In 2011 the Port announced they were for a Blankenburgtunnel in the short term and an Oranje tunnel in the mid-long term.

70% of the Port of Rotterdam's shares), convinced the Port Authority that to relieve congestion for the city of Rotterdam, the Blankenburgtunnel would be better than the Oranje. The Blankenburg meant direct investment inside the territory of Rotterdam. For the national government, the Blankenburg option was also cheaper than the Oranje option, where the water crossing is wider and involves a more complex infrastructure. The higher costs of the Oranje was a repeatedly used argument from the national government to favor the Blankenburg option; a difference of up to € 800 millions¹⁰¹. The growth of the Port and the safety improvement for emergency exits from the Port were thus two issues justifying the NWO, but the choice between the two routes seem to rest on other considerations.

The governing coalition, with the Minister and the Rotterdam agglomeration alliance, thus put emphasis on the fight against congestion, and even more on certain road segments that should absolutely not be congested. The discursive link made between the fight against congestion and economic performance was emphasized by the Dutch cabinet in its choice of investments: certain expected problems necessitated direct action, in order not to compromise the current and future bread and butter of Rotterdam and the Netherlands. The transport investment policy had an economically-focused spatiality, of which the spatial implications had nothing natural. Economic and transport rationales had led to other results in previous analyses, i.e. the Oranje option (see bottom note on the previous page for details). The dominant discourse focused on the congestion in the ring of Rotterdam and on the Benelux tunnel, to frame the choice of needed investments. Choosing the Blankenburgtunnel was an opportunity to complete the A4 transport corridor. Now that the A4 is being built in Midden-Delfland, the A4 could become an efficient international transport axis going through the agglomeration of Rotterdam.

This spatiality overlook other values given to space (FG1). I discussed of the issue of social accessibility above. Other authors have elaborated on the consequence of the governmental policy for air quality in cities (Geerlings 2012). More related to the controversy of the NWO and the discourses of the opposing coalition are nature and landscape values. With the Crisis and

Original citation in Dutch : "Het interessante is dat in het project Transumo-A15, waar ik projectleider van was, ook een Westelijke Oeververbinding werd voorgesteld. In onze modelberekeningen zijn wij uitgegaan van de aanleg van de Oranjetunnel omdat die het meest recht doet aan de noodzaak om een robuust wegennet aan te leggen" (Geerlings 2012, 40).

¹⁰¹ In January 2012, the expected costs of the Blankenburgtunnel were from €1 to €1,6 billions, and of the Oranje from €1,6 to €2,4 billions (depending on the exact route and tunnel height, MIM 2012c, 3). In March 2012, they were evaluated to be for the Blankenburgtunnel from €0,8 to €1,05 billion and for the Oranje from €1,50 to €1,70 billions (MIM 2012a, 8-9). Opponents argued that, with measures to reduce impact on landscape and nature from the Blankenburgtunnel, the Oranje was not significantly more expensive.

Recovery Act, legal provisions for nature conservation were relaxed, permitting a project of 'national interest' to be built in a natural area if need be (Wheeler 2010). This means that nature-preservation and development programs from previous governments lost their binding power for some large projects. Discursively, a new highway was presented as compatible with the preservation of green open and natural areas, through a good integration in the landscape (MIM 2012e, 9). The NWO would go through the area of Midden-Delfland if the Blankenburg option is chosen.

I presented the discourse from the Dutch cabinet, focusing on the Minister of Infrastructure and Environment (MIE), since the MIE is the actor in charge of the highway network in the Netherlands. In sum, the Minister of Infrastructure at the national level has collaboration and support from the Rotterdam agglomeration, controlled by the same political party than the national cabinet. Civic actors tried to go around this strong alliance in addressing the province of South Holland, the local municipalities in between Rotterdam and The Hague, and the opposition parties in the national parliament.

Provinces have little responsibilities in terms of roads, but have responsibilities in terms of nature and recreational areas (Provincie Zuid-Holland 2013). Yet, the province of South Holland is also active in the promotion of transit-oriented development (Stedenbaanplus 2011; Duffhues 2010). In addition, the provinces have a special tool through which citizens can get involved. The 'citizen initiative' is a formal opportunity for citizens to bring an issue or project to the provinces, with a minimum number of signatures, to demand that the province then seriously considers the issue. With all those issues considered, the province of South Holland appeared an attractive authority to target and enroll for opponents to the highway plans (Int MD2; Int NM2; Int GL). Practically however, it did not hold any direct power on the NWO. With the citizen initiative handed to the province and the other above-mentioned channels of opposition, civic organizations became involved to offer a counter discourse to the one of the government : a utopian frame of a Green Metropolis.

6.2 Motivations for a counter discourse : the main actors involved

Actors with different motivations participated in diverse ways to the production of a counter-discourse. The environmental organization *Milieudefensie* (Friends of the Earth Netherlands),

mainly produced a discourse on mobility through a plan focusing on Rotterdam The Hague to illustrate another world of possibilities for transport and mobility. *Milieudefensie* built a campaign of public outreach and the gathering of signatures on this report 'Green Metropolis', with a petition they handed to the provincial authority of South Holland as a citizen initiative. In the report, they advocated for a set of alternatives to replace the actual policy of the government for new highways, and its consequences in South-Holland. In parallel to the production of this report, other organizations were active in the promotion and preservation of green open (and natural) areas. To understand their motivations in the NWO debate, it is essential to know more about the space that they tried to defend.

Midden-Delfland is a special area for South-Holland. Not so much for 'nature', although ecologically it has its importance, but certainly as a cultural-historic landscape. The vast majority of the Dutch landscape is man-made by the dikes, fillings and dryings they have done over centuries. The landscape of Midden-Delfland is characteristic of the agricultural and meadow (man-made) landscape of the Dutch country. The area had been neglected in the past. Starting in 1977, a 'reconstruction law' was adopted by the National government to valorize this landscape, with heritage protection and more recreative possibilities within Midden-Delfland (revamping old houses and farm buildings, restoring and designing 'natural' areas attracting fauna and flora, creating recreational facilities with biking and walking paths, etc.). The surrounding local municipalities, inhabitants, farmers and nature groups were involved in this 35 year process. A formal-legal commission of reconstruction was under operation to regulate the uses and development in the area, and the association Midden-Delfland Vereniging was created to bring the different parties together in this process. The association was especially devoted to represent inhabitants and farmers in the process and to promote the preservation of the green and open character of the area.

There are also, in this area, resident associations created to oppose specific projects in Midden-Delfland. From their involvement we can see that the place-making of Midden-Delfland as a green, nature, open and recreative area was a broad goal, but with varying interpretations. Residents were getting involved to ensure the primacy of the 'green open character' of the territory over recreative (or even industrial) new facilities (Int ABCN; Int MF). Midden-Delfland had been further designated as a 'State buffer zone', one of the green open areas to be preserved for the benefit of urban dwellers (Muijnck, Koomen, and van Rij 2009; Int GV). This was a particularly important buffer zone, in terms of quality of life (and air quality), because of

the limit it set to the spreading of industries from the port of Rotterdam (Int GV; FG2). In the 1990s however, a concrete plan of landfill for toxic waste became known to residents in the surrounding municipalities, with a port and train infrastructure to transport the waste to the planned landfill. An association against the project was created, *Groeind Verzet* (Growing Mobilization), and developed a strategy to block it : to plant thousands of trees on the coveted site for the landfill. Residents and shop-owners from the community got involved and in December 12 1992, almost 8000 people planted a total of 16 000 trees on the site, which became known as 'the People's Woods'. The action successfully blocked the landfill project. In 2010, 18 years later, the organization *Groeind Verzet* was still active. Hearing about the plans of the Blankenburgtunnel of which one potential route would go through the People's Woods, they started mobilizing against it and re-published on their website the archives (documentary and video) of their previous tree-planting. Tree planters, among them the children of 1992 which who are now adults, were contacted to become involved in the protection of their woods, against the highway segment. The special character of this place, as a place protected and produced by the will of the locals, since they literally planted a forest, was put forward by this organization.

Another group of residents became involved, in 2009-2010, to oppose a new recreative facility that would be disruptive for green and natural spaces and would bring much traffic in Midden-Delfland. Through this involvement with municipalities the group heard about the project of the Blankenburgtunnel and became actively involved in opposing it. They then created an association with informal networks throughout the region. Among them were persons who had been involved against the highway A4 in Midden-Delfland. This became the *Actiecomité Blankenburgtunnel Nee* (Action Committee against the Blankenburgtunnel; Actiecomité or ABCN), which was particularly involved to protect the open character of the cultural heritage sector 'Zuidbuurt', within Midden-Delfland.

In addition to these two groups, there are other associations involved in activities of outreach, education and preservation of nature, organizing bird watching events for example, or activities of interpretation on nature and landscape. These nature organizations are represented by the umbrella organization *Milieufederatie Zuid-Holland* (Environmental Federation South Holland), which is subsidized by the province. Within the province, *Milieufederatie* stands up against projects that have detrimental effects for nature and the environment. *Milieufederatie* works with local groups and tries to have a broader regional and process-based approach.

The organization was involved in the debate on the A4 highway in Midden-Delfland, first opposing it, but then collaborating to optimize its integration in the landscape. Regarding the A4 highway, members of Milieufederatie had the feeling of a good, or at least promising, process, but which turned out to be very disappointing since the resulting agreements were not followed by the state (Int MF; FG2). In the debates on the Blankenburgtunnel, they were thus very involved on matters of process. *Milieufederatie* became the main producer of a discourse on what a legitimate decision-making process should be like for such new large infrastructure projects (Int MF; MFZH 2010; Vitaal Midden-Delfland 2011; MFZH 2011; Natuurmonumenten et al. 2011).

Finally, another broad organization was involved in producing discourse on the value of the Midden-Delfland territory and, later, on the mobility choices to make. Natuurmonumenten is a national nature conservation agency which owns and manages 100 000 hectares of nature areas in the country, and has close to 750 000 members. In Midden-Delfland, it owns a polder hosting shore-birds, this polder being the reason why the area is part of the Ecological Main Structure (nature network connecting important ecological zones and corridors in the country). From the beginning, Natuurmonumenten also emphasized the heritage character of the site and the importance to preserve the open landscape, which is so rare in South Holland (Natuurmonumenten 2010a).

The main actors involved in the opposition to the highway plans in Midden-Delfland were thus *Milieudefensie* (Friends of the Earth), which developed in a metropolitan frame a package of mobility alternatives, *Milieufederatie Zuid-Holland*, which focused mainly on the process of decision-making, and *Natuurmonumenten*, which is there first to preserve the nature patches under its protection. Associations embedded in the local context are also very much engaged, with as motivation the protection of the area. Among the most important are *Groeiend Verzet* (for the People's Woods), *Midden-Delfland Vereniging* and the *Actiecomité Blankenburgtunnel Nee*. They are synthetically presented in Table 6.2. I now present the civic utopia these actors have been advocating.

Table 6.2 *The main actors involved and their motivations*

Actor (with translation and shorter name used in text)	Main motivation and theme in discourse production
Milieudefensie (Friends of the Earth)	Motivation : provide a package of alternatives to highways for a whole territory, in order to save green spaces. Discourse on mobility alternatives.
Milieufederatie Zuid-Holland (Environmental Federation South Holland; Federation)	Motivation : nature and environment protection. Discourse on the 'good process'
Natuurmonumenten (Naturemonuments)	Motivation : preserve the nature areas under its protection, and the open character of Midden-Delfland. Discourse first on Midden-Delfland then on mobility.
Actiecomité Blankenburgtunnel Nee (Action Comité Blankenburg No; Actiecomité)	Motivation : protect the open character of the Midden-Delfland area, especially of the 'Zuid buurt'. Discourse on the scope of the transport analyses.
Midden-Delfland Vereniging (Midden-Delfland Union)	Motivation : enable collaboration and engagement in the valorization ('re-construction') of Midden-Delfland as a cultural-historical area
Groeiend Verzet (Growing Resistance)	Motivation : protect the People's Wood, the historic 'Zuid-buurt' and Midden-Delfland as a buffer zone for residents to reduce pollution from the Port

6.3 The utopian frame : a green metropolis

Through the involvement of those actors, the broader civic utopian frame is one of a green metropolis, in which there is good accessibility to green areas and where mobility does not threaten green open spaces. This utopia and its interpretative repertoires constituted themselves in opposition to the discourse from the governing coalition. The nodes of the civic utopia, and the later interpretative repertoires, were debated in a series of events from 2011 to 2012, as shown in Table 6.1. The civic utopia is composed of three equivalences. The first equivalence affirms the incompatibility of new highways and the protection of green open spaces. The second equivalence links the fight against congestion to alternative modes of mobility. The third equivalence associates a broader territory of decision-making to the protection of green open spaces and mobility alternatives. I describe each of these nodes and see how they were discussed in public and parliamentary debates.

Highways incompatible with the protection of green open spaces

The protection of green open spaces from the spoilage of road infrastructure forms the essence of the civic utopia. It denies a possible equivalence between new roads and the protection of green open spaces, opposing its articulation in the dominant discourse from the government. This denial of a possible equivalence was not affirmed previously by all environmental actors, such as during the debates on the A4 in Midden-Delfland when many negotiations concerned the possible integration of the highway segment in the landscape (part tunnelling, walls...). This conciliation of highway and landscape had been in fact a topic of dissent internally among civic actors (Int MF; Int NM). When announcing his support to the Green metropolis plan, the director of *Midden-Delfland Vereniging* rejected this possible conciliation and stated clearly the first equivalence of the utopian frame.

Can it still come together? The preservation of landscape and nature and the extension and widening of infrastructure? It has been impossible for a long time already. Now that the widening knows no limits, it becomes even more obvious that more asphalt comes at the cost of landscape. (Ben van der Velde, *Milieudefensie* 2011a, 5)¹⁰²

Similarly, but with a focus on the contribution of the green areas to quality of life, *Groeierend Verzet* argued:

Is the Blankenburgtunnel and highway through our last piece of green space really the solution? No. For if you come without traffic jams to your work, you still would like to be able to cycle through the nice Zuidbuurt or recreate at the Krabbe lake. But there you would see asphalt and hear the traffic hurry. Not really a relaxing situation. Then you would have again the feeling that you live in an inhospitable environment.¹⁰³ (*Groeierend Verzet* 2011, 1)

The major discourse production came not in words, but through pictures, maps, videos and protest events. *Milieudefensie*, the Coalition 'A Midden-Delfland Highway, Really?'¹⁰⁴, and the broader network collecting signatures against the Blankenburgtunnel show, through their maps

¹⁰² "Kan het nog samen? Het behoud van landschap en natuur en uitbreiding van de infrastructuur? Dat kan eigenlijk al heel land niet meer. Nu die uitbreiding geen grenzen meer lijkt te kennen, worden we ons steeds meer bewust dat nog meer asfalt ten koste gaat van het landschap."

¹⁰³ "Maar is die Blankenburgtunnel en snelweg door onze laatste stuk groene ruimte wel de oplossing? Nee dus. Kom je zonder file van je werk, wil nog ff wat fietsen door de mooie Zuidbuurt of recreëren aan de Krabbeplas, zie je asfalt en hoor je het verkeer voorbij snellen. Geen echte ontspannende situatie. Dat zal dan weer het gevoel geven in een onherbergzame omgeving te wonen."

¹⁰⁴ The Coalition *Hoezo Midden-Delfland Snelweg? (A Midden-Delfland Highway, Really?)* was mainly active in the opposition to the A4 in Midden-Delfland.

(example Figure 6.3), the extent of the threats posed by new highways. Pictures also simulated what the landscapes would become with a highway going through (Vitaal Midden-Delfland 2012). Groeiend Verzet emphasized the protection of the People's Woods as a collective project through their picture of a wood surrounded by a round of persons protecting it. The flyers inviting to a demonstration events showed the incompatibility of the highway with the recreative mission of Midden-Delfland. Playing on the absurd, civic actors even held a protest event alongside the A20 highway to show that with the Blankenburg, only the famous 'picknicking along new highways' of the 1950s and 60s would be possible as a recreative activity in the area. In this very dense area of South Holland, 'open areas' with landscape views free from built infrastructure, were shown to be rare.

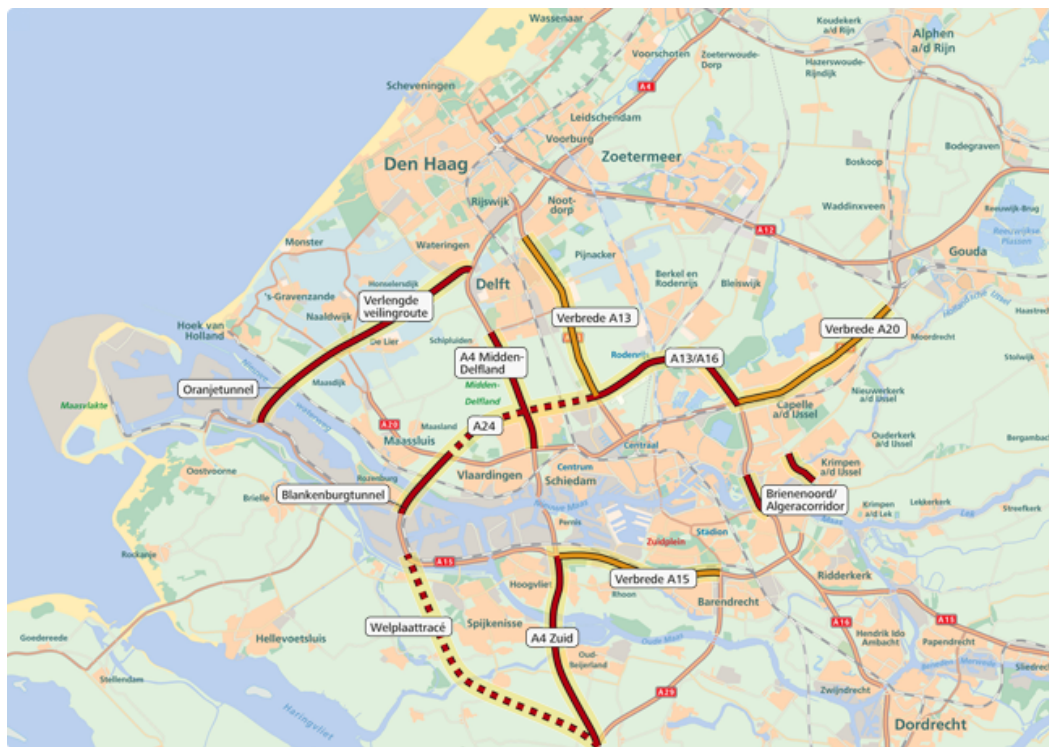


Figure 6.3 All new planned (or potential, in dotted lines) highways, as represented by Milieudefensie (Friends of the Earth Netherlands). Reproduction permitted. (Source: Milieudefensie (2011))

The claim for the protection of Midden-Delfland builds on a longer planning tradition in the Netherlands of preserving the green areas to ensure the liveability of the most urbanized zones of the country. Much of the Dutch planning doctrine since the 1960s has been focused on

controlling urban growth to protect the 'Green Heart', as a space for close access to nature and leisure (Faludi 2004; Hajer and Zonneveld 2000; Faludi and van der Valk 1994). This Green Heart is formed of green open areas in the center of the ring of the largest Dutch cities (the Randstad, which means ring city, is formed by the agglomerations of Rotterdam, The Hague, Utrecht and Amsterdam). In the past, some transport infrastructure had to be in part tunnelled to protect the 'Green Heart'. The metaphor of the 'Green Heart' was used in parliamentary debates to speak of the necessary protection of a green lung in South Holland (Tweede Kamer 2012a, 18–24). Midden-Delfland was named 'the little green heart for South Holland', during civic events and in maps and promotional documents from *Midden-Delfland Vereniging* (Midden-Delfland Vereniging 2012).

As we saw in the presentation of the motivation from the main civic actors involved, the protection of Midden-Delfland, as a special place, is justified by two reasons. The area has an ecological value, which is promoted by *Natuurmonumenten* and smaller nature societies members of the *Milieufederatie*. It has an ecological value for the fauna and flora, hence of biodiversity, as well as for the particular preservation of endangered birds. But there is also an ecological-social value, as a buffer zone between residences and the industries, and as a recreative area. The area has also a cultural-historic value, because of the historic landscape of the polder, but also because of how people were involved in making it a valuable place – through the reconstruction process requalifying it as a heritage site, and because of the planted People's Woods. These ecological and cultural-historic values of the place were both argued by the actors to go beyond the benefits for the local inhabitants, and profit to the whole region. In general, the scarcity of green open and nature areas within the region was emphasized. Hence the brokers argued that the value of this green open space goes beyond the direct inhabitants of this area in-between the urban agglomerations; it is as much a metropolitan or region-wide issue than the necessity for fighting road congestion (Natuurmonumenten and Midden Delfland Vereniging 2010; Natuurmonumenten 2011a; ABN et al. 2011, Milieudefensie 2011a).

How was this equivalence of the utopian frame, to protect place from highways for the nature, landscape and cultural values, received in debates on the NWO? In general, the value of Midden-Delfland was not contested, but was considered by the governing coalition as something to take into account in the impact assessment and compensation measures. The civic actors wanted it to be part of the justification of the NWO and of the choices between the two possible routes, one being much worse than the other on this account (Natuurmonumenten et al. 2011).

In parliamentary debates, the different values (nature vs. cultural-historic) given to Midden-Delfland were used to arrive at different conclusions. For the Socialist party, the fact that Midden-Delfland was valued for its recreative and cultural-historic landscape made it even more important to preserve (Tweede Kamer 2011d, 36:191; Tweede Kamer 2011c, 37:56–57). In contrast, the Minister and the second party in the governing coalition, CDA, put emphasis on the fact that it is not exactly real 'nature', but more 'recent' nature, and that hence the value and attractiveness it acquired in the last decades could be re-made elsewhere. Hence the reconstruction efforts of this place were used as an argument for more easy compensation measures in the form of new recreative area elsewhere (instead of preservation) (CDA, Tweede Kamer 2011c, 36:76; Minister, Tweede Kamer 2012a, 39:76). The opposing parties Christian Union and GreenLeft reacted on the scarcity of open green spaces available in the Randstad, which makes compensation elsewhere in the Randstad far from easy (36:74, 36:79). The CDA and PVV (which could ensure majority to the leading party) hesitated until spring 2012 before confirming what their position was on the NWO would be; the CDA especially emphasized that the decision was hard because they wished to balance economic interests with landscape and environmental protection (CDA in Tweede Kamer 2011c, 36:63-64, CDA in Tweede Kamer 2012b, 11–12).

At the agglomeration level, the five local municipalities north of the Meuse River¹⁰⁵ all opposed the Blankenburg option, arguing for the importance of preserving Midden-Delfland for the whole region, and reminding the parliament that large state investments were put in its reconstruction (Gemeente Maasluis et al. 2010). But recall that the local interlocutor of the Minister for Infrastructure and Environment was the agglomeration of Rotterdam, and that the city-region, institutionally, offers little place for debate (Schaap 2005). The five smaller municipalities around the green area of Midden-Delfland were against it, while seven others, including the City of Rotterdam, were for (Int SR; Stadsregio Rotterdam 2011). The agglomeration adopted its position on the NWO internally (with no debate open to external actors) in fall 2011 by the rule of majority. A decision favorable to the Blankenburg instead of the Oranje option was thus communicated to the Minister of Infrastructure and Environment, the main justification for the decision being the capacity to solve more effectively expected congestion in the Benelux tunnel. The concession given to the opposed municipalities was the promise of a good integration of the highway in the landscape to preserve the area of Midden-Delfland. For the Minister, *the local authorities*, as represented by this majority vote in the Rotterdam agglomeration, had thus

¹⁰⁵ Maasluis, Vlaardingen, Schiedam, Midden-Delfland and Hoek van Holland (this last one actually being a borough of Rotterdam)

signified their preference for the Blankenburg and confirmed that highway and landscape protection was a good option (Minister Schultz in Tweede Kamer 2011d, 61–62; MIM 2011j).

In sum, this first equivalence linking landscape protection and the incompatibility with highway received support from the municipalities in Midden-Delfland and opposition parties in the national government, but was denied by the dominant actors. The interpretative repertoires tried to increase the power of this node from the utopian chain of equivalence.

Alternative infrastructure of mobility

In contesting new highway segments in green open areas, the civic utopia stated also that there are alternative solutions. The objective was to show that we can keep on 'moving' (allowing mobility and fighting congestion) and still protect the green open areas : what was needed was a focus on modal transfer (Int MD2; Int GR). In this second node were linked the fight against congestion, the transfer of mobility to alternative modes, and the absence of new highway : “Without any new asphalt and still 40% less congestion” (Milieudefensie 2011, 1). *Milieudefensie* proposed eight public transport investment projects (more frequent trains, light railway train, improved tram network, a rapid dedicated bus line, more public boats crossing the river, etc.), many of which were in the public authorities' folders but were delayed by budget cuts from the national government. The public transit projects were explicitly presented in their potential to reduce road by a modal transfer from car to efficient public transit, which would eliminate the need for the new highway segments, and preserve green open spaces (see their logo in Figure 6.4 (Milieudefensie 2011a, 14, 17, 22)). Cycling infrastructure and mobility management (the new flexible work, presented in the next chapter) were also in their solution package.

To further reduce car traffic and finance the public transit projects, the report Green Metropolis advocated the introduction of a pricing system for the most congested segments of the network, as well as for all freight transport. In a context in which the national authorities do not go through with a national congestion charge, *Milieudefensie* proposed to set up a pricing system at the metropolitan scale of Rotterdam and The Hague. To convince of the feasibility of its plan, *Milieudefensie* asked two external consulting firms to calculate the plan's effects using the traffic model from the Rotterdam agglomeration. According to those calculations, their plan would have reduced congestion by 40% more than the plans from the cabinet, with the additional benefits of reducing CO₂ emissions and improving air quality (Goudappel Coffeng 2011; CE Delft 2011).



Figure 6.4 Logo from *Milieudedefensie*, front page of the plan *Building together a Green Metropolis*
(Source : *Milieudedefensie* (2011a))

This set of solutions from *Milieudedefensie* received relatively little support. The exclusion of the pricing system 'Paying differently for mobility' was part of the coalition agreement from the new cabinet in 2010, as explained in introduction. Both the province of South Holland and Rotterdam agglomeration, in their letters of reaction to the plan, essentially invalidated the proposition Green Metropolis with the argument that a congestion charge was not a possibility in the current political context (Baljeu 2011; PZH 2012). From the transport planners' point of view, the Green Metropolis Plan did not present any exciting breakthroughs (PZH 2012; Int SB). It summarized existing plans and political scissions, both on public transit and the implementation of a congestion charge, but did not mention the more innovative project from the Province of South Holland. The province was working on a concept of transit oriented development, with other parties, to obtain more railway investment, but this was not in the Green Metropolis plan. And the report only re-stated the importance of the bicycle infrastructure that were already financed by the province. It was thus easy for the province to respond that they were working on these alternative modes of mobility already, and not discuss further the Green Metropolis and the controversial NWO.

The emphasis on no new highway at all was also seen as radical. The Minister wrote : "In general, I share with *Milieudedefensie* the importance of the program *Beter Use* and projects of public transit. But the conclusion that through these investments the extensions of roads would not be necessary is really a stretch" (MIM 2011h, 4–5)¹⁰⁶. Similarly, the VVD spokesperson

¹⁰⁶ "Al met al deel ik de inzet van Milieudedefensie, dat het van belang is om in te zetten op Beter Benutten en openbaar vervoerprojecten. De conclusie dat hierdoor investeringen in wegbuitbreidingen niet meer nodig zouden zijn, gaat mij echter te ver."

Aproot said : “a variant like the one presented by *Milieudefensie*, in which public transport attracts everything and which suggests that car and freight traffic will gigantically reduce in the coming years is like a pie in the sky. Such a variant is for us unacceptable in the conversation (VVD in Tweede Kamer 2011c, 8)”¹⁰⁷.

As for the opposition parties at the national level, they described the governing coalition as driven by an 'Asphalt ideology', which puts all its eggs in the same basket, with a short-term view of highway development. They demanded further re-investment in public transit and the program Better Use (D66, GreenLeft, SP, PvdA in Tweede Kamer 2011c; Tweede Kamer 2011a). Yet on the NWO project, only the GreenLeft Party and the Party for Animals (PA) endorsed the position of *Milieudefensie* to advocate no highway at all. The other fractions advocated the alternative of the Oranje route, which was less damaging for green and nature areas. We will see below how the brokers will take this into account in the elaboration of interpretative repertoires.

A broader territorial/metropolitan scope to the decision-making process

In the second node of the utopian frame from *Milieudefensie*, the fight against congestion through alternative infrastructure of mobility was discussed in relation to an enabling metropolitan scale. This last component constitutes the third equivalence of the civic utopia. *Milieudefensie* articulated a metropolitan frame, stating that Rotterdam and The Hague form together 'a metropolis'. Other brokers emphasized more the territorial scope and depth of the decision-making process. The two variants nevertheless share the following discursive equivalence defining this node : that a broader territorial scope for the NWO decision-making process (with implications on the authorities in charge) would enable transport decisions different from the dominant discourse, and protect green open spaces from new highways. The chain of equivalence links together a 'good' participatory and decision-making process with an adequate territoriality : a concerted territorial vision with multi-sectoral objectives and a right scale to plan infrastructure.

In the report 'Building a Green Metropolis' from *Milieudefensie*, the term 'metropolis' was used as an image of modernity and innovative urban mobility and as a scale to plan mobility beyond individual cities' interests (Milieudefensie 2011a, 5–6–11–12). In the report, they explained what, in their eyes, would be the best scale to plan transport to allow a transition toward more mobility in public transit:

¹⁰⁷ “wij een variant zoals gepresenteerd door Milieudefensie, waarbij het openbaar vervoer alles opvangt en gesuggereerd wordt dat het auto- en vracht- verkeer de komende jaren gigantisch vermindert, luchtftietserij vinden. Een dergelijke variant is voor ons niet bespreekbaar.”

Rotterdam and The Hague should be seen as one territory for the decision-making processes over new infrastructure. They stand so close to each other and there is a big overlap in the origin from traffic. [...] Economically, geographically and policy-wise, this territory forms more and more one unit. It is then obvious that the policies on mobility should be made to take into account the whole region instead of the individual cities.” (Milieudefensie 2011, 9)¹⁰⁸

The metropolitan frame of *Milieudefensie* specifically situated the metropolis as the ideal scale to plan mobility, in the face of the observed flow of traffic, and the failures of the municipalities and national states to integrate them. Besides the 'metropolitan' framing (the metropolitan in relation to other scales), it also widened the territorial scope of the spatial planning and mobility analyses. This broader territoriality was shared by the other civic actors, as it is strategically better for nature preservation (Midden-Delfland is located in between Rotterdam and The Hague), and for the infrastructure choices at stake.

Indeed, the other opponents to the Blankenburg tunnel also asked for a broader territorial scope to the traffic study justifying the NWO. This demand was present in 40 out of the 90 original briefs submitted to the NWO public consultation of 2011¹⁰⁹. The argument in those briefs is the following : the analysis from the national government is focused on the ring of Rotterdam, the Benelux tunnel especially and the access to the port, and does not evaluate the traffic implications of the inter-relation with the agglomeration of The Hague. Indeed The Hague and Rotterdam have two distinct spatial and transportation plans, and the NWO situates itself in the Rotterdam plan. *Milieufederatie* and ABCN stated this had strong implications for the choice of the localization, since a focus on Rotterdam favored the Blankenburg tunnel option while a thorough study of the road network could favor the Oranje tunnel combined with the route A54 (see map Figure 6.1 or 6.3) (ABN et al. 2011; ABN and MFZH 2011). Independent advices (by the State's advising council on spatial and transportation planning) and criticisms from university professors also supported this statement, referring even to a hidden report that would have shown benefits to the Oranje option (Geerlings 2012; College van Rijksadviseurs 2011). In

¹⁰⁸ “Bij de besluitvorming over nieuwe infrastructuur kunnen Rotterdam en Den Haag als één gebied worden gezien. Ze liggen namelijk zo dicht bij elkaar dat er een grote overlap zit in de herkomstgebieden van het verkeer.[...] Economisch, geografisch en beleidsmatig vormt het gebied steeds meer één geheel [...] Het is dan ook vanzelfsprekend om het mobiliteitsbeleid op de gehele regio af te stemmen in plaats van op individuele steden.”

¹⁰⁹ 221 briefs were submitted to the public consultation on the NWO preliminary plan. Out of this number, 90 are considered by the Center for public participation to be originals, the other 131 are replications of 6 briefs done by civic organizations and re-submitted by other participants. Only the 90 originals are described. In those 90 briefs, 40 demand a broader territorial scope to the traffic study, as reported in the Nota van Antwoord (2012).

addition, the ANWB, association representing car drivers, but also promoting recreative facilities within the country, also favored the Oranje in considering the broader territory including The Hague (ANWB 2011b).

But The Hague and Rotterdam had failed to work together on a joint planning. The team in charge of the public participation on NWO had thus been asked not to cover The Hague in the participatory process (Int NWO). Receiving those criticisms on the process and the lack of a broader territorial vision, the team's spokesman noted : "Sorry but we did not receive the task to include a larger spatial-economic vision from our direction. The authorities are not even in agreement on one vision – that is of course a pity. But you cannot blame the team of the participatory process for that." (Int NWO)¹¹⁰

The counter-territorial framing went farther than the scope of the transport analyses. It also pertained to the quality of the participatory process and the extent it responded to the criterion for a multi-sectoral (transport, nature and quality of life), multimodal (not just mobility by cars) and place-based acceptability, with sufficient information provided for locals to measure the consequence of the infrastructural choice. The wider territorial scope of traffic analyses, not made available within the participatory event, was mentioned in this perspective (Vitaal Midden-Delfland 2011; ABN et al. 2011).

There are always opponents whatever the solution. But a democratic process is about a transparent process where there is an understanding of the issue by stakeholders before the decision is taken. [...] The rapidity of the process had greater priority than the societal involvement. And the multimodality perspective was doubtful¹¹¹ [...]. What was strange in this process is that there was not the recent and necessary information, knowledge and expertise presented to justify this billion investment. The shallow involvement from stakeholders and the concluding points from the Minister are thus based on emotion and not on factual information¹¹². (Vitaal Midden-Delfland 2011, 5).

¹¹⁰ "Men verwijt mij dus ook, of ons, dat we geen ruimtelijk economische visie hebben. Ja, sorry, nou als ik geen opdracht heb van het bestuur dan doe ik dat niet. Dat kan ik niet maken want ik weet niet waar ik voor moet kiezen. Want daar zijn de bestuurders het niet over eens. En dat is natuurlijk vervelend."

¹¹¹ Other mobility modes had been discussed in the Masterplan Rotterdam Vooruit for which there had also been a public participation in 2009. *Milieufederatie* here denounced that the public transit investments promised in the Masterplan, such as in South Rotterdam, were delayed for the profit of highway investments (as explained in section 6.2). Thus the promise to have a multi-modal investment in mobility had not been kept.

¹¹² "Er zullen altijd voor en tegenstanders van welke oplossing dan ook blijven bestaan. Waar het in een democratie omgaat is dat door het voeren van een open en zuiver proces er begrip ontstaat bij stakeholders (samenleving) voor de besluitvorming. [...] snelheid van het proces had hierin grotere prioriteit dan (maatschappelijke) betrokkenheid. Ook de multimodaliteit valt te betwijfelen. [...] Het bizarre in dit proces is dat er geen actuele en noodzakelijke informatie, kennis en kunde voorhanden zijn om te komen tot deze miljardeninvestering. De

The counter-territorial framing from the opponents to the Blankenburg was meant to criticize the sense of urgency legitimizing a shallow participatory process. It also criticized the traffic engineering analyses making natural the focus on specific segments linked with economic priorities. Civic actors stated that accessibility to economic destinations cannot be the sole objective for a region, the scope needs to be broadened and discussed. In response to public authorities stating, in their multi-partite plan for Rotterdam, that “to improve the economy and the attractiveness of the living environments in the Rotterdam region, accessibility is an important *pre-condition*” (MVW et al. 2009, 15), civic actors denounced a sectoral domination of transport engineering over the future of a whole territory (Natuurmonumenten 2011a; ABN et al. 2011; Vitaal Midden-Delfland 2011).

The participatory process on the NWO was particularly criticized for its transport-engineering framing. *Natuurmonumenten*, which normally attends such participatory events, boycotted it because it only considered the project 'through the lens of a transport engineer', with no broader perspective on the future of the territory and of its green and nature areas (Natuurmonumenten 2011). The only issue at stake was a choice between two highway-tunnel options: the process consisted in receiving comments from participants on the advantages and disadvantages of two different potential routes for the highway.¹¹³ Those first participatory events were supposed to be broad in scope since later stages of participation and appeal were removed (following the Crisis and Recovery Act). *Milieufederatie* and ABCN also argued that objectives for quality of life and the preservation of nature needed to be explicit and count in the choice of the infrastructure (MFZH 2011b). *Milieudefensie* and *Groeiend Verzet* also boycotted the participatory event for its legitimization of a new highway. This legitimization of a highway route seemed even more obvious to the brokers of the coalition considering the contested territorial scope of the traffic studies (mentioned above) which seemed to favor the choice of one specific option, the Blankenburg.

gebrekkige betrokkenheid van stakeholders en de uitgangspunten van het ministerie zijn dus gebaseerd op emotie en niet op feitelijke informatie.”

¹¹³ A similar framing of the debate around a transport infrastructure agenda was said to have been present in the preliminary participation on the multi-partite Masterplan for accessibility around Rotterdam (Int MF, Int CC). Participants were asked what they experienced as the greater problems of accessibility in the city-region. Surprisingly, the majority of participants stated they were satisfied with the current level of accessibility : 70% of the 1501 respondents (some by internet) who answered the question on accessibility in the region (and to their destinations) stated they felt it was good (Centrum voor public participatie 2010: 11, 14-15). The civic organizations were lately involved, after the points of congestion and priorities for the building of new highway segments had been identified. These organizations felt the problems of accessibility and the solutions preconized in the final Masterplan had already been determined (In PP, Int MF).

This third equivalence of the utopia for a broader territorial vision was very much used and repeated in parliamentary debates. It gave munitions to opposition parties to put in doubt the numbers from the Minister, and participated to make the whole participatory process suspect (Tweede Kamer 2011d, 61–66). The participatory process did not follow the objective of a broad preliminary examination of the issues at stake with actors from the region concerned by the project – such as advised by a Commission on participation in infrastructure, the Elverding Commission, in the spirit of 'Quicker and Better' participation. Judging the NWO participatory process as a test of this new procedure, the Labour Party, Green Party, Christian Union and Socialist Party asked many questions, requested to improve the participatory process and demanded a serious and fair comparison of the two highway options (Tweede Kamer 2011d, 61–66; Tweede Kamer 2011c, 15,16,25). The Minister had to respond in a letter to the critics of the participatory process and what seemed biased transport analyses supporting the Blankenburg option (MIM 2011h). Notwithstanding those responses, a majority of the questions from opposition parties to the Minister in 2012 on the NWO (to prepare to the Second Chamber vote) concerned the territorial scope of the transport studies (see Table 6.1, (MIM 2012d)).

At the agglomeration level, the five local municipalities north of the Meuse River all opposed together the Blankenburg variant of the NWO and also used the argument that the scope of the transport study was too narrow. They were with *Milieufederatie* the first actors to ask for a better and broader participatory process (2010, 2011). But with the Crisis and Recovery Act, the power of the municipalities on the territory which a road was planned had been reduced; they could no longer have a veto against it. In addition, the desire from the larger cities to keep separate the planning of Rotterdam agglomeration and The Hague agglomeration was a barrier to their counter-framing.

Finally, even if the province of South Holland was directly targeted by this utopian equivalence, it remained outside the NWO debate. The broader territory of planning and decision-making, asked by activists, coincided with its territory. But the province did not become further engaged after receiving the report Green Metropolis, presented as a citizen initiative. I explained earlier how the metropolitan frame of the Green Metropolis was discordant with the vision of the provincial officials. First the idea of a congestion charge at the metropolitan scale seemed to them unrealistic, second their own vision of a metropolitan solution (transit oriented development) was in its development phase. The Green metropolis plan had not mentioned it,

and it seems that the province wanted to prevent conflictual relations compromising this project and others (PZH 2012, Int SB).

Hence the utopian node for a broader territorial and metropolitan decision-making process was used within parliament and by local municipalities. The scalar component (for a metropolitan vision of no new highways and for congestion charge) had little favorable echos in parliamentary debates or with the province, except in its link with demands for a broader territorial scope. The territorial argument seemed succesful: it specifically and strategically contested the scope of the traffic analyses, but was also grounded in a broader demand to include other objectives and actors in the decision making process than the engineered and economically focused spatiality. The contestation of the territorial scope was used within parliament to put in doubt the legitimacy of the expert technical analyses and of the democratic process around the NWO.

To sum up, the civic utopia is one of a green 'metropolis' (although the term metropolis is not used by all), where mobility is only part of a broader vision on territory in which accessibility to preserved green open spaces is a priority. The first equivalence concerns the protection of green open spaces from new highways, which is presented as incompatible with nature and landscape. In reaction to this equivalence, the discourse from the government re-affirmed their possible integration. The second equivalence concerned alternative solutions in the fight against congestion; but these solutions seemed radical to many actors when considered as alternatives to all new highway segments. The last equivalence concerns a broader territory for the decision-making process. This received much echo within parliamentary debates, and put real doubts on the fairness of the traffic analyses done and on the participatory process. Yet, it did not convince the provincial authority to get involved. Each of these equivalence, if they were not by themselves necessarily successful in changing the dominant discourse, provided assets further used in the elaboration of interpretative repertoires. Since the manner the government responded to the utopian frame showed at least that the preservation of nature and landscape could not be dis-regarded, and that the legitimacy of the process was a concern for members of parliament.

I will now consider what web of relations enabled or constrained the coalition in the promotion of the civic utopia and in the invention of interpretative repertoires.

6.4 The resources from the brokers and the evolution of the discourse coalition

The chain of equivalence of the utopian frame was produced by specific actors who I coined discursive brokers. It was further supported, diffused, promoted and eventually transformed by these actors and others with whom they were in relation. I presented, in section 6.2, the brokers and their motivations. Here I wish to detail how their positionality enabled them to accomplish their tasks of relational and discursive brokerage and how this affected the content of their discourses.

Milieudefensie, with its Green Metropolis campaign, was the major discursive broker linking alternative modes of mobility with the fight against congestion and the protection of green open spaces. Other brokers also produced and supported the discursive node on the protection of green open areas from new highways, which we see in the network in Figure 6.9. We will see, in this section, that in the months of the Green Metropolis campaign, it became evident that the second equivalence linking car alternatives to the fight against congestion was little supported by the civic networks; while the nature and green area protection was much more grounded in collective action networks. But to understand this process, we need more details on the position and resources of the brokers involved in the discourse coalition studied, following the dimensions provided in our conceptual framework. Brokers may have enabling characteristics to accomplish relational brokerage: the actors' position of intermediary, their identity and mission and their number and types of ties. And certain enabling characteristics to accomplish discursive brokerage: knowledge of diverse situated discourses and ability to link them. These two forms of brokerage were hypothesized to be important in the transition from a utopian frame to interpretative repertoires in order to transform the dominant discourse. I thus consider the characteristics of the main brokers I observed and how it seems to have influenced their relational and discursive brokering capacities.

The Green Metropolis and the position of *Milieudefensie*

Milieudefensie, who wrote the plan Building a Green Metropolis, has a membership of approximately 42 000 members (Milieudefensie 2011b). It is financed by the membership and donators – not by state authorities – which grants it independence from state authorities. *Milieudefensie* is based in Amsterdam (and has more connections in the region of Amsterdam), but the organization is involved in many regions and works frequently with local actors. In the area of Rotterdam The Hague, the group had been involved in the long opposition to the A4 in

Midden-Delfland (Milieudefensie 2010). Nevertheless, *Milieudefensie* was still considered an outsider in the region. Spokesman of the organization on mobility issues had also changed several times, and so there were little inter-personal bonds between *Milieudefensie* and the other organizations on the ground. Their plan Green Metropolis was thus seen as their own individual input in the debate, and not a product of collective efforts or of a coalition (Int; FG1). This is despite the fact that they had done rounds of consultation with local groups to present and debate the content of the mobility plan (Obs1; Int MD1).

Professionals from *Milieudefensie* had found it difficult to establish relations with local groups (Int MD1). With their Green Metropolis campaign, the objective was to bring together the oppositions to the highways A13-A16 and to the NWO, as is visible on their map (Figure 6.3). In the past, they had been stuck in the position of favoring one highway option over the other. The procedure around new highway infrastructure in the Netherlands requires that at least two alternatives be presented, two competing highway plans to respond to the policy objectives. In the last debate on the A4 in Midden-Delfland, the A13-A16 was presented as its possible alternative. And so organizations in Midden-Delfland and the ones in the North of Rotterdam were mobilizing against each other; and *Milieudefensie* was more on the side of the people in Midden-Delfland (against A4), because of the scope and qualities of the green areas threatened. Now that the A4 was under construction however, it was predicted as yet not enough to cope with increasing traffic jams; and the A13-A16 junction was also planned by the Ministry of Infrastructure and Environment, in addition to the NWO. This time, with the Green Metropolis plan, the objective was to bring all opposing actors together under a uniting utopia for no new highway, instead of dividing forces. Discursively, they linked the two battles in their report, with the metropolitan articulation that to save all green spaces (also an important stake for the A13-A16), no more highway should come at all. But this capacity to discursively link the two causes was not supported by a corresponding relational brokerage. And the utopia itself seemed radical.

When *Milieudefensie* contacted the different local groups that were involved each in their area, many re-stated their primary objective to protect their place from the construction of a highway, and remembered the previous opposition between the two plans (Int MD1&2). The opposition to all new highways seemed a stretch. The mobility alternatives seemed not to be sufficient to counter the momentum for new highways (Int MD1&2; Int GV; Int PF) : “We were told by local actors: a new highway segment will come, the question is where”, said the person linking with local groups at *Milieudefensie* (Int MD1).

Milieudefensie managed to have an official support for its plan from two major resident associations from areas threatened, the *Actiecomité Blankenburgtunnel Nee* and the *Platform regional park A13-A16*, in addition to the nature organizations *Midden-Delfland Vereniging*, *Milieufederatie Zuid-Holland* and, finally, the two urban environmental centers from Rotterdam and The Hague. Yet, this group of actors supporting formally the plan did not constitute a collective of actors as such. They had no further joint actions than the report itself.

Among these supporting organizations of the Green Metropolis campaign, there were no transport or economic focused organizations. Hence there was not a real network supporting the initiative in the transport and mobility domain, no one cautioning their package of alternative solutions. There was at least no supporter who wanted to be publicly known or who endorsed the whole plan. Some important organizations did make public announcements, in the weeks following the diffusion of the Green Metropolis plan, about sections from the plan that they endorsed. The Port of Rotterdam announced to be also in favor of the implementation of a congestion charge at the metropolitan scale like *Milieudefensie* proposed it (Port of Rotterdam 2011). But for the Port Authority, this congestion charge ought to pay for new highway segments to ensure accessibility. The association representing car drivers (ANWB) also published a big report on a new perspective that cities should adopt to promote park and ride stations to reduce traffic congestion (ANWB 2011a). If the ANWB had been contacted to support the Green Metropolis plan, it would have refused, possibly (according to our interviews), because of the political profile of *Milieudefensie*, associated with the green, leftist political spectrum. Another civic organization involved in alternative modes of mobility also refused to formally support it : it is “very anti-car”, he remarked, and “you see that at the political level it gets laughed at”. Furthermore, the lobby for cyclists in the Netherlands considered the plan could be predicted to have no effect whatsoever in the current political context. In addition to the political rejection of the congestion charge, the organization also felt the Green Metropolis plan was putting too much energy in public transit and too little in bicycle plans, which is the ‘Dutch difference’ on which they should build, he felt. In sum, the political position of *Milieudefensie* made it more difficult to have power on the discursive field. This is even though the organization had tried to present its discourse on mobility as being built on objective analyses, with the external report from a consulting firm evaluating the effects of the proposed measures.

The other brokers of the discourse coalition spoke of how *Milieudefensie* was tied by its membership and its political affiliations; it was a political organization representing a certain

vision for the Netherlands, and which wanted to profile itself to attract more members (FG2). The campaign leader of *Milieudefensie* was himself very conscious of the fact that his organization was associated with one side of the political spectrum, which made their Green Metropolis plan seem more radical. In interview, he admitted the need for another 'messenger';

So we try to convince others, like the Province South Holland, to take it over, to take those ideas, and put them to test on their own terms, which we still would have a lot of faith in, and they would have a more neutral messenger for the same idea. And then it would be even more difficult to ignore the idea and ignore the problem-solving benefits of it (Int MD2, in English).

The doubts regarding the frame from *Milieudefensie* seem to have come also, in some cases, from existing social relations from the partner organizations. *Natuurmonumenten*, for example, was positive about the Green Metropolis plan generally but did not believe the region could have no more highway at all, with the predicted and planned growth of the Port of Rotterdam. In the discussion over the network of actors with which they interacted on this issue, the campaign leader of *Natuurmonumenten* at the time explained that “actually, we are very close to the Port, I would even maybe say we are friends” (Int NM1). In planning the growth of the port into the sea (for hosting larger container ships), the Port of Rotterdam had made agreements to give a zone to *Natuurmonumenten* for a marine natural reserve. The two organizations were involved in several such partnerships. The opposition to one highway option was already a strain on this relationship; so opposing the two highway options seemed too much to ask for *Natuurmonumenten*. Hence, the power of the frame of *Milieudefensie* depended not only on its own direct relations and position, but also on the wider web of affiliations of actors involved in the NWO project.

The different strategies and interpretative repertoires, which we will see in more detail below, were not a disappointing surprise for *Milieudefensie*. The discursive broker did not expect changes in the discursive field in the very short term. Just the fact of bringing, in the public debate, a complete set of mobility alternatives to any new highway was an achievement for this organization (Int MD2). There was an openness to different positions and levels of support to the Green Metropolis plan. In an event organized before the parliamentary debate of June 2011, *Milieudefensie*, with *Natuurmonumenten*, staged a wide map of the Rotterdam The Hague metropolitan region. The two organizations demanded elected representatives to position themselves, literally on the map, for the best mobility alternative from the report Green

Metropolis, or for a localization where it made more sense to build a road (Figure 6.5). The demonstration was thus open to different convictions: either for the least damaging road option, or for other mobility alternatives.



Figure 6.5 Members of parliament on the Green Metropolis map, before the June 2011 parliamentary debate.

We see the representatives of different political parties with signs either for an alternative to highway ('new way of working', 'congestion charge'), or for a highway location, before the June 2011 parliamentary debate, Second Chamber. (Source: Milieudefensie (2011))

In the end, *Milieudefensie* agreed that the priority should be given to fight the greater risks posed by new highways in green open areas (Int MD2). And indeed, the collective action organized itself much more in two separate campaigns against the highway segments considered the most detrimental (A13-A16 in the north of Rotterdam, and the Blankenburg in Midden-Delfland), with as a background the report of the Green Metropolis, which received different levels of support.

Coalition Vital Midden-Delfland – No Blankenburgtunnel

In Midden-Delfland, it is the opposition to the Blankenburg option of the NWO which became the gathering point for resident and nature associations. The actors presented in Table 6.2, and that are reproduced in the network representation of Figure 6.6, worked together as brokers to structure a campaign focused on the protection of place. A joint website was created under the name 'Vital Midden-Delfland', on which the campaign against the Blankenburgtunnel could be followed. They assembled a petition of more than 33 000 signatures (in comparison to the 7000 signatures gathered for the Green Metropolis mobility plan). Facebook pages, movie clips on internet, petitions, 'tweet actions', demonstrations and public events were organized. Joint demonstration actions were done in Midden-Delfland, for which all the networks of the brokers were used : the members of nature and environment organizations, local people having

participated to the People's Woods, and also local political parties of the municipalities where the Blankenburgtunnel would come.

The support networks of the brokers and their share of resources are visible in Figure 6.6. We can first see that *Milieudefensie* had no supporting network for the discourse on mobility. Besides *Milieudefensie* (which stayed as a participant but not as a leader or key relational broker), the other brokers focused on nature and the protection of Midden-Delfland. The other brokers can also be divided in two groups : the sectoral brokers on top (nature organizations of a broad national or provincial scope) and, below, local brokers who's missions are place-based. Like *Milieudefensie*, *Natuurmonumenten* is a 'club' with members; but its mission is closer to the specific focus on the protection of Midden-Delfland, since it involves the protection of nature and landscape. *Milieufederatie* is a provincial coordinating organization for matters of environmental protection. It has however no individual members and no political affiliations, but helps the coordination of associations in the province. These local associations give legitimacy to *Milieufederatie* in the field. It was characterized in interviews as a great 'coordinating broker' for the campaign against the Blankenburgtunnel (Int ABCN; Int GV).

The local brokers have place-based missions, and a network of actors related to that mission. The *Actiecomité Blankenburgtunnel Nee* had relations with local political parties, resident and neighborhood associations in Maasluis and the sector Zuidbuurt, and a network of individual connections from different useful sectors : farmers' association, engineers, university professor, all of them providing technical resources for the resident association and the broader discourse coalition. This diverse support network is coined 'heterogeneous' in Figure 6.6. *Groeiend Verzet* had its support network in Vlaardingen, linked with the People's Woods. This network includes known political figures like the environmental activist and previously socialist party deputy Remi Poppe, and the residents, shop owners and politicians who had been involved in the People's Woods plantation. The support network from Midden-Delfland Vereniging was tied to its role in the valorization and 'reconstruction process' of Midden-Delfland, and its protection as a green open space. This network included municipalities, heritage and recreative associations and farmers. By the extent of their publicly known 'place-based' network, *Groeiend Verzet* and *Midden-Delfland Vereniging* were demonstrating the meaning given to the protection of Midden-Delfland, showing people and resources which had been mobilized around its protection and efforts of place-making in the last 30 years.

The brokers in Figure 6.6 shared resources, collaborated in the organization of events, demonstrations and co-signed reports and press releases¹¹⁴. Between *Milieufederatie Zuid-Holland*, *Natuurmonumenten*, and the *Actiecomité Blankenburgtunnel Nee* there were stronger ties. They especially worked together to hold the broader network active and co-produce discourse. As central brokers in a broader network, these three actors seemed to have more control on the collective discourse produced in the coalition; this is visible in the documents produced, and was confirmed in interviews. The pair made of *Milieufederatie Zuid-Holland* and the *Actiecomité* worked on the participatory process and technical details of the traffic studies. The pair *Milieufederatie* and *Natuurmonumenten* worked on the lobbying and adaptation of the utopian frame to gain political allies, especially in parliament where a decisive vote would be held. *Natuurmonumenten* also gave credibility and weight to the campaign, and led to the invention of the second interpretative repertoire, which we will see below.

Natuurmonumenten has a large membership of 750 000 individuals, with decentralized structures in each region for the members to participate in the orientations. These characteristics were both forces and constraints, since the expectations of what the membership would like the organization to do could restrain *Natuurmonumenten* in its opposition to highways. Yet, the organization could mobilize many resources, through its membership and lobbyists. Just the fact that *Natuurmonumenten* was very involved in the campaign gave it a credibility (in interviews with public officials, the standpoints of *Natuurmonumenten* were especially noted, in comparison to others). Within this large organization, professionals are also skilled to map the political landscape and find allies for the coalition. They learned to cultivate relations with local groups, with the help of *Milieufederatie*.

In sum, the position and enabling characteristics of the brokers seemed very important in their contribution on the utopian frame and interpretative repertoires. While *Milieudefensie* was an important discursive broker, the equivalence on mobility was not enough supported by the collective action network. In contrast, the collective against the Blankenburg benefited from the capacities of brokers and of actors supporting their discourse on the protection of place. Their key contribution was to adapt the utopia to the external discursive field, in interpretative repertoires. To attract political support, they gave new situated meanings to the utopian chain of equivalence.

¹¹⁴ Except the *Midden-Delfland Vereniging* less involved in the organization of events and which did not systematically signed all collective documents.

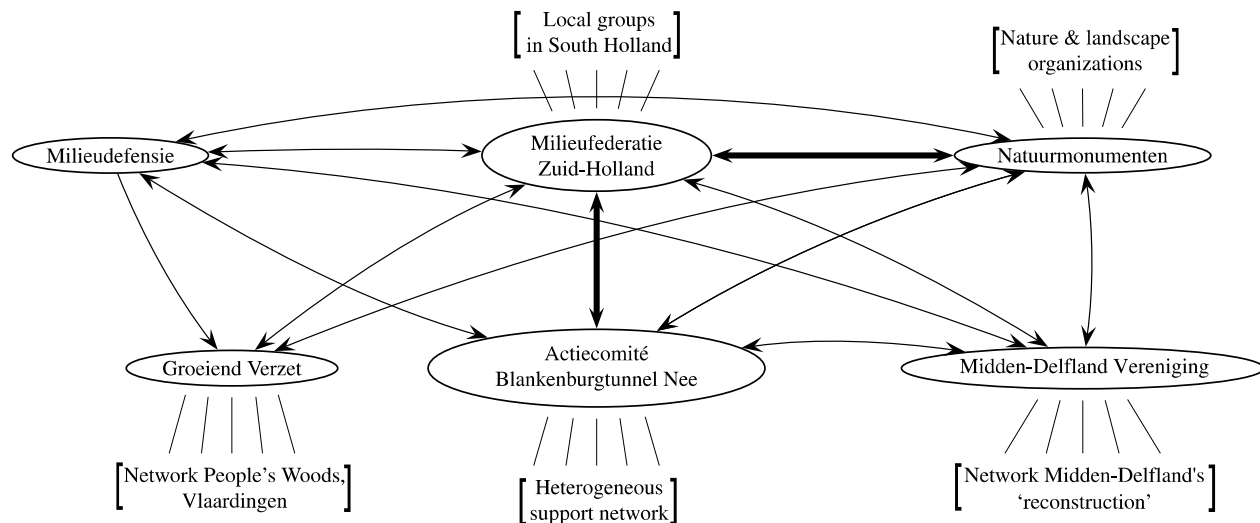


Figure 6.6 Network representation of the brokers from the Coalition Vitaal Midden-Delfland, their supporting network and share of resources

Explanation of the network representation

This network representation shows the share of resources between the brokers of the coalition Vitaal Midden-Delfland, for the purpose of that coalition. The circles show brokers, the arrows show a share of resources between them (with bold traits showing a more intense share of resources). The lines pointing to a network in bracket represent the supporting network from brokers. By resources shared we mean 1) political support; that is the case for *Midden-Delfland Vereniging*, *Groeiend Verzet* and ABN in relation to *Milieudefensie's* plan 2) share of ideas, social networks, organizational, material and financial resources to organize and publicize demonstration events; the case between all brokers; 3) share of lobbying resources, that is the case mainly for *Natuurmonumenten* with others; and 4) share of knowledge, between *Milieufederatie Zuid Holland* and local actors and *Milieudeferatie* and *Milieudefensie* and *Natuurmonumenten*.

The ties shown are not necessarily exhaustive, they represent the information gathered through interviews, focus groups and documents produced by those actors. The interviews were in fact the major data source, which could be triangulated with each other, in addition to the documents and press releases they produced (which organizations signed it and authored it) (ABN et al. 2011, ABN and MFZH 2011, *Natuurmonumenten* et al. 2011, *Natuurmonumenten* et al. 2012, *Natuurmonumenten* et al. 2012B, *Natuurmonumenten* et al. 2012C, *Groeiend Verzet* 2011, *MiddenDelfland Vereniging* 2011, 2012, *Vitaal Midden-Delfland* 2011, 2012), and their webpages (especially the promotion they did of the actions and initiatives from the other groups).

6.5 Two interpretative repertoires

“Saving Vital Midden Delfland”: the focus on one place

In the first interpretative repertoire, the brokers tried to gain political support in emphasizing the value of Midden-Delfland, giving it meaning as a place. The repertoire focused on the protection of this meaningful place, and did not touch on the more sensitive issue of changes in mobility practices. The focus of the mobilization became thus the absolute protection of Midden-Delfland. The broad territorial vision advocated in the utopia allowed to choose the least damaging sites for the road, the goal being to protect this valued place (Int MF; Int NM1; Int MD2). The best argument to lobby for in the parliament seemed to be that *there was an alternative to the Blankenburgtunnel*. The idea of no more highway at all, in the metropolitan frame of *Milieudefensie*, stayed as a utopia in the background, but the coalition pointed explicitly to Oranje as a highway alternative. Nature organizations were successful in showing how much more dramatic would the direct impact be on the green open space of Midden-Delfland. With the Oranje option, there was a more long-term risk of more urban sprawl and urban or industrial developments threatening sand dunes on the coast; but *Milieufederatie* considered this risk was much more uncertain, not direct, and with a lesser impact. In fact they never mentioned it publicly (Int MF).¹¹⁵

This joint interpretative repertoire of saving 'Vital' Midden-Delfland was adopted also because the Blankenburg, in the context of very recent debates and decisions taken on the A4, was seen as a decision bringing further *irreversible* damage to the place (Project NWO 2012; Milieudefensie 2011a; Hoezo Midden-Delfland Snelwegen and ABN 2011; Natuurmonumenten 2012; Natuurmonumenten, Milieufederatie Zuid-Holland, et al. 2012, FG2). The civic actors constructed discursively a temporal scenario linking all the highway projects in a dependence relation. The construction of the A4 had not yet begun and already it was planned to bring further congestion and necessitate a new NWO highway connection. And after the Blankenburg segment would be built, it seemed that yet another section would be necessary to complete a new ring around Rotterdam, the A24. This would be the end of Midden-Delfland, crossed then by three highway segments, as visible on the two civic actors' maps showing the A4, the planned

¹¹⁵ There was one group that had formed to oppose the Oranje option, with fears for the impacts on the sand dunes. But they were isolated, did not organize an opposition campaign and did not gain much political support. Yet, the leading party in parliament, VVD, used this in some parliamentary debates to present to the two routes as receiving both *local* opposition for nature and environment reasons, but that local oppositions should not stop such important project. (VVD in Tweede Kamer 2012A, 12)

NWO and A13-A16 and the 'threat' of the A24 (Figure 6.3). Such temporal disaster scenario was not argued for the Oranje option, although there could be, with the Oranje, some long term negative effects in terms of urban sprawl. It was the 'end of Midden-Delfland' which was portrayed as the scenario to avoid, in which the A4 had been the first step, the Blankenburg could be the second step, and the foreseen A24 the last step. The protection of the landscape and nature, the fundamental values given to Midden-Delfland, seemed at that final stage impossible. Hence the civic actors tried vigorously, with this temporal disaster scenario, to break the logic of the government which said that *the Blankenburg was compatible with nature and landscape preservation in Midden-Delfland*. They were not compatible, since the Blankenburg was part of a dependence loop with other highway segments.

How was this interpretative repertoire received and argued for during debates? We will see that for discursive and governance reasons, both at the agglomeration and at the national level, the focus on the protection of place led only to concessions about good landscape integration and nature compensation, but not to switch to the other potential route (and even less for no highway at all).

At the agglomeration level, civic actors and citizens had little voice. I mentioned already that the Rotterdam agglomeration, with the majority rule and no open debate, adopted in fall 2011 a position favorable to the Blankenburg, because of its higher capacity to solve expected congestion in the Benelux tunnel. The concession given to the opposed municipalities was a good integration in the landscape to preserve the area of Midden-Delfland. The disaster scenario of a third highway segment was put aside by technical traffic studies showing that it was not (now) needed (Stadsregio Rotterdam 2011). For the Minister, the local authorities had thus expressed their preference for the Blankenburg (Minister Schultz in Tweede Kamer 2011d, 61–62; MIM 2011j).

Yet, all the opposition parties in parliament were against the Blankenburg and for the Oranje option in spring 2012. Not only the Green Party, the D66 Democrats and the Socialist Party, but also the Labour Party, which was the second biggest party in parliament, were firmly against the Blankenburgtunnel. But the Christian Democratic party (CDA), which was the second party of the coalition, and the PVV, the extreme right party (which together could ensure majority to the VVD in parliament) hesitated for several months. *Naturemonumenten* and *Milieufederatie* hence focused their lobbying energy on the CDA, since the party has a political base of farmers and nature lovers. In parliamentary debates, the CDA adopted a motion demanding that the third

highway (A24) foreseen by civic actors in Midden-Delfland be considered out of the question, to protect this special place. The party retained its choice for the Blankenburg (and not the Oranje), after having put aside this disaster scenario. The CDA voted also for maximum tunnelling of the Blankenburg to protect Midden-Delfland. The party kept this position even with technical studies from the Minister showing only a quarter of the road after the water crossing could be underground (because of the status of the infrastructure, with the dam and a junction to another highway above ground); hence the green open character of the area could not really be spared with the Blankenburg. The emphasis on this (minimal) landscape integration was thus a disappointment for the brokers.

So the parliamentary debates of 2012, like the Rotterdam agglomeration advice, focused on the amount of money for nature preservation and landscape integration and on the length of the tunnelling of the Blankenburg (we can see this in Table 6.1). With the focus on landscape 'integration' and tunnel technicalities, these debates have not much concerned the choice between the Oranje and the Blankenburgtunnel, choice around which the civic coalition wanted to frame the conversation.

Hope for the discourse coalition came not from the CDA, but, surprisingly, from the right party PVV (with which the nature and environment organizations do not have good relations). Just a few weeks after the spring debate on the NWO in 2012, the government fell because the PVV withdrew its support of the governing coalition regarding a different topic: European guidelines. After the announcement of the fall of the cabinet (but which would continue to manage the country for the summer months), discussions in parliament concerned what topics should be considered 'controversial', and postponed to after the elections. The PVV voted with the opposition parties to make the NWO controversial. Not for nature or place protection reasons, but for economic and transport-related reasons. They asked a broader mobility study for the whole Rotterdam The Hague area to re-evaluate the greater benefit of the Blankenburgtunnel over the Oranje (there was also an issue about the planned toll on the Blankenburg, which the PVV opposed). Unexpectedly, the utopian equivalence for a broader territorial scope had substantial weight here, instead of the nature and landscape preservation. In any case, this was a small victory which further delayed the approval of the Blankenburg. But the collective against the Blankenburgtunnel knew now that there was no political majority putting the protection of Midden-Delfland above the presumed performance of the Blankenburgtunnel.

Yet the vote for the Blankenburgtunnel had been a close call, and two political parties had long hesitated. The issue had become a national controversy. The group *Groeiend Verzet* hence continued on with this interpretative repertoire of 'Saving Midden-Delfland' in raising even more attention to place protection: they planted a second 'People's Woods'. Even though the planned route for the Blankenburg did not pass on their People's Woods directly, the group wished to contest the damage done to Midden-Delfland and thus planted a second People's woods directly on the planned route. Wanting to show that she was serious about landscape protection, the Minister shortly after announced that she was working to also protect the second woods, even with the Blankenburg built (MIM 2013, 10).

“No growth of mobility = no new highway”; universalizing the issue again

The second interpretative repertoire came from a new campaign leader in *Natuurmonumenten*. This new campaign leader developed a new interpretative repertoire going beyond the value of place, to criticize what threatened it : the presumed growth in mobility.

A new campaign leader

The previous campaign leader in *Natuurmonumenten* had come from the central office of the organization. In the central office, he was also involved personally in the contacts with the Port of Rotterdam, which exercised pressure on the stance of the organization regarding the NWO. Other civic organizations had been impressed by the energy put into the campaign against the highway by *Natuurmonumenten*. The organization was usually more consensual and had collaborated for the good 'integration' of the A4 in the landscape. Still, the campaign leader was cautious to acknowledge the importance of good relations with the Port. He also feared that a fraction of the organization's large membership would react negatively to the stance against the highway. Lastly, the leader was cautious in making alliances publically, the organization wanting to stay neutral politically and not be associated with a political party (Int NM1).

In the beginning of 2012, the campaign against the Blankenburgtunnel from *Natuurmonumenten* was transferred to the regional office of South Holland.¹¹⁶ The person who took responsibility of it in the regional office had experience in opposing highway plans in his previous work in other organizations. He believed firmly in the cause and found it rewarding to work with other groups in order to find new strategies and arguments. He took every delay as a small victory giving

¹¹⁶ The organization thought the parliamentary decision would be by then already taken and the campaign almost over, which turned out not to be the case at all.

them more time to mobilize¹¹⁷. The close involvement of *Natuurmonumenten* with other groups in the coalition against the Blankenburg, which had already well started, was further developed with him. He viewed it as a sort of pilot project of a new way of working for *Natuurmonumenten*. In the past, the organization had received criticisms for being too far from what people actually cared about (nature protection and nature re-construction had for example been opposed to the protection of agricultural landscape, generating anger among farmers (Hajer 2003)). Also, the leader cited the strong disappointment by locals regarding the building of the A4 in Midden-Delfland, to which *Natuurmonumenten* had collaborated in order to receive nature compensation elsewhere. To be closer to what people valued as 'nature', another approach was necessary. With this new highway project which threatened, the discourse coalition thought, irreversibly the area of Midden-Delfland, the broker advocated for another approach for his organization. He said his organization now wished to be 'a voice for people caring for nature and the environment', by also taking into account how nature and environment are perceived and enjoyed locally (Int NM2). For him, this went beyond the development of a position as an organization, in isolation, considering its members and its land to protect (Int NM2). The collaboration with other groups with other perspectives and objectives, but with a common goal for the preservation of Midden-Delfland and against the Blankenburg, was considered very important. In comparison to the previous campaign leader who spoke about the reactions of its members to their pro-active approach, this new leader spoke of surveys done in the region which showed the positive reactions to how *Natuurmonumenten* was involved in the Blankenburg debate. This different focus is indicative of how the mission and position of the organization was re-interpreted by the campaign leader.

A new interpretative repertoire

The new campaign leader had experience on advocacy against highways. When he got more closely involved, it became clear to him that only arguing about nature and landscape protection would not lead to success; although it had successfully occupied a lot of the discursive space on the topic. As described above, the political party CDA still considered the alleviation of congestion to be essential and wished to reduce the costs of new infrastructure. At the level of the agglomeration too, the reduction of congestion was the key argument, even with the opposition of the five local municipalities on the basis of nature and landscape protection.

¹¹⁷ Parliamentary debates to decide on the NWO were delayed multiple times by the government, the Minister of Infrastructure and Environment having to document responses to many questions from opposition parties, from January to April 2012. Then the government fell and the decision was further delayed, after the elections of September; after which the debates were also delayed until December 2012.

Hence, the new campaign leader from *Natuurmonumenten* thought they had to really dig into the issues of the cost of the infrastructure and of the growth of mobility. This led to a second interpretative repertoire that put directly in doubt the first node of the dominant discourse from the coalition government, that new infrastructure was urgently needed to ensure economic performance threatened by car congestion. This second interpretative repertoire also argued for nature and against a highway in Midden-Delfland, but on the basis that the infrastructure needs were not existing, or at least very uncertain.

I have discussed in the beginning of this chapter how the government justified its investment on transport infrastructure based on the criterion of satisfying accessibility levels, defined in terms of time of travel to destination in peak hours. These were predicted for 2020 and 2030, in order to plan the development of infrastructure not only to reduce current bottlenecks, but also to *prevent* future bottlenecks (in the Benelux tunnel, and for the growth of the port). In the civic utopia, civic actors (*Milieufederatie* and the *Actiecomité*) had argued that the models to predict congestion should not only focus on certain segments around Rotterdam, but on the whole area of Rotterdam The Hague. But the campaign leader of *Natuurmonumenten* took an even broader approach, looking at the numbers on the growth of mobility. Even *Milieudefensie* had not put the growth of mobility into question in their Green Metropolis campaign, arguing rather that the expected growth in mobility should be channelled to public transit or reduced by a congestion charge. Looking at the numbers of the State mobility agency (KIM 2011b), the campaign leader from *Natuurmonumenten* could see that since 2005 (so before the economic crisis) mobility of persons, in terms of number of kilometers travelled nationally and regionally, had reduced and that the kilometers by cars had also begun to stagnate. An increasing annual growth in car use was thus already not the reality, but was still used in justifying documents for the NWO (Natuurmonumenten, Midden Delfland Vereniging, et al. 2012; Natuur and milieu federatie Zuid-Holland et al. 2013). In that context the civic actors, who rallied in joint position papers and letters around this new argument, claimed that the investment in the NWO seemed totally unjustified, especially in the context of budget cuts in all domains because of the economic crisis. Regarding the stagnation in the growth of mobility and car use, the State mobility agency wrote indeed that :

Since 2005, the increase in national mobility of persons has flattened, particularly with regard to car use. [...] It is unclear if the flattening in the growth of car mobility will also continue in the future. (KiM 2012, 151)

The growth in freight transport witnessed in 2010 continued in 2011, but this does not apply equally to all transport modes. [...] Only road transport remained well below the levels achieved in 2008 (KiM 2012, 155–156, English summary)

Data on the stagnation in car mobility and road freight transport was thus used in the second interpretative repertoire in order to put in doubt the need for a new highway. The argument was sent to parliament and the press three days before the parliamentary debate of April 2012. The campaign leader had had multiple interactions with his president and the regional director, both of whom wanted to make sure his evaluation was correct, before going public with such a position outside of their zone of expertise, as a nature organization. Finally, the director had an opinion letter published in the national newspaper *Trouw*, arguing that the numbers on mobility growth did not justify the need for the new NWO highway (wherever it may be) (Jaap de Graef 2012). But this letter was published only one the day before the parliamentary debate. And this same last day, the Port of Rotterdam, with 21 supporting actors (municipalities from the south shore of the river New Maas, chambers of commerce and the employers council) sent a press release and a letter asking the Second Chamber to weigh sufficiently the importance and superiority of the Blankenburgtunnel option for solving congestion problems threatening economic performance (Havensbedrijf et al. 2012).

Those last attempts to try to influence the debate of April 2012 show how unpredictable the actors felt the discussions and decision in parliament would be. They also show how *Natuurmonumenten* and the *Port of Rotterdam* had come to oppose each other. The campaign leader felt that, in the relation with the Port, like with any professional organization :

You have to be able to say such things, that we work together over a lot of things but on certain things we just don't agree. [...] Can't we agree that on certain things we don't agree? (Int NM2)

This was nevertheless a very difficult position for *Natuurmonumenten*, because they did collaborate with the Port on other topics. The campaign leader of *Natuurmonumenten* and *Milieufederatie* hoped that the Port of Rotterdam would put water in their wine and agree at least that the Blankenburtunnel was not needed now.

The stagnation in the growth of mobility by cars was not much discussed in the debate of April 2012. The desire of the business community to see the Blankenburgtunnel built was stated, although it did not dominate the debate, as we can see in Table 6.1. The question of the

integration of the tunnel in the landscape was rather the major topic discussed, as explained in my presentation of the first interpretative repertoire. But then the government fell and the NWO was put aside until the elections. The civic coalition tried to bring back this argument on the stagnation of car mobility before and after the elections of September 2012. Yet the political context became less and less favorable.

The elections and the new coalition agreement of fall 2012 brought a surprise and disappointment to the civic actors. The new coalition was composed again of the VVD but also of the Labour Party. The VVD had managed to include in the coalition agreement the construction of the Blankenburgtunnel. It was thus put as a condition for the Labour Party to be part of the new government with the VVD, condition which the Labour Party accepted. The Labour Party had always been, since the beginning of debates on the issue, against the Blankenburg and for the Oranje instead. The civic coalition expressed its frustration and feeling of betrayal : just one month before the elections, the Labour Party had again participated to a civic action against the Blankenburg.

A battle on numbers started at this point, a battle which is still ongoing. Are the old predictions and traffic models valid? The five discursive brokers argued that the coalition agreement contained inaccurate facts on the growth of mobility. In the coalition agreement it was stated that the Blankenburgtunnel would be prioritized since the benefits were higher than the costs – considering the expected increase in mobility (VVD and PvdA 2012, 38). But the numbers showed a 'trend break', argued the civic actors, a trend break acknowledged by independent agencies (KIM 2011b). The local fraction of the Labor Party in Vlaardingen (one of the municipalities opposed) was also angry and disappointed by the position of the national branch of the Labour Party (PvdA Vlaardingen 2012). During the Labour Party congress of November 2012, the members adopted a motion requesting a study on whether the Blankenburg was indeed needed. Yet, no concrete steps were taken by the Labour party and in the last parliamentary debate and subsequent questions from the Chamber, the Labour party continued to emphasize good integration in the landscape, saying it was bound by the coalition agreement to support the highway project (Tweede Kamer 2012b; MIM 2013).

For landscape integration, the Labour Party obtained from the Minister more money and an involvement of the province, the agglomeration and (invited) civic actors to decide upon the best measures of landscape integration. Civic actors, considering that the measures planned were too minimal, did not collaborate and continued to present the stagnation in the growth of mobility

as a counter argument, supported by opposition parties still asking questions on the matter to the Minister in parliament (Natuurmonumenten et al. 2012; Natuur and milieu federatie Zuid-Holland et al. 2013; MIM 2013).

In sum, this second interpretative repertoire, developed in parallel to the advocacy for the first repertoire of Saving Vital Midden-Delfland in the spring of 2012, came back on the mobility question, going beyond the sole emphasis on place, which had proved insufficient to gain a political majority in parliament. The argument was not that mobility by car was immoral, which was the perceived anti-car attitude of the plan from *Milieudefensie*, but that numbers on recent mobility trends showed uncertainty, with a stagnation in the growth of mobility by cars. So in this second interpretative repertoire, the groups tried to convey that the governing coalition did not adapt adequately its policy to the real numbers on mobility. But the political context became much more difficult with the Labour Party in the governing coalition.

Conclusion

The general research question is – through what processes do coalitions for car alternatives challenge the dominant discourses on mobility? What articulation processes did I observe in this case study, and how were they related to the abilities of brokers, their relation to place, and (existing and created) opportunities in the geography of governance?

In this Dutch case, the discursive field and the geography of governance were dominated by the governing coalition at the national level and its alliance with the City of Rotterdam, against which the utopian frame and interpretative repertoires were articulated. The dominant discourse had specific spatialities. It focused on key infrastructure segments important for economic development, specific expected congestion points to avoid. It is especially the evacuation of broader objectives for the area that was opposed by the discourse coalition. The utopian frame argued for another geography of governance in which the whole province of South Holland, a 'metropolis' including both Rotterdam and The Hague, would be involved in multi-sectoral planning (not just transportation), to go beyond the current political alliances and give priority to the protection of green open spaces. It was however very difficult to break the political alliances and the agreed-upon responsibilities of each scale of government. It was more in the national parliamentary arena that the debates occurred – the province not wanting to be involved and the

agglomeration being relatively deaf to the input of external actors. It is at the national scale that the civic coalition hoped to gain allies to vote against the Blankenburg; it is thus where they concentrated their energy. The demand for a broader territorial scope to the decision-making process successfully shed doubt on the fairness of the process and was cited and used in parliament in the debates prior to the votes on the NWO. It enabled further debates on the protection of green open spaces, being an argument used successfully to demand more parliamentary debates and to place NWO among controversial issues in April 2012.

What about the evolution of the discursive field on the making of metropolitan space for mobility? Did it evolve with the making of interpretative repertoires? Recall that discourse coalitions are networks of actors built around a common spatial (utopian) frame, but which is open to different interpretative repertoires (Benford and Snow 2000; Martin 2003; Potter 2004; Hajer 2005; Pierce, Martin and Murphy 2011). These interpretative repertoires are parallel narratives working under the general utopia, but providing alternative resources, depending on the context and power dynamics at play in different arenas (Potter 2004; Chateauraynaud 2011). In this case, did the utopian frame and interpretative repertoires contribute to the maintenance of a discourse coalition and an evolution in the discursive field?

The utopian frame argued for a green metropolis with preserved open green areas and alternatives to highways. In the production of the interpretative repertoires, the actual demands changed from no highway to no Blankenburg. The first interpretative repertoire came from a strategic and pragmatic calculation to ensure some gain for nature and environment protection. This calculation was a function of the allies they could get in the Second Chamber of the parliament. But it was also a function of the primary loyalties of the actors involved for the protection of place, and of the structural and cultural positions of the discursive brokers. The actor that had produced discourse on mobility, *Milieudefensie*, had little power on the interpretative repertoires for two reasons. First, it had no relations in its network giving legitimacy to a utopia of no NWO at all, and for public transit and bicycle instead. There were no supporting actors in the field of mobility – no actor supporting the discourse. Second, it had no leverage power with public authorities, being only associated with environmental and leftist political parties which were in the opposition, both at the national and city scale.

In contrast, the first interpretative repertoire of 'Saving Midden-Delfland' was produced by discursive brokers with much power and legitimacy in the field of nature protection – *Natuurmonumenten*, but also *Milieufederatie Zuid-Holland* – and was supported by local actors

each with their own networks, concretely showing how the place was valued (*Midden-Delfland Vereniging* on the reconstruction of the area, and *Groeierend Verzet* with the two People's Woods). This first interpretative repertoire sought to re-give meaning to Midden-Delfland as a place to protect, in its own right, and not a space in between cities or an area for the 'missing highway segments'. The importance that nature and landscape protection took in the April (2012) parliamentary debate was interpreted as a result of their opposition. Yet, it was not enough to get political majority: the discursive node from the governing coalition, that a new highway was a matter of economic necessity, remained stronger.

In the second interpretative repertoire, the critical stance on mobility came back when the argument of 'saving place' did not seem sufficient to change the dominant discourse of the governing coalition. The second interpretative repertoire was the following. Since the future growth in the use of cars was uncertain, the highway segments justified by expected growth were not justified. Surprisingly, this argument was put forward by the most powerful discursive broker on matters of nature protection, *Natuurmonumenten*, in the context of a new campaign leader working closely with the other civic groups to save Midden-Delfland.

In sum, the discourse coalition effectively held through time thanks to the production of interpretative repertoires, which were supported by the network and the position of the brokers, and had adapted to the external context. The discourse changed from a metropolitan frame to a focus on place and then a return to a generic issue: the stagnation in car mobility. The interpretative repertoires stayed very much related to the civic utopian frame, soliciting the nodes of nature-place protection, territorial scope and mobility alternatives, but giving them new meaning. Those nodes were also used by political parties in parliament – the CDA and, later, the Labour Party on nature and landscape protection, and the PVV on the broader territorial scope. There was thus a flexibility giving diverse political ammunitions to the discourse coalition (but also to its opponents, especially on landscape integration). The discourse coalition had become a collective actor capable of affecting the evolution of the discursive field.

Even with this flexibility in arguments, the discourse coalition changed the boundary in the discursive field, between the discourse of the governing coalition and the opponents forming a discourse coalition : the protection of Midden-Delfland was non-negotiable, and the purported necessity of a new infrastructure had to be demonstrated. This structuration of the boundary was an evolution in comparison to previous infrastructural debates, where environmental actors had negotiated landscape integration of roads and had trusted that the two were compatible and that

a new road was necessary. Yet, this new structuration of the discursive field was not fully effective on the parliamentary scene : bounded by the new coalition agreement, the Labour Party continued to only argue for better landscape integration of the Blankenburg. Even with the contestation of the growth mobility trends, the governing coalition seemed to worry less and less about demonstrating its case (having majority in parliamentary). After the mobilization of the discourse coalition in 2012, with for effects multiple delays, many questions and requests for further information by opposition parties and, finally, the vote making the NWO a controversial project (hence further delayed after elections), the ruling party VVD found a way to secure the future of the Blankenburg project. By including the Blankenburg in the governing coalition agreement, it made it politically very difficult to stop.

CHAPTER 7. SPACES OF INNOVATION IN ROTTERDAM THE HAGUE : SMART WORKING = SMART TRAVELLING

In contrast to the discourse coalition for the preservation of Midden-Delfland against new highways, the discourse coalition for smart travelling has no clear opponent, works in a consensual manner and is very close to the discourse of the government. It is an entrepreneurial look upon congestion, which focuses on flexibilization of the labor market and on the involvement of economic actors. Large companies, labor unions and 'mobility managers' are the leaders of it, with the environmental organization *Natuur&Milieu (Nature and Environment)* and the cycling organization *Fietsersbond* also involved. The frame of the discourse coalition does push for change in regard to mobility: less work-related commuting at rush hour, and less mobility by cars. Recall that the three pillars for the fight against congestion in the Netherlands have been, in the recent years, building new infrastructure, pricing the use of the highway network, and optimizing the use of the existing network. We saw that the pricing system was contested, and not desired by the government in place. The building of roads was planned and implemented, but controversial. The third pillar in the fight against congestion is seen as a good idea by almost everybody. It involves the optimization in the use of the existing transport network, called Better Use (*Beter Benutten*), by changing mobility practices. The place-frame resolves around the flexible work space and the mobilization of the community of employers-employees.

7.1 The network of actors involved and their different motivations

The involvement of the private sector to improve mobility practices and reduce congestion is not a new practice in the Netherlands. There had been some initiatives by organizations and companies wishing to reduce the travel time of their employees. Introduced in the 1990s in the Netherlands, the term mobility management was defined in 2006 after a consultation of several involved parties.

Mobility management stands for organizing smart travel. Since the car cannot solve all problems, the traveller is encouraged to use alternatives such as bicycle, use of P+R, or telecommuting. Requirements and wishes of people travelling take up key position and the focus is on customized solutions. Governments, employers, crowd-pullers and

mobility facility providers together organize the conditions enabling travellers to make smart choices¹¹⁸ (Goudappel Coffeng te Deventer 2006, 9).

Before 2008, there was no organization centralizing efforts of 'mobility management'. Furthermore, it is only in 2011 that mobility management comes with a new framing of 'Smart Working Smart Travelling'. The 'Taskforce Mobility' was set up in 2008 by the national government. The objective was to organize regional systems of coordination between public and private actors for mobility management. At that time the Social Economic Council¹¹⁹, an important organ representative of the Dutch polder model between employers and unions, recommended to adopt a law to request the involvement of businesses in the fight against congestion. The Employers' council VNO-NCW lobbied against obligations for all companies but for tailor-made agreements made on the basis of each company's situation. Every region was thus granted a 'mobility manager' (*mobilitéitsmakelaar*) funded by the state to tailor business-specific plans of mobility management, which were to be agreed upon as contracts by participating businesses. It was a structured effort from the government to involve companies in the fight against congestion and more sustainable commuting practices (Int P; Int M).

With the new Dutch cabinet in 2010, the state-led taskforce of the previous cabinet was transformed into a more business oriented network around 'the new way of working'. To ensure a continuity in the funding of the project, the mobility managers recruited the fifty biggest companies innovative in this field (called the 'B50s'), for example the big banks, IBM, KPN, Voda phone, to act as leaders. The B50s proposed themselves as 'role models' for other companies and asked successfully to the new cabinet to fund this now more entrepreneurial tackling of mobility. The Taskforce Mobility Management was transformed into the *Platform Slim Werken Slim Reizen* (Platform Smart Working, Smart Travelling). In this Platform, a team of four persons was funded to coordinate a multi-actor growing network to trigger organizational, legal, entrepreneurial and social practices making possible 'the new way of working', involving more flexible work spaces and work schedules. Mobility managers working in each region continued to work with individual companies to trigger mobility management. They also included in their work this "broader picture of a new way of working" (Int M). The Platform and mobility managers were

¹¹⁸ "Mobiliteitsmanagement is het organiseren van slim reizen. Aangezien de auto niet alle problemen kan oplossen, wordt de reiziger geprikkeld alternatieven te gebruiken als fiets, openbaar vervoer, gebruik van P+R, of telewerken. Eisen en wensen van mensen die zich verplaatsen staan centraal, en het draait om oplossingen op maat. Overheden, werkgevers, publiekstrekkingen en aanbieders van mobiliteitsdiensten organiseren samen de voorwaarden waarbinnen reizigers slimme keuzes kunnen maken."

¹¹⁹ "An advisory and consultative body of employers' representatives, union representatives and independent experts" <http://www.ser.nl/en/> , consulted in January 2013.

public brokers facilitating this. They were partly funded by the national government, and partly by participating companies. When the new cabinet decided to get involved in this project, the employers and employees were presented as the drivers of this perspective by the Minister of Infrastructure and Environment : “I am following a societal trend in which employees wish more flexibility in the work schedules and work locations and in which employers have a greater need for this flexibility of the labour market.” (MIM 2011d, 2)¹²⁰

Among the employers, the B50s played a role of leadership. They organized conferences and workshops, they wrote 'white papers' published on the website of the *Platform Slim Werken Slim Reizen* and distributed by mobility managers. In particular, the B50s shared information on how they resolved constraints and barriers to 'the new way of working' in their company : how to re-organize and reduce office space and have it accepted by employees, how to use technologies to meet virtually and have virtual collaborative platforms, how to bring more flexibility to the working schedule, etc. (PSWSR 2012a; PSWSR 2011a; PSWSR 2011b; PSWSR 2011c, Int P). The leader companies in the B50s were very interested in those innovative practices. The focus is on innovative working practices with flexible location and time, and on being an attractive and socially responsible employer. According to a coordinating member of the *Platform Slim Werken Slim Reizen*, in contrast, medium and small companies wish to focus on more traditional mobility management (encouraging employees to cycle to work or to use the train). The objective of the Platform is explicitly “to give actors the tools to implement the 'new way of working' and mobility management in order to reduce traffic jams” (PSWSR 2012b).

Employers' associations, employers' council and chambers of commerce also promoted both mobility management and 'the new way of working' to their members. They provided resources to the mobility managers, information and contacts, to invite new businesses to participate (Int M). To give an idea of the number of companies involved, 175 companies were involved in the mobility management programs in the agglomeration of Rotterdam (Verkeersonderneming 2011). It includes many companies in the area of the Port of Rotterdam. In The Hague agglomeration, 75 companies were involved in the beginning of 2012 (Int M). According to the Ministry and based on numbers from the *Platform Slim Werken Slim Reizen* and the B50s, there would have been in June 2011 “800 000 employees in the state of Smart Working Smart Travelling”. The objective was to expand it to 1 million by the end of 2012 and to 2 millions in 2015 (MIM 2011).

¹²⁰ “Ik sluit hiermee aan bij de maatschappelijke trend dat werknemers flexibilisering van werktijden en werklocaties wensen en waarin werkgevers een grotere behoefte aan flexibele arbeidsinzet hebben.”

Labour unions were also closely involved. The leader of the *Platform Slim Werken Slim Reizen* was a former director of a large labour union. Labour unions were participating to make flexible working conditions a possibility, and an advantage for employees. Some adjustments either in conventional practices or in the legal system could be necessary to ensure such flexibility could be a possibility for all, whether through more flexible time schedules, more flexible locations (ability to work at home or elsewhere) or mobility budgets paying not only for cars, but rewarding cycling, walking, and the use of the train or urban public transit. The different labour unions regrouped their energies in a joint knowledge center on 'work and circulation' (*Kenniscentrum Werk en Vervoer*). The objective from the point of view of labour unions was to give greater autonomy to employees on their timetable and daily mobility to facilitate the conciliation of work and personal life.

The involvement of the central government did not limit itself to the funding of the *Platform Slim Werken Slim Reizen*. In addition, they set up a new 3-year program called Better Use (of the transport network, *Beter Benutten*), as inspired by the third pillar of the fight against congestion in the Netherlands (MVW and VROM 2004). This program would give funding from 2011 to 2015 to eight regions most problematic in terms of traffic congestion. The objective was to reduce by 20 to 30% the congestion on the most problematic segments (MIM 2011). Locally the regions could decide of the mobility management measures funded. Measures of mobility management work on the demand for transport, in trying to reduce and modify it. But the Minister wished results in the very short term with her program, and this business movement was interesting but slow to put in place (Int P; Int BB). She called upon regional authorities to identify the easiest 'quick wins' measures for the fight against congestion. She thus included in the Better Use program measures on demand (mobility management) and measures on the offer of transport infrastructure. These last measures included additional car lanes in congested road segments and investments in 'park and ride' stations.¹²¹ We will see in the two interpretative repertoires that there were disagreements over the concrete types of measures funded (working on the demand or offer sides of transport, and what transport mode).

Environmental and cyclist organizations got also involved. The organization *Natuur&Milieu* (Nature and Environment)¹²² participated actively in the the *Platform Slim Werken Slim Reizen*

¹²¹ For the modal transfer from cars to public transit (train or metro).

¹²² *Natuur&Milieu* is a different organization than *Milieufederatie Zuid Holland* and *Milieudefensie* discussed in the previous chapter. *Natuur&Milieu* was not very involved in the debate on the New West riverbank connection (NWO) in Rotterdam The Hague, but did oppose it in a press release (2011) and in a joint brief with the Coalition against the Blankenburgtunnel in 2013.

by organizing an annual event promoting 'the new way of working'. The week of promotion and the website with tips were called 'the new way of working, you can do it yourself'. This was really a campaign for individual persons and employers who could introduce more flexibility in their working schedule and working space. *Natuur&Milieu*'s campaign presented 'the new way of working' as a natural and easy step to take, with both economic and environmental benefits. *Natuur&Milieu* was the major voice presenting also the environmental motivation for it (Natuur&Milieu 2011a). *Milieudefensie* had also included 'the new way of working' in its Green Metropolis plan introduced in the previous chapter, in their package of alternatives to highways.

The cycling lobby *Fietzersbond* was also involved in this broad network. It had two campaigns linked to new mobility practices to go to work, which were framed in terms of the fight against congestion. The first 'Ride 2 over 5' was a campaign in the mobility management perspective, directly working with private companies. The second project was in line with the fine-tuning of the transport infrastructure to ensure a more efficient mobility to work.

The project 'Ride 2 over 5' consisted in promoting cycling to work in interested companies. 2 over 5 stands for two days over the 5-days working week. The concept is not to force an every-day transition but to experience how two days of cycling to work per week can make someone feel good, in terms of health and the landscape seen. Through the campaign, the company is helped in the process of making a bicycle plan to encourage its employees to cycle to work. The campaign is conducted with the collaboration of mobility managers in different regions. In the Netherlands, 24% of the mobility trips from and toward work was done by bicycle in 2011 (van der Steenhoven 2011). When the distance is 5 kilometers and less, this goes up to 40%. It reduces to 25% from 5 to 10 kilometers and to 10% from 10 to 15 kilometers (idem). The cyclist organization wished to increase cycling to work between 5 to 15 kilometers. It did so by promoting (with subsidies from the state) the electric bicycle which can help for longer distances. *Fietzersbond* also organized a project to improve the infrastructure, called 'Fast cycling routes'.

In the midst of the announcements by the national government that it will finance projects directly focused on the fight against congestion on roads, *Fietzersbond* launched the project of regional 'fast cycling routes', as part of the solution to tackle congestion. The concept is to build regional biking lanes of high quality and continuity parallel to congested road segments to incite people to switch from the car to the bicycle to get to work. If the Netherlands has many cycling paths, at the regional scale they are not always well connected with each other. It is not always obvious which route is best, there are interruptions, and cyclists do not always have the priority.

The idea of the 'fast cycling route' is to have a specifically designed, comfortable, marked regional bike lane between working centers that otherwise would not be well connected. The project also aimed at advertising these routes to potential users now using their cars to go to work. The ability of *Fietzersbond* to position its project in the fight against congestion was commented as very effective lobbying to receive funding even in time of severe budget cuts (Fietsberaad 2010). *Fietzersbond* also facilitated the brokerage between different public authorities. Since the regional fast cycling routes were going through multiple municipal territories, *Fietzersbond* was the coordinating actor between the municipalities, agglomeration authorities and province, authorities that either owned the land or contributed to the funding of the project (Int F).

The two campaigns from *Fietzersbond*, the mobility management project of '2 over 5' and the 'fast cycling routes', were promoted in a national platform (*Platform Fiets filevrij*, Platform Bicycle No Congestion) with annual conferences for professionals in municipal and provincial bodies. This platform emphasized the contribution of *Fietzersbond*, and of cycling to work, in the tackling of congestion (*Platform Fiets filevrij* 2011).

Table 7.1 *Brokers and their roles*

Actors	Brokering roles
<i>Platform Slim Werken Slim Reizen</i> (Platform Smart Working, Smart Travelling)	Brokers between companies, labour unions and public authorities at a national level; coordinating mobility managers
Mobility manager	One in each agglomeration, brokerage with private companies
B50s	National role models of the business community for 'the new way of working'
Regional trios for the program Better Use (described below, in 7.2)	Representatives from a CEO of a big company, Agglomeration alderman and Minister of Infrastructure and Environment, deciding on the packages of measures funded by the program 'Better Use' in their region
<i>Natuur&Milieu</i> (Nature and Environment)	Broker to social and environmental considerations for 'the new way of working'
<i>Fietzersbond</i> (Cycling union)	Brokering between public authorities and between employers and employees to promote cycling to work and the 'fast cycling routes'

In sum, the network of actors involved in changing work-related mobility practices was diverse. It included the government, which funded (with the private sector) the mobility managers and the *Platform Slim Werken Slim Reizen* and invested in the program Better Use, companies and labour unions, and the organizations *Natuur&Milieu* and *Fietzersbond*. *Natuur&Milieu* promoted the concept. *Fietzersbond* added to it their own cycling solution, articulated within this entrepreneurial frame of a different way to work and travel. Table 7.1 presents synthetically these actors and their brokering roles.

7.2 The utopian chain of equivalence

I have described broadly the motivations from the different actors and the objectives they had set in their involvement in this network. The set of actors presented is considered a discourse coalition because the participating actors all work on their project and campaign with the same broad chain of equivalence. I will now present this chain of equivalence. It includes three terms : congested roads, flexible work space as a solution, and city-regional forms of public-private governance.

Congested roads

The first node of the utopian frame is the starting point, the rallying call for action : road congestion. We saw in the previous chapter (section 6.2) that the Minister of Infrastructure and Environment associates road congestion with economic threat. This was a key element of the dominant discourse that the opponents to the Blankenburgtunnel had to face. In the utopian frame for 'flexible work space', the problem of road congestion is presented in a chain of equivalence linking it negatively with economic performance especially, but also with quality of life and, more indirectly, to the environment.

The fight against congestion was particularly linked with economic performance in the region of Rotterdam. Investments to reduce congestion had focused on the widening of the highway A15, the artery of the port. An organization created by the Port with public authorities also coordinated mobility management. The *Verkeersonderneming* (Traffic company) coordinated mobility management efforts from businesses in the port area, to ensure better fluidity on the A15 highway during the construction works. In this organization, the leadership of the Port Authority

had been very important (Int PR; Int SR). The leitmotiv was the fluid circulation of containers and employees from and to the port.

Without efficiency improvements in supply chains, traffic management, the construction of new infrastructure and the improvement of public transport, Rotterdam is at risk of experiencing daily traffic congestion and shippers will want to take their business to other ports. This would weaken the competitive position and cause economic damage. (Port of Rotterdam 2011, 80–81)

The program was known in the region and its results seemed impressive to many public and civic actors I met. *Groeierend Verzet*, a local resident association opposed to the Blankenburtunnel (see previous chapter), used this involvement of the Port as an illustration of the real potential of mobility management as an alternative solution (to new roads) in the fight against congestion (Groeierend Verzet 2011). The Traffic company extended its territory of mobility management to the whole ring of Rotterdam with the new program Better Use from the government.

In the program Better Use, congestion was framed as the problem and as the relevant metric of success for state intervention. The Minister gave money to “the regions where the greatest traffic pressure occurs” (MIM 2011d, 3). Agglomeration authorities, companies, and mobility managers were asked to calculate to what extent each of their measure, even for example new parking spaces for bicycles, would reduce the percentage of traffic jams (which is not experienced by practitioners as an easy thing to evaluate) (Int M; Int BB). Mobility managers had, from their start in 2008, a focus on reducing car travel. But the involvement of the new cabinet gave it a greater focus on evaluating the effects of the program on car congestion. The ambition from the government was to directly link its investments to clear results on the alleviation of congestion.

Abiding by this focus on congestion and the precise accounting of its reduction, *Fietzersbond* argued that the ‘fast cycling routes’ could reduce by 5% the number of car rides on the parallel congested segments (which was one of the indicator regions and mobility managers had received from the national government) (Platform Fiets filevrij 2011; Fietsberaad 2010). Their argument was that the state should make room to facilitate cycling to work, to reduce car congestion. The cycling union was involved with several regional authorities to include investments for cycling routes in the package of solution of the program Better Use. This inclusion of pro-bicycle measures was promoted by the Minister herself as a proof of multi-

modality in the tackling of congestion (MIM 2011d, 5). *Fietzersbond* was also involved with mobility managers in the brokering with employers to present cycling to work as a healthy and resourceful way to go to work and avoid traffic jams (Fietzersbond 2012; Platform Fiets filevrij 2011, Int F).

The environmental organization *Natuur&Milieu* also produced discourse on the problem of road congestion in its campaign 'The new way of working: do it yourself'. The organization emphasized the problem of congestion from the point of view of individuals losing time in traffic jams. In 2011, the campaign was called 'Be the boss of your own job', and in 2012 'Control time'. This focus on individuals and their work-life balance concurred with efforts from the labour unions documenting the possibilities for 'the new way of working'. They presented congestion as an issue in terms of quality of life, which the tackling of could also result in benefits for the environment and the economy. In the course of *Natuur&Milieu's* 2011 campaign, the organization sponsored a study on the macro-economic benefits of 'the new way of working'. The results were publicized in terms of the huge potential in the reduction in the number of cars, in green house gas emissions, and air pollution, and the gain in productivity: "If in 2015 20% of the population works at home one day per week, this will bring almost two billion [euro] of benefit for the Dutch society"(Natuur&Milieu 2011a)¹²³. The report was cited in Parliament as we will see below. The environmental impacts of 'the new way of working' are mostly shown through such economic calculations. But the promotion campaign from *Natuur&Milieu* mostly referred to the daily experience of congestion for individuals.

Innovative working, flexible work space

The new way of working goes beyond the focus on congestion. In fact it focused much more on innovation and flexibility as solutions, than on the problem of congestion as such. The basic argument of 'flexible work space' was that by bringing more flexibility in the location and time of work, there could be much more productivity: employees could have a more efficient use of their time, since they did not get stuck in congestion, and they could be available from different locations. Starting work later, or working at home or in a meeting places (special coffeehouses for 'the new way of working' have developed across the country) at least during the rush hour, are examples of this. The community mobilized was the community of employers and employees. Mobility management was already in the Netherlands more focused on employers (and not on school travel, for example) (SWOW 2012). The 'new way of working' pushed this

¹²³ "Als in 2015 20 procent van de beroepsbevolking en dag per week thuis zou werken, zou dat de Nederlandse samenleving jaarlijks bijna twee miljard euro aan baten opleveren".

further in emphasizing not only new mobility practices to work, but innovative working practices. Innovation was the focus, through flexibility in the work space. This meant tele-conferencing, virtual meetings, and less office space. Some companies saw this as a business opportunity and promoted their own services and new technologies enabling such practices.

Civil society actors also participated in the promotion of 'the new way of working'. *Natuur&Milieu* participated to this discursive node on innovative and flexible work space with its public campaigns, showing the benefits for daily life of a more flexible working schedule (good coffee at home, concentration, more time with children, "start your day in your dressing gown, instead of in traffic jam", etc.). It could make employees more productive and enable an easier balance between home and other personal activities. The discourse from *Natuur&Milieu* associated 'the new way of working' to a broader scope of discourses associated with daily life : fathers wishing to participate more to family life, the improvement in accessibility to daycare centers close to home or the work place, the implementation of coffee working centers where to go in-between meetings or during peak hours, etc. These diverse issues and ideas were discussed in the events organized by *Natuur&Milieu*. Their campaign promoted the new way of working for a diversity of jobs, beyond the service or knowledge sectors already more engaged in such initiatives.

One report from the labour unions' knowledge center presented the possible negative effects of this greater flexibility (Kenniscentrum Werk&Vervoer and PSWSR 2010, Int M). If employees do not have to work from 9 to 5, there might also be an implicit obligation to always be available at whatever hour, and to have to adapt to the inexistence of a stable office space. In response to that, *Natuur&Milieu* emphasized the importance of choice and initiative.

The new way of working also contains points to reflect upon. In working more at home, the contact with colleagues may be harder, and working at home could lead toward overwork. This is why it is important that the new way of working does not come from above and be imposed on employees, but that employees themselves can choose it. The new way of working is at the end about liberty and autonomy. In the week 'The new way of working', employees and managers are invited to experiment with this new way of working. (*Natuur&Milieu* 2011b)¹²⁴

¹²⁴ "Het Nieuwe Werken kent ook aandachtspunten. Door veel thuis te werken kan het contact met collega's verwateren en thuiswerken kan leiden tot meer overwerk. Het is daarom belangrijk dat Het Nieuwe Werken niet van bovenaf wordt opgedrongen aan werknemers, maar dat werknemers er zelf voor kunnen kiezen. Het Nieuwe Werken gaat tenslotte over meer vrijheid en verantwoordelijkheid. In de Week van Het Nieuwe Werken worden zowel werknemers als managers uitgedaagd om te experimenteren met deze nieuwe manier van werken."

Labour unions, coordinated in their Knowledge Center Work and Circulation, have particularly emphasized the agreements needed between employers and employees so that the rights and obligations of each are respected (Kenniscentrum Werk&Vervoer and PSWSR 2010; Kenniscentrum Werk & Vervoer 2012). The 'new way of working' goes thus well beyond mobility, and changes many things in the relations between employees, and their colleagues and their superiors. The labour unions' Knowledge Center produced documents and workshops to prepare employees and employers to 'the new way of working'. For them the benefit of the new way of working comes from the autonomy of employees in their work-life balance.

Employers could also be reluctant to the new way of working. The *Platform Slim Werken Slim Reizen*, the B50s and the Knowledge Center from the labour unions were active in organizing colloquium and workshops to overcome the negative perceptions of it (PSWSR 2011a; PSWSR 2011b). The Platform in fact presented its main objective as coordinating the collaboration between employers, employees and the state to make 'smart working smart travelling' 'business as usual' (PSWSR 2012b). The flexible way of working involved new relations and agreements, within each company. At a broader scale, there were also new forms of governance promoted to decide upon public and private investments facilitating such changes in working and mobility practices.

City-regional forms of public-private governance

The new way of working, with flexible time and space, was presented as an entrepreneurial movement with the B50s as role models for other companies, and civil society actors such as labour unions and *Natuur&Milieu* as sources of inspiration for individuals to change their habits and thereby improve their work-life balance. It pictured a utopia of autonomy and responsabilization of individual employees and employers for their own individual benefit. The motto 'the new way of working you can do it yourself, from *Natuur&Milieu*, summarizes it well. Both *Natuur&Milieu* and the *Platform Slim Werken Slim Reizen* were financed for two to three years, with the expectation that afterward the network of employees-employers would flourish on its own. The degree of involvement from the state in this was ambiguous. In the words of the Minister and some political parties, the state was there only to give it a little impulse.

According to the Minister, besides the national campaigns of promotion, this impulse could best happen at the city-regional, that is at the agglomeration scale. Within regions a link with the business community could be made (beyond the B50s already involved). There was also in regions the expertise and proximity to concretely tackle congestion. The concrete state's

involvement in mobility management and 'the new way of working' continued to be done through the work of mobility managers. In addition, public-private forms of governance were put in place for the program Better Use, building on previous initiatives from certain regions, which were praised by the Minister (MIM 2011d, 2). They represented successful entrepreneurial tackling of congestion like she wanted to promote. The new program Better Use was based on regional decentralization, whereby the measures were chosen in a executive 'trio' composed of the Minister of Infrastructure, the agglomeration alderman on transport and a CEO of a big company. The implementation and follow-up of these measures were then coordinated by a city-regional hybrid organization linking public and private actors (like the Traffic company with leadership by the Port in Rotterdam). These public-private bodies implementing measures of mobility and traffic management differed in their concrete forms in the different regions. This form of governance was justified by the companies' economic motivation to make things better in regard to traffic congestion (MIM 2011d). The Port of Rotterdam also especially emphasized this.

In the Port of Rotterdam we have a direct economic drive. Since if the road is not in order than it costs us money, and if affects badly the competitive position of the Port. So we have a direct economic drive to fix it. We want it to happen. So we are always the ones pushing it. The governmental parties are more indirectly involved. Rijkswaterstaat [the Minister of Infrastructure] is not made accountable for the traffic jams on the road. That is of course annoying, but it is really an indirect process through elections in The Hague, are there is in this a lot of, I don't want to say distance, but yes, they are still involved more from a distance. (Int PR)¹²⁵

The city-regional scale for such public-private governance was presented as most efficient for two reasons: first, for the proximity of the problems experienced to the concerned authorities and their regulatory powers on transport issues and second, for the easier coupling with this economic drive from private companies and the Port. The agglomeration authorities could collaborate in the adjustments of traffic on the road network under their responsibility (traffic management on roads and arteries leading to highways) and on regional public transit (MIM

¹²⁵ "Wij vanuit het havenbedrijf hebben een directe economische drive zeg maar. Want als dat niet op orde is dan kost het ons geld, hè, dan gaat het met de concurrentiepositie van de haven niet goed. Dus we hebben een directe economische drive om dingen gewoon tot stand te brengen. En we willen dat dat gebeurt. Dus wij zijn altijd wel een beetje de aanjager. De meer overheidspartijen die zitten er wat indirecter in. Rijkswaterstaat wordt niet afgerekend op de files op de weg. Ja dat is heel vervelend natuurlijk maar dat is een heel indirect proces via verkiezingen en Den Haag, die zitten daar dus veel, ik wil niet zeggen afstandelijker, maar die zitten daar toch een stuk afstandelijker in".

2011d, 3–4; Tweede Kamer 2011a, 23, 31). They at the same time could coordinate a territorial tackling of mobility management with big companies (specific spaces and axis were chosen to focus on) (Ministerie van Infrastructuur en Milieu and Stadsregio Rotterdam; De Verkeersonderneming 2011), Int M). Mobility managers secured this link between agglomeration authorities and the companies to reward the former's efforts of mobility management with state investments in strategic services or infrastructure (like a new tram line or bike path).¹²⁶ For the CEO chosen for each city-region, their involvement went further. He participated in the decision-making over the choice of the best measures to reduce congestion in the whole city-region, and represented the business community in that process.

In addition to the close involvement and leadership of private companies, the Port's representative also emphasized another benefit of this regional public-private governance. The actors with an 'economic drive to fix congestion problems' (including the Port which is owned by the state) could have a more direct access to the different governmental authorities (Int PR). Through the Traffic company, the Port had quicker access to the agglomeration, the province and the Minister of Infrastructure, in order to rapidly adjust traffic management, coordinate road construction works and react rapidly to incidents. The feeling was that this necessary coordination between multiple actors could be better achieved with such hybrid city-regional form of governance.

I indeed believe that this regional scale is the scale at which we can tackle this problem. I profoundly believe it. And I think that with it you can assemble all parties from the business world and governments, around the two nodes of mobility management and traffic management. (Port of Rotterdam representative, Int PR)¹²⁷

The close involvement of the business community was not criticized; it was rather viewed positively by parliamentary members and by civic actors in its potential for broad change in mobility practices (Tweede Kamer 2011a; Tweede Kamer 2011d; Milieudefensie 2011a; PSWSR 2012b). One critique was made, however, regarding the choice of a CEO of a big company to represent the business regional community, rather than already existing associations with such

¹²⁶ This is in short the logic of what happened for the A15, artery of the Port, the Port being very engaged in the Traffic company, for mobility management, while the State financing the widening of the highway. The Port of Rotterdam is however owned by the City of Rotterdam and the central government. In The Hague also, our interview spoke of such exchange between companies collaborating for mobility management and the state offering services (new tram line) and infrastructures (regional bike path) responding to the mobility needs of its employees (Int MA).

¹²⁷ "Ik geloof inderdaad deze regionale schaal is de schaal voor deze problematiek om het aan te pakken. Ik geloof daar heilig in. En ik geloof er dus in dat je al die partijen bedrijfsleven overheden met mobiliteitsmanagement en verkeersmanagement met die twee knoppen dat je daaraan kan draaien."

representative mission, like the board of trades (CDA in Tweede Kamer 2011a, 16, 33). Also, the right wing parties PVV and VVD wanted insurance that the involvement of the state stayed minimal in mobility management, and that this mostly involved employers and employees; the government only having to invest in hard-core infrastructure (PVV and VVD in Tweede Kamer 2011a, 13, 22). In contrast, the D66 Democrats and GreenLeft were worried about the exact content of the measures chosen in those new governance spaces and the importance of road investments therein (Tweede Kamer 2011a, 8–9, 18, 33; Tweede Kamer 2011c, 7, 20–21; Kamerstuk 2012, 46).

The decentralization of the choices of measures in those hybrid city-regional spaces meant that their content was made less available to public scrutiny and parliamentary debates. The content of the measures, and whether they constituted investment favoring one transport mode or another, or measures reducing the demand for roads or providing additional small 'fixes' to the road network, became thus much less visible. Most of the political parties besides the leading VVD (D66 Democrats, PVV, CDA, CU) have requested more information in the choices of measures and their follow-up (Tweede Kamer 2011d, 18–20, 32, 38; Tweede Kamer 2011c, 14). The whole national program was presented as an innovative solution to congestion (going beyond the building of new roads) and as replacing investments withdrawn from the budgets of the three largest cities for public transit (MIM 2011f; Tweede Kamer 2011a). But did those investments respond to the same mobility needs? And would they favor investment in roads or public transit? The political parties D66 and GreenLeft were, at first, particularly sceptical (Tweede Kamer 2011a, 8–9–18). At a city-regional (agglomeration) level also, the visibility of the choices were minimal: they were negotiated in a forum with representatives of the trio introduced above (Agglomeration, Minister, CEO).

For the Minister, the accountability of the state investments in the program Better Use was ensured by performance indicators. The goal was the reduction of congestion on roads. Hence, the choice between one measure or another was a technical one evaluated in terms of its performance in reducing congestion (Tweede Kamer 2011a, 23, 31). And the Minister considered regional actors do be the most capable of delivering such measures, since they were aware of the problems causing congestion at a local and regional level (Tweede Kamer 2011a, 23, 30, 31; MIM 2011d). Regional actors signed agreements on a package of measures with precise expected reduction in traffic congestion (the Minister demanded 20% reduction for the

chosen sectors), of which the performance was evaluated by independent experts (MIM 2011d; MIM 2011i).

In sum, the utopian frame of smart working smart travelling includes three nodes : road congestion is an urgent problem to solve, flexible work space is a solution, and city-regional forms of governance with public and private actors can enable this solution and reduce car congestion. I presented how each of the nodes were contested. The first node, the focus on the alleviation of congestion, was not much contested in relation to this utopia. But we saw in the previous chapter how the focus on congestion was contested when it naturalized certain infrastructural choices, especially new highways going through green open spaces. The second node, the flexible work space, was debated in its possible negative effects for employees. By and large however, the actors producing discourse on this topic presented it very positively and were more in search of solutions to make it possible and beneficial for employees and employers. They were mostly promoting its implementation. This 'flexible work space' solution was however very broad and vague in its content. It could include flexible schedule, flexible location of work, access to different mobility modes at different times of the day, etc. We will see below that this ambiguity had a role in the two interpretative repertoires. The third node of the utopian frame concerns the city-regional governance of mobility management and the new way of working, including the state and private actors. The utopia of 'smart working smart travelling' clearly targets the community of employees and employers. The state, however, did get involved to enable flexible work, since it required certain investments. The precise content of these state investments, however, and what they implied in terms of changing patterns of mobility practices, was the topic of more dissension. There were in fact two interpretative repertoires on the topic, which we now turn to.

7.3 Two interpretative repertoires

If there was a quasi consensus on flexible work-home space in the discursive field, and much enthusiasm about the entrepreneurial tackling of congestion, the implications of this flexible work-home space on mobility patterns was the object of diverse interpretations. We can see two interpretative repertoires of the utopian frame 'smart working = smart travelling'. One interpretative repertoire apprehended the changes in mobility patterns coming from flexible work in its capacity to ensure fluidity on the roads. The traffic most *necessary* (freight or business

traffic not displaceable at other times, for example) would then be able to go through. The other repertoire perceived flexible work in its potential for more sustainable mobility. If the two were not contradictory, and could both be supportive of the broader utopian frame, they did not imply the same state investments.

I introduced the program Better Use and its city-regional forms of public-private governance deciding on the concrete measures to be financed. Those measures were to include mobility management to reduce the demand for road infrastructure and dynamic traffic management to reduce incidents and accidental congestion. But the measures funded by the state also involved small 'fixes' to the infrastructure, the 'quick wins' for less congestion. Some of the infrastructural investments went for cycling paths and park and ride stations. Other infrastructural investments went to additional car lanes on road, arteries, roundabouts, bridges. The inclusion of measures on infrastructure in this program did not receive the support of all actors of the network. One professional from the *Platform Slim Werken Slim Reizen*, for example, considered that such investments in infrastructure were something different than 'the new way of working', and were already covered by other budgets (Int P). The narrative of flexible work was for the Platform's representative about reducing the demand for transport and car mobility through flexible working practices. Yet, for other actors, the improvement of road infrastructure fitted with the idea of 'better use' in an engineering understanding of it: small adjustments in the local and regional roads and junctions could be more efficient than new infrastructure and were quicker than changing mobility practices. It could lead to a more 'robust network' favorable to fluid commuting and predictable time of travel (De Verkeersonderneming 2011; Tweede Kamer 2011a, 30; MIM 2011d; Kennisplatform Verkeer en Vervoer in FG1). It is thus about marginal changes in the road transport network making big differences. If the objective was to reduce car traffic congestion quickly to ensure the fluidity for business traffic, those infrastructural 'quick-wins' seemed well suited. But some of those adjustments were more in a logic of adding car lanes in congested segments (Tweede Kamer 2011a, 12). The line between marginal adjustments and an inclination for more and wider roads was thus thin.

The extent to which the government favored road investments in the Better Use budget was discussed in parliament. The PVV and VVD pushed to include improvements to the road network : "We need to invest money in real solutions, and that is still mostly asphalt." (VVD in Tweede Kamer 2011c, 7)¹²⁸. They voted in favor of the program when assured that it would

¹²⁸ "Wij moeten het geld investeren in echte oplossingen. Dat is toch vooral asfalt."

include some road investments (Tweede Kamer 2011d, 6, 7, 9). In the contrary, the Greenleft and D66 Democrats asked the government not to “put their asphalt fingers in the pocket of the Better Use program” (Tweede Kamer 2011c,7,46). The extent to which the money envelope from the program included road investments (like additional lanes or the refecton of bridges) remained unclear, because it was left to the initiative of regional actors, in collaboration with the CEO working with them, to choose the most efficient measures.

I wrote above that the Minister asked for the measures to be chosen based on the criterion of their performance in reducing congestion. The political parties GreenLeft and D66 had also asked to consider the improvement of air condition as a criterion (Tweede Kamer 2011a, 9,18,33). When comparing a new car lane versus a new bike path or public transit, the short term effects on congestion may be better for the first, but worst in terms of sustainability and air quality. The Minister responded that health was already taken charge of by regulations and compensation measures with which the government had to comply (Tweede Kamer 2011a, 20, 33).¹²⁹ The reduction of congestion was thus kept as the meta indicator for the choice of investments by the regional trios, even with the perceived risk of a slippage toward more road investments.

The different positions on the inclusion of road investments in the program Better Use was a test on the capacity of Minister Schultz to retain the discursive frame of an innovative tackling of congestion associated with her own policy-making. *Milieudefensie* considered that 'the new way of working' was promising, but that to truly change mobility practices and favor a reduction of vehicle use it had to be coupled with a congestion charge for cars and for road freight transport (Milieudefensie 2011a, 28). The party GreenLeft made the same point in parliament (Tweede Kamer 2011a, 17). As partners from the national government in the promotion of 'the new way of working', the *Platform Slim Werken Slim Reizen* and *Natuur&Milieu* did not take position. As for *Fietzersbond*, the inclusion of their project in the package showed an openness from the Minister to promote bicycle use. In contrast, public transit was not successfully lobbied for with the logic of tackling congestion and 'the new way of working'¹³⁰. The association representing car drivers however, the ANWB, did to a certain extent fill that role. For they presented in 2011 a new vision of Park&Ride for the benefit of commuters wishing to easily transfer from their car to the train or metro to avoid congested road segments when approaching urban agglomerations (ANWB

¹²⁹ Although the Netherlands was not yet complying with European norms on air quality (Geerlings 2012) and although the environmental organization *Milieudefensie* was opposing in court against another transport policy of this Minister (speed increase on highways) on grounds of air quality regulations.

¹³⁰ *Milieudefensie* had tried with its Green metropolis plan (chapter 6), but was considered radical.

2011a). The report from the ANWB was cited by the Minister in her justification of her measures in the Better Use program (Tweede Kamer 2011a, 26). She had withdrawn budget from public transit, but in order, she argued, to re-invest the money from little used bus lines to strategic transfer points such as park and ride stations.

The multi-modal character of investments in the Better Use program did rally most of the political parties, although the two political parties representing two poles on this topic each tried to influence the Minister on their own interpretation of the program (for more fluidity versus for more sustainable mobility).

Fortunately also extra asphalt, but also Park and Ride for bicycles and cars, better public transit, smart road connections, better bicycle infrastructure, smart traffic management.

We thus say : doe it. (VVD in Tweede Kamer 2011d, 9)¹³¹

Finally I make a call to the three coalition parties. [...] Keep your greedy cement hands away from the pot of Better Use. It is the very best way to tackle congestion. The addiction to asphalt is no reason for Netherlands to stay stuck in traffic jams over the long term, since more concrete means more congestion. (D66 Democrats in Tweede Kamer 2011c, 20–21)¹³²

There were also debates in parliament on the extent to which the 'new way of working', and the program Better Use, could affect the broader orientation of the governmental policy on transport, and reduce the need for the road investment plans like the NWO discussed in the previous chapter. The collective benefit of flexible work space and flexible work schedule is that the traffic is reduced or better spread throughout the day. Given the enthusiasm generated by the so-called 'phenomenon' of 'the new way of working' in the Netherlands (Natuur&Milieu 2012), the need for new road infrastructure might be reduced. Flexible home-work space could lead to less infrastructure demands. The parties GreenLeft and D66 particularly believed in this potential, and cited a report sponsored by *Natuur&Milieu* on the topic.

If the Minister really believed in the program Better Use, she would lay less asphalt. We received a report from PricewaterhouseCoopers. It states that less asphalt would be

¹³¹ "Gelukkig ook extra asfalt, maar ook Park and Ride voor fiets en auto, beter openbaar vervoer, slimmere aansluitingen, betere fietsmogelijkheden, slim verkeersmanagement. Wij zeggen dus gewoon: doen."

¹³² "Tot slot doe ik een oproep aan de drie coalitiepartijen. [...] blijf nu met de hebbelijke cementknuistjes af van het potje Beter Benutten. Het is de allerbeste manier om files aan te pakken. Asfaltverslaving is geen reden om Nederland blijvend op lange termijn in de file te zetten, want meer beton is meer files."

necessary if 'the new way of working' was better managed. Why are there no consequences associated?¹³³ (GroenLinks, Tweede Kamer 2011d, 46)

Yet, parties of the coalition in power, VVD and CDA, stated that “The need for new road is for us obvious. We cannot take seriously the ones who don't recognize this.” (VVD, Tweede Kamer 2011d, 4); and “These solutions [better use and the new way of working] do not solve the problem around Rotterdam. Whether we like it or not, we need to do something now and make choices” (CDA, Tweede Kamer 2012b, 15). The efforts in the field of mobility management with employers (like *Smart Work Smart Travel*) were considered by the Minister, the Rotterdam agglomeration representative and by the Port of Rotterdam necessary measures to alleviate congestion *while waiting for new car infrastructure*, considering the time all procedures take before the actual building of a new road (MIM 2011d; Int PR; Int SR). If there was a potential of less road investment, the Minister argued, it was more long term and could not yet affect infrastructural decisions (Minister, in Tweede Kamer 2011d, 47). The rightwing party PVV, which was supporting the leading coalition, remarked: “Despite the budget cuts the Minister sees the chance of investing until 2020 up to 18 billions in more asphalt. The PVV fraction finds this of course fantastic” (PVV, Tweede Kamer 2011d, 2). Furthermore, the PVV stated that, in the context of an economic crisis, investments on new highways are good investments for the economy.

Several civic actors criticized the low commitment to innovative measures to tackle car congestion, especially in the context of the debated highway segments. *Natuur&Milieu* criticized in a press release the choice of the Blankenburgtunnel and, in general, the promotion of car use “instead of looking for creative solutions to congestion that are supported by both residents and businesses, such as 'the new way of working'” (Natuur&Milieu 2011c)¹³⁴. The coalition opposing the Blankenburgtunnel argued that, in addition to overlooking of the statistics showing a stagnation of mobility by cars since 2005, the scenarios justifying the new highway were out of date because they omitted, among other things, the trends of 'the new way of working'. Yet the government, in other circumstances, was promoting the important potential of 'the new way of working' in the reduction of congestion (Natuurmonumenten, Midden Delfland Vereniging, et al. 2012).

¹³³ “Als de minister echt gelooft in het programma Beter Benutten, zou ze minder asfalt aanleggen. We hebben het rapport gekregen van PwC, PricewaterhouseCoopers. Daarin wordt aangegeven dat minder asfalt nodig is als het nieuwe werken op een betere manier gestalte krijgt. Waarom worden daar geen consequenties aan verbonden?”

¹³⁴ “in plaats van te zoeken naar creatieve file-oplossingen waar zowel burgers als bedrijven achter staan, zoals Het Nieuwe Werken.”

The narrative of the Minister was effectively ambiguous, yet this ambiguity is perhaps what kept both poles of the mobility debate enthusiastic about 'the new way of working'. When speaking about new road infrastructure, the Minister spoke of the trends of 'the new way of working' and mobility management as uncertain and more long term than the urgently needed road segments. But her own program Better Use had very concrete objectives on the short term. The narrative of around the program Better Use emphasized the feasibility of a significant change in mobility patterns, reducing congestion. It was part of the enthusiasm toward this entrepreneurial tackling of congestion, and especially of the concrete measures of performance from the Minister's program Better Use. A rule of thumb was presented that a 1% reduction in the number of cars on the most congested road segments meant a reduction of 10% of congestion. For a reduction of 20 to 30% of congestion (demanded by the Minister) there would have to be only 2 to 3 % reduction in the number of cars at peak hours (Tweede Kamer 2011a, 19; MIM 2011d). So the utopian frame rested on this possibility of real impact on mobility patterns. Its mobilizing capacity came from the real difference it could make.

Conclusion

The research question structuring the analysis of the case studies is the following : through what processes do coalitions for car alternatives challenge the dominant discourses on mobility? Considering my propositions, we can wonder more specifically: how effective were the brokers' efforts of place-framing?

This case differs significantly from the others by the fact that the state was an important broker in the discourse coalition. The Ministry of Infrastructure and Environment participated in funding some of the brokers (like the *Platform Slim Werken Slim Reizen* and the mobility managers), and produced much discourse. The Ministry's goal was to include its program Better Use in this innovative 'societal trend' (to use the Minister's words, MIM 2011d, 2). Nevertheless, the discourse went beyond the justification for the program Better Use. The place-frame was articulated by a supportive network of large companies (the B50s), the environmental organization *Natuur&Milieu*, labour unions and *Fietzersbond*. The involvement of these actors gave much more substance to the place-frame. The node of flexible work space was given meaning in linking it to, on the one side, a better work-personal life balance, flexible mobility practices and social and environmental benefits; and on the other side, productivity and

innovation in the styles of working. The different nodes of the place-frame were linked together by the identification of the group 'employers and employees' enabling an innovative tackling of congestion. The community of employers and employees were targeted not through a coercive approach forcing certain mobility practices, as the congestion charge policy had been perceived, but from their own initiative to transform mobility and working practices for their own benefit.

Yet, the focus on the group of employers and employees leaved the state and private actors with ambiguous roles. First, there was an ambiguity in the role of the state in giving an impulse to such private initiatives. Second, there could be a malaise with the role of the business community in jointly deciding upon state investments on transport infrastructure and mobility management. The forms of governance privileged were at the city-regional scale and involved public-private decision-making arenas based on performance indicators to relieve congestion. This left a certain ambiguity over the orientation of the investments (in terms of modes privileged and whether it focused on mobility management or improvements in infrastructure).

In sum, the interpretative repertoires were successfully used by the Minister and the *Platform Slim Werken Slim Reizen* to hold a discourse coalition around the frame of 'smart working, smart travelling'. The more radical repertoire in terms of the transformation of the dominant discourses for car mobility, for a coupling of flexible working space with a congestion charge and a greater focus on public transit, did not seem to have much weight. Nevertheless, the utopian frame of 'Smart working smart travelling' enabled new frontiers in the discursive field, in creating a broader support to a new tackling of congestion. This new tackling of congestion was not formulated in terms of mobility modes, but in terms of a community of practice, the employers and employees, who needed to be mobilized.

CHAPTER 8. COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS: PLACE-FRAMING AS A TOOL OF COLLECTIVE ACTION

This thesis studies the process of place-framing in different contexts. A comparative building-block approach is used to capture the variability and convergence in the *hypothesized* process of place-framing. This chapter brings together the lessons from the four case studies, following the order of the propositions formulated at the end of chapter 2. The three propositions address the main question of this thesis: how can coalitions transform dominant discourses on mobility? The first proposition is that coalitions articulate a joint discourse which re-organizes networks of collective action. The second proposition is that coalitions produce, for this joint discourse, strategic representations of places, i.e. place-frames linking in a chain of equivalence the desired norms for a space with the geography of its governance. The third proposition is that coalitions deal with antagonism through the constitution and constant re-interpretation of their utopian place-frame; the dislocation of the utopian chain of equivalence, linking the two components of the place-frame (hyp. 2), reduces the capacity of a coalition to act and to transform dominant discourses.

8.1 Discourse coalitions and the co-constitution of discourse and networks

The articulation of social networks around a joint discourse, made possible by the work of brokers, can transform the discursive field and change dominant discourses. This proposition is inspired by work on discourse and social networks. In the literature on social networks and coalition building, the work of Simmel (1955), Lemieux (1998) and Mische (2008) focus on how negotiations over the meaning, identity and mission of a group are at the basis of the group's dynamic constitution, defining the members participating in it and its evolution in relation to the outside.

I added to this discussion on coalitions the discursive theory of Laclau and Mouffe because of their useful concept of articulation. Through articulation, discursive elements can be taken from the exterior (from the surplus of the discursive field) and be integrated in the discursive chain of equivalence to give meaning to a node. The discursive elements also include and exclude identities and subjects, and come to define collective actors endorsing the discourses.

Linking these ideas more explicitly with the work on social networks and coalition building, I posited that, in this articulation process integrating new discursive elements, the support and adherence of actors, associated in the discursive field to these discursive elements, is needed. In other words, a strong discourse needs a strong supporting network illustrating its meaning politically, and vice-versa. The question behind this claim is whether actors are tied to a same discourse because of their social relations, or whether it is the attractivity of the discourse itself and the power of the narrative or metaphors which rally actors around it, without a need for any kind of concrete social bond or exchange of resources between actors (see a discussion of this in the beginning of section 2.4).

The four case studies shed light on this first proposition. In each case, a variety of actors were associated with a utopian chain of equivalence. But the intensity of this association differed across actors. First, some actors were producing, negotiating, and defending the discourse : these actors are what I call the discursive brokers. Second, other claim-makers, in relation with brokers, supported the discourse by their very actions, practices and missions. Third, there were actors providing occasional discursive resources. Finally, there were actors sharing a vague discursive affinity with the chain of equivalence, but without concrete agency in the discourse coalition. In short, in the studied discourse coalitions, there was a collective *acting* network, formed of the brokers and the directly supporting actors, and there was another more fuzzy set of actors around it, which could integrate the discursive formation or be excluded from it, depending on the interpretation of the discursive frame. The discourse coalition is thus a group with fuzzy and dynamic boundaries. Since the discourse attracts the adhesion of some actors not directly bound to the brokers, it has a life of its own. Yet, for a discourse to have this power of attraction, a closer supporting network, tied to the brokers, appears necessary.

The actors of the supporting network are 'performing' or supporting its utopian frame, in the sense that they concretely illustrate its stakes, making it real and productive of reality, grounded in practice. Such supporting network was present in all four case studies. In chapter 4, about the discourse coalition on spaces for traffic calming, we saw diverse local community networks illustrating what a dynamic community enabling walking and cycling would mean. There were also associations representing specific publics, for example the elders or children going to school, which were showing the practical logic of the interpretative repertoire of the 'inhabited spaces of mobility', since these vulnerable publics were using and inhabiting those spaces of mobility. In chapter 5, on the discourse coalition for another Turcot, we encountered the multi-

scalar coalition supporting the place-frame linking local living conditions with a metropolitan system of public transit. In chapter 6, on the discourse coalition for spaces saved from cars, there were networks showing the value given to Midden-Delfland. In chapter 7, on spaces of innovation, I discussed the networks giving a concrete meaning to the discourse of innovation in the fight against congestion.

There is of course a strategic component in the building of relations and discourses with and around such supporting networks. In constituting a discourse, brokers want to have the adherence of actors whose affiliations and positions are useful support to that discourse, giving it further credibility and legitimacy. Hence there is an intentional attempt to produce a discourse and a network that are supporting each other. In order to change the dominant discourses, brokers want to make new connections, both among social actors (bridge structural holes)- and among discursive elements (discursive chain of equivalence). Both types of connections re-assembles the political field. In the case studies, the discursive chains of equivalence seemed indeed more productive when supported by relational connections, i.e. by a supporting network or by key actors with an enabling position in the field. Otherwise, the chain of equivalence appeared out of place in the social and discursive field. For example, *Milieudefensie* was not taken seriously in its defense of a utopian frame for no new highway in South Holland plausibly because it had no supporting network on mobility issues.¹³⁵ Other brokers took the leadership of the opposition to the Blankenburg by reformulating the actual discourse through an interpretative repertoire of saving one place, Midden-Delfland, discourse for which they had a strong supporting network. New brokering relations were established to enable a discourse around the protection of Midden-Delfland from highways. In the other cases also, the brokers needed to have or reach a position in the network giving them authority to make the new discursive connections.

In the opposition to car-oriented infrastructure in Montreal for example, the public health arguments were key. Documented collisions supported a discourse of vulnerability in the streets of Montreal, and documented air pollution supported a discourse of unjust conditions of inhabitation near highways. In both cases, the credibility of the Montreal public health agency (DSP), and its concrete link with the civic brokers (both the regional environmental organizations and the local groups financed by the health sector), gave content and power to the discursive

¹³⁵ Which does not mean that the discourse was totally unproductive, since it later came back with the second interpretative repertoire, when the discursive field regarding mobility was de-structured by the data on the stagnation of car mobility. I come back to this below.

chain of equivalence. The DSP was a key actor providing discursive resources with a respected (as a public authority developing 'scientific' knowledge) and grounded position in the network of actors.

In the Netherlands in contrast, public health did not represent a similar force. Stricter norms regarding air pollution have been introduced by the European Union, but they are not yet met in the Netherlands and have not come to take a discursive importance in the highway debates (Geerlings 2012; Int GL; Int MD2). This is not because no actor tried. The political party *GreenLeft* and the environmental organization *Milieudefensie*, for example, have been denouncing air pollution attributed to the increased speed limits on highways in urban agglomerations; they also mentioned it briefly in their Green Metropolis plan (Milieudefensie 2011a, 10). *Groeind Verzet*, a resident association involved in the opposition to the highway NWO, also tried to discuss the health impacts of the highway, but within its municipality and with no support on this argument from larger organizations (Int GV). *Milieudefensie* expressed the following opinion on whether air pollution was a convincing argument in the highway debates in Rotterdam:

Well, only for people who were already convinced that car traffic was a problem to public health. People would think that it's not, they just regarded it as an opportunistic thing for us to say, that it is not really about that. [...] To them the air has never been cleaner, which is not true. But even if it was, the air is not as clean as it should be. The World Health Organization says we should have like 20 milligrams of nitrogen dioxide maximum. European limits are double that, it's 40, and in rush hour in Rotterdam, Amsterdam or The Hague, it's going up to 200. Ten times as much as it should be. I think that's a problem.

And there is no public health agency which is sort of your ally in this?

Yes, yes, yes, there are. But everything is very neatly divided in Holland so they argue that we should do something about air quality, and then it's up to the politicians to decide on what to do. They would never, like the Health people, they say we measure the air, and it's like this, and we think that the detrimental health effects are: so many months of your life is lost. They even made a few years ago a calculation that we pay about 4 billion a year on health costs due to air pollution. It's a huge amount of money. But it's a different department, so nobody cares. Hum, so the people who work on traffic, do not work on air quality. (Int MD2, conducted in English)

Although *Milieudefensie* tried to make this link between public health and mobility modes in the Netherlands¹³⁶, it benefited of no supporting network on the topic, and has not succeeded in systematically bringing the issue in arenas of debate. A civic coalition can always use the air pollution argument, but it has more weight when it is advocated by an institution having the credibility of 'science' and the legitimacy of an actor with a position and a mission on the topic. In contrasting the debates in Montreal with those in the Rotterdam The Hague area, we can appreciate the importance of the discursive brokering from the Montreal public health agency between health, transport and urban planning. The health agency was not only giving scientific data providing discursive resources to the utopian frames, it was also involved in the funding of civic programs and initiatives (by itself or through the foundation *Québec en Forme*). Hence, the health sector provided resources, discursive, financial and organizational resources, and had a certain control on the discourse (through funding conditions). In addition to the DSP, associations of doctors also participated in the traffic safety debates (see chapter 4). Yet, the health lobby was not important enough to significantly change the project of the Turcot interchange highway (chapter 5). The equivalence between unjust conditions of inhabitation and air pollution (upheld in the context of Turcot) was weaker than the equivalence between vulnerability and car collisions (upheld for traffic calming). This relative weakness is partly because air pollution was expected to reduce in the future thanks to technological improvements for vehicles. Still, the issue was central in the utopian frame of the opposing coalition the the MTQ's Turcot project. Interestingly, the NWO highway in the Netherlands would much likely imply a lot more air pollution than the new Turcot in Montreal.¹³⁷ Yet, air pollution had more discursive importance in Montreal than in Rotterdam, apparently because, in the last case, the civic coalition had not enough relational resources, no supporting network, to make it a powerful discursive equivalence. In sum, the comparison between the topics taking greater discursive importance in the two metropolitan areas confirms the importance of the supporting network and of the work of brokers.

¹³⁶ Recent court decisions may change this little integration of transport and health issues in the Netherlands, for *Milieudefensie* has won its case in court against two highways' increase in speed limit, in Rotterdam and Amsterdam, on the ground that air quality had not been sufficiently taken into account in the transport policy (decision for which the government went in appeal) (*Milieudefensie* 2014). *Milieudefensie* also made an agreement on air quality in relation to the growth of the Port of Rotterdam and associated traffic, which we spoke of in chapter 6.

¹³⁷ Regarding the NWO in the Rotterdam The Hague area, the project involved a new 6-lanes highway segment. In Montreal, the Ministry of transport argued that there would be sensibly the same amount of cars passing through in the old and new Turcot (although two lanes, with additional service alleys, were added and they were much wider, which led the opposition to conclude that there was a capacity increase).

A similar remark can be made on the topic of mobility management. Mobility management is being practiced in Montreal, and there are organizations devoted to the helping employers plan the mobility practices of their employees. But there was no strong discourse deployed in the public sphere making it a transformative feature of mobility practices since there was also no diverse network of actors organized around that goal, like there is in the Netherlands. In Montreal, the idea of promoting, even marketing, the change of mobility habits is a little at odds with the strong emphasis on physical solutions to mobility issues. The discourse coalition indeed emphasized that changes were needed in streets and infrastructure in order to bring changes in practices, that if alternative modes were given space and resources (if there were public transit and bicycle paths), people would directly use these modes. The focus on mobility management, to tailor business specific arrangements to convince employees to take the bus or cycle, is a different (although not necessarily contradictory) behavioral strategy. A participant to one of my focus groups emphasized this point :

Well I think that one element which has not been enough analyzed and considered is the human factor: we speak a lot about infrastructure, mitigation measures, but we need to consider that not everybody is willing to change its mode of transport. (FG2)¹³⁸

In Montreal, mobility management was thus somewhat dissonant with the selectivity of the utopian frames from the discourse coalitions. In the Netherlands, in contrast, mobility management was integrated in a place-frame whereby employees and employers asked for a flexibility in the work space, reducing mobility through allowing employees to work at home or close to their home and their other activities. The network put in place to support that discourse, with big companies, labour unions, government, mobility managers and environmental organizations, gave support to that discursive chain of equivalence, with some entrepreneurs as 'role models'.

My argument is that the process of assembling a network of actors around a discourse repositions this discourse in the socio-political field. This new network can also be understood in institutional or structural terms, in an evolving political opportunity structure for car alternatives, a geography of governance with territorial and scalar components. The separation of transport, urban planning and health policy-making is a structural feature of the state in the Netherlands, a segmentation which was reduced in Montreal by the creation of the 'built-environment' team of

¹³⁸ "Oui, alors, je pense qu'un élément qui a pas été assez bien analysé, considéré c'est le facteur humain, parce qu'on parle beaucoup d'infrastructures, de mesures de mitigation mais faut considérer que les gens n'ont pas tous une ouverture à changer de mode de transport."

the public health agency. Some of the reactions the agency triggered in the press (see section 4.1) and its outlier position in the field of public health (see the example on traffic safety in section 4.3) show, however, the still precarious and contested nature of this de-segmentation. On the provincial scene, the Montreal public health agency has a marginal position. It is a central actor only in debates and collective action in Montreal.

As for mobility management, there are also some institutional features to the mobilized network, and to its capacity to transform discourses. In the province of Quebec, mobility management has for the Ministry of Transport, the same status than public transit and the promotion of walking and cycling: it is delegated to other public authorities (the AMT and small non-profit 'centers for mobility management'), and subsidized. In the Netherlands in contrast, the government has included mobility management *within* its own public-private governance and entrepreneurial tackling of congestion.

Both the cases of public health arguments and of mobility management as a solution to congestion have thus been supported, the first in Montreal, and the second in the Netherlands, by new institutional or governance arrangements. In the problem-setting in chapter 1, I had noted the comment from Hebbert that “a dangerous gap is now opening between the street paradigm and the inertia still embodied in official highways standards. Institutionally, most new thinking has been sponsored by non-transportation branches of government” (2005, 55). This point is tightly related to the previous argument. Yet, the emphasis I gave to network relations (brokerage, supporting network) shows the agency and concrete situations through which those institutional re-articulations are or can be made. I thus consider, like Miller (2013), that an assemblage and structural approach to socio-spatial politics are far from being contradictory.

This first section of my comparison did not discuss in depth how the content of the discourse is itself a binding agent for a network of actors. In this thesis, I consider how a specific type of discourses, place-frames, can further encourage the convergence of actors in a coalition and their opposition to dominant discourses. This topic is the content of my second proposition, to which I now turn.

8.2 The use of place-frames

My investigation of coalitions for car alternatives focuses on the use of *spatialized claims*. My second proposition is the following. Coalitions produce, for their joint discourse, strategic representations of places, *place-frames*, which link the desired norms for a space with the geography of its governance. This proposition was inspired by work on place frames (Martin 2003; Pierce, Martin, and Murphy 2011), scalar frames (McCann 2003) and spatial imaginaries constructing political spaces (Boudreau 2007). In the general conclusion to the thesis, I will discuss how my process of 'place-framing' relates to these literatures. First, I consider the use of place-frames in the four case studies. The objective is to see to what extent coalitions effectively used this type of discourse, how the components of the place-frames were linked, and whether their association enabled or constrained coalitions in their attempts to transform dominant discourses on mobility. I start by considering the similarities in the place-frames found in the four case studies. I then analyze their use by coalitions.

Similarities in the place-frames identified

The analytical tool used to identify the place-frames is the discursive chain of equivalence from Laclau and Mouffe. For each case study, I identified three nodes that the discourse coalition defined in a series of equivalence. The inter-connection between the three nodes constituted the political claim of the discourse coalition. As we can see in Table 8.1, each of the three nodes identified in the different cases have a similar meaning across cases. The first node consists in a diagnostic of a problem in space. The second node is a solution in space. The third node is a solution in terms of the geography of governance.

In the place-frames, the first component is a diagnostic emphasizing a problem or threat experienced in space. This diagnostic is a selective reading of the site(s) contested emphasizing a problem and a certain way to frame this problem in space. This diagnostic related to the agenda of brokers. The resonance of this diagnostic beyond brokers seemed to be related to spatial practices [although a selective choice of certain spatial practices]. In Montreal for example, the node on vulnerability linked spatialized data from the public health agency with a sensibility to the well-being of children and the elderly, and to the desire to walk and cycle without getting hurt. It was grounded in scientific facts, was normatively appealing to many as a 'good' organization of the city based on their daily practices in space. In Rotterdam The Hague, the utopian frame affirmed the incompatibility of green open spaces with highways, building on

the experience of Midden-Delfland and its recent degradation by a new highway. These diagnostics present contradictions, in space, in need of being addressed by a change in the manner of addressing the problem and, by extension, its solutions.

Table 8.1 *Place-frames identified in the four case studies*

Topics of mobilization	Nodes from the chain of equivalence	Meanings of the nodes for the place
Spaces for traffic calming in Montreal	Vulnerability	Diagnostic, problem in space
	Traffic safety through better street design	Solution in space
	A dynamic local community enabling walking and cycling	Solution in the geography of governance
Spaces of (car/public) transit in Montreal : the Turcot interchange	Unjust conditions of inhabitation	Diagnostic, problem in space
	Solutions through the re-design of the infrastructure	Solution in space
	A metropolitan community enabling public transit	Solution in the geography of governance
Spaces saved from cars in Rotterdam The Hague	Highways incompatible with green open spaces	Diagnostic, problem in space
	Alternative infrastructure of mobility	Solution in space
	A broader territorial/metropolitan scope to the decision-making process	Solution in the geography of governance
Spaces of innovation in Rotterdam The Hague : Smart working = smart travelling	Congested roads	Diagnostic, problem in space
	Flexible work space	Solution in space
	City-regional forms of public-private governance	Solution in the geography of governance

The second node is the solution in space. I showed in each case study how the solution was discursively constructed in opposition to another type of solution, in which the spatial contradiction seemed to the discourse coalition not directly addressed. Traffic safety in neighborhoods of Montreal needed to be addressed by solutions involving the built-environment (car traffic calming) instead of through behavioral incentives and regulations. Public transit

needed to be included in the project of Turcot interchange, on the east-west commuting axis, not added *ex post*. And the highway plans in Rotterdam The Hague had to avoid green open spaces. In these three cases, the solution *in space* was affirmed as a guarantee of results. In the 'Smart working = smart travelling' case, it concerned changes in mobility practices, but which should be enabled by a flexibility in the work space in order for the work space to be better connected with the spaces of personal daily life.

The third node brings forward a solution in terms of the geography of governance. The proposed geography of governance is argued to enable a better resolution of the problem and contradictions in space, and the implementation of the solution. This geography includes a claim for a location or arena where the issue should be investigated and acted upon, but not necessarily in pointing toward a specific authority. Discursive brokers pointed rather to a decision-making process, a planning-regulating process or a participatory process, that should have a certain territorial or scalar scope, and 'fit' with the community experiencing the spatial contradictions. This 'community', of which I discuss further below, could give input and legitimacy to implement the solution in space. Hence, the proposed geography of governance pertained not only to state authorities but also to the regulating authorities' openness to a diversity of actors in another governance arrangement enabling the solution of the utopian frame.

In short, the discourse coalitions studied made car alternatives a spatial issue in multiple and intertwined ways: the problem, solution and governance was given a concrete spatiality. It could have been otherwise. Actors have, in the past, mobilized for car alternatives in a sectoral way, or through user-based strategies (focus on the users of public transit, for example). Civic actors in Montreal could have focused on campaigns to convince Montrealers to cycle, with no link with a local community utopian frame (some of them have this focus). Environmental organizations could have focused only on the inclusion of public transit in Turcot for transit commuters (in a user-based demand frame) with no link with conditions of inhabitation or the governance of it (some organizations have done that). In Rotterdam The Hague area actors could have denounced the relaxation of nature-protection laws with no concrete claims on transport, the socio-cultural values of Midden-Delfland and the territorial decision making process. But discourse coalitions did use place-frames. And when comparing to these alternative scenarios just stated, place-frames, by the scope of the issues they can bundle, appear as powerful tools of coalition-building and discourse transformation.

Place-frames assembling coalitions

In terms of a tool of coalition building, the use of place-frames seems useful, but also risky. I argued in the conceptual chapter, based on a literature review, that place-frames have to be negotiated between the different spatial affiliations within the collective. It has to find resonance and acceptance among the claim makers, those who will mobilize and diffuse the discourse in different groups, communities and institutions. The degree of acceptance may depend on the centrality of the issue in the audiences' lives and the compatibility of the narrative with their other engagements and affiliations (Benford and Snow 2000, 622; Routledge, Cumbers, and Nativel 2007; Pierce, Martin, and Murphy 2011). The diverse 'loyalties' of the activists in their web of affiliations (Simmel 1955) and their motivation coming from their particular link with the space (Harvey 1996), may put certain chains of equivalence at test. In the case studies, I particularly investigated this in considering the efforts to bundle together the diverse motivations of participating actors into a utopian frame.

In Montreal for example, the node of the dynamic community enabling walking and cycling came with a bundle of different but very convergent motivations. Environmental organizations and the health sector presented the local community as a way to enable more walking and cycling. They were motivated by the project of more healthy and environmental-friendly urban neighborhoods. This motivation converged with the motivation for community development of the neighborhood inter-sectoral tables (Sénécal, Cloutier, and Herjean 2008). These local networks were invested for the mobilization on traffic calming and spaces for walking and cycling. They were not only invested by the health and environmental brokers, but also by individual residents coming to these civic neighborhood arenas to make explicit demands for traffic calming. The fact that the inter-sectoral tables network contained a local community territoriality affirming a 'neighborhood voice' (Germain, Morin, and Sénécal 2004) fitted even better with the chain of equivalence from discursive brokers. This point relates to what McAdam, Tarrow and Tilly (2001) discussed as the appropriation of existing relational structures for a new collective action to take place. But the converging motivations were also found in schools (Vélo-Québec's program) and shopping streets associations (Équiterre's program), not traditionally involved in such neighborhood-based action. It was a broad convergence from multiple sectors, giving further credibility to the utopian frame from the discourse coalition. There was thus a supporting network for the discourse, as introduced in relation to proposition 1, the network around a promotion of a local governance for the resolution of experienced problems when walking and cycling in the neighborhood. The wide

range of actors with which discursive brokers were in relation in their programs for traffic calming supported their claim that a dynamic local community was enabling for walking and cycling. The place-frame itself had facilitated their involvement and support, in its complementarity with the actors' motivation for the neighborhood. Adherence to the place-frame provided resources (expertise and visibility from the brokers, grants from the health sector) for their own related project, for example urban revitalization. Collectively, each actor's participation increased the convergence of civic organizations around this goal in the neighborhood and thus the legitimacy of the frame, and its chance of support by borough and city authorities.

In the opposition to Turcot, several actors working in the adjacent neighborhoods had the incentive to work together under the discursive node of unjust conditions of inhabitation near the highway. It was not just about housing and expropriations, or just about the sense of enclave or air pollution: all together these concerns constituted the argument for unjust conditions of inhabitation in opposition to the rebuilding project of Turcot. This collective sense of threat motivated local actors to work together (Int MT). In addition, when looking for solutions, the proposition to focus on more public transit and less car capacity was an unlocking event, allowing for concrete alliances and a broad enlargement of the discourse coalition. It opened the door to alliances with the defenders of public transit and another vision of mobility in the Montreal region, vision of mobility that, in the discourse, was concretely linked with reducing the negative impacts on the surrounding neighborhoods. This multi-scalar link between the problem and the solution made it also possible to reach out to public authorities like the City of Montreal, and to actors which provided discursive resources to the discourse coalition, such as the Montreal Board of Trade.

The place-frame can allow a convergence of different motivations, but only if it does not appear incompatible to the actors' primary motives and affiliations. Some actor's primary motive may already be territorial. In the case of neighborhood inter-sectoral tables in Montreal, this territoriality converged with the utopian frames. But in other cases, the territorial motive of an actor may seem in tension with the utopian place-frame.

The case of the opposition to the NWO highway in the Netherlands illustrates this tension. Most actors involved were there to 'save' particular places from new highways. Hence the demand of a whole metropolitan area without new highways made sense for *Milieudenfensie* but seemed too risky for actors thinking from the point of view of their place and the inevitability of a highway to come somewhere (which shows the strength of the dominant discourse, which was later

weakened by the second interpretative repertoire on the stagnation of car mobility). The utopian frame was then re-interpreted around the joint motivation to protect Midden-Delfland.

A place-frame, hence, faces the risk of losing the support of actors whose own motivations include a relation with space, a certain territoriality, felt as incompatible with the place-frame. A place-frame nevertheless has the potential of uniting other actors, among whom the ones with converging relations to space, and the ones with sectoral motivations for which the territoriality of the place-frame is in itself neutral. Yet even if the place-frame is neutral in relation to the core motivation, actors may still endorse it because the convergence of many actors around it makes it useful tool for their own objective. The place-frame thus appears a powerful tool for coalition building in certain conditions, conditions that the brokers can themselves nurture through relational and discursive brokerage.

The second point about place-frames concerns their capacity to transform dominant discourses. The first proposition states that the co-constitution of discourse and networks, made possible by the work of brokers, can transform the discursive field and change dominant discourses. I argued in this section that place-frames enable, under certain conditions, the convergence of actors and thus this re-assembling of the social networks and the discursive field. This re-assembling of network connections and discourses rests not only on the bundle of motivations from the brokers and close-by supporting actors. It also relies on discursive resources that brokers can attract from the broader set of actors in the discourse coalition, the more fuzzy set of actors potentially sharing discursive affinity with their place-frames. Brokers can attract discursive resources for the three nodes of the place-frames, even from actors that would not necessarily give support to the whole chain of equivalence. In Rotterdam, the brokers used individual statements from the Port of Rotterdam even though this last actor could be supportive of only one of their three nodes. In Montreal, brokers used the narrative from the Montreal Board of Trade and the City of Montreal on public transit. The place-frame thus enabled, with its three nodes, a wide scope of complete or partial adhesion, and of support, giving it further power as a counter-discourse.

Place-frames as road maps for change

Place-frames also seem powerful in the discursive field because they constitute a concrete road-map for change. In identifying a problem, it identifies also spatialized and pragmatic solutions to it. By using a place-frame, one comes to argue that the problem needs to be understood in a certain way to correspond to spatial practices, that the solution needs to be materialized in

space to ensure its implementation, and that the geography of its governance needs to be linked spatially to the framing of the problem and of the solution.

This idea that a collective action frame can include a recipe and rhetoric for change, with not only a solution (prognostic frame) but also a certain framing of political opportunities enabling it, is not new. Gamson and Meyer (1996) argued that activists employed in their frames a rhetoric of change to counter calls for inaction. The activists' frames would include an optimistic perception of political opportunities. Calls for inaction try to discourage activism and reduce the perception of opportunities by referring to the jeopardizing of past gains, the futility of action in the face of existing barriers and the potential perverse effects (Gamson and Meyer 1996, 285, citing Hirschman 1991). In response, activists would employ a rhetoric of change:

Their job is to convince potential challengers that action leading to change is possible and desirable. By influencing perceptions of opportunity among potential activists, organizers can actually alter the material bases of opportunity. [...] Activists counter the jeopardy argument by emphasizing the risks of inaction, and conveying a sense of urgency. If we do not act now, the situation will not remain the same but will become more and more difficult to change. [...] Activists counter the futility argument by asserting the openness of the moment. Windows that are currently open will not stay open for long. [...] Finally, the promise of new possibilities counters the threat of perverse effects. (Gamson and Meyer 1996, 286)

Several of the discursive brokers in the case studies employed this rhetoric of change, in their place-frames. The quotation below illustrates how the place-frame is put as a road map for change. The quotation is taken from a participatory plan from one important broker for traffic calming, the *Centre d'écologie urbaine de Montréal* :

The rapid increase in car use was made possible thanks to the construction and reconfiguration of road infrastructure promoting car fluidity at the expense of non-motorized residents. These changes have had major impacts [...]. The perception of insecurity resulting from the difficult cohabitation with cars discourages active transportation modes such as walking and cycling, and promotes a sedentary lifestyle.

Designing our neighborhoods in the first place for the people who live there, not for cars, is the goal of the *Centre d'écologie urbaine de Montréal* works with the project Green, active and health neighborhoods. Rethinking urban development, by

starting from our streets and sidewalks, prioritizing walking, cycling and public transit, is a great idea not only for the quality of life in a neighborhood, but also for the health of the population and the planet. The time has come to move from discourse to action!

The plan Green, active and healthy Mercier-Est offers a range of tested and feasible action tracks. Obviously, the borough of Mercier-Hochelaga-Maisonneuve, which has been a valuable partner throughout the process, must now exercise a leadership role in what happens next. [...] We rely on partners regrouped in Solidarity Mercier-Est to play a catalytic role in this regard. (CEUM and Solidarité Mercier-Est 2010, IV)¹³⁹

In this quotation, the diagnostic, solution in space and the geography of its governance are stated in a programmatic way. There is an explicit goal of implementation, with local governance networks including the borough authority as actors of change.

In the antagonistic debates, the place-frames also represented road maps for change, tracing the way for an alternative path to the ones currently pursued. The direct antagonism that these discourse coalitions faced meant that their road maps for change were structured more as criticisms than in the collaborative program cited above (although the quotation above contains a criticism of a 'planning for cars' still implemented by other public authorities). In the directly antagonistic cases, the formulation of the three nodes exemplified a comprehensive alternative possibility. In the debates on the NWO in Rotterdam The Hague region, the opponents to the Blankenburg framed a certain diagnostic, a value given to place. They also proposed several alternatives to the Blankenburg infrastructure (Oranje route or other mobility modes). And in their place-frame, it was argued that the diagnostic (incompatibility of green open spaces with highway) and their alternative solutions, had been disadvantaged by the deficient participatory and decision-making processes with a limited territorial scope. It was a comprehensive and thus

¹³⁹ "La progression fulgurante de l'utilisation de l'automobile a été rendue possible grâce à la construction et à la reconfiguration d'infrastructures routières favorisant la fluidité de leurs déplacements aux dépends des résidents non motorisés. Ces transformations ont entraîné des impacts majeurs [...]. La perception d'insécurité qui découle de la difficile cohabitation avec la voiture décourage l'adoption de modes de transport actifs, tels que la marche et le vélo, et favorise un mode de vie sédentaire propre à nos sociétés.

Aménager nos quartiers en premier lieu pour les gens qui y vivent, pas pour les voitures, voilà l'objectif que le Centre d'écologie urbaine de Montréal poursuit avec le projet Quartiers verts, actifs et en santé. Repenser les aménagements urbains, en commençant par nos rues et nos trottoirs, en priorisant les déplacements à pied, à vélo et en transport en commun c'est une excellente idée non seulement pour la qualité de vie dans un quartier, mais aussi pour la santé de la population et de la planète. Le temps est venu de passer du discours à l'action!

Le plan de Quartier vert, actif et en santé de Mercier-Est propose un éventail de pistes d'actions éprouvées et réalisables. Évidemment, l'arrondissement de Mercier-Hochelaga-Maisonneuve, qui a été un précieux partenaire tout au long du processus, doit maintenant exercer un rôle de leadership pour la suite des choses. [...] Nous comptons sur les partenaires regroupés au sein de Solidarité Mercier-Est pour jouer un rôle de catalyseur à cet effet."

difficult criticism. Political parties that would vote in parliament responded to it, the CDA for example did not want that its choice for Blankenburgtunnel be associated with a denial of the place value of Midden-Delfland, and a denial of a thorough democratic process. In addition, the three nodes presented a real alternative path, which could have been chosen in parliament. The place-frame appeared both as a comprehensive alternative path to take, and as a comprehensive criticism.

The place-frames I observed were thus both utopian and pragmatic. Utopian because they involved another possible world in space, with better conditions of living. But also pragmatic because they were constructed to have characteristics to increase their chance of being endorsed. They were comprehensive, logic, even including very concrete normative details. Indeed, in all cases, some of the brokers were involved in very detailed norms and verifications: examinations of the infrastructure, data on transport analyses or concrete design of intersections for traffic safety. With those details making the diagnostic and solution in space very concrete, but foremost because of the comprehensiveness of the three inter-related nodes, the place-frames were rhetorically presented as road maps one could follow to produce places for car alternatives.

The enabling 'community' and the geography of governance

The place-frames also consisted in road maps for change because of their identification of a community enabling change. In each of the utopian place-frames from the case studies, visible in Table 8.1, I indeed found the identification of a community or 'collective actor' able to move the issue forward. This community was linked by their common relation to place. In the spaces for traffic calming, it is a community of actors and residents practicing and making the dynamic public spaces of the neighborhood. In the debate on Turcot, it is a community of commuters transiting on the east-west metropolitan axis. In the debate on the NWO, it is a community valuing the open landscape of Midden-Delfland. In the case of 'Smart working = smart travelling', it is the community of 'employees and employers' with a flexible work time/space. This notion of a community sharing a certain relation with place, and enabling change, was found in all four cases. This notion of community is linked with political power because the identified community is conceived as the basis of planning and decision-making on the topic, indicating the direction for a re-articulation of the current geography of governance.

This common discursive trait of a 'community enabling change' was not anticipated. In the literature, it can be associated with the notion of a 'community of fate', which Hajer defines as "a

group of actors that, because they are all affected by a policy plan, develop a sense of shared interest” (2003, 97). This identified community, however, was deliberately constructed and created by the brokers. It was based on a set of actors (supporting network) mobilized because of a new sense of threat or possibility. Rhetorically however, the brokers built on this supporting network a narrative of the community going beyond those concrete supporting actors, but making them a symbol of it. In the discourse, this community was not just a community of actors explicitly concerned by the plans, as in the 'community of fate' but a 'community' identified as an agent of change. The very spatial practices of the members of that community would provide the motor for change: commuters commuting in public transit (reducing the need for car highway), employees changing their mobility practices through flexible work spaces and work schedules (reducing road congestion), a dynamic community of institutions, shop-owners, residents, schools' committees practicing their neighborhood and designing it to promote walking and cycling.

In the collaborative cases, the re-articulation of the geography of governance to fit with the identified 'community' was done willingly, and to the benefit of the directly concerned state actors (borough authorities in Montreal were glad to be at the center of the local governance of traffic calming, and the Dutch Ministry of Infrastructure and Environment was glad to encourage the entrepreneurial tackling of congestion by hybrid public-private arrangements). Yet, in Montreal the node of the dynamic local community was interpreted in a repertoire allowing actions not only on residential 'protected neighborhoods', but also on the spaces of mobility. This interpretation was in tension with established norms on traffic calming and the previous geography of governance. Hence even in collaborative cases where state authorities had advantages to win in the new form of governance, the identification of this community made it possible, in the Montreal case, to push further the demands for car alternatives.

In the directly contentious cases (on the Turcot in Montreal and on the NWO in Rotterdam The Hague), the re-articulation of the geography of governance to fit with the identified 'community' meant more fundamental changes, changed that the targeted authorities did not favor. In both cases, the re-articulation opposed a planning focused on specific highway segments with no broader picture. In both cases, there was a criticism to the engineering vision of the city by segments of infrastructure, instead of a broader picture of the production of space, a picture including valued forms of 'urbanity' or 'nature'. The production of the metropolitan area by the Ministry of Transport in Quebec and by the Ministry of Infrastructure and Environment in the

Netherlands were criticized and challenged. But the dominant position of those institutions seemed not very much affected by these challenges.

In the two cases, the identification of a community enabling change was accompanied by a request for a broader territory to plan for mobility and quality of life. For the city authorities in the two cases however, the implications were different. As I noted in chapter 1, the power of the engineering Ministry was preponderant in both metropolitan regions, but its relation with the city authorities differed. In Montreal, the discourse coalition received support and discursive resources from the City of Montreal, which first opposed the project of the Ministry. In South Holland, the Ministry and the agglomeration of Rotterdam were strong allies for the implementation of the Blankenburg. In consequence the narrative for a territorially broader area to plan mobility was associated, in Montreal, with a demand for more political autonomy for the metropolis (which wanted with civil society another type of infrastructure, a more 'urban' infrastructure, as part of a broader metropolitan transit network). The broader territorial scope argument in South Holland was rather used to remove power from the central city of Rotterdam and give more to the municipalities directly in Midden-Delfland, and to the city of The Hague ('metropolis' thus meant going beyond Rotterdam's authority). In both cases, the contestation of this state territoriality was argued with reference to the community enabling alternatives. In Montreal this community was an east-west montreal community able to move with public transit and stirred by a central city leadership; in Rotterdam The Hague this was the community dedicated to the preservation of Midden-Delfland. We see thus that the same type of discourse, a place-framing with a community enabling change, was used in the two metropolitan areas by coalitions opposing certain infrastructural choices. A similar discourse implied different demands for the localization of political power.

The work of brokers

So far in this section, I synthetically presented the place-frames and their use by discourse coalitions in the four case studies. Reference to the work of brokers has mainly been implicit. I now discuss more explicitly the results regarding brokerage, beyond what was already presented in 8.1. I come back on the distinction between discursive and relational brokerages, as well as on dynamics between regional and local brokers. Discursive brokers are the ones producing place-frames, defending them in different arenas and adapting them. They need resources (from their position in the network) and some control on the discourses produced. Their power is important but grounded in their context: they are granted a power to intervene

because of the resources they bring to the cause (their ties with other actors and groups, with public authorities, the imported sources of funding, etc.) and their ability to represent a convergence in the positions of the participating actors. They could not invent any discourse and build the case for its use as place-frame; much of the content of the place-frame is already known, experienced or used by some groups before it becomes a joint discourse for the discourse coalition. One could wonder, then, where exactly their contribution lies. At times, the discourse they defend is already an obvious equivalence in their situated context (for example thinking of public transit as a solution for the negative consequences of the Turcot interchange was obvious for environmental organizations). But the way the equivalence is diffused in other sub-groups of the broader network, and becomes associated with another situated discourse (e.g., sense of threat and injustice locally), is where lies the work and inventiveness of brokers. In this sense, it is often difficult to distinguish actors doing discursive brokerage from actors doing relational brokerage, the two building on each other, except when one or the other is obviously lacking for the utopian frame or the coalition to be effective. In the NWO case for example, the equivalence put forward by *Milieudefensie* between the protection of place, an alternative paradigm on mobility and a congestion charge at the metropolitan scale, was quite creative in the context. But the discursive broker lacked a supportive network: it could not accomplish the necessary relational brokerage making the utopian frame effective for coalition-building and discourse transformation.

In the other cases, many of the brokers were both discursive and relational brokers, linking elements of discourse *and* groups of actors together. Or they worked in close teams, one actor producing more discourse, the other working on the supportive network – but their proximity (in terms of frequent contact and same position on the issue at stake) was high.

In Rotterdam The Hague, the new core brokerage team around the first and second interpretative repertoires, composed of *Milieufederatie*, *Natuurmonumenten* and the *Actiecomité Blankenburgtunnel Nee*, together produced discourse and ensured a supportive network of relations and political support. In the movement for Smart Working, Smart Travelling, the *Platform Slim Werken Slim Reizen*, the B50s, the mobility managers as well as the environmental organizations involved were all doing, to different extent, both discursive and relational brokerages.

In Montreal, the brokers making the programs for traffic calming were also both discursive and relational brokers, constructing a discourse, a recipe for their program, and a network to

implement it. Yet, much of their relational brokerage was actually accomplished by local brokers, implementing the campaigns in their own neighborhood networks. The regional brokers designing the programs also differed on the extent to which they worked on building relations for the new geography of governance. We saw that the *Urban Ecology Center* developed more relations to implement a governance to tackle the spaces of mobility. The other brokers rather encouraged the local brokers in the multi-local governance of traffic calming. This difference, embodied in the different interpretative repertoires, meant somewhat different 'road maps for change'.

In the opposition to Turcot, we had another example of an important discursive broker without the capacity for relational brokerage. GRUHM was able to analyze the technical details of the infrastructure, provide analyses of mobility flows and suggest alternative possibilities for the design of the infrastructure, but did not have the ability to structure a network of support (although for quite different reasons than the case of *Milieudefensie* cited above). Other actors provided him relational support and gave attention to his propositions, propositions which in this case were concordant with the motivations and objectives from the other actors of the network.

In the opposition to the Turcot interchange, there were also brokerage dynamics between local and regional brokers. The brokers in the neighborhoods adjacent to the Turcot interchange seemed under more pressure than their regional partners, the issues at stake being very concrete for their partners in the affected neighbourhoods. The car-infrastructure meant important effects on quality of life and expropriations in the neighbourhoods. On the other hand, some community groups also feared the consequences of their opposing stance on the subsidies they received from the government. These two elements meant that, according to our interviews, the local brokers felt more political pressure and had a different emotional and geographic proximity than the regional brokers to the fate of the infrastructure (not counting in this category the political party *Project Montréal*, which could not adopt a detached attitude vis-à-vis this issue, the project being very close to their core political project). This variable proximity explains in part the brokers' different reactions to the MTQ's revised project. For local brokers in *Mobilization Turcot* and for *Projet Montréal*, it had become a question of principles, an issue of injustice. For the regional environmental brokers, it stayed one tactical decision in a series of struggles to improve public transit and reduce car use in the Montreal region.

Let me draw a last contrast on these dynamics between regional and local brokers, on which the Turcot case differed from the NWO case. In Rotterdam The Hague, the core motivation of

regional brokers, *Natuurmonumenten* especially, but also *Milieufederatie*, was to protect the ecological spaces in Midden-Delfland under their direct care. The feeling of responsibility was just as strong for regional brokers than it was for resident associations (*Groeiend Verzet* and the *Actiecomité*) and the organization *Midden-Delfland Vereniging*. The protection of place was a defining characteristic of their organization. Hence, the dynamics observed in the case studies, with respect to the various levels of involvement from brokers could be best described not by a local versus regional differentiation, but by the proximity of the issue at stake from the organization's core mission, and the sense of loss, in terms of their relation to place, that a defeat would signify.

In sum, the four discourse coalitions used place-frames in their mobilization for car alternatives. The place-frames included a diagnostic in space, a solution in space, and the geography of its governance. Place-frames are used to assemble new coalitions, with brokers making links between discursive elements and actors of a wider network in becoming. In the case studies, this network enabled brokers to project a rhetoric of change, with the identification of a community able to move the issue forward. The rhetoric of change associated the solution in space with its new geography of governance. The modifications demanded in the geography of governance did trigger opposition from the targeted public authorities, especially in the contentious cases. I now consider how the place-frames were dynamically constructed and re-interpreted in the face of antagonism.

8.3 The process of place-framing in the face of antagonism

The third proposition of this thesis is that coalitions deal with antagonism through the constitution and constant re-interpretation of a utopian place-frame; the dislocation of the utopian chain of equivalence reduces the capacity of a coalition to act and transform dominant discourses. Interpretative repertoires were presented as parallel narratives working under the general utopia, but providing alternative resources, depending on the context and power dynamics at play in different arenas (Potter 2004; F. Chateauraynaud 2011). The presumed importance of interpretative repertoires in the process of place-framing was that this flexibility in discourse

allows different standpoints and relations to space to cohabit and permit strategic adjustments in order to transform the discursive field.

In the conceptual chapter, I presented the process of place-framing as involving a 'test' of antagonism for the place-frame in relation to the outside of the discourse coalition. Arguments from the discourse coalition are put to test in a series of debates with political opponents which will affect the content of the place-frame. In the articulation process, both the discourse coalition and its political opponents try to give new meaning to nodes and cause a dislocation of the opponent's discourse. In addition, I described an internal 'test', in which the brokers struggled to maintain the unity of the chain of equivalence in the face of the different motivations and affiliations from members and potential adherents. To be sure, this dynamic process of place-framing in the face of antagonism can not easily be separated into 'internal' or 'external' tests. The frontier between the discourse coalition and the outside is dynamically constructed in relation to the antagonism. An external antagonism may be successfully addressed and bring the integration of a new element in the coalition's chain of equivalence; or, the reverse, an internal antagonism may not be successfully addressed and cause discursive elements and actors to be excluded. The frontier of the coalition and its place-frame are dynamic. In the time-frames I looked at, the question was whether the process of place-framing, the dynamic re-interpretation of the utopian chain of equivalence, allowed to maintain unity to the discourse coalition and transform dominant discourses, or whether the chain of equivalence was broken through the antagonism.

As we saw in the conceptual chapter (end of section 2.2), Laclau pointed to two types of situations where dislocation would be more susceptible (as summarized by Torfing 2005, 16–17). Most discourses are capable of including many elements and justifications in their chains of equivalence. But *when a new event or conjuncture happens that cannot be satisfactorily explained* or represented by the discourse, the nodal points of the discourse can be contested and there will be struggles on how to define the problem and solutions, with “a proliferation of floating signifiers” (Torfing 2005, 16). Alternative discursive equivalences may then be forged. A dislocation can also occur *when actors are put in new relational situations* (new networks and web of affiliations and share of resources), triggering new negotiations on the terms of equivalence in the discursive formations and in relation to the external discursive field.

For each case study, I will discuss to what extent interpretative repertoires were used by discourse coalitions to preserve the utopian frame and discourse coalition.

Cases of indirect antagonism

In the two cases of collaborative collective actions, where the antagonism was indirectly experienced, interpretative repertoires were used in a similar way but with a different impact. There is one crucial difference between the two cases that can partly explain this different impact of the interpretative repertoires. In the case of the spaces for traffic calming in Montreal, the leadership of the programs was in the hands of civic actors (although with resources and some control by boroughs, the city and funding agencies) while in Rotterdam The Hague area, the leadership was in the hands of state and private actors, with involvement of civil society actors.

Although in Rotterdam The Hague the whole discourse is about innovation and an entrepreneurial tackling of congestion, it was clear that the state, through funding of the program Better Use and its linkage with city-regions, and through the *Platform Slim Werken Slim Reizen* and mobility agents, was providing the key brokerage resources to make this collective action, and discourse a reality. The Platform, funded by the national state, had for mission to structure a network around 'Smart working = smart travelling'. Our documentary data showed that the Minister used the enthusiasm for 'the new way of working' to showcase the innovative perspective her cabinet had on the tackling of congestion. The more radical interpretation of this innovative tackling of congestion, the repertoire stating that flexible work could reduce investments in road infrastructure, was neither denied, nor confirmed. The hope that 'the new way of working' could eventually reduce the need for new car infrastructure ensured the support of environmental actors and of the 'greener' opposition parties in parliament. But the other interpretative repertoire, that mobility management and the new way of working made fluidity on roads temporarily possible while waiting for the long delivery of new car infrastructure, also allowed the support of political parties in favor of road investments for economic performance. In the Dutch case, the interpretative repertoires thus seemed a tool for the government to receive broad support for the place-frame of 'Smart working = smart travelling'.

Although there were debates on the financing of roads through the Better Use program, and that several actors asked to take more seriously the promise of mobility management and the 'new way of working', the utopian chain of equivalence was not dislocated. The equivalences between congestion as a problem in space, flexible work space as a solution, and private-public territories of governance was not denied. Some actors rather tried to argue for an interpretative repertoire pushing further the implications of the place-frame to reduce investments in more car

infrastructure. This potential remained in the background since it was not acknowledged in concrete decisions from the Ministry of Infrastructure and Environment.

The discourse coalition on spaces for traffic calming in Montreal was also a collaborative type of collective action where opposition was not emphasized. The place-frame was confronted with antagonism, but indirectly. In fact, both the utopian frame and the flexible use of one or the other interpretative repertoire allowed the discourse coalition to avoid clear conflict and still advance its cause for extending spaces for traffic calming.

The node on traffic safety through street design was advocated in the provincial arena, where it received little acknowledgement. The discourse coalition did not win its case with the MTQ. Nevertheless, civic actors continued to ensure their discursive chain of equivalence would have impacts in Montreal. The MTQ had re-directed the civic actors to the Montreal space of action. Hence, the Ministry of Transport had not attacked the chain of equivalence, only its relevance in the provincial political arena.

The node on a dynamic local community enabling walking and cycling was also debated, during the Plateau controversy, but without significantly weakening the utopian frame of the civic actors. In fact, their process of 'community-based' participatory planning was further legitimized by public authorities (city and boroughs) wanting to avoid conflict. In addition, the antagonism experience in the Plateau controversy showed an incoherence in the interpretative repertoire of the 'protected neighborhood': isolated actions from the borough, even if following the protected neighborhood model, had caused impacts and opposition outside the local streets. In our focus group, several actors affirmed that the local community perspective could serve to reduce antagonism and negotiate traffic calming, even within the 'spaces of mobility' (arterial roads), with the involvement of exterior actors. In short the antagonism, rather than breaking the utopian discursive chain of equivalence, strengthened it and supported the use of a more 'radical' interpretation of it by certain brokers, including actors with regulatory powers on the issue.

In both collaborative discourse coalitions, I did observe antagonism, but this antagonism was successfully addressed, within the discourse coalition, by taking advantage of the flexibility of interpretative repertoires. There was no dislocation of the utopian frames. In the two cases, interpretative repertoires were used to strategically choose when to push further for a transformation of norms. In Montreal, it led to the actual acknowledgement of the more radical interpretative repertoire in certain decisions, and to new practices of governance. In Rotterdam

The Hague area however, it served more the interest of the government for the broad support to its place-frame. Place-frames can serve both civic, state (and private) actors, not only through the utopian forms of the place-frames but also through the flexible interpretative repertoires.

Cases of direct antagonism

In the two other cases the discourse coalitions were in position of direct antagonism. Their utopian frame was a counter discourse to the governmental justification of a highway project, the Turcot interchange in Montreal and the Blankenburgtunnel in the region of Rotterdam The Hague. In the first case, there was not really any use of interpretative repertoires by the discourse coalition, while in the second case the interpretative repertoires were essential to adapt to the motivations of the participant members of the coalition, and to the external political context.

In the discourse coalition for an alternative Turcot, the utopian frame was in opposition to the infrastructure project of the MTQ. Yet, I did not observe clear interpretative repertoires allowing a flexible place-frame. There was a diversity of arguments and alternatives to Turcot presented. The different alternative projects did differ in their details. But there were no parallel repeatedly used narratives emphasizing different interpretations in order to better respond to the opponent or to avoid antagonism. The aim of the brokers was to keep making a strong converging call for more metropolitan wide public transit and less car capacity on the Turcot infrastructure.

This utopian chain of equivalence was however dislocated by the Minister of Transport when he announced a dedicated lane for buses, money for more buses going downtown, and investment to improve conditions of inhabitation in the surrounding neighborhoods; but without changes in the geography of governance and without a reduction of car capacity on the infrastructure. The utopian chain of equivalence was dislocated, since the coalition's demands on place had been partially addressed but outside the logic of its chain of equivalence. Furthermore, the political opportunity on which it had counted, and which had given real power to their place-frame in terms of a key actor's support, was changed. The alliance with the City of Montreal was broken, for the mayor accepted the MTQ's revised project with no objections.

The discourse coalition has been unable to cope with this defeat. The difference in the interpretations of this move by the MTQ and the City broke the coalition and the motivations which had bound it together. Certain brokers considered that the MTQ had demonstrated its intention to improve public transit. Since the City had switched sides, they tried to lobby

for marginal improvements. In contrast, *Projet Montreal* demanded as much money for public transit than for the road infrastructure in Turcot (50-50), to contradict the presumed importance of the marginal increase in public transit given by the MTQ and accepted by the mayor of Montreal. Other actors tried to keep mobilizing for the equivalence between the improvement of living conditions adjacent to Turcot and substantially reducing the car capacity of the infrastructure. Each on their own, the actors did not make any important gain. When put to test, the utopian frame had broken into different isolated causes which were not interpretative repertoires: no broker made them hold together, and they did not give meaning to the three nodes of the place-frame. They rather emphasized one node or the other. The node for another geography of governance had been abandoned, the City of Montreal adopting the position of the MTQ.

In sum, the MTQ successfully dislocated the chain of equivalence of the discourse coalition. It did so in modifying just enough its discourse on two of the three nodes (public transit and improvement in adjacent neighborhood), showing the whole utopian frame was both unnecessary and no more possible (with the defection from the City of Montreal). In the end, the discourse coalition did modify the dominant discourse but only marginally. Since the MTQ had showed that some of its requests could be addressed without significant changes leading to an alternative path regarding mobility and its governance in Montreal.

In the discourse coalition against the NWO, the place-frame was also directly developed in opposition to the dominant discourse. In that case, the political alliances between the Minister and the agglomeration of Rotterdam constituted an unfavorable political context. And the desired implication of the province of South Holland did not materialize itself. Interpretative repertoires were used by the brokers of the discourse coalition to try to make room for their place-frame in that difficult political context.

The first interpretative repertoire consisted in focusing on one place: Midden-Delfland. This was meant to rally more easily actors and avoid the perceived radicalism of the 'no highway' narrative, a narrative perceived as radical both within the coalition and outside of it. The node defining an incompatibility between highways and the preservation of green open spaces was applied specifically to Midden-Delfland, with the support from the two other nodes : an alternative existed elsewhere and the governance had been territorially biased. This first interpretative repertoire successfully pushed the discursive frontier. Before, a number of nature

organizations had been involved in negotiating the integration of highway and landscape. Now this integration was framed as an impossibility.

Although the government did not modify substantially its discourse, the whole utopian chain of equivalence from activists was not broken. The government did not respond to the demands to protect Midden-Delfland, nor to consider a broader territoriality, or at least not enough to satisfy any of the brokers of the discourse coalition (a key difference in comparison to the case of Turcot). Realizing that the interpretative repertoire of Saving Midden-Delfland was not enough, *Natuurmonumenten* put forward another repertoire going beyond nature and landscape, to adapt to the external discursive field focusing so much on the fight against congestion to ensure economic performance. This was of course made possible by an element of context: there were statistics showing a stagnation of car mobility. In the second interpretative repertoire, the discursive broker (for which the prime motivation was still place protection) universalized the issue by attacking the justification of new car infrastructure in general.

The re-elected government won the struggle not by replying to the arguments of the discourse coalition (especially the second interpretative repertoire received no refutation), but by ensuring that its project could no more be contested in parliament: it included it in the new governmental coalition agreement. It reached political majority in parliament in bargaining the Labour Party's support for the project in exchange for participation in the government.

Yet the opposition continued, with the brokers of the discourse coalition being still active around their chain of equivalence. With the second interpretative repertoire, the criticism had been widened and so did the range of actors who supported it. The opposition was also visible in parliament, for up to December 2013 (16 months after the election of the second government led by the VVD) opposition parties presented motions to ask to stop the progress of new highway projects until they were re-evaluated in light of lower expected mobility in the future. This demand received no majority vote and triggered no change in policy, but the issue was still contested. It stayed in sedimented discourses and has already been used in one other highway debate in the Netherlands (A13-A16).

The contrast between the two contentious discourse coalitions is interesting. Both of them have not succeeded in changing the choice of the contested car infrastructure. But in the first case, the dislocation of the utopian chain of equivalence led afterward to more fragmented mobilizations for the isolated nodes, with the brokers making no use of interpretative repertoires.

In the second case, even if the government included the highway project in the governmental coalition agreement, the utopian chain of equivalence was not broken. It continued to be advocated in the public sphere, with the two interpretative repertoires giving it broader scope. The breaking of the chain of equivalence thus seems a key instrument for state authorities in cases of direct antagonism. This breaking of the chain of equivalence involved in Turcot not only showing that the complete logic of the place-frame was not necessary, but also removing its relational condition of implementation as identified in the geography of governance (more political autonomy to the City of Montreal on infrastructure of transport). The support of the City of Montreal had given strength to the discourse coalition, but had also made it vulnerable. Their utopian place-frame did not survive the opposition from the Minister and his final agreement with the City of Montreal.

In Rotterdam The Hague, there was also a demand for more local political autonomy (the local municipalities of Midden-Delfland). But the vote of surrounding municipalities against the Blankenburg had little impact. The coalition's place-frame relied less on one concrete authority, and the little involvement of the province of South Holland did not discredit their claim. It was more the concern for a good democratic and territorially 'neutral' process which gave support to the Midden-Delfland community of fate in the wider discursive field. In Rotterdam The Hague, the threat of dislocation concerned more the 'radical' perception of the no-highway proposition, and the effect the focus on one place could have in the discursive field (only an issue for local residents or also for the whole region?). The discourse coalition used interpretative repertoires to avoid the dislocation of its utopian frame, broadening the meaning given to the place to protect and to the need for a new transport infrastructure. Doing so, they maintained the discourse coalition united.

Conclusion to the comparison

In this chapter, I have organized the comparison of the case studies with the three propositions structuring my inquiry. The four case studies differed in terms of their relation to antagonism, and in the location of their opportunity. Place-framing was present in all four cases, although with important variations. The propositions seem to hold for all four cases and, more importantly, to offer heuristic explanations of coalition building and discursive struggles.

With regard to the first proposition, the observed processes allowed a discussion of the constitution of discourse coalitions, with brokers arranging a supporting network and a fuzzy group of actors around it, providing discursive resources and political support to their utopian frame. The supporting network seems crucial for a frame to constitute a serious alternative to the dominant discourse in the discursive field, as I exemplified with the contrast between the effectiveness of the public health arguments and mobility management ideas in the two city-regions. This supporting network can also involve changes in the institutional field, the Montreal case showing how actors creating a new expertise in the public health agency bridged across sectoral barriers of transport, spatial planning, and health policy. This institutional reconfiguration shares characteristics with the social construction of traffic engineering and of the meaning of the 'street' in the beginning of the 20th century (see chapter 1). The expertise producing discourse on the making of urban space for mobility includes discursive struggles, which sediment in institutions, and of which new interpretations can lead to new institutions regulating in other ways the making of urban space for mobility. Existing institutions, and the power they have on other actors and institutions to adhere to certain discourses on mobility, do however set constraints to the evolution of the field.

My prime interest was the use of specific types of discourses, place-frames, to transform dominant discourses on mobility. The four case studies showed the use of place-frames by coalitions. The place-frames were similar in their use of three components: a diagnostic in space, a solution in space, and a solution in the geography of governance. The place-frames were used as a tool of coalition-building. One of the cases showed however that the place-frame was first in tension with the motivations of certain participants; hence it had to be re-interpreted to be a good frame for coalition-building. The place-frames were also often used as road maps for change, in a rhetoric of change linking together the solutions in space with the new geography of governance.

The new geographies of governance asked for by discourse coalitions were structured, in the four cases, around a community of actors capable of making change happen. The emphasis on these *acting* communities was a discursive figure from the brokers, who drew on their supportive network to illustrate a wider community whose spatial practices could make the utopia a reality. If the re-structuring of the governance around such community was concretely experienced and experimented with by the two collaborative discourse coalitions I investigated (on traffic calming and flexible work space), it was much farther from the reach of activists in the contentious cases.

The obstacles they faced in that regard demanded changes in their strategies and in the adaptation of their discourses.

The place-frames were indeed put to test. The use of interpretative repertoires to overcome the conflicts and preserve the coherence of the utopian frame showed a great variability among the four case studies. For the spaces of traffic calming in Montreal, the brokers seemed to use the interpretative repertoires to choose strategically when to push for more transformative demands to the existing norms, and when to fit their requests in the existing regulations. For the innovative tackling of congestion in the Netherlands, it is more the government which benefited from the interpretative repertoire, to keep a broad support to the place-frame. In the directly antagonist cases, the use of interpretative repertoires also differed markedly. For the Turcot project, no interpretative repertoire was used; while in the opposition to the NWO in Rotterdam The Hague, they were essential for the evolution of discourses and the maintenance of the opposing coalition through time. In sum, the use of interpretative repertoires seem to be very dependent on the context. This context relates not only to the abilities of the brokers, but also to what Lemieux (1998) had conceptualized as the interplay between the coherence within the coalition and the coherence in relation with the outside: can the discourse coalition manage variability within the group in order to be more efficient in relation to its opponent? In any case, the contrast between the utopian place-frame and the interpretative repertoires shows the constant tensions in the chain of equivalence, both from within the coalition and outside of it. Those tensions are at the basis of the core challenges of collective action in general, and by extension, of collective action on particular places.

In this research, I have studied place-framing as a tool of collective action, used by coalitions to transform dominant discourses on the making of urban space for mobility. The transformative potential of place-framing was thus considered, but did not materialize itself in many of the case studies, at least not in important ways. The frontiers in the discursive field were somewhat modified in all cases, but with new meanings to specific nodes in at least two of the four case studies (on the spaces of traffic calming and on the opposition to the NWO to protect Midden-Delfland), although the discursive field was certainly not transformed as much as the activists had wished for. In the two other cases, the place-frame was either used (Smart Working Smart Travelling) or dislocated (for Turcot) by the Ministries of Transport, with some (in the last case very marginal) modifications in the discursive field. A longer timeframe would facilitate the detection of the more substantial effects place-framing on the discursive field on mobility. Yet,

the short timeframe I considered allowed for a close look at the micro-processes of articulation in the discursive and network practices from actors and coalitions. The interaction, within the articulation process, between the objectives from the coalition to transform dominant discourses and the objective of state actors to go through with their policy does not invalidate the role that place-framing can have. I suggest instead that such framing tool can be mobilized by a diversity of actors and for a diversity of political agendas.

These comparative findings will give substance to our concluding remarks on the theoretical and methodological contributions of this research, and to its limits and possible extensions.

GENERAL CONCLUSION

The meaning of space for collective and contentious action has been discussed in various ways in the academic literature. Until recently, the discussion on socio-spatial relations was dominated by the rediscovery of the notion of 'scale' as a social and political construction. It was used in analyses of social movements and place-based mobilization in need of scalar shift or scale-jumping (Marston 2000, Cox 1998). Multi-spatial frameworks have been developed, re-problematizing the notions of place and territory, in relation with scale and networks (Jessop, Brenner, and Jones 2008; Leitner, Sheppard, and Sziarto 2008). In the last decade, several geographers have turned away from more structural political-economic analyses to study how representations and discourses were politically important (MacKinnon 2011), with concepts such as place and scale frames, spatial imaginaries, as well as territorial and scalar narratives (McCann 2003; Martin 2003; González 2006; Boudreau 2007; González 2011; Kaiser and Nikiforova 2008). Place has also been more and more discussed in relational terms, i.e. how places are constructed by interactions *in situ*, with an assemblage of connections stretching beyond one site (Massey 1994, Amin 2004, Pierce, Martin and Murphy 2011). Albeit all these developments, scholars argued that the debates on the meaning of space in geography has stayed at an upper abstract level of explanation far from the study of the actual categories of practice from activists (Moore 2008; Martin 2013). Moore, who explicitly made this criticism, argued indeed to study the categories of practice, defined as "categories of everyday experience; developed and deployed by ordinary social actors" instead of discussing the categories of analysis, defined "as experience-distant categories used by social scientists" (Moore 2008, 2007, citing Brubaker and Cooper 2000, and drawing on Bourdieu).

My contribution is resolutely grounded in the practices of actors, actually in their discursive and network practices. This has meant two types of contributions for this thesis: first, methodological contributions, with the tools developed to make such investigation of relational and discursive practices possible; second, conceptual contributions, on the notion of place-framing. The notion of place-framing was already present in the literature (Martin 2003; 2013). My contribution was to explicitly consider place-framing as a discursive process linking claims on the desires for a space with the geography of its governance. In terms of categories of practice, I will outline below how place-framing works on two angles of the experience of the politics of space for activists: antagonism and opportunity. I first synthesize the process of place-framing as I conceptualize it, to then follow with the methodological contributions and, afterward, the

conceptual contribution on place-framing. I end the conclusion with the limits and possible extensions of this doctoral research.

Place-framing was studied as a process structured by the work of brokers. The manner by which space is relevant for activists wishing to transform dominant discourses was investigated through an analysis of the challenges met by brokers. It was then the experience of the resources and constraints that space provided for brokers, in their work for the discourse coalition, which was investigated. These challenges of brokers relate to their attempts to structure a network of actors and articulate a joint discourse, a collective action frame, which gives meaning to a place and has the potential to transform dominant norms on mobility. Brokers face challenges within their own collective, to create enthusiasm and adhesion to a discourse that they adapt to the participants' affiliations and motivations. They also face the challenge of defending the frame in the wider discursive field, and to adapt it when necessary and strategically, in order to transform dominant discourses. It is through these discursive and relational challenges that space, as a category of practice from activists, was explored.

Methodological contributions

The process I described above imply a specific angle from which to study collective action. The two methodological contributions of this thesis concern the *how* to investigate coalition-building and collective action.

The first contribution is the focus on brokers, as a way to capture processes of collective action and coalition building. Coalitions and collectives are composed of an important number and variety of participants over-lapping in complex ways. To organize and focus the empirical investigation of such collectives, brokers constitute good entry points. If brokers are not representative of the experience of the coalition and of the mobilization for all participants, they embody many of the key challenges which investigators of coalitions and collective action are interested in, i.e. the discursive and relational challenges outlined above. My focus on brokers was inspired by the work of Ann Mische and Georges Simmel. It consisted in combining a perspective from a social network analysis, considering brokers as pivotal points between different groups, having thus special resources and control, and an approach from the cultural branch of social network analysis, emphasizing how these actors have much 'work' to do to

conciliate the different affiliations and projects of the participating actors. The relevance of this focus on brokers is grounded in the literature. It is grounded in a relational process-based approach, in the spirit of what McAdam, Tilly and Tarrow (2001, 2008) have been proposing for some years. It also builds on new developments in geography, which emphasized the role of brokers (Pierce, Martin and Murphy 2011), and 'network imagineers' (Routledge, Cumbers and Nativel 2007) in the making of spatial imaginaries. Pierce, Martin and Murdoch (2011) already paved the way in proposing to focus on brokers to consider collective action processes giving meaning to places.

The second methodological contribution concern the manner to investigate the dynamic production of discourses by coalitions and collectives. I combined elements of the discourse theory from Laclau and Mouffe with other discursive tools. In the proposed framework, the production of discourses by collectives is studied by the identification of chains of equivalence, which constitute snapshots of collective action frames, constituted in relation to the antagonistic elements in the discursive field. In addition, the dynamic aspect is studied through the identification of interpretative repertoires (Potter and Wetherell 1987), repertoires that allow a certain flexibility and adaptation to the utopian chain of equivalence. This allows for the analysis of the ways coalitions constitute and adapt dynamically their joint discourse, and how both the utopian frames and the coalitions can endure through time through this process.

The relevance of this contribution relates to the use and criticism of the notion of framing and collective action frames. The framing approach was criticized as being too static and considering too little the interactions between the producers of the discourse and their context. My approach to study framing processes was designed to take account of the dynamic production of discourse in a discursive field characterized by antagonism. The focus on antagonism in Laclau and Mouffe does not mean that it is useful only in cases of direct conflict: as I have shown, the conflict is at times more indirectly experienced by the discourse coalition. But to focus on antagonistic elements allows to identify the obstacles and possibilities for a change in dominant discourses. The bottom line is that the analysis of discourse through debates and conflict provides a heuristic way to investigate the issues at stake, and their evolution.

The first and second contributions are related: they were blended together in the investigation of my case studies. The theory of Laclau and Mouffe allowed an easy link with dynamics of coalitions, through the angle of the production and adaptation of joint discourses by coalition members. In the manner I have used it, the approach allows to jointly study the evolution of

coalitions and of discourses, and to consider the capacity of brokers to hold a coalition around a chain of equivalence, to avoid a dislocation of both the utopian frame and the coalition. The chain of equivalence from Laclau and Mouffe seems a good way to capture the force of a political idea by the linkage (equivalence) between different elements. When the meanings of the different elements become disconnected, the force of the political idea is reduced. And when this political idea was the glue uniting actors together in a collective, then the collective will likely dissolve. However, the political idea can evolve, and the collective survive, as long as the participating actors support the new interpretations of the equivalences.

The methodological contribution of this thesis is thus twofold. The first contribution is the focus on brokers, as a specific angle from which one can consider agency in collective action processes and spatial frames. With agency conceptualized, let me recall, as the capacity from actors to appropriate existing norms and innovate in a field of constraints, “in accordance with their personal and collective ideals, interests and commitments” (Emirbayer and Goodman 1994, 1442, see 2.4). The second contribution is the discursive framework, analytically defining a collective action frame as a utopian chain of equivalence with interpretative repertoires ensuring its variability and resilience.

Conceptual contribution : place-framing as a tool of collective action

These two methodological contributions enabled me to investigate how space was involved in the discursive and relational challenges encountered by activists. How did space turn out to matter in their practices? The experience of space for brokers and discourse coalitions turned around finding *opportunity* in a geography of governance, and making gains on the *antagonisms (or conflicts)* in the discursive field. Both opportunity and antagonism can be acted upon through what I have coined place-framing.

The discussion of the experienced politics of space in terms of opportunity and antagonism is embedded in my *conceptualization* of discourse and of collective action. The work of Laclau and Mouffe offers not only useful tools for the investigation, mentioned above, but also provides for the theory of articulation, focusing on antagonism. Articulation is the process through which nodes are given meaning by their linkage with new discursive elements. This process happens in a state of antagonism where the discursive field and the meaning given to specific elements

are not stable. Antagonism defines a situation where there are dominant (or hegemonic) discourses, but no 'objectified' discourses. The boundaries between discursive formations are still in flux. In this articulation process, actors can focus on giving meaning to a particular space, tentatively redefining it as place or territory, with a new position in the (scaled and relational) geography of governance.

Let me give an example of this articulation from one of my case studies. In the opposition to the highway segment NWO, the discourse coalition mobilized to give meaning to the place Midden-Delfland in South Holland. The previous meaning of Midden-Delfland, as a place to protect and enhance the value of, had been institutionalized in a law and in state investments in what was called Midden-Delfland's 'reconstruction'. Midden-Delfland had specific qualities, as a heritage site remnant of older Dutch landscape and as an open green area in an ecological network; these qualities were promoted by nature and resident associations, as well as local municipalities. The new government, however, proclaimed the right to construct a (second) highway segment through the place. The reason given was the economic urgency of fighting congestion. This governmental discourse gave a new meaning to Midden-Delfland, from a particular place to a sum of characteristics that could either be preserved by mitigating the impacts of the road, or compensated by in re-investments for nature in other sites. The brokers of the discourse coalition engaged into the discursive work of showing the incompatibility of the highway with the place of Midden-Delfland. Midden-Delfland had been reduced to a space in-between cities, a space characterized by the 'missing highway segments'. In opposition, the discourse coalition pushed for the re-attribution of Midden-Delfland as place. Much of the debate against the NWO was structured around those lines: Can Midden-Delfland be saved even with the building of a new highway segment? Going even further, the discourse coalition presented the future of Midden-Delfland as part of the future of the region, in demanding a broader territorial scope to the decision-making process. Hence the question became not only 'Can Midden-Delfland survive the highway?', but 'Can the region (in terms of liveability), survive the highway?' In response, the government and economic actors responded: 'Can the region survive *without* the highway?' Question to which the discourse coalition responded yes, considering the stagnation of car mobility. Through these interactions, we see that the meaning-giving to Midden-Delfland (and to the fuzzy region around it) was articulated in relation to the conflict with the proposed highway. I have been calling this meaning-giving process 'place-framing'.

In this process of place-framing through antagonism, space seems to be experienced by activists in a way that Lefebvre conceptualized it: space as the medium through which we experience socio-political contradictions. Individuals and organizations experience conflicts in space. Through discursive articulation, collectives aim at giving new meaning to the place to overcome these conflicts.

Besides antagonism, I also emphasize opportunity. In the place-framing example summarized above, the search for *opportunity* from activists was just as present in the meaning given to place, than was antagonism. The utopian frame consisted in demanding political power to the 'community of fate' around Midden-Delfland, with the support of the province, the local municipalities, or the opposition parties in parliament. The new geography of governance would include, as local interlocutors in the decision-making process, a broader fuzzier region, a green metropolis including The Hague, instead of the sole emphasis on the City of Rotterdam, whose alliance with the port and the national government offered no easy re-articulation of the dominant discourses.

The search for opportunity, as a component of the politics of space experienced by activists, had been introduced through the existing literature. It is explicitly present in the social movement literature, with the concept of political opportunity structure, and implicitly present in the geographic literature on the politics of scale (and on place-based collective action). In the literature on the politics of scale, opportunity to influence policies and decision-making has been studied in terms of the access to the scales of regulation, which were considered far from the actual scales of practice of activists (Swyngedouw 2004; Cox 1998). The literature on 'scale-jumping' was criticized as being too simplistic and reductive. Indeed, the case studies have shown that it is not so much about access to one scale, but rather about a system of political alliances and inter-relations between the public authorities on the contested issue, a context facilitating to various degrees the mobilization of actors and their transformation of dominant discourses. In the end, it is not so much about scales but about relations among actors and institutions with each their own relation and power on the spaces at stake. Yet, there are power differentials among these actors and institutions, power differentials that the concept of scale has tried to pay tribute to (Jonas 2006). I think that the broader notion of geography of governance can capture this fact too.

The notion of geography of governance was investigated not only as a pre-existing context where lies a set of opportunities, but also as an object of claim-making. The geography of

governance consists in the experienced political opportunities of activists and their claims to change it. This discursive work to change the set of political opportunities by activists has been noted in the social movement literature before (Gamson and Meyer 1996).

The claims for another geography of governance did not consist simply in demanding access to one (territorial) arena or another. It consisted in requests to re-deploy the geography of governance in order to transform the dominant discourses. The motivation was to transform certain norms and practices, and the new geography of governance consisted in a practical (even though often very ambitious) manner to reach that goal. The inter-relation between the two types of claims [norms on a site and the geography of their governance], as two components of the strategic representation of place, is also what distinguishes my work from similar studies in this domain. Martin (2003, 2013) emphasizes desires and grievances for the neighborhood, but without articulating much the link with neighborhood political power. McCann (2003) does the reverse, emphasizing the scalar aspect of the political debates, but less the content of the demands. Boudreau (2003, 2004) makes the link more concretely, in presenting territory “as an instrument used to attain a broader goal (such as quality of life, social justice, identity)” (2003, 184). Territory, in her sense, was embodied in the boundaries of municipalities, which groups wanted to see modified or conserved.

I sought to problematize and investigate the ways activists, within their frames, combine demands on what they wanted in terms of the making of space for mobility and demands on the position of the political power over that place, in the geography of governance. Hence the strategic representations of place included a diagnostic in space, a solution in space and a solution in the geography of governance. The presence of these components of the frames in the four case studies testifies to the relevance of such categories for activists.

Place-framing is different from the territorial strategies identified by Boudreau, in that it can include a more diverse set of spatial imaginaries than the focus on concrete territorial boundaries. In the case studies, the territorial boundaries were in fact in most cases fuzzy, yet the localization of the political power to regulate the contested norms on a site was the key concern. Place-frames are also specific in that they are constituted from a diversity of relations to space, which converge into a collective action frame. Yet the diverse relations that participants have to space and the external meanings attributed to the space can always put the place-frame at test.

The conceptual contribution of this thesis is thus to introduce place-framing as a tool of collective action. Place-framing, of course, was not named as such by the actors and brokers I studied. But the constituents of the place-frames and the dynamic process of its elaboration was observed in the case studies. The two components of place-frames were experienced and mentioned explicitly by actors: the antagonism on the making of space for mobility, and the search for an opportunity to change it in the political system. The actors have combined in ingenious ways, in their discourses, these two components of their experienced politics of space, in order to act upon it. The notion of place-framing accounts for the making and use of such claims in political debates.

Limits and possible extensions

The findings on place-framing are related to the specificities of my case studies. I discuss three points. These three points constitute limits to this research, but also imply possible extensions: first the governance in flux of the regions I investigated, second the specificity of the topic of the making of urban space for mobility, and third the building blocks which my cases corresponded to, in a wider range of eventual cases of discourse coalitions using place-framing.

The first element that may impact the content of the place-frames I observed is the moving governance context in both regions I investigated. Both Montreal (which has recently known consolidation, de-amalgamation, new metropolitan institution) and Rotterdam The Hague (failed creation of metropolitan provinces, creation of urban agglomeration bodies, loss of veto from municipalities, recent projects of new metropolitan bodies) have experienced effective and tentative territorial reforms, with changes in boundaries, power, and competencies among the different authorities, in the last 10 to 15 years. These changes in the governance context are still discussed, and public and civic actors alike are still adapting to it and experimenting with it. This context of a governance in flux may encourage actors to make claims for another geography of governance, since changes in institutions and in the share of competencies do not seem impossible. And, in most cases, the propositions in the place-frames appear less demanding than territorial reforms undergone by state authorities, constituting in network forms of governance or the re-positioning of power and competencies among existing authorities. One may even interpret these propositions on the geography of governance as the contribution from civic actors to improve the incomplete territorial reforms from the state, in order to improve

transport and mobility policy in their region. In contexts with less changes in the institutions and governing practices, perhaps I would have found no demand about the geography of governance, activists considering this type of request as being too unlikely to generate change. Case studies in stable institutional contexts would be necessary to draw some conclusion in that regard.

Second, the topic of the making of urban space for mobility also raises particular conflicts in space. In chapter 1, I have outlined how the conflict between the spaces devoted to car mobility seems to have evolved, for several decades, through a power struggle between different territorial and scaled public authorities, with the expertises of traffic engineering concentrating in higher state departments, with a differentiated access from the public. The activists for car alternatives and for other values to urban places have, in some cases, been formulating their grievances in relation to a perceived oppression coming from higher state authorities, with a zone of manoeuvre and a space for resistance in cities. Yet, the room for manoeuvre in cities depend on the way the infrastructure for mobility are tied to other interests and stakes. In Rotterdam, for example, the modernistic ambition in city building as well as the economic stakes of the port have affected the opportunity to resist car infrastructure in important ways. In the case studies I investigated, the spaces of the neighborhoods, of the region and of a metropolitan axis of mobility were the major geographies of governance proposed to escape the dominance of the national ministry of transport or of infrastructure, and its particular framing of mobility in the city.

There may be something specific about the regulation of mobility and transport infrastructure which makes it particularly vulnerable to the strategies of regulation by state authorities, or to different authorities' territorial projects. In that context, you would expect activists opposing their policy to also play on that register, perhaps more than on other topics. Yet, it seems that other topics could also be characterized by territorial and scalar projects from the state, with demands for another geography of governance by activists in response. The existing literature on scale and place frames, scalar narratives, and spatial imaginaries from activists mobilizing on a diversity of topics, suggests so indeed. The evaluation of how these different terms from social scientists refer to similar or different categories of practice from activists could be however more thoroughly considered.

There could also be fascinating connections to make between this research and the wider field of representations arising from the interplay between mobility and urban space. The conflict in the uses of space for movement versus stay produces a whole set of challenges and questions

to which everybody is, at one time or another, confronted. This made the mobility issue an interesting one to study place-framing. It is experienced by many, and triggers various spatial imaginaries. The spatial imaginaries on the interaction between mobility flows and places go well beyond what I have explored in this thesis. Presumably, mobility practices is one way to experience the world and to become a citizen (Godefroy and Boudreau 2011), and the diversity in mobility practices probably generates a myriad of spatial imaginations, with multiple implications on social and political life. I have focused on the convergence of different spatial motivations into place-frames, convergence enabling collective action and the transformation of the discursive field on the making of urban space for mobility. It would be interesting, however, to compare how the place-frames I observed fit well or not with representations from actors outside the realm of political debates. For example, does the place-frame on 'dynamic local community enabling walking and cycling' fit with the spatial imaginaries of families choosing to stay in Montreal or families choosing to leave for less dense sectors of the metropolitan region? Does the place-frame of an enabling community of west to east commuters on the island of Montreal, supporting a Montreal leadership for public transit, fit with the spatial imaginaries of persons actually experiencing that commute? How selective, representative or distortive are those place-frames for actors outside the networks of mobilization and collective action? These would also be very interesting questions to consider.

In addition, it would be interesting to consider how much the place-frames constituted to act upon the making of a metropolitan space for mobility are linked or not to discourses and place-frames advocated in other debates. I said almost nothing on the issue of climate change in this thesis, although the issue relates clearly to mobility and transport. If the brokers I studied did mention climate change from time to time, they did not include it in their chains of equivalence, chains of equivalence which were structured to provoke changes in the urban and metropolitan settings. They could have done so. In the Netherlands especially, the City of Rotterdam is a front-runner in terms of policy-making to adapt to climate change, and the country and region are clearly at risk in that regard (they are under sea level). Yet, actors have not really made the link in their discourses on mobility, at least not the key brokers structuring the discourse coalitions. Why is it so? In other arenas where climate change is discussed, is the urban and metropolitan setting debated and included in the chains of equivalence, or is it also at the periphery of this discursive field?

The third element representing a limit and possible extension of the thesis concerns the characterization of the case studies as building-blocks in a wider field of eventualities. The building-blocks were defined with the criterion of the position of the discourse coalition in relation to antagonism and to opportunity. My results on place-framing are specific to the building-blocks to which my case studies correspond, and would need to be contrasted with other range of possibilities in terms of opportunity and antagonism. The design of the research with the specific attribution of a position in relation to antagonism and opportunity, as types of building blocks, allows to consider and contrast other building blocks with a similar research design (with of course the necessary caution and contextualization any comparison and contrast implies).

In terms of the location of opportunity, the cases studied represent building-blocks where opportunity lied in the neighborhood/local community, metropolitan region or axis of mobility, or in the coalition government, all in reaction to dominant discourses by the Ministries from the national (or provincial) government. Although the dominant discourses I observed were part of wider national, european and global discursive trends, they were embodied within particular institutions in the national state. It would be interesting to consider cases where the dominant discourses were promoted from elsewhere. Consider the recent mobilization for free public transit in Greece, for example, which opposed dominant discourses from global and European politics, with attempts to resist it in the city of Athens. I wonder what types of discourses were there formulated, and if they had the form of place-frames.

My cases represented building-blocks in the middle of the range of antagonism, although I did provide a contrast between more collaborative and contentious cases. More radical conflict situations should be considered, where there is no alliance with any state authority. At the other extreme, the investigation of cases with apparent absence of conflict should also be considered. In such cases, one could investigate further how the dominant discourse manages to annihilate conflict. The results observed in my cases studies, on the content and process of place-framing, would need to be strengthened with these more extreme cases, in a wider range in terms of the intensity of conflict and the localization of opportunity. The same can be said about the assertion that place-framing can serve a variety of political agendas and can be used as much by public and private actors than by civic actors and social movements.

Scholars of urban studies have noted how discourses of 'community' and of the promotion (or preservation) of 'a sense of place' have been used by urban elites or governments for a variety of purposes, for instance to support gentrification or the quest for a more (socially and ethnically)

homogenous environment (Purcell 2001; Hankins and Walter 2012). These terms are also part of the justification for the rolling back of public provisions of services, with the ideal of self-reliant dynamic communities taking responsibility of their futures (Raco 2005; Mayer 2009). This use does not mean that place-frames can not constitute tools to transform dominant discourses. The discursive struggle is then precisely about the equivalences to include in the definitions of 'place' or of 'community'. And this discursive struggle is linked with a challenge to constitute effective supporting networks, with actors and relations supporting the meanings given to place and community in the place-frame. This supporting network can be formed by a mix of public and civic actors, as we saw in the case studies. Civic actors may actually *want* to be involved with the state in such place-framing process, *possibly* giving further legitimacy and leverage to their actions.

If place ideals are part of all sorts of discourses, it becomes even more relevant to study how place-frames are used in politics, in what kinds of coalitions and for what effects on the articulation of discourse and, eventually, on the production of space.

APPENDIX 1. SYNTHÈSE DE LA THÈSE EN FRANÇAIS

L'objectif de cette thèse est de considérer l'apport des discours de type *place-frames*, dans l'action collective et l'évolution des discours en matière de mobilité. Elle débute par une introduction aux objectifs de la thèse et une problématique sur les enjeux politiques de l'organisation de l'espace pour la mobilité. La problématique introduit également les conflits de transport vécus dans les deux régions à l'étude, Montréal au Canada et Rotterdam La Haye aux Pays-Bas, et les rapports entre institutions et expertises, qu'ils comportent (chapitre 1). S'en suit une revue de littérature sur des notions de réseaux sociaux, de discours et de production de l'espace, qui mène au cadre conceptuel élaboré (chapitre 2). Ce cadre conceptuel porte sur le processus de *place-framing*. Le processus de place-framing est examiné dans une comparaison de type 'building-block', avec quatre cas variant sur les dimensions du conflit et de l'accès aux autorités publiques. Le design de cette recherche comparative est présenté dans le chapitre de méthodologie (chapitre 3). Y sont aussi présentés les outils de collecte de données ainsi que les méthodes pour l'analyse de discours et de l'évolution des réseaux et coalitions. Les études de cas suivent, en commençant par les deux cas à Montréal (chapitres 4 et 5) et en suivant par les deux cas dans la région de Rotterdam La Haye (chapitre 6 et 7). Suite à la présentation de chaque cas, le chapitre 8 consiste en une analyse comparative suivant les trois propositions énoncées pour répondre à la question de recherche. La thèse se termine par une conclusion sur les contributions théoriques et méthodologiques.

L'introduction de la thèse pose la question de la signification des discours 'spatiaux' énoncés dans des débats publics. Combien de fois entend-on, durant un débat, que l'enjeu est traité à la mauvaise échelle, que les autorités devraient considérer pour une planification un territoire plus large, avec des espaces connexes par exemple, ou que l'intervention devrait être mieux située vis-à-vis d'une certaine problématique spatiale? Avec les participants les plus ambitieux demandant même une reconfiguration du pouvoir politique, avec plus de pouvoirs à leur ville, leur quartier, à leur province ou à un organisme métropolitain. Or, ce type de discours, si tel en est qu'on peut le qualifier comme 'type', semble avoir été peu étudié comme catégorie de discours des acteurs, comme manière de s'engager dans un débat et d'imaginer un autre monde possible. Comment les participants viennent-ils à les formuler, et pour quels effets? Comment sont-ils liés aux liens qu'entretiennent les participants avec l'espace en jeu, ou leurs tactiques et stratégies dans un certain contexte politique? Est-ce que ces discours spatiaux demandent des changements radicaux, progressifs ou cosmétiques dans les institutions et le

contenu des politiques? Ces questions sont étudiées à travers l'enjeu de la construction de l'espace urbain pour la mobilité, avec les débats et mobilisations sociales que cela soulève.

Chapitre 1. Problématique

Le chapitre 1 introduit la problématique de la construction de l'espace urbain pour la mobilité, comme source de conflit et objet d'action collective. Les conflits sur la construction de l'espace urbain pour la mobilité sont vécus à différents niveaux. Dans les pratiques quotidiennes, il y a des conflits dans l'usage de l'espace entre différents modes de transport, ainsi qu'entre la mobilité et les usages plus sédentaires de l'espace. La mobilité implique une certaine organisation de l'espace, avec la mise en place d'infrastructures qui font aussi l'objet de débats publics. L'emplacement de ces infrastructures est déterminant pour l'accessibilité des citoyens à des services et à des activités, et affecte la convivialité et l'attractivité des zones urbaines. La nature des infrastructures de transport est aussi importante pour ce qui est de la performance environnementale des agglomérations urbaines, ainsi que leurs degrés d'étalement dans l'espace périurbain. Les décisions en matière de mobilité et de transport proviennent en partie d'expertises, telles que l'ingénierie et l'urbanisme, qui se sont codifiées et ont institutionnalisé une certaine façon d'envisager le problème du transport en milieu urbain.

La mobilité est définie, suivant Cresswell (2006, 2010), comme la production sociale du mouvement. Elle consiste donc en le mouvement des individus et des biens à travers l'espace, comme réalité empirique, mais aussi un mouvement qui prend toute une série de significations dans le champ du discours et des idées. Car les possibilités en matière de mobilité sont produites par des pratiques sociales et des décisions politiques. L'organisation de l'espace pour la mobilité, par exemple, implique des choix sélectifs, et donc des conflits et désaccords potentiels dans cette organisation du mouvement, sur des questions comme, par exemple, quelle route est choisie pour telle ou telle infrastructure et, à quelle vitesse une personne peut-elle se déplacer?

Je me concentre sur ce type de questions telles qu'elles sont posées par des activistes et coalition d'acteurs dans l'espace métropolitain, particulièrement du point de vue des mobilisations pour les alternatives à la voiture. Les mobilisations pour des alternatives à la voiture comportent plus que des demandes d'accès à un mode particulier de mobilité. Cet accès dépend en fait de toute une série d'infrastructures ainsi que d'une organisation de l'espace permettant la pratique de tel ou tel mode. Des trains ont besoin de stations et de rails, les

automobiles de stationnements (ainsi que du carburant, manufacture automobile, système d'autoroute, etc.). Et la pratique de la marche et du vélo demande, ou du moins se voit facilitée, par un certain aménagement des rues, ainsi qu'une densité du bâti et une mixité des fonctions (Henderson 2009). Les mobilisations pour des alternatives à la voiture concernent donc toute cette organisation de l'espace permettant d'autres modes que l'usage de l'automobile. Or, la croissance de l'usage de l'automobile dans les villes a rendu plus précaire la position qu'y occupaient d'autres modes par le passé. Des chercheurs ont commencé à analyser sous le terme de 'automobilité' le régime « rendant possible et dans plusieurs instances nécessaire, l'usage de l'automobile » (Bohm et al. 2006, traduction libre).

J'aborde l'évolution des expertises de l'urbanisme et de la planification du transport, plus particulièrement la spécialisation des ingénieurs de la circulation (trafic engineering). Aux Pays-Bas, la longue tradition de planification spatiale diminue, selon Mom and Filarski (2008), les ampleurs que va prendre le développement autoroutier, surtout en ce qui concerne leur impact sur les villes. La marge de manœuvre laissée aux autorités locales, de même que plusieurs mobilisations réagissant au nombre accru de véhicules dans les rues étroites des centres urbains, va mener à la préservation d'espaces piétonniers, de nouveaux modèles en terme d'apaisement de la circulation, ainsi que le déploiement d'infrastructures cyclables. Entre les villes par contre, le réseau autoroutier se développe de manière importante. De même dans la ville de Rotterdam, qui est une anomalie en terme de forme urbaine pour une ville hollandaise. Elle fut détruite pendant la Deuxième Guerre mondiale et reconstruite dans un style moderniste, avec de larges boulevards et un réseau routier supportant le développement du Port.

Au Québec, les débats publics sur les développements autoroutiers dans les dernières années ont opposé les visions des infrastructures de transport du Ministère du Transport et de la Ville de Montréal. Historiquement, le service d'urbanisme de la Ville de Montréal, dès les années 1940, avait des plans pour une autoroute est-ouest traversant l'île de Montréal (Poitras 2009). Le développement du métro était aussi perçu comme une solution privilégiée pour la mobilité dans le centre de Montréal. Et les urbanistes de la Ville furent aussi engagés dans une vision d'intégration des autoroutes urbaines mises en place par le Ministère provincial dès 1960, les associant à des opportunités de rénovation et de développement urbain, mais pour lesquelles il fallait limiter les fractures du tissu urbain. Avec les pressions du public et des mobilisations contre l'autoroute est-ouest dans les années 1970, l'enjeu de la préservation du patrimoine et des logements furent davantage mis à l'avant-scène.

Cette introduction aux cas montre une évolution et influence mutuelle entre la pratique de l'urbanisme dans les villes et l'ingénierie de la circulation, en interaction avec des mobilisations sociales. Surtout, elle met l'accent sur une institutionnalisation, à partir des années 1960, de certaines normes d'ingénierie de la circulation dans des institutions fortes qui ont cadré le 'problème de transport en milieu urbain' d'une certaine façon, dans un contexte sociétal où l'ingénierie paraissait pouvoir résoudre tous les problèmes. L'aspect institutionnel de cette standardisation apparaît aussi avoir un aspect scalaire, c'est-à-dire que la perspective d'ingénierie se concentre dans des départements publics au niveau national avec une autorité sur les planificateurs en milieu urbain, une prépondérance qui varie par contre selon les contextes. Car le cas des Pays-Bas montre en fait qu'un veto plus grand des urbanistes et des autorités locales ont mené à un portrait différent de la place qu'a pu occuper l'automobile, du moins dans la plupart des villes néerlandaises.

Ce portrait nous mène à une présentation du cadre institutionnel de la gouvernance des transports à Montréal ainsi qu'à Rotterdam La Haye. Les deux régions se ressemblent sous plusieurs points. Le réseau autoroutier est sous la juridiction d'une entité semblable, le Ministère du Transport au Québec et le Ministère des Infrastructures et de l'Environnement aux Pays-Bas. Dans les deux cas, les municipalités ont leur mot à dire sur ce développement, mais n'ont pas de veto comme tel. Au niveau métropolitain, les deux régions connaissent un tableau complexe, mais d'où n'émerge aucun pouvoir politique significatif du point de vue de la planification du transport. En effet, à Montréal, il y a l'Agence métropolitaine de transport, qui régit le développement du transport en commun métropolitain depuis 1996, mais qui est en fait un organe du Ministère du Transport au provincial. À Rotterdam La Haye, chacune des deux villes participe à des organes de coopération au niveau de leur agglomération respective (Rotterdam et La Haye étant chacune une ville centre qui doit coopérer avec ses banlieues), dans lesquelles les intérêts de la ville centre dominant. Cela rend des politiques au niveau du sud de la Randstad (constituée de Rotterdam et La Haye, à seulement 30 kilomètres l'une de l'autre) plutôt difficiles. Finalement, les débats politiques sur les politiques du Ministère national varient de manière importante du fait que le Québec se situe dans un système parlementaire le plus souvent majoritaire, et que les Pays-Bas ont une tradition de gouvernement de coalitions dans un système multipartiste. Cela signifie qu'aux Pays-Bas, contrairement au Québec, beaucoup d'influences, tractations et jeux politiques se situent dans les décisions et compromis que font les partis politiques. Au total, ces portraits offrent des opportunités différentes pour les coalitions

se mobilisant pour des alternatives à la voiture. À Montréal, le conflit entre la Ville et le MTQ offre une ouverture, tandis qu'aux Pays-Bas, il y a en fait une alliance forte entre la municipalité de Rotterdam et le Ministère des Infrastructures, du point de vue du développement de nouvelles autoroutes.

Chapitre 2. Cadre conceptuel

Le chapitre 2 consiste à introduire la littérature mobilisée pour constituer le cadre conceptuel, présentée en dernière section. Des notions sur les réseaux, les discours, et la production de l'espace sont discutées. Les trois champs sont explorés afin d'avoir les outils pour saisir les processus par lesquels les acteurs, dans le cadre de la constitution de coalitions, vont être capables de fabriquer des discours conjoints, incluant des discours avec une texture spatiale et une portée territoriale.

Les réseaux d'action collective

La première section présente les définitions et conceptualisations des notions de réseaux sociaux, de collectifs et de coalitions. Des outils et concepts de la littérature sur les mouvements sociaux sont aussi sollicités. La question des réseaux sociaux a été importante autant pour la littérature sur les mouvements sociaux, avec la thèse de la mobilisation des ressources, que la théorie des coalitions.

Les travaux de Georges Simmel et de Mische sont présentés pour offrir une vision riche du contenu développé par des acteurs en coalitions. Le réseau et la coalition sont en fait conceptualisés comme une toile d'affiliations, dans laquelle chaque individu doit concilier son appartenance à de multiples groupes, qui ont chacun leurs propres objectifs et priorités. Le groupe, à l'inverse, doit gérer la diversité des affiliations de chaque participant. La toile d'affiliation, vécue par chaque individu et groupe, est transposée aux organisations et coalitions. Cette image permet de conceptualiser les défis de constituer une coalition et de maintenir un projet et un discours communs.

Certains acteurs ont un rôle particulièrement important en ce sens. Ce sont les *brokers*, qui dans la théorie des réseaux sociaux se définissent comme des acteurs liant des acteurs (ou sous-groupes) autrement non connectés. Quelques auteurs ont discuté les contributions des *brokers* dans les processus d'action collective. Mische parle de médiateurs, Routledge et ses collaborateurs de créateurs d'imaginaires ('network imagineers') pour le réseau social. Les *brokers* sont aussi discutés pour leur rôle de courtage et de faiseurs de compromis, entre

différentes autorités publiques (Nay et Smith 2002). Enfin, les catégories de Lemieux (1998), réinterprétées à la lumière de cette riche littérature exposée, résument la position singulière des *brokers* : 1) ils doivent réussir à susciter une convergence dans les affiliations, les motivations et les loyautés des acteurs participants à la coalition, 2) ils détiennent des ressources qu'ils peuvent transférer d'un groupe ou d'une arène à une autre, et 3) ils détiennent un certain contrôle sur les projets conjoints de la coalition, étant le pivot entre des acteurs autrement non connectés.

Après des précisions sur le rôle ambigu qu'entretiennent les acteurs 'de la société civile' avec l'État, cette section se termine sur la présentation du concept de cadre d'action collective (*frame* et *framing*), de Benford et Snow (2000). Une discussion des potentiels et faiblesses de cette approche nous mène à la section suivante, sur les discours, qui permettra d'étoffer davantage la notion de 'framing'.

La théorie et l'analyse du discours

Le discours est défini comme un ensemble d'agencements linguistiques lié à des pratiques et un certain contexte d'énonciation, qui comporte des significations sociales et politiques. L'analyse de discours se distingue donc par une analyse non seulement des mots et de leurs agencements, mais aussi du contexte dans lesquels ils sont énoncés. Dans cette section, différentes approches à l'analyse de discours sont présentées, avec un accent sur l'approche de Laclau et Mouffe, qui est privilégiée. Laclau et Mouffe présentent l'évolution des discours avec le concept d'articulation. La signification d'un élément provient des connexions avec d'autres éléments dans le champ discursif. L'articulation consiste à donner sens à certains termes (des 'nœuds') par les liens constitués dans une chaîne d'équivalence. La force d'une idée politique vient donc du lien qu'elle pose entre plusieurs énoncés. Cette articulation se produit dans un contexte où la signification des objets n'est pas complètement fixée, où il y a encore des antagonismes sur leur définition et sur les frontières du champ discursif.

Pour ajouter à la théorie de Laclau et Mouffe des outils concrets d'analyse, en plus de la notion de chaîne d'équivalence, nous y combinons les notions de répertoires interprétatifs, de Potter et Wetherell (1987), et de coalitions de discours, de Hajer (1995, 2005). Les répertoires interprétatifs constituent des interprétations de la chaîne d'équivalence, qui procurent des ressources différentes selon le contexte d'énonciation.

Mobilisation dans l'espace, production de lieux et de territoires

L'espace est introduit à travers sa problématisation dans diverses disciplines en sciences sociales : en sociologie, avec le concept de communauté, en politiques publiques et en planification, avec la recherche du 'territoire optimal' pour l'action publique, puis enfin dans l'étude de l'action collective. Dans l'étude de l'action collective, on distingue trois approches sur la mobilisation ancrée dans des lieux spécifiques ('place-based collective action'). La première approche conçoit l'ancrage dans un lieu comme ferment de l'action collective, mais qui comporte des risques de repli sur soi et qui, éventuellement, rencontre des défis de ré-échelonnage à une autre échelle d'action jugée essentielle, l'échelle de régulation, mais qui serait distincte de l'échelle des pratiques ancrée dans un lieu (Harvey 1997; Cox 1998; Swyngedouw 2004). La deuxième approche conçoit l'action collective dans un lieu comme négociant déjà diverses motivations, divers rapports au monde, et expérimentant déjà, dans le lieu, la superposition et la coprésence de plusieurs échelles et réseaux d'influences (Amin 2004; Massey 1994; Featherstone 2008). Cette approche dite relationnelle est par contre critiquée lorsqu'elle fait fit des contraintes posées par l'institutionnalisation de territoires politiques et économiques qui posent des contraintes effectives à l'action collective. La troisième approche conceptualise l'action collective de manière relationnelle, mais en considérant comme question empirique la diversité des perspectives spatiales représentées dans les acteurs entrant en relation et dans les institutions pouvant constituer des freins ou barrières à la mobilisation sociale. C'est cette dernière approche qui est ici préconisée. À cette problématisation de l'action collective ancrée dans un lieu s'ajoutent des définitions des notions d'espace, de place, d'échelle et de territoire, dans le Tableau 2.1.

Après avoir discuté de la problématisation de l'action collective *dans* l'espace, la section continue sur le thème de la *production* de l'espace par l'action collective. Les travaux d'Henri Lefebvre sont discutés, pour poursuivre avec les travaux sur les processus de production de l'espace par la planification. Je poursuis avec des travaux en géographie, qui présentent les conflits quant aux divers objectifs pour la vocation des lieux et territoires. Les travaux de McCann et Martin sont particulièrement discutés pour leur accent sur l'élaboration, par des activistes, de certains discours visant à participer au 'place-making' de leur espace de vie. McCann (2003) parle de *scalar frames*, et Martin (2003; 2013) de *place-frames*. La section finie avec une définition du concept de *place-frame*, qui est au cœur de cette thèse.

Les coalitions de discours autour des place-frames : synthèse du cadre conceptuel adopté

Cette dernière section offre un condensé de l'approche conceptuelle de la thèse. Elle décrit premièrement la coalition de discours, comme une coalition d'acteurs liés ensemble par leur adhésion à un discours commun. La constitution et la cohésion d'une coalition de discours sont assurées par le travail des *brokers*, dont les rôles en termes discursifs et relationnels sont précisés. La thèse se penche particulièrement sur un type particulier de discours commun, les *place-frames*. Les *places-frames* sont définis comme des discours liant ensemble des demandes de normes territorialisées et une nouvelle géographie de gouvernance sur ces normes. La littérature évoquée dans la section précédente suggère en effet de manière implicite une certaine performativité, un certain pouvoir aux discours liant ensemble ces deux composantes.

L'investigation des études de cas ne concerne pas uniquement l'identification de tels discours, mais aussi et surtout le processus de leur élaboration et de leur utilisation pour transformer les discours dominants en matière de mobilité. C'est donc le processus de *place-framing* qui est étudié, en tant que constitution dynamique des *place-frames* par les *brokers* d'un collectif, à travers une série de tests d'antagonisme dans le champ discursif, ainsi qu'à l'intérieur de la coalition (où diverses motivations et loyautés à l'espace doivent converger dans un objectif et discours d'action collective commun). Cette constitution dynamique des *place-frames* implique deux niveaux de discours, un 'utopian frame' qui correspond à une chaîne d'équivalence entre les diverses composantes du *place-frames*, ainsi que des répertoires interprétatifs donnant une certaine flexibilité au discours pour en permettre l'adaptation.

Voici la question de recherche et les propositions structurant l'analyse des études de cas.

Comment les coalitions pour des alternatives à la voiture peuvent-elles transformer les discours dominants en matière de mobilité?

[Sur les coalitions de discours] Proposition 1 : Les coalitions, principalement à travers le travail des *brokers*, articulent un discours conjoint qui réorganise les réseaux d'action collective, afin de transformer les discours dominants.

[Sur les place-frames] Proposition 2 : Les coalitions produisent, pour ce discours conjoint, des représentations stratégiques de lieux (places), c'est à dire des *place-frames* liant dans une chaîne d'équivalence la territorialisation de normes et la géographie de leur gouvernance.

[Sur l'antagonisme et la chaîne d'équivalence] Proposition 3 : Les coalitions font face à l'antagonisme à travers la constitution et la réinterprétation constante de leur 'utopian place-frame'. La dislocation de leur chaîne d'équivalence, liant ensemble les deux composantes du place-frame (hyp. 2), réduit la capacité de la coalition d'agir et de transformer les discours dominants.

Chapitre 3. Méthodologie

Le troisième chapitre présente la méthodologie utilisée, ainsi que les outils de collecte de données. Le chapitre débute par l'approche de recherche utilisée, orientée par l'observation d'un processus, c'est-à-dire le « place-framing ». Une approche par processus est utilisée par plusieurs chercheurs en sciences sociales, dont McAdam, Tarrow et Tilly (2001; 2008) qui en ont fait l'angle privilégié de leurs recherches récentes en action collective. Ce genre d'approche consiste non pas à tester une théorie générale du monde, ou à tester l'importance de telle ou telle variable, mais à identifier des processus et mécanismes communs à une variété de situations, de manière à mieux comprendre un phénomène. Un processus consiste en “une série délimitée d'événements qui changent la relation entre des éléments”, et qui se produit de manière similaire dans une variété de situations (McAdam, Tarrow, and Tilly 2001, 25). La variabilité vient d'un agencement différent de plusieurs processus, et de conditions initiales qui diffèrent.

Une analyse comparative sied bien une telle approche de recherche par processus. En effet, le processus peut alors être étudié dans des situations avec des conditions initiales qui diffèrent, permettant de voir les éléments convergents du processus et ceux qui varient. Les études de cas sont connues pour permettre des analyses riches de situations dans leurs contextes. L'inclusion de plusieurs cas augmente la portée analytique de la recherche, tant que les cas sont encadrés par un même questionnement et processus de recherche. La comparaison d'études de cas suit le modèle de « building-blocks » (George et Benett 2005). Ce modèle comparatif consiste à identifier les cas étudiés à des blocs représentant à certaines instances dans un plus vaste champ d'éventualités. Les cas sont délimités par certains critères clés pour le phénomène étudié. Dans mon cas, le processus de *place-framing* est étudié chez les coalitions pour des alternatives à la voiture. Les cas sont choisis par leur variabilité sur les critères d'antagonisme et de localisation de l'opportunité, tels qu'illustrés dans le tableau ci-bas, c'est-à-dire que les coalitions vont varier selon leur position (directe ou indirecte) au conflit, et la localisation d'une opportunité ou contrepoids au discours dominant.

Table A1.1 Dimensions de la recherche comparative de type « *building-blocks* »

	Localisation de l'opportunité	Études de cas
Antagonisme indirect	Opportunité dans les quartiers et arrondissements	Chapitre 4. Les espaces de l'apaisement de la circulation automobile à Montréal
	Opportunité dans l'approche entrepreneuriale de la lutte contre la congestion du Ministère des Infrastructures et de l'Environnement	Chapitre 7. Les espaces de l'innovation à Rotterdam La Haye : « Travailler futé = voyager futé »
Antagonisme direct	Opportunité dans le contrepoids offert par l'alliance avec la Ville de Montréal	Chapitre 5. Les espaces du transport de transit (automobile ou collectif) à Montréal : l'échangeur Turcot
	Opportunité de contrepoids dans des alliances avec les partis d'opposition au parlement	Chapitre 6. Les espaces préservés des automobiles à Rotterdam La Haye : Midden-Delfland et le Blankenburgtunnel

Le chapitre poursuit avec une description du choix des répondants pour les entrevues et groupes de discussions. Les répondants ont été choisis avec les critères suivant : 1) des *brokers* dans les coalitions étudiées, 2) des autorités publiques faisant partie de l'action collective ou étant visé par les demandes des coalitions et 3) des acteurs de la société civile actifs sur le thème, mais ayant une position périphérique dans le réseau. La plupart des répondants étaient des *brokers*, ce choix étant justifié dans l'approche conceptuelle de la thèse. Un total de 20 entretiens à Montréal et de 20 entretiens à Rotterdam La Haye ont été effectués. Deux groupes de discussions ont été organisés dans chaque ville-région, avec 10 et 6 participants à Montréal et 6 et 7 participants à Rotterdam La Haye.

Les entrevues étaient des entrevues semi-dirigées visant à obtenir la perception qu'avaient les répondants de l'évolution de leur coalition, du rôle de certains acteurs clés, ainsi que de la constitution et l'évolution de leur discours conjoint. Les groupes de discussion permettaient de confirmer ou infirmer certains résultats des entrevues, par exemple sur les relations entre participants et la qualification d'enjeux conflictuels pour la coalition. Ils permettaient aussi d'avoir une discussion sur la gouvernance de l'enjeu contesté, des acteurs publics et civiques étant appelés à interagir ensemble sur leur perception de la nouvelle géographie de gouvernance défendue par les activistes. Le groupe de discussion dépend par contre beaucoup des participants qui acceptent d'y participer et de la dynamique de discussion qui se crée *in situ*.

Une partie importante des données provient d'une analyse de discours sur des documents. Ces documents consistent, premièrement, en des transcriptions de débat publics sur l'enjeu débattu, auxquels les *brokers* des coalitions étudiées ont participé. À ces transcriptions de débat sont ajoutés des documents des *brokers* et autorités publiques qui sont en cause dans les débats et qui permettent de mieux saisir leur points de vue. La sélection de ces documents est synthétisée dans les Tableaux 3.3 à 3.5.

La méthode d'analyse de discours, avec le concept de chaîne d'équivalence, est décrite avec ses implications en terme de codage, d'archivage et d'analyse de la transformation des discours. Ensuite, l'approche d'analyse interprétative des réseaux sociaux est discutée, avec une emphase sur les dynamiques de coalitions et le rôle des *brokers*.

Suite à la méthodologie, la thèse se poursuit avec la présentation des quatre études de cas.

Chapitre 4. Les espaces de l'apaisement de la circulation à Montréal

Cette étude de cas porte sur les programmes mis en place par des acteurs de la société civile pour la promotion de l'apaisement de la circulation automobile et la promotion de la pratique de la marche et du vélo. Le chapitre débute par une mise en contexte sur l'action collective sur ces thèmes à Montréal, avec une implication grandissante, dans les 15 dernières années, des organisations environnementales et du monde de la santé publique. Cela introduit bien la place importante que vont prendre les organisations environnementales, comme *brokers* pour l'apaisement de la circulation. Ces *brokers* vont faire le lien entre la santé publique [notamment une nouvelle source de financement, de la Fondation Québec en Forme, et une nouvelle expertise de la Direction de santé publique à Montréal (DSP)] et les groupes communautaires et associations de résidents dans les quartiers. Ils vont mettre en place des programmes, véritables recettes à suivre pour mettre en place des mesures d'apaisement, qui vont demander l'implication importante d'acteurs locaux mettant en oeuvre ces programmes et mobilisant des acteurs du quartier autour de ces derniers. Ces *brokers* vont défendre un discours composé de trois équivalences. Premièrement, le discours tisse des liens entre la pratique de la marche et du vélo, le sentiment d'insécurité et les personnes vulnérables, comme les enfants et les personnes âgées particulièrement, mais aussi en général les piétons et les cyclistes. Ces personnes sont vulnérables aux collisions avec des automobiles, documentées par la DSP. Le sentiment d'insécurité limite la pratique de la marche et du vélo. Deuxièmement, une équivalence lie l'amélioration de la sécurité routière à l'aménagement des rues; c'est l'essence

du concept d'apaisement de la circulation. Cette équivalence n'est pas appuyée par le Ministère des Transports (MTQ) qui adopte une approche plus comportementale à la sécurité routière. Troisièmement, les brokers mettent de l'avant l'image d'une communauté locale dynamique qui permet la marche et le vélo. Cette communauté dynamique est constituée d'une accessibilité locale à des commerces et institutions et/ou des espaces publics attrayants permettant une vie de proximité. Dans ce discours, les citoyens pratiquant leur quartier vont avoir tendance à y être actifs aussi politiquement, et à demander des améliorations dans le cadre bâti. Cette dernière équivalence fait aussi l'objet de débats, dans la controverse du Plateau et celle sur le contrôle des pompiers.

Au total, ce discours constitue un 'utopian frame' qui va se moduler en deux répertoires interprétatifs. Selon la situation, les *brokers* et leaders locaux vont adopter l'un ou l'autre des répertoires interprétatifs. L'un est déjà intégré dans les normes de la hiérarchie routière, il consiste à permettre l'apaisement de la circulation suivant un modèle de 'quartier protégé', les rues résidentielles étant protégées de la circulation de transit, qui est canalisée par les artères. L'autre répertoire interprétatif pousse pour agir en priorité sur les artères, les espaces qui devraient être dédiés à la fluidité de la circulation, mais qui sont aussi des espaces de vie: écoles, centres de santé, centres communautaires, etc., y sont situés. Ce second répertoire interprétatif implique une coordination entre les différentes autorités publiques, l'arrondissement étant responsable des rues locales, mais la ville centre, avec l'agglomération, la société de transport collectif (et occasionnellement d'autres acteurs), sont responsables ou concernées par les interventions sur les artères. Le chapitre se termine par une discussion, tirée des constats d'un des groupes de discussions, sur les avantages et difficultés d'intervenir en matière d'apaisement de la circulation à partir de plusieurs arènes au niveau micro-local, avec la création de multiples associations et comités de suivi se mobilisant autour de leur école, leur rue résidentielle ou commerciale de proximité, ou leur espace public. La conclusion porte sur les significations de ce discours et sa mise en réseau par quartier pour la transformation des discours en matière de mobilité et les pratiques de gouvernance sur ce thème.

Chapitre 5. Les espaces du transport de transit (automobile ou collectif) à Montréal : l'échangeur Turcot

Cette deuxième étude de cas à Montréal se situe dans un contexte beaucoup plus conflictuel, qui contraste avec la position de collaboration qu'occupait la coalition de discours pour l'apaisement de la circulation. L'opposition à la reconstruction prévue de l'échangeur Turcot se

située dans une série d'oppositions face à de nouvelles infrastructures routières qu'a proposées le MTQ dans la dernière décennie. La coalition de discours met de l'avant un discours s'opposant à la vision du projet Turcot du MTQ, avec les équivalences qui suivent. Premièrement, un sentiment d'injustice dans les conditions de vie à proximité de l'échangeur, notamment en terme d'expropriations, d'enclaves et de pollution de l'air. Deuxièmement, des transformations du projet d'échangeur et son repositionnement non pas comme un segment d'infrastructure routière, mais comme un noeud dans un système métropolitain de transport collectif. Le transport collectif réduirait le nombre d'automobiles et donc la grosseur de l'échangeur et l'ampleur de la pollution atmosphérique. Troisièmement, cette solution de transport collectif serait rendue possible par la communauté de navetteurs sur l'axe est-ouest, qui pourraient se déplacer dans un système performant de transport collectif sur cet axe, avec un leadership de la Ville de Montréal dans un virage vers le transport collectif. Ce discours lie donc les conditions de vie vécues localement avec un choix pour le transport collectif à l'échelle métropolitaine. Il fut développé par des *brokers* capables de faire ce lien inter-scalaire et d'avoir une analyse fine de l'infrastructure routière. Le discours reposait aussi sur une convergence entre les demandes des acteurs de la société civile et la volonté de la Ville de Montréal. Le MTQ, par contre, va discréditer les alternatives de la société civile et de la Ville sur la base des coûts, et va proposer un projet modifié qui, pour plusieurs, comporte finalement peu de changements. Les différents *brokers* vont réagir différemment à cette annonce, et c'est à ce moment que la coalition et le discours conjoint va se voir briser : certains y voyant une chance de négociations et de collaborations avec le MTQ, d'autres s'insurgeant que les demandes principales, soit un axe de transport collectif performant, une réduction de la capacité autoroutière, et une autonomie politique à la Ville de Montréal, se soient vues ignorées. Mais le MTQ a en donné juste assez (nouveaux autobus, financement pour les quartiers environnants) pour susciter l'ouverture d'acteurs régionaux, sans pour autant s'engager dans les changements plus fondamentaux initialement demandés par la coalition de discours.

Chapitre 6. Les espaces préservés des automobiles à Rotterdam La Haye : Midden-Delfland et le Blankenburgtunnel

Le chapitre 6 aborde les débats autoroutiers dans la région de Rotterdam La Haye. Là encore, la position de la coalition de discours est tout à fait conflictuelle. Elle va mettre de l'avant un contre-discours au discours dominant du cabinet national et du Ministère des Infrastructures et de l'Environnement, qui bénéficie de surcroît d'une alliance avec la Ville de Rotterdam. Dans le

contexte de la crise économique, le discours dominant met l'accent sur l'urgence économique de la lutte contre la congestion, qui signifie des priorités pour des infrastructures de transport jugées rentables, ainsi qu'une réduction, à travers une nouvelle loi intitulée 'Crise et Reprise économique', des opportunités de participation publique et des règlements assurant la protection des espaces naturels. Le projet autoroutier débattu est plus particulièrement un segment liant les deux rives de la rivière La Meuse, entre Rotterdam et La Haye, intitulé NWO (nouvelle connexion ouest). Le Port de Rotterdam, un des plus importants au monde, est situé sur la rive nord de la Meuse. Il y a deux trajets possibles à ce projet routier, un plus proche de La Haye, le 'Oranje', l'autre plus proche de Rotterdam, le 'Blankenburg'. Ce dernier trajet, le préféré de la Ministre des Infrastructures, passerait à travers un espace vert et ouvert, qui contient un paysage qualifié de patrimonial et une valeur en terme de biodiversité : Midden-Delfland. Des opposants au tracé Blankenburg vont se réunir en coalition. Leur discours comporte les équivalences suivantes. Premièrement, il y a incompatibilité entre segments autoroutiers et la préservation de la nature et du paysage sur un même espace. Deuxièmement, des alternatives en terme de mobilité sont possibles. Troisièmement, un territoire plus vaste que la seule emphase sur la ville de Rotterdam devrait faire partie de l'analyse des flux de mobilité et du processus décisionnel, et devrait inclure les autres valeurs accordées à Midden-Delfland. Le processus semble biaisé en faveur du Blankenburg, qui rapporterait davantage à la ville de Rotterdam et qui s'inscrit dans un axe de transport jugé stratégique du point de vue du développement économique.

Pour l'adoption de cet 'utopian frame', une organisation environnementale a relié la cause de la protection de l'espace vert avec la demande d'un autre paradigme de mobilité, en faveur d'investissements dans les transports collectifs et d'un système de péage métropolitain pour les voitures. Son refus d'aucune nouvelle autoroute sembla par contre radical aux autres participants à la coalition s'opposant au Blankenburg. S'en suivit finalement un autre répertoire interprétatif, qui mit l'accent sur la protection du lieu de Midden-Delfland, et pointa vers le trajet alternatif Oranje pour le segment autoroutier NWO. Ce répertoire, qui s'appuie toujours sur le 'utopian frame' expliqué ci-haut, récolta plusieurs appuis et suscita beaucoup d'échanges et de discussions lors du débat en parlement. Ce fut néanmoins insuffisant pour assurer un vote contre le projet. Un des *brokers* va donc développer un autre répertoire interprétatif, fondé sur les statistiques montrant une stagnation de la mobilité en voiture depuis 2005, mettant en cause

le besoin d'une nouvelle autoroute. Le 'utopian frame' continue donc d'être défendu à travers le temps, avec une évolution dans les répertoires interprétatifs grâce au travail des *brokers*.

Le *utopian frame* est revendiqué premièrement à la province, dans le but qu'elle s'implique sur l'enjeu, mais sans succès. Il est aussi revendiqué de pair avec les municipalités locales qui sont contre la venue d'une autoroute sur leur territoire, mais qui sont minoritaires dans l'arène de l'agglomération de Rotterdam. Rotterdam est en faveur du Blankenburg avec le Ministère des Infrastructures. C'est finalement au parlement, avec les partis d'opposition, que les opposants vont réussir à se faire entendre davantage. Le cas montre une flexibilité dans les discours grâce à l'usage des répertoires interprétatifs visant à s'adapter au contexte et aux appuis potentiels : d'abord une utopie sans nouvelle autoroute, ensuite une emphase sur la protection de Midden-Delfland et finalement un retour sur le justificatif pour une nouvelle autoroute, qui est mise en cause par la stagnation de la mobilité.

Chapitre 7. Les espaces de l'innovation à Rotterdam La Haye : « Travailler futé = voyager futé »

Le chapitre 7 présente la coalition de discours 'Travailler futé = voyager futé'. Elle s'inscrit dans une approche entrepreneuriale à la lutte contre la congestion routière, favorisée par le cabinet néerlandais au pouvoir. La communauté mobilisée est celle des employés et employeurs, qui, par leur volonté d'une plus grande flexibilité dans leurs pratiques de travail et de mobilité, peuvent réduire la congestion sur les routes et améliorer leur productivité et leur qualité de vie. Les *brokers* clés dans cette coalition sont les suivants : une Plate-forme financée par le gouvernement et faisant le lien entre entreprises et syndicats, des 'agents de mobilité' faisant la promotion de la gestion des déplacements chez les entreprises, un groupe de 50 entreprises faisant acte de *role-models*, ainsi qu'une organisation environnementale et le lobby cycliste. Leur 'utopian frame' est composé des équivalences suivantes. Premièrement, la congestion routière comme problème d'un point de vue économique et de qualité de vie des individus. Deuxièmement, qu'une flexibilité dans l'espace et dans l'horaire de travail constitue une solution. Cette flexibilité s'inspire à la fois de la gestion des déplacements (adopter différents modes et temporalité de mobilité) que de nouvelles manières de travailler (télétravail, travail à la maison, travail dans des espaces café rencontre pour affaires, espaces virtuels de rencontres et de partage de fichiers, etc.). Troisièmement, une gouvernance publique- privée facilitant la mise en place de cette flexibilité et d'une performance accrue du système de mobilité. Cette troisième équivalence se répercute dans un programme du Ministère des Infrastructures, *Better Use*, qui

est présenté comme s'inscrivant dans la mouvance sociétale décrite ci-haut. Les choix en matière d'investissement dans ce programme dédié à réduire la congestion routière sont décidés par des trios composés de l'autorité régionale, du Ministère et d'un CEO d'une grande entreprise de la région. Ce discours et ses trois équivalences, si elles comportent quelques points débattus, sont très consensuels dans la société civile. C'est surtout leur implication pour les choix en matière d'investissements de l'État qui font l'objet de dissension et entraînent divers répertoires interprétatifs.

Les environnementalistes et quelques partis d'opposition au parlement souhaitent que cet enthousiasme dans l'implication des employés et employeurs s'accompagne de mobilité plus directement en faveur des modes durables, avec des investissements dans le transport collectif et un péage; ils souhaitent aussi qu'il y ait pas d'investissement routier dans cette enveloppe budgétaire. Ils demandent aussi de tirer les conséquences de ces changements dans les pratiques sur les besoins réels de nouvelle autoroute. D'autres partis politiques, à l'inverse, vont accepter le programme Better Use seulement s'il inclut aussi des investissements routiers. La Ministre réussit à assurer l'adhésion de tous à son programme en gardant une certaine ambiguïté (les modes et types de financement étant finalement décidés localement par les trios). Le 'Travailler futé, Voyager futé' n'est pas contre pas jugé suffisant, par la Ministre, pour réduire le besoin du segment autoroutier NWO. Dans cette dernière étude de cas, les répertoires interprétatifs apparaissent utiles à l'État. Le 'utopian frame' est en effet développé par des acteurs économiques et de la société civile, mais est approprié et supporté par le gouvernement. Son interprétation plus radicale cohabite dans le discours, permettant une adhésion large au programme donnant une image d'innovation à l'État, sans toutefois d'impact encore sur la perspective d'investissements en transport de manière générale.

Chapitre 8. Analyse comparative : Place-framing comme outil d'action collective

Le chapitre 8 revient sur les quatre études de cas en comparant et en contrastant leurs résultats vis-à-vis des trois propositions formulées pour répondre à la question de recherche, dans la section 2.4.

8.1 La co-constitution d'un discours conjoint et d'un réseau d'action collective

Les études de cas montrent en effet que la position des *brokers* mettant de l'avant le *utopian place-frame* et la présence ou non d'un réseau de support sont associées à la capacité fédératrice de ce discours dans le champ discursif. Dans chaque étude de cas, la présence d'un

réseau de support, rattaché aux *brokers*, a été observée : les réseaux locaux d'organismes communautaires à Montréal ainsi que les liens avec les acteurs du monde de la santé, les réseaux illustrant la valeur accordée à Midden-Delfland dans la région de Rotterdam La Haye, le réseau multi-scalaire supportant le *place-frame* multi-scalaire sur Turcot, et le réseau entrepreneurial supportant le *place-frame* sur l'innovation aux Pays-Bas.

Les exemples de la santé publique et de la gestion des déplacements sont éloquentes. Je résume ici celui sur la santé publique. Les *place-frames* à Montréal s'appuient beaucoup sur des arguments de santé publique et la position privilégiée de la Direction de la Santé publique, qui réduit la segmentation institutionnelle entre transport, urbanisme et politique de santé publique. Aux Pays-Bas, les problèmes de santé publique liés aux transports sont aussi sinon plus importants qu'au Québec, mais il n'y a pas d'acteurs et de réseaux d'acteurs capables de lier ces enjeux ensemble. La reconstitution du réseau supportant un discours est donc le fruit du travail de *brokers*, et peut aussi comporter des dimensions institutionnelles sur la territorialité et la segmentation sectorielle de l'état.

8.2 L'utilisation des *place-frames* par les coalitions

La deuxième proposition de cette thèse est que les coalitions produisent, pour leur discours conjoint, des représentations stratégiques de lieux (places), c'est à dire des *place-frames* liant dans une chaîne d'équivalence la territorialisation de normes et la géographie de leur gouvernance.

Cette deuxième section du chapitre de comparaison présente donc les *place-frames* observés dans les quatre études de cas, ainsi que leurs utilisations par les coalitions. Le tableau A1.2 présente les *place-frames* identifiés. Ces derniers sont similaires dans leurs composantes : ils comportent tous un diagnostic, une solution dans l'espace ainsi qu'une solution dans la géographie de la gouvernance. Les coalitions, qui auraient pu faire leurs revendications pour des alternatives à la voiture sans un type discours spatialisé, ont en effet articulé ces trois composantes qui, inter-reliées, constituaient leurs discours conjoints pour transformer les discours dominants.

Table A1.2 *Place-frames* identifiés dans les quatre études de cas

Thèmes de mobilisation	Nœuds des chaînes d'équivalence	Signification des nœuds pour <i>place</i>
Les espaces de l'apaisement de la circulation à Montréal	Vulnérabilité dans la pratique de la marche et du vélo	Diagnostic d'un problème tel que vécu dans l'espace
	Sécurité routière à travers un meilleur aménagement des rues	Solution dans l'espace
	Une communauté locale dynamique permettant la pratique du vélo et de la marche	Solution dans la géographie de la gouvernance
Les espaces du transport de transit (automobile ou collectif) à Montréal : L'échangeur Turcotte	Injustices dans les conditions de vie	Diagnostic d'un problème tel que vécu dans l'espace
	Réaménagement de l'échangeur et son repositionnement dans le système de mobilité	Solution dans l'espace
	Une communauté métropolitaine permettant davantage de transport collectif, avec le leadership de Montréal	Solution dans la géographie de la gouvernance
Les espaces préservés des automobiles à Rotterdam La Haye : Midden-Delfland et le Blankenburgtunnel	Incompatibilité d'une autoroute avec la préservation d'un espace vert	Diagnostic d'un problème tel que vécu dans l'espace
	Des alternatives quant aux infrastructures de mobilité	Solution dans l'espace
	Un territoire plus vaste (voire métropolitain) pour le processus décisionnel	Solution dans la géographie de la gouvernance
Les espaces de l'innovation à Rotterdam La Haye : « Travailler futé = voyager futé »	Congestion routière	Diagnostic d'un problème tel que vécu dans l'espace
	Flexibilité dans le lieu de travail	Solution dans l'espace
	Une gouvernance public-privé par régions	Solution dans la géographie de la gouvernance

Ces *place-frames* ont permis de rassembler les coalitions, en prenant appui sur la convergence dans les relations à l'espace (en terme de pratiques spatiales), ainsi que sur un objectif commun sur cet espace. Ces *place-frames* sont aussi mis de l'avant dans une rhétorique de changement, en traçant la voie pour une alternative : avec une manière de problématiser un problème dans l'espace, de le régler *in situ*, et d'agencer une gouvernance effective. La nouvelle géographie de gouvernance revendiquée par les coalitions de discours se structure aussi, dans les quatre cas, autour d'une communauté d'acteurs capables d'incarner le changement. L'accent sur une communauté du changement est une figure discursive des *brokers*, qui s'appuie sur le réseau de support, mais qui le dépasse en terme d'acteurs concrets: on parle de communautés locales dynamiques permettant la marche et le vélo (apaisement de la circulation), de la communauté

de navetteurs de l'axe est-ouest permettant un transfert au transport collectif et une réduction de la capacité routière (Turcot), de la communauté pour la protection de Midden-Delfland, et de la communauté des employeurs-employés permettant des manières innovantes de réduire la congestion routière.

Lors de la constitution de ces *place-frames*, des *brokers* étaient impliqués d'un point de vue discursif, liant ensemble des éléments de discours, et d'un point de vue relationnel, liant ensemble des acteurs et groupes d'acteurs. Ces deux tâches étaient souvent effectuées, dans les études de cas, par les mêmes acteurs ou des acteurs travaillant en étroite collaboration. L'absence de capacités relationnelles de certains *brokers*, observée dans deux études de cas, a mené à une réarticulation du réseau et du discours pour permettre un *place-frame* appuyé par des *brokers* ayant un réseau de support concordant avec le discours revendiqué. Cette section sur les *brokers* finit avec des remarques sur les interactions entre des *brokers* locaux et régionaux.

8.3 La réinterprétation des *place-frames* pour face à l'antagonisme : l'utilisation des répertoires interprétatifs

La troisième proposition formulée est que les coalitions font face à l'antagonisme à travers la constitution et la réinterprétation constante de leur *utopian place-frame*; la dislocation de leur chaîne d'équivalence, liant ensemble les deux composantes du *place-frame* (hyp. 2), réduit la capacité de la coalition d'agir et de transformer les discours dominants.

Cette section discute donc de la capacité des *brokers* de faire face au conflit à l'intérieur de leur coalition et à l'extérieur de celle-ci. Ont-ils fait appel à l'usage de répertoires interprétatifs? Quelles conclusions peuvent être tirées des cas où les coalitions de discours étaient en position d'antagonisme direct, et les cas où elles étaient en position d'antagonisme indirect?

Dans les deux cas d'antagonisme direct, les *brokers* ont utilisé des répertoires interprétatifs pour réduire l'empreinte directe du conflit sur la poursuite de leur objectif. Dans le cas des espaces de l'apaisement de la circulation à Montréal, les acteurs civiques ont utilisé les répertoires interprétatifs pour pousser, seulement dans certaines situations, la transformation des normes existantes afin d'agir aussi sur les espaces de mobilité, artères et frontières de quartiers. Dans d'autres cas, ils sont restés dans l'interprétation du 'quartier protégé' pour étendre l'application de l'apaisement de la circulation à Montréal en suivant les normes existantes et donc sans nuire à leurs relations avec les autorités publiques.

Dans le cas hollandais sur la gestion des déplacements et une flexibilité dans l'espace de travail, le gouvernement est directement impliqué, et fait même preuve de leadership, dans l'utilisation du *place-frame* et de ses répertoires interprétatifs. Son programme 'Beter Benutten' (meilleure utilisation du réseau de transport, 'Better Use') s'intégrant dans ce discours reste par contre ambigu sur les conséquences en matière de mode de mobilité et d'approche d'investissement de l'État. Divers répertoires interprétatifs de la société civile et des partis politiques au parlement, soit pour une réduction des investissements routiers ou une augmentation de ces derniers, sont présents et cohabitent, ce qui sert à la Ministre en assurant un appui large à son programme. Les répertoires interprétatifs peuvent donc aussi servir à l'État, mais aussi, comme dans le premier cas, aux acteurs civiques décidant de manière stratégique quant ils peuvent se permettre de pousser plus loin les implications de leur *place-frame*.

Les cas d'antagonisme direct montrent aussi un contraste marquant, puisque dans un cas il n'y a pas de répertoires interprétatifs et, dans l'autre, ils s'avèrent essentiels.

Dans le cas de Turcot à Montréal, les différents *brokers* réagissent de manière différente à l'annonce du projet révisé du MTQ, sans réussir à rester unis autour de leur *utopian place-frame*. Le MTQ fait des modifications sur deux des trois nœuds du *place-frame*, en promettant plus d'autobus et en fournissant des fonds pour l'amélioration des conditions de vie près de l'échangeur, mais sans répondre aux demandes fondamentales de la coalition, soit un axe performant de transport collectif, une réduction de la capacité autoroutière et un pouvoir politique à Montréal. L'appui de la Ville de Montréal à ce projet 'révisé' divise encore plus les troupes. S'en suit des énergies isolées, poussant des ajustements sur une ou l'autre des demandes, mais en ayant perdu la portée d'ensemble du *place-frame*, de même que la cohésion de la coalition. La chaîne d'équivalence de la coalition de discours est rompue. Les *brokers* n'ont pas réussi à réinterpréter leur *place-frame* de manière à conserver son pouvoir comme contre-discours en face du MTQ.

À l'inverse, la coalition de discours contre le Blankenburg se sert efficacement des répertoires interprétatifs pour s'ajuster au contexte politique et faire face aux désaccords à l'intérieur de la coalition ainsi que face au conflit avec l'extérieur. Le premier répertoire interprétatif met l'accent sur la protection de Midden-Delfland pour éviter les désaccords sur le besoin ou non d'une nouvelle autoroute; on parle plutôt de ne pas construire une autoroute dans Midden-Delfland. Voyant néanmoins la force de l'argument du besoin d'une nouvelle autoroute pour des raisons de développement économique, un *broker* formule un deuxième répertoire interprétatif avec les

données montrant une stagnation de la mobilité en automobile, mettant en doute ce besoin de nouvelle infrastructure routière. Ce faisant, il réuniversalise l'enjeu sur le thème des infrastructures de mobilité, toujours avec l'objectif de protéger Midden-Delfland. Le gouvernement réussit à s'assurer une majorité pour la continuation du projet Blankenburgtunnel en marchandant avec l'autre gros parti politique son appui au projet en échange de sa participation au gouvernement de coalition. Néanmoins, le gouvernement ne démentit pas le discours et ce second répertoire interprétatif, qui continue d'être scandé sur la place publique. La coalition, aussi, demeure effective et unie.

En somme, les cas d'antagonisme directs supportent la troisième proposition qui soutenait que la dislocation de la chaîne d'équivalence réduirait la capacité d'action et de transformation des discours dominants de la coalition. Effectivement, la dislocation de la chaîne d'équivalence contre Turcot est brisée de même que la coalition, et les luttes isolées ne mènent pas à obtenir des gains importants, surtout sur les enjeux les plus contentieux de la capacité routière de l'infrastructure et du leadership politique à la ville de Montréal pour un transport collectif d'ordre métropolitain. Si la coalition s'opposant à l'autoroute aux Pays-Bas ne gagne pas non plus sa cause, la coalition continue à agir et à transformer les frontières du champ discursif suivant l'*utopian place-frame* : l'incompatibilité entre autoroute et espace naturel est assumée par les acteurs civiques (ce qui n'était pas le cas auparavant) et la justification pour une nouvelle autoroute est mise en doute.

Conclusion

La conclusion présente les principales contributions et limites de la thèse.

Il y a d'abord deux contributions d'ordre méthodologique. Ces contributions présentent un angle de recherche particulier pour les processus d'action collective et les dynamiques de coalition. Tout d'abord, il y a l'accent sur les *brokers*, comme porte d'entrée sur le terrain. Ensuite, il y a l'approche d'analyse de discours. Celle-ci combine la notion de chaîne d'équivalence de Laclau et Mouffe (1985) avec les répertoires interprétatifs de Potter et Wetherell (1987). La méthode d'analyse de discours proposée a l'avantage de considérer de manière dynamique la constitution et l'adaptation des 'collective action frames' en relation avec le contexte, répondant à une critique formulée à la perspective du 'framing' dans l'étude des mouvements sociaux. La méthode proposée peut être utilisée aussi dans les situations où le conflit est vécu de manière indirecte par la coalition, comme les études de cas l'ont démontré. Toutefois, ce sont les

désaccords et les conflits sur le sens des termes qui offre un regard heuristique sur les discours et leur évolution.

La contribution d'ordre conceptuel se situe dans la notion de *place-framing*. *Place-framing* est présenté comme un outil d'action collective. L'objectif n'était pas d'inventer une nouvelle catégorie d'analyse spatiale pour les géographes explorant le monde, mais plutôt de tenter de faire sens des catégories de pratiques des acteurs (Moore 2008, Martin 2013). Les activistes que j'ai observés, surtout les *brokers*, rencontrent plusieurs défis d'action collective, notamment ceux associés à la maintenance de la coalition à travers le temps et son habileté à transformer les discours dominants. À travers ces défis, les *brokers* vont travailler pour redéfinir, dans le conflit, le sens donné à un espace, afin qu'il soit organisé et aménagé suivant les objectifs de la coalition. Les *brokers* vont aussi chercher les opportunités, dans le contexte politique, pour favoriser la mise en oeuvre de ces objectifs sur l'espace convoité. Ils vont non seulement chercher l'arène politique la plus accessible, mais vont aussi demander une nouvelle géographie de la gouvernance, offrant davantage d'opportunités pour leur propre définition de l'espace. Ces efforts pour redéfinir le sens d'un espace, d'un lieu, ainsi que la géographie de la gouvernance des normes sur cet espace, constituent ce que j'appelle le processus de *place-framing*. Cette notion constitue une contribution à la littérature sur les discours et imaginaires d'ordre spatial et territorial pour la raison suivante. *Place-framing* rend compte de manière explicite du lien entre la territorialisation de normes (les normes pour un espace) et la géographie de leur gouvernance, dans les pratiques discursives des acteurs et des coalitions.

La conclusion se termine par la discussion de limites et possibles extensions de cette recherche doctorale, qui sont de trois ordres. Premièrement, les résultats sur le *place-framing* sont spécifiques aux études de cas. Les régions étudiées sont particulières du fait qu'elles se situent dans un contexte de gouvernance en changement; depuis les 15 dernières années, elles ont fait l'objet de réformes territoriales et d'ajustements dans les pratiques de gouvernance. Ainsi, des coalitions fonctionnant dans un contexte plus stable quant au système politique et aux pratiques de gouvernance n'auraient peut-être pas formulé des demandes sur la géographie de la gouvernance, celle-ci ayant peut-être été considérée comme fixe et immuable.

Deuxièmement, les résultats sont aussi spécifiques au thème sur lequel se mobilisaient les coalitions étudiées, c'est-à-dire l'organisation de l'espace urbain pour la mobilité. La littérature plus vaste sur les discours spatiaux et territoriaux suggère par contre que d'autres thèmes de mobilisation font aussi l'objet de discours de ce type.

Troisièmement, l'investigation du *place-framing* se limitait à quatre cas identifiés comme correspondant à certains « *building-blocks* » dans un éventail plus large d'éventualités. Les cas étaient caractérisés par leur position face au conflit et aux opportunités. L'investigation de cas correspondant à d'autres « *building-blocks* » permettrait de mieux qualifier le processus de *place-framing* et sa pertinence comme outil présumé d'action collective.

APPENDIX 2. INTERVIEWS AND FOCUS GROUPS: TYPES OF RESPONDENTS AND SCRIPTS USED

Respondents for interviews and focus groups in Montreal

Civic brokers, regional or national professional organizations (7 interviews+1LB)

- CRE Conseil régional de l'environnement de Montréal (Environmental regional Council of Montreal) : 2 interviews with same person, also in one focus group
- VQ Vélo-Québec: 2 persons interviewed (at the same time), also one in focus group
- CEUM Centre d'écologie Urbaine (Urban Ecology Center): 2 persons interviewed (at different time : one formal one, one informal during observation)
- E Équiterre: 2 persons interviewed (at different time : one by me, one by team from Laurence Bherer)¹⁴⁰

Political party, also broker (1 interview)

- PM Projet Montréal (political party at Montreal City Hall): 1 person interviewed, also in focus group

Civic brokers, local or voluntary associations (5 interviews)

- MT Mobilisation Turcot: 1 person interviewed also in focus group
- GRUHM, Groupe de recherche urbaine Hochelaga-Maisonneuve (Urban research group): 1 person interviewed also in focus group
- MA Maison de l'Aurore: 1 person interviewed
- S Solidarité Mercier-Est: 1 person interviewed, another person in focus group
- NDG Centre communautaire Notre-Dame-de-Grâce: 1 person interviewed

Other actors met, not most important brokers (3 interviews)

- ARUC McGill Alliance de recherche université-communauté (ARUC) Mégaprojets au service des communautés, on Turcot debate: 1 interview
- T Transport 2000: 1 interview
- CRE-Laval Conseil régional de l'environnement de Laval (Environmental regional Council Laval): 1 interview
- SC Member of a school committee : 1 in focus group
- PMV Resident association Plateau Milieu de vie: 1 in focus group

¹⁴⁰ In Montreal I had access to the transcription of interviews conducted by the research team of Laurence Bherer, in the context of a research collaboration between the two of us, which lead to an article (Van Neste and Bherer 2013). The interview guide from her research team had some overlap with our interest, especially in terms of networks between actors and scales of action. Two interview transcripts were used as a complement to my interviews. Laurence Bherer shared these transcripts and permitted their use for this thesis.

CG Centre de gestion des déplacements (Mobility management center, NGO): 1 person in focus group

Public actors (4 interviews+1LB)

DSP Direction de la santé publique de l'Agence de santé et des services sociaux de Montréal (Public Health Agency) : 2 persons interviewed (at different time one by me, one by team from Laurence Bherer), 1 other person in focus group

VdM City of Montreal : 1 person interviewed also in focus group

PMR Team from the Plateau Mont-Royal borough : 1 in focus group

MTQ Ministère des Transport du Québec (Minister of Transport, Province of Quebec): 2 persons interviewed (at different times), 1 focus group

AMT Agence Métropolitaine de Montréal (Metropolitan Transit Agency) : 1 person interviewed

STM Société de Transport de Montréal (Montreal Transit Agency) : 1 person in focus group

Respondents for interviews and focus groups in Rotterdam The Hague

Civic brokers, regional or national professional organizations (8 interviews)

NM Natuurmonumenten (Nature monuments): 2 persons interviewed, at different times

MF Milieufederatie Zuid-Holland (Environmental Federation South Holland): 1 interview, participated to the 2 focus groups

MD Milieudefensie (Friends of the Earth Netherlands): 2 persons interviewed, 1 participated to focus group

F Fietserbond (Cyclist lobby Netherlands): 1 interview, 1 focus group

P Platform Slim Werken Slim Reizen (Platform smart working smart travelling): 1 interview

Civic brokers, local or voluntary associations (2 interviews)

GV Groeiend Verzet (Growing mobilization for People's Woods): 1 interview, 1 focus group

ABCN Actiecomité Blankenburgtunnel Nee (Action committee against the Blankenburgtunnel): 1 interview

Political party, also broker (1 interview)

GL Groenlinks Rotterdam (GreenLeft, municipal political party): 1 interview, 1 focus group

Other actors met, not most important brokers for issue investigated (2 interviews)

ANWB Association for car drivers: 1 interview

PF Platform A13-A16: 1 interview, 1 focus group

K Kennis Platform Verkeer en Vervoer (Independent knowledge center on transport and circulation, devoted to help local authorities) : 1 focus group

BV Representative of the 'Bos variant': 1 focus group

Brokers between public and private actors (2 interviews)

PR Rotterdam Port Authority, road transport division: 1 interview
M Mobility manager, The Hague: 1 interview

Public actors (5 interviews)

SR Stadsregio Rotterdam, Verkeer en Vervoer (planning of transport, Agglomeration of Rotterdam): 1 interview, 1 focus group (2 participants to it, one on roads, one on public transit)
SB Provincie Zuid-Holland, Stedenbaan project: 1 person interviewed, another person in focus group
BB Ministerie van Infrastructuur en Milieu (Minister Infrastructure and Environment), program Beter Benutten (optimal use of transport network) : 1 interview, also participates to focus group
NWO NWO Project Buro (project team for the project Nieuwe Westelijk Oeververbinding), Ministerie Infrastructuur en Milieu: 1 interview with 2 persons
PP Centrum Publieksparticipatie, Rijksoverheid (Center Public Participation, Dutch government): 1 interview with 2 persons

INTERVIEW SCRIPT

Explanatory note : These are the general topics covered in the semi-focused interviews, with types of questions. The questions could be much more precise in relation to each actors' project, network and coalition (much documentary preparation came before). I started with general and open question to let them tell *their* story, before pointing myself to specific events and discourses.

1- Organizational and geographic setting, description of involvement and motivation

A. Can you explain to me how you and your group/organization has come to get involved on this topic?

B. Can you describe me your daily work or involvement on this topic, and the projects your are working on? How long have your worked on this?

C. On what territory exactly are you working on this theme? Would you like to extend you actions further?

If there are two sub-issues they are working on (for example trafic calming and highway opposition) (which was frequent, being broker), I started by discussing the least contentious in terms of collaborations, coalitions and events, and followed with the other.

2- Map/images framing the issue

I have a map here of __. What do you think of this map? Or / How did your organisation design this map and with what purpose.

3- Collaborations

Who do you collaborate with most often? Could you draw me on this paper the network of your most frequent collaborations on this topic?

- What actors do you think are particular important in this field? Why?

- Are there some actors particularly linking different sub-groups together?

- *More specific questions about some actors now or later in the interview, when the moment is ripe.*

4- More specific about dynamics of coalitions

Can you tell me more about the constitution of this coalition/ network and its evolution?

How did it start? Can you tell me more about the challenge you just mentionned?

- referring eventually to key moments documented already (if participant doesn't mention them first)

5- Events of debate

You have participated to this event/debate. Could you explain your group's positionning in that event? What point did you try to bring accross? Was a common vision adopted with allies (how was this elaborated)? Or were there different perspectives expressed during that event?

There was for example a discourse or strategy of __. Did you agree or not with it?

(some more specific questions for each case, prepared in advance)

(usually there are several points I want to cover in this, but some come spontaneously without me having to ask)

6- Come back on, if necessary :

a- Network relations

I had a last question about this group. Can you tell me more about your relations with them?

b- Discourse divergence and convergence

Specific question on a discourse I want to hear more about : Could you tell me more about this vision of the issue in terms of _ : why do you (or others) disagree or emphasize something else?

c- Scale of action

Are you also involved at the metropolitan scale, how or why not? With the province? Are there tensions between the local/metropolitan?

7- Wrap-up, looking forward

What do you think will happen in your region in the next 10-15 years? How optimistic are you about the future of the car alternatives/solution you are promoting?

FOCUS GROUP SCRIPT

1- Round of presentations

Each participant presents him/herself and the projects they are working on.

2- Situations for discussion

The moderator presents two situations/problems setting constructed by the researcher to initiate the discussion (with sub-questions the moderator has). (The second is only presented when the first discussion is over, at about half of the time, but flexible to the enthusiasm of the discussion). These themes of discussion come from the convergences in discourses or the recurrently identified tensions observed (from documents and interviews).

The moderator presents the problem for discussion, and invites participants to tell their perspective on it.

3- Conclusion

Participants are invited to conclude in relation to what they have learned during the discussion or a point they wish to emphasize in regard to the discussions.

APPENDIX 3. DATA ON THE DISCOURSES FROM BROKERS, REFERENCES TO CHAPTER 4

Table A3.1 Equivalences encountered in the documents from the *Centre d'écologie urbaine*, supporting the chain of equivalence explained in Chapter 4

Equivalences	Detailed occurrences in the texts
Vulnerable population, active transportation, traffic safety and street design	"Youth are less and less numerous to use active transportation in their daily activities; habits which have excessive negative effects on their health. We take as a starting point that a safe neighborhood for the youth is safe for the entire population." "The objective of the project is to rethink public spaces in favor of walking and cycling, with more attention to youth"
Street design and dynamic community (public spaces)	"Streets and public spaces for all. The first principle is that urban design and transport systems are taught for people and not for cars. [...] Re-equilibrating the sharing of public roads allows to improve those spaces which belong to us collectively in order to create meeting spaces"
Active transport, traffic safety, street design	"Active and safe mobility. In a green active and healthy neighborhood, priority is given to active transportation. [...] It is imperative to secure the urban environment to adapt it to pedestrians and cyclists with build design and signals making space convivial and reducing the risks of accidents"
Dynamic community (public spaces) and active transport	"A diagnostic of the neighborhood is done with research methods of Gehl "Public Space, Public Life", counting pedestrians and cyclists and measuring the use of public space"
Vulnerable populations	Hierarchy of mobility uses to prioritize : the most vulnerable on top (pedestrians, cyclists, users of public transit, public service vehicles, private cars)
Dynamic community (used public spaces and identity)	Encouraging sense of belonging through developing the 'sense of place' and public spaces with their own identity, to engage citizens and encourage the frequentation of public spaces.
Dynamic community (streets and public spaces with greenery)	Natural and ecological spaces. Offering public spaces is not enough, they need to be pleasant and without nuisances. Greening has a lot of other important ecological effects, including the potential to slow down cars in streets
Dynamic community (local mobilization and adherence)	"We think Green, active and healthy neighborhoods should be conceived for and by citizens who inhabit them". "The community is actively engaged in the future of its neighborhood".
Dynamic community (mixed and dense)	"The notion of sustainability points to the global quality of life of a neighborhood, to its natural and built form and to the manners in which we live and occupy it. Mixed, density, proximity of shops and serves as well as the quality of the urban design are determinants factors of it."
Dynamic community (to bring back residents in the central city)	"Some recent methods of planning have lead to the degradation of central neighborhoods of large cities like Montreal. This has favored the exodus of an important part of the population toward suburbs or new towns for a more appropriated living environment. The principle of the green neighborhood is to reverse this tendency in promoting the creation of urban neighborhoods attractive to these populations. In other terms, it means creating nice living environments to bring back populations toward the urban center through the enhancement of the urban life with its attractive features, like proximity shops, easy access to transport or the animated cultural life."

Source : CEUM 2009; CEUM 2010; CEUM 2011a; CEUM 2011b; CEUM and Solidarité Mercier-Est 2010; CEUM and DSP 2008

Table A3.2 Equivalences encountered in the documents from the *Conseil régional de l'environnement*, supporting the chain of equivalence explained in Chapter 4

Equivalences	Detailed discursive contribution
Dynamic community (local mobilization) and traffic safety	"A growing number of citizens' groups constitute themselves around the problem of car traffic, and their activities are more and more reported, notably in local newspapers. They denounce the excessive speed of car vehicles, their too large numbers and the associated insecurity. The same voices are heard in public consultations."
Dynamic community (local mobilization, awareness), traffic safety and greenhouse gas emissions	"The objective of this project consists in making car drivers change their behavior to more secure practices, and favor mobility by walking and cycling, and reduce greenhouse gas emissions. This objective is worked through two angles : one angle is the support of citizens and groups wishing to establish traffic calming measures in their neighborhood, and the other is building the awareness of alternatives in boroughs and neighborhoods affected"
Traffic safety, dynamic community (quality of life, health) and greenhouse gas emissions	"The significant increase in the number of vehicles circulating in the streets of Montreal do not only have consequences on safety and tranquility of residents but also for their quality of life (stress and noise), on the quality of their environment (pollution and greenhouse gas emissions) and on their health, according to the Public Health annual report of 2006."
Active transport, street design, dynamic community (with quality of life)	"Traffic calming is a way to reduce the negative impacts of cars in our neighborhoods and give back the place which pedestrians and cycle deserve, as well as the security and quality of life to the residents."
Street design	"The street, by its design, dictates to the drivers what behaviour he must adopt. [...] She can signify to the driver, in reducing his zone of comfort, that he is not alone in his kingdom"
Traffic safety and dynamic community (quality of life)	"Ultimately, it is the improvement of security for all users of the road and the quality of life of residents of the neighborhoods which are targeted."
Street design, traffic safety, dynamic community (convivial)	"Traffic calming allows to slow down car vehicles, discourage transiting circulation in residential streets, favor a better sharing of the road between the different mobility modes, minimize the risks of accidents and make a neighborhood more convivial and less noisy."
Street design, traffic safety and dynamic community (quality of life to keep young families in the city)	Tranquility and children's security are too key reasons identified for young families going to live in the suburbs, and both are threatened in the city by car transit circulation in living residential neighborhoods.
Vulnerable populations, street design, traffic safety	" A lot of intersections are very long to cross, difficult for elderly people and dangerous for children. Reducing the length of the crossing with curb extensions and central platform would facilitate crossing for pedestrians."

Source : CRE 2007A; CRE 2007B; CRE 2009; CRE 2010; CRE 2011

Table A3.3 Equivalences encountered in the documents from the *Équiterre*, supporting the chain of equivalence explained in Chapter 4

Equivalences	Detailed discursive contribution
Active transport and Dynamic communities (local shops)	"Active transport is good for the affairs of local shop keepers"
Active transport and Dynamic communities (local shops)	Cycling is an efficient and practical mode of transport in the city in general, and to go shopping also; walking as well
Active transport and dynamic communities (mobilization of local shops and local institutions)	Pedestrians do not need parking space, just a convivial promenade space; less need for parking space means less costs for institutions.
Active transport and Dynamic communities (local shops)	The contribution of shop keepers to neighborhood life is a under-estimated. Dynamic local shops mean dynamic streets, safe street, convivial streets with a lot of pedestrians which socialize and may make demands for more room for pedestrians and cyclists
Dynamic communities (mobilization for street design favorable to active transport, local shops)	Residents who shop and socialize in their neighborhoods are likely to militate for better environments for walking and cycling (greening and street design)
Active transport and dynamic communities (mobilization of local shops and local institutions)	Walking and cycling can be encouraged by simple infrastructures provided by shops and institutions (bike parking, lockers, shower) or services (billboard for carpooling, bicycles and car share)
Active transport and dynamic communities (mobilization of local shops and local institutions)	The health, motivation, and productivity of employers of shops and institutions improve if they exercise through walking and cycle to work; a good image to the shop
Active transport and dynamic communities (mobilization of local shops and local institutions)	Institutions and shopkeepers can be active in asking for more or adapted transit services from the public transit agency, and/or in allowing for flexible work hours, reducing the offer of car parking spaces, and pay public transit passes
Dynamic community (local shops and services, animated neighborhoods), and active transport	"Encouraging citizens to consume locally and to walk and cycle both valorize local proximity services and a safe, but animated neighborhood life with quality of life"
Dynamic communities and Active transport	Diverse actors in the neighborhood have to deal with transport issues (health local center, school, businesses) and bringing them together in a project of active transport and local shopping can be very effective and fruitful for the local community

Source : (Équiterre 2007a; Équiterre 2007b; Équiterre 2009; Équiterre 2007c)

Table A3.4 Equivalences encountered in the documents from the Vélo-Québec, supporting the chain of equivalence explained in Chapter 4

Equivalences	Detailed discursive contribution
Vulnerable population, active transportation	"The campaign aims at reducing the dependence to cars in daily journeys of pupils to school." "Objectives : Encourage children of primary schools to integrate active transport in their daily life; Reducing motorization in the surroundings of schools"
Active transport, vulnerable populations, feeling of unsafety	"Spontaneously, children would walk to school, but the trends in the last year have been to the increase of parents dropping their children to school with their car, even when the school is near." "The perception of safety represents a key factor in the choice of walking or cycling to go to school."
Dynamic community (mobilization of school community) and active transportation	"A school can encourage pupils, parents and teachers to adopt active transport". "When a school gets involved in the program, she receives a guidance by the Vélo-Québec team for three years, on three levels : safe design, education and information, mobilization"
Street design and active transportation	"When we find, in a municipality or neighborhood, an environment conducive to the practice of physical activity, everybody is winning. Well designed intersections, good traffic signs and bicycle paths are elements contributing to an environment favorable to active transport". Street design and infrastructures send signals to road users they are welcomed (pedestrians, cyclists), are invited to slow down (cars).
Active transport, dynamic community (mobilization of parents and children for the quality of life in neighborhood)	"When a child walks or uses a bicycle to get to school, he improve his own physical condition and contributes to the improvement of the quality of his living environment. In the same manner, parents who eliminate the daily journeys in car to school contribute to the quietude of their neighborhood and to the reduction of the pollution around the school."
Active transport and dynamic community (diversity of functions)	"The type of environment where the school is found has effect on the mobility habits. A dense sector, with diverse urban functions and short distances is more favorable obviously to the practice of active transport than one dominated by residences."
Street design and traffic safety	School corridors and local streets surrounding schools are actually not well designed and are conducive to speed
Traffic safety, vulnerable population, dynamic community mobilizing for better street design	"The school travel plan has four objectives : securing home to school journeys, maintaining and promoting active transportation in pupils of primary schools, and initiating a work of collaboration to deploy design measures improving the safety of home to school journeys." "Objective : assist schools to integrate high-impact communication tools and ideas for fun, enlightening school activities; Offer schools the necessary tools to make them autonomous in their promotion of active transport to pupils."
Traffic safety, active transport, dynamic community (awareness)	"La rue pour tous ! takes place every May and is designed to promote road safety in the vicinity of schools, minimize motor vehicle traffic and promote active transportation. Increased community awareness means safer and more pleasant streets for everyone!"
Traffic safety, active transport, dynamic community (awareness, local mobilization)	Children are particularly involved in the sub-campaign : "Street for all : when each collaborates, everybody profits!" in which children themselves inform parents in kiosks (or home) and demand them to sign a contract of a "good and safe use" of the street. Shops and neighborhood groups are sometimes also involved
Traffic safety and dynamic community (awareness and mobilization of diverse actors)	The diagnostic of the obstacles to walking and cycling to school mobilize different actors : the school's direction, municipal authorities, police, the school council (regrouping parents, and the direction) and children. Obstacles are identified in the surroundings of schools, through the journeys of pupils, and at intersections.

Source: (Vélo Québec 2007; Vélo Québec 2011a; Vélo Québec 2006; Vélo Québec 2011a; Vélo Québec 2010b)

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