

# The Politics of Innovation in Public Transport

Issues, Settings and Displacements

De politiek van innovatie in het openbaar vervoer  
Issues, settings en verplaatsingen

(met een samenvatting in het Nederlands)

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# The Politics of Innovation in Public Transport

Issues, Settings and Displacements

Roel Nahuis

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# 1 Introduction

## Displacements, Public transport and Democracy

### 1.1 Introduction

The mutual relation between technological innovation and societal change is one of the central topics in Science and Technology Studies (STS). STS conceive of technological innovation as a social process. They reject the determinist idea of a technological system exclusively driven by scientific discoveries and technological inventions. On the one hand, technological innovations can develop in multiple directions and each of these directions affects stakeholders differently. On the other hand, these developments depend on interactions between stakeholders, power structures, negotiations and contingencies. Innovation processes involve heterogeneous actors and are characterized by contest, inclusion, exclusion, power, etc. This reveals an important political dimension of innovation processes (Staudenmaier, 1989; Smits et al., 1995): the confrontation of values and interests and an impact in the public realm. This research project elaborates this political dimension from an evaluative stance: to what extent do innovation processes meet criteria of democratic quality? In other words: how to understand and evaluate the democratic quality of the politics of innovation?<sup>1</sup>

This first chapter elaborates the main terms of this research question and develops the outline of the thesis. Thereto three routes are followed. On the first route the politics of innovation is presented as a process of co-construction of technology and actors. As three examples show, this process concerns dealing with all kinds of conflicts, frictions and power disparities. On the second route, the literature on user-technology relations is reviewed. Based thereon, it is argued that different aspects of the politics of innovation are dealt with in various settings, which calls for a focus on displacements between settings. The third route justifies why public transport is an interesting field for learning about the dynamics and democratic implications of displacements. Moreover, a reflection on current meanings of democratic decision-making in public transport policy leads to a workable definition of democratic quality. Following these three routes we arrive at the main research questions and an outline of the thesis.

### 1.2 The politics of innovation

#### 1.2.1 Novelty of technology, novelty of constellation

On this first route I argue that the political dimension of technological innovation is indeed recognised within STS, but that a gap remains between empirical scrutiny and democratic

evaluation of these politics. This will be clarified after a (for the moment) short delineation of the politics of innovation.

As said, there is an important political dimension of technological innovation processes. Yet, there are some characteristics and developments, which set the politics of innovation apart from other, more established and institutionalised kinds of politics (Smits and Leyten, 1991). One of the main features of technological innovation is novelty: innovation literally means renewal. Novelty implies that each project generates its own opportunities, visions, problems, tensions, etc. As a consequence, actors do not occupy a traditional position; they have to find out anew how they relate to the issue and to other actors. Do they want to be involved? What opportunities does technology offer? How are they affected? Do they have means for intervention? Who are the allies and the enemies? The politics of innovation is not a typical event recurring within given actor constellations (like for example the politics of law making). It is a renewal of constellation as well; it is the co-construction of technology and actors.

The co-construction of technology and actors means that they are both shaped in the same practices: identity and capabilities of users, for example, are not independent from the technologies they use. In other words: in innovation, the (future) world of users is somehow implicated, anticipated, served, altered or harmed, at least potentially. 'Co-construction' emphasizes the implications of interactions between actors: those who are the main actors in practices of co-construction shape the worlds in which we are to live. This notion thus marks the political dimension of innovation processes: "[practices of] co-construction of users and technology may involve tensions, conflicts, and disparities in power and resources amongst the different actors involved" (Oudshoorn and Pinch, 2003, p 13).

For example, this dimension is at the core of three recently published case studies explicitly dealing with the politics of innovation.<sup>2</sup> The authors of the case studies all follow a particular actor trying to realise something they consider valuable or of public interest to some degree and they draw attention to the 'politics' involved. One case shows how cognitive and behavioural patterns of electric vehicle users run counter to the power practices inscribed in official state policies (Gjøen and Hård, 2002). Another case illustrates how implementation of user-centred design (UCD) methods at workplaces involves many negotiations and the reshaping of both methods and workplace (Garrety and Badham, 2004). In the third case electricity companies appeared to privilege some kinds of users over others with differently branded packages of services and a marketing strategy based on political prejudices (Summerton, 2004). All cases illustrate relevant aspects of the politics of innovation. They show how services, technologies, expertise, policies or methods become contested when they contain 'wrong' assumptions about the contexts in which they are actually implemented or employed. They show how designers, engineers, marketing managers, UCD practitioners, scientific experts, state policies and spokespersons of those being affected claim to speak in the name of users in order to grant authority to their claims. And they show how others contest such user representations: identities, desires and capabilities of users are part of the issue. In short, the politics of innovation involves dealing with the conflicts, tensions and distribution of power between actor constituencies: indeed, this politics comprises practices of co-construction of technology and actors.

### **1.2.2 The question of democracy**

While the complex political dimension of technological innovation has increasingly been recognized, the question of democratic quality has become ever more urgent (Smits and Leyten,

1991). Advances in biotechnology, nuclear energy, military technology, artificial intelligence, etc. have raised ethical concerns and resistance leading to broad societal debates. Since the 1960s and 1970s broad movements, which advance more citizen participation, have picked up these issues. If facts and values are hard to distinguish and justice should be done to the range of risk perceptions, the heterogeneity of values, different perceptions of desirability and need and contextual features, then decision-making should go beyond expert advice and also include lay knowledge.

These societal concerns have highlighted the issue of democratic quality. Yet, because the politics of innovation involves the renewal of constellations and learning about procedures as well, the rules for democratisation are not easily established. Many STS scholars still hesitate to take an evaluative stance in the controversies studied (Woodhouse et al., 2002). Despite a strong sensitivity for and empirical scrutiny of the operations of power in innovation processes, there are remarkably few examples where conclusions are explicitly drawn in terms of democratic quality. Although the examples in the previous setting all explicitly concern the “politics” of innovation, they are mainly descriptive and avoid taking a stance: the word ‘democracy’ does not show up once. The authors deconstruct politics by describing arbitrary representations, differences, contestations, negotiations and compromises; they foreground the contingencies at work in the design, implementation and use of artefacts, services or methods; they, however, do not provide us with a framework for evaluating and explaining (a lack of) democratic quality. In other words, evaluation on the base of empirical scrutiny seems to be methodologically and theoretically underdeveloped.

### **1.3 Co-construction, settings and displacements**

#### **1.3.1 Technology and users: an overview of literature**

Because users are important stakeholders, especially in (transport) service innovation,<sup>3</sup> their positioning within emerging actor constellations is crucial in the politics of innovation. Therefore, the second route goes through the literature about user-technology relations for understanding this positioning. This literature discusses politically relevant issues of co-construction and agency; it conceptualises the manoeuvring space and ways of users.

A growing body of literature addresses the co-construction of technology and users. Oudshoorn and Pinch (2003) have recently reviewed this literature and among other things discussed the responses to a number of politically relevant questions: *Who/what dominates what/whom? How do technologies treat their users? Do they require certain capacities from users? How do they include, exclude, or otherwise affect certain groups of users? And do these effects result from design activities? If they are determined by design, then the question is how users are represented in these contexts. If usage instead springs from the historical and cultural contexts in which technology is used, then the main questions rather relate to cultural determinants. These kinds of questions are central to the review of Oudshoorn and Pinch.*

I interrogate the same literature and specifically ask where and how the co-construction of users and technology comes about and what the main differences in this regard are. Thereto, I use the distinction made by Oudshoorn and Pinch between social constructivist approaches, semiotic approaches, and cultural approaches.<sup>4</sup>

### *The evolutionary and the SCOT approach<sup>5</sup>*

The evolutionary approach considers technology development in terms of variation and selection (Nelson and Winter, 1977). Competing variants of the same technology can live next to one another for some time, until a dominant design emerges. Like in biological evolution technology development is understood as an alternating process of trial and error in which the fittest survive. But unlike in biology the variation process is not completely blind. Innovators may anticipate the selection environment (Pinch and Bijker, 1987; Van den Belt and Rip, 1987) and try to determine user needs in advance (Teubal, 1979). They incorporate expectations about the future world into their research agenda's (Van Lente, 1993). These insights have drawn attention to the social nature of variation.

Likewise, the Social Construction of Technology (SCOT) approach has drawn attention to the social nature of selection. How is it possible that variations are selected that are not the most optimal from a technological point of view? SCOT studies conceive of selection as a social process in which different relevant social groups are involved (institutions, organizations, as well as organised or unorganised groups of individuals) (Pinch and Bijker, 1987; Kline and Pinch, 1996). Social groups look at artefacts from different points of view. They have different assumptions about who the main users are, about what their specific capacities and desires are, about the environments in which the artefacts should be used, and henceforth about the requirements that the artefacts should meet. In their famous case of the bicycle, Pinch and Bijker show that selection between these variants is best understood as a social-rhetorical process of problem definition and redefinition, meaning attribution, negotiation and compromising between social groups.

### *Semiotic approaches*

Semiotic approaches consider technologies as if they were texts. This metaphor illuminates two features of technological artefacts. In the first place, technology is always embedded in a context to which it owes its meaning (Latour, 1991a). Like the words in a sentence, technology and context derive their meaning from one another. In semiotic approaches, this context is considered as a network or chain of interrelating elements, comprising machines, innovators, financiers, tools, users, documents, etc. A hammer derives its meaning from the materials it is made of, the shop where it was sold, the carpenter whose hands are around it, the spike it hits on the head, etc. The sense of each element depends on its place in the chain. Hence, from a semiotic point of view artefacts and actors have similar roles in the network (in which intentions do not matter). They act upon one another. The related metaphor of technology as a film script strongly emphasizes the role of artefacts (Akrich, 1992). It points to the capacity of for example a round table to set the scene for a meeting without hierarchies. No one can sit at the head after all.

The second feature of technology, illuminated by the metaphor of technology as text, is the interpretive flexibility of technological artefacts. Like the meaning of a text depends on interpretations by readers, so does the meaning of a technological artefact depend on interpretations by users. In a case of usability trials, Woolgar (1991a) has shown how innovators observe users' confusions, mistakes and other possible interpretations. By means of design decisions, like adding or removing plugs, putting warning stickers on the cover or rewriting manuals, innovators (a manufacturer of microcomputers in this case) try to constrain the degrees of freedom and teach people how they use technology. Innovation can henceforth be

conceived of as a process of ‘configuring the user’, a process of delimiting the range of possible interpretations.

### *Cultural studies*

Cultural studies focus on user technology relations from the viewpoint of users as consumers. The culture of consumption has been an important theme within cultural studies since the late 1970s, when consumption patterns increasingly became understood as social mechanisms of identity creation (Oudshoorn and Pinch, 2003). The idea that technologies must be culturally appropriated before they become functional challenges the determinist view that new technology shapes lifeworlds. Instead, lifeworlds shape technology. Consumption as cultural appropriation of technology is a matter of lifestyle, social relations, status and identity in the first place (Silverstone and Hirsch, 1992). From this point of view cultural studies argue that the appropriation of technology goes beyond mere passive adoption; the very meaning and use of new technologies is being shaped, and, consequently, the social identity of users themselves when they integrate novelties into their daily lives and social relations. The history of the Sony Walkman illustrates how a technology serves and alters different publics over time, depending on being used during running exercises, in trains, or even in swimming pools and showers (Du Gay et al., 1997). At the same time, the Walkman itself became smaller, more robust and waterproof. In conjunction with commercial advertisements of manufacturers, these publics reshaped the joy of running and social relations within trains, while individualizing music taste and opening up new markets related to music recording. The concept of ‘domestication’ (Silverstone and Hirsch, 1992) emphasizes the cultural work needed for this: consumers tame ‘wild’ technology when they articulate its value and integrate it in their lives.

### **1.3.2 Theoretical approaches and techno-political settings**

The review shows that co-construction of users and technology is a dynamic process in which actors of different kinds interact and negotiate technologies and meanings. Having said that, there are some interesting differences in emphasis between the three kinds of approaches with regard to the political nature of innovation processes. In semiotic/script approaches politics is about the normative prescriptions coming along with new technology (Winner, 1980; Akrich, 1992; Harbers, 1996). In cultural approaches politics is a matter of dealing with the unfamiliar, exciting and threatening aspects of new technology and the enthusiasms and resistances it elicits (Oudshoorn and Pinch, 2003; Sørensen, 2004). In evolutionary/SCOT approaches politics is about interests and normative assumptions, which social groups bring in, and the relations of power, which structure the social dynamics and negotiation processes (Rip et al., 1995; Bijker, 1999). Consequently, approaches draw attention to certain kinds of settings. The differences in the conceived nature of innovation politics reflect differences in the kinds of settings, which the approaches deem relevant.

Typical settings for the politics of scripts are laboratories, research institutes and design departments (Latour, 1987; Akrich, 1995). There, delineations of users serve as input for technical decisions. These delineations can be constructed with different techniques, ranging from the imagination of designers, to expert advice, to surveys, to usability trials, and to user feedback. With the notion of ‘user representation techniques’ Akrich (1995) deliberately connotes these mediating techniques to the political meaning of representation: the degree to which the input available in laboratories resembles the real interests of users.

Typical settings for the cultural politics of technology are those settings where common languages, visions and metaphors are generated and repeated (Du Gay et al., 1997; Sørensen, 2004). The emergence of new technology, including commercial advertisements and ‘what’s new’ pages in magazines, may trigger cultural nerves. Yet, the fear and fun of novelty, the opportunities and threats they bring along, are expressed in social relations and public debates. Cultural politics resides in public life, in schools, debates, art and literature, and – perhaps most importantly – in the claims and statements implicitly expressed by actual modes of usage.

Typical settings for evolutionary politics are meetings between mutually dependent stakeholders, like designers, manufacturers and financiers. There, development and marketing strategies are negotiated. Another kind of setting, related to selection, are markets (Van den Belt and Rip, 1987). SCOT scholars also attribute an important role to advertisement (Pinch and Bijker, 1987; Kline and Pinch, 1996). Advertisers attempt to shape the need for and meaning of new technology. They claim for example that safety is the most important feature of bikes and thereby address a whole public of female cyclist. Other typical settings are experiments and demonstrations (Pinch and Bijker, 1987; Rip and Schot, 2002). Road races demonstrated that air tires did not only contribute to the comfort of bikes, but also to their speed. Finally, in the different media for public debates and opinion formation a broader set of actors shapes and negotiates meanings (Pinch and Bijker, 1987). The pros and cons of publicly financed projects, like new railways or dams, are often publicly discussed in daily newspapers, magazines, or on Internet. In all these settings heterogeneous actors shape and negotiate the meaning of new technology, including their implications for design and development.

Taken together, the literature provides a strong sensitivity for the multiplicity of settings where the politics of innovation takes place. Without being exhaustive, the review enables us to summarize a number of potentially relevant political settings (Table 1.1). Theoretical approaches unmask this variety of settings. This has three important implications: First, due to the variety of settings where these approaches point to, decision-making about innovation (whether deliberate or *de facto*) is very likely to transcend the boundaries of one particular setting. In other words, one should take into consideration that the politics of innovation *displaces* between different settings. Second, this situation is theoretically underdeveloped in existing approaches, because these all contain a theoretical bias towards the relevance of certain settings. The adoption of a single approach thus runs the risk of neglecting other important settings where plans are made, contested, approved, rejected, materialised, etc. Third, if the politics of innovation is indeed

*Table 1.1* Potentially relevant settings for the politics of innovation

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Laboratories, research institutes and design departments
User representation techniques (usability trials, user feedback)
Technological scripts (confronted with real users)
Experiments and demonstrations
Meetings between mutually dependent stakeholders
Markets, commercial advertisements and ‘what’s new’ pages in magazines
Public debates and discourse (metaphors, visions)
Cultural expressions (art and critiques)
Social relations (schools, subcultures)
Actual use

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characterized by displacements, how can we then identify the most relevant political settings? Is it somehow possible to follow a controversy as it displaces between different settings, to develop an approach for the study of displacements that crosscuts the variety of settings? Such an approach will be developed in chapters 2 and 3.

## 1.4 Democratic quality and public transport

### 1.4.1 Learning from experience

The third route formulates answers to two additional questions: (i) why doing case studies of public transport innovations and (ii) what do I mean with democratic quality?

Decision-making about public transport historically begs for democratic legitimacy. Developments in the relation between the national and regional governments and public transport providers can be very broadly delineated as a process of deprivatisation in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century and a process of privatisation at the end of that century. During and as a result of the first process, issues like market regulation, (inter)regional coordination, infrastructural requirements, accessibility, and connectedness of regions have become a public responsibility (Groenendijk, 1998). As a result, current public transport policy is still justified by two major public interests:<sup>6</sup> (i) reliable connections in densely populated areas to stimulate economic activity and (ii) a minimum service level to guarantee accessibility of hospitals and other public services. In addition, public transport affects still other public interests like environmental objectives and concerns about social security. These interests and concerns are increasingly seen as responsibilities for the national and regional government and, since the state guards the public interests, decision-making about developments in public transport has consequently required democratic legitimacy.

Among other things this democratic legitimacy was at stake in many debates about liberalization and privatisation at the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century (Button and Keeler, 1993; Groenendijk, 1998). Antagonists of privatisation argued that the public would not be represented any longer. Profit interests of companies would dominate the public interest in for example unprofitable connections in rural areas, while residents had been deprived of the means to contest such decisions. Public representation, these antagonists said, is a too large sacrifice.

On the other hand, protagonists of privatisation argued that the state fell short exactly in terms of democratic legitimacy. The particular conception of democracy as a system of regulating by mandate and control by elected representatives would not per se serve the public interest better than for example a well working market, they argued. Alternative forms of democracy, like user panels and consumer platforms, might very well compensate for a less influential government. Democracy does not need to be located in established institutions.

In part, alternative forms of democracy are proposed to compensate for a withdrawing state. However, there also have been democratic initiatives next to state democracy. Such initiatives might aim at bringing the voice of users louder into state institutions; they might also challenge the very decision-making structures of the state. These initiatives link up with different forms of democratic politics. I will give three examples from the history of public transport, which illustrate the variety of democratic political forms: the work of traveller organization ROVER, resistance against transport planning, and the organisation of Consumer Platforms. These randomly chosen examples show that democratisation, notably the effective involvement of

stakeholders, is an inherent trait in many public transport developments, not because decision-making takes place in formal democratic settings, but mainly because stakeholders are used and expected to express their interests and ideas in public transport policy-making. These examples, moreover, show the variety of manifestations of democratic forms that a definition of democratic quality should cover.

#### **1.4.2 Forms of democratic politics: three examples**

The first example is the foundation and work of traveller organization ROVER.<sup>7</sup> By now, ROVER is a well-established consumer organization, which represents the interests of public transport users. It is easy to complain about late buses and poor connection, the founders argued in 1971; the challenge is to foster improvement. The organization has regional offices all over the country and a number of central departments centred on different issues. These departments discuss the merits of all policy proposals related to public transport. By means of requested or unrequested advice, ROVER recommends improvements to the Ministry of Traffic and Transport, to parliament, to local governments and to transport companies. The organization, which currently has about 7,000 members,<sup>8</sup> actively looks for public support by means of media attention. Part of its lobby goes via newspapers, magazines and Internet. It also operates in coalitions with for example elderly, disabled or general consumer organizations if they share the same interests in a particular situation.

ROVER has indeed become an obligatory passage point for many policy decisions. The organization itself claims to have improved democratic quality in policy formation processes. “ROVER, the voice of the passenger”, its website states. It thus challenges the democratic legitimacy of elected representatives in matters of public transport, because those are not specifically elected to represent citizens as public transport users. ROVER claims to be a better representative in those matters.<sup>9</sup>

The second example is the emergence of resistance against innovative ideas or new transport plans. In the city of Utrecht, the Netherlands, the city council planned an exclusive bus lane right through the city in the mid-90s, which provoked a lot of protest. Citizens and entrepreneurs founded action committees, foregrounding a variety of issues: the safety of pedestrians and cyclists, the lack of facilities for elderly and wheelchair users, increased bus traffic in residential areas, the removal of trees, enduring road works, hardly reachable shops. These committees managed to collect hundreds of Letters of Protest against the initial plan, forcing the city council to come up with important adjustments.

Resistance exhibits democracy in one obvious sense. Union strikes, feminists protests, Luddite’s machine breaking, student protests, demonstrations against nuclear warfare: these utterances of public concerns are hardly imaginable in non-democratic states, unless authoritarian state structures are already destabilizing and demonstrators precisely fight for more democracy. Resistance and collective protest can certainly enhance democratic quality (Barry, 2001), but here democracy takes a specific form again. Democracy is the articulation of difference and pluralism. In this conception public controversies improve democracy, because they exhibit the many different and opposing values and interests at stake in circumstances where elected representatives tend to compromise plans long before all stakes are clear.

The third example shows democratic improvement in a formalized way and initiated by the national state. The *Personal Transport Act 2000* determines that transport companies can tender for the exploitation of public transport in specified regions. Regional authorities establish the requirements companies should meet. At the same time, the law requests the institutionalisation of Consumer Platforms, which have to be consulted in major decisions, like the establishment of the program of requirements, changes in time schedules, accessibility, experiments, procedures for complaints, etc. Consumer Platforms bring together delegates from official organizations, which serve the interest of public transport users. In one Dutch region, no less than eight different organizations participate, like Women 55+, ROVER, the Youth Platform, and the Chamber of Commerce.<sup>10</sup> The Province organises the meetings and is responsible for the circulation of minutes.

The national state has initiated Consumer Platforms partly as compensation for the effects of liberalization. The platforms control the tender procedure and negotiations between regional authorities and transport companies and give recommendations from the point of view of the public transport users.<sup>11</sup> Its heterogeneous nature reflects the heterogeneous nature of users. The platforms promise enhanced democratic quality again, although in yet another form. This form emphasizes aspects of democracy related to the division of power. Two parties, Province and company, could easily bargain a deal. A third party, however, now controls their negotiations: the consumer platform. In this sense, the platform substitutes/supplements Provincial States, the body of elected representatives responsible (by constitution) for the control of the provincial administration.

#### 1.4.3 Democratisation as an inherent trait

To the three examples one could easily add another number of democratisation initiatives: measurement systems for client satisfaction have been developed, transport companies have installed customer panels, authors in magazines like *OV.Magazine*<sup>12</sup> evaluate the value for users of new policy measures, and of course state institutions still have an important organizing, coordinating and evaluating role. However, we do not need to elaborate on those initiatives and institutions if we want to draw conclusions about the recurring question of democracy in the field of public transport. The examples already show the variety of democratic forms in public transport decision-making.

Yet, the examples concern the democratisation of policy-making and this study is concerned with technological innovation. Innovation is characterized by novelty and fluid actor-constellations. Actors have to find their stake before they can become stakeholders. I characterized the politics of innovation as dealing with the inequalities, tensions and conflicts in practices of co-construction of technology and actors. How, then, do ROVER, resistance, consumer platforms, etc. contribute to the democratic quality of *innovation* processes? And what are the most important settings in these processes? There is a clear need for case studies, here.

Nevertheless, because democratisation seems to be an inherent trait of developments in public transport, we can assume that this field offers interesting cases; issues are often politicised already, the (sometimes conflicting)<sup>13</sup> public interests are quite well articulated and the call for democracy is widely recognised. Public transport is an empirical field where democratic legitimisations of decisions have always been very important since public transport companies were deprivatised in the first half of the twentieth century. This enables learning about the democratic implications of displacements and, what is more, because this happens in a fairly

consistent and traditional way it is possible to abstract a notion of democratic quality and take that to be a relatively constant and consensus-based ideal.

#### 1.4.4 A definition of democracy

What do I mean with ‘democracy’? What are the terms of evaluation? Here we face a flexibility/rigidity dilemma: is it possible to define a set of criteria for evaluation, which is flexible enough to cover the variety of democratic forms, but rigid enough to make a difference between bad and good politics? Within STS, evaluation criteria based on deliberative theory have been developed (Rowe and Frewer, 2000; Rowe and Frewer, 2004; Rowe et al., 2004). In a recent article Hamlett (2003) has coined the possibility to extend the application of these evaluation criteria to non-procedural politics of technology by treating it

“as one anchor of a continuum of political structures that might reach from the broadest participatory democracy; through various forms of limited participation democracy, such as pluralism, interest group bargaining, corporatism, or other representative forms; through to various forms of elitist, technocratic, or authoritarian systems” (Hamlett, 2003, p. 123).

This argument thus suggests a possibility for evaluating the different cases of the politics of technology. The criteria are based on the assumption that individuals with diverse or opposing values and preferences will reach a reasoned, informed, and consensual judgment when they get a fair opportunity to discuss controversial issues. A fair opportunity means a forum that meets a set of nine criteria (see table 1.2).

This rather extensive set of criteria is too large for the main purpose of this study: to evaluate the cumulative effects of decisions on a variety of settings. Mainly for practical reasons I decided to pick those criteria, which I deem most relevant and which are able to cover the ideas about democracy that can be observed in the field of public transport: representativeness, resource

*Table 1.2* Democratic evaluation criteria for innovation processes

Representativeness	The participants should comprise a broadly representative sample of the affected population.
Independence	The participation process should be conducted in an independent (unbiased) way.
Early involvement	The participants should be involved as early as possible in the process, as soon as value judgments become salient.
Influence	The output of the procedure should have a genuine impact on policy.
Transparency	The process should be transparent so that the relevant population can see what is going on and how decisions are being made.
Resource accessibility	Participants should have access to the appropriate resources to enable them to successfully fulfil their brief.
Task definition	The nature and scope of the participation task should be clearly defined.
Structured	The participation exercise should use/provide appropriate mechanisms for structuring and displaying the decision-making process.
Cost-effectiveness	The procedure should in some sense be cost-effective from the point of view of the sponsors.

Source: Rowe, Marsh and Frewer (2004)

availability, and influence. This leads to a global definition of democratic quality in terms of three principles or requirements:

- *Participation/representation*: the degree to which stakeholders are able to participate, either directly or indirectly;
- *Empowerment*: the degree to which all stakeholders are able to articulate their ideas and action programs;
- *Impact/influence*: the degree to which the articulation of ideas and action programs affects outcomes.

To be sure, application of this definition is not straightforward. Stakeholder interests are often unclear until opportunities of new technology or services are being articulated. I characterized the politics of technology as dealing with the conflicts and tensions involved in the co-construction of technology and actors. How, then, should these practices meet the requirement of stakeholder participation? What are the relevant resources for empowerment? Should stakeholders have proportional influence in all stages of the process? These questions are too specific to be answered here. They urge for careful scrutiny in empirical studies, for observing ROVERs, resistances and Consumer Platforms in action and for contextual understanding of their roles in more or less democratic decision-making. The criteria should thus be specified as soon as the issues at stake and the range of possible actions are getting clearer.

## 1.5 A study of displacements

### 1.5.1 Research questions

This chapter followed three routes to arrive at the main objective of this study: understanding and evaluating displacements in innovation politics in public transport. On the first route the politics of innovation was characterized as practices of co-construction of actors and technology. Despite increased recognition of the political dimension of technological innovation processes and despite lively and ongoing debates about their democratisation, STS scholars still often hesitate to base normative conclusions on empirical findings. This thesis aims to build a bridge between empirical scrutiny and evaluative ambitions.

The second route offered a persuasive argument for focusing on settings and displacements. The literature about the co-construction of technology and users learns that techno-political practices cannot be easily located in isolated settings without reducing the nature of these politics. Issues, frictions, and conflicts emerge and are dealt with in different settings; they displace between settings. Displacement, here, means the subsequent discussions of (aspects of) techno-political issues in different settings. I argued that this idea of displacement is important for understanding the politics of innovation, but is nevertheless still theoretically underdeveloped.

The third route provided reasons to focus on cases in the empirical domain of public transport. Because the call for democratisation frequently leads to stakeholder involvement, though in many different ways, this domain offers interesting cases. Moreover, the choice for this domain justifies a definition of democracy in terms of participation, empowerment, and impact, which is flexible enough to cover the kind of democratic political forms that can be observed in

public transport decision-making, but rigid enough to make a difference between good and bad politics.

These arguments translate the initial question – how to understand and evaluate the politics of innovation – into three more specific research questions about the conceptualisation, the dynamics and the democratic implications of displacements:

- Given the variety of settings that seem to be relevant in the politics of innovation, it is striking that the notion of displacement is still theoretically underdeveloped. An important question, then, is: *How to conceptualise the politics of innovation in terms of displacements?*
- If the politics of innovation extends into different settings, then its evaluation should centre on the consequences of displacements. This leads to the second question: *How do displacements affect democratic quality?*
- If an evaluation is to have a genuine impact on democratisation policy, then it should be able to look beyond the contingencies in the politics of innovation and try to trace the patterns underlying these politics. A third question, then, is: *What are the underlying dynamics of displacements?*

### 1.5.2 Outline of the thesis

This introductory chapter followed three routes leading to the research questions of this study. It introduced the main terms of the questions – the politics of innovation, displacements between settings, and democratic quality – and presented an argument to address these questions in the empirical domain of public transport.

Chapter 2 elaborates the theoretical background. It reviews the STS literature about technology, politics and democracy and presents five perspectives, which differ in their assumptions about technology development and conceptions of democratisation. The chapter collects the building blocks for a conceptual framework.

Chapter 3 develops the conceptual framework. It introduces the main concepts – issues, settings, and displacements –, discusses their relations, and explains how they can be used to answer the empirical questions. Furthermore, methodological considerations are presented to justify a case study approach and the selection of cases.

Chapter 4 presents the results of a first case study about the introduction of self-service in the Amsterdam trams between 1967 and 1973. The focus of the study is on the notion of ‘issues’ as clashes between action programs and antiprograms. The study shows how seven issues displace between three settings according to four patterns. Based thereon conclusions are drawn about the dynamics and democratic implications of displacements.

Chapter 5 presents the results of a second case study about the implementation of a flexible public transport concept in and between the towns of Hoogeveen and Meppel between 1999 and 2004. The focus of this case study is on the notion of ‘settings’. By spelling out the main characteristics of no less than fifteen settings it is shown how displacements involve a reframing

of issues and how the four patterns of displacements from chapter 4 can be typified on the base of distinct reframing effects. Based thereon it draws conclusions about the dynamics and democratic implications of displacements.

Chapter 6 presents the results of a third case study about the introduction of High-quality Public Transport in the city of Utrecht between 1990 and 1999. One highly controversial issue is followed through nine settings. The focus of this study is on the contribution of displacements to the three dimensions of democratic quality. Conclusions about the dynamics and democratic implications are again linked to the typology of displacements.

Chapter 7 draws conclusions. It presents the main conceptual conclusions and the main conclusions from the three case studies in order to answer the three research questions. The chapter ends with a discussion of the contribution of this study to the field of Science and Technology Studies.

## Notes

- 1 Although not entirely the same, we use the term technological innovation also for innovation in services. In technology intensive services, innovation generally involves a modified service-concept based on existing technology or the continuation of existing services with new technology developed elsewhere (Barras, 1986). In any case, much of what is known about the political dimension of technological innovation also holds true for the political dimension of service innovation.
- 2 These studies are published in *Science, Technology & Human Values*. Because the relation between democracy and technology is one of the central topics in this journal we selected articles published there.
- 3 Service providers are often adopters and intermediate users of technology. Their decisions relate to how technology is embedded in the organization and provision of services, rather than to 'hard' technological design choices. Because the production and use of services often coincide users are directly affected by these decisions.
- 4 In addition, Oudshoorn and Pinch (2003) discuss a fourth set of approaches originating in feminist critiques of biased historiography and design of technology. These approaches are rather marked by an explicit political agenda than by the development of new concepts; they specify and use concepts from semiotic, SCOT and cultural approaches to reveal unexpected forms of power and discrimination.
- 5 Oudshoorn and Pinch (2003) do not mention evolutionary economics. We believe that there are good reasons to discuss this approach in conjunction with SCOT. SCOT studies attempt to explain the evolutionary mechanism of selection (Pinch and Bijker, 1987; Van den Belt and Rip, 1987).
- 6 Nota Mobiliteit (Mobility Paper), Ministry of Traffic and Transport, The Hague, 30 September 2004.
- 7 <http://www.rovernet.nl/>
- 8 The Netherlands has about 16 million inhabitants. The public transport share of overall mobility is about 10%.
- 9 Whether this is a valid claim and ROVER indeed deserves to be heard, of course, raises additional questions: whom does the organisation exactly represent; who are its members; whose interests does it bring forward? What would be ROVER's position in cases of conflicting interests? For example, the social function of public transport may sometimes be hard to align with environmental objectives. The social function prescribes that those who are not able to drive a private car should nevertheless be able to reach hospitals and other public services. Therefore, bus lines are maintained despite low occupation degrees and loss-making exploitation.

These buses pollute as much as full buses. Moreover, the subsidies to compensate for exploitation losses could also be used for improving (the main connections in) a public transport network for the sake of a modal split.

10 Source: minutes of the meetings of the Consumer Platform Drenthe.

11 The Consumer Platform Drenthe hardly played a role in the case reported in chapter 5. The province of Drenthe anticipated the forthcoming Personal Transport Act 2000 when it selected tenders already in 2000. The Consumer Platform was however not installed until 2001.

12 *OV Magazine* is a leading Dutch journal for research in public transport.

13 See note 9.

## 2 Where are the Politics? Perspectives on Democracy and Technology<sup>1</sup>

### 2.1 Introduction: the problem of displaced politics

This chapter explores the literature about technology, politics and democracy and will collect the building blocks for an encompassing framework. It draws on three conclusions from chapter 1, which specify the requirements of such a framework:

- The politics of innovation is broadly defined as those practices that contribute to the co-construction of technology and actors.
- The literature about users learns that those practices take place in a variety of settings ranging from the context of design to the context of use. To understand and evaluate innovation politics one needs to take displacements between these settings into account.
- Observations about public transport learn that different political practices (protest, lobby, platforms), though presupposing different kinds of settings, may all somehow contribute to democratic quality. To cover such contributions a definition of democratic quality is postulated in terms of three global principles: participation, empowerment, and impact.

Chapter 1 pointed to the role of settings and displacements. Only after analysing all settings and their contributions to democratic quality it is possible to evaluate the democratic quality of the overall process. This gives rise to a new challenge: how to understand and evaluate the *dynamics of displacement?*

The idea of displaced politics has been helpful to understand the politics of innovation. Indeed, the deeply ambivalent relationship between democracy and technology is one of the central themes in Science and Technology Studies (STS) of the last decades. While science and technology have helped to improve the standards of living and seem to make the world more transparent, they also challenge the common meaning of (democratic) politics (Salomon, 2000). Technological innovation has been conceived of as the continuation of politics with other means (Latour, 1987), but this politics seems most successful when it is possible to bypass or rearrange established institutions (Winner, 1980; Bovens et al., 1995). Politics, thus, can be 'displaced' from its traditional institutional settings.

Yet, this notion of displacement does not imply that innovation processes are undemocratic per se. The point is that, in order to look for more democratic innovation politics, we should try to understand the various ways in which these politics are indeed democratic. We should look for the democratic merits and deficits of displacements, for example when elected governments formulate policies and mandates and delegate authority, when societal organizations deliberate with civil servants, when users vote with their feet, etc. We want to theorize the democratic

merits and deficits of displaced politics without preoccupations about where these politics 'belong'.

The confusing relation between democracy and technology, (among other things) due to the phenomenon of 'displaced politics', has raised pertinent questions within STS and elsewhere. What does 'politics' mean in the context of technological innovation? How does a particular meaning of 'displaced politics' reflect assumptions about the nature of technology and the dynamics of innovation processes? What are the implications of such assumptions for the evaluative question and for proposals to democratic renewal? In search for answers we reviewed a number of influential articles and books that address such questions (Winner, 1980; Pinch and Bijker, 1987; Latour, 1991b; Woolgar, 1991b; Akrich, 1992; Pfaffenberger, 1992; Rip et al., 1995; Sclove, 1995). This literature, however, yielded different answers partly due to diverging theoretical assumptions and partly to the use of the same concepts for different phenomena. This urges for a distinction between different perspectives on democracy and technology. In order to devise a consistent approach to the dynamics of displacement we decided to clarify the similarities, complementarities and differences between these perspectives first. To grasp the meaning of 'displaced politics' from different perspectives we ask: *where are the politics?* Answers to this question require the explication of assumptions about the meaning and the locus of the politics of innovation and thus beg for specification of the different theoretical perspectives. By speaking about politics in the plural we emphasize that politics can indeed mean different things. There is not a definition of politics independent of perspectives.

We see a perspective as a set of approaches that are complementary and share basic concepts and arguments. Perspectives imply particular roles for the analyst and suggest or urge particular political means. On a theoretical level they also differ in their concepts of 'technology', 'politics' and 'democracy'. We discerned five perspectives in the literature: an 'intentionalist', a 'proceduralist', an 'actor-network', an 'interpretivist', and a 'performative' perspective. Each perspective comprises different approaches to study technology and democracy that nevertheless share the same theoretical assumptions and normative position.

## 2.2 The intentionalist perspective

One of the most encompassing efforts to draw attention to the political dimension of technology is *Technopolis* by Calder (1969). Technopolis, he argued, should not be feared but steered. We already live in a society that is continuously changed by science and technology, and we should start to understand the mechanisms responsible for these sometimes dramatic changes. Authors like Calder effectively put the idea that technological innovations are not innocent or neutral in their social consequences on the agenda. This is one of the shared assumptions in most STS studies on democracy and technology. However, the idea that technological actors are privileged to direct these consequences is typical for what we label as an 'intentionalist' perspective. This idea finds support in Noble's celebration of the engineer (Noble, 1979). Noble argues that the twentieth century rise of corporate capitalism was due to the emergence of the engineer and the recognition of his ability to reconcile technological opportunities with corporate needs. This emphasis on the agency of engineers and designers has implications for democratisation. Winner's (1980) famous case of the Long Island bridges provides a telling example. According to Winner, the architect of the bridges, Robert Moses, deliberately designed these bridges very

low in an attempt to restrict access to Jones' beaches for poor and black minorities, who normally used public transport those days. Winner's claim is that technology has inherent capacities to act, though technological actors can strategically direct these capacities. These and similar cases raise a specific kind of question about the relation between democracy and technology: to what extent should decision making about technological development be subjected to arrangements for democratic politics?

The intentionalist perspective draws attention to the forms of power and authority that technology developers materialize in artefacts. Typical questions are whether outcomes of design and innovation process are in conformance with the ideals and values of democratic societies. Do artefacts treat citizens equally? How do they affect basic rights? In another example, Winner (1980) quotes Mumford when he compares the politics implied in nuclear energy with the politics implied in solar energy. Nuclear energy, they argue, is more compatible with a bureaucratic organization of society due to the requirements it poses to its way of operation, whereas solar energy is more compatible with a democratic organization. Illich (1973), a philosopher of the same mind, argues that many typically modern technologies turn into a threat of widely accepted values as soon as they come to dominate alternatives. Automobiles create distance, since they render space scarce; schools create illiteracy, since they monopolize a specific kind of knowledge. In questioning the political qualities of artefacts, authors like Winner, Mumford and Illich have inspired the alternative technology movement. The ambition is to assess and evaluate seemingly promising technological paths, to explicate the (hidden) design criteria, and to propose alternatives. The idea is to derive criteria from the domain of human affairs and to apply these to the domain of technology. Sclove (1995) proposes a 'provisional system of design criteria for democratic technologies'. He finds, for example, that technologies should not establish authoritarian or hierarchical social relations, should not promote ideologically distorted or impoverished beliefs and should be compatible with egalitarian political decentralization and federation. Solar energy, then, is suggested as an alternative to nuclear energy; and infrastructures should facilitate instead of restrict the movements of less mobile people. The political means that the intentionalist perspective suggests are the social control of technology, technology assessment, redirection of design activities and public involvement in decision-making (Boyle et al., 1977).

An intentionalist perspective is highly relevant for the criticism of centralized power and hierarchical structures in the context of design. Under these conditions, elitist values can be materialized in design process and realised via artefacts. The intentionalist perspective thus learns what is at stake in questions about the acceptability of new technology: the confrontation of materialized values with values of other stakeholders. This indeed begs for technology assessment. When, however, not the acceptability of already developed technology is the question, but rather the tensions and conflicts in the co-construction of technology and actors, then one should primarily elaborate on the practices themselves and the settings where these take place. This begs for more subtle process evaluation.

### 2.3 The proceduralist perspective

Whereas the intentionalist perspective assumes technology to be deliberately designed for predefined ends, others take uncertainty as an inherent trait of technological development. One of the reasons why technology assessment failed to meet its expectations was that many predictions were severely contested or just did not come true (Smits and Leyten, 1991). This constrains intentionalism in design. Also value pluralism is at odds with the intentionalists' judgments about the value of technologies unless these judgments are based on broadly shared values. Even Winner concludes in his book *The whale and the reactor*, after attempts to base evaluation on 'nature', 'risks', 'appropriate technology', and 'decentralization', that "the inquiry we need can only be a shared enterprise, a project of redemption that can and ought to include everyone" (Winner, 1986, p. 163). This translates the question of democracy to: how to interfere (democratically) at the right places and the right moments? Instead of criteria for design, the focus shifts towards procedures for involvement; hence we may speak of a 'proceduralist' perspective. Democracy becomes defined in terms of participation, deliberation and consensus seeking (Sclove, 1995; Bijker, 1997; Bijker, 1999; Hamlett, 2003).

From social construction to politics only is a small step, according to Bijker. Constructivist studies show how technology develops in complex interactive processes, in which a heterogeneous set of actors and aspects play a role (Pinch and Bijker, 1987). Indeed, politicisation is a clear feature of constructivist studies as interests become apparent, normative assumptions are clarified and relations of power show up. Constructivists start from the assumption that artefacts are flexibly interpretable: different social groups attach different meanings to artefacts under development and one cannot predict on beforehand which meanings come to dominate others. Closure only occurs in a 'micropolitics' of heterogeneous action and coalition formation, goals and meanings get shaped through interactions and learning processes.

But politicisation is not democratisation unless equality among participants is acknowledged. Democracy requires additional means. When Bijker (1997) pleads for democratisation of the technological culture, he argues that there is no a priori distinction between experts and lay people from a social constructivist point of view. Everybody is expert in some aspects and lay in others; expertness is a negotiated attribution. When relevant social groups (including citizens, organizations, architects and engineers) participate in committees, advice groups and vote sessions (to which they ought to have opportunities), then this should principally be on an equal base and the outcomes are the result of shared responsibility. In this tradition, several authors have proposed criteria for evaluating whether individuals with diverse or opposing values and preferences can reach an aggregated, reasoned, informed, consensual judgment when they get a fair opportunity to discuss controversial issues (Rowe and Frewer, 2000; Hamlett, 2003; Rowe et al., 2004). Such criteria define a workable process definition of democracy, particularly when applied to political innovations like consensus conferences and dialogue workshops (see chapter 1). Democracy, in this perspective, is understood as a deliberative practice with strong participation. By sharing preferences and interests among participants, mutually listening and proposing solutions, it is assumed that partial and private interests aggregate into solutions that are acceptable to everyone (Sclove, 1995; Zimmerman, 1995; Bijker, 1999; Hamlett, 2003). As Hamlett states:

“The expectation is that the participants will find their ideas, preconceptions, and eventually their preferences changed and molded by the experience, rather than engaging only in various bargaining or advantage-seeking tactics to secure unchanged goals” (Hamlett, 2003, p. 122).

Another example of the proceduralist perspective is Constructive Technology Assessment (CTA). This approach seeks to bridge the two tracks of promotional activities for technology development on the one hand, and control and regulation on the other (Rip et al., 1995). By broadening the aspects, as well as the actors, CTA strives after strategies to manage technological innovation while including both positive and negative impacts. Impacts, however, are not conceived of in terms of consequences of technology development. Rather, CTA starts from the assumption of co-production of technology and impacts. The challenge for CTA researchers is to learn about the mechanisms of co-production and use these insights to improve innovation processes. Although CTA can be seen as a new management principle, its proposals for institutionalisation do not differ much from other democratisation proposals. Chances for better technology are enhanced through the organization of activities – like dialogue workshops, consensus conferences, scenario workshops or citizen reports – in which societal questions become articulated and coupled to technological development in which actors will accept a shared responsibility for barely predictable outcomes (Schot, 1996). CTA bets on societal learning without fixing the end terms for the learning process. As in consensus conferences or citizen juries, technological outcomes matter less than the process: interests are represented, discussions actually take place and lessons are learned.

What can the understanding and evaluation of the *dynamics of displacement* in areas like public transport gain from the proceduralist perspective? This perspective builds on constructivist criticism of technological determinism and thereby points to the conditional role of settings and procedures. If designers and engineers indeed harm societal values through technological activities, then one should first of all criticise the conditions that enable them to play such a pivotal role.

The proceduralist perspective brings forward evaluation criteria for settings where technological power is developed and exercised. The criteria are derived from the ideal of direct democracy. This ideal, however, may be a bridge too far for our purposes. Authors like Sclove (1995) and Bijker (1997) argue that direct democracy has many benefits, including more equal power distribution and the relative empowerment of minorities compared to vested interests and traditional parties. But direct democracy also denies citizens the right to hold aloof (Harbers, 1996). Technological issues are often very complicated and require a certain level of professionalisation. Sometimes it is more appropriate to let elected representatives discuss and decide in one setting while citizens take part as audience and raise their voice in due course.<sup>2</sup> Moreover, in public transport innovations, citizens, politicians, and policy makers have been strongly involved already. They participate in various settings, which are mutually linked via chains of accountability. In other words, CTA has been done in public transport since long before the approach was theorized in the 1990s. Yet, to understand how this is done one should focus on the *dynamics of displacements*, that is: on the complementary assets of settings where decisions are taken. For evaluating the dynamics of displacement the criteria derived from the ideal of direct democracy might be too elaborate. Complementary settings by far do not meet the criteria

of Rowe et al. (2004) when evaluated in isolation. Therefore, chapter one postulated a more general and workable process definition of democratic quality: the degree to which stakeholders participate, are empowered and affect outcomes (in which participation might also take the form of representation). Such global principles also appreciate settings that only partially contribute to democratic quality, provided that other settings compensate for their deficits.

## 2.4 The actor-network perspective

Both the rationalist and the proceduralist perspective are concerned about normative principles, be it in terms of technological outcomes or in terms of participation in processes. Other studies that reflect on displaced politics, however, lack a transcendent normative principle for critical assessment and recommendations. The politics of innovation in and through expanding and weakening networks is thought to be rational though amoral. Some versions of actor network theory provide clear examples. Latour (1991b; 1991a) and Akrich (1995), for instance, assume a gradual distinction between a local and a global level. Decisions at the local level (e.g. design specifications) are intentional and rational as they can be understood if one takes into account the relations with other actors, the available resources, the skills of engineers, and other local circumstances. At a global level systems and structures acquire their characteristics through an accumulation of local decisions. Networks thus emerge as the accumulation of choices, decisions, and actions. According to Latour and Akrich the global can only be understood from the networks created by local decisions. Henceforth, global structures (electricity networks, sewerage systems, institutions, democracy) should be conceived as networks that may reach far in their complexity and geographical range, but remain local at their nodes. Macro structures are built up by micro decisions; “the Leviathan is a skein of networks” (Latour, 1991b, p. 169). The political institutions that we take to be democratic today were once contested political innovations and historically constructed as techniques of representation (Gomart and Hajer, 2003).

Latour’s translation theory proposes a set of concepts and methods to capture the dynamics of network formation. Networks are defined by the elements that contribute to the accomplishment of an actor’s action program. The success of the network depends on its strength, that is, the number of allied elements that support the same action program. An important mechanism of network formation is translation: the activity of actors to translate their own interests, purposes, problem definitions into those of others, attempting to enrol them into the network and to be able to speak on behalf of them. Latour’s view on the politics of innovations is explicitly Machiavellian (Latour, 1987, 1988). He considers the various strategies and tactics of successful innovators as well as their conditions and limitations, just like Machiavelli analysed the successful paths to power. These strategies aim at enrolling others, while keeping control over their behaviours (Latour, 1987). Domination is thus a matter of enlarging and unifying networks.

Another strategy to enrol actors and control their behaviour is to delegate network formation to technological artefacts (1991a). Technological artefacts sometimes are more durable substitutes for work done by (unreliable) human actors. If a hotel manager adds a metal weight to the keys of the rooms, he is more likely to have them returned than when he would have to ask his guests for this favour each time anew. The metal weight substitutes the multitude of requests, and while enrolling more guests in the action program of the manager it becomes an ‘actant’ in the network. Another example, according to Latour (1988) the perfect counterpart of Winner’s Long Island

bridges case, highlights the political dimension of delegation. At the end of the nineteenth century the municipal authorities of Paris wanted to make sure that the exploitation of the underground to be built would remain in the hands of the municipality. After a long struggle, the municipality decided to build the underground with rails too small for train wagons. This way they could ensure that private railway companies would not appropriate the underground, even when a right wing coalition would allow them in the future. Instead of contractual arrangements, more durable arrangements were made out of stones, steel, earth and concrete. This feature of technological actants is captured with the notion of 'script': the action program inscribed in the material dimension of technological artefacts and infrastructures plays an important role in its usage: it allows, forbids, prescribes and suggests ways of use. "Thus, like a film script, technical objects define a framework of action together with the actors and the space in which they are supposed to act" (Akrich, 1992, p. 208).

Actor-network theory rephrases distinctions between facts and values and between technology and politics in terms of competing networks (which are themselves hybrid compositions of humans and non-humans). What are the normative implications of this conception? Technologies, networks, politics as well as their legitimisations reflect the outcome of a struggle of forces. For example, the accomplishment of totalitarianism through the construction of a network of statistics and calculations, bureaus and investigations brought along its own (ideological) foundation (Latour, 1991b). As a consequence, this also justified that Stalin's scientists created 'truth' through intimidation and isolation of dissidents (Amsterdamska, 1990). Thus, unfortunately an actor-network analysis of the politics of innovation cannot draw on universal norms to disapprove particular practices.

Is, then, the actor-network perspective irrelevant for democratic thought? On the contrary, but its political relevance is rather to propose an alternative political ontology. It does not concern techno-politics, but *techno-polities*. Instead of evaluating technological activity, it explores new divisions of power that cross-cut the old distinction between the technological and the political (Latour, 2004). How should, for example, representation and accountability be redefined if they are not only to cover the political work of politicians, but also the political work of scientists and engineers? How can the divergence necessary for taking all relevant values and facts into account be balanced with the convergence necessary for effective decisions?

The actor-network perspectives brings along an interesting agnosticism that is helpful for evaluating displaced politics without pre-occupations about where these politics belong. Most relevant for the understanding and evaluation of the dynamics of displacements is the idea that innovation comes about in the interplay of action and antiprograms. These notions point to the political nature of innovation processes; at the same time they incorporate the idea of the politics of artefacts: whereas the intentionalist perspective highlights the contestability of technological artefacts as materializations of designers' values, the actor-network perspective sees this as one of the ingredients of the competition of networks. It offers a rich and dynamic perspective of the politics of innovation.

## 2.5 The interpretivist perspective

Whereas the intentionalist and actor-network perspective draw attention to the politics/agency of artefacts, the proceduralist perspective (the SCOT approach in particular) rather emphasizes the interpretive flexibility of artefacts. These ideas are difficult to align. For example, even if the Long Island bridges were designed with racist intentions, by now they discriminate rich people in luxury buses and camper vans more than the poor people who used to travel by public transport but bought private cars in recent times (Joerges, 1999). Some deny that these bridges are inherently political: they are ambiguous at worst; they are flexibly interpretable (Woolgar, 1991b; Pfaffenberger, 1992; Woolgar and Cooper, 1999). Artefacts are like texts: their stability and societal consequences result from an alternating process in which readers interpret texts and texts configure their readers. The social construction of a particular technology, they argue, goes hand in hand with the creation of a moral order, myths and rituals that signify the technology-as-text and prescribe what kinds of use are appropriate, which interpretations are accurate, which judgments make sense.

Within what we label as the 'interpretivist perspective' interpretive flexibility is a guiding principle. It is also applied to the discursive entities that signify artefacts.<sup>3</sup> Although discursive elements (e.g. aesthetic and economic arguments for low bridges that mystify the racial intentions of the architect) are conditional for the realisation of the political effects of artefacts and hence become another factor in the struggle of forces, they remain amenable to reconfiguration. In the words of Pfaffenberger:

“the people adversely affected by regularization engage in myth-, context-, or artefact-altering strategies that represent an accommodation to the system (technological adjustment) or a conscious attempt to change it (technological reconstitution)”  
(Pfaffenberger, 1992, p. 282).

What does this interpretivist perspective imply for the understanding of democratic quality? What are the rules for signification? The interpretivist perspective offers a sophisticated analysis of the co-construction of hegemonic ideologies – “the political ideas that shape a polity are those that emerge from a technological crucible” (ibid. p. 288) – but how can such polity reflexively define the rules of the game? An answer can be found in the interpretive flexibility of 'democracy'. If democracy is seen as text and its meaning depends on the discursive contexts that signify it (Halffman, 2003), then we arrive at a conception of democracy that is akin to Lefort's (1992) idea of modern democratic societies being fundamentally characterized by indeterminacy. His philosophical argument is simple: democracy cannot be a neutral or universal technique for the regulation of political contest, because that would imply the exclusion of contest about this technique from the political arena. Democracy refers to the way a society reflexively acknowledges the frailties of its own political institutions and finds ways to cope with the indeterminateness of proper politics and democratic legitimacy. It appreciates ambiguity and opposition, which urge for continuous re-thinking and re-institutionalisation of its own practices and principles. Henceforth, democratic conceptualisation is thought to be part of the legitimacy struggles in each political process. The construction of 'democratic legitimacy' should therefore be investigated with the same empirical means as the politics of technological innovation: case studies and ethnographic research. The interpretive challenge is to unravel the discursive

conditions and circumstances by which a political/innovation process both leads to particular outcomes *and* is claimed to be democratic.

The interpretivist perspective has many similarities with the actor-network perspective. Both hold that technological controversies entail more than mere competition between different variations of a technology. Controversy in terms of conflicting action programs in the actor-network perspective implies that different future worlds are competing; it is both social and material at the same time. Now, the interpretivist perspective adds a discursive dimension to the social and material. It insists on the crucial importance of a signifying discourse from which the technology-as-text derives its meaning. Such discourse might explicate and shape the (political) aims that are intended by design; it might also mystify these aims. Moreover, each signification may provoke countersignification, which indeed amounts to the construction of technology.

One of the most important contributions of the interpretivist perspective to STS has been its call for reflexivity. Because also critical analyses of technologies contribute to the discourse that signifies these same technologies, the analyst himself takes part in their construction.<sup>4</sup> The analyst should therefore show some reflexive sensibility, which is not uncommon in STS nowadays.

## 2.6 The performative perspective

The interpretivist perspective addresses the ambiguity in the ideal of democracy: the ideal in itself does not prescribe its form. There are multiple possible settings for democratic politics and the legitimacy of any actual political setting has to be negotiated as much as the issue itself. The interpretivist perspective would draw attention to the role of discourse in the legitimisation of settings. In contrast, some authors emphasize the role of settings in the mobilisation of a particular discourse of democratic legitimacy. Levidow (1998), for example, argues in an essay on the regulation of agricultural biotechnology in Europe that in settings devised to democratise biotechnology the idea of 'democracy' in its turn is 'biotechnologised'. Procedures for public participation, safety regulation and science education set the terms for expert regulation:

“In all these ways, European democracy is biotechnologised. Participatory exercises help legitimise the neo-liberal framework of risk-benefit analysis, which offers us a free consumer choice to buy safe genetic fixes. (...) If we wish to democratise technology, I suggest that we must challenge the prevalent forms of both technology and democracy.”  
(p. 223)

The idea that the setting induces the meaning of both technology and democracy is key to what we suggest to call the 'performative perspective'. According to this perspective, the setting of activities and the framing of concepts are never passive or innocent, they *do* something, they are performative (Gomart and Hajer, 2003; Hajer, 2005). The very competences and capacities of participants are being shaped in a political process that is already structured in particular ways. The political setting provides information and rules to decide what it is to participate. Instead of asking '*who* participates' one should address the performative question: *what* enables participants

to act the way they do? How do they acquire the competences and capacities to contest, reason, deliberate, choose?

A key concept in the performative perspective is *bias*. The idea that politics is the mobilisation of bias featured prominently in political science debates in the 1960s and 1970s (Schattschneider, 1960; Bachrach and Baratz, 1962; Lukes, 1974). This idea entails that power is not only exercised via participation in decision-making processes, but in an earlier stage already via control of the agenda. The bias of a setting is a set of predominant values, beliefs, and institutional procedures that, by admitting only safe issues to political debates, operates to the benefit of certain actors and at the expense of others. This idea has recently been revitalized in STS as part of the turn to a 'politics of what'. Mol (2002) stresses the extension of the traditional view on politics as a question who can participate to a politics that includes the performative power of the setting. An extension, thus of a 'politics of who' to a 'politics of what': "Once inside the hospital, the who question is linked to, or even, overshadowed by, *what* questions. There, time and again, the question to share is: *what to do*" (p. 172). The range of possible answers to this question, one could argue, is shaped by the local circumstances of the hospital, that is: by the biases of this setting.

Gomart and Hajer (2003) use the notion of bias to elaborate further on the 'politics of what'. They review a discussion about 'good experiments' in the field of psychological experiments on rat sexuality in the 20th century. Central, too, in this discussion was the notion of bias. In one of the early experiments a male rat took a sexually 'active' role after a female rat was dropped in his cage. In contrast, later experiments, with larger cages, showed a female rat that 'actively' gave signals of being prepared to mate. The subsequent debates between conservative and feminist ethologists focused on the cultural expectations of the experimenters that were said to be materialized in the size of the cage and that biased the results. Gomart and Hajer draw another conclusion. They argue that bias is inevitable and also the larger cages interfered with the phenomenon, although differently. The behaviour of rats will always be relative to constraints and facilities of the (experimental) situation. The larger cages, however, gave the female rats a chance to behave unexpectedly and to surprise the experimenter. The question, thus, is not whether the setting is more pure and neutral, but which setting is more likely to *surprise* the ethologists, or: offers more variation/options for behaviour.

"In the case of the female rat, *to treat her like* an active sexual agent transforms in an unprecedented and interesting way relations between feminist ethologists, their rats, their older 'biased' colleagues, and because of the parallels constantly drawn in ethological debates between rats and humans, this proposition tentatively transforms relations between male and female humans" (p. 41).

The point of this excursion into the 'quality' of scientific experiments is that one does not need transcendental criteria if one emphasizes the positive role of bias. Bias can be positively employed in order to achieve surprising results. Good experiments upset business as usual. What does this performative notion of 'quality' mean in the realm of politics? First of all it means to acknowledge that bias – how a setting frames a problem, engages a certain audience and constructs the very meaning of participation – is a key concept for understanding politics. Second, the emphasis on surprise draws attention to the extent to which a political setting enables participants to turn the course of the process in unexpected and interesting directions and to reveal yet unacknowledged aspects of the issue. And third, if the bias of a setting indeed reveals certain aspects and engages

certain audiences, then a democratic political process may benefit from the ‘mobilisation of bias’, from passing through a variety of settings, indeed from the displacement of issues. Each displacement potentially offers surprising positive effects.

Because of its appreciation of the dynamics of displacements the performative perspective seems very promising for the approach we strive after. It does not see settings as the passive locations where the co-construction of technology and society comes about, but instead puts the role of settings in the centre of analysis. The positive potential of displacements is recognized (note that displacements can also reinforce negative biases). Moreover, the performative perspective builds on the actor-network perspective – the local determines the global – when it conceptualises the bias of settings as the prime condition for politics. It is able to incorporate insights from the interpretivist network by explaining the force of discourse from the mobilisation of bias. And it shares with the proceduralist perspective an explicit ambition to democratise innovation processes.

However, this normative ambition requires quite another approach in the performative perspective, an approach that we do not want to follow. In contrast to the received logic that evaluation in normative terms always requires an external, transcendental point of reference, the performative perspective attempts to turn transcendences into empirical questions without ending up in a normative deadlock. “Surprise [...] insists that criteria are inherently *immanent* and cannot be picked a priori to guarantee outcomes” (Gomart and Hajer, 2003, p. 40). However, in the analysis of Gomart and Hajer such criteria do seem to have slipped in via the backdoor. In their case, the development plan for a multipurpose area called the Hoeksche Waard, creative experiments with political forms indeed led to the unexpected voicing of hitherto silenced ‘Hoekschewaarders’ (the inhabitants) among other things. But they also selected a case where creativity in political solutions happened to coincide with remedying injustice. By celebrating the first, they avoid spelling out what is involved in the second (Pestre, 2004). For example, would they also celebrate ‘sudden reversals’ and ‘unexpected turns’ if these instead revealed power centralization?

## 2.7 Delimitation of the perspectives

The distinctions between the perspectives reveal two key issues in Science and Technology Studies of the last decades. First, the traditional STS ambition to steer technology in socially desired directions assumes that (technological) actors are capable of bringing about particular societal consequences. On the other hand, empirical studies also point to the ambiguity of new technologies, the contingencies in innovation processes and limitations to the predictability of societal consequences. How, then, to steer technological development when its effects are contingent? This issue reflects the identification of the intentionalist perspective, emphasizing deliberate design, as distinguished from the four other perspectives that much more emphasize contingency and interaction.

The second issue relates to the definition of democracy. Here we may distinguish an idealist from a realist political stance. Idealism assumes the independent existence of transcendental principles as the essence of democracy, which determine/prescribe how proper politics is to be done. It opens the black box of ‘technology’, but keeps the black box of ‘democracy’

Table 2.1 Five perspectives on technology and democracy

	Intentionalist perspective	Proceduralist perspective	Actor-network perspective	Interpretivist perspective	Performative perspective
Assumptions about technology development	Rational choice Realizing means for predefined ends	Negotiation between interested social groups Co-evolution of technology and impact	Alternation of action and counteraction Network formation, alignment, enrolment	Alternation of configuration and interpretation	Practical decisions framed by settings
Assumptions about strength of technology	Materialization of power arrangements Cause of (un)foreseen consequences	Interpretive flexibility Materialization of social dynamics	Materialized (part of) action program Forbids, allows, constrains and enables	Interpretive flexibility Accommodates relational meaning	Constrains and enables, (biased) stage for action NB: including political settings and institutions
What is political about technological innovation?	Social ordering through technological choice/ impact	Rules of social dynamics	Realisation of action programs, strategies to deal with antiprograms	Reification of specific interpretations about technological functionality and/or political legitimacy	Public contestation of plans, designs, etc.; public contestation of settings
Main normative problem with displaced politics	Politics bypasses democratic arrangements and institutions	Power differences in decision-making about public affairs	Problematic division of power between technological and political actors	Discursive dimension of power is often not recognized	Settings are not sufficiently or properly biased
Meaning of democracy	Set of core values and human rights	Participation, equality, deliberation, consensus Procedures for participation	'A skein of networks': set of historically contingent decision-making techniques and practices	Ambiguous, discursively realized, reflexive	Democratic legitimacy and public interest immanent to political process
Role of the analyst	Critical technology assessment	Learning about co-evolution Using lessons for improved procedures	Constructing alternative political ontologies	Interrogating practices of meaning attribution Reflection on own role	Scrutinising bias and surprise in settings Political experimentation
Implications for democratisation	Alternative technology meeting democratic values	Inventing new forms for direct democracy and rational choice	Broaden actor participation, also to non-human actors	Explicate and integrate discursive framing of issues in debates	Provoking surprise via displacement and experimentation settings

closed. Realism (in the machiavellian sense of RealPolitik) implies that democratic principles are immanent co-constructions. Like technology, democracy can be studied as an empirical phenomenon. Yet, the notion of democracy cannot be used anymore to evaluate practices of co-construction, if it is consequence of such practices itself. Should one fix the terms of democracy in order to take a stance, or explain the emergence and reification of democracy at the expense of evaluative ambitions? Different answers to this question mark the distinction between the proceduralist perspective and the actor-network perspective.

The interpretivist and performative perspective are not perspectives in the sense of being shared by broad research communities. Yet, because they bridge the gap between idealism and realism in distinguished ways, we consider them as if they are perspectives in their own right. The interpretivist perspective calls attention to the discursive contexts in which the politics of innovation is embedded (and evaluated). This implies that arguments for democratisation, because they tend to reify a particular perspective on democracy, should also include rethinking their own foundations. The performative perspective also calls attention to the context, but rather emphasizes the role of local enablers that shape actual political performances. These enablers may include material as well as discursive elements.

Table 2.1 summarizes the main features and concepts of the five perspectives.

## 2.8 Conclusion

Technological change is often a story of displaced politics, and in STS and elsewhere this has sometimes been diagnosed as a democratic deficit *per se*. However, we need a less negative conception of displacement in order to understand and evaluate the dynamics of displacements in public transport. Co-evolution of technology and society takes place in a variety of settings, and especially in public transport in all these settings contributions to democratic quality (in a positive and in a negative way) are made. This urges for a framework to theorize the democratic deficits *and* merits of displaced politics wherever politics ‘belong’.

Questions about the nature and location of the politics in technological developments and about possibilities to assess the democratic qualities have been addressed in STS. From its rich empirical tradition we reviewed some influential articles about displaced politics; we mapped the differences and complementarities of various proposed theoretical concepts and procedures that have been elaborated in almost three decades of Science and Technology Studies. The diversity of positions has been organised into five perspectives: an intentionalist, a proceduralist, an actor-network, an interpretivist and a performative perspective. They offer different conceptualisations of the politics of technology and means for democratisation.

The intentionalist perspective starts from the assumption that undesirable consequences of technological choice should be remedied by making better choices. At the basis for better choices are the key values that are believed to be central to democratic societies. The intentionalist perspective yields important lessons, both analytically and politically, about the materialization of values and ideas in the design of artefacts, which explain the motivations of actors to embrace or resist technological innovation. These lessons, however, are relative to the assumption of technological determinism. When design is conceived of as a complex, interactive and iterative process, it is far more difficult to see how societal consequences can be deliberately inscribed in technological artefacts.

The proceduralist perspective acknowledges the variety of appraisals of stakeholders, and embraces direct and deliberative democracy as a means for better practice. If designers indeed affect societal values through their activities, then one should democratise the conditions that enable them to play such a pivotal role. To do right to existing forms of democratic politics in public transport we do not adhere to the underlying ideal of direct democracy, in which all stakeholders are directly involved. Nevertheless, we do take from the proceduralist perspective a number of useful evaluation criteria and aggregate these in a definition of democratic quality in terms of three global principles: participation, empowerment and impact (see chapter 1). These principles are to be applied to chains of displacements and should also appreciate settings that only partially contribute to democratic quality, provided that other settings compensate for their deficits.

The actor-network perspective starts with an ambition to understand innovation and democracy as constructions. The focus is on processes of mobilizing allies, through the inscription of action programs into plans, designs, press conferences and artefacts. Artefacts thus carry a script that allows and encourages users to take part in the action program. The script of technology incorporates the values and consequences inscribed in material content, though the actor-network perspective insists on the possibility that implicated actors do not take up or actively resist the roles envisioned for them. This idea of action programs contested by antiprograms offers a rich and dynamic view on what is at stake in the politics of innovation. However, the influence of settings and displacements remain theoretically underdeveloped.

The interpretivist perspective focuses on the discursive signifiers that are to be mobilised for artefacts to have (political) effects. This perspective draws attention to the ways in which the consequences of technological practices are justified or mystified via interventions in prevailing interpretive categories. Signification and countersignification are therefore important factors that explain the course of technological controversies. If these notions are aligned with the notions of action programs and antiprograms, then they add a discursive dimension to the hybrids of social and material actors.

The performative perspective focuses on the way technologies and democratic practices are framed by the characteristics of settings. The confrontation between action and antiprograms takes place on settings that are already biased. Bias defines who has access, how issues are framed and to what extent the public is involved; bias is thus a productive force of settings. Although advocates of the performative perspective see democratic values as immanent, attributed features, they nonetheless aim to evaluate the displaced politics of technology. Yet, it remains doubtful whether the proposed sensitivity for political creativeness and surprising outcomes suffice for that. Our approach will rather evaluate the active role of settings and the dynamics of displacement in public transport on the base of three general principles derived from the proceduralist perspective.

To be sure, the borders between the five perspectives are sometimes quite fluid. For example, authors who plea both for democratic technologies and for democratic procedures of their development (Winner, 1986; Sclove, 1995) draw on assumptions of both the intentionalist and the proceduralist perspective. Concrete contributions to constructive technology assessment are mostly proceduralist (Schot, 1996), but some express a reflexive sensibility rather typical for the interpretivist perspective (Wynne, 1995). Furthermore, the interpretivist and performative perspective can be seen as amendments on the actor-network perspective regarding the political realism that these perspectives share. Yet, this review suggests that spelling out the differences

and similarities between the five perspectives creates the possibility to transcend the limitations of any particular perspective on technology and democracy.

To conclude, the phenomenon of displaced politics has been a key concern for STS scholars as it points to the biased structuring of decisions (or even decision-making) in settings that fall short in terms of democratic control. However, a simple diagnosis of a democratic deficit on the level of singular settings neglects the situation where democratic quality is met via a dynamics of displacements, which for example is driven by mutual relations of accountability. The multiple forms of (partial) democratic politics deserve attention and evaluation in their interrelatedness. What our review shows is that such evaluative ambitions should carefully build on insights from various perspectives. Only this allows for the understanding of a politics that is a performed, proceduralised, socio-material-discursive confrontation of actor-networks. Chapter 3 takes the building blocks of this chapter together in order to develop a comprehensive conceptual framework.

## Notes

- 1 I am indebted to Harro van Lente, who revised and wrote substantial parts of this chapter.
- 2 Four-yearly elections are one example of displaced politics: they displace decision-making authority from polling stations to parliament. But citizens may also vote with their feet in yet other related 'settings'. The massive Shell boycott in the Brent Spar controversy shows that there are other political means to participate in public affairs (Harbers, 1998).
- 3 Interpretive flexibility is a central concept in the SCOT approach, too, where it is used to emphasize the differences between social groups that value and interpret technologies differently. In SCOT the concept is thus the starting point for the analysis of *social* processes. In the interpretivist perspective, the consequences of the notion of interpretive flexibility for the relation between artefacts-as-texts and real texts are thought over. It is thus the starting point for the analysis of *discursive* processes.
- 4 This also applies to the construction of democracy: each definition amounts to the reification of a particular conception. We defined democracy in terms of three general principles, which, though we believe they are at the core of most particular conceptions of democracy, remain open for debate. The reflexive challenge of this thesis is to proof their usefulness.



# 3 Theory and Method

## Issues, Settings and Displacements

### 3.1 Introduction

How can we understand and evaluate democratic quality of the politics of innovation in public transport? This question is central in this study. In chapter 1 democratic quality was defined in terms of three dimensions: participation, empowerment and impact. This, however, raises the question about political forms or settings. In what kind(s) of settings are these democratic requirements optimally fulfilled given the complex, interactive and iterative nature of innovation processes?

Chapter 1 discussed the variety of settings, ranging from supply (laboratories, pilots) to demand (public debates, actual use) in which is decided about aspects of design and use. It was suggested that the decision-making process might extend over this range of specific settings. As a consequence, evaluating a decision-making process implies analysing the different settings where issues displace between. Settings could complement each other when it comes to the democratic ideal of broadening the range of actors and aspects and this begs for a focus on the series of displacements.

Existing frameworks for evaluation do not sufficiently capture displacements as a specific mechanism of democratisation because they are designed for the evaluation of specific settings like consensus conferences or dialogue workshops. This study aims at developing and using a more dynamic and detailed framework, which captures both the dynamics of displacements and their contribution to democratic quality. Thereto three research questions are formulated:

1. How to conceptualise the politics of innovation in terms of displacements?
2. What are the underlying dynamics of displacements?
3. How do displacements affect democratic quality?

This chapter addresses the first question. Building on the results of previous chapters, it develops a conceptual framework for the operationalisation of the second and third question. While doing so, the following conceptual and methodological sub-questions are addressed. Why should one follow *issues* as they *displace* to other *settings*? How should these concepts be defined and specified? How do they relate to each other? How can the two empirical questions be answered? And what kind of data does that require? The chapter starts with the main lines of the argument thus far. These come together in a framework, which has already been sketched and is now conceptualised and elaborated in detail. This leads to the specification of the empirical research questions and to a number of methodological considerations.

### 3.2 Summary of the argument

The first chapter of this thesis defends the view, prominent in the literature about the role of users in innovation, that technology and users are co-constructed. This view rejects technological determinism on the one hand and essentialist perceptions of user identities on the other. The rejection of technological determinism implies that technology development is not purely driven by the opportunities of new inventions, but as much by the representation of user desires, interests and competences (among other social forces). Users thus intervene in innovation processes. The rejection of an essentialist view on users, however, implies that ‘users’ is not a well-defined social group. Representations of users are constructed (by producers among others) in order to capture and structure users’ heterogeneous interests and desires. The representation of users in technology development is indirect, mediated, biased. What it means to be a user partly depends on how one gets represented and involved in the course of innovation processes.

Co-construction means that technology shapes users and users shape technology. But in addition: this takes place in settings that are already structured and biased themselves. Chapter 1 outlines the variety of settings where such co-constructions come about. Chapter 2 distinguishes a performative perspective and suggests adopting this perspective on settings for understanding and evaluating the displacement of politics. The focus on performance marks a quite new and yet hardly explored dimension of the politics of innovation, namely the (positive) contribution of settings themselves to the co-construction of technology and users. This perspective takes Winner’s thesis about the performative role of artefacts in politics (Winner, 1980) serious to the point of symmetry: political artefacts (settings, procedures) also play a performative role in technological innovation. Moreover, this perspective does not idealize one particular kind of setting, but instead evaluates the cumulative effects of settings where technology and users are co-constructed.

The performative perspective draws attention to the structures and biases of settings. The question ‘who participates’, it was argued, should be supplemented with the question ‘what enables people to become participants’, that is to say that settings empower some actors into effective participants, while excluding others. The characteristics of settings not only define who has access, but also what counts as relevant information, reasonable arguments, and legitimate decisions. In addition, it is argued that the contribution of the characteristics of settings to the democratic quality of political processes should be measured in a comprehensive way: settings may reinforce each other’s biases; they may also compensate for each other’s biases. From this it follows that democratic quality could benefit from the displacement of issues, when displacements offer new opportunities for stakeholder participation, empowerment, and impact.

#### **Box 3.1 The displacement of the public transport chip card**

Since the mid-1990s Dutch public transport companies have been experimenting with payment systems based on chips. The current prospects are nationwide introduction in the year 2008. To gain support for this project, advocates use two main arguments.

First, they emphasize the possibilities for a more just and flexible tariff system. The old system for buses is based on travel zones, prepaid tickets, and stamping devices.

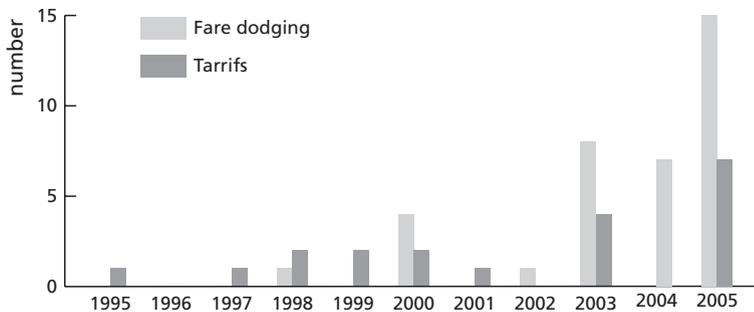


Figure 3.1 Main arguments for introduction of a public transport chip card.

Proceeds from ticket sales are collected nationwide and distributed according to a yearly estimated (though always arbitrary) distribution code. For trains, an altogether different tariff system exists. These two tariff systems can merge into one, based on the chip card, which at the same time enables transport companies to differentiate their tariffs according to their own market strategies.

The second main argument for introduction of the chip card is the possibility to reduce fare dodging and enhance social security. In the current situation, fare dodging is merely prevented by ticket inspections. In the new situation, travellers will have to check-in and check-out at gates that are difficult to dodge. Moreover, the chip card contains personal data, offering possibilities to trace lawbreakers and to determine certain access restrictions.

These two arguments have not always carried the same weights. The discussions and arguments for introduction of the chip card have shown a peculiar transformation of the issue since the year 2000. Before, the main arguments related to tariff flexibility and differentiation. Since 2000 the possibility to counteract fare dodging has been the main argument. Figure 3.1 reflects this transformation. It shows the number of articles in the five most important Dutch newspapers in which the public transport chip card is associated with either 'tariffs' or 'fare dodging'.<sup>1</sup> The relative increase of emphasis on the fare dodging/social security argument in 2000 and again in 2003 clearly appears from the figure. How should that be explained?

This shift can be explained with reference to the settings where the issue displaced to. Initially 16 transport companies were struggling to align their own interests in the issue. Not until April 2000 they agreed upon a standard for the system. This standard, however, involved considerable investment costs and therefore a contribution from the state. This displaced the issue from the group of companies to parliament, where a different audience needed to be persuaded and different arguments were relevant. The growing emphasis on the fare dodging argument can further be explained by a focus on social security since the 2002 elections. The first Balkenende cabinet (2002-2003) prominently included the introduction of the chip card in its list of measurements to improve social security.<sup>2</sup>

### 3.3 A conception of the politics of innovation

#### 3.3.1 Towards a conceptual framework

In the course of the argument a few concepts – issues,<sup>3</sup> settings and displacement – have been introduced that are yet insufficiently defined. It was argued that the co-construction of users and technology happens in settings that are already biased themselves. In order to evaluate the performative dimension of these settings, one should follow the issues when they displace between settings. Box 3.1 illustrates the effects of displacement with the example of the chip card in public transport.<sup>4</sup> In this section I will roughly sketch the underlying theoretical argument. Next sections deal with four core concepts: issues, settings, displacement, and issue-framing.

The performative perspective on political settings as developed by Gomart and Hajer (2003) is strongly inspired by Schattschneider's political theory. Schattschneider (1960) argues that conflicts are at the heart of politics. In a conflict two (or more) parties combat and it depends on the support from the audience and its possibilities to intervene how the conflict will develop. The audience comprises those actors that are interested or stakeholder and may shortly be able to intervene in the conflict. Possibilities for intervention, however, are not entirely open. Settings define who have access and influence. Councils of elected representatives, for example, engage a whole citizenry via elections and let majorities decide. Public debates, to give another example, offer minorities equal opportunities to make their case and to acquire public support. Settings like parliament, public debates and negotiation structures prescribe the rules of the game, the conditions for participation, the requirements for representation, the relevance of information, the rationality of arguments, the legitimacy of decisions, and henceforth what it means to be involved. They frame the conflict and the issues at stake. The displacement<sup>5</sup> of an issue means the entrance of the issue into an often differently framing setting, which, if democratic, ought to engage different and/or more stakeholders.

Consequently, displacements are not value-free. The central thesis in Schattschneider's work is that the organization of politics involves a mobilisation of bias. The characteristics of the setting enable and constrain the range of possible participants and actions. For example, two party systems discriminate against third and fourth parties; referenda directly engage voters, but require a set of predefined options; a system of representation, in contrast, is based on 'weak' participation, but is better able to handle complex issues and compromise opposing standpoints. Thus, politics is inevitably biased: it partially depends on the setting how conflicts evolve. Conflicts may be won or lost by displacement. The course and outcomes of conflicts remain unpredictable as long as new audiences, which can significantly shift the balance of forces, are involved. Each displacement mobilises other biases. The displacement of issues opens up new opportunities, and possibly new allies or resources for advantageous solutions. And this may eventually contribute to democratic quality, either positively or negatively.

To understand and evaluate the roles of biases in settings, it was concluded from chapter 2, one should follow the *issues* into the *settings* where they *displace* to and investigate how they are consequently *reframed*. Schattschneider's integrative framework relates these central notions to one another. With this framework in mind four conceptual questions – what is an 'issue', what is a 'setting', what is a 'displacement', and what is 'reframing' in the politics of innovation? – will now be addressed in four separate sections, thereby filling the framework with insights from Science and Technology Studies (STS).

### 3.3.2 Issues

Conflicts are at the heart of political processes. For this reason STS have conceived of innovation processes as politics with other means (Latour, 1987). Translation theory, for example, emphasizes the fundamental contestability of technological scripts, of the envisioned actor worlds and scenarios implicitly assumed by the supposed use of artefacts (Callon, 1987; De Laat, 1996). Contested scripts are the issues in the politics of innovation; they are the objects of conflicts and tensions.

The concept of *script* points to the political dimension of technology. Artefacts are not socially neutral; they affect the world into which they become embedded by prescribing particular ways of usage. To capture this performative power of technology, Latour (1991a) and Akrich (1992) introduced the notion of a *script* or an *inscribed action program*.<sup>6</sup> Designers ‘inscribe’ a program of action in the technical content of the new object. For example, non-standard plugs and screws do not allow reparation of a broken device by lay people, but instead foster users to return it to the manufacturer. “Like a film script, technical objects define a framework of action together with the actors and the space in which they are supposed to act” (Akrich, 1992, p. 208).

Action programs acquire force from actors willing to take up their prescribed roles (Akrich, 1992). However, the roles they see for themselves may of course also run counter to the inscribed roles. They may be harmed or adversely affected by the inscribed action program and engage in antiprograms that aim at objection, rejection or adjustment of the script. The contestability of technological scripts then becomes manifest in the opposition between action programs and antiprograms.

Translation theory starts from this assumption when it states that all kinds of innovation processes can be conceived of as interactions between action programs and antiprograms (Latour, 1991a). This theory suggests that actors translate their own action programs – their interests, purposes, problem definitions – into those of others, attempting to align action programs and enrol others into their networks. Translation theory insists on the importance of alignment. Alignment allows one actor to represent and speak in the name of all aligned others. Box 3.2 illustrates how opposing action programs can become aligned through various kinds of translation. The example shows that successful innovation crucially depends on how conflicts between action programs and antiprograms are being solved and opponents have aligned their interests. Once this happens, the final specifications stabilize, design choices turn into features of black-boxed artefacts, collaborators speak in each other’s names, ‘child diseases’ are cured, and user guidelines become accepted. The script gets performed.

I focus on the issues themselves, that is: the objects of conflicts constituted by opposing action programs. Translation theory is used as a heuristic for the identification of these issues. Is this the proper heuristic? Recall chapter 1, which addressed the need for an approach that identifies the issues at stake, while crosscutting the range of political settings from supply to demand. Translation theory might indeed offer such an approach. The example in box 3.2 shows how the dialectics of action programs and antiprograms extend into the context of use, even though this particular example sticks with the perspective of the innovator. Moreover, the notions also capture controversial adoption decisions and the actual (non-)use of innovative artifacts. The subtle and diverse ways in which users can dodge action programs and the many reasons they may have for (non-)compliance cause conflicts along the spectrum. Users are actively engaged in the support and construction of action programs and antiprograms in several phases of innovation processes.

To conclude: the dialectics of action programs and antiprograms can be used as a heuristic for empirical studies. They make it possible to describe innovation processes in terms of conflicting interests. Antiprograms cause clashes and deadlocks in need of translation from either side. The clash or conflict between an action program and an antiprogram thus forms an ‘issue’ (figure 3.3). Issues are the objects of conflicts. These issues are followed when they are politicised, translated,

### Box 3.2 The interplay of action programs and antiprograms

Latour (1991a) addresses the question how a hotel manager makes sure that his guests leave their key behind when they leave the hotel, pointing out the subsequent strategies that the hotel manager employs. In a first attempt the manager simply asks the guests to leave the key at the reception desk. But, fed up with asking each time, he subsequently places instruction signs displaying this message. However, the fact that many people fail to read messages urges him to reconsider his strategy. He adds a metal weight to each key. Guests who do not want to carry the weight around with them all the time are more likely to leave the key at the desk. With this last addition the hotel manager finds that most guests obey the request. Latour elaborates in great detail on this simple example. My purpose is only to clarify the dialectics of action programs and antiprograms. The route that the hotel manager wishes his customers to follow is the *action program*. Action programs have a material and a social dimension. For example, the action program of the metal weight version consists of keys and weights and relates guests to the manager. It reads like: “you don’t want to carry the weight around, and you don’t have to: leave the key at the desk!” Each subsequent strategy translates the previous action program. These translations anticipate the guests’ *antiprograms*. The oral and written messages anticipate guests who are unaware of hotel etiquette. The weights anticipate guests who do not read messages. Figure 3.2 shows the subsequent action and antiprograms.

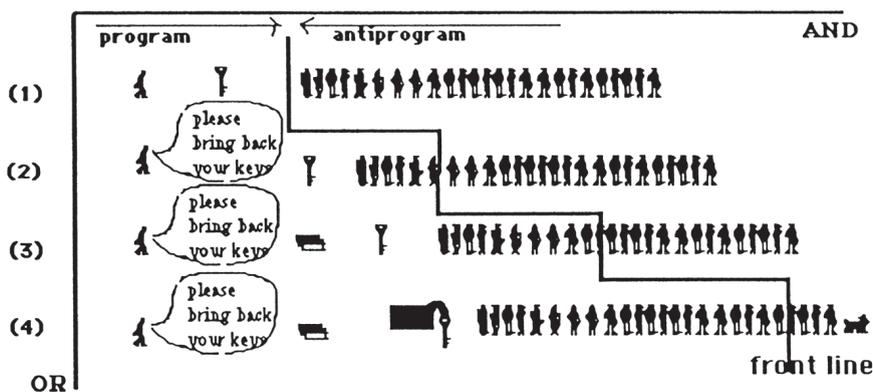
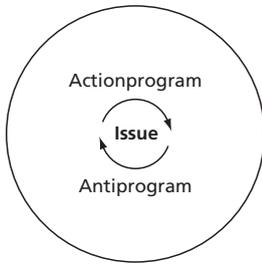


Figure 3.2 The hotel manager successively adds keys, oral notices, written notices, and finally metal weights; each time he thus modifies the attitude of some part of the “hotel customer” group while he transforms the action program (Latour, 1991a).



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Figure 3.3 Issues are conflicting action programs

displaced, and depoliticised. To be sure, a translation is not the same as a displacement: translations can be done within a single setting as the example in box 3.2 shows (see also 3.3.7).

### 3.3.3 Settings

The clash between an action program and an antiprogram happens in what I define as a setting. Settings are those locations where issues emerge, get articulated, are dealt with, are settled (Hajer, 2005). Examples of settings are parliaments, councils, and forums; but also laboratories (Latour, 1987), work floors (Garrety and Badham, 2004,) and even households (Silverstone and Hirsch, 1992). The tensions and conflicts between action programs and antiprograms arise in a wide range of settings.

Settings are not neutral; they provide the conditions for the performance of the issue. Barry's notion of 'demonstration' in this context provides a nice illustration (Barry, 2001). In its common political meaning 'demonstration' refers to protest. Typically the harmed and weaker party in a conflict protests against a situation to gain public support for its case. It questions an unjust or intolerable situation, a broken promise, or an otherwise undesirable state of affairs. In its second meaning 'demonstration' refers to the practice of showing something to an interested audience, which is historically rooted in the anatomical theatres as the origin of medical academia. This second meaning emphasizes the equipment needed to perform the (political) demonstration: a stage to speak up, a case, valid argumentation, communication technology, an audience to speak to, and – more specific for the politics of innovation – proposals, prototypes, experiments, spreadsheets, etc. To take the two meanings together: opponents *demonstrate* the injustice of a certain situation. This event marks the setting. The setting consists of those elements and techniques that make demonstration possible; it is thus the concrete and local condition for the clash between action programs (see figure 3.4).

What are the characteristics of settings? Notions like actors, settings and performance are metaphors borrowed from theatre and drama and used to render comprehensible the reciprocal and sometimes dramatic nature of technological activities. As Pfaffenberger (1992) states:

“The metaphor of drama ... is to emphasize the performative nature of technological ‘statements’ and ‘counterstatements’, which involve the creation of scenes (contexts) in which actors (designers, artefacts, and users) play out their fabricated roles with regard to a set of envisioned purposes (and before an audience)” (p. 285).

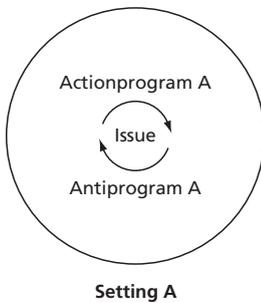


Figure 3.4 Settings comprise the specific conditions for the clash between action programs

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In other words, acts and scenes co-evolve in technological dramas. Yet, while these metaphors are fruitfully used to analyse processes of co-construction (Akrich, 1992; Pfaffenberger, 1992; Gomart and Hajer, 2003), the structuring roles of settings in these processes still remain underemphasized. In other words, the metaphor of a setting as a theatre stage is theoretically underdeveloped. For example, what role do settings play in the 'invitation' of actors? What kinds of attributes that make the performance possible are available and allowed on these settings? What roles do audiences play in different kinds of settings?

To develop a theoretical understanding of settings, three features of theatre stages are assumed to characterize settings in technological innovation: access conditions, attributes, and audience.

1. Settings give access to some actors while others are part of the audience or excluded altogether;
2. Settings provide and/or allow the attributes with which the performance is enacted; and
3. The audience comprises those who are able to observe the performance and who are indirectly involved, either by asserting influence on the participants in the setting or by asserting influence in subsequent settings.

### 3.3.4 Issue-framing

The three characteristics of settings constitute a frame in which issues appear. Such frames might offer new opportunities, because issues disappear, new issues appear, or already existing issues are reinterpreted. For example, reframing the public transport chip card (see box 3.1) as a solution for criminal and terrorist offences has become more popular since terrorist attacks (notably with planes, trains and metros involved) changed the role of the audience of parliament, namely its electorate is now (supposedly) asking for more State protection. Partially due to such reframing of issues new actors were enabled to participate (e.g. new political parties like *LeefbaarNederland* and *LPF* entered parliament) or existing participants became more empowered to express their interests and action programs (e.g. those willing to sacrifice privacy for the sake of social security). This way, displacements may lead to a significant reframing of issues (see figure 3.5).

### 3.3.5 Displacement

Because settings are not neutral, they are contestable and negotiable in principle. As Gomart and Hajer (2003) put their findings:

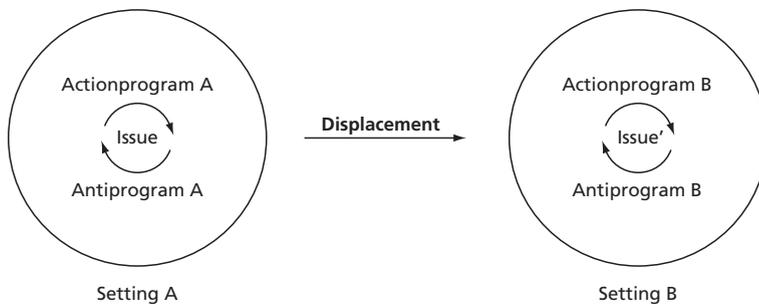


Figure 3.5 Issue-reframing as an effect of displacement

“Actors not only deliberate about the solutions for the problems on their agenda, but *while doing so*, also negotiate new ways of doing things, resulting in new political practices. [...] They design new concrete conditions, and search for new shapes of legitimate political intervention” (p. 34).

Those who feel excluded or marginalized, because the access conditions or attributes of settings do not serve their purposes, may attempt to negotiate new practices. Once actors try to displace issues, they simultaneously contest the legitimacy of current political settings and practices. This contestability of settings thus becomes manifest in the possibility to displace the issue to other or transformed settings.

The displacement of politics is usually associated with a democratic deficit. Displaced politics would take place in settings, which lack democratic features like transparency, equality, accountability, or division of power. If, for example, New York architect Robert Moses engages in racist politics by means of bridge building, then the democratic deficit emerges from the elitist nature of architects’ decision-making (Winner, 1980).<sup>7</sup> In this thesis a displacement is defined as the movement of an issue to another setting or as a significant change on one of the three dimensions of the setting (access conditions, attributes, audience). This is not negative per se. The contribution of displacements to democratic quality depends on their reframing effects. For example, if one stakeholder is denied access in setting A, but features prominently in setting B, then a displacement from A to B leads to compensation in terms of participation. To give another example, if an issue displaces from setting A with broad participation to setting B with limited participation, but this displacement happens on the base of a mandate broadly supported in setting A, then democratic quality of the overall process might enhance despite a reduction in terms of direct participation.

### 3.3.6 Democratic quality

Having developed the conceptual framework, two research questions must again be addressed: How do displacements contribute to democratic quality? And what are the underlying dynamics of displacements? These questions are now further clarified and specified in a set of sub-questions.

A consequence of the argumentation underlying the conceptual framework is that displacement may very well contribute positively to democratic quality of innovation processes,

instead of merely manifesting a democratic deficit. Displacements contribute positively if they reinforce one or more of the three democratic principles:

1. Participation/representation: the degree to which stakeholders are able to participate, either directly or indirectly;
2. Empowerment: the degree to which all stakeholders are able to articulate their ideas and action programs;
3. Impact/influence: the degree to which the articulation of ideas and action programs affects outcomes.

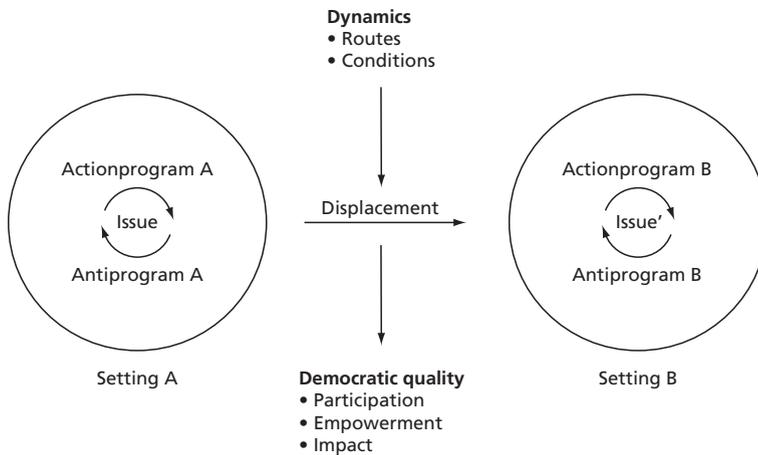
In principle, stakeholders are those who have an interest in the issue. However, due to reframing of the issue this set of stakeholders has to be considered anew after each displacement. After all, reframing might also have implications for others than already recognised stakeholders. For example, because the chip card will be introduced nationwide, the main stakeholders are transport companies, public transport users, and tax payers. Displacement to parliament offers access to representatives of those stakeholders. What is more, the displacement involves a reframing of the chip card as a means to enhance social security because social security is an important concern for many parliamentarians. They are henceforth deemed to represent potential victims of criminality due to fare dodging, too, and de facto define these potentially affected (drivers, conductors, fellow travellers) as stakeholders. Thus, new stakeholders get represented due to reframing. To complete the example: empowerment of these (represented) stakeholders happens via studies, reports, notes from traveller organizations, knowledge available to political parties, etc. And impact is guaranteed by the mandate to reign that they have received from the electorate during elections.

### 3.3.7 The dynamics of displacement

The dynamics of displacement is the object of the second empirical research question and comprises two elements: routes and conditions. Routes explain *how* issues displace: they are the characterizations of displacements in terms of the settings involved. Reframing is an effect of routes of displacements, for only the relative differences between the characteristics of settings determine how issues are reframed.

Conditions and driving forces explain *why* issues displace. These conditions and driving forces may be related to internal or external origins. An internal condition springs from the interplay of action and antiprograms. For example, the 'mobilisation of bias' (Schattschneider, 1960) is a way to translate action programs by means of displacement: actors strategically anticipate reframing effects by trying to displace the issue to settings that supposedly bias in favour of realisation of their action program. Take the example of demonstrators who demand involvement in decision-making: these demonstrators, who are driven by their antiprogram, aim at issue-reframing via adjustment of the access conditions of settings. They try to mobilise a beneficial bias. Note that such displacements will have different democratic implications depending on whether they originate in action programs supported by weak or by strong actors: if weak actors succeed to mobilise bias, then power is likely to become more distributed; if already strong actors succeed to do so, then power becomes more centralized.

External conditions of displacement include institutional arrangements or contingent events. Institutional arrangements are procedures for decision-making that are part of more general policies or polities. For example, parliamentary decisions follow certain routes because of institutionalised procedural requirements. Also contingent events may drive displacements of



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Figure 3.6 The conceptual framework

issues. For example, terrorist attacks in New York, Madrid and London also affected settings where Dutch debates about the future of public transport take place.

### 3.4 Method

#### 3.4.1 Research questions

The conceptual framework (see figure 3.6) has been developed to gain understanding of displacements. We are particularly interested in routes, conditions, reframing effect and the consequences (of this reframing) for democratic quality. Given this conceptual framework, the main research questions – what are the underlying dynamics of displacements and how do displacements affect democratic quality? – now can be made more operational. This results in the following empirical sub-questions:

With regard to the dynamics:

- (ii) What are the issues in this case?
- (iii) How do settings frame the issues?
- (iv) Is it possible to characterize different types of displacements on the base of reframing effects?
- (v) What are the main conditions and driving forces of these different types of displacements?

With regard to democratic quality:

- (vi) How do the characteristics of settings relate to the principles of democratic quality?
- (vii) Who are the most important stakeholders?
- (viii) How do displacements affect their participation, empowerment and influence?

### 3.4.2 Method and case selection

To answer these questions three case studies are performed. Case study is the most appropriate strategy when the phenomena under investigation are not controllable (Yin, 1994), which is the case with displacements. Displacements are the effects of yet unknown conditions and drivers, and because gaining knowledge about these conditions is one of the objectives of this thesis, a case study approach should be adopted. Furthermore, case studies should be done when phenomena are hard to isolate from their contexts (Yin, 1994). This research investigates the role of settings in the politics of innovation. Yet, while it focuses on settings, it partially depends on the issue which contextual characteristics (discursive, material, social) exactly make up the setting and which ones can legitimately be left out of consideration. This circumstance also calls for a case study approach. Another reason for doing case studies relates to the embryonic nature of the conceptual framework. Lacking yet a sound empirical basis, the relations between concepts are much like reasoned guesses. The main objective of this research is to build a more comprehensive understanding, which requires the 'proof of principle' of the framework. Case studies allow for this.

We selected three interesting and controversial cases from a list of public transport innovations. Controversies are interesting because they beg for democratic assessment. Moreover, because controversial cases are often dynamic in terms of displacements, they yield relevant data for gaining insight in answers to the research questions.

All three cases deal with the questions about the dynamics of displacement (iii and iv) and the contribution to democratic quality (vii). Yet, the emphasis differs. The cases have been selected by the availability of data corresponding with the part of the conceptual framework that is central in the case study. The three studies together show the whole framework 'in action'.

The first case, the introduction of self-service in the Amsterdam tramways between 1965 and 1973, is characterized by a variety of antiprograms (fare dodging), which the Amsterdam municipal transport company had to deal with. Therefore the case is particularly interesting for exploring the emergence and displacement of issues as a dynamic interplay of action and antiprograms. The case study explores how the notion of 'issues' helps understanding the dynamics and implications of displacements. The emphasis in this study is on questions (i) to (iv).

The second case, the introduction of a flexible public transport system in and around Hoogeveen between 1999 and 2004, is characterized by the large variety of settings where decision-making took place. Therefore, this case is of particular interest for the exploration of the metaphor of settings as a theatre stage and the specific role of settings in the dynamics and democratic implications of displacements. The emphasis in this study is on questions (ii), (iii), (iv), (vi) and (vii).

The third case is the introduction of High-quality Public Transport (HOV) in Utrecht between 1990 and 1999, an innovation that has been debated during more than two decades. Because of recurring debates about the legitimacy of the decision-making process related to the putative exclusion of certain stakeholders, this case is of key interest for the study of the effects of displacements on the three dimensions of democratic quality. The emphasis in this case study is therefore on questions (iii) to (vii).

### 3.4.3 Data gathering

What kinds of data does the conceptual framework require and how are these data collected? In order to follow the issues when they are displaced between settings, two kinds of data are required: about issues (action and antiprograms) and about settings. Matching data of these kinds allows for conclusions about issue development, the nature of settings, issue reframing, and routes of displacements.

Data about *issues* should make possible the description of the interplay between action programs and antiprograms. Starting point is the announcement of a plan, which defines the first action program. Then, statements pro and contra this action program are gathered. Next, arguments, images, pamphlets, allies, rephrased statements, etc., which actors bring in to gain support for their standpoint in the controversy is considered to amount to the development of either action or antiprogram and therefore relevant. Archives of newspaper articles are mostly effective starting points for gathering data of this kind, because popular media spent a lot of attention to innovative activity that directly affects their audiences, as occurs in public services. Besides, journalists share my interest in controversy. Via references in popular accounts relevant policy documents, minutes of meetings, actors, artefacts, and other data are identified and sought in archives, requested from the owner, or visited.

Data about *settings* should render the influence of settings on issue-framing comprehensible. The metaphor of a theatre stage was introduced for this purpose. Relevant data therefore concern the access conditions (who participates and why?), the attributes (what kinds of supports are available for action programs?), and the audience (who are indirectly involved?). These data are derived from the same sources as data about issues, but are complemented with evidence from literature, constitutional/founding documents, law, and procedural arrangements for the relatively structural biases of these settings.

In addition to data about issues and settings, I need data about the conditions and drivers of displacements in case displacements cannot be sufficiently explained from the internal dynamics of action and antiprograms. After all, external forces like contingent events may also drive displacements. Data about external origins of displacements are derived from further interrogation of settings and their organizers. If information about issues and settings do not sufficiently explain why an issue appeared on/disappeared from the agenda, then actors are asked for reasons.

## Notes

- 1 The articles are originally published in NRC, AD, Telegraaf, Volkskrant and Trouw and digitally available at <http://www.lexisnexis.nl/>. They are selected with the following keywords: 'OV', 'chipkaart', and 'tarieven' respectively 'zwartrijden'.
- 2 Aanvalsplan Sociale Veiligheid in het Openbaar Vervoer, Ministry of VWS, The Hague, 16 October 2002.
- 3 'Issue' refers to the content of the decision-making process: the contested plans and designs by means of which technology and actors are co-constructed (see 3.3.2).
- 4 This example merely functions as an illustration of the conceptual framework developed in this chapter. The small empirical base does not justify hard conclusions, although the example does yield a hypothesis about the relation between settings and issue-framing.

- 5 Schattschneider (1960) uses the concept of displacement for a somewhat different political mechanism. For him, it refers to the displacement of one issue by another one on political agenda's. Because these agenda's can only comprise a limited number of issues, actors may strategically try to close the conflict by displacing the issue with another, 'more important' one. In this thesis, I will use the notion in its present-day meaning. Displacement refers to the shift of decision-making from one setting to another.
- 6 The notions of 'scripts' and 'action programs' are used as synonyms in the vocabulary of the Actor Network Theory. In this thesis I will mainly use the notion of 'action program'.
- 7 Even more explicit about such democratic deficits are Bovens et al. (1995). In a small booklet about democratic renewal in the Dutch context they discuss displacement of politics in six different directions. Politics moves from parliaments towards for example local administrative bodies, networks of civil servants, or societal organizations. Unlike parliaments, these 'destinations' fall short in democratic terms: "The displacement of politics is often mainly a displacement of societal power and not or not yet a displacement of democratic control" (p.21). The politics should therefore either be brought back to parliaments, or democratic control should be brought to these politics in the form of user involvement for example. This line of argument has a clear moral appeal, but its practical consequences are far from self-evident. Decision-making about innovation takes place in a variety of settings. What does the 'displacement of democratic control' then mean? Should all these settings be controlled democratically? Or are some settings allowed to compensate for the democratic deficits of others?

## 4 Following the Issues

# The Case of Self-service in the Amsterdam Trams<sup>1</sup>

### 4.1 Introduction

To understand and evaluate the democratic quality of the politics of innovation, we decided to follow issues as they displace between settings. The conceptual framework developed in the previous chapter emphasizes the notion of 'issues' and the dynamics of displacement in terms of a dynamic interplay of action programs and antiprograms. These notions can be used as heuristic tools in a case study: the clash between an action program and an antiprogram defines an issue; translations of action programs are responses to such issues on the one hand, but may give rise to new issues on the other hand. Thus, the description of the chain of translations can be used to map the issues that appeared in due course. This leads to the following questions to be addressed in this case study: (i) what were the most important issues that needed to be settled in this case and how did they translate in terms of action and antiprograms? And as issues are reframed when they displace: (ii) how do settings frame the issues? Furthermore, (iii), is it possible to characterize different types of displacements between settings and (iv) what are the main conditions and driving forces of these different types of displacements? And, finally, (v) how can we relate such an analysis to democratic quality in terms of participation, empowerment and impact?

In this chapter, these questions are addressed in a case study about the introduction of self-service on the Amsterdam trams between 1965 and 1973; an innovation that implied a considerable change in the way passengers used the trams. Conductors were taken off the trams and different kinds of machines were introduced: ticket-vending machines, ticket-stamping machines, and buttons to operate the tram doors. Most of the tasks that had previously been performed by the conductors were redistributed, with some delegated to machines. The conductor's total control was replaced by random checks carried out by teams of ticket inspectors. In this new situation, fare dodging soon posed a serious problem that threatened to destabilize the self-service system. The concept presupposed self-discipline on the part of passengers, and if large numbers of passengers failed to appreciate and incorporate this 'virtue', the foundation of the concept would fall apart. The analysis of different modes of fare dodging as antiprograms against self-service illustrates how the Amsterdam Municipal Transport Company (GVB) struggled with creating self-serving passengers from the mixed lot of tram users. More important for this study, it renders visible a rich variety of issues displacing between settings.

The case study is mainly performed on the base of articles from different newspapers in the period 1965-1973 collected by the Municipal Archives of Amsterdam. These articles include accounts of press releases and press conferences, comments, journalist observations and

interviews with GVB spokespersons and ticket inspectors. These data are complemented with minutes of those city council meetings where aspects of self-service were on the agenda. Finally, information is derived from a small number of books and reports that discuss this particular episode in the history of the GVB.

## 4.2 Dealing with fare dodging

At a press conference in July 1965, deputy director Van der Vos of the GVB announced plans for self-service on the Amsterdam trams.<sup>2</sup> He cited two arguments in favour of self-service: cutting back on scarce and expensive labour, and providing quicker service. Yet there was another, more implicit reason motivating the GVB: self-service suited the spirit of the times. City councillor Polak said: “In many service-providing companies, the customer is being brought in.”<sup>3</sup> GVB director Ossewaarde made a comparison with supermarkets: “I am convinced that it will succeed. ... Look around: the traditional grocery is disappearing and new self-service shops are appearing everywhere. Why shouldn’t it work in our business?”<sup>4</sup> While supermarkets paved the way, self-service on the tram raised different questions. In particular, the problem of fare dodging would become a recurring issue, even though experiences in other cities like Cologne, Frankfurt, and Stuttgart initially led to the expectation that fare dodging would not be a major problem. Only 0.03% to 0.3% of all German passengers travelled illegally, depending on the inspection methods used.<sup>5</sup>

Early in 1968, the city council agreed with a proposal put forward by the Board of Mayor and Aldermen (M&A) in which it presented the first phase of the GVB plan.<sup>6</sup> The company had asked for a loan to purchase ticket-vending and ticket-stamping machines for tramlines 1 and 2. The following extract summarizes how users were represented in this proposal:<sup>7</sup>

“Weekly tickets and annual season tickets do not need to be stamped. [...] Tickets bought outside the tram should be made valid after entering the tram by using the ticket-stamping machines. [...] We propose to widen the method of random control by employing ticket inspectors to prevent fare dodging. [...] We are aware that a great deal of attention should be given to informing the public, emphasizing the advantage of using weekly tickets or annual season tickets.”

In this extract, at least four different representations of users can be identified: the subscriber, the responsible ticket buyer, the fare-dodger, and ignorant members of the public. Fare-dodgers and ignorant passengers would require specific attention. These passengers were perceived as deviants who should be disciplined and educated.

Indeed, fare dodging emerged with the introduction of self-service on the tram. Prior to 1968, the task of control was combined with the sale of tickets, i.e., all passengers had to pass by the conductor. From 1968 on, passengers were required to buy a ticket in advance, and total control by the conductors was replaced by random checks on a smaller scale. It was these conditions, then, that actually enabled the emergence of fare dodging. In fact, its formal emergence had already occurred just a couple of months earlier, because the regulations and tariff system adopted by the GVB did not include payment of an additional charge if a passenger was discovered travelling without a ticket. In order to continue the introduction of expanded self-service, this omission

would have to be remedied. So, the Amsterdam council decided to include a new article in the public transport regulations obliging passengers to obtain their own tickets, and fare-dodgers were fined NLG 1.50 (roughly 50¢ in those days).<sup>8</sup> Soon this fine was raised to NLG 2.50.<sup>9</sup> Moreover, the regulations were adjusted to allow inspectors to report offences and to remove fare-dodgers from the tram.

Meanwhile, the GVB installed ticket machines and developed measures to deal with the problems of ignorant passengers and fare-dodgers. Education seemed appropriate for ignorant passengers, so the GVB organised press conferences, painted self-service trams in different colours, distributed flyers, and placed instruction placards at the stops. It published a special GVB newsletter explaining the different features of the system, and because many foreign tourists made use of the tram, the instructions and flyers were also translated into French, German, and English some time later.<sup>10</sup> Users could no longer plead ignorance of the regulations; everybody without ticket was treated as a fare-dodger.

Dealing with fare dodging, however, called for a somewhat different approach. The GVB employed about 80 ticket inspectors who carried out random checks in the trams. At certain stops, uniformed inspectors entered the tram in pairs, checked that passengers had tickets, left the tram, and got onto the next one.<sup>11</sup> This method of ticket inspection was intended to suggest the ‘omnipresence’ of inspectors.

The inspectors quickly identified different types of fare-dodgers. For instance, there were the ‘escapers’ who did not stamp their tickets as they entered the tram but did so as soon as the ticket inspectors made their entrance. “The sound sometimes resembled a machine gun,” said one inspector in an interview.<sup>12</sup> So the company revised its inspection strategy. One inspector was still in uniform, while the other one was dressed in civilian clothes – the latter attempting to catch the escapers as soon as he saw them stamping their tickets.

However, some fare-dodgers persisted despite the random ticket inspections. Among them were many ‘hippies’ who travelled to the Vondelpark each summer. “To them, paying isn’t an issue at all,” an inspector explained.<sup>13</sup> These politically engaged hippies, initially organised in the so-called Provo movement,<sup>14</sup> turned their refusal into a political statement: they believed that public transport should be free.<sup>15</sup> But according to the GVB, this group was too small to be acknowledged as a problem. The company estimated that (only) 350,000 passengers had dodged fares in 1972 (in reality, an increase of more than 50% relative to 1971). A spokesperson ascribed the problem to wrong perceptions:<sup>16</sup>

“Because many people purchase a season ticket and travel with a pass or transfer ticket, one might get the wrong impression that an excessive number of passengers are dodging fares. In reality, the number still does not exceed 1% of the total number of passengers”.

Nevertheless, the GVB asked for an increase in the fine because, apart from the escapers and hippies, there was another type of fare-dodger: the ‘gambler’. A ticket cost NLG 0.50 and, if caught, the fine was NLG 2.50. Thus not being caught for more than five journeys meant the user could realise a profit. Some people simply calculated and gambled. These gamblers were quite easy to deal with. They often paid quickly; they even had the NLG 2.50 in their hand if they were asked for their ticket.<sup>17</sup> To deal with these gamblers, the company proposed increasing the fine to NLG 5.50 (still far too low, according to the GVB director). While a majority of the council agreed, some councillors specifically supported the notion that public transport should be free.<sup>18 19</sup>

### 4.3 Seven antiprograms to counter

The route the innovator wants his users to follow defines an action program. The GVB's original action program, prior to the era of self-service, required transfer tickets and season tickets that were inspected by a conductor who, at the same time, sold tickets to other passengers. The new action program can be described as "take care of your own tickets". During the introduction of self-service, this action program clashed with several antiprograms, each of which defined a new issue. Hence, in this case seven issues can be discerned:

1. The traditional organization of sales and inspection of tickets clashed with the urge to cut costs due to structural shortages.
2. The idea of self-service clashed with the legal possibility to dodge fares.
3. The idea of self-service clashed with the possibility of accidental fare dodging due to unawareness.
4. Self-service, now enforced by law, clashed with the possibility of deliberate law breaking.
5. Self-service, now also enforced by inspection, clashed with the fare dodge strategy of 'escapers'.
6. Self-service, though enforced by law and inspection, clashed with the behaviour of groups of hippies, who dodged fares as a socialist statement.
7. Self-service, now also enforced by inspectors in civil clothes, clashed with the fare dodge strategy of 'gamblers'.

These seven issues are analysed separately in order to understand how they developed in terms of action and antiprograms. Tables 4.1 to 4.7 present the results. The first column mentions the settings. In these settings, action programs (second column) were *translated* to solve conflicts with antiprograms (third column). These translations are numbered 1a to 7d (second column). The conditions and drivers of displacements or the reasons for closure are mentioned in the last column. Closure means that an issue gets settled. The tables are clarified in the accompanying text and used for analysis of the role of settings in (re)framing issues on the one hand and of the drivers of displacements on the other (4.4).

#### 4.3.1 Structural shortages

The first and most important set of translations led to the replacement of conductors by several kinds of machines. Increasing labour costs had resulted in structural shortages (table 4.1, line 1a), which forced the GVB to raise its fares a couple of times in the first half of the 1960s. The council discussed each fare increase at great length.<sup>20</sup> In return, the GVB promised to increase the efficiency of its services, and on one occasion broached the idea of self-service, which was thought would save on expensive and scarce labour.<sup>21</sup> This discussion also focused on the contribution or threat of different kinds of users to the promised level of efficiency, that is, on the users' motives for (not) paying (line 1b).<sup>22</sup> Fare-dodgers, for example, were repeatedly addressed but not really feared because, according to Mayor and Aldermen: "experiments elsewhere show that the number of fare-dodgers will remain considerably below 1%" (line 1c).<sup>23</sup>

The debate whether to implement self-service took place within the city council, where it was part of a discussion about finances. The main attributes in the city council were ideological arguments about whether users (rightist) or the municipality (leftist) ought to pay for public transport. Arguments from right and left got aligned once the GVB was characterized by the

Table 4.1 Structural shortages

Setting	Action program	Antiprogram	Displacement/closure
City council (1a)	Conductors sell and check tickets	High labour costs + structural shortages	
(1b)	GVB requests a loan for self service machines and ticket inspectors + expected efficiency + suits spirit of time	Uncertainty about fare dodging	Clos.: Depoliticisation by two translations: (i) reduction of uncertainty about user behaviour to uncertainty about fare dodging and (ii) 'evidence' from Germany. No further questions about societal implications or similarity with German situation at this stage. Loan is granted and machines adopted.
(1c)	(1b) + fare dodging no problem + Germany report teaches how to deal with it	-	

inefficiency of its service, which both the Amsterdam municipality and the tram passengers unjustly paid for.

The issue did not displace. It got settled in the council, but in a way that trampled on the democratic requirement of empowerment. Two translations explain why the debate settled this way. First, the responsible alderman in the city council rhetorically reduced the main effects of self-service to financial consequences, when he stated that “the basics of the proposal [are] the saving of expenses by a company through the disappearance of the conductor from the tram.”<sup>24</sup> Other non-financial consequences received little, if any, attention in the council debate about adoption: blind people who might have difficulty with the ticket machines;<sup>25</sup> disabled persons or mothers with children who might have problems with the automatic doors;<sup>26</sup> passengers who would have to do without a familiar (and sometimes entertaining) source of information;<sup>27</sup> disabled persons who would be deprived of guaranteed seats because there no longer were conductors to mediate for this group with other passengers;<sup>28</sup> vandals who now had a number of tempting (and unprotected) artefacts to destroy;<sup>29</sup> and pickpockets who could widen their territory to include trams.<sup>30</sup> These non-financial consequences were not addressed until later stages. Fare dodging was the only recognised adverse effect. The second translation comprised the reassurance of the city council that this single effect would stay within limits. Based on experiments in Germany, the GVB firmly insisted on the prediction that the number of fare-dodgers would remain “considerably below 1%”.<sup>31</sup> This second translation amounted to the depoliticisation of the issue, as the Amsterdam city councillors uncritically relied on the results of this study. They neither contested the numbers nor the putative similarity between the German and the Amsterdam public, because their commitment was focused on Amsterdam budget policy, and they saw an inefficient municipal company that had to be dealt with. Due to a framing in terms of fare paying versus fare dodging, city councillors were not well empowered to represent the interests of other potentially affected users.

#### 4.3.2 Expected indifference

In the new situation, after installation of the machines, passengers were required to take care of their own tickets. A moral appeal, asking passengers to behave responsibly, accompanied the installation of the machines.<sup>32</sup> However, some passengers were expected to remain indifferent

Table 4.2 Expected indifference

Setting	Action program	Antiprogram	Displacement/closure
City council (2a)	Most passengers are expected to pay + moral behaviour.	Expected immoral behaviour.	
(2b)	(2a) + passengers are obliged to pay + adjusted GVB regulations + fines + more users expected to pay	-	Clos.: Unanimous agreement within council. Mandate for GVB to counteract fare dodging.

(table 4.2, line 2a). The appeal was therefore reinforced by an adjustment in the GVB regulations that made it possible to deal with the good and the bad in terms of legal and illegal activities (line 2b).

This second set of translations was a quintessential activity for the city council, since formulating regulations and laws is what there ought to be done, and – given the commitment of councillors with implementation of self-service as a way to save expenses – unanimous agreement was not surprising. But while the decision seemed to concern merely the determination of a small fine, it also legitimised future measures. The ruling declared that it was now illegal to travel without a ticket (which hitherto was not the case), which paved the way for other GVB measures to identify and check abuse without additional political approvals. Thus it delegated the employment of ticket inspectors and the design of inspection strategies to the GVB management (see below). Those measures were legitimised by the mandate implied in the ruling.

#### 4.3.3 Expected unawareness

Yet, the moral appeal and adjusted laws did not result in all people paying their fares, particularly if they were unaware of the regulations (table 4.3, line 3a). A public campaign had to be added to the action program, aimed at stopping claims of unawareness as a valid excuse. The need for this translation was easily agreed upon by the city council (line 3b). But as a result of all publicity, journalists co-travelled on the tram and observed another problem: foreigners did not understand the idea of self-service. The instructions were written only in Dutch (line 3c). This led to formal questions in the city council (line 3d), which agreed upon a decree for the GVB to translate the instructions in German, English and French (line 3e).<sup>33</sup> This translation justified inspectors to fine all fare dodgers, even if they were foreigners and claimed not to understand the system (line 3f).

The issue displaced between the city council and the tram itself. Here one obvious difference in issue-framing becomes apparent. In the city council action programs are broadly defined in general terms (public campaign [versus] unaware fare dodgers), in the tram they are unpacked and more specific and real (press conferences, flyers, instruction placards [versus] incidental users, foreigners). Whereas ‘unaware users’ were represented in the city council with just two words, at the level of the tram they comprised all actual unaware users, including incidental users and foreigners (the first were included by instructions, the later were not until instructions were

Table 4.3 Expected unawareness

Setting	Action program	Antiprogram	Displacement/closure
City council (3a)	(2b)	Expected unawareness of new situation + unaware fare dodgers cannot be charged	
	(3b)	(3a) + public campaign decree	- Displ.: GVB is told to organise a public campaign.
Tramways (3c)	(3b) + press conferences + flyers + instruction placards (in Dutch) + more users paying	Foreigners do not understand	Displ.: Publicity campaign invites journalists into trams. Councillors raise formal questions.
City council (3d)	(3c)	(3b) + journalist observations + formal questions + unaware foreigners cannot be charged	
	(3e)	(3d) + translation decree	- Displ.: GVB is required to translate information.
Tramways (3f)	(3e) + implementation of decree + foreigners paying	-	Clos.: GVB management believes everybody should know now.

translated). This implies that antiprograms in council and tram were of different kinds. In the council they were based on imagination, in the tram they were manifestations.

Basing council decisions on real fare dodging thus required feedback from the tram. Observation and feedback were therefore important conditions for displacements from tram to council, conditions that were fulfilled by journalists as important mediators in this displacement. The opposite displacements from council to tram were conditioned by decrees for the GVB to inform the (foreign) public about the self-service system. The council delegated the execution of the decree via Mayor and Aldermen to the GVB management.

#### 4.3.4 Expected law breaking

Self-service without any form of inspection would be too much temptation for lawbreakers (table 4.4, line 4a). The GVB therefore employed eighty inspectors and developed an inspection strategy with random checks (line 4b). After implementation of the strategy (line 4c) the self-service system comprised ticket-vending machines, stamping machines, instruction placards, inspectors, uniforms, and strategy. See section 4.3.5 for discussion.

#### 4.3.5 Escaping

The next set of translations involved the redesign of the control strategies (using civilian clothes to catch escapers). This repeated the previous translations with one difference. Instead of being based on an expected antiprogram, it was based on an observed antiprogram (table 4.5, line 5a).

Table 4.4 Expected law breaking

Setting		Action program	Antiprogram	Displacement/closure
GVB management	(4a)	(3f)	Expected law breaking + loss of income	
	(4b)	(4a) + eighty inspectors employed + strategy with random checks and uniforms	-	Disp. Implementation of strategy
Tramways	(4c)	(4b) + implementation + law compliance	-	Clos.: measure was justified by the investment proposal and the law determined in 2b. (delegation)

Inspectors reported about the escapers and fed information back to the GVB management (line 5b). The implementation added inspectors in civil clothes to the self-service system.

The displacements from GVB management to tram involved common conduct of management: the implementation of inspection strategies. Noteworthy is the enabler of these displacements: the mandate implied in the decision with which the city council had agreed to charge fare-dodgers. This mandate justified the current measures without need for renewed approval by municipal authorities.

The main significance of inspection was in the role of inspectors as mediators between the tram and the GVB management. Inspectors detected the escapers, who quickly stamped their tickets behind the backs of inspectors; they encountered hippies who refused to pay; they caught the gamblers who then readily paid their fines. This feedback helped the board learn more about the antiprograms of fare-dodgers, and they used that knowledge to develop customized interventions.

What happened in terms of issue-framing can be summarized as moving from a setting without contestation to an 'urban jungle'. At the level of the GVB management no antiprograms existed. The tram as an urban jungle appeared to be a setting where expected behaviour of

Table 4.5 Escaping

Setting		Action program	Antiprogram	Displacement/closure
Tramways	(5a)	(3e) + eighty inspectors + uniforms + random checks + compliance	"We stamp as soon as inspectors enter" (escapers)	Displ.: Inspectors report observations to GVB management (and to journalists).
GVB management	(5b)	(5a) + feedback from inspectors + civil clothes + compliance	-	Displ. Implementation of new strategy
Tramways	(5c)	(5b) + implementation + compliance	-	Clos.: Measure was justified by the investment proposal and the law determined in 2b. (delegation)

passengers was confronted with real behaviour of many different types of users. There were season-ticket holders, ticket buyers, unaware incidental users, foreigners, escapers, hippies, etc., who all participated somehow in tram usage. They used the tram in ways that suited their own action programs and that did not always match the GVB's expectations. Hence, unexpected antiprograms most likely emerged at the level of the tram.

#### 4.3.6 Free public transport claim

Random control by teams of conductors wearing uniforms or civilian clothes reduced the number of fare-dodgers but did not counter the anti-program of hippies who simply refused to pay their fares because they believed public transport should be free (table 4.6, line 6a). On the contrary, the claim was picked up by newspapers, which published fare dodging percentages. The problem increasingly became a subject of public suspicions (line 6b). Newspapers were eager to comment, and journalists travelled along with inspectors to do participatory research.<sup>34</sup> Apart from these debates, the idea of free public transport received much attention in general. Experiments with free transport in Bologna and other Italian cities heightened the discussion. When the Socialist Youth demonstrated for free public transport in reaction to fare increases, 24 newspaper articles within three weeks were devoted to these actions.<sup>35</sup> Moreover, the new State Secretary of Transport, Public Works and Water Management, M. Van Hulsten, had recently published his book, in which he pleaded for free public transport, too.<sup>36</sup> These debates were vitalized when hippies and journalists tried to reinterpret fare dodging as a first step towards free public transport. Against this reinterpretation, however, GVB spokespersons countered that the problem was still very marginal ("no more than 1%") and based on wrong impressions (line 6c).

The observations of journalists and the way they related the phenomenon of fare dodging with a number of converging developments in public transport reframed an – according to the GVB – very specific and still relatively innocent phenomenon to an emerging trend towards a different kind of public transport. The articulation of different elements and their merging into a strong antiprogram invited much more stakeholders to the reframed issue. It triggered a real debate about the pros and cons of free public transport. Despite the GVB's attempts to de-articulate it, the issue became more popular and would end up on the agenda of the city council if the

Table 4.6 Free public transport claim

Setting	Action program	Antiprogram	Displacement/closure
Tramways	(6a) (5c)	Refusal + "public transport should be free" + hippies	Displ.: Journalist report about hippies' actions and claims and inspectors' experiences with hippies
Newspapers	(6b)	(6a) + "fare dodging is reality" + examples + Italian solution + Socialist Youth + demonstrations against fare increase	Articulation
	(6c) (6a) + press conference + wrong impressions + "percentage below 1%"	-	Temporal closure, although newspapers remain eager to criticise claimed success.

opportunity presented itself. This would happen when the GVB proposed to increase the fines as a response to another antiprogram: ‘gambling’.

#### 4.3.7 Gambling

A last kind of anti-program was initiated by fare-dodgers who simply calculated the cost of the fines imposed against the cumulative costs of the fares (table 4.7, line 7a). Inspectors not only identified escapers (see 4.3.5), but also these gamblers. Gambling implied another type of anti-program against inspection. The board of directors wanted to increase the fine in order to counteract this anti-program, but had to rely on the city council (line 7b). To increase the fine, the GVB regulations would need to be adjusted yet again, which was a council responsibility. The GVB management and Mayor and Aldermen proposed raising the fine from NLG 2.50 to NLG 5.50 in response to increased percentages of fare dodging:<sup>37</sup>

“During the first years after the change of regulations [...] the number of infringements stayed within limits. The last two years however, after implementation of the self-service system on almost all tramlines, the number of passengers without a valid ticket has increased alarmingly. Therefore we think the time has come to raise the fine.”

Councillor Van Duijn made a fundamental objection (line 7c). He sympathized with hippies, being one of them, and did not find the increase in fare-dodgers alarming at all. On the contrary, he supported people who devised ways to use public transport free of charge. He referred to the ideas of State Secretary Van Hulst and rejected the fine increase as a further step away from the ideal of free public transport. In response, alderman Brautigam answered: “If Mr. Van Duijn thinks it is a wrong step to take, then the only possible reaction is that the wrong step is taken within the existing legal order” (line 7d).<sup>38</sup> This closed the debate.

Table 4.7 Gambling

Setting	Action program	Antiprogram	Displacement/closure
Tramways (7a)	(6c)	“we hardly see inspectors and gamble” (gamblers)	Displ.: Inspectors report observations to GVB management, who consider measurements.
GVB management (7b)	(7a) + Feedback from inspectors + GVB mgt. wants to raise fines	GVB mgt. not authorized to raise fines	Displ.: GVB requests council to multiply fines.
City council (7c)	(7b) + “alarming increase of fare dodgers” + proposal to raise fine	“Fine increase is wrong step” + book Van Hulst + free transport is ideal + ideal justifies gambling	Reopening of issue 6.
	(7d)	-	Clos.: Depoliticisation, based on already closed debate

The displacement from tram to GVB management is again conditioned by the articulation of observations by ticket inspectors. This feedback enabled the GVB management to take adequate measures. To counteract gambling, a fine increase, and therefore a displacement to the city council, seemed to be most appropriate. There, the opportunity was taken to address the issue of free public transport within the council, but the responsible alderman depoliticised this issue on the base of an earlier decision: to charge fare dodging. This depoliticisation involved a bad argument in favour of a good solution. The fine had to be raised simply because fare-dodgers travelled at the expense of fare-payers and because free public transport would evoke problems of its own. Those arguments convinced most city councillors. But Van Duijn's plea should not have been rejected with reference to the existing legal order, and he should not have accepted this rejection because the legal order (established six years earlier) was the actual issue at stake. Van Duijn wanted it changed on behalf of those people who advocated free public transport – a valid ambition – because adjusting legal orders to new circumstances is exactly what politicians ought to do.

This episode most clearly illustrates the issue-reframing effects of displacements. In the tram the issue was framed as a clash between inspectors and gamblers. When inspectors reported to the GVB management, the issue was reframed in terms of motives and adequate disciplining measurements. But when the GVB management asked support from the council for its policy, the issue was reframed altogether. Councillors coupled the request to the recent debate about free transport and in that debate other arguments (e.g. environmental) were also relevant and other actors (e.g. shopkeepers, taxpayers) could claim to be stakeholders, too. This reframing implied that those other stakeholders also ought to participate and be empowered to influence the decision-making process.

#### **4.4 Conclusions**

The analysis shows that decision-making about the project occurred in a number of distinct settings with different characteristics. This section addresses the research questions formulated in the introduction. First, the analysis of issues and their translations leads to conclusions about how relevant settings in this case framed the issues (4.4.1). Based thereon, four different types of displacements between settings are discerned (4.4.2). Finally, this typology of displacements is used in an evaluation of democratic quality in terms of participation, empowerment and impact (4.4.3).

##### **4.4.1 Settings and framing of issues**

In this case study I investigated the dynamics of displacement by following the issues. Latour's translation theory was adopted as a heuristic tool to define issues as the clashes between action programs. In this case seven issues were identified: the first issue emerged when self-service was coined as an alternative to an inefficient system in which conductors sold and stamped tickets. The other six issues were based on different (expected) antiprograms against the self-service system itself: expected indifference, expected unawareness, expected law breaking, escaping, gambling, and the free public transport claim. These six issues described the clashes between the GVB's action program with newly emerged antiprograms. Typically, antiprograms emerged when the action program displaced to a new setting (the city council, the tram, the GVB management).

Once emerged, it was investigated how issues developed in terms of action and antiprograms. That is, how the original action program translated in response to antiprograms, and vice versa. It appeared that most translations were merely additions: more elements (organizational, legal, strategic) were added to the action program in order to make the self-service system work.

Note that translation of action programs is not the same as a displacement of an issue to another setting. Often, action programs are translated several times within one setting before they displace to another setting. For example, until line (3c) four translations took place within one single setting: the city council.

This analysis of translations was done to identify relevant settings and show how they (re)frame the issues in this case. Although settings do not determine the precise moves of actors (as actors can still creatively engage in action or anti programs), they do determine the range of appropriate actions. In the case of the self-service system in the tram, three different settings seemed to be of major importance: the tram itself, the GVB management, and the city council. These settings had different characteristics, which affected the kind of activity that took place. We describe the settings and their influence in terms of the metaphor of a theatre stage by asking: what were the access conditions, attributes and audiences?

The tram, firstly, is best described as an urban jungle, where many different private interests prevailed and where an innovative technology did not have predictable effects per se, because people creatively invented antiprograms to benefit from a new situation. In the metaphorical terms of a theatre stage: this setting offered access to a wide range of actors, also to those with the intention to dodge fares; inspectors hardly possessed attributes to counteract those fare dodgers especially in the beginning; and an audience of GVB directors and city councillors was yet hardly aware of the various fare dodge strategies. These characteristics led to a particular type of framing in which (translations of) the self-service system was confronted with real users and in which expectations about user behaviour appeared to be right or wrong depending on the actual manifestations of fare dodging. In the tram, the issue of self-service being threatened by fare dodging (in general) scattered into many different sub-issues accompanied by several types of fare-dodgers. Implementation of self-service in the tram thus incited the manifestation of a set of specific fare-dodge-related issues.

Typical activities on the second setting, the GVB management, were surveillance, taking or proposing measures, and monitoring whether measures had an effect. In terms of the theatre metaphor: access to the stage of decision-making was limited to the board of directors while employees were ordered to implement the measures. The 'audience' consisted of the Amsterdam city council, as the municipality owned the transport company. Each major decision required approval by the council, though some measures were already implicitly approved in earlier stages. Such mandates appeared to be important attributes available to the GVB board to justify decisions. Another important attribute was the credit from the municipality to realise self-service and the counteracting measurements. These circumstances led to a framing in which the variety of specific fare-dodge-related issues articulated by journalists and inspectors were confronted with municipally approved self-service policy and this confrontation was translated into specific measurements. This setting incited the search for effective solutions to specific fare-dodge-related issues.

The city council, thirdly, appeared as a theatre stage for deliberation about the public interest. The council accommodated debates about whether action programs served the public interest, and what that meant in a particular situation. Access to this stage for politicians was

based on elections while the electorate (mediated by popular press) constituted the audience of the council. Within the council arguments and votes were the important attributes. The most influential kinds of attributes appeared to be arguments that related the issues at hand (i) to existing debates, such as the debates between left and right about tariffs, general accessibility, and the ideal of free public transport, or (ii) to the earlier decision to start and support the project implying that regulation and inspection were logical next steps. This type of framing can be characterized as ‘contextualisation’, because the issues on the agenda were made part of broader debates covering related issues.

To conclude, the analysis and the metaphor of a theatre stage contribute to the understanding of how the three settings – tram, corporate management, and city council – each frame issues differently. The specific characteristics of settings contributed to three distinguished types of framing: the manifestation, the counteraction, and the contextualisation of a range of fare-dodge-related issues. To understand when such framings were opportune, however, one should follow the issues as they *displace* between settings. This will be done in the next section.

#### 4.4.2 The dynamics of displacement

What does the case study tell us about the dynamics of displacement, a key concern of this study? The characterization of settings allows us to answer two questions: First, can we distinguish between different types of displacement on the basis of their reframing effects? Second, what are the main mechanisms and conditions of displacements? Both questions are addressed by unravelling four patterns of displacement in which different dynamics are discerned: articulation, politicisation, delegation and depoliticisation (figure 4.1).

1. Articulation occurs in displacements from tram to GVB management or city council (the demonstration of an anti-program).
2. Politicisation occurs in displacements from GVB management to city council (the contextualisation of issues).

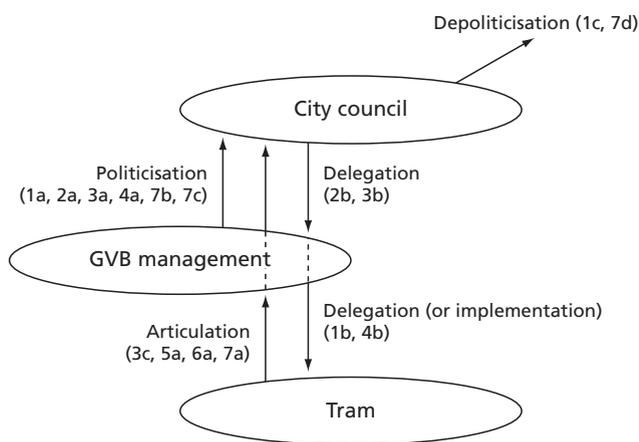


Figure 4.1 Four patterns of displacements

3. Delegation/implementation occurs in displacements from city council via GVB management to tram (the realisation of an action program).
4. Depoliticisation occurs in displacements from city council to a non-political space (the disappearance of an issue).

*Articulation* happens when antiprograms against a design, plan, proposal or measure are 'demonstrated'. Several antiprograms emerged in the tram (3c, 5a, 6a, 7a). These remained unknown to the initiators of the action program until they were articulated and evaluated in order to devise adequate counteracting measurements. An important condition or driving force of articulation was the work of inspectors and journalists. Because fare dodgers obviously did not articulate their antiprograms themselves (except hippies, who expressed a political claim), articulation was a mediated process.

*Politicisation* occurs when issues are contextualised in broader debates about fairness and justice. Justice claims often led to the displacement of issues to the city council: self-service potentially offered a solution for the inefficiency of a service, which the Amsterdam municipality *unjustly* paid for (1a); adjustment of the regulations was meant to counteract *abuse* of the system (2a); the public campaign was politically induced to prevent *unfair* impositions of fines to incidental and foreign users (3a and 4a); the increase of the fine was a political issue because gamblers *unjustly* travelled at the expense of fare-payers (7b); and discussion about free public transport, raised by the fine increase, was a political issue because hippies questioned the *legitimacy* of the legal order (7c). In all these cases, the circumstances impinged on the sense of justice of either one of the involved parties – the company, customers, taxpayers, or hippies. This was an important condition for politicisation. In addition, the case also shows that regular contact with Mayor and Aldermen, who determined the agenda of the city council, played a role in mobilizing the city council. The GVB management much better succeeded in getting fare dodging on the agenda, than hippies in getting free public transport on the agenda, simply because the GVB director and the alderman for transport met very regularly.

*Delegation* occurs when a decision of the city council or a measure of the GVB management contributes to the realisation of the self-service action program. For instance, the task to inform the public was delegated to the GVB (3b), just like the responsibility to counteract fare dodging (2b). The GVB management in its turn delegated the sales of tickets to machines (1b) and the control of user behaviour to ticket inspectors (4b). This latter kind of delegation can also be called implementation. I prefer 'delegation' in order to emphasize the similarity in structure between the two displacements.<sup>39</sup> Both were made possible by the hierarchical arrangement of authority between city council, M&A, GVB management, and GVB employees. These hierarchical power relations guaranteed the impact of a decision.

*Depoliticisation* can be said to happen when an issue disappears, for instance when a city council majority judge that taking the issue into consideration would set in motion a new chain of action and antiprograms. Two issues got depoliticised in this case: the investment proposal and the free-public-transport-debate. The first example happened when German 'evidence' proved the beneficial prospects of self-service in Amsterdam regardless of possible non-financial consequences (1c). The second example of depoliticisation occurred when hippies' claim that public transport should be free was rejected on legal grounds, when in fact precisely the legal order was at stake (7d). In both cases depoliticisation was conditioned by unwillingness or

inability of councillors to take part in the broadening of debates about unsolved issues. Favouring an action program easily explains such unwillingness among a council majority.

We started with the general notion of the dynamics of displacement as interplay between action programs and antiprograms. Antiprograms emerged in response to imperfectly inscribed action programs. Users were able to develop strategies to dodge fares and travel for free, because stamping machines did not sufficiently determine their behaviour. This case study shows how the translations of the GVB action program were responses to such antiprograms and served to settle issues by complementing technical determination with legal and organizational means. Our analysis stresses the relevance of settings and highlights how four patterns of displacements contributed to this purpose: the articulation of antiprograms; the politicisation of normative issues; the depoliticisation of potentially escalating issues; and the delegation/implementation of decrees and measures. These displacements were respectively conditioned by the articulating work of inspectors and journalists, by susceptibility for justice claims among city councillors (particularly when GVB tried to politicise issues), by a council majority unwilling to broaden the debate about unsolved issues, and by the institutionalised decision-making authority of the city council.

#### **4.4.3 The contribution of displacements to democratic quality**

We are now in a position to reflect on the question how displacements contribute to the democratic quality of innovation processes. In chapter 1 democratic quality was defined in terms of three general principles: participation (or representation), empowerment, and impact (or influence). Displacements can be said to contribute to democratic quality if one or more of these principles are reinforced.

This definition, of course, raises the question “who are the stakeholders in this case?” and in principle the answer depends on the issues. For instance, the issue of free public transport poses other requirements to participation than does the determination of the GVB’s fine policy. Yet, observations of the case justify the delineation of the GVB as one crucial stakeholder that should have been well empowered and influential in this process. After all, once the project had taken off, the GVB was accountable for its success or failure. Second, those users qualified as ticket buyers held a stake in proper service provision, but they were not very well empowered to articulate their interests. Such empowerment would have required specific attention for the interests of disabled, elderly, fathers/mothers with children, incidental users, and foreigners particularly in the council decision to introduce self-service on the tram. We first discuss the power of the GVB relative to fare dodgers and then return to the empowerment of these groups of fare payers.

Within the context of the tram, especially in the beginning, the GVB was much less empowered and influential than fare dodgers in deciding about how self-service machines were to be used. Can we speak of ‘undemocratic use’, then? The tram was indeed a political space, where the public interest should have prevailed over the variety of self-interests, particularly because they were not compatible. Therefore, displacements that empowered the GVB relative to fare dodgers can be considered to improve democratic quality.

The most important impact enhancing displacements in this sense came about when articulation and delegation reinforced each other. Articulation revealed the antiprograms that

became manifest in the tram. Delegation justified counteraction. The combination of these effects amounted to the specification of the self-service action program into actions and measurements, which in turn were delegated to machines, inspectors, flyers, instruction placards, uniforms, etc. In other words, as long as inspectors and journalists adequately monitored fare dodge strategies and the city council approved the proposed means to deal with these strategies, the democratic quality of tram use was enhanced.

The enhancement of impact of the GVB thus partly depends on delegation of counteracting authority from the city council to the GVB management. This is, however, only democratic if delegation results from inclusive decision-making. This shifts the attention from the tram and the corporate management to the city council, and by doing so, to the merits of politicisation. The reframing effect of politicisation was that the issue was seen in its wider context. Consequently, some additional actors should have entered the scene as stakeholders, because they featured in the wider context. For example, both tram users and taxpayers were traditional stakeholders in debates about tariff increases. Councillors indeed brought their interests in the debate about adoption of self-service. However, in the same debate some specific user groups were much less empowered: because the council majority did not acknowledge the interests of disabled, elderly, and parents, but depoliticised the issue untimely, the decision and the mandate arguably lacked legitimacy. Partial depoliticisation thus reduced the democratic quality of the decision.

To conclude, how did different types of displacements contribute to democratic quality? The GVB initially lacked attributes for its empowerment and influence on tram use. Articulation (learning about fare dodging) contributed to its empowerment and delegation (of decision-making authority) justified measures. This combination enabled more impact of the GVB's action program. In addition, the justification of measures should be based on a democratically made decision: the reframing effects of politicisation should lead to inclusive decision-making about the content of the mandate. This happened mostly except when depoliticisation without debate reduced the democratic quality of the process of introducing self-service in the tram.

## Notes

- 1 This chapter is an adjusted version of Nahuis (2005)
- 2 Trouw, 29 July 1965.
- 3 Het Vrije Volk, 24 February 1966.
- 4 Het Parool, 12 March 1969.
- 5 Het Vrije Volk, 25 July 1967. Representatives of the GVB referred to a study about foreign experiments in a number of press conferences and city council meetings. Although references abound, it remains doubtful whether the study exists in any written form. An extensive search in four different archives in Amsterdam, as well as personal communication with two then closely involved council members, turned up nothing. Most probably the referred study was an informal report of a study tour by the directors of the GVB.
- 6 City Council (1968). *Zelfbediening op trams en autobussen*. Amsterdam: Gemeentebld afd. 2, pp. 311-314.
- 7 City Council (1968). *Invoering systeem van zelfbediening op trams en autobussen*. Amsterdam: Gemeentebld afd. 1, pp. 191-196, p. 191.

- 8 City Council (1967). Besluit tot aanvulling van het Reglement en Tarief voor het vervoer door het Gemeentevervoerbedrijf. Amsterdam: Gemeentebld afd. 2, pp. 1156. To give an impression, a public transport fare amounted NLG 0.50. Nowadays, this would be approximately EUR 1.50.
- 9 City Council (1968). Vaststelling Verordening op het zich bevinden in tramrijtuigen of personenveerboten zonder geldig plaatsbewijs. Amsterdam: Gemeentebld afd. 1, pp. 1977-1978
- 10 Het Vrije Volk, 7 February 1968. Algemeen Handelsblad, 14 February 1969. Het Vrije Volk, 13 March 1969 Nieuws van het GVB, March 1969b. Nieuws van de Dag, 19 June 1969.
- 11 De Tijd, 24 October 1968.
- 12 Unknown source, approx. June 1972. Nieuwe Rotterdamse Courant, approx. June 1972.
- 13 From reports on the work of ticket inspectors, unknown source, 22 January 1972.
- 14 Provo was a protest movement founded in 1965. After the 1966 election it had one seat in the Amsterdam city council. In 1967 the Provo movement is renamed as Dwarf movement and links up with an emerging anti-authoritarian hippie culture. Source: <http://nl.wikipedia.org/wiki/Provo>, viewed on 11 September 2006.
- 15 Local activist Hans Hofman said this to a journalist, Tijd Maasbode, 11 September 1967. See also a note to the City Council from a left-wing party PSP: City Council (1970). Nota van het raadslid Ten Brink c.s., inzake het openbaar vervoer. Amsterdam: Gemeentebld afd. 1, pp. 27-36.
- 16 Nieuwe Rotterdamse Courant, approx. June 1972. Similarly quoted in Het Parool, 3 June 1972.
- 17 Op. cit., note 13.
- 18 City Council (1973). Wijziging verordening plaatsbewijzen Gemeentevervoerbedrijf. Amsterdam: Gemeentebld afd. 2, pp. 976-982
- 19 This case study focuses on the period 1965-1973. Until 1973, self-service is considered to be relatively successful with fare dodge percentages below 1%. After 1973, however, the system slowly started to destabilize and in the next decades the old situation with conductors on the tram was gradually restored. For a summary of developments between 1973 and 2002 see the epilogue in Nahuis (2005).
- 20 See for example: City Council (1967). Tarieven gemeentevervoerbedrijf. Amsterdam: Gemeentebld afd. 2, pp. 1020-1055.
- 21 Op. cit., note 9.
- 22 One other antiprogram was the concern of some city councilors about the fate of obsolete conductors. This issue, not analysed here, can be explored in a similar way as the issue of fare dodging.
- 23 Op. cit., note 7, p. 194.
- 24 City council (1969), Zelfbediening op trams en autobussen. Amsterdam: Gemeentebld afd. 2, pp. 355-366, p. 361.
- 25 De Tijd, 28 April 1969.
- 26 Het Parool, 29 March 1969. De Waarheid, 21 January 1972.
- 27 De Tijd, 20 November 1970.
- 28 Nieuws van de Dag, 18 Oktober 1969.
- 29 COCOV (1980). Wel of geen kondukteur in het stads- en streekvervoer. Den Haag: Vereniging van Nederlandse Gemeenten.
- 30 Ibid.
- 31 Op. cit., note 6.
- 32 A picture in Nieuws van het GVB, March 1969, p. 3 shows a woman stamping her ticket. The caption reads: "Did you already use the self-service tram? Then you are familiar with self-stamping like this charming passenger." The newsletter contains many similar statements.
- 33 City Council (1969). Zelfbediening op trams en autobussen. Amsterdam: Gemeentebld afd. 2, pp. 355-366.
- 34 Op. cit., notes 13. De Waarheid, 21 January 1972.

- 35 For example, *De Volkskrant*, 17 February 1969.
- 36 Van Hulten, M. (1972). *Gratis openbaar vervoer*. Deventer: Kluwer.
- 37 City Council (1973). *Wijziging van de Verordening op het zich bevinden in tramrijtuigen of personenveerboten zonder geldig plaatsbewijs*. Amsterdam: Gemeenteblad afd. 1, pp. 1378-1379, p. 1378.
- 38 *Op. cit.*, note 18, p. 978.
- 39 The term delegation emphasizes that tasks implied in an action program are not only displaced, but also redistributed. It does not fundamentally matter whether these tasks are delegated to machines or people (Latour, 1991a).

# 5 Settings and Framing

## The Case of a Flexible Public Transport System

### 5.1 Introduction

To understand and evaluate the democratic quality of the politics of innovation, we decided to follow issues as they displace between settings. The conceptual framework developed in chapter 3 suggests that settings significantly influence the way issues are framed and that, based on this effect, different types of displacements can be distinguished. In this case study we explore the metaphor of settings as a theatre stage, which comprises the characterization of settings in terms of access conditions, attributes, and audiences. Displacements are then conceived of as mutations of the access conditions, of the availability and allowance of attributes and of the presence, composition and role of the audience. This characterization expresses in detail what displacement entails and why this leads to a certain reframing. Moreover, it will contribute to an understanding of the conditions that enable and constrain stakeholder participation, empowerment and impact due to displacement, and hence of the relation between displacements and democratic quality. This leads to the following questions to be addressed in the case study: (i) how do the characteristics of settings influence the (re)framing of issues? (ii) Is it possible to characterize different types of displacements based on reframing effects? (iii) What are the main conditions for these displacements to take place? And (iv) how do displacements contribute to stakeholder participation, empowerment and influence?

The case comprises the introduction of a flexible and user driven public transport concept in and between Hoogeveen and Meppel, two small towns in the province of Drenthe in the northern part of the Netherlands, between 1999 and 2004. This is an interesting case, because decisions were prepared and taken in a variety of settings, partly competing for democratic legitimacy. For example, major decisions were taken in Provincial States, a Development Group supervised the project, a panel of users was supposed to decide about operational issues, on the work floor two strikes took place, separate meetings were organised to settle conflicts, and one of those conflicts ended in court. This variety of settings results in an interesting case for the exploration of the metaphor of a setting as a theatre stage and the specific role of settings in the dynamics and democratic implications of displacements.

A setting comprises the conditions for the clash between action and antiprograms. To identify the relevant settings, a statement that expresses an interesting action program is taken as the starting point. Next, this action program is confronted with statements that express antiprograms. This confrontation always happens in a particular setting, the conditions of which can be scrutinized in the next step. Appendix A gives an illustration of this method for setting-identification for the first four settings.<sup>1</sup> Because this case study attempts to understand issue-

framing, the direction of analysis is now reversed. A further interrogation of the settings based on the theatre metaphor is done to explain why these action and antiprograms are stated as they are.

The data used for this case study are derived from archival records, policy documents, evaluation reports, and, most importantly, minutes of meetings. Archives of newspaper articles were effective starting points, because popular media spent a lot of attention to innovative activity in public transport. By means of a snowball method references to meetings, policy documents, project proposals, and other sources of information are followed. For scrutiny of settings this study makes use of thought experiments by consequently asking: what are in this particular setting the access conditions, the attributes, and the audience?

## 5.2 Manoeuvring through the institutional landscape

The case starts in 1999, when a former civil servant and his American companion negotiated with the provincial authorities of Drenthe to provide a transport service with small buses for elderly and disabled in Hoozevee. Those days transport company Arriva provided regular public bus transport within the town, as it did in and between nearly all regions in the north. In addition, a railway operated by the Dutch Railways connects the town to the cities of Groningen and Zwolle. The transport system which the two entrepreneurs had in mind was supposed to serve the 'bottom of the market', thus complementing regular public transport.<sup>2</sup> They proposed a quite innovative service concept for a number of reasons.<sup>3</sup> In proportion with the town size and target group, the buses were just large enough to transport eight passengers. Instead of at designated bus stops, the buses stopped for anyone on the route who raised his hand. It was even possible to pick up (disabled) people from their homes if that would not disrupt the time schedule. Panels of users determined the principle routes, time schedules, and tariffs. These features amounted to a highly flexible and demand-driven system. In sum: a very attractive concept for small towns. With a permit and loan from the province of Drenthe and subsidies from the Ministry of Traffic & Transport the two entrepreneurs set up an experiment to develop the system. For the exploitation of the system they founded a company called Millennium Transport International (MTI), a company that employed merely drivers besides its two directors. The company's ambitious action program was to "introduce the transport concept in ten regions or areas in the Netherlands."<sup>4</sup> The case comprises the politics involved in the realisation of part of this action program: providing *regular* public transport in and between Hoozevee and Meppel.

The realisation of MTI's action program depended on its manoeuvring through the institutional landscape composed of a variety of political settings. The company had to encounter action programs of other actors participating in these settings, like authorities, other transport companies, drivers, and consumer organisations. In the course of the project MTI's action program was challenged and transformed in fifteen settings. Figure 5.1 depicts these settings as well as the issues that are displaced. It will become clear that there were three major issues, each represented by one chain of displacements. In the analysis (section 5.3), these chains are followed in order to explore the effects of settings on the reframing of the issues. The next sections first describe the characteristics of settings, the frame of the setting, and the reframed issues (in terms action programs) in chronological order. A chronological order is preferred to avoid



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Figure 5.1 Displacements between fifteen settings<sup>5</sup>

too many cross-references, when for example developments in one chain triggered or delayed displacements in the other chain. The figure can be used as a map of the case.

### 5.2.1 Structures for negotiation (about Arriva's tender)

While MTI started up the experiment for elderly in Hoogeveen, provincial authorities put the regular public bus transport network out to tender for the first time. The forthcoming

Table 5.1 Setting 1 – Structures for negotiation (about Arriva's tender)

Displacement	Mandate from Provincial States for deputy: negotiate good contract with Arriva	
• Access conditions	Three authorities decided to invite Arriva	
• Attributes	Offers, letters, phone calls, Transport Act 2000, program of requirements, mandate from Provincial States, Ongoing contract with Groningen-city, tender	
• Audience	Constituencies of negotiators would only read the 'reviews of the performance'; Provincial States wanted realisation of program of requirements, Arriva's shareholders wanted profits	
Frame	Negotiations reduced to bargaining about costs, because attributes strongly empowered Arriva and Arriva's audience want profits	
Issue	<i>Action program (deputies)</i> Authorities wanted to continue Arriva's contract against best costs	<i>Antiprogram (Arriva)</i> Arriva refused innovation costs
Displacement	With regard to Drenthe: deadlock urged negotiating deputy to return mandate to Provincial States	

Passenger Transport Act 2000 would oblige provincial authorities to invite tenders for its public transport and Drenthe was one of the first to anticipate this obligation. But due to historical circumstances, this first invitation was only open for one provider: Arriva. The province wanted to invite together with the neighbouring province of Groningen and the city of Groningen in order to establish an optimally connected transport network (Drenthe's action program), but because Groningen-city had a continuing contract with Arriva, the three authorities exclusively negotiated with this 'monopolist'.<sup>6</sup> Yet, Arriva may have been too confident about its position when it disagreed with one phrase in the program of requirements: "Arriva is expected to realise a substantial decrease of costs in the next four years. The savings should be used for improvement measures."<sup>7</sup> Arriva wanted to meet all requirements except investing in innovation.<sup>8</sup>

The first setting in this case comprised the structures in which these negotiations took place. Its characteristics and the consequences for issue-framing are presented in table 5.1.

### 5.2.2 Provincial States (part 1)

Facing Arriva's standpoint Drenthe's deputy returned to Provincial States. Within Provincial States, the second setting (table 5.2), several members recalled the small company that developed a new user driven transport service concept for elderly in Hoogeveen and suggested a more prominent role for MTI in regular public transport.<sup>9</sup> State members received the initiative with great enthusiasm. They did not think new entrants to the market should have to wait for four years, just because Arriva needed this time for its quality improvement. And they found that liberalization is a farce with Arriva's exclusive candidacy. MTI was one of those rare transport companies willing to exploit the thin lines of transport networks: the lines that are far from profitable to operate with standard buses. State members showed growing appreciation for this willingness.<sup>10</sup> They had raised the issue whether the focus on costs would not go at the expense of the less profitable thin lines in rural areas and the interests of elderly and disabled. They considered a social system of transport more important than increased efficiency. Moreover, a positive evaluation report commissioned by the province recommended to scale up the Hoogeveen experiment in order to assess its viability.<sup>11</sup>

Table 5.2 Setting 2 – Provincial States

Displacement	With regard to Drenthe: deadlock urged negotiating deputy to return mandate to Provincial States	
• Access conditions	Board of deputies and 51 elected State Members	
• Attributes	Two repertoires of ideologically inspired arguments (left and right) that are traditionally employed in this setting, deadlock, a positively evaluated MTI project	
• Audience	Drenthe's electorate votes every four years: expected left wing to be engaged with good public transport	
Frame	Exploitation of network of thin lines became <i>relevant</i> argument due to compatibility with prevailing kind of attributes and with expectations of audience; and became <i>strong</i> argument due to specific attributes (evaluation) empowering MTI advocates in Provincial States	
Issue	<i>Action program (deputies)</i> Deputy wanted to continue Arriva's contract against best costs	<i>Antiprogram (State members)</i> Consider alternative providers + MTI experiment + MTI evaluation report + distinction between thick and thin lines
Displacement	New mandate for deputy: negotiate inclusion of MTI	

### 5.2.3 Structures for negotiation (about MTI's inclusion in Arriva's tender)

As a result of the discussions in Provincial States, the tender invitation could not be redone without somehow including MTI. The Board of Provincial Deputies decided to limit the tender period to two years and, more important, proposed a distinction between a 'connecting network' and a 'disclosing network' in order to negotiate with more parties about parts of the whole.<sup>12</sup> MTI could operate three parts: the province granted regular public transport in the towns of Hoozevee and Meppel and in the so-called InterHoMe region (in between the towns) to MTI, the 'big' winner of the renegotiations. What started as an experiment at the 'bottom of the

Table 5.3 Setting 3 – Structures for negotiation (about MTI's inclusion)

Displacement	New mandate for deputy: negotiate inclusion of MTI	
• Access conditions	Three authorities decided to invite Arriva <i>and</i> MTI	
• Attributes	Offers, letters, phone calls, Transport Act 2000, revised program of requirements, revised mandate from Provincial States, tender, ongoing contract	
• Audience	Constituencies of negotiators would read the 'reviews of the performance'	
Framing	Same as negotiations with Arriva (bargaining quality and costs), but now with less emphasis on Arriva's interests. New/revised attributes and alliance with MTI empowered province. Levelled positions urged for compromise.	
Issue	<i>Action program (all)</i> Redesigned tender + formal distinction between disclosing and connecting + compromised contract with Arriva + subcontract for MTI	<i>Antiprogram</i> -
Displacement	Compromise due to levelled positions, contracts signed. Supervision delegated to Development Group	

market', quite remote from the provincial responsibility for regular public transport, suddenly became an ally of the province in their negotiations with Arriva. When the company agreed to execute the three projects as Arriva's subcontractor, its action program (to provide regular public transport in more than one town) started to take off.

Table 5.3 explains issue-framing due to displacement to the setting where the renegotiations took place.

#### 5.2.4 Development Group (part 1)

This action program, however, was to be realised in conjunction with programs and interests of actors in the fourth setting: the supervising Development Group Southwest Drenthe, founded and chaired by the province to look after the continuation of the MTI project among other things (table 5.4). The group held two-weekly meetings. Participants were representatives of the province and the municipalities in the region, as well as someone from traveller organization ROVER, who represented a platform of consumer organizations. Furthermore, the participation of both Arriva (board and drivers) and MTI reflected constructive intentions: the group could directly allocate tasks to those actually serving the region. The most important issue the Development Group had to decide about was the concrete transport service plan as proposed by MTI.<sup>13</sup> In MTI's philosophy users determined the routes: the proposal was based on public gatherings and questionnaires. Yet, MTI's board had to compromise many more desires and fit them into their cost-benefit calculations. Municipalities expressed desires about routes and considerations about municipal policies (like 30 km/h zones).<sup>14</sup> The group insisted on good connections with trains and with the Arriva lines to other parts of the province.<sup>15</sup> It drew attention to the peak loads at opening and closing hours of schools and factories, which was easily neglected in MTI's user research.<sup>16</sup> For these peaks, MTI had to make arrangements

Table 5.4 Setting 4 – Development Group

Displacement	Provincial States delegated supervision to Development Group	
• Access conditions	Province (founder/chair) invited municipalities of Meppel and Hoogeveen, representative of platform of consumer organizations, Arriva, MTI.	
• Attributes	Distributed knowledge about demand derived from existing services, user research, and from participants' experience and desires.	
• Audience	No audience present. Constituencies (like Provincial States) are at a distance. Interests of the participants determined the agenda.	
Frame	Strong focus on final service characteristics (like routes, travel information, and equipment). Due to lack of audience the interests of stakeholders determined the agenda. Due to the composition of the group, a client/user perspective prevailed.	
Issue	<i>Action program (MTI)</i> MTI proposal + knowledge derived from existing services + user research	<i>Antiprogram (others)</i> Recommendations about routes, connections, frequencies, travel information and equipment
	Same + adjustments based on recommendations	-
Displacement	Arriva's council of employees was to be consulted by the Development Group as part of the procedure because of detachment contract.	

with Arriva about back-up equipment and drivers. In addition, the two companies also had to agree upon the transition of personnel and the division of earnings from the National Tariff System.<sup>17</sup> Although many of the costs and benefits were highly uncertain, MTI had to fix routes, time schedules, required equipment and personnel, and season-ticket tariffs before the concept could definitely be approved. The Development Group gave MTI the opportunity to deal with this complex situation within a relatively short period of time. The company presented a draft, included comments from the group, and finalized a definitive plan just in time.<sup>18</sup>

### 5.2.5 Arriva's council of employees

The Development Group framed the transport plan from a client perspective. This, however, bypassed the perspective of drivers: signs of possible resistance among drivers were easily ignored in the Development Group.<sup>19</sup> The provincial chair said that persuasion of employees was a task for Arriva's board, not for the group.<sup>20</sup> The group underemphasized the resistance among Arriva's drivers and insufficiently realised that the council of employees had a formal mandate to disapprove the whole transport plan.<sup>21</sup> The forthcoming Passenger Transport Act 2000 would arrange the transition of personnel if a new company wins a tender in order to protect drivers against unemployment. Because the law had not been enforced yet, the involved companies voluntarily arranged the transition. MTI hired personnel from Arriva, provided that the former would apply all labour conditions as formalized in the Collective Labour Agreement (CLA), a document negotiated between employers and labour unions.<sup>22</sup> As part of the procedure Arriva's council of employees (which consults the board of Arriva about decisions that possibly affect employees) had to approve the arrangement.<sup>23</sup>

However, the council disapproved the proposed contract, because MTT's intentions did not match formal requirements.<sup>24</sup> MTI appeared to give a slightly different interpretation of some aspects of the public transport CLA: drivers did not get two breaks of 21 minutes every 4½ hour, but four times 13 minutes in accordance with MTT's time schedule and similar to its own employees.<sup>25</sup> To its own employees the company applied the taxi-CLA, because they drove

Table 5.5 Setting 5 – Arriva's council of employees

Displacement	Arriva's council of employees was to be consulted by the Development Group as part of the procedure because of detachment contract.	
• Access conditions	Elected employees, some member of labour union	
• Attributes	Transport plan, formal possibility to veto detachment contract, public transport CLA, consult from labour unions	
• Audience	Sceptical employees, Arriva's board, Development Group	
Frame	MTI project and time schedules reframed as breach of CLA. Disapproval reflects scepticism among audience	
Issue	<i>Action program (MTI)</i> (Adjusted) transport plan as agreed by the Development Group	<i>Antiprogram (drivers)</i> Council's disapproval + resistance among Arriva drivers + veto + support from labour unions + support from Arriva's board
Displacement	MTI remained indifferent and province did not take a stance. The latter tried to hush up the conflict as time proceeded and invited transport companies to private meetings. Labour union CNV started a legal suit.	

the small 8p buses and did not have to possess a driving licence for buses. However, Arriva's council of employees rejected this interpretation as far as the hired drivers were concerned. This standpoint resulted in a deadlock between diverging interests, especially when MTI stuck with its own interpretation for financial reasons and Arriva's board took sides with its employees, because it thought MTI competed unjustly on labour conditions.<sup>26</sup> What is more, labour unions consulted by the council stated that compliance with the public transport CLA should not only apply to the hired drivers, but also to MTI's own employees, because MTI now provided regular public transport.<sup>27</sup> Labour union CNV started a legal suit (see table 5.5).

### 5.2.6 Private meetings (province, Arriva and MTI)

The start of the tender had meanwhile been postponed at least half a year.<sup>28</sup> Initially, the province had taken a background position and conceived of the deadlock as a conflict between two private parties. However, when the parties failed to agree, provincial officials intervened and succeeded to persuade MTI to comply with the CLA, partly because further delay would really harm the company's financial situation. MTI included 21 minutes break times, but only in the schedules of those lines operated by Arriva employees.<sup>29</sup> The province decided to tolerate this situation.<sup>30</sup> Perhaps officials or the Deputy should have acted more decisive: either force MTI to comply or stop the project. That decision, however, would have been a decision for Provincial States and, more striking, a shame for the initiators and for the very idea of liberalization. In the current setting, the province tried to settle the conflict silently by excluding as many actors and aspects as necessary (table 5.6). The boards of the two companies indeed reached agreement, although labour unions started preparing legal procedures.<sup>31</sup>

### 5.2.7 MTI's office (strikes)

When the issue displaced to the actual work floor, the detached employees themselves got involved. In cooperation with Arriva's schedule makers MTI adjusted the time schedules to the 21-minutes break time requirement. Drivers had to be fit into the schedules in hectic

Table 5.6 Setting 6 – Private meetings (province, Arriva and MTI)

Displacement	The province tried to hush up the conflict as time proceeded and invited transport companies to private meetings.	
• Access conditions	Provincial officials approach directors of MTI and Arriva	
• Attributes	Arguments about the costs of delay, reputations of initiators	
• Audience	No audience present, mediation took place behind the scenes	
Frame	The setting lacked an audience, so that actors' interests were all that mattered. Neither Arriva's employees nor labour unions had access (their antiprograms were bracketed). Therefore, by persuasion of Arriva's board, the CLA conflict could be removed from the centre of the stage.	
Issue	<i>Action program (MTI)</i> Proposal as agreed in Development Group + provincial toleration + Arriva's board gives up protest	<i>Antiprogram (drivers)</i> (Angry council of employees + angry labour unions + resistance among drivers)
Displacement	Entrance of implementation phase, displacement to the office of the schedule makers	

Table 5.7 Setting 7 – MTI's office (strikes)

Displacement	Entrance of implementation phase, displacement to the office of schedule makers	
• Access conditions	MTI's schedule makers, Protesting drivers	
• Attributes	Shared dissatisfaction, support from labour unions, CLA, labour rights	
• Audience	Boards of MTI and Arriva	
Frame	CLA conflict could return at the centre of the stage, now as sickness generator, because drivers got empowered to strike due to motivational and legitimising attributes	
Issue	<i>Action program (MTI)</i>	<i>Antiprogram (drivers)</i>
	Concrete driving schedules	Driver dissatisfaction + strike
	Revised schedules	Still dissatisfaction + another strike + epidemic sickness
Displacement	Unpaid bills for sick drivers was problem for Arriva and MTI who started correspondence about this issue	

circumstances.<sup>32</sup> The postponed start date neared and MTI's schedule makers had neither experience nor proper sight on the contents of the public transport CLA. MTI cancelled a planned information gathering for the selected drivers because of time constraints. Drivers faced the outcomes of schedule making work from which they had been excluded, although the feasibility of these outcomes depended on their agreement. In this stage they raised their voice. First, with a strike they expressed dissatisfaction with ever changing driving schedules by incompetent schedule makers. Second, with another strike they objected to simplistic revision of the schedules (lines would depart *and* arrive nine minutes late, causing passenger to complain about missed train connections). Third, over time more and more drivers noticed stress and sickness. Out of twelve initially hired drivers, only two were still on the bus in the second year.<sup>33</sup>

Table 5.7 describes the setting of the strikes and explains issue-framing due to the characteristics of this setting.

### 5.2.8 Correspondence MTI/Arriva

Instead of giving in, MTI tried to displace the issue. In a letter to Arriva, MTI accused 'sick' drivers of work refusal, and therefore it did not want to pay the bills to Arriva. Arriva, however, ascribed the high illness-rate to bad management by MTI and reported so to the Development Group.<sup>34</sup> The province's official asked MTI and Arriva to solve the issue bilaterally, which Arriva understood as permission to initiate a legal procedure that should attribute responsibility on this issue.<sup>35</sup> This step made further cooperation between Arriva and MTI impossible and the province concluded that the only remaining solution was to discontinue the detachment arrangement. The tender ended by the end of the year anyway.<sup>36</sup>

The correspondence between MTI and Arriva is considered the eighth setting (table 5.8).

### 5.2.9 User panel

User involvement was claimed to be a main feature of the MTI concept, and the concept's appeal to authorities originated partly in this feature. The company announced to organize user panels to decide by majority about operational issues like routes, frequencies, and tariffs.<sup>37</sup> As soon as the Hooerveen experiment had been approved, the company recruited a large number

Table 5.8 Setting 8 – Correspondence MTI/Arriva

Displacement	Unpaid bills for sick drivers was problem for Arriva and MTI who started correspondence about this issue	
• Access conditions	MTI and Arriva accused each other	
• Attributes	Detachment contract, CLA, formal letters	
• Audience	Province/Development Group, audience was not very interested	
Frame	Interpretation of driver sickness and ascription of costs again divided MTI and Arriva	
Issue	<i>Action program (MTI)</i>	<i>Antiprogram (Arriva)</i>
	Sick drivers + “work refusal” + breach of detachment contract	Sick drivers + “bad management” + unpaid bills + labour unions + CLA
Displacement	Deadlock: cooperation had become impossible. New tender was only solution. Displacement to Provincial States as soon as tender period ends.	

of participants for the user panel in canteens of old people’s homes.<sup>38</sup> The panel held regular meetings every month. This user panel would remain the only one in the case. At the time MTI had been contracted for public transport in the InterHoMe region, it first promised to install additional panels and later to aggregate the Hoogeveen panel into one panel for the whole region.<sup>39</sup> However, this panel never came about despite pressure from within the Development Group. The small MTI board prioritised solving CLA troubles over organizing the panel.<sup>40</sup>

The user panel is an exceptional setting in this case, because it remained isolated in the institutional landscape. Issues neither moved to nor moved from the user panel, so one would not trace this setting by following the issues. Yet, because its existence featured so prominently in any presentation of the company (in media, to authorities, in subsidy requests), it seems worthwhile to look at the discussions that took place within the panel. Particularly interesting are the consequences of its isolation for the democratic quality of its politics.

The Hoogeveen user panel in its early stage highly identified with the MTI management. For example, MTI made a lot of announcements, which the panel hardly disputed.<sup>41</sup> Applause among the participants after MTI reported about the hundredth subscriber underscored this ‘we’ feeling.<sup>42</sup> Nevertheless, the user panel did achieve important translations of MTI’s action program. On proposal of the panel MTI lengthened, shortened, diverted and combined routes; it instructed drivers to stop as near to the sidewalk as possible; it installed grips in the buses for better accessibility and a light bulb at the front window for better visibility in dark; and it provided relevant public buildings with time schedules.<sup>43</sup>

Right when the panel discovered the opportunities of participation, the director of MTI did not show up on a number of subsequent meetings and the panel started fearing not being taken seriously enough.<sup>44</sup> Ever more, the panel meetings showed a confrontation between the company’s perspective and the user perspective. A number of recurring issues were not settled but by overruling the panel. First, MTI transported a lot of employees of social workplace Alescon. This caused capacity shortage around 4 pm, even after MTI used a larger bus. An extra bus would have been required, but the company stated that it could not afford hiring an extra driver for this bus.<sup>45</sup> Second, MTI rejected a request from users to divert one route to the Carstenstraat and the cemetery. Unlike the panel, MTI believed that there was not enough demand at these locations.<sup>46</sup> Third, elderly, the original target group, complained about a lack of service by drivers and the company, especially in peak hours. The panel repeatedly issued the possibility to take walking aids

Table 5.9 Setting 9 – User panel

Displacement	User panel was part of contract between MTI, Arriva and province	
• Access conditions	Recruited season-ticket holders, MTI management	
• Attributes	Information from MTI management, users' own experiences, financial responsibility, decision-making authority, access to Development Group	
• Audience	No audience present. The outcomes were reported to the Development Group, but the group treated them as if they were MTI's decisions, it merely held MTI accountable for operational issues	
Frame	Due to the absence of an audience, the framing of issues merely depended on the interests of the participants. The project was therefore framed in terms of service characteristics (routes, connections and additional service to elderly). In conflicts MTI was clearly better empowered: it possessed the decisive attributes and the (financial) requirements imposed by the Development Group and the Province disallowed MTI to delegate too much decision-making power to the panel.	
Issue	<i>Action program (users)</i>	<i>Antiprogram (MTI)</i>
	"Routes do not meet demand optimally" + demand estimations + own experience	Some routes diverted or combined
	"Elderly have difficulty to enter buses" + examples + suggestions	... buses stop near sidewalk + grips installed
	"Buses hardly visible in dark" + suggestions	... light bulbs installed
	"Lack of information" + suggestions	... public buildings provided with schedules
	"Capacity shortage at 4pm" + Alescon transport + passengers refused	"Cannot afford extra bus and driver"
	Request to include Carstenstraat and cemetery + demand estimation based on own experience	"There is not enough demand"
	Elderly want to take walking aids on board	MTI advises elderly to avoid peak hours
	30% tariff increase is too much	"It cannot be changed anymore"
Displacement	Each conflict was settled within the user panel (closure)	

on the bus, which required some support by drivers. MTI's simply advised elderly to avoid peak hours.<sup>47</sup> Fourth, at the moment MTI started operating in Meppel and the InterHoMe region, it announced to level all tariffs. This implied a price increase of about 30% for a Hoogeveen season ticket, which elicited a lot of resistance in the panel. But MTI closed the discussion: "It cannot be changed anymore. Passengers who often make use of public transport in Hoogeveen will still profit from a season-ticket."<sup>48</sup> To sum up, the panel indeed achieved some victories, but it lacked power to resist being overruled on the controversial issues; merely 'innocent' issues were open for discussion.

Table 5.9 presents the characteristics of the user panel and their role in issue-framing. Note the large chain of translations without any displacement taking place.

### 5.2.10 Development Group (part 2)

Meanwhile another issue had risen in the Development Group, which would seriously threaten MTI's chances in the next tender. The agenda of the group showed a number of small issues that would not have been mentioned here if they had not added up to a fast growing action list. MTI postponed or did not execute its tasks and after time the list turned into an issue itself. Most of the actions had to do with travel information and communication.<sup>49</sup> For example:

- The national internet service for travel information should get the MTI data.
- There should be more information along the routes.
- Drivers should be able to communicate in case a back-up bus meets with peak demand.
- It should be clear how buses deviate from the routes in case of road works.
- Drivers should be able to communicate with the office otherwise than by mobile phones.
- MTI should make clear how it deals with complaints.
- MTI should organize a user panel for the InterHoMe region.
- MTI should develop a communication plan.
- MTI should sell tickets in the bus and not let people without a pre-paid ticket travel for free.

The province presented an overview to the Development Group, which summarized thirty-eight not (sufficiently) executed tasks from five meetings, most of them allocated to MTI. Follow-ups of these tasks remained unclear as the director of MTI mostly happened to be excused. He was late once, replaced by subordinates twice, and just absent on the last meeting.<sup>50</sup> The conclusion of the overview clearly reflected the group's annoyance:<sup>51</sup>

“Unfortunately, MTI time and again shows its unprofessional side in spite of guidance by the province. There is a number of reasons, like a lack of experience in public transport, the small board of MTI, the many miscommunications within the company, and the

Table 5.10 Setting 10 – Development Group

Displacement	No displacement, distrust grew within Development Group	
• Access conditions	MTI, director excused, Province (founder/chair), municipalities of Meppel and Hoogeveen, representative of platform of consumer organizations, Arriva	
• Attributes	Decreasing trust, Minutes of previous meetings, shared dissatisfaction	
• Audience	No audience present. Constituencies (like Provincial States) are at a distance. Interests of the participants determined the agenda.	
Frame	MTI project as innovative in principle though threatened by bad managed despite provincial steering. MTI's troubles in other settings were bracketed, because they were not valid excuses for the failing performance in this setting.	
Issue	<i>Action program (MTI)</i> Making schedules + dealing with strikes + small staff	<i>Antiprogram (others)</i> Trust crisis + many other tasks waiting for execution + stakeholders annoyed + MTI-director excused at meetings
Displacement	At top of trust crisis provincial officials invited MTI for a 'good conversation' about the action list	

non-attendance of meetings. There is a strong hierarchy at MTI, where the top decides what happens. The other parties in the development group unanimously find MTI unprofessional and there is explicit doubt whether MTI is capable of operating public transport services at all.”

Table 5.10 deals with the characteristics of the Development Group regarding this issue.

### 5.2.11 Private meeting (province, MTI)

Whereas MTI already argued with Arriva about driver sickness, it now also faced an annoyed Development Group. If MTI were to survive in the next tender, then it needed renewed support from at least the province. A first step towards rehabilitation was a ‘clarifying conversation’ in which the deputy of the province reassured the board of MTI that the company should work on the action list.<sup>52</sup> The province was authorised to commission public transport, on which MTI’s existence depended. If MTI wanted to be involved in the next tender, then it now had to obey the province. The province in turn wanted the project to become a success. The action list, an initiative of provincial officials, already reduced the variety of issues to one single issue: MTI’s capability to operate a public transport system. In the conversation, the two actors made arrangements about this most urgent issue without interferences and irritations of the other actors (table 5.11). As a result, the action list returned on the agenda of subsequent meetings and MTI reported task by task about the state of affairs. In this refreshed atmosphere the Development Group did not raise new issues and the most controversial ones gradually disappeared from the agenda.<sup>53</sup>

### 5.2.12 Office of evaluators

A second step towards rehabilitations of MTI and renewed support from the province was an evaluation of the project, which did not hold MTI primarily accountable for the current conflicts and tensions. The province had commissioned the evaluation, but rather than evaluating MTI’s performance the evaluation aimed at lessons for the province regarding forthcoming tenders.<sup>54</sup> The evaluators mentioned a lot of problems, miscommunications and ignorance, but they only drew conclusions about how the province should have prevented or solved these problems.

Table 5.11 Setting 11 – Private meeting of province and MTI

Displacement	At top of trust crisis provincial officials invited MTI for a ‘good conversation’ about the action list	
• Access conditions	Provincial officials invited MTI	
• Attributes	Province was authorized to decide about next tender. MTI was eager to tender.	
• Audience	No audience, only results are reported to Development Group	
Frame	MTI project is innovative and feasible if management improves; improvements are discussed in relative silence. Audience is excluded to bracket annoyance and distrust for the moment	
Issue	<i>Action program (MTI &amp; province)</i>	<i>Antiprogram (Trust crisis)</i>
	Arrangements about how to clean up the action list + renewed alliance	
Displacement	MTI promised to clean up action list (closure). Results would become attribute in selection of tenders by Provincial States.	

Table 5.12 Setting 12 – Office of evaluators

Displacement	Because current tender period ended the province commissioned an evaluation	
• Access conditions	Diepens & Okkema was commissioned to evaluate MTI project	
• Attributes	Instruction to focus on policy lessons for next tender, interviews with stakeholders, minutes, policy documents	
• Audience	Provincial States	
Frame	MTI project as innovative though badly managed due to bad steering	
Issue	<i>Action program (MTI &amp; province)</i> Policy lessons + excused MTI	<i>Antiprogram</i> (Trust crisis)
Displacement	MTI excused (closure). Results would become attribute in selection of tenders by Provincial States	

For example, they ascribed the growing action list to a lack of steering by the province: “In the implementation phase the province insufficiently controls the execution of arrangements between Arriva and MTI [...] and MTI gets too much freedom in (not) living up with appointments” (p.28). It concluded that the project was indeed innovative and feasible and would have been better managed if the province had played a better part. This focus on policy lessons offered valuable input for the new tender invitation, but it also neutralized the annoyance and ‘excused’ MTI for its incapacity. Table 5.12 describes the setting where the evaluation was done.

### 5.2.13 Provincial States (part 2)

The provincial Board of Deputies prepared the new tender invitation and Provincial States held the Board accountable for the adequacy of decisions. Thus, because the Board wanted to continue with MTI it needed to convince Provincial States of the capability of MTI to operate a public transport system (table 5.13). The Board indeed believed that public transport in rural areas could benefit from experiments like these.<sup>55</sup> The fact that the company was suited by labour union CNV for not complying with the CLA was countered with the argument that politicians should not occupy the position of judges. Waiting for a verdict the Board considered MTI innocent.<sup>56</sup> What is more, without much discussion it had prepared a tender invitation that clearly favoured MTI. The Board had invited three transport companies to compete for the contract, but the competitors did not have a fair chance. The program of requirements reinforced the existing situation (except user panel): the winner should drive the same lines with the same time schedules and kind of equipment as MTI had been doing for the last two years. The program even required the absence of regular bus stops (except for unsafe locations), which was one of the specific features of the MTI concept.<sup>57</sup> Moreover, the contract would just last for one and half year, because Drenthe and its southern neighbour Overijssel had already agreed to invite tenders for an extension of the region around July 2005.<sup>58</sup> This short period was of little attraction to newcomers. While the requirements obviously favoured MTI, at the end of the selection procedure the company indeed appeared to have made the most economic tender and was selected on that ground.<sup>59</sup>

Table 5.13 Setting 13 – Provincial States

Displacement	Cooperation Arriva/MTI had become impossible. New tender was only solution. Displacement to Provincial States as soon as tender period ends.	
• Access conditions	Board of deputies and 51 elected State members	
• Attributes	Results from 'good conversation', 'excusing' project evaluation, program of requirements, legal suit against MTI	
• Audience	Audience (electorate that votes every four years) is not very interested, there was hardly any public interest in the tender negotiations	
Frame	MTI was still seen as a solution for many problems (see Provincial States, part 1) and attributes supported this perception. Developments on other settings did not affect the opinion of State Members much. Bad management is no issue. MTI being involved in a legal suit worries some members.	
Issue	<i>Action program (provincial deputies)</i> MTI is invited to offer + biased program of requirements  "MTI is not guilty until there is a verdict" + most economic offer	<i>Antiprograms (State members)</i> MTI is involved in legal suit  Two other offers + companies not really interested
Displacement	Selection based on costs: MTI wins (closure)	

#### 5.2.14 Court

For the new invitation MTI again prepared a tender, though without need to hire drivers this time. Simultaneously it developed a CLA of its own, adjusted to the flexibility of its transport concept.<sup>60</sup> But while the company indeed succeeded to win the tender,<sup>61</sup> its CLA would be disapproved in court (table 5.14). Labour union CNV had sued MTI (see 5.2.5) in spite of the fear among a group of drivers that a verdict would cause MTI's bankruptcy. The group even threatened with legal procedures against the unions. CNV continued nevertheless: "If MTI ceases to exist, another company will come and need drivers".<sup>62</sup> In court, however, private interests, like the standpoint that the changeover from a taxi-CLA (or MTI's own CLA) to a

Table 5.14 Setting 14 – Court

Displacement	Labour union CNV started a legal suit	
• Access conditions	Judge, MTI (defendant), CNV (challenger)	
• Attributes	MTI-concept requires flexibility, taxi CLA, regular public transport contract, public transport CLA	
• Audience	Other stakeholders	
Frame	The entire MTI project was reduced to one aspect of it: labour conditions. Arguments referring to other aspects of the project did not count because such attributes do not belong in this setting.	
Issue	<i>Action program (MTI)</i> Flexible application of CLA + "exceptional situation"	<i>Antiprogram (CNV)</i> MTI should fully comply with public transport CLA
Displacement	CNV was judged right. MTI followed another route: starting a public debate about the adequacy of the current CLA	

public transport CLA would cause MTT's bankruptcy, did not count; neither did the opinion at MTI that the 'entirely obsolete regulation and a very rigid CLA' frustrate necessary innovation in public transport.<sup>63</sup> The verdict was merely based on laws. The judge concluded that the CLA carried more weight than MTT's exceptional situation and obliged the company to comply with all conditions of the public transport CLA, meaning that it should give up developing an alternative CLA. The verdict included obligatory 21 minutes breaks each four and a half hour, an extra payment for weekend work, and days off instead of shorter workweeks.<sup>64</sup>

### 5.2.15 A public debate

Although MTI won the tender competition, it lost the legal suit. Time schedules had to be revised in order to integrate the 21 minutes breaks. With regard to weekend work: MTI either had to increase rewards or should skip weekend services. Because weekend services had always been the least beneficial ones it chose to do the latter. But due to that decision, state subsidies also decreased.<sup>65</sup> For these reasons, MTI had cut down expenses, fired 13 out of 70 employees, and blamed the labour unions for that.<sup>66</sup> By blaming labour unions, the director of MTI tried to trigger a public debate about the inadequacy of the current regulatory regime (table 5.15).

Media are often used for lobbies towards decision-making structures. With public attention MTI succeeded to put its case on the agenda of another setting: the meeting between the employer's association and labour unions. In this meeting CLA's are negotiated.<sup>67</sup> MTI did not participate itself, but because other transport companies faced similar problems in consequence of the Passenger Transport Act 2000 and the subsequent changes of the economic structure of the sector, employers and unions agreed to modernise the CLA:<sup>68</sup>

"Particularly issues like flexibility, customer orientation, and cost control should be translated to organization structure, working processes, and desired culture. This raises the question whether the current CLA still suit external developments."

By the end of 2003 the parties commissioned a working group to advise about this issue. MTT's case would surely become part of the rethinking. Meanwhile, the company itself went bankrupt

Table 5.15 Setting 15 – Public debate (newspapers)

Displacement	MTI started a public debate about the adequacy of the current CLA	
• Access conditions	Access depended on whether someone's opinion is of enough interest	
• Attributes	Controversial case, free speech	
• Audience	Everybody who is interested, CLA negotiators were a particularly important audience	
Frame	Access conditions and attributes enabled MTI to frame the CLA as an innovation barrier instead of labour protection	
Issue	<i>Action program (MTI)</i> CLA + "rigidity and obsolesce" + MTI's innovative concept + verdict + collective dismissal	<i>Antiprogram</i> -
Displacement	MTI's case appeared on the agenda of the meeting between the employer's association and labour unions, where the next CLA was negotiated.	

due to circumstances in another project: the province of Brabant cut down subsidies because the company did not meet its objectives in the town of Oss and MTT could not pay the rent of buses anymore.<sup>69</sup>

## 5.3 Conclusions

The analysis shows that decision-making about the project occurred in many different settings in a complex institutional landscape. Issues were not settled until they displaced between various settings. This section addresses the research questions formulated in the introduction. First, conclusions are drawn about how the characteristics of settings amount to the framing of issues (5.3.1). Next, different types of displacements are discerned together with the main conditions underlying these displacements (5.3.2). Finally, the contribution of these displacements to stakeholder participation, empowerment and impact is examined (5.3.3).

### 5.3.1 The role of settings in the reframing of issues

An issue can be defined in terms of conflicting antiprogram. These action- and antiprograms are supported by actors and empowered by political means like arrangements, contracts, rights, knowledge, alliances, public support, etc. The assumption that settings are actively present involves the proposition that actors have or do not have access to these settings, that (beneficial) attributes are or are not available to them, and that audiences do or do not influence the course of action. These conditions amount to a certain framing of issues. Tables 1 to 3 in appendix B characterize all settings in terms of the theatre stage metaphor and illustrate how they frame and reframe the issues at stake in the project. In the analysis, these settings are presented chronologically. In the tables, settings are ordered according to three main issues that can be discerned in the case: mismatches between the requirements to and the quality level of the service, labour conditions in MTT's plan, and service provision in practice (recall figure 5.1).

The case study shows a clear relation between the characteristics of settings and the framing of issues. For example, a strong attribute empowering Arriva in its negotiations with the authorities was its ongoing contract with Groningen-city. The audience of these negotiations consisted of the constituencies of the different negotiators, including Arriva's shareholders. Arriva, aware of its privileged position, had to get a profitable deal to satisfy its shareholders. This explains why the focus was mainly on costs and why one paragraph in the program of requirements could cause a paralysing deadlock.

Another example is Provincial States, where the issue displaced to and where it was reframed in a completely different way. Relevant attributes in Provincial States were ideologically inspired arguments. Moreover, (part of) the audience expected provincial authorities to organize good public transport, especially for those who depend on public transport for their mobility. Due to these circumstances, MTT's willingness to exploit the thin lines of the transport network became a strong and ultimately decisive argument in the redefinition of the mandate for negotiators.

A third example of the impact of the characteristics of a specific setting on the framing of issues is the Development Group, which was a typical solution oriented stakeholder meeting due to the absence of a general audience. The province defined the access conditions. The setting reflected the main interest of the province: it was arranged to facilitate the realisation of MTT's action program. This resulted in a constructive atmosphere, though one that did not tolerate

conflicts and internal tensions. The provincial chair deliberately tried to exclude the threat of driver resistance and the issue of labour conditions.

The characteristics of settings affect the way issues are framed. Access conditions define *who is allowed to enter* a particular setting in order to find support (allies and attributes) for his action program. Attributes (knowledge, contracts, arguments, trust, decision-making authority) are *those supports that are valid* in a particular kind of setting. Attributes may strengthen one action program (arguments, CLA, veto right) or link different action programs together (trust, shared dissatisfaction, programs of requirements, complementary knowledge); in both cases they shift the balance of power. Audiences often *decide upon their representatives' fate and reputation*.<sup>70</sup> Audiences are those constituencies that are represented by participants and that pass judgment on the performance of participants. The more directly and critically they are involved, the more likely do their expectations and interests frame the issue. The other way around, solutions for some conflicts came about by (temporarily) excluding audiences to negotiate compromises in relative silence.

### 5.3.2 The dynamics of displacements

Based on different reframing effects, it is possible to discern five types of displacement: delegation, politicisation, depoliticisation, articulation, and authorisation. The patterns and dynamics of four of these displacements have already been discussed in chapter 4. This case study confirms their more general existence, and identifies a fifth, authorisation. In addition, it draws on the characterization of settings to explain why these five types of displacements reframe issues as they do. Finally, it identifies the most important conditions and drivers for these displacements.

The first type of displacement, *delegation*, involves the attempt to realise an action program on the base of a broadly supported mandate. The realisation of ones action program often depends on cooperation with others. In order to align complementary action programs representatives are delegated to negotiate with representatives of other stakeholders. The tender negotiations are examples of delegation (see Appendix B: §1 and §3). Another example is the foundation of the Development Group to align the action programs of the province/MTI with action programs of the consumer organizations and municipalities involved (§4). Typical for delegation is that participants in setting A become the audience in setting B and check whether the mandate is treated with care. The success of delegation relies in part on attributes that link action programs together. For example, the revised program of requirements was a crucial attribute leading to agreement between province, Arriva and MTI. With regard to the dynamics of displacement, the most important condition for delegation is a mandate enabling representatives to engage in negotiations. This mandate protects participants from the scorn of the audience.

The second type of displacement, *politicisation*, involves the discussion of the most controversial parts of an action program in its wider context. Due to politicisation new arguments and perspectives can enter the debate and surprising solutions become possible. The displacement to Provincial States to solve the conflict between Drenthe's negotiator and Arriva (§2) offers a telling example, because this opened up the possibility to include MTI based on ideologically inspired arguments. Politicisation is most importantly conditioned by explicit consultation of the audience, which in this case the shortcomings of the mandate begged for.

The third type of displacement, (*partial*) *depoliticisation*, involves the bracketing and disappearance of antiprograms. Depoliticisation occurred when the province mediated in

conflicts (§6 and §11), in the evaluation for the sake of policy lessons (§12) and in the user panel (§9). Depoliticisation is characterized by access limited to one or two actors, by an independency of participants from audience (if there is an audience at all), and in one case (§12) by a decisive attribute that already contained the conditions for depoliticisation. Depoliticisation of ‘bad management’ was completed when the results of two partial depoliticisations doubly bracketed the issue in a setting where participants had never even been fully aware of the issue (§13). Depoliticisation in the user panel (§9) happened because only one participant controlled decisive attributes, while an audience and possibilities for displacement (politicisation) were lacking. Depoliticisation is a strategic move of dominant actors, who are able to define the characteristics of a setting.

The fourth type of displacement, *articulation*, involves the public demonstration against (part of) an action program. Examples of articulation are the judgment of Arriva’s council of employees (§5), driver strikes (§7), accusations between the two transport companies (§8), and MTI’s protest against an ‘obsolete CLA’ (§15). In each of these examples the CLA features prominently as an empowering attribute, either as a ground to contest a dominant action program or as an object of contestation itself. Articulation is thus an effect of the recognition and use of hitherto undervalued attributes. It is a strategic move of dominated actors, even in the case of Arriva’s council of employees. Although displacement to this setting was already arranged in the detachment contract, the joint use of two attributes (the veto right and the CLA) appeared to be a very effective counterstrategy.

The fifth type of displacement, *authorisation*, involves the solution for a conflict on the base of acknowledged authority. This fifth type of displacement is introduced to capture the lawsuit between CNV and MTI. A clear-cut conflict was settled when the judge decided about the relevance and applicability of predefined attributes (established laws and contracts). The audience did not matter. Authorisation is a strategy to strengthen action programs with formal attributes; it is made possible by our legal system.

To conclude, the case study shows that all displacements can be characterized with typology of five distinguished ways of reframing. Moreover, these five patterns can rather consistently be explained by changes in the characteristics of settings in terms of access conditions, attributes and audience.

### **5.3.3 The contribution of displacements to democratic quality**

How do these displacements contribute to democratic quality of innovation processes? In chapter 2 democratic quality was defined in terms of three general principles:

- Participation/representation: the degree to which all stakeholders are able to participate, either directly or indirectly.
- Empowerment: the degree to which all stakeholders are able to express their ideas and action programs.
- Impact/influence: the degree to which the expression of ideas and action programs affects outcomes.

Displacements, therefore, can be said to contribute to democratic quality if one or more of these principles are reinforced.

The foregoing now translates the question of democratic quality into: how do different types of displacements contribute to participation, empowerment and influence? We distinguished three major issues in the case, two of them framed and reframed in long chains of displacements;

the other only displaced to one setting (see figure 5.1 and appendix B). The democratic quality of each of these (chains of) displacements is evaluated.

The first issue in the case, mismatches between the requirements to and the quality level of the service, changed faces as it displaced through seven settings: negotiations structures, Provincial States, again negotiation structures, the Development Group, a private meeting, the office of evaluators, and Provincial States again. One could claim that the democratic quality slowly decreased, because provincial officials used their mandate to depoliticise the issue. Following the chain of displacements clarifies why democratic quality decreased.

Who ought to be involved in decision-making about this issue? Clearly the inhabitants of Drenthe (and Groningen) were the most important stakeholders in the comparison of quality and costs. Provincial States, the body of elected politicians, represented the inhabitants of Drenthe. Once the negotiations between provincial deputies and Arriva tended to reach a deadlock, the issue displaced to Provincial States where it was opened up for discussion on a broader variety of aspects and henceforth created space for MTI to take part in the tender. State members were empowered by repertoires of ideological argumentation, with which similar problems are traditionally treated. The inhabitants (the audience) had been represented in these debates because voting rights empowered them to decide on access conditions of Provincial States. Requirements of participation and empowerment had hitherto been met. Whether this also generated impact depended on how the influence of inhabitants affected decision-making in the next setting.

The issue displaced to the supervising Development Group, because of a mandate from Provincial States to carry out the decision (delegation). The group was founded to offer access to and mobilise attributes for those who could help realise the provincial action program. In this group inhabitants were represented via the municipalities of Hoogeveen and Meppel, via a representative from the consumer platform, and via the mandate carried out by provincial officials. Due to the composition of this group a client perspective prevailed and as long as MTI took suggestions from participants into account, inhabitants were still adequately represented. Yet, the growing action list evoked serious doubts about the hitherto unquestioned capabilities of MTI. If these doubts were right, then inhabitants would not get value for money. At this point in time, representatives of inhabitants should have been empowered with attributes to decide about the conditions for continuation of the project. Instead, the group did not meet for some time. The province tried to settle the issue via displacements to settings with limited access. Officials took MTI apart and bracketed the distrust in the Development Group.

The mandate from Provincial States remained the only attribute that carried on the voice of inhabitants. Yet, to look upon proper execution of the mandate State members should have taken part in the audience, check whether the mandate was carried out properly and question the mandate again when the nature of the issue changed. But when the issue had indeed dramatically changed due to the action list this audience remained silent. State members had not been very interested in the politics of the Development Group. They did not raise their voice in the name of inhabitants until the issue had already been partially depoliticised in the 'good conversation' and the 'excusing' evaluation report. Not until Provincial States had to decide about the next tender, the results of the two depoliticising displacements became available as strong attributes in Provincial States. MTI's victory in the next tender invitation proofs the efficacy of these attributes.

Whether deliberate or not, by excluding the stakeholders represented in the Development Group and by bracketing doubts and distrust dominant provincial officials *overused* their mandate and constructed a 'successful' project. They were able to do so, because State members did not take part in the audience to look upon the mandate. As a consequence, State members who represented inhabitants were not empowered to decide about continuation of the project.

The second issue, a conflict about the Collective Labour Agreement (CLA), raises the question how the framing of the project as an innovative service concept in need of fine-tuning was substituted with a framing centred on the project's ignorance of labour conditions. This reframing may have *over-empowered* drivers.

The way MTI translated conditions and requirements in its transport plan, was discussed and settled in the Development Group. The participation of all stakeholders was guaranteed by access conditions. The main task implied in the mandate from Provincial States was to empower MTI with the attributes brought in by the other stakeholders in order to show that Drenthe addressed the problem of the thin lines, took liberalization seriously and successfully innovated with public transport. Due to this dominant framing, however, internal frictions were considered to be issues for the two companies only, which had to be solved, but preferably in a silent way. Driver resistance, for example, did not feature on the group's agenda.

Drivers got access when the issue displaced to the meeting of Arriva's council of employees (articulation). They indeed ought to participate in the decision-making process, because they were clearly stakeholders in MTI's plan. Therefore in the detachment contract, it was arranged that Arriva's council of employees would have a right to veto MTI's transport plan. This right formed a crucial attribute in the meeting of the council, which not only empowered drivers to articulate the issue of labour conditions, but also provided them with real influence: the issue would be taken up in subsequent settings.

Impact became manifest in a conflict between Arriva's board (supporting drivers) and MTI (sticking with its own action program). The province tried to mediate and settle the conflict in a depoliticising attempt to exclude the audience and ignore the validity of the CLA attribute. Between the boards of Arriva and MTI, the province emphasized the benefits of a compromise and persuaded Arriva. Drivers were not represented in this setting.

However, drivers felt that this situation bypassed the validity of a strong legal attribute: the CLA. With support from labour unions, drivers again articulated the issue and mobilised this attribute in the decision-making process by organizing two strikes and collectively noticing sickness. They reframed the MTI-project as a sickness generator.

Drivers were now participating and quite well empowered. But the impact of their protest still depended on MTI conceding their claims. In subsequent settings, the validity and general applicability of the CLA remained at stake. Arriva and labour union CNV used this attribute in their fights against MTI. The verdict in the legal suit of CNV against MTI (authorisation) finally generated the impact they strived after.

But what if current CLA negotiators will agree with the claim that the CLA is indeed an obsolete structure and put the director of MTI finally in the right? Then, retrospectively, drivers may have been somewhat *over-empowered* at the expense of the continuation of the project and the interests of MTI, the province, and the inhabitants of the area. Like the impact intended by the mandate from Provincial States, the impact of the verdict should not be seen as a final

impact: changing circumstances can urge for re-articulation and re-politicisation of issues that had already been settled.

The third issue, tensions on the level of the practicalities of the service, raises a question about the democratic deficits of user involvement: why did the user panel have so little influence? On the level of practicalities, season-ticket holders and other users were the most important stakeholders together with service provider MTI itself. These participated in the user panel. MTI had taken initiative and recruited participants in old people's homes, because elderly were considered to be important users. Access conditions thus offered stakeholders the possibility to participate. However, these participants were badly empowered with attributes compared to the MTI management and did not affect decisions on serious issues. The user panel put a variety of issues on its agenda regarding routes, equipment, tariffs and driver service, but MTI's management overruled the panel on the most controversial issues. The user panel did not have any formal rights, nor did it have and/or recognize the possibility to articulate or politicise issues to other settings. For example, the Development Group has never invited the chair of the user panel (probably because the Development Group already comprised several participants who looked upon the interests of users and the Province did not want to put tensions on a too detailed level on the agenda). Thus, the user panel seemed more democratic than it was; it was not sufficiently empowered to have a real impact.

To conclude: how do different types of displacements contribute to participation, empowerment and impact? First, the selection of MTI for the second tender did not fully reflect the interests of inhabitants. Members of Provincial States played an important role in the representation and empowerment of the inhabitants of Drenthe when they formulated the mandate with which provincial delegates organized and participated in the supervision of the MTI project. However, when MTI proved to be incapable of organizing public transport, the mandate was not returned but became over-used instead. This led to depoliticisation, partly because the audience of State members was not very alert.

Second, drivers may have been over-empowered compared to inhabitants. They successfully articulated issues by demonstrating the validity of yet undervalued attributes (e.g. the CLA). However, the validity of such rights and laws should also have been politicised because their realm of application seemed to be changed.

Third, the user panel was less democratic than it seemed. If users want to participate with impact, they need to be able to control decisive attributes. Such attributes can either affect the outcomes in one particular setting (e.g. voting rights) or offer a possibility to displace the issue (e.g. notices of appeal).

## Notes

- 1 See also chapter 4 for the merits of this heuristic.
- 2 Provinciale regeling openbaar vervoer 2000. Assen: Provincie Drenthe.
- 3 Schlingmann, M. (2002). Contact met de reiziger essentieel voor plattelandsvervoer. *OV-Magazine* 8/7, pp. 16-17.
- 4 Project proposal on <http://www.move-mobiliteit.nl/html/projecten/ketenpr-12.htm>. Viewed on 15 November 2004.

- 5 Note that settings are not always easily and unambiguously defined. Where, for example, took evaluation exactly place?
- 6 Statenstuk 732. Programma van eisen stads- en streekvervoer Groningen en Drenthe. Assen: Provincie of Drenthe, 20 December 1999.
- 7 Ibid.
- 8 Statencommissie Ruimte, Infrastructuur en Mobiliteit (RIM), Assen: Province of Drenthe, 21 December 2000.
- 9 Statencommissie RIM 16 October 2000. Provinciale Staten 7 November 2000. Statencommissie RIM 19 December 2000. Statencommissie RIM 21 December 2000. Statencommissie RIM 15 January 2001.
- 10 Statencommissie RIM 17 January 2000. Provinciale Staten 9 February 2000.
- 11 Diepens & Okkema (2000) Evaluatie MTI Hoogeveen. Assen: Provincie Drenthe. The header in the press report from the Province of Drenthe reads: "Extension of experiment necessary," [http://www.drenthe.nl/actueel/pers/2001/van\\_tape/pb01-013.htm](http://www.drenthe.nl/actueel/pers/2001/van_tape/pb01-013.htm), viewed on 24 June 2005.
- 12 *Concessiebeschikking openbaar vervoer Arriva*, Provincie Drenthe, Assen, 24 January 2001.
- 13 Minutes of Development Group Southwest Drenthe (DG). Assen: Province of Drenthe, 16 May 2001 and subsequent two-weekly meetings.
- 14 DG 3 October 2001.
- 15 DG 30 May 2001, 4 July 2001, 18 June 2001, 3 October 2001.
- 16 DG 4 July 2001, 14 November 2001.
- 17 The Netherlands has a national system of tariffs for bus transport. Prepaid tickets are stamped in the bus. The earnings from ticket sales are collected nationwide and distributed among transport companies according to the national WROOV system, proportionate to the number of passengers. In the current situation Arriva received the money and the sharing between Arriva and MTI should be arranged bilaterally. Source: DG, 5 September 2001.
- 18 DG 14 November 2001.
- 19 An Arriva spokesman mentioned such signs, but the consequences were not discussed. DG 19 September 2001, 3 October 2001.
- 20 DG 19 September 2001.
- 21 Diepens & Okkema (2003) *Procesevaluatie experiment InterHoMe*. Assen: Provincie of Drenthe.
- 22 MTI hired the personnel formerly operating the lines served by Arriva: Hoogeveen and the regional lines. In the case of Meppel a transition was not needed, because Meppel did not have a city transport network of its own.
- 23 Diepens & Okkema, *op. cit.*, note 21.
- 24 Minutes of a meeting about the negotiations Arriva/MTI. Assen: Provincie of Drenthe, 21 January 2002.
- 25 Zwama, Jaap (2002) Interview: 'Het openbaar vervoer moet meer een supermarktmentaliteit krijgen', *OV-Magazine* 8/7, p. 6-9.
- 26 *Op. cit.*, note 20.
- 27 *Dagblad van het Noorden* 27 February 2003, 22 October 2003, 27 October 2003. DG 13 January 2003.
- 28 Arriva en MTI bereiken akkoord. Gezamenlijk persbericht van de provincie Drenthe, de gemeenten Hoogeveen, Meppel, Westerveld, De Wolden en vervoersbedrijf Arriva en vervoersbedrijf MTI, Assen: Provincie of Drenthe, 14 August 2002.
- 29 *Dagblad van het Noorden*, 22 October 2003.
- 30 Ibid.
- 31 DG 10 February 2003, Diepens & Okkema, *Op. cit.*, note 21.
- 32 Diepens & Okkema, *op. cit.* note 21. DG, 15 August 2002.

- 33 *ibid.*
- 34 *ibid.*
- 35 The province also considered the conflict a legal issue. In response to a councillor's questions by letter, the province's deputies rejected a political qualification of the conflict. "The province is not the prime controlling institute in matters of compliance with CLA conditions." Source: Letter 3/6.12/2004000306 to State member Beerda. Assen: Province of Drenthe, 20 January 2004.
- 36 Letter from provincial official Rijpstra to the Development Group, 21 August 2003. Minutes of Consumer Platform. Assen: Province of Drenthe, 27 October 2003.
- 37 *Het Financieële Dagblad*, 25 April 2001.
- 38 *ibid.*
- 39 DG 21 October 2002, 18 November 2002, Minutes of user panel (UP) 4 December 2002.
- 40 Diepens & Okkema, *op. cit.*, note 21.
- 41 UP 30 January 2001, 27 July 2001, 8 October 2001, 3 July 2002.
- 42 UP 27 June 2001.
- 43 UP 17 September 2001, 6 November 2002, 4 December 2002, 6 March 2003.
- 44 UP 27 October 2002.
- 45 UP 6 March 2003.
- 46 UP 8 January 2003, 5 February 2003.
- 47 UP 4 December 2002.
- 48 UP 17 September 2001, 5 November 2003.
- 49 The overview was sent to members of the Development Group as an appendix to the minutes of the meeting of 13 January 2003.
- 50 *ibid.*
- 51 *ibid.*
- 52 DG 10 February 2003. Diepens & Okkema, *op. cit.* note 21.
- 53 E.g. DG 19 May 2003, 16 June 2003.
- 54 Diepens & Okkema, *op. cit.*, note 21.
- 55 Statencommissie RIM 19 January 2004.
- 56 *Ibid.* Provinciale Staten 17-3-2004.
- 57 Aanbestedingsdocument InterHoMe concessie Zuidwest Drenthe. Assen: Province of Drenthe, 16 October 2003. Statencommissie RIM 19 January 2004. Provinciale Staten 17 March 2004.
- 58 *ibid.*
- 59 Statencommissie RIM 19 January 2004. Provinciale Staten 17 March 2004.
- 60 User panel (UP), MTI, Hoozevee, 5 November 2003.
- 61 *Dagblad van het Noorden*, 15 January 2004.
- 62 *Dagblad van het Noorden*, 27 October 2003.
- 63 *Brabants Dagblad*, 20 February 2004.
- 64 *Dagblad van het Noorden* 6 February 2004.
- 65 E-mail from Rover representative Wippoo to the other members of the Consumer Platform, 25 March 2004.
- 66 *Dagblad van het Noorden*, 9 March 2004.
- 67 MTI was not a member of the employer's association, had not signed the current CLA, and therefore thought that it could develop a company CLA. However, to prevent companies to compete on labour conditions, the minister has ordered general-applicability of the CLA, even for public transport companies that have not signed it. In other words, MTI should have become a member of the employer's association to have direct impact on the content of the CLA.

- 68 <http://vakwijzer.adp.nl/nieuws/CLAs/2003/11/21-3/> viewed on 12 June 2006.
- 69 Het Financieële Dagblad 29 April 2004. Dagblad van het Noorden, 5 May 2004.
- 70 In related settings (e.g. polling stations) audiences indeed express this judgment with often binding consequences for their representatives.



# 6 Displacements and Democratic Quality

## The Case of High-quality Public Transport in Utrecht

### 6.1 Introduction

The central claim in this thesis is that the framework developed in chapter 3 can enhance our understanding of democratic quality. This claim is based on the hypothesis that the characteristics of settings (access conditions, attributes, audience) assert influence on the degree to which democratic principles are reinforced. To conceptualise this influence we introduced the notion of ‘issue-(re)framing’ as an expression of the idea that the characteristics of settings affect the strengths of action programs (see chapter 5). Issue-(re)framing thus involves a shift in the balance of power between action and antiprograms. Of key interest in this case study are the implications of such shifts for democratic quality in terms of participation, empowerment and impact. This leads to the following questions: (i) How do the characteristics of settings relate to these three dimensions of democratic quality? This question is addressed on the level of settings. The main objective, however, is to understand and evaluate democratic quality on the level of the decision-making process, that is: to understand how and why stakeholders become involved in due course. We, therefore, ask (ii) who are the stakeholders that should be involved in the first place?<sup>1</sup> in order to evaluate (iii) how different displacements indeed contribute to their participation, empowerment and influence. Answers to this last question build on the typology of displacements established in the previous case studies. This raises the last question: (iv) what are the routes and conditions of the different types of displacements in this case?

These questions are addressed in a case study about the introduction of High-quality Public Transport (HOV) in Utrecht, a highly controversial innovation that has been debated during more than two decades. This study focuses on the period between 1990 and 1999, when continuous agitation by the ‘anti-tram movement’ against plans proposed by the Board of Mayor and Aldermen and its administration caused a sequence of clashes between action programs. These action programs all advocated or opposed (the development and implementation of) the so-called Masterplan, a plan that has been adjusted several times partly due to reframing when it displaced between different settings. The case is particularly interesting for the understanding of democratic quality, because (1) just one single (though complicated) issue needs to be followed and (2) this issue (and the settings) gave rise to polemical debates and fundamental legitimacy conflicts. These debates and conflicts are indicative for the democratic merits and deficits of the settings involved.

Data for the case study is collected during a three-week visit of the archives of the city clerk’s office. This fieldwork resulted in an overview of the relevant studies, policy documents, proposals and minutes of meetings. The archive also stored letters and counter reports by the anti-tram

movement. In addition, I used case descriptions from stakeholders, which were produced for the purpose of an evaluation of the interaction with citizens between 1994 and 1997. In order to supplement these data, I also visited the city archive and the public library of Utrecht and collected newspaper articles about the controversy.

## 6.2 Background: twenty-five years of debates

When the municipality of Utrecht decided to realise two parallel bus routes from the Utrecht railway station to university campus De Uithof in 1999, a debate that had lasted for more than two decades finally settled. I will shortly summarize the tumultuous debates and afterwards elaborate in detail on two episodes in the case.

The debate rooted in the building of De Uithof in the 1960s. One way to bridge the approximately six kilometres distance to the city centre was to realise a tramway between the southern town of Nieuwegein via Utrecht and the Uithof to the eastern town of Zeist. In 1975 the municipalities of Utrecht and Nieuwegein agreed to develop plans for the southern part. In its meeting, the Utrecht city council also agreed to form a number of official workgroups to develop plans for the eastern part between the railway station and De Uithof.<sup>2</sup> However, both the workgroups and a large number of council members remained ambivalent about the plans, because the tramway required the construction of a new road for motor traffic through densely populated residential areas, apart from the problems the tramway would evoke with regard to the integration of tram infrastructure in the old city centre and to the provisioning of shops along the trajectory.<sup>3</sup> Shopkeepers and residents organized in what can be called the first anti-tram movement and effectively agitated against the plans.<sup>4</sup> The Utrecht city council decided to reject the plan for the eastern part to De Uithof.<sup>5</sup>

When the Nieuwegein tramline opened in 1985, the Board of Mayor and Aldermen (M&A) revitalized the rejected plan for the eastern part.<sup>6</sup> A large number of studies explored many variations: a combination of a tram to the Uithof and a bus onwards, a tram tunnel underneath the city centre, a bus tunnel, and an alternative trajectory southward of the city centre.<sup>7</sup> The State promised a substantial financial contribution as part of national policy plans and again M&A formed a number of official workgroups.<sup>8</sup> Their conclusion in 1989 was that a tram (and only a tram) through the city centre would be able to meet with growing demand for transport in the eastern part of the city.<sup>9</sup>

Many people engaged with transport policy in Utrecht agreed on the need to improve public transport somehow while reducing car use in order to protect the eastern part of the city from getting congested. The objective was to multiply the number of public transport users with 2.8 in 2010. This factor was derived from estimations about future mobility patterns (based on the building of 65.000 new dwellings and an increase of job supply with 50.000) and existing policy to reduce car use (with 14% instead of an expected increase by 35%).<sup>10</sup> Disagreement existed on the means to realise this improvement.

Since the late 1980s the action committee 'Geen tram door de binnenstad' ('No tram through the city centre') had taken the lead in decent opposition. Not only did it find support among many residents, shopkeepers, cyclists, elderly organizations, and traveller organizations, it also contributed to the debate by means of well-informed counter reports, in which it scrutinized assumptions of official documents and offered alternative solutions for the same problems,



Figure 6.1 The region of Utrecht

namely a more distributed network of buses.<sup>11</sup> Whereas the tram plan assumed a bundled flow of public transport through the city centre, the bus network vision made possible to develop an additional trajectory ‘around the south’ of the city centre. The centre line would then disclose the centre (at the expense of speed) and the south line would connect station and De Uithof with a minimum of stops (see figure 6.1). One variety of this alternative comprised a tram around the south. Opposition party GroenLinks advocated this alternative.<sup>12</sup> D66, another opposition party, advocated a different alternative together with those engaged with the preservation of the historical city centre, which was based on the centre trajectory but included a tunnel for the centre part.<sup>13</sup>

Elections and the subsequent coalition negotiations played a major role in the reframing and transformation of the plan. The 1990 elections would lead to a choice for a tram through the city centre, the 1994 elections would lead to the revision of the tram plan into a plan with advanced buses and the 1998 elections would result in a significant downscaling of the finances and prestige of the whole plan. I will focus on displacements preceding the 1994 and 1998 elections and explore how they contributed to the election results and subsequent changes of the plan.

### 6.3 From tram to bus (1991-1994)

The work program of the Board of M&A after the 1990 elections reads:<sup>14</sup>

“As part of a regional system of public transport and in relation to the future development of the city, the activities in aid of an underground tram connection through the city centre will continue. Conditions are sufficient contribution of the State for investments and exploitation [...] The council will be asked to choose an aboveground tram through the city centre if an underground trajectory is not feasible.”

I will take this intention as the action program of the current board. The main antiprograms were based on alternative trajectories and equipment. In this section I will elaborate on four settings where the clash between these action- and antiprograms occurred. These settings were the meeting of M&A (6.3.1), a public inquiry (6.3.2), the city council (6.3.3) and the coalition negotiations after the 1994 elections (6.3.4). How did displacements between these settings contribute to democratic quality?

Democratic quality is defined as the degree to which stakeholders participate, are empowered and affect outcomes. Now, who were the stakeholders?<sup>15</sup> The contestation of the action program as expressed by the work program was the major issue in this case. There were several actors with a stake in this issue, including the Municipal Transport Company Utrecht that would exploit the line, the Ministry of Transport and Traffic that paid for the infrastructure, municipalities in the region of Utrecht (Zeist in particular) with transport connections to the city, the University of Utrecht, future users, and residents/shopkeepers along the trajectory. In the first period of this case (1990-1994) these stakeholders can be divided in two groups: those advocating a fast and concentrated tram connection through the city centre and those advocating a more distributed network of buses and/or trams. The first group included for example users who travelled to or in the direction of De Uithof. The second notably included residents, shopkeepers, and those concerned with the historical city centre. The interests of the first were represented by diverse means, like the wish of some prominent politicians to connect De Uithof to the Railway station, transport value studies that estimated future demand, and a Masterplan that merged these interests into a concrete plan. The interests of residents and shopkeepers were also brought forward in diverse ways, ranging from opposition in the city council to public inquiries and demonstrations. Because the interests of these two groups of stakeholders were hard to align, the democratic question of proportional participation/representation is especially pressing here.

#### 6.3.1 Meeting of the Board of Mayor and Aldermen (1991)

The 1990 elections had centred on the question whether Utrecht should construct a tramway to the Uithof via the city centre. D66, one of the winners, agreed to participate in a Board of M&A with PvdA and CDA under the condition that a tram tunnel would be considered an alternative option. Only if that appeared to be unfeasible, D66 would support the aboveground tram.<sup>16</sup> A feasibility study, however, showed that the costs of a tunnel would significantly exceed the budget available.<sup>17</sup> In its meeting of 1 November 1991 the Board of Mayor and Aldermen (M&A) discussed the consequences of the analysis. The meeting took place in a setting with the following characteristics:

- Access conditions: coalition partners had composed the board on the base of the coalition agreement and election results.
- Attributes: the mandate from a city council majority to compromise and execute a work program, previous decisions about the issue, and the many studies performed so far.
- Audience: the city council in which coalition parties held a majority.

In the meeting M&A concluded that:<sup>18</sup>

1. An underground tram is financially unfeasible.
2. Only trams will – given their high capacity compared to buses – be able to transport 2.8 times the number of current passengers without causing congestion on crossing traffic in general and pedestrians and cyclists in particular.
3. Tramways structure economic activity around its trajectory and induce future demand.”

Nevertheless, two aldermen of D66 maintained that a bus tunnel, being one of the variants in the feasibility study, would still do and they took a minority standpoint not to support the aboveground tram.<sup>19</sup> The other parties of the coalition understood this as a breach of promise and forced the two to resign.<sup>20</sup> This debate about D66’ lack of loyalty overshadowed the debate about the content and a new majority established by joining coalition partner VVD made such a debate needless. D66’ proposal to bring more than one option into inquiry was not taken into consideration. Under the responsibility of the revised Board a newly founded Projectbureau Tram started to develop the Masterplan Tram.

The most important stakeholders in the issue discussed in this setting were the advocates of an aboveground tram versus the advocates of a distributed network. D66 took a middle road between the interests of the stakeholders by proposing to also take a bus tunnel into account (the bus option suited the distributed network idea quite well). However, the advocates of fast aboveground tram through the city centre dominated in this setting. The new coalition of parties (PvdA, CDA, VVD) was especially concerned with (both autonomous and induced) demand for public transport, sufficiently empowered by studies to articulate the different dimensions of its action program, and able to exclude D66 from decision-making (see table 6.1). The dominance of the interests of advocates of a fast tram connection in the current debate can be explained by the way the characteristics of the setting framed the issue:

*Table 6.1* Evaluation of democratic quality of setting 1 – Board of M&A

	<b>Fast tram flows</b>	<b>Distributed network</b>
Participation	Via PvdA, CDA and (later on) VVD	Via D66 (minor party)
Empowerment	Relatively elaborated plan (aboveground tram):one of the options studied from the beginning	Hardly elaborated alternative (bus tunnel)
Impact	Exclusion of D66, reinforced loyalty to work program, elaboration Masterplan Tram	-

Participation of fast tram advocates directly resulted from the access condition of this setting. The access condition of the Board was the coalition agreement, which initially allowed PvdA, CDA and D66 to the meeting. The exclusion of D66 from the coalition occurred when D66 wanted stronger involvement of local stakeholders; it wanted to bring more than one option into inquiry. D66's replacement by VVD in the coalition prevented this to happen.

The empowerment of fast tram advocates was determined by the attributes available on this setting. These attributes contributed to an elaborate and articulated action program: the reports and decisions carried on in the history of the project, like transport value studies,<sup>21</sup> economic impact studies,<sup>22</sup> car reduction policy,<sup>23</sup> the state subsidy outlook,<sup>24</sup> and rejection of a tunnel<sup>25</sup> all provided arguments for a tram on the base of the desirability, estimation, and consequences of future use. Attaching these attributes to the coalition's shared action program increased legitimacy in terms of meeting with demand.

The degree to which these advocates of fast trams affected the outcomes of the process depended on one more attribute: the mandate of a city council majority to compromise and execute a work program. This program, which counted as a decisive expression of the public interest, was an attribute even stronger than the coalition itself, as the replacement of D66 for VVD in the coalition proved.

The characteristics of this setting framed the issue as one in which coalition parties should align action programs first. The work program made a start already; D66's action program was excluded, and further elaboration was made possible. This framing privileged advocates of the aboveground tram through the city centre via limited access conditions, building on available attributes, and reinforced loyalty to the work program.

### **6.3.2 Public inquiry (1992)**

A public inquiry is common in major urban projects.<sup>26</sup> A first inquiry would create opportunities for citizens to react to the Masterplan Tram as a whole, while a second inquiry in a later stage would offer the opportunity to react on a detailed level against for example the layout of particular streets.<sup>27</sup> Here, the first inquiry is taken as the second important setting in the case. The inquiry as a setting comprised the following conditions:

- Access conditions: everybody could react in principle.
- Attributes: the Masterplan Tram and related information,<sup>28</sup> set of alternative ideas provided by the anti-tram movement.<sup>29</sup>
- Audience: the city council, which had to discuss the so-called two-column document (the report of the inquiry with questions and answers) in its meeting.

The public inquiry (as performance) was of extraordinary high quality. The long history of the project and all media coverage resulted in a well-informed public. The two-column document covered a large variety of considerations both pro and contra the Masterplan.<sup>30</sup> Yet, without doing justice to this variety of arguments, three major outcomes of the inquiry stand out because they challenge the legitimacy of the action program of the aboveground tram advocates.

First – not expected to this extent – the Masterplan met widely shared resistance. Four hundred people visited the information evenings and 260 people reacted formally to the Masterplan, nearly all in some adverse way.<sup>31</sup> The two-column document learned that many citizens favoured buses instead of trams and better utilization of the trajectory around the south for a variety of reasons. M&A and its administration answered them with reference to the higher

capacity and structuring effects of trams through the city, and therefore did not see any reason to adjust the core of the plan.

Yet, the second outcome followed from the sum of answers to different reactions, which revealed a circular argument in favour of trams. The board defended the choice for a tram (through the centre) with reference to the required capacity (answer, p. 80). On the other hand, the board rejected a parallel tram trajectory around the south because of too little demand (answer, p.87). The circularity was that the centre trajectory required a tram, because people were disabled to travel around the south. Capacity was needed because flows were deliberately concentrated.

The third outcome related to the reliance of the Masterplan on the putatively stronger attractive and structuring features of the tram as compared to the bus. An economic effect study concluded that particularly retail, catering and commercial services would profit, while other businesses were likely to benefit from geographical extension of the labour market. However, these effects did not so much depend on the tram sec, but on its separate infrastructure, which would materialize the trajectory through the city for decades. This consideration inspired the Board of Deputies of the *Province* of Utrecht in its reaction to coin the possibility of doubly articulated buses on a free lane.<sup>32</sup> If such a lane would be solid and flat enough, then bus qualities would very much resemble tram qualities, while being much cheaper and more flexible in cases of road obstruction. Moreover, the capacity of doubly articulated buses would amount up to 90% of tram capacity and these buses could be employed around the south as well.

In this setting the advocates of a distributed network were strongly involved compared to the previous setting. They massively participated, could clearly articulate their action programs, and indeed contributed to a critical and *potentially* influential two-column document (see table 6.2). How can the increased influence of those resisting the fast tram flows be explained by the way the characteristics of the setting framed the issue?

The high degree to which advocates of a distributed network of trams and/or buses participated was made possible by the open access conditions. However, this insufficiently explains *why* the inquiry was used as a massive protest against the plans of the council. One reason is that the set of attributes made available by the Board of M&A was strongly biased in favour of a tram through the city centre. Whereas the Masterplan elaborated on the tram to a relatively detailed level, alternatives had been much less elaborated. Whether doubly articulated

Table 6.2 Evaluation of democratic quality of setting 2 – Public inquiry

	Fast tram flows	Distributed network
Participation	The Projectbureau that answered questions fell under the responsibility of the Board of M&A	Massively used the opportunity to protest
Empowerment	Answers further elaborated (reasons for) Masterplan Tram	Articulation of widely shared resistance, problematisation of capacity argument, possibility of doubly articulated buses
Impact	Many objections rejected	Recognition of resistance, two-column document potentially affecting the standpoints of city councillors

buses would have been feasible had not been studied on beforehand. Neither had the problem of fitting in a tram trajectory 'around the south' received as much attention as problems of fitting in a trajectory through the centre. This one-sidedness of attributes provoked a lot of protest. In other words, the lack of impact by local stakeholders in the previous setting was compensated for in this setting.

The degree to which these advocates of a distributed network were empowered, thus, did not depend on the Masterplan-related attributes, but instead on attributes made available by the anti-tram movement. The well-informed anti-tram movement supplied the people with a coherent set of alternative ideas and fulfilled the empowerment condition (in terms of being informed) to a large extent. In this sense, the anti-tram movement should be considered as a co-organizer of the inquiry.

To what degree did these stakeholders affect the outcomes? All objections were carefully documented. However, their impact on the broader decision-making process depended on whether these outcomes would be taken up by participants in the next setting: city councillors. These councillors formed the audience of the current setting. Thus, the audience played an important role in this setting. The two-column document informed this audience about the circular argumentation underlying the need for trams and the possibility of doubly articulated buses. It could empower those councillors who challenged the M&A standpoint, particularly because the two-column document was a product of broad citizen participation.

The characteristics of this setting framed the issue as one in which anybody should be empowered to articulate ones action and antiprograms, but mainly opponents of the Masterplan did so. The main focus in previous settings had been on demand and capacity and even the attributes available in this setting contained such a bias. This provoked both the construction of alternative attributes and, as one result, the massive protest to the Masterplan Tram. The impact of this protest could be read in the two-column document. Whether this document would also influence future decision-making depended on the document being taken up by the audience and taking effect in next settings.

### 6.3.3 City council (1993)

The meeting of the city council about the project took place on 1 July 1993.<sup>33</sup> This setting comprised the following conditions:

- Access conditions: election results; 45 elected councillors, divided in five major and a number of minor political parties, were to decide about proposals from M&A.
- Attributes: rights to speak, majority voting, studies and previous decisions, the Masterplan Tram, the two-column document, a survey, a letter from the Minister of Transport.<sup>34</sup>
- Audience: the electorate (next elections would be in 1994).

The proposal to be discussed on this meeting included approval of the Masterplan, approval of the answers in the two-column document, and the supply of money for preparations during the last stage until the implementation decree (this latter decree involved voting for the expenditure of the budget including state subsidy). In this meeting the three conclusions from the public inquiry – the capacity paradox, the doubly articulated bus alternative, and the lack of public support – disappeared for different reasons.

A GroenLinks councillor addressed the capacity paradox: "The tram must come because of insufficient capacity on one main trajectory. But if you concentrate all transport on one trajectory, you create a problem instead of solving one."<sup>35</sup> By means of a motion GroenLinks tried to

convince the council to charge the board to elaborate the bus option. M&A however replied that all alternatives were considered and discussed in the past already, and that new facts have not been presented since. Although the possibility of a doubly articulated bus, which GroenLinks mentioned in the motion, did constitute a new element in the discussion, a majority of the council backed M&A. Because neither the spokespersons of the different parties nor GroenLinks councillors themselves referred to the doubly articulated bus again, both conclusions from the public inquiry disappeared. What is more, the alderman of transport affairs introduced a new argument in support of the tram. Just two days before the meeting, the M&A had received a letter from the Minister of Transport. Although the content appeared somewhat ambiguous, the spokesman concluded that subsidies for investments in bus infrastructure would amount only 80% of subsidies for tramways. Much of the debate focused on the proper interpretation of the letter, which overshadowed disputes about the content of the plan.

The public inquiry had raised a third problem: how can a massively rejected plan still be legitimised democratically? Out of the councillors elected three years earlier 29 supported and 16 opposed the plan. A recent survey among Utrecht citizens, however, showed a much more balanced picture: 40% of the Utrecht population supported the plan and 40% opposed it.<sup>36</sup> The council thus did not represent the population proportionally. However, the legitimacy issue had not been part of the debate, apart from one comment by a PvdA councillor, who pointed to the primacy of the council: “Of course, the argument that people do not want the tram is not a valid argument. I think that in a situation with a divided people, politicians should take responsibility.”<sup>37</sup> Obviously, such a derogatory standpoint fails to recognize the rationality of many counterarguments like those expressed in the public inquiry. Yet, without further debate, the answers of the board in the two-column document were approved and while the main conclusions of the inquiry disappeared the council also approved the Masterplan Tram. One GroenLinks councillor was likely to be put in the right in the end: “[Only] a more balanced decision-making process [...] could have prevented a claim on the next elections.”<sup>38</sup>

Since the issue, the contested Masterplan Tram, had not fundamentally changed, the same stakeholders can still be distinguished. But like in the Board of M&A, and despite the public inquiry, the advocates of fast tram flows also dominated in this setting. The coalition of parties (PvdA, CDA, VVD) backed their board and agreed with its proposals (see table 6.3). How can this dominance be explained by the way the characteristics of the setting framed the issue?

The degree of participation – PvdA, CDA and VVD formed a majority – was a consequence of the access conditions: the results of the 1990 elections. On the base of its majority the coalition

*Table 6.3* Evaluation of democratic quality of setting 3 – City council

	<b>Fast tram flows</b>	<b>Distributed network</b>
Participation	Via PvdA, CDA and VVD	Via D66 and GroenLinks
Empowerment	Need for Masterplan Tram was reinforced	Important counter arguments derived from inquiry were weakly articulated
Impact	Approval of Masterplan Tram, supply of money for further preparation, approval of answers in two-column document	Potential electoral support in next elections

had negotiated the access conditions of the Board of M&A (and renegotiated it after the 1991 withdrawal of D66). Now, the parties backed their aldermen in this issue.

The high degree to which these parties were empowered resulted from the work done by the Projectbureau Tram. Under the responsibility of the M&A, the Projectbureau had elaborated the Masterplan Tram on the base of previous decisions, the State subsidy outlook, and a large number of studies. Moreover, the new letter of the minister was another attribute in the hands of the tram parties. In opposition, however, advocates of a distributed network were empowered by the two-column document. This attribute expressed relevant counterarguments – the capacity paradox, doubly articulated buses, and the legitimacy question – and enabled them to contest the relation between user interests and the need for a tram.

The degree to which these respective stakeholders affected the outcomes did however hardly depend on the degrees of empowerment. The work program and preceding council decisions seemed to be the most decisive attributes on this setting, because they formed the basis of a stable majority. The inquiry, in contrast, did not have much impact, because its purpose was mainly to facilitate a recognizable comparison of pros and cons by the city council. To do so, the two-column document presented the questions by the people and the answers by the board and its administration. The city council was only supposed to decide about the adequacy of the answers. The coalition succeeded to depoliticise most controversial aspects in it and the opposition did not resist. Opposition parties either felt powerless against coalition pressure (“given the answers, it does not make sense to speak any further”)<sup>39</sup> or anticipated on next elections. Persuasion of the electorate-audience would perhaps be a better strategy.

The characteristics of this setting framed the issue on the one hand as an extension and on the other hand as a reduction compared to the diversity of interests, demands and concerns that had been expressed in the public inquiry. The extension involved the letter of the minister, which introduced an important new element in the discussion. The reduction concerned some highly controversial aspects of the issue, which the public inquiry had raised and which were only shortly mentioned before they disappeared from the debate. Despite being well empowered by valid concerns and new perspectives, the advocates of a distributed network were far from influential. Due to the access conditions, they were in a minority position and unable to affect the binding force of the work program, an attribute that strongly linked advocates of fast tram flows together.

#### **6.3.4 Coalition negotiations (1994 elections)<sup>40</sup>**

After the 1993 council decision, the Projectbureau Tram prepared a request for State subsidy.<sup>41</sup> It translated the Masterplan into designs for different parts of the trajectory and into specifications for construction. These specifications substantiated the cost estimations necessary for the subsidy request. However, this process took longer than intended and the request was never sent.<sup>42</sup> It might have been possible to send it before the elections, but an answer and a final decision by the city council (to vote the credit for execution) would certainly have exceeded this crucial event.

The results of the elections hardly surprised. The 1993 survey had already shown a balance between the advocates and opponents of the Masterplan.<sup>43</sup> After the elections, the advocating political parties (VVD, CDA, PvdA) and their opponents (Groen Links, D66, SP) also balanced each other: 21-20. The remaining 4 seats on the council went to right extremists with whom none of the parties wanted to reign.<sup>44</sup> These circumstances formed the starting point for the coalition negotiations, which took place on a setting that can be characterized in the following way:

- Access conditions: GroenLinks and D66, being the winners of these elections, took the lead and invited potential partners.
- Attributes: party programs, number of seats.
- Audience: constituencies of parties.

GroenLinks and D66 had taken the lead and invited PvdA and CDA to join. Consequently, the work program for the next four years was a compromise between the two groups of stakeholders that had been opposing each other for four years. It made room for advanced buses on a separate infrastructure, which should be appropriate for future changeover to trams.<sup>45</sup>

The stakeholders being considered in this study – still the same – were represented by four large political parties. The advocates of the distributed network were allowed to take the initiative in the negotiations, but they were in need of coalition partners in order to establish a majority in the city council. The compromise achieved reflected the balance of power (see table 6.4). This equal involvement of all stakeholders can be explained by the characteristics of settings:

The degree of stakeholder participation resulted from the access conditions and attributes. GroenLinks and D66 were the biggest winners and allowed to invite others to the setting. They selected potential coalition partners on the base of party programs and number of seats (attributes), in order to establish a majority.

The degree to which stakeholders were empowered to articulate their action programs also balanced. After all, one's voice was proportional to the number of seats.

The degree to which stakeholders affected the outcomes, finally, balanced too. The result – a compromise with advanced buses on a separate infrastructure that combined the criteria of speed and flexibility – reflected the equal distribution of seats. Henceforth, a large group of local stakeholders, who hitherto hardly had influence on the decision-making process, now participated actively. Their lack of impact in previous settings can be said to have provoked the current election result.

The characteristics of this setting framed the issue as one in which alternative options were considered again in the context of public support. The 1993 council decision had not created enough impact to get D66 and GroenLinks on board, partly because their interests had not been reflected in the outcomes. The rejection of the network idea had been based on the 1990/1991-work program, which was arguably out of date given the 1992 inquiry. The new election results finally had impact on council decisions; it caused a reshuffle in the city council, where the two most important opposition parties had received enough public support to turn the course of events. A majority of tram advocates turned into a minority and trams turned into buses.

*Table 6.4* Evaluation of democratic quality of setting 4 – Coalition negotiations

	<b>Fast tram flows</b>	<b>Distributed network</b>
Participation	Via PvdA and CDA	Via GroenLinks and D66
Empowerment	Parties could not afford sticking with tram; they emphasized the benefits of the centre-trajectory.	Cancellation of tram was especially articulated
Impact	Separate infrastructure for fast flows	Advanced buses flexibly applicable on different trajectories

## 6.4 Austerity measures (1994-1999)

The 1994 election marked a turning point in the history of HOV Utrecht. It provided public support for both anti-tram parties GroenLinks and D66, enabling them to form a coalition with PvdA and CDA. Consequently, the work program of the new Board of Mayor and Aldermen envisioned a future opposed to the one advocated by the previous board: a future with buses. The final decision in 1999, however, yet substantially deviated from this envisioned future. The layout of the most controversial part, the Biltstraat, changed twice compared to the 1994 plans.<sup>46</sup> Considerable savings were realised by austere constructions of the necessary bridges and tunnels.<sup>47</sup> Eye-catching stations were substituted with simple bus stops and two stops were added to the trajectory.<sup>48</sup> The initial travel time of 12 minutes<sup>49</sup> lengthened to 18 to 20 minutes<sup>50</sup> in spite of the main quality criterion of high average speed. And the trajectory around the south was developed with priority.<sup>51</sup>

This section elaborates on the decision-making processes between 1994 and 1999. The elections had significantly changed the issue. The work program of the new Board is now considered as the main action program:<sup>52</sup>

“Once there is clarity about advanced bus rolling-stock that can be used in the region, then it will be employed on the [centre] trajectory from the railway station to De Uithof. Whether such buses suffice or trams are required will be based on quality assessment afterwards.”

This intention is taken as the action program of the current board. The main antiprograms were based on alternative trajectories and/or moderated construction of the centre trajectory. In this section I will elaborate on five settings where the clash between these action- and antiprograms occurred. These settings were the HOV Projectbureau (6.4.1), demonstrations (6.4.2), correspondence with the State (6.4.3) the city council (6.4.4) and the coalition negotiations after the 1998 elections (6.4.5). How did displacements between these settings contribute to democratic quality?

With the revised action program the issue changed. Now, what were the most important stakeholders in this issue? The stakeholders were basically the same as in the previous four years, but due to the shift in the city council and the substitution of trams for buses, the dividing line between the two major groups of stakeholders also shifted. On one side of the line there were those who advocated fast buses on a separate infrastructure through the city centre, on the other side there were those who still pleaded for a more distributed network that spared the historical city centre and lively residential areas. The first, including the new Board of M&A, based the new plan on the existing Masterplan, but substituted trams with buses. Their interests were mainly inspired by criteria for national public transport subsidy policy: HOV should be attractive enough for car users to change their minds: cheap, speedy and comfortable.<sup>53</sup> The second rejected the Masterplan altogether. The anti-tram movement still resisted the idea of fast and expensive tram-like buses through residential areas. Their interests, particularly put forward by residents and shopkeepers, were the safety and liveability of neighbourhoods.<sup>54</sup> Despite the compromised work program, the interests of these two stakeholders still appeared to be hard to align. The democratic question of proportional participation/representation is again pressing here.

#### 6.4.1 HOV Projectbureau (1994-1995)

After the 1994 elections the new Board of Mayor and Aldermen and the HOV Projectbureau (formerly known as the Projectbureau Tram) spent nearly two years developing a Masterplan Adjustment. Here, the Projectbureau deserves specific attention, because at this stage of the process it silently produced the attributes that would become crucial in forthcoming settings. The HOV Projectbureau comprised the following conditions:

- Access conditions: employees were selected on the base of competences and obedience to M&A.
- Attributes: work program, the instruction to develop a Masterplan Adjustment, Masterplan Tram, two-column document 1992, competences and knowledge of employees, money.
- Audience: Board of M&A.

Halfway the transformation of the Masterplan Tram into a Masterplan Adjustment a document was produced that illustrates how the Projectbureau pre-structured council decisions by taking a stand in a range of minor issues.<sup>55</sup> Particularly the intention to stay close to the Masterplan Tram (with regard to the trajectory and the location of stations) dictated the argumentation. For example, because stations in the centre for HOV were thought to be more attractive (in a literal sense) than ordinary bus stops, three stations were considered to suffice. This would minimally compromise speed, although at the expense of larger walking distances. Another example was that the plan for the Biltstraat would not be changed although many objections from the 1992 public inquiry concerned the implications of too heavy traffic flows for pedestrians, cyclists, residents and shopkeepers on this part of the trajectory. In order to speed up the decision-making process, very few adjustments were allowed. With similar intentions, the head of the Projectbureau advised the alderman not to have a public inquiry about the whole plan again, but merely one about details. There had already been an inquiry about the Masterplan Tram as a whole, which, he argued, mainly exposed objections about the tram *an sich*.<sup>56</sup> He did not think of inquiries as influential anyway: “a neat report will be produced [but] nothing will happen with the remarks of those being heard, unless the committee and/or the council decide otherwise,” he said.<sup>57</sup>

The stakeholders being considered in this study – the advocates of fast bus flows versus the advocates of a distributed network – were not equally represented. In conformance with the election results and the work program, the interests of the first featured solely on this setting (see table 6.5). This exclusive featuring can be explained by the characteristics of the setting:

Table 6.5 Evaluation of democratic quality of setting 5 – HOV Projectbureau

	Fast bus flows	Distributed network
Participation	Employees of HOV Projectbureau elaborated work program on behalf of the Board of M&A	-
Empowerment	Mandate was properly executed	-
Impact	Masterplan Adjustment, many decisions pre-structured	-

The dominant participation of people working on the fast bus option simply depended on the access conditions (employment contract) and one crucial attribute (the instructions). The employees were instructed to stay as close to the Masterplan Tram as possible in order to avoid the need for another delaying public inquiry about the Masterplan Adjustment as a whole. Their aim was to prepare a council decision as soon as possible and thereto consultation or involvement of the anti-tram movement was not desirable.

The degree of empowerment was high because all required attributes were made available by the Board of M&A.

To what degree did these stakeholders affect the outcomes? The employees fully controlled the outcomes; they were only held accountable by the Board of M&A (audience) with which the head of the Projectbureau had frequent contact. Due to the access conditions and especially to the instructions, the Masterplan Adjustment primarily met the criteria for national public transport subsidy policy: cheap, fast and comfortable.<sup>58</sup> Conflicting interests were excluded a priori. Outside, however, the anti-tram movement reared itself: two newly founded action committees demanded involvement.<sup>59</sup>

The characteristics of this setting framed the issue as settled and in need of elaboration. The new work program was seen as a compromise solidly founding a bus Masterplan; stakeholders were already considered to be allies. While access of the anti-tram movement was considered needless (the two-column document already expressed their voice), the available attributes empowered employees to settle a range of minor aspects on the base of staying close to the Masterplan Tram. The access conditions and instructions even ordered them to do so. The audience (M&A) looked upon and intervened in the execution of the mandate, though the head of the Projectbureau played an influential advisory role. These conditions resulted in a Masterplan Adjustment<sup>60</sup> that remained far from the interests of many local stakeholders.

#### **6.4.2 Demonstration (1996)**

Early 1996 the Masterplan Adjustments would be discussed with local stakeholders,<sup>61</sup> presented to the general public<sup>62</sup> and subject of a public inquiry (about details and specifications)<sup>63</sup> in order to gain public support. One important constraint was put to this invitation: only details were open for discussion.<sup>64</sup> The revelation of this constraint, however, provoked a large demonstration, which aimed at reopening the overall discussion, too.<sup>65</sup> This demonstration occurred in a setting that can be described by the following conditions:

- Access conditions: sharing the objections to the current Masterplan Adjustment or to the procedure followed thus far.
- Attributes: arguments, alternatives, a newsletter, protest postcards, signings lists, instructions to participate in the inquiry.
- Audience: the city council and Ministry of Transport.

The stakeholder discussions (not discussed as a separate setting here) had been the first invitation to participate for years. On this occasion stakeholders were asked to comment on a plan that hardly differed from the rejected Masterplan Tram, which they thought had successfully agitated against.<sup>66</sup> This situation added up to a loss of faith in the procedures. Instead of negotiating details like the width of pavements, safety for cyclists, or possibilities for provisioning, their response was to unite and demonstrate against the whole plan in order to enforce participation.<sup>67</sup> New action committees were founded and would join the HOV platform (a collaboration of no less than sixteen neighbourhood and action committees) later that year.<sup>68</sup> Instead of merely

providing input for the Masterplan Adjustment, they rather produced a newsletter, a postcard action, a 200-people demonstration, 1300 petition signings, and 850 inquiry reactions.<sup>69</sup> These reactions included not only demands about the layout of particular streets or distances between stations, but also concerns about total costs, doubts about the necessity of the prestigious plan, doubts about the necessity of high speeds, the possibilities for a trajectory around the south, and reservations about the inquiry procedure.<sup>70</sup> They questioned the overall plan. The city trajectory should be a disclosing line for a limited number of buses instead of a main road for all eastward connections.

Still, the most important stakeholders were advocates of the fast buses through the city centre versus those who resisted this plan in favour of a more distributed network. In this setting the second group of stakeholders were strongly involved, though impact on the decision-making process as a whole remained unpredictable (see table 6.2). The increased influence of those resisting the Masterplan Adjustment can be explained by the way the characteristics of the setting framed the issue. (Note the similarity with the 1992 public inquiry):

Strong participation followed from open access conditions of this setting on the one hand and from the biases of the previous setting on the other. For example, demonstrators demanded compensation for not having been able to access the HOV Projectbureau despite good reasons for a continuous dialogue. Particularly via the HOV platform, local stakeholders got organized into an alternative coalition that opposed the administrative apparatus. Thus, their lack of access and impact in the previous setting was compensated for in this setting.

The degree to which these advocates of a distributed network were empowered depended on the attributes made available by the organizers of the demonstration. The main argument of the board (speed, comfort, subsidy conditions) did not bother them much. Rather, they emphasized the importance of arguments about liveability and safety in neighbourhoods, priority for ‘around the south’, and the lack of public support for the current plan. “Liveableness and quality of the environment [...] ought not to be a derivative of abstract HOV-requirements.”<sup>71</sup> These attributes enabled them to articulate their demands and concerns quite well. Moreover, media coverage amplified these demands and concerns to the public in general and the specific audiences of this setting in particular.

Potential impact depended on whether these specific audiences, the Ministry of Transport and city councillors, would integrate the demands and concerns in the next settings of the decision-making procedure.

*Table 6.6* Evaluation of democratic quality of setting 6 – Demonstrations

	<b>Fast bus flows</b>	<b>Distributed network</b>
Participation	-	Massively used the opportunity to protest
Empowerment	-	Well-articulated demands, concerns, doubts, reservations and alternatives.
Impact	-	Recognition of resistance, another two-column document, demands potentially affecting the criteria for State subsidy and/or standpoints of city councillors

The characteristics of this setting framed the issue as one in which the dominant action program became strongly contested again. Due to access conditions based on the engaging activities of the HOV Platform, the local stakeholders formed an alternative coalition to combat the biased decision-making process. Their lack of involvement and impact provoked their public articulation of demands and concerns as a counterweight in the conflict. In subsequent settings it would become clear whether this took effect on the most important audiences.

#### **6.4.3 Negotiations with the State (1996)**

During the public inquiry M&A had requested a subsidy and negotiated with the Ministry of Transport and Traffic about specifications of the criteria and subsidizability of the different elements of the plan.<sup>72</sup> These negotiations comprised the following conditions:

- Access conditions: the Board of M&A had put a subsidy request to the minister.
- Attributes: promises from the past, criteria for subsidy, Masterplan Adjustment, demonstrations in the media.
- Audience: national parliament.

The results were disappointing: instead of the 86 million euros counted upon, only 59 million were guaranteed provided that additional questions would be answered.<sup>73</sup> Some elements, notably car reduction measures, cycling lanes and the revitalization of some surrounding streets and squares, were not subsidizable because not directly related to improvement of public transport. Moreover, an important consideration from the side of the Ministry was the lack of public support exposed by the public inquiry. The minister stated that public support was an additional criterion next to speed, comfort, and exploitation aspects. By coupling both criteria about 'high quality' and about 'public support' to subsidizability she tried to align the interests of stakeholders. The Board of M&A was forced to respond to public concerns; it should (and would) become more susceptible for concerns about liveability, safety, pedestrian crossings, and shop provisioning.

The most important stakeholders, advocates of the fast buses through the city centre versus those who pleaded for a more distributed network, were more equally involved than it seemed from the outset. Although only representatives from the Ministry and from Utrecht's Board of M&A were officially involved, the first had become acquainted with the existence and claims of the HOV platform. The outcomes of the negotiations partially reflected these claims (see table 6.7).

The degree to which stakeholders participated or were represented in part reflected the access conditions. The Board of M&A had put a subsidy request to the minister. By doing so, M&A was expected to represent all Utrecht stakeholders, but it had never been explicated how the conflicting interests of future users and local stakeholders should be translated in a proper representation. Arguably, the insufficient and contested representation of local stakeholders weakened the position of M&A despite the promise that the minister had made several years ago. The HOV Platform had contested the legitimacy of the Masterplan. Some attributes available, notably media coverage of the demonstrations, brought this conflict of interests to the setting. By acknowledging the HOV platform as a broad public movement, the minister also took the interests of these stakeholders into consideration.

The degree to which different stakeholders had been able to express their action and antiprograms depended on the attributes that were constructed on the previous two settings: the

Table 6.7 Evaluation of democratic quality of setting 7 – Negotiations with the State

	Fast bus flows	Distributed network
Participation	M&A submitted a subsidy request	Influential officials at the Ministry knew about the claims of the HOV platform
Empowerment	The Masterplan Adjustment expressed the plan	The demonstrations had expressed the most important objections
Impact	€59 million was awarded conditionally	Public support became an additional criterion for subsidy

Masterplan Adjustment resulted from the work of the HOV Projectbureau and the recognition of resistance resulted from the demonstrations.

The degree to which participation and empowerment of the fast flow advocates resulted in impact on the decision-making process was partly based on the existing promises. In the late eighties the State promised a substantial financial contribution as part of national policy plans. However, since proofs of public resistance became more important attributes, this promise had become conditioned by the additional criterion of public support.

The characteristics of this setting thus framed the issue as one in which the State was authorised to decide between conflicting action programs. It decided in favour of the advocates of fast bus flows, but at the same time forced them to integrate demands of other stakeholders. The impact of the demonstrations was a decisive attribute in this decision.

#### 6.4.4 City council (1996/1997)

Two more council meetings about the issue were required: the first in November 1996 to approve the Masterplan Adjustment (including the answers in the two-column document about the 1996 public inquiry), the second in June 1997 to vote for definitive expenditure of the budget (if the ministry would supply subsidy). These two meetings were again surrounded with protests and the debate remained highly polemical. The setting in which these meetings took place can be characterized by the following conditions:

- Access conditions: election results; 45 elected councillors, divided in five major and a number of minor political parties, were to decide about proposals from M&A; in addition, outsiders have the opportunity to have a say in the meeting.
- Attributes: rights to speak, majority voting, work program, the two-column document, the Masterplan, State subsidy, cost-calculations.
- Audience: the electorate (next elections were in 1998).

In the autumn of 1996 the results of the public inquiry of last spring had not been published yet. Nevertheless the Projectbureau continued working on the Masterplan Adjustment in relative silence and with little consultation of the HOV platform.<sup>74</sup> It prepared solutions to problems exposed by the public inquiry and emphasized by the ministry. The Projectbureau preferred to present a document with possible solutions not based on further dialogue but on the yet unpublished two-column document. It developed three more adjustments to the Masterplan Adjustment.<sup>75</sup> Most radical was a change of the layout of the Biltstraat: a separate cycling lane and more crossings were added. However, like the other two changes this merely concerned adjustments on the level of details. The overall plan did not change in spite of the critique on

this level. In angry reactions both the HOV Platform and some of its member committees questioned the lack of transparency and the breach of promise to get involved.<sup>76</sup> When the board finally published an information leaflet, proclaiming that the new “Design meets with objections from the inquiry”, the amazed HOV Platform organized a demonstration and called people up to protest at the upcoming council meeting.<sup>77</sup>

The city council had to decide about the final Masterplan Adjustment including the three changes proposed by the Projectbureau. During the discussion of city council’s committee (that prepared the council discussion) the HOV platform used the opportunity to have a say, but was accused of “wrongly depicting the state of affairs” by a coalition party spokesperson.<sup>78</sup> Only a number of small political parties sympathized with the platform. To sum up the meetings, the city council did impose M&A to involve stakeholders better in the elaboration phase of the Masterplan and to commission an external bureau for communication advice to gain public support, but it also approved by majority the finally published two-column document and the Masterplan Adjustment.<sup>79</sup>

The subsequent elaboration phase was characterized by approaching stakeholders directly instead of via the HOV Platform, because that would isolate the diehard activists according to the advice of the communication bureau.<sup>80</sup> When the minister decided to grant the subsidy in spring,<sup>81</sup> the bypassed HOV Platform continued its protest in court. It suited the Board and the minister (in vain), because it claimed that the lack of support made the plan and the subsidy illegitimate.<sup>82</sup>

Meanwhile politicians started to use the issue for party profiling more and more. Next elections were already nearing when the council had to vote for expenditure of the budget in June 1997. Some savings were carried through in the proposed ‘Masterplan Design’: the ministry would credit a subsidy of 53 million euros and Utrecht had to contribute another 18 million euros.<sup>83</sup> The HOV Platform disputed these calculations and argued that the Utrecht contribution would amount up to 37 million euros. In the council meeting politicians used this disagreement to restart fighting their position war. VVD and SP judged the plan too expensive and risky. D66 was divided: two prominent councillors voted against the proposal, because they wanted priority to the construction of ‘around the south’ (which was planned already, but not as a prime connection to De Uithof) and austere construction of the centre trajectory afterwards; four other D66 councillors voted with the coalition. A council majority approved the Masterplan Design and the 18 million euros credit.<sup>84</sup>

The two stakeholders in this issue were represented in the city council. In conformance with the 1994 election results, the advocates of the fast bus flows through the city centre formed a majority and had most impact on the final decision. However, the opposition was more empowered now, because the financial support for the Masterplan was less favourable than in 1994 and the trajectory ‘around the south’ had become more elaborated meanwhile. Notably, councillors of coalition partner D66 opposed the Masterplan Design (see table 6.8). How can the decision of the council then be explained by the way the characteristics of the setting framed the issue?

The degree to which stakeholders were represented in part reflected the 1994 election results (access conditions of city council) and the subsequent coalition agreement (attribute linking majority together). The HOV Platform, which used the opportunity to have a say in the 1996 meeting, only met with sympathy of those opposition parties having been in a minority since last elections. In the 1997 meeting, however, the electorate (audience) started to play a role again

Table 6.8 Evaluation of democratic quality of setting 8 – City council

	Fast bus flows	Distributed network
Participation	Via PvdA, CDA, GroenLinks	Via VVD, D66 (and SP) and the HOV Platform
Empowerment	Masterplan Design well expressed underlying action programs	Politicians emphasized financial setbacks and risks, 'around the south' had been elaborated meanwhile
Impact	Approval of two-column document, approval of Masterplan Design, 18 million euros credit	Potential electoral support in next elections

and the coalition slightly disintegrated. Because elections were forthcoming, parties choose to position themselves in a way that was recognizable to their constituencies. Two D66 councillors, for example, choose to be critical to the Masterplan rather than loyal to the coalition's work program.

The degree to which the different stakeholders were empowered partly depended on attributes made available by the anti-tram movement. The well-informed movement had questioned M&A's cost-calculations, publicized their own calculations in the local newspaper and brought them via VVD and SP into the council debate. But still the option of a distributed network, with an important role for the trajectory 'around the south' to De Uithof had remained less elaborated and discussed than the Masterplan option of buses on a free lane through the city centre.

The degree to which stakeholders affected the outcomes was again a matter of how the work program (attribute) aligned coalition partners and the decisiveness of majority voting (attribute), although with forthcoming elections the work program was losing force. Opposition would possibly generate impact on the next setting.

The characteristics of this setting framed the issue as one that triggered renewed controversy, as one in which opposing interests were well articulated, but also as one in which opposition did not lead to impact on the decision-making process, unless elections would turn the tide. The work program was still decisive.

#### 6.4.5 Coalition negotiations (1998 elections)

The 1998 elections turned the tide. Out of the blue local party *Leefbaar Utrecht* became the second biggest after *GroenLinks*.<sup>85</sup> This suggested a coalition of *GroenLinks*, *Leefbaar Utrecht* and one or two other parties, to be formed in a setting with the following characteristics:

- Access conditions: *GroenLinks* took the lead and invited potential partners.
- Attributes: party programs, number of seats, recognition of *Leefbaar Utrecht*'s spectacular victory.
- Audience: constituencies of parties.

*Leefbaar Utrecht*'s spearhead in the election debates was HOV and its victory was most importantly based on recruiting both ideas and people from the anti-tram movement.<sup>86</sup> However, its election promise to organize a referendum about the continuation of the project barred participation in a new coalition because the other parties found such a return unacceptable.<sup>87</sup> Other parties formed a broad coalition of no less than six parties (32/45), which included VVD

and D66.<sup>88</sup> Because VVD, D66 and Leefbaar Utrecht would form an influential power bloc in the council, the work program of the new Board of Mayor and Aldermen already reflected their wish to simplify the prestigious project and to prioritise ‘around the south’.<sup>89</sup>

Fast doubly articulated buses around the south would connect the railway station with De Uithof and the centre trajectory would be as austere as possible, though still with a free bus lane. Austerity concretely meant simple bus stops instead of eye-catching stations, an additional bus stop in the Biltstraat and another one in the city centre, and one-way traffic for cars in the Biltstraat to reduce traffic intensity and create space for cyclists, pedestrians and trees.<sup>90</sup> In general, arguments based on liveability, safety, and accessibility replaced hitherto hegemonic arguments related to the capital H in HOV. Quality criteria were substituted with compromised criteria: ‘reasonable speed’, ‘fitting in urban environment’, and ‘doing right to other functions (cycling, car driving, parking, shop provisioning, pedestrian crossing, living, etc.)’ in the first place. “The design does not necessarily have to meet all [earlier] formulated HOV requirements”.<sup>91</sup>

Arguably, the concretisation of austerity measures gave rise to new disputes and some more adjustments. Was an expensive foundation of concrete really necessary?<sup>92</sup> Should Utrecht adopt articulated buses on LPG or doubly articulated buses on diesel?<sup>93</sup> Are taxis allowed to use the free lane?<sup>94</sup> Yet, the big controversy closed as more and more parts of the two trajectories reached finalization. The anti-tram movement disintegrated in individuals who still thought of HOV as an ugly monster, but for most Utrecht citizens the final result represented an irreversibility about which enough was said.

The stakeholders being considered in this study – still the same – were represented by six political parties. Like in 1994, GroenLinks took the initiative in the negotiations, but it was in need of many coalition partners and had to compromise essential parts of the existing Masterplan. The compromise achieved reflected the balance of power (see table 6.9) and can be explained by the characteristics of the setting:

The degrees of stakeholder participation resulted from the access conditions. GroenLinks invited these five other parties on the base of party programs and number of seats (attributes) in order to establish a majority. A broad coalition was necessary to justify the exclusion of Leefbaar Utrecht.

The degree to which the coalition parties were empowered did not only balance the number of seats they had received from the electorate. Those parties advocating the distributed network idea remained closest to the party program of Leefbaar Utrecht. They were able to use the latter’s victory as an attribute to the benefit of their own action program.

*Table 6.9* Evaluation of democratic quality of setting 9 – Coalition negotiations

	<b>Fast bus flows</b>	<b>Distributed network</b>
Participation	Via GroenLinks, PvdA, and CDA	Via D66, VVD, and SP
Empowerment	Parties could not afford sticking with Masterplan Design	Comfortably articulated benefits of network
Impact	Free lane for buses through city centre, advanced bus rolling stock	Priority to around the south, austerity measures

The degree to which stakeholders affected the outcomes, finally, reflected the number of seats plus Leefbaar Utrechts victory, too. In other words, the election result supported Leefbaar Utrecht and their ideas, but the real finalization and settlement of the project came about in complex negotiations between six coalition parties against the background of an outspoken and in the end successful anti-tram movement. The most important impact was austere execution of the Masterplan.

The characteristics of this setting framed the issue as one in which action programs were again equally valid, compared with one another and aligned if possible. Public support, as expressed by the election results, counted more than building on achievements realised thus far. Some plans ready to be executed were even frozen awaiting the elaboration of the new work program. Particularly due to Leefbaar Utrecht's victory, this final outcome expressed the will of citizens of Utrecht. Only non-Utrechters, who would nevertheless make use of HOV, were excluded.

## **6.5 Conclusions**

In this case study the democratic implications of displacements and reframing are a key interest. Per issue, the most important stakeholders were determined in order to answer the question how they were (not) enabled to participate, empowered to articulate their ideas and action programs, and how such articulation affected the outcomes of the decision-making process. Section 6.5.1 draws conclusions about democratic quality on the level of settings and focuses on the question how participation, empowerment and impact are reinforced due to the characteristics of settings. Section 6.5.2 draws conclusions about the process as a whole and deals with the question how the reframing effects of displacements between settings contribute to democratic quality. The typology of displacements from the previous chapters is used to investigate how the different types of displacements contribute to overall democratic quality. Finally, section 6.5.3 draws conclusions about the dynamics of displacements. The typology of displacements will here be used to investigate whether the relation between reframing effects and democratic quality is somehow patterned by a certain dynamics.

### **6.5.1 Democratic quality and the characteristics of settings**

The degree to which all stakeholders are able to participate, either directly or indirectly, is for a large part determined by the access conditions of the settings. Those who organize or legitimise the setting decide who will be invited. In coalition negotiations after elections the biggest political party took the initiative; in the public inquiry the Board of Mayor and Aldermen determined the access conditions; in the city council the electorate determined the access conditions. Only the HOV Projectbureau conditioned access on more general criteria (education and skills relevant for policy advice), but in this setting access also required obedience to the Board of M&A to develop the Masterplan.

In the case of indirect participation, a specific attribute, a mandate, also determines the ability to participate. In this regard, it is useful to distinguish between direct and indirect participation. In the first case, stakeholders participate on behalf of themselves; in the latter case, for example within the city council, stakeholders participate on behalf of others. Access to the latter requires a mandate, which justifies the representation of others. For example, election results

justify decisions of the city council on behalf of the electorate. A mandate, however, requires the presence of a critical audience who is enabled to judge about the proper execution of the mandate. The electorate is enabled to do so in elections. Another example of an active audience is the set of political parties, which judged upon the achievements of their representatives in the coalition negotiations.

Note that the ability to participate does not always reflect actual participation. Actual participation decreases when the interest of stakeholders are already integrated in the dominant action program. If not, like in the public inquiry, the demonstrations and the two elections, stakeholders are eager to participate and compensate for being excluded in other settings.

Empowerment, the degree to which participants are able to articulate their ideas and action programs, most importantly depends on the attributes available on the setting. Here it is useful to distinguish two kinds of attributes: representational attributes (previous agreements, work programs, two-column documents, mandates, party programs, and media coverage of protest) and information/knowledge attributes (transport value studies, economic impact studies, feasibility studies, the Masterplans, alternative options, cost calculations).<sup>95</sup> Empowerment is mainly based on the use of representational attributes combined with knowledge attributes. The first justified the interests; the second expressed the relation between facts and interests. For example, the combination of the work program and the studies performed in the history of the project, merged in the Masterplans as expressions of the action program of advocates of the centre trajectory time and again. In opposition, the alternative options elaborated by the anti-tram movement combined with the proofs of widely shared public resistance strongly empowered the advocates of a distributed network.

Did the availability of attributes reflect the action programs of the organizers and hence bias the degree of empowerment? Yes, the information available in the public inquiries, for example, elaborated on the benefits of a centre-trajectory, but did not provide a comparison between different options. Having said that, these settings were co-shaped by non-organizers. The empowering of the opposition in nearly all settings depended on activism by a number of persistent critics of the Masterplan. Some active demonstrators wrote influential counter reports and received quite some media coverage already in the early nineties. If the opposition to the Masterplans was indeed equally empowered, then this was made possible by voluntary work.

Impact, the degree to which empowerment affects the outcomes, can be divided in two kinds: influence on the prevailing action program and influence on the characteristics of subsequent settings.

Influence on the prevailing action program – that is: on the Masterplans – requires a third kind of attribute to actually make legitimate decisions: constitutional attributes (right to vote, majority decision-making). Coalition negotiations strongly influenced the content of the Masterplan just because voting rights of citizens justified proportional influence of participants. The work program repeatedly played an important role just because it put majority decision-making in operation.

This role of constitutional attributes, however, can become too important. It can also justify decisions, which are based on limited participation or unbalanced empowerment. For example, the 1992 two-column document revealed the circular capacity argument and the possibility of doubly articulated buses and henceforth questioned the validity of empowering attributes of

the coalition parties in the subsequent council decision. Nevertheless, in spite of very strong counterarguments, the council decided by majority to accept the proposal of M&A on the base of majority decision-making.

The other kind of impact is influence on the characteristics of subsequent settings. Such impact rather requires a responsive and potentially influential audience. A statement implies an addressee. When fellow participants do not listen, then addressing the audience can be more effective. For example, in the 1993 city council meeting one councillor concluded: "it does not make sense to speak any further." Yet, he did speak further because elections were forthcoming. The electorate was an influential audience in that meeting. Other examples are the articulated antiprograms in the 1992 public inquiry and the 1996 demonstrations. The audiences (city council and negotiations with State respectively) became participants in subsequent settings and the direct outcomes (two-column documents and media coverage of demonstrations) became attributes.

To conclude, the possibility to participate depended on access conditions and, in the case of indirect participation, a mandate from the audience. The degree of empowerment depended on the attributes available on the setting, especially the combination of representational and knowledge attributes. Attributes biased the ability to articulate an action program, but differently biased attributes were most often available, because both the respective Boards of M&A and the anti-tram movement recognized the need to empower their participating allies. Impact on the issue depended on participation, empowerment, but most importantly on constitutional attributes that justified a decision. Impact on the setting depended on the responsiveness of the audience and its empowerment and influence in subsequent settings.

#### **6.5.2 The contribution of displacements to democratic quality**

This section evaluates democratic quality of an innovation process at the more general level of displacements, because the requirement that all stakeholders should be involved does not necessarily mean that they should be involved in all settings. Settings may as well compensate for each other's deficits. Yet, they may indeed reinforce each other's biases and establish hegemony. Therefore, to evaluate democratic quality this section assesses the framing and reframing effects of settings and their relative contributions to participation, empowerment and impact. Tables 6.10 and 6.11 summarize the findings from the case study. They present the decisive characteristics of settings, the resulting framing of issues and the relative degrees in which stakeholders were involved. The second column also presents the type of displacement between brackets, which is based on the definitions<sup>96</sup> established in the previous case studies.

Who were the most important stakeholders? Stakeholders in the issue were divided into two groups: those advocating a concentrated flow of trams (later buses) through the city centre and those advocating a distributed network of preferably buses. The first group had traditionally been very strong: most stakeholders involved in the mid-1980s, when the issue reappeared on the political agenda, thought that a fast tram connection would attract much more passengers than the then existing network of buses. The prospects of increased traffic due to a growing city urged for a radical improvement of the public transport system. The second group of stakeholders grew stronger in due course, when the political plans became more realistic and official workgroups were even set to work. This group feared the adverse consequences of fast trams continuously going up and down the neighbourhoods where they lived or had a living. Both stakeholder

Table 6.10 The influence of settings and framing on democratic quality (1990-1991)

Setting (decisive characteristics)	Framing	Participation, empowerment & impact	
		Fast tram flows	Distributed network
Meeting of M&A (access privileged to coalition partners)	M&A realigned and elaboration of its action program (delegation)	Much impact: reinforced loyalty to work program, elaboration of Masterplan (MP),	No participation
Public inquiry (two conflicting kinds of attributes compels either/or choice)	Articulation of objections and antiprograms (articulation)	Well empowered, rejection of many antiprograms, no impact until next setting	Massive participation, well empowered, well articulated antiprograms, no impact until elections
City council (work program was decisive attribute, but electorate appeared to be potentially influential audience)	Disappearance of many controversial aspects (partial depoliticisation)	Much impact: proposal of M&A accepted (approval of MP, supply of money for further preparation, silent approval of two-column document)	Well empowered, but hardly articulated antiprograms, no impact, awaiting elections
Coalition negotiations (election results and party programs as decisive attributes)	Alternative options reappeared in the context of public interest, public resistance took effect (politicisation, delegation)	Proportional impact: separate infrastructure for fast flows	Proportional impact: advanced buses flexibly applicable on different trajectories, trams disappeared from MP

groups had obvious interests in the issue, so the question of proportional involvement was highly pressing. To go about with this question, we take the election results as indicative for the relative sizes of the two groups and retrospectively evaluate how the reframing effects of displacements did (not) contribute to democratic quality?

Table 6.10 shows that the advocates of a distributed network were not allowed to participate in the formulation and elaboration of the work program by the Board of M&A. Its meeting framed the issue as one in which tram advocates were empowered to align their action programs and make a start with the elaboration of the action program into a Masterplan (delegation). The 1990 election results legitimated this framing.

The public inquiry reframed the issue as one in which all stakeholders were empowered to articulate their antiprograms (articulation). But whatever the outcomes, impact on the prevailing plan was not in the hands of the participants, but of its audience of city councillors willing to take them into consideration. The Board of Mayor and Aldermen itself conceived of the inquiries as a mere ‘exchange of viewpoints’ or ‘exchange of thoughts’.<sup>97</sup> As a team that evaluated the participation between 1994 and 1997 concluded:<sup>98</sup>

“The two-column document is admittedly a correct instrument in a formal and procedural sense, but it does not contribute to a positive interaction between the inquired and the authorities. On the contrary: a two-column document rather excites ‘distance’ and frustration.”

Because impact was far from guaranteed, one may suspect that the inquiry was organised for nothing but procedural requirements, like other inquiries those days (Korsten et al., 1996, p. 73).

If the city council had taken the public inquiry into serious consideration, then the suspicion would have been much weaker. Yet, in the council meeting the most controversial aspects of the Masterplan, which the public inquiry had revealed, disappeared from the debate (partial depoliticisation). The work program fostered loyalty among a city council majority and appeared to be a decisive attribute in the decision about the issue; it put majority voting into operation.

The coalition negotiations after the 1994 elections turned the tide. The issue got reframed as one in which resistance finally took effect and alternative options reappeared in the context of a redefined public interest (politicisation). The election results were primarily responsible for this turn. These results can be explained by the recent history of the process. The 1991 meeting of the Board of M&A was legitimately biased in favour of the forthcoming Masterplan. The 1992 public inquiry biased in favour of a distributed network, though a higher impact degree might have prevented frustration among the inquired. In the city council the outcomes of the inquiry as well as the outcome of a survey were well known, but the council accepted the proposal of M&A without discussing the manifestation of widely shared resistance, the circular capacity paradox, and the possibility of doubly articulated buses: it insufficiently politicised the issue. This indeed put a claim on the elections, where the issue was finally politicised.

The 1994-1999 episode followed a similar pattern. After the 1998 elections the issue soon settled and the anti-tram movement ceased its protest; the compromise seemed to satisfy all stakeholders. Therefore, we can safely take these elections again as indicative for the proportional sizes of the two groups of stakeholders. So, how did the reframing effects of displacements (not) contribute to democratic quality?

Table 6.11 shows that the advocates of a distributed network were not allowed to participate in the work of the HOV Projectbureau. This workplace framed the issue as settled: the bus plan was to be developed but on the base of the existing Masterplan Tram. However, this framing again bypassed the concerns of local stakeholders about the concentrated traffic flows through lively residential areas (delegation). Decisions were taken on the base of one attribute, the instructions from M&A, instead of also on continuous participation of those who were at the base of the election victory of the coalition parties. Nevertheless, definitive approval of these decisions would later be taken in the city council, where all stakeholders would participate.

The subsequent demonstrations framed the issue as one in which the dominant action program, the Masterplan, was publicly contested (articulation). The exclusion of local stakeholders from the previous setting fed frustration, distrust and hence a strong willingness to participate in a broad protest movement. Yet, here again: citizens, empowered by the HOV Platform to articulate their antiprograms, could not control or influence decisive (constitutional) attributes. Therefore, stakeholders sought impact via persuasion of the audience.

One audience played a crucial role in the next setting. The minister was to decide about the 86 million euros subsidy request for realisation of the Masterplan Adjustment. The negotiations between Utrecht and the State framed the issue as one in which the minister became authorised to foster a solution for the conflict of interests (authorisation). Indeed, the minister achieved alignment of interests by adding criteria of public support to existing criteria of speed, comfort and costs. This potentially made room for impact by network-advocates.

Table 6.11 The influence of settings and framing on democratic quality (1994-1999)

Setting (decisive characteristics)	Framing	Participation, empowerment & impact	
		Fast tram flows	Distributed network
HOV Projectbureau (access conditions and instructions deny access to others than employees and alderman)	Controversial issue taken to be settled, dominant action program elaborated (delegation)	Much impact: development of MP Adjustment, many decisions pre-structured	No access, no participation (provoked protest)
Demonstration (open access, bias of previous setting provoked massive protest)	Contestation of dominant action program, articulation of antiprograms (articulation)	No participation	Massive participation, well empowered, well articulated antiprograms, no impact until next setting
Negotiations with State (two conflicting kinds of attributes among which begged for alignment)	State became authority to solve conflict between action programs (authorisation)	Proportional impact: €59 million was awarded conditionally	Possible impact: public support became an additional criterion for subsidy
City council (opportunity to have a say, work program as decisive attribute, electorate as potentially influential audience)	Emerging financial risks triggered renewed controversy (articulation), impact based on biased work program (partial depoliticisation)	Much impact: proposal of M&A accepted (approval of two-column document, approval of Masterplan Design, 18 million euros credit)	Well empowered, but still relatively weak articulation of antiprograms, no impact, awaiting elections
Coalition negotiations (election results and party programs as decisive attributes)	Alternative options reappeared in the context of the public interest, public resistance took effect (politicisation, delegation)	Proportional impact: free lane for buses through city centre, advanced bus rolling stock	Proportional impact: priority to around the south, austerity measures

In the next setting, the city council, the issue was framed in a dual way. On the one hand, the biased work program and Masterplan Tram were still decisive attributes, because their contestation by concerns about heavy traffic flows through residential areas was not taken into consideration (depoliticisation). M&A claimed having incorporated public concerns, but only adjusted the Masterplan on the level of details. On the other hand the 1997 meeting brought forward new antiprograms against the Masterplan: the too high and risky own contribution (articulation). Although a depoliticising loyalty to the work program set majority voting in operation, councillors also tried to influence the audience of citizens by articulating weak aspects of the prevailing action program.

The coalition negotiations on the base of the 1998 election results again caused a major turn in the decision-making process. In this setting, the issue was reframed in the context of election results (politicisation): the public preference for a distributed network was more important than the time and money already invested in the development of the Masterplan. Not until the

issue displaced to this setting, the interests of advocates of a distributed network (meanwhile a majority) were awarded with impact.

The disproportional impact of fast flow advocates was due to depoliticisation of the concerns of network-advocates on two settings. First, the HOV Projectbureau did not allow participation of those to whom the coalition, M&A, and the mandate to the Projectbureau thanked their dominance. Instead of continuous dialogue, M&A instructed the Projectbureau to develop a tram-like bus plan. Second, after this situation had provoked demonstrations and the articulation of a broadly supported antiprogram, and the minister awarded the validity of this protest, concerns and demands were only partially integrated in the Masterplan. The city council depoliticised the main concerns about the foundations of the Masterplan: the adverse consequences of heavy traffic flows through old and lively residential areas. The council did not respond to the well-articulated public interest. Like in its 1993 meeting, it refused to repoliticise the issue. This again put a claim on the elections, where the issue was indeed politicised.

To conclude, the two episodes of the case show a similar pattern. Constraints to participation in the development of plans fed massive demonstrations in which a self-empowered anti-tram movement well articulated its antiprograms. These demonstrations thus compensated for the access limitations in previous settings. The issues displaced between two oppositely biased settings, which in principle contributes to democratic quality, because such displacements pre-eminently render the pros and cons of action programs clear. Within the city council, participants were thus well empowered due to the activities on these settings. However, in the city council the antiprograms were depoliticised on the base of loyalty to decisive attributes: the respective work programs. Without recognizable comparison of interests, the council time and again voted by majority with the Board of Mayor and Aldermen, even when there were enough disempowering attributes available that proved them to vote against the current will of the people. Elections put the people in the right.

### **6.5.3 The dynamics of displacement**

On the base of different framing effects the previous case studies established a typology of five types of displacements: delegation, articulation, politicisation, depoliticisation, and authorisation. These displacements can be discerned in the current case, too (see table 6.10 and 6.11). This section further elaborates on their dynamics. Thereto, the overall question – what are the underlying dynamics of displacements? – is divided in a how question and a why question. The first concerns the description of routes of displacements in terms of the characteristics of settings where the issue displaces between. In addition to conclusions from previous case studies, this case study also draws conclusions about changes in democratic qualities that are involved in these displacements. The why question addresses the conditions and drivers of these displacements.

Delegation – the realisation of an action program on the base of a broadly supported mandate – occurred in the formation, discussions and decisions of the Board of Mayor and Aldermen on the base of a mandate from the city council majority (6.3.1, 6.3.4, 6.4.1 and 6.4.5). Coalition parties aligned action programs in the negotiations, leading to a work program and to the Masterplans.

The scope of settings narrows due to delegation. In the council<sup>99</sup> representatives of the electorate have proportional access (seats) and influence (votes). Majority voting is a decisive (constitutional) attribute, and the electorate is the audience. In the Board of M&A access is

only allowed to coalition parties, who sign the work program. An important (representational) attribute is the mandate from the council to develop plans. The audience of M&A is composed of councillors, who will have to decide about the proposals in the end. Although the scope of settings narrows in delegations, M&A remains accountable to the council due to its representational attribute (mandate) and audience (councillors).

In terms of democratic quality, delegation amounts to partial participation, because minorities are excluded. It empowers M&A with mandates to acquire the attributes that are needed to elaborate the work program, but M&A remains dependent on the council for impact. Yet, majority voting is a constitutional attribute in the council, and coalition parties generally back their aldermen-delegates, M&A is able to generate impact despite partial participation.<sup>100</sup>

The main condition for delegation, finally, is the election result and the mandates (and instructions) derived from it. The largest political party is allowed to take the initiative in the formation and the coalition is mostly based on a council majority. Because the work program needs to be a compromise between their interests, parties with similar visions and ideas are invited. In this case, the interests in the HOV project played a crucial part in this invitation.

Articulation – the public demonstration against (part of) an action program – most importantly occurred in the public inquiry (6.3.2) and demonstrations (6.4.2). Antiprograms were also uttered in the city council (6.4.4), but less well articulated.<sup>101</sup> The public inquiry and demonstrations were responses to settings with disproportional participation in favour of the dominant action program.

Articulation involves a displacement to a setting that opposes the previous setting in many regards. The previous settings, M&A and the HOV Projectbureau respectively, are characterized by denial of access to differently minded stakeholders, by strong representational attributes (mandates), and by knowledge attributes constructed and collected by participants themselves. The audiences commissioned this construction and collection of attributes. The setting where articulation takes place, on the contrary, is characterized by open access, by knowledge attributes that are constructed by outsiders (relative to the previous setting) and that challenge the validity of prevailing knowledge attributes. The audience consists of those to be persuaded to change their minds.

In terms of democratic quality, articulation contributes to additional participation and empowerment. Articulation does not directly contribute to impact on the decision-making process.

Articulation is made possible by procedural requirements (a public inquiry in major projects is a requirement of Utrecht policy on democratisation) or by activism (HOV Platform called up and empowered demonstrators). In both cases, the massive attendance was a response to the biases of previous settings.

(Partial) depoliticisation – the bracketing and disappearance of antiprograms – took place twice in displacements to the city council (6.3.3 and 6.4.4). This conclusion – that depoliticisation notably takes place in a setting designed for democratic politics – begs for a conscientious argument.

Depoliticisation is the result of many changes in settings, which explain why well-articulated (parts of) antiprograms disappear. First, the audience of the previous setting (councillors) become participants in the current setting, but are apparently not convinced by the antiprograms

articulated in previous settings. Second, not convinced means that the *majority* is not convinced as majority voting becomes a crucial (constitutional) attribute with displacement to the council. Third, not convinced might mean that antiprograms were not based on convincing knowledge attributes, but here it means not convinced enough to break with the work program, which is a representational instead of a knowledge attribute. And fourth, the legitimacy of this representational attribute is fundamentally contested in the previous setting, but just taken for granted in the current.

With regard to democratic quality, the outcomes of depoliticisation do not reflect the interests. When stakeholders are equally empowered the relative degrees of participation should be decisive. Depoliticisation means that participation admittedly reflects the latest election results, but is nonetheless disproportional to the current division of interests. Even though the political system awards an election victory with a mandate for four years, when the mandate is not in correspondence with the public interest then democratic legitimacy is at stake.<sup>102</sup> The exploitation of this questionable mandate enables disproportional impact.

The single most important conditions for depoliticisation, finally, was the planning of the Board of M&A (and the head of the HOV Projectbureau, who advised about wise moments) when and what to propose to the city council.

Politicisation – the discussion of controversial parts of an action program in its wider context – happened during and directly after elections (6.3.4 and 6.4.5), because the council had refused to do so in the previous setting. Elections are payday for politicians. The results expressed the massive dissatisfaction with the one-sidedly biased decision-making process. In the coalition negotiations different interests were discussed in the context of considerably changed electoral support.

This politicisation between the old and the new city council and the old and the new coalition was due to election results. Access conditions, being proportional to the results, changed; attributes, notably the work program, became obsolete; and the audience became more and more suspicious and critical about the promises of politicians. Politicians, especially after the 1998 elections, could not afford bypassing the claims of the HOV Platform any longer.

With regard to democratic quality, elections restored the balance of power. Participation was proportional (by definition); empowerment had never been a problem thanks to decent opposition by a number of energetic activists; but impact was finally within reach as hitherto bypassed stakeholders saw their interests better reflected in the new work programs.

The conditions for politicisation, as said, were the elections: the main democratic mechanism in the political system.

Authorisation – the solution of a conflict on the base of acknowledged authority – happened once: when the minister awarded State subsidy under the condition of increased public support (6.4.3). This condition was meant to align opposing action programs on the base of authority.

The settings involved in the displacement were the HOV Projectbureau and the demonstrations on the one hand and the negotiations with the State on the other. The outcomes of the first settings functioned as attributes in the latter. The Masterplan, produced in the HOV Projectbureau, was to be assessed. In opposition, media coverage of the demonstrations also functioned as a (representational) attribute in this setting, despite the fact that the HOV

Platform did not have formal access to the setting. From the point of view of the latter setting: the minister and her servants were influential audiences of the previous settings.

In terms of democratic quality authorisation potentially yields proportional impact. Due to the use of representational attributes, disproportional participation was compensated. Masterplan and demonstrations had brought forward all attributes for equal empowerment. Impact, however, depended on evaluation of the minister along extended criteria. Three changes made by the Projectbureau apparently sufficed, although this far from satisfied the HOV Platform. Retrospectively, the promises made in past (representational attribute) carried more weight than the satisfaction of network advocates.

Finally, the most important condition for authorisation is a relation of dependency. The Board of Utrecht was obliged to pass by this setting in order to finance the project at all.

## Notes

- 1 In the two previous case studies, this normative question was answered a posteriori and on the base of observations that provoked our sense of justice. This case study more systematically interrogates the issue in order to identify stakeholders.
- 2 *Maandblad Oud-Utrecht* January 1978.
- 3 *Utrechts Nieuwsblad (UN)*, 20 May 1977.
- 4 *U-blad, Utrecht University*, 10 December 1976. *UN* 30 September 1977. *UN* 29 October 1977.
- 5 *UN*, 21 April 1978.
- 6 *UN* 27 September 1984.
- 7 *Vervoerwaardestudie (1986)*. Utrecht: DHV. *Facetstudie Vervoersvoorziening Utrecht-Uithof-Zeist (1988)*. Utrecht. *Een schets van hoogwaardig openbaar vervoer in en om Utrecht (1988)*, Utrecht: Provinciale adviesgroep voor verkeer en vervoer BV (AGV). *Facetstudie tramtracés om de zuid (1989)*. Utrecht: BGC.
- 8 *UN* 12 February 1988. *UN* 7 June 1988.
- 9 *Conclusies facetstudie tramtracé binnenstad versus 'om de zuid' (1989)*. Utrecht: BGC.
- 10 *Regionale netwerkstudie Utrecht, tussenrapportage (1989)*. Utrecht: GVU/AGV.
- 11 *De adder onder de rails (1989)*. Utrecht: Werkgroep 'Geen sneltram door de binnenstad'.
- 12 *Evaluatie HOV beleidsproces (Evaluation HOV policy process) (1998)*. Utrecht: Projectmanagementbureau.
- 13 *Ibid.*
- 14 *Ibid.*
- 15 This question needs to be addressed per issue, because whether actors should participate depends on whether they have a legitimate interest in the issue. However, due to reframing of the issue, the question needs to be asked anew after each displacement. After all, reframing might also have implications for others than already recognised stakeholders.
- 16 *Evaluatie*, op. cit. note 12.
- 17 *Tram Utrecht CS – De Uithof. Ondergronds tracé binnenstad. Hoofdrapport (1991)*. Utrecht: city clerk's office.
- 18 *Proposal by Mayor and Aldermen*. Utrecht: city clerk's office, November 1991.
- 19 *Ibid.*
- 20 *Notulen vergadering gemeenteraad Utrecht (Minutes of the city council meeting)*, Utrecht: city clerk's office, 7 November 1991.
- 21 *Vervoerwaardestudie*, op. cit. note 7. *De weg naar HOV (1991)*. Utrecht: Directieoverleg.

- 22 Economische effectrapportage (1991). Utrecht: Bureau voor Economische Argumentatie.
- 23 Op. cit. note 10.
- 24 Op. cit. note 8.
- 25 Op. cit. note 17.
- 26 Evaluatie, op. cit. note 12. Communicatieplan HOV-verbinding Utrecht CS – De Uithof (1992). Utrecht: city clerk's office.
- 27 Op. cit. note 18.
- 28 Masterplan Utrecht CS – De Uithof, concept (1992). Utrecht: Projectbureau Tram. Op. cit. notes 7, 9, 10, 17, 21, and 22.
- 29 Op. cit. note 11.
- 30 Inspraakreacties Utrecht CS – De Uithof (1993). Utrecht: city clerk's office.
- 31 Ibid. Evaluatie, op. cit. note 12.
- 32 Discussiebijdrage vormgeving Hoogwaardig Openbaar Vervoer in het stadsgewest (1992). Utrecht: Deputies of Utrecht.
- 33 Notulen vergadering gemeenteraad Utrecht (Minutes of the city council meeting). Utrecht: city clerk's office, 1 July 1993.
- 34 Ibid. p. 17-20, 34-39, 50-58.
- 35 Ibid. p. 7.
- 36 Sneltram eindigt in remise. Stadspeiling Utrecht (1993). Utrecht: city clerk's office. Opponents were mostly non-users, well informed, highly educated, and elderly. Advocates basically included regular users, badly informed, people with low education, and immigrants. One may interpret this result as a forerunner of the next elections, because the first group of people generally is more politically engaged and more inclined to participate in elections.
- 37 Ibid. p. 5.
- 38 Ibid. p. 9.
- 39 Op. cit. note 33, p. 41.
- 40 Coalition negotiations followed elections. Elections involve a displacement to yet another setting: polling stations in which the voice of the people is directly expressed. This setting has clearly distinguished characteristics, like voting rights (access conditions), votes, party programs, media debates (attributes); there is no audience within polling stations.
- 41 Beschikkingaanvraag HOV-tracé Utrecht CS – De Uithof, concept (1994). Utrecht: Projectbureau Tram.
- 42 Jaarverslag 1993. Utrecht: Projectbureau Tram. Evaluatie, op. cit. note 12.
- 43 Op. cit. note 36.
- 44 ANP, 2 March 1994, <http://web.lexis-nexis.com/>, viewed on 12 December 2005.
- 45 ANP, 13 April 1994, <http://web.lexis-nexis.com/>, viewed on 12 December 2005. Evaluatie, op. cit. note 12.
- 46 Notulen vergadering gemeenteraad Utrecht (Minutes of the city council meeting), Utrecht: city clerk's office, 28 November 1996 and 17 December 1999.
- 47 Kostenraming (Cost estimate) HOV Utrecht CS – De Uithof (1997). Utrecht: HOV Projectbureau.
- 48 Notulen vergadering gemeenteraad Utrecht (Minutes of the city council meeting), Utrecht: city clerk's office, 17 December 1999.
- 49 UN, 14 October 1994.
- 50 <http://www.gvu.nl/> viewed on 12 May 2006.
- 51 Op. cit., note 48.
- 52 Collegeprogramma 1994-1998 van de fracties van: D66, GroenLinks, PvdA en CDA (1994). Utrecht: city clerk's office, p. 18.

- 53 Beleidsnota regionaal netwerk HOV (1996). Utrecht: city clerk's office.
- 54 HOV busbaan onacceptabel (1996). Utrecht: HOV Platform.
- 55 Utrecht CS – De Uithof: Aanpassingsnota Masterplan (1995). Utrecht: Projectbureau.
- 56 Note from the head of the HOV Projectbureau to the aldermen of transport affairs, 10 March 1995.
- 57 Ibid., p. 14.
- 58 Council proposal HOV Utrecht CS – De Uithof. Utrecht: city clerk's office, 19 June 1995.
- 59 Evaluatie, op. cit. note 12.
- 60 Masterplan Utrecht CS – De Uithof. Nota van Wijziging (Masterplan Adjustment) (1996). Utrecht: HOV Projectbureau.
- 61 Meeting 'Overleg Biltstraat'. Utrecht, 16 January 1996. Invitation for further meetings, Utrecht, 4 April 1996. Meetings 'Commissie van Advies inzake Bevoorradingvraagstukken'. Utrecht, 14 February and 27 March 1996.
- 62 Masterplan, op. cit., note 60.
- 63 Inspraaknota Masterplan HOV Utrecht CS – De Uithof. Nota van wijziging (1996). Utrecht: HOV Projectbureau.
- 64 Raadsvoorstel HOV Utrecht CS – De Uithof (Proposal to the council). Utrecht: city clerk's office, 19 June 1995.
- 65 Evaluatie, op. cit., note 12.
- 66 Press release. Utrecht: Stichting 'Geen Sneltram door de Binnenstad', 18 March 1996.
- 67 HOV: Gigantisch prestige project. Binnenstadkrant 3. Utrecht, June 1996.
- 68 Evaluatie, op. cit., note 12.
- 69 Ibid.
- 70 Op. cit., note 63. HOV busbaan onacceptabel (1996). Utrecht: HOV Platform.
- 71 This is the title of an information booklet with demands of the HOV platform to the responsible alderman, October 1996.
- 72 Note to M&A: Aanpak vervolgtraject CS – De Uithof route 'Binnenstad' en route 'Om de Zuid'. Utrecht: city clerk's office, 28 May 1996.
- 73 Ibid.
- 74 Evaluatie, op. cit., note 12.
- 75 Op. cit., note 63.
- 76 Most explicit in a letter from 'Wijkomitee Buiten-Wittevrouwen' to the Alderman of Traffic and Transport, Utrecht, 10 September 1996. HOV busbaan onacceptabel, op. cit., note 70.
- 77 *Evaluation*, op. cit., note 12.
- 78 Ibid.
- 79 Notulen vergadering gemeenteraad Utrecht (Minutes of the city council meeting), Utrecht: city clerk's office, 28 November 1996.
- 80 Note Voorstel overleg t.b.v. planuitwerking HOV CS – De Uithof. Utrecht: Projectbureau, 7 January 1997. HOV CS – De Uithof. Infobulletin. Utrecht: HOV Projectbureau, 2 May 1997. Communicatieplan HOV CS – De Uithof (1996). Utrecht: Bikker Communicatie.
- 81 Toekenning financiële bijdrage ov-infrastructuurproject 'HOV Utrecht – De Uithof', The Hague: letter from the Ministry of Transport, 7 May 1997.
- 82 Its claim was that the Minister had not legitimately rejected the notice of objection from the HOV Platform. HOV/Gemeente Utrecht/216.856. Utrecht: letter from B.J.W. Walraven to Arrondissementsrechtbank Utrecht, 24 October 1997.
- 83 Kostenraming (Cost estimate) HOV Utrecht CS – De Uithof (1997). Utrecht: HOV Projectbureau.

- 84 Notulen vergadering gemeenteraad Utrecht (Minutes of the city council meeting). Utrecht: city clerk's office, 12 June 1996
- 85 Whereas all other political parties were linked to their national counterpart, Leefbaar Utrecht did not have one. The emergence of such local parties (with liveability in their name) is generally attributed to an increasing gap between citizens and councillors, partly due to coalition loyalty. Source: Jan Weggemans (1998). Coalitiedwang maakt burgers monddood. De Volkskrant, 26 January.
- 86 Ibid. Wolfgang Spier, one of the most active critics of the former Board of M&A was prominently on Leefbaar Utrecht's list.
- 87 Trouw, 20 March 1998.
- 88 UN, 1 April 1998.
- 89 Collegeprogramma 1998 – 2002 van de fracties van PvdA, GroenLinks, VVD, CDA, D66, RPF/GPV (1998). Utrecht: city clerk's office.
- 90 Versobering HOV-binnenstad (1999). Utrecht: Dienst Stadsontwikkeling.
- 91 Ibid., p. 7.
- 92 UN, 23 January 2001.
- 93 Notulen vergadering gemeenteraad Utrecht (Minutes of the city council meeting). Utrecht: city clerk's office, 17 December 1999. UN 8 June 2001.
- 94 UN, 6 June 2001.
- 95 Although these kinds of attributes have a different function in settings, there is no absolute distinction. Attributes may for example both contain knowledge and represent stakeholders. The transport value studies were meant to estimate future demand, but this implied the representation of future users at the same time. Yet, for understanding the conditions of empowerment, this distinction is useful.
- 96 *Delegation* is the realisation of an action program on the base of a broadly shared mandate.  
*Articulation* is the public demonstration against (part of) an action program.  
*Politicisation* is the discussion of controversial parts of an action program in its wider context.  
*Authorization* is the solution for a conflict on the base of acknowledged authority.  
*(Partial) depoliticisation* is the bracketing and disappearance of antiprograms.
- 97 Evaluatie, op. cit. note 12.
- 98 Evaluatie, op. cit. note 12, p. 31.
- 99 This displacement occurs between the (newly elected) city council and coalition negotiations. The first setting is described in the case study, though not in relation to this displacement but in relation to discussions about the Masterplans. The characteristics of the city council can nevertheless be taken from sections 6.3.3 and 6.4.4.
- 100 Delegations to M&A (6.3.1) and to the HOV Projectbureau (6.4.1) already tended towards partial depoliticisation, because antiprograms were bracketed. Instead of aligning the Masterplans and the network idea, the concerns about the very idea of fast flows through lively neighbourhoods were simply ignored. The probable approval by a council majority was comfortably anticipated.
- 101 This effect of the displacement from negotiations with the State to the city council was due to the emergence and alternative interpretation of financial risks. The driver/condition of this displacement is discussed under the label of depoliticisation, the main effect of this displacement.
- 102 A referendum might therefore have been more appropriate. However, this would have required at least two equally elaborated alternatives, which the board had not been willing to develop.



# 7 Displacements

## Dynamics and Democratic quality

### 7.1 Introduction

One of the key concerns in Science and Technology Studies is the democratic quality of decision-making about innovation. Adequate procedures to develop technological products and services cannot be easily devised, because often these do not have any precedent. Specifications and functionalities of new technologies are not pre-given but have to be constructed in the same moves by which technologies are constructed, while actors search for suitable strategies, positions and action programs. The decision-making context, therefore, often still needs to be built. Developing procedures and structures is a process of continuous exploration and learning itself. This raises the question how to understand, evaluate and, ultimately, enhance democratic quality of decision-making about innovation?

Chapter 1 argues that the multitude of settings where decision-making about innovation in public transport takes place calls for an analysis on the level of settings and displacements. Because the politics of innovation displaces between settings, the cumulative contributions of settings should be understood and evaluated. Existing frameworks for evaluation do not sufficiently capture the complementary and reinforcing contributions of displacements, because they are designed for the evaluation of specific settings like consensus conferences or dialogue workshops. This thesis develops and uses a more detailed and dynamic framework. Thereto three research questions are addressed:

1. How to conceptualise the politics of innovation in terms of displacements?
2. What are the underlying dynamics of displacements?
3. How do displacements affect democratic quality?

Chapter 2 collects the building blocks for a conceptual framework to answer these questions. In chapter 3 the framework is developed and the initial research questions are refined into a number of sub-questions to be addressed in three case studies. Chapter 4, 5 and 6 present the results of the case studies.

The objective of this final chapter is fourfold. The first objective, corresponding with the first research question, is to draw conclusions about the definitions and relations of concepts used to understand the dynamics of displacements and their democratic implications. Section 7.2 presents the findings from chapter 3 and complements these with some conceptual results from the case studies.<sup>1</sup> The second objective, corresponding with the second question, is to draw conclusions about the dynamics of displacements: the 'routes' of displacements and the enabling 'conditions'. This is done per case (7.3) and in comparison of cases (7.4.3 and 7.4.4). The third objective, corresponding with the third question, is to draw conclusions about the conditions for democratic quality of displacements. Again, this is done per case (7.3) and in case-comparison

(7.4.2). The fourth objective, finally, is a discussion of the contribution of this research to the wider field of Science and Technology Studies (7.5).

## **7.2 The politics of innovation: a conceptual framework**

This section discusses the core concepts that have been used in this study: ‘issues’, ‘settings’, ‘framing’, ‘displacements’, ‘democratic quality’, and ‘dynamics’. These concepts constitute the main building blocks of the conceptual framework of this study. Most conclusions in this section are based on the literature review in chapters 2 and 3 but these conclusions are complemented with conceptual findings from the case studies (e.g. useful distinctions).

### **7.2.1 Issues: action programs and antiprograms**

An ‘issue’ is the stake in a political conflict. Issues consist of opposed opinions, interests or statements, while the balance of power in the conflict depends on the competences and resources of the actors and the support from allies and bystanders that they receive. In this sense innovation can be considered as a political process insofar its development is driven by conflicts and their solutions.

The notions of action programs and antiprograms from translation theory are helpful to describe the antagonism of technology development. Action programs are defined as statements that are allied with/supported by/carried by discoveries, inventions, artefacts, financial resources, entrepreneurs, users, etc. Antiprograms are similar kinds of statements, which however run counter to the action program. Opponents may engage in antiprograms that aim at objection, rejection or adjustment of the action programs they are confronted with. The clash between an action program and an anti-program defines an issue in the politics of innovation.

Note that a displacement of an issue is not the same as a translation of an action program. A translation is often the solution for the clash between an action and an antiprogram and such a solution may be achieved in many different ways (dominance, assimilation, compromise, surrender). The case studies show that different translations can take place within one single setting. The main topic of this thesis is however not translations, but the dynamics and effects of displacements between settings.

### **7.2.2 Settings as a theatre stage**

Issues are not free-floating entities, but are articulated, discussed and settled in what can be called ‘settings’. Settings are the direct contexts of the clashes between action and antiprograms. Examples of settings are negotiation structures, sites for demonstration of innovative technology, forums for debate, political institutions, and protest actions. This thesis starts from the premise that settings are never neutral, but biased and politically loaded. The constraining and enabling quality of a setting can be elaborated with the metaphor of the stage where an act is performed. This metaphor, derived from the theatre, emphasises three dimensions on which settings can be characterized: access conditions, attributes, and audience. These dimensions were further defined and specified on the base of the case studies.

The first dimension is access conditions. Settings allow some actors to participate while others are part of the audience or excluded altogether. Access conditions define *who is allowed*

to enter a particular setting in order to find support (among participants and attributes) for his action program.

The second dimension is attributes. Settings provide the attributes with which the performance is enacted. Attributes are those *supports that are valid* in a particular kind of setting. Attributes may strengthen one action program or link different action programs together; in both cases they shift the balance of power. Chapter 6 distinguishes between three kinds of attributes:

- Representational attributes (mandates, agreements, media coverage) are attributes that express and justify the interests in an action program.
- Knowledge attributes (studies, cost calculations, options) are attributes that express the relation between facts and interests.
- Constitutional attributes (voting rights, majority decision-making) are attributes that legitimate decisions.

The third dimension is audience. The audience of a setting comprises those who are *indirectly involved*, either by asserting influence on the participants in the setting or by asserting influence in subsequent settings. An example of the first is the constituencies that are represented by participants in a setting and whose judgment do the participants anticipate. An example of influence in subsequent settings is the electorate, who pass judgment about politicians by voting in polling stations.

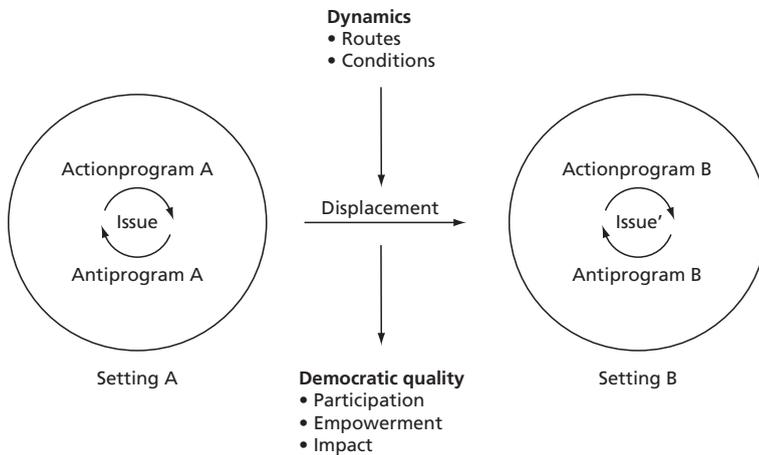
### 7.2.3 Framing of issues

The characteristics of settings can be conceived of as the (negative *or* positive) ‘bias’ of settings. In other words, due to its biases, settings frame a political performance: they co-determine which issues are central or peripheral and which aspects of issues are relevant in a particular setting; issues might even appear or disappear due to biases. The framing of issues is the direct effect of its appearance in a setting (note the related meanings of the verbs ‘to set’ and ‘to frame’). Five different types of (re)framing are distinguished. This typology is derived from the case studies but nonetheless presented in this section, because it primarily contributes to an answer to the conceptual research question. Section 7.4.1 further elaborates these types of (re)framing.

- Delegation: the realisation of an action program on the base of a broadly supported mandate.
- Articulation: the public demonstration against (part of) an action program.
- Politicisation: the discussion of controversial parts of an action program in its wider context.
- Authorisation: the solution for a conflict on the base of acknowledged authority.
- (Partial) depoliticisation: the bracketing and disappearance of antiprograms.

### 7.2.4 Displacements between settings

Because of the different framings of settings, displacements of issues between settings highly matter in the politics of innovation. A ‘displacement’ is defined as the movement of an issue to another setting or as a significant change on one of the three dimensions of the setting. This definition on the one hand raises the question of dynamics: Displacements come about because the decision-making context often still needs to be built; developing procedures and structures is a process of continuous exploration and learning itself. Actors deliberate *in* settings, but simultaneously *about* settings. They search for appropriate political forms and devise the conditions for deliberation. But how do they succeed in such endeavours? On the other hand, the concept of displacements raises the question of democratic implications: Displacement might



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Figure 7.1 The conceptual framework

offer new opportunities due to reframing, because issues disappear, new issues appear, or already existing issues are reinterpreted. How does this affect democratic quality? Before elaborating the dimensions of these two questions, we schematically present the conceptual framework and illustrate the central role of displacements therein (figure 7.1). This framework is used for the operationalisation of the two empirical research questions.

### 7.2.5 Democratic quality

In order to understand and assess the implications of displacements for democratic quality of innovation processes some normative assumptions are made. In this thesis 'democratic quality' is defined in terms of three general principles.

1. Participation/representation: the degree to which all stakeholders are able to participate, either directly or indirectly.
2. Empowerment: the degree to which all stakeholders are able to articulate their ideas and action programs.
3. Impact/influence: the degree to which the articulation of ideas and action programs affects the outcomes.

Displacements contribute to democratic quality if one or more of these principles is reinforced. These principles should be understood as dimensions of democracy that are general enough to capture local variation and specific enough to make a difference between good and bad. They are general enough to cover local variations like issue-specific requirements to participation, the actor-specific agreement about the proper level of empowerment, or contingent influences on achievements. Nevertheless, they are also specific enough for normative evaluations; they offer a ground for normative comparison of settings and henceforth a way to assess the contribution of displacements to democratic quality.

Having said that, following the issues when they displace between settings is a relevant evaluation method, not only because it relates the characteristics of settings to the requirements of a democratic process; the most important merit is that it does so without losing track of the

(changing) content of decision-making, the issues, which co-determine who ought to be involved and what democratic quality means in a particular situation.

### **7.2.6 The dynamics of displacements**

The underlying dynamics of displacements can be divided in a ‘how’ question and a ‘why’ question. The how question concerns the *routes* of displacements in terms of the settings involved. Reframing is an effect of routes of displacements, because this only depends on the relative differences between the characteristics of settings. Therefore, one question is whether the different reframing effects are patterned by routes of displacements.

The why question concerns the *conditions* and *driving forces* of displacements. These can be divided in internal and external conditions. An internal condition is, for example, the ‘mobilisation of bias’: actors purposefully try to displace the issue to settings that are biased in favour of their action program. For example, a strike among bus drivers displaces decision-making about new timetables and driver schemes from the board’s room to the work floor where the crucial importance of drivers is suddenly put centre stage.

External conditions of displacement include institutional arrangements or contingent events. Institutional arrangements are procedures for decision-making that are part of more general policies or politics. For example, public inquiries are often obligatory in major urban projects. Contingent events may also lead to displacements. For example, in debates about the introduction of chip technology in the Dutch public transport system arguments about tariff differentiation have suddenly become much less relevant than arguments related to social safety partly because of 9/11 and the Madrid railway bombs.

## **7.3 Displacements in public transport**

The research questions are addressed in three case studies about innovation in the domain of public transport, a domain in which issues are expected to displace because of the variety of (public) interests in transport innovation. While all three cases are relevant to both empirical questions, the emphasis was different. The first case study (7.3.1) was about the introduction of self-service in the Amsterdam tramways around 1970. This study focused on the emergence and displacement of issues as a dynamic interplay of action and antiprograms. The case study explored how the notion of ‘issues’ helps understanding the dynamics and implications of displacements. The second case study (7.3.2) followed the introduction of a flexible public transport system in and around Hoogeveen in the early 2000s. It explored the metaphor of setting as a theatre stage and the specific role of settings in the dynamics and democratic implications of displacements. The third case study (7.3.3) concerned the introduction of High-quality Public Transport (HOV) in Utrecht, an innovation that had been debated during more than two decades. Here, the effects of displacements on the three dimensions of democratic quality were a key interest. This section highlights the main findings of these case studies and discusses their contributions to answers to the research questions.

### **7.3.1 The case of self-service in the Amsterdam trams**

The first case study, the introduction of stamping machines in the Amsterdam trams between 1965 and 1973, centred on the notion of ‘issues’. Issues are defined in terms of conflicting action

and antiprograms. In this case issues were characterized as tensions and conflicts between (desired) fare paying and (expected or actual) fare dodging. The case study learns that following these issues draws attention to the role of settings and that this role is crucial in the framing of issues.

On the one hand, the case was characterized by a large variety of antiprograms resulting in the distinction between no less than seven issues. In the first issue, self-service was coined as an alternative to an inefficient system in which conductors sold and stamped tickets. The other six issues were based on different (anticipated) antiprograms against the self-service system itself: expected indifference, expected unawareness, expected law breaking, escaping, gambling, and a 'free public transport' claim. On the other hand these issues were dealt with in a relatively small number of settings: the tram, the corporate management, and the city council. Because the variety of issues was dealt with in a limited number of settings, the issues often followed similar routes of displacements between settings. This enables drawing some general conclusions, one of which is the typology of reframing effects of displacements (see 7.2.3).

Based on how issues were framed, three different settings were discerned. The tram itself, especially in the beginning, was like an urban jungle (without access limitations and attributes disadvantageous to fare dodgers), where the abstract notion of 'fare dodging' scattered into many different types of fare dodgers. The setting of the tram incited the manifestation of a set of specific fare-dodge-related issues. The corporate management, secondly, became increasingly aware of these issues, especially via articulation based on activities like surveillance and monitoring. To counteract them, however, the municipally owned company required measurements either explicitly approved by its audience of city councillors or implicitly by means of a mandate. In either case, the idea of 'counteraction' was specified in customized measurements on the level of the corporate management. The city council, thirdly, discussed the issues in the context of the need to save expenses on its public services. Due to its audience of citizens and its typical kind of argumentation, the council framed issues as being part of ideologically loaded debates between rightist and leftist politicians about for instance the value and costs of public transport.

Four types of displacements were discerned. First, articulation – the demonstration of antiprograms – is recognized in displacements from tram to corporate management. The most important condition for articulations is mediation, in this case the work of journalists and ticket inspectors. Second, politicisation – the contestation of 'unfair' (aspects of) action programs – occurs when issues move to the city council. An important condition for politicisation is the ability to put an issue on the agenda of the city council, which depends on whether the public interest is somehow at stake. Third, delegation – the realisation of an action program on the base of a broadly supported mandate – can be found when issues displace from city council to corporate management and from the management to the tram. Delegation occurs under the condition of hierarchical power relations, which enable the top-down movement of an issue. And fourth, depoliticisation – the disappearance of antiprograms – occurs when an issue is indeed put on the council's agenda, but not taken into serious consideration and deliberation. The most important condition is the unwillingness or inability of councillors to represent the advocates of antiprograms.

To conclude, due to their different characteristics settings are more than the mere nodes of networks. They frame and reframe issues that are displaced to these settings, while the type

of framing seems to be patterned by the characteristics of the settings that are involved in the displacement. A second conclusion concerns the main conditions for displacements: articulation is made possible by mediation activities, politicisation by broader concerns about the public interest, delegation by existing power structures, and depoliticisation by relative power differences in a setting.

The distinction between different types of displacements is helpful to question and assess democratic quality during particularly tumultuous episodes of the innovation process. The case study shows that the municipal transport company was initially insufficiently empowered and influential. It could not create a successful self-service system, in which the private interests of fare dodgers would not prevail at the expense of fare payers and taxpayers. Later on, however, the company's lack of influence was remedied due to the mutual reinforcement of *articulation* and *delegation*. Articulation revealed the antiprograms that became manifest in the tram. Delegation justified counteraction. Enhanced impact came about in their reinforcement leading to specific actions, which in turn were delegated to machines, inspectors, flyers, instruction placards, etc. This enhancement of impact was made possible by the articulating work of journalist and ticket inspectors on the one hand and the hierarchical power structures between city council and corporate management on the other hand.

Increased influence of the transport company contributed to democratic quality provided that the delegation of power from council to corporate management was based on a democratic council decision. Mostly this was the case. Yet, without a proper debate in which the interests of all stakeholders are taken into consideration issues are easily *depoliticised* in the council. For example, the decision to invest in ticket-vending and stamping machines lacked empowerment of disabled, elderly, parents, and foreigners. Their interests were bracketed in that discussion, because councillors were preoccupied with the financial aspects of the decision.

### **7.3.2 The case of flexible public transport in Hooegeveen**

In the second case study, about the introduction of a flexible public transport system in and around Hooegeveen exploited by Millennium Transport International (MTI) (1999-2004), the notion of settings was put central and further developed. The case was very interesting for this purpose, because it covered a large variety of settings and henceforth of displacements. The study started from the theatre metaphor: the conceptualisation of settings in terms of access conditions, attributes and audience. It systematically explained the framing of issues by the characteristics of settings and resulted among other things in the further elaboration of the definition of these characteristics (see 7.2.2).

In the case three major issues were discerned: (i) mismatches between the requirements to and the quality level of the service, (ii) a conflict about the Collective Labour Agreement (CLA), and (iii) tensions on the level of the practicalities of the service. The first two issues were framed and reframed in long chains of displacements. The third displaced to one setting. I first present the conclusions about the dynamics of these displacements and then the conclusions about democratic quality.

The case study provides further evidence for the five different reframing effects distinguished in 7.2.3. Four of them are revealed in the previous case study; all five are present in the second case.

Delegation involves the attempt to realise an action program on the base of a broadly supported mandate. Because of the many mutual dependencies in this case, the realisation of the main action program required alignment of complementary action programs. Successful alignment depends on attributes with the potential to link action programs together, like a program of requirements (that links supply and demand of a tender together). The mandates crucial for delegation were defined in Provincial States. State members to a more or less degree took part in the audiences of settings where the mandates were used. The mandates are the most important condition for delegation to happen, because without a mandate (whether explicit or implicit) a delegate cannot act on behalf of a constituency.

Politicisation involves the debate about controversial parts of an action program in a wider context. Due to politicisation new arguments and attributes can enter the debate and surprising solutions become possible. The most important condition for politicisation is the motivation to consult the constituency (audience) when delegation does not result in the intended realisation of an action program.

(Partial) depoliticisation involves the bracketing and disappearance of antiprograms. It occurs in private settings: when access is limited to one or two participants, the audience is hardly influential, and possibilities for displacement (articulation, politicisation) are largely lacking. Affected stakeholders are mostly in a powerless position or not involved at all. Depoliticisation is a strategic move of dominant actors, who are able to establish the characteristics of settings.

Articulation involves the public demonstration against (part of) an action program. It is often based on an empowering attribute (e.g. the Collective Labour Agreement), either because that forms an undervalued ground to contest an action program or because this attribute becomes an object of contestation itself because it is overvalued in the eyes of others. This motivation for articulation, the mobilisation or contestation of an important empowering attribute, is a strategic move in the interplay of action and antiprograms.

Authorisation, finally, involves the solution of a conflict on the base of acknowledged authority as happened when decision-making displaces to court. Only specific (legal) attributes are relevant on this setting; the audience is not relevant. The result of authorisation offers a strong attribute in favour of the winning combatant. Authorisation is made possible by the legal system.

The distinction between these different types of displacement is again helpful to question and assess democratic quality of decisions in the innovation process. All three issues raised questions about democratic quality:

The first issue, mismatches between the quality requirements and the actually offered service level, was initially characterized by an iteration of delegation and politicisation. Delegation, from authority to delegate, was based on the use of a mandate; politicisation, the other way around, was based on the return of the mandate when it did not suffice to achieve a positive negotiation result. Politicisation appeared to contribute to the empowerment of MTI-sympathizers in Provincial States, because additional (ideological) attributes in favour of the MTI concept could be mobilised.

Later on in the project the issue untimely depoliticised at the expense of empowerment requirements. Provincial States *delegated* the issue to the Development Group, the group of stakeholders that supervised the project, which in due course collected enough reasons to seriously doubt whether MTI was able to organise and provide public transport at all. At this point, either the participants of the Development Group should have been empowered and able

to decide about the conditions for continuation or provincial officials should have consulted Provincial States about the scope of their mandate. Instead, the Development Group did not meet for some time and provincial officials *depoliticised* rather than *politicised* the concerns about MTT's malfunctioning. This depoliticisation was made possible by Provincial State members, who were far from an interested audience in the politics of the Development Group. As a consequence, when Provincial States was to discuss the decision about continuation of the project, its members (and thereby Drenthe's citizens) were insufficiently empowered; they were disabled to assess MTT's capabilities.

In displacements of the second issue, a conflict about the Collective Labour Agreement (CLA), drivers arguably got too much influence. Drivers were detached from Arriva to MTI provided that the latter would comply with all relevant labour conditions. However, according to the drivers MTI failed to comply with the public transport CLA. In two displacements – to Arriva's council of employees and to the MTI office where a driver strike was organised – this failure was *articulated* to an audience of decision-makers (the province and the boards of the two companies). Due to these displacements, drivers indeed fostered participation and, supported by labour unions, put forward the CLA as the one and only decisive attribute at the base of a solution. In court (*authorisation*), drivers were indeed put in the right. MTI did not only have to apply the CLA to the hired drivers, but also to its own employees (which forced MTI to fire 13 of its 70 employees). Arguably, however, this CLA was itself an outmoded attribute, belonging to an era before liberalization. Although the issue settled with the verdict in court, this did not prevent MTI to *articulate* changes in the CLA's realm of application in public debates to empower an audience of future CLA negotiators.

The third issue, tensions about the practicalities of the service, raises the question why the user panel had so little impact. It appeared that users could only assert influence on issues that were safe for MTI to leave to the panel. Due to its dependent position in the Development Group, MTI could not afford an influential user panel; controversial issues were *depoliticised a priori*. In other words, if users want to participate and assert influence, they need to be able to control decisive attributes. Such attributes (rights, notices of appeal) can either affect the outcomes in one particular setting or offer a possibility to displace the issue to another setting.

### **7.3.3 The case of High-quality Public Transport in Utrecht**

The third case study spelled out the three dimensions of democratic quality – participation, empowerment and impact – and elaborated on the relation between the framing effects of settings and these dimensions. The case, the introduction of High-quality Public Transport in the city of Utrecht (1990-1999), is particularly interesting for this aim, because it centred on just one single issue (the development and implementation of a so-called Masterplan) and this issue gave rise to polemical debates and fundamental legitimacy conflicts. Such debates directly point to the democratic merits and deficits of settings.

The case learns first of all how democratic quality is related to the characteristics of settings. The possibilities for direct participation appeared to depend merely on access conditions. Indirect participation (representation) also depends on a mandate from an audience, on behalf of whom participants access the setting. The degree of empowerment depends on a combination of representational and knowledge attributes (see 7.2.2 for definitions), which are constructed and made available by participants' own constituencies. The most important (knowledge) attributes reflect the biases of these constituencies: they empower either one of the stakeholders. Finally,

the degree of impact on the issue depends on participation, empowerment, but most importantly on constitutional attributes (see 7.2.2) that justify a decision. Influence on the characteristics of settings is related to the responsiveness of the audience and its role in subsequent settings.

In this case study all five reframing effects of displacements were discerned. The study offered insights in three dimensions of these displacements: the characteristics of the settings involved, the conditions for the displacements, and their democratic implications in terms of participation, empowerment and impact.

Delegation involves a narrowing of the scope of settings: although participants of the previous setting are the audience of the current, only representatives of majorities have access as participants. Participation is based on a mandate, the crucial representational attribute, from the majority on the previous setting. The alliance constituting a majority and the mandate it formulates are crucial conditions for delegation. In terms of democratic quality: delegation excludes minorities, just because empowerment of the majority is one of the focal objectives of delegation; the degree of impact depends on the return of the issue (as proposal) to the previous setting, where it is decided upon.

Articulation involves radical changes on two of the three dimensions of settings. Those who are denied access in the previous setting have access in the next. And attributes that contained a bias against their antiprograms are substituted with attributes that contain a more favourable bias. The audience remains constant: those who decide in the end. Articulation is made possible by procedural requirements and/or by activism. The most important contributions to democratic quality of articulation are participation and empowerment of not yet involved stakeholders. Impact depends on whether the audience is convinced and/or whether the results of articulation (public inquiry report, media coverage) will be important attributes in the subsequent settings.

(Partial) depoliticisation can occur despite the fact that action and antiprograms are well articulated. On the one hand, participants have been the audiences of previous settings and the results of previous settings are available as attributes on this setting; participants are thus well empowered to represent the interests of different stakeholders. On the other hand, they are not obliged to base a decision on the content of the issue or the interests of stakeholders; in many decision-making settings support from a majority suffices. Issues were depoliticised in settings where decision-making power was an important (constitutional) attribute. The most important condition for depoliticisation was putting the issue (as proposal) on the agenda of this particular setting, that is: a return of the issue after delegation. In terms of democratic quality depoliticisation may lead to a democratic deficit. Requirements to participation and empowerment are often met, but the decision can nonetheless trample on the impact requirement if it is not primarily based on articulated ideas and action programs but on previous arrangements instead.<sup>2</sup>

Politicisation involves two radical changes in the characteristics of settings: renewed access conditions and a new work program (the attribute representing the coalition of parties). In this case, the conditions for politicisation were the elections with their disruptive consequences. In terms of democratic quality, politicisation restored the balance of power. Participation was proportional (by definition), empowerment had never been a problem thanks to decent opposition of activists, and impact was finally within reach as bypassed stakeholders with enough electoral support got a voice in the formulation of the work program.

Authorisation involves access of a third party, which is enabled to control decisive attributes, and the availability of the results of previous settings as attributes in this setting. Earlier involved stakeholders are again represented, either by participant or by (representational) attributes. The conditions for authorisation depend on the source of authority. In this case, Utrecht depended on the State for subsidy, which authorised the minister to determine the criteria for the project and force Utrecht to take public concerns into account. Authorisation can contribute to democratic quality if the judgement is based on equal representation and empowerment of the stakeholders in the conflict.

In this case study, too, the typology of the five reframing displacements (see 7.2.3) is used for the evaluation of the process. The case was divided in two episodes in which the process followed a similar pattern: Elections resulted in a coalition agreement on the base of a shared work program. The elaboration of the work program was *delegated* from the newly established city council to the Board of Mayor and Aldermen (M&A) to the municipal apparatus (the Projectbureau). There the issue tended to depoliticise, because antiprograms that featured in the elections were not taken into account as the (elaboration of the) work program could already count on a council majority. However, when the Utrecht citizens (shopkeepers and residents of the surrounding neighbourhoods in particular) massively raised their voice, they again *articulated* the antiprograms silenced by M&A and the Projectbureau. This situation – delegation leads to a dominant action program but also provokes the articulation of all kinds of concerns and antiprograms – put a large weight on the shoulders of city councillors, who were in a position to compare all pro's and cons and make a deliberate decision. However, they still did not take concerns and antiprograms into account and backed M&A by majority. The issue *depoliticised* in the city council just to be *politicised* in forthcoming elections. Not the decisions of the city council, but the diametrically opposed decisions of the people in polling stations met with the democratic requirements. Because each vote carried equal weight elections succeeded to unite participation, empowerment and impact. Unfortunately, the influence that large groups of bypassed stakeholders finally acquired went at the expense of costly reversals of maturing plans.

#### 7.4 Conclusions: dynamics and democratic quality

In this section the results of the case studies are compared in order to answer the two main research questions about the dynamics of displacements and the contribution of displacements to democratic quality. In the course of the case studies, the typology of different reframing effects and displacements based thereon was a recurring theme, because answers to both questions hinged on this typology. The typology enables linking conclusions about the dynamics of displacements and about democratic quality. Therefore, this section first discusses the typology itself in the context of empirical findings (7.4.1). This allows for conclusions about: the democratic quality of innovation processes in terms of these types of displacements (7.4.2); the dynamics of these five displacements in terms of routes between settings (7.4.3); and the dynamics of these displacements in terms of the most important conditions and drivers (7.4.4).

#### 7.4.1 A typology of reframing by displacement

How are issue (re)framed by displacements? The framing of issues depends on the characteristics of settings and displacements between settings henceforth involve a reframing of issues. This thesis develops a typology of five different reframing effects. These were discovered in the self-service study, defined in the MTI Hoogeveen study, and further elaborated in the HOV Utrecht study. This section presents the empirical support for the typology.

Articulation is defined as the public demonstration against (part of) an action program. In the self-service study, however, the *antiprograms* were to be fought against, because these dominated the action programs. Articulation there denoted the revelation and demonstration (in a literal sense) of hidden fare dodge antiprograms for the sake of the corporate management counteracting them. In the MTI case articulation rather denoted the demonstration against a dominant action program. This demonstration (in its political sense) amplified the validity of the CLA as an attribute against MTI's action program. Likewise, articulation in the HOV case comprised public inquiries and demonstrations organised by the HOV Platform. Articulation is thus the demonstration of antiprograms against action programs. It renders issues (publicly) known; they are opened up for deliberative decision-making.

Politicisation is defined as the discussion of controversial parts of an action program in its wider context. The self-service case learns that politicisation involves the questioning of the fairness of action and antiprograms, which in turn is based on a wider context of existing values and principles. The MTI case shows that politicisation opens up the possibility to discuss solutions for a conflict on the base of ideologically inspired arguments. Politicisation in the HOV case refers to discussions of the issue after elections, that is: in the context of considerably changed electoral support. The wider context thus involves the values, principles, ideologies, and public support relevant for the issue. In other words, politicisation is the discussion of issues in the public interest.

Delegation is defined as the realisation of an action program on the base of a broadly supported mandate. In the self-service case delegation involved the delegation of the (programmed) actions, like information, education, inspection. This was rather based on hierarchical arrangement of administrative power between authority and delegate than on a mandate.<sup>3</sup> In the MTI case delegation was based on mandates and involved activities and negotiations to align complementary action programs of mutually dependent stakeholders. In the HOV case, mandates also enabled negotiations between complementary action programs (in the coalition negotiations). On the other hand delegation (to the Projectbureau) contributed to the construction of attributes to elaborate already prevailing action programs. To conclude, delegation occurs in two different modes<sup>4</sup>: the delegation of power to develop and realise an action program and the temporal delegation of power to align complementary action programs of interdependent stakeholders. The first mainly requires adequate and feasible top-down instructions. The latter requires political skills and a mandate to compromise ones action program.

(Partial) depoliticisation is defined as the bracketing and disappearance of antiprograms. In the self-service case issues disappeared in the city council, when councillors did not take antiprograms into consideration. In the MTI case antiprograms were bracketed when the provincial officials

shifted attention away from the most controversial parts of action programs and disappeared when Provincial State member did not take the issue into consideration at all. In the HOV case issues disappeared when city councillors did not take antiprograms into serious consideration and deliberation. Thus, depoliticisation indeed involves the bracketing of antiprograms and, as a likely consequence, the disappearance of issues.

Authorisation is defined as the solution for a conflict on the base of acknowledged authority. This effect is not observed in the self-service case. In the MTI case authorisation refers to the effect of displacement to court; authority was derived from the legal system. In the HOV case it refers to the authority of the minister derived from Utrecht's dependency on the State for financial reasons. Solutions might be a verdict putting either one of stakeholders in the right or a compromise between the interests of stakeholders. The common element in authorisation is a legitimate and binding judgement of a third, more or less independent, party.

To conclude, the typology of reframing is a useful means to distinguish displacements on the base of their effects. A distinction between five types of reframing covers all displacements discerned in the three cases. This raises the question whether this typology also justifies general conclusions about the contribution to democratic quality and the underlying dynamics of these *types* of displacements.

#### **7.4.2 The contribution of displacements to democratic quality**

How do types of displacement contribute to democratic quality of innovation processes? Based on the typology and the empirical findings, the first main research question can be answered. The case studies yield a large number of (more or less hypothetical) relations between displacements and democratic qualities, which are presented here and illustrated with examples from the cases:

Articulation can bridge the gap between empowerment and impact, because it puts extra weight on hitherto undervalued attributes. Democratic impact should be based on the participation and empowerment of stakeholders. Articulation aims at (dis)empowering by (de)valuation of attributes. The MTI case offers two telling examples: (i) drivers tried to empower themselves by emphasizing in strikes that the public transport CLA should be decisive in the CLA conflict, and (ii) MTI tried to disempower drivers by emphasizing that the current CLA was outmoded as it did not fit the situation of newcomers in the recently liberalized market. Articulation does not guarantee impact.

The combination of articulation of antiprograms and delegation of power to counteract these antiprograms leads to empowerment of the actors of the action program, because favourable knowledge attributes and representational attributes reinforce each other.<sup>5</sup> These attributes are mobilised via the two displacements. Important knowledge attributes in the self-service case resulted from the articulating work of ticket inspectors who witnessed the strategies of fare dodgers. Representational attributes are the mandates underlying delegation, which justified counteracting measures on the base of majority interests. Because the interests of fare dodgers did not fit the majority interests, the knowledge about fare dodgers empowered the transport company to counteract.

This same combination of articulation and delegation also contributed to impact, because the customized measures effectively changed the self-service system (for example via experimentation with ticket inspection strategies). This impact occurred directly when the mandate included a constitutional attribute like majority approval already, or via explicit approval of the city council when the mandate did not yet include such a constitutional attribute. The latter route required a displacement to the council, which could trigger politicisation.

Delegation can lead to depoliticisation if the authority (who delegates) does not take part in the audience of the setting where the mandate is used. This taking part in the audience is necessary, because mandates should be cancelled once the circumstances change in order to prevent the illegitimate use of the mandate. The provincial officials in the MTI case, however, continued to use the mandate without articulating conclusions about MTI's mismanagement and incapacities to the (not very interested) audience of State Members. They depoliticised the concerns. Depoliticisation threatens the empowerment principle of democracy when the issue returns to the authorizing setting, because participants are not informed about the outcomes of previous settings. The concerns about the feasibility of MTI's action program were bracketed and had disappeared once Provincial States was to decide about the next tender.

Delegation leads to depoliticisation if the mandate biases in favour of one action program and/or denies access to other stakeholders. The HOV Projectbureau did not engage in a continuous dialogue with its main critics, because the responsible alderman did not allow that; instead, the instruction was to stay away from too radical alternatives. The consequence was a democratic deficit in terms of participation as the critics had already proved to represent about half the electorate.

Issues are depoliticised a priori if dominant actors control constitutive attributes and the conditions for displacements. The user panel seemed more democratic than it was, because users could express their demands but not impose their will on the MTI management. The panel was not able to put issues on the agenda of the Development Group either, because the MTI management formed an obligatory passage point for this displacement.

Depoliticisation provokes articulation, provided that bypassed stakeholders are well empowered. The HOV case shows that empowered stakeholders get frustrated and angry when they cannot participate despite their well-substantiated and widely supported antiprogram. This anger motivates them to engage in protest. Articulation henceforth remedies the silencing consequences of depoliticisation.

Depoliticisation tramples on the requirement of proportional impact if constitutional attributes merely comprise formal conditions for decision-making like majority voting does. In that case empowerment is not a necessary condition for impact. Both the self-service case and the HOV case offer examples of depoliticisation due to majority voting. In both cases the interests of minorities like disabled, elderly, residents, and shopkeepers were not even taken into consideration, because the council was confronted with a yes/no choice, a majority would say yes to the proposals of Mayor and Aldermen, and an opposing minority could not achieve any compromises.

Politicisation remedies the democratic deficits of depoliticisation if constitutional attributes cannot be used without representational and knowledge attributes. For example, in the coalition negotiations in the HOV case, the formation of a majority was not only based on election results, but also on compromises in one party programs resulting in a common work program. Because decisions were based on substantial debates, in which empowered participants confronted their action programs with one another, minority parties had proportional impact.

Politicisation amounts to empowerment because it opens up the possibility to mobilise new attributes. As all three cases show, the displacement of issues to the city council, Provincial States and coalition negotiations made room for new kinds of arguments, which empowered all stakeholders.

Authorisation can contribute to democratic quality if combatants are equally represented and empowered and authority is based on agreement. The MTI case shows that these conditions are met in court because of our legal system. In the HOV case these conditions were met somewhat differently: authority was based on the State's financial contribution (all stakeholders accepted this authority in exchange for the subsidy). With regard to participation and empowerment: the HOV Platform, which was one of the stakeholders but did not participate in the meeting between Utrecht and the State, was represented via media coverage of the demonstrations. Its claims were well known by the minister.

#### **7.4.3 The dynamics of displacements: routes**

The question of the dynamics of displacements can be divided in two: a 'how' question and a why question. Here, the 'how' question is addressed: do the different types of reframing by displacement reflect certain patterns in the routes of displacements? This question should be answered with reference to (changes in) the characteristics of the settings involved.

Articulation – the demonstration of antiprograms against action programs – mostly involves two crucial changes in the characteristics of settings which enables weakly empowered stakeholders to better articulate their antiprograms. First, access conditions are reversed. Weakly involved and empowered stakeholders (like the tram company in the self-service case, drivers in the MTI case, and shopkeepers/residents in the HOV case) have (created) access to and turn into the main participants in the next setting, which enable them to mobilise the attributes in favour of their action/antiprogram. Second, these attributes do become available during articulation by displacement. Few active mediators (ticket inspectors, member of Arriva's council of employees, and activists in the anti-tram movement respectively) do have some access to the first setting of this displacement in order to produce the notes and reports that function as important knowledge attributes in the second. Therefore, a different kind of attributes is emphasized than the kind that dominated in the previous setting. Particularly the MTI and HOV case, where articulation took place in protest actions, attributes like the Collective Labour Agreement and arguments about liveable neighbourhoods were mobilised and emphasized.

Politicisation – the discussion of issues in the public interest – most importantly involves the 'reloading' of representational attributes (leftist/rightist argumentation, party programs, election results). Reloading means that the interests of some stakeholders become more important because

they are more easily aligned with the public interest than the private interests of for example fare dodgers or Arriva. Politicisation furthermore involves the consultation of the audience. It happened in displacements to the city council (self-service case), Provincial States (MTI case) and coalition negotiations (HOV case). The HOV case also shows that politicisation may follow from the renewal of access conditions and therefore the reevaluation of representational attributes relevant to the issue. Yet, the examples of politicisation mainly have in common that issues are displaced to a higher level of authority,<sup>6</sup> where participants have access on the base of ideologies and programs that go beyond the issue at stake.

Delegation – the realisation of an action program on the base of a broadly supported mandate – comprises a displacement to a lower level of authority. Access is limited to those having complementary action programs; minorities in the delegating setting are typically not represented in the delegated setting. Characteristic is the crucial importance of a mandate from (a majority of) the delegating setting. Furthermore, the participants in the delegating setting are the audience of the delegated setting and look upon the execution of the mandate. Finally, the MTI case also shows that, if realisation of action programs relies on alignment between complementary action programs, then attributes linking these together should be available in the setting where the issue leads to via delegation. An example from the MTI case of such an attribute is the program of requirements, which formed the basis for negotiations between provincial deputies, Arriva and MTI.

Partial depoliticisation is the bracketing of antiprograms. Full depoliticisation is the disappearance of issues. The first typically happens in a private setting, where access is limited to one or two participants, the audience is not alert or influential, and possibilities for displacement (articulation, politicisation) are largely lacking. It sometimes happens on the base of the same mandate that also constitute delegation. In the MTI case, the biased evaluation and the hardly influential user panel are examples. Full depoliticisation is likely to occur when issues are already partially depoliticised, because antiprograms are not well articulated. For example, Provincial State members were disabled to assess MTI's capabilities, because MTI's malfunctioning was already bracketed in two depoliticising displacements. Depoliticisation in the self-service case and HOV case took place in the city councils, where participants were not obliged to base a decision on the content of the issue or the interests of stakeholders, but merely on a constitutional attribute (see 7.4.3). The possibility to depoliticise issues is an inherent trait of settings for formal decision-making, because it should also be possible to settle issues that cannot be compromised in content.

Authorisation, finally, – the solution for a conflict on the base of acknowledged authority – involves a displacement to a setting accessible by the combatants in a conflict, but more importantly by a third party. This third party, moreover, is able to decide: it controls the constitutional attributes. In the MTI case a judge was authorised to give a verdict and in the MTI case the minister was authorised to decide about the subsidy. Specific for the MTI case was that the setting strictly specified the kinds of attributes that counted: in court only legal attributes were relevant. In the HOV case, however, various attributes were taken into consideration by the minister, ranging from the Masterplan, to different alternative plans, to

promises from the past, and to media coverage of protest actions. Audiences, finally, are not very relevant in authorisation.

#### **7.4.4 The dynamics of displacements: conditions**

The final empirical research question also concerns the dynamics of displacements: why do issues displace? In other words: what are the main conditions for the five distinguished types of displacement?

Articulation is conditioned in two distinct modes corresponding with whose interest articulation serves. In one mode antiprograms are articulated in order to counteract them; in the other mode antiprograms are articulated in order to support their realisation. The most important condition for the first mode appears to be mediation – by journalists and ticket inspectors in the self-service case – a way to render the antiprograms visible to the corporate management, which was largely unaware of them. The second mode is conditioned by the motivation of activists, who fought against a disadvantageous bias of previous settings and succeeded to mobilise many other hitherto excluded stakeholders. In all cases articulation is a way to strengthen ones action program; it is one of the clearest examples of the ‘mobilisation of bias’.<sup>7</sup>

Politicisation happens when an issue displaces to a setting where arguments are derived from (different) ideas about the public interest like city councils, Provincial States and coalition negotiations. A crucial condition is to get the issue on the agenda, because too many topics are usually competing for a place on these agenda’s. In the city council, Mayor and Aldermen compose the agenda and in Provincial States the Board of Deputies. In all cases the perceived needs of aldermen and deputies to consult their constituencies or put their plans to the vote are decisive conditions. Note that in the HOV case the issue could have been politicised in the city council because it was on the agenda, but it was depoliticised for various reasons. This depoliticisation seemed to be the most important condition explaining why the issue got politicised soon thereafter. Politicisation is thus a contingent effect of established democratic procedures that takes place on a regular base. The conditions for politicisation originate in the wider institutional context of the issue.

Delegation occurs under the condition of hierarchical power relations or a mandate. In the tram case, the Board of Mayor and Aldermen ordered the corporate management of the municipally owned company, who in turn ordered its employees. This also happened in the HOV case, when the HOV Projectbureau was set to work. Negotiations and the work of the Development Group in the MTI and HOV cases were based on mandates provided for the specific task to align different action programs: mandates specify the margins of negotiations. Devising mandates is done when majorities deem delegation opportune and when they are in control of constitutional attributes like majority voting. Delegation is a purposeful way to realise action programs, but presupposes administrative power or constitutional attributes. It originates in the wider institutional context of the issue.

Depoliticisation is the result of the unwillingness or helplessness of participants to represent the advocates of antiprograms. All cases offer examples of depoliticisation because elected representatives were unconditionally backing their Board of M&A, helplessly facing a majority,

or not aware of potential harming consequences. In the MTI case partial depoliticisation was probably a strategic move (or maybe a unintended effect) of dominant actors, who were able to define the characteristics of settings. Depoliticisation is an inherent trait of formal settings, though when depoliticisation does not take place after a comprehensive debate, then politicians fail to represent their constituencies in a recognizable way. This failure, which was part of the issue, is the main condition for depoliticisation.

Authorisation, finally, is conditioned by the source of authority. In the MTI case, in which the CLA conflict was brought to court, the source of authority was the legal system, with its own rules, rights and procedures. In the HOV case, the source of authority was the State's financial position, which authorised the minister to determine the criteria for the project and force Utrecht to take public concerns into account. In either case, authorisation originated in the wider context of the issue.

To conclude, displacements, particularly delegation, politicisation, and authorisation, are often conditioned by the institutional context: the existing political and legal system. To a certain degree actors are able to strategically employ the opportunities of these systems to displace issues. Articulation and depoliticisation are much more deliberate actor strategies, as they are less conditioned by external circumstances. (Collective) actors can employ these displacements more easily in order to strengthen their action programs, but they will also be held accountable for this.

## 7.5 Contributions to STS

This study draws on insights and methods of Science and Technology Studies such as the recognition of a political dimension of innovation processes, the idea that technology and actors are co-constructed, the sensitivity for tensions and conflicts, and the practicalities of doing case studies. What, then, does this study contribute in its turn to the field of STS? This section presents the insights from the study in their intellectual context. It discusses conclusions about the framing role of settings, the different types of reframing by displacement, the dynamics of displacements, and the relation between displacement and democratic quality. Furthermore, the specific contributions to three theoretical approaches – translation theory, democratisation theory, and user theory – are highlighted. Finally, the contribution to transport studies is discussed.

The *framing* effects of settings are made visible by assuming that settings are more than mere contexts. There is a long tradition in STS of studying the relation between content and context (Hughes, 1987; Van den Belt and Rip, 1987; Lundvall, 1988; Kemp et al., 1998). The notion of settings enables the analyst to be more specific about how the context intervenes in the content, because it focuses on those contextual elements that are part of the direct, local context of the decision-making process.

Moreover, the notion of 'setting' differs from notions like 'context' or 'system', because it emphasizes a performative dimension. It is derived from the verb 'to set', which denotes an activity. This performative dimension has long been recognized in political science (Schattschneider, 1960; Bachrach and Baratz, 1962; Lukes, 1974), though in a negative sense only:

### Box 7.1 Examples of insights about settings

- Those who are able to set the characteristics of settings can take advantage of bias. They can for example deny access to actors with opposing action programs or only allow safe issues on the agenda.
- Settings provide and/or permit the representational, informational and constitutive attributes with which the performance is enacted. Attributes may strengthen one action program or link different action programs together, but when they are used they always shift the balance of power.
- In decision-making processes there is often an audience of stakeholders, who become decision-making participant on one of the subsequent settings in the process. Participants better anticipate on such future settings and timely consult the audience.
- This conception of an active audience in the politics of innovation suggests that stakeholder participation can also come about by taking part in the audience. This suggestion does not per se favour representative democracy over direct participation, but it does offer a way to delegate the complex tasks of innovation politics to specialized actors, while it simultaneously urges for reflections on the limits of mandates, on the need for publicity and accountability of leading actors, and on the conditions under which the audience can actually intervene.
- Because settings matter in decision-making, stakeholder influence can mean two things: direct influence on the concrete characteristics of technologies or services or indirect influence on the characteristics of subsequent settings. The change of access conditions or attributes available on the subsequent setting can also be an important democratic achievement if it structurally contributes to a more balanced division of power among stakeholders.

as bias. Bias, there, was used in opposition to neutrality. Only recently, this idea of bias has been reintroduced in political science in a different way, which is highly relevant for STS, too. Gomart and Hajer (2003) do not oppose biased settings to neutral settings, but negatively biased settings to positively biased settings; they argue that settings are performative by definition and always bias the decision-making process. This thesis builds on their argument, but further develops the concept of settings: it explores how the three dimensions of settings – access conditions, attributes, audience – frame conflicts and issues. (Whether this is positive or negative depends on how framing and reframing contribute to democratic quality.) Box 7.1 presents some examples of insights gained from the operationalisation of the concept of settings.

Another important contribution to STS is the insight in different *types* of framing due to displacements to settings. In STS the notion of ‘frames’ usually denotes the different social relations, cognitions and values of stakeholders involved in the social construction of technology: stakeholders bring in the frames (Bijker, 1995). This thesis draws attention to the frames that originate in settings. Due to their characteristics, settings co-determine whether interests are expressed, plans are elaborated, or issues are discussed, settled, or ignored. Because the framing

due to settings is theoretically underdeveloped in STS, the typology of five framing effects is an important contribution to STS.

A third important contribution to STS is the idea that displacements affect *democratic quality*, because they are accountable for the reframing of issues, and this may either lead to reinforced biases or to a more balanced division of power. Displaced politics is usually associated with a democratic deficit (Winner, 1980; Bovens et al., 1995). This thesis keeps at a distance of such dogmatic views and develops a much more detailed and balanced understanding of displacements. This understanding notably includes insights into how different types of reframing by displacement affect three distinguished dimensions of democratic quality. Box 7.2 presents some implications of the importance of displacements for democratic quality

A fourth important contribution to STS is the development of a *framework* for democratic evaluation of displacements. Existing frameworks for evaluation focus on the characteristics of particular settings, like consensus conferences, dialogue workshops or citizen juries (Sclove, 1995; Rowe and Frewer, 2000; Rowe et al., 2004). The framework developed in this thesis appreciates the complementary characteristics and implications of settings where the decision-making process displaces between. The other way around, it also reveals occasions where negative biases of settings reinforce each other leading to dominance. Democratic quality of innovation processes can be enhanced or deteriorated due to displacements. The framework has sensitivity for these opposing effects of displacements, because it insists on the need to lay bare the characteristics of settings where an issue displaces between, before evaluating the overall process.

**Box 7.2 Some Implications of the importance of displacements for democratic quality**

- Not all stakeholders need to have access to all settings provided that they are effectively involved in the overall process. For example, if a certain stakeholder is denied access in setting A, but features prominently in setting B, then a displacement from A to B leads to compensation in terms of participation. To give another example, if an issue displaces from setting A with broad participation to setting B with limited participation, but this displacement happens on the base of a mandate broadly supported in setting A, then democratic quality of the overall process might also enhance despite a reduction in terms of (direct) participation.
- Displacements (delegation in particular) enable the division of issues in sub-issues, which are dealt with in separate settings. Whether this happens democratically depends on additional conditions (the existence of a mandate or the possibility of articulation and/or politicisation).
- Displacements potentially contribute to techno-political creativity. For example, displacements can contribute to the invitation of other stakeholders, to new opportunities for action, to new perspectives, to new solutions, to the persuasion of a broader audience, etc. Displacements can, however, also contribute to power centralisation and perverse technological effects if stakeholders are systematically excluded.

A fifth contribution to STS is the understanding of the *dynamics* of displacements, which has no precedent because displacements in the politics of innovation are hitherto hardly recognized and researched. This thesis gains insights in both the routes of displacements and in the conditions for displacements.

In addition to these general contributions to STS, this thesis also contributes to the specific theoretical approaches on which it is build. The thesis builds on translation theory. It starts from the concepts of action and antiprograms and their dynamics in terms of translations. Much attention in translation theory is already paid to the mechanisms of translation and the role of human and non-human actors therein (Latour, 1987; Latour, 1991a; Latour, 1992). However, by blurring the differences between objects and subjects, the agency of (non) human actors has become overemphasized; translation theory is criticised for ignoring the structuring and normative roles of settings (Amsterdamska, 1990; Radder, 1992; Winner, 1993). The characterization of settings in this study emphasizes a more structural dimension in the dynamics of translations; a theoretical intervention that solves many of the tensions caused by the voluntarism in translation theory.

This thesis also builds on democratisation theory in STS, which seeks ways to apply democratic requirements to decision-making about science and technology. Democratisation theory has brought forward arguments for democratisation, thought-out lists of democratic criteria as well as innovative forms of decision-making (Sclove, 1995; Bijker, 1997; Hamlett, 2003), but is also criticised for being asymmetric when pleading for neutral decision-making settings. The idea of neutrality is criticised for entailing a modernist language that is not easily aligned with constructivist theories of technological innovation (Harbers, 1996; De Wilde, 1997). On the one hand constructivism holds that actors are nodes in a 'seamless web' of dependencies (Hughes, 1986), on the other hand neutrality assumes that participants act rational and autonomous. On the one hand constructivism embraces the view that technological and societal developments mutually affect each other (Rip et al., 1995), on the other hand neutrality assumes unmediated and unbiased deliberation to be possible. This thesis solves the problem of neutrality by insisting on the inevitability of bias. There is no need to cancel out bias; the challenge is to create a sufficiently democratic process where biases are evenly and democratically distributed among the settings that matter.

The thesis furthermore contributes to the growing literature about users, which increasingly recognizes that users and technology are co-constructed and that this occurs in various settings (Oudshoorn and Pinch, 2003). The thesis illustrates how users are (not) represented, how these representatives are (not) involved in innovation processes, and how this is reflected in the final outcomes. In conformance with recent literature, it opens up the black box of 'user involvement'. Hitherto, however, one aspect remains underemphasized in the literature: the governance of co-construction. This thesis importantly contributes to user theory because it deals with the consequences of insights about co-construction for democratic decision-making. It shows in detail how and why different groups of users and implicated actors (drivers, corporate management, passengers, fare dodgers, tax payers, residents) actually get involved in decision-making and how one should value such involvement. For example, articulation by displacements appears to be a particularly important mechanism in the empowerment of implicated actors.

The final contribution addresses public transport studies and policy. This contribution is threefold. First, the thesis develops a framework for evaluation that is non-existent in these fields. Usually (ex-ante) evaluation takes place along the lines of choice and optimisation of technology. Cost benefit analyses of plans, for example, are quite common. In addition to these methods, the current thesis provides a way to evaluate democratic quality of decision-making processes. Though this evaluation-framework is used ex-post, it may be possible to develop an ex-ante or ex-durante method on the base of the conclusions and further research. Such methods could be valuable complements to cost benefit analyses and multi criteria analysis.

Secondly, the thesis contributes to insights in the role of authorities in public transport innovation. This role is a central issue in debates about deregulation, privatisation and liberalisation. In all cases described, regardless of the degree of privatisation and liberalisation, state institutions played a crucial role, mainly in politicisation and depoliticisation by displacement. This role was, however, most complex and diverse in the MTI case, where privatisation and liberalisation required many negotiations and consultations and henceforth displacements. A peculiar finding in this regard is that in this most liberal context provincial officials still played a major role, though this role seemed to escape democratic control. Do liberalisation and deregularisation, then, displace too much power to government officials?

The third contribution concerns insights in the dynamics of planning and offers a refined understanding of the reasons why cost projections of transportation projects are generally inaccurate (Flyvbjerg et al., 2005). Flyvbjerg et al. conclude that errors in forecasting (like passenger overestimation) often cause financial setbacks in infrastructure projects. In addition, this thesis, the HOV Utrecht case in particular, suggests that forecasts are inherently inaccurate, not only because of contingencies in the development of demand, but mainly because the plans themselves are contested and compromised. The object of forecasting is not stable.

A final comment reflects on the object of this study: the boundary between technological innovation and politics. Cases of innovations were deliberately selected from the domain of public transport to guarantee a rather obvious political dimension. This raises an interesting question for further research: to what extent do the conclusions about displacements also apply to practices and structures somewhat further removed from the boundary? More established political practices, on the one side, are object of study in political science. Can conclusions from this thesis contribute to a better understanding, and perhaps improvement, of 'ordinary' politics? On the other side of the boundary is the emergence of new technologies like nanotechnology and functional genomics. What does 'displacement' mean in these contexts? Would a study of displacements yield similar results, there?

These questions do not merely concern the general applicability of concepts and conclusions on either side; they also address the scope and nature of the boundary itself. Political philosophers have warned for the perverse consequences of a blurred boundary, because politics equipped with technology would be nearly unbeatable (Winner, 1980). However, STS as "the political philosophy of our time" (Pfaffenberger, 1992, p. 309) compel a much more moderate judgement: do not fear the hybrids of politics and technology, but engage in their displacements.

## Notes

- 1 Although this suggests a linear research process, it must be noted that the framework is in part a result of the case studies; relevant literature was discerned in a back and forth process between theory and empirical data. In addition, the case studies also yielded a number of conceptual findings that were not based on existing literature but nonetheless contribute to the objectives of this study. These findings are also presented in 7.2 (with reference to the case studies).
- 2 In this case, depoliticisation notably took place in the city council, which consisted of elected representatives. Yet, when these 'delegates of the electorate' do not adequately represent their constituencies, then they will not get a mandate for the next period. In other words, elections remedy the democratic deficits of the city council.
- 3 Power arrangements and mandates are similar in the sense of specifying the conditions for the activities of subordinates/delegates. Power arrangements, however, are like lasting mandates. The difference is thus that mandates are given for clear-cut tasks and can be returned and revised if the specified activities do not appear to contribute to the realisation of the action program.
- 4 Although the case studies did not reveal intermediate modes, these two modes may be seen as two poles on a spectrum of possibilities.
- 5 See also section 6.5.1 for conclusions about empowerment via the mutual reinforcement of representational and knowledge attributes.
- 6 Authority here means the ability to control constitutional attributes like votes, majority rule, etc. A higher level thus refers to settings where mandates originate.
- 7 See section 2.6 about the performative perspective. Note that the mobilisation of bias changes the balance of power: if weak actors succeed to mobilise bias, then power is likely to become more distributed; if already strong actors succeed to do so, then power becomes more centralized.



## Appendix belonging to chapter 5

*Table A1* An example of setting identification by following the issues

<b>Issue: mismatches between requirements and quality level of service</b>				
<b>Setting</b>		<b>Actionprogram</b>	<b>Antiprogram</b>	<b>Displacement</b>
Bilateral meetings between provincial deputies and the Arriva board	(1a)	Continue Arriva's contract against best costs (forthcoming Law on Personal Transport + mandate from States + requirements based on existing contract but include improvement measures)	Arriva refuses to include improvement measures in offer ('monopolist' position)	Deadlock: mandate returned to Provincial States
Provincial States	(1b)	(1a) + deadlock	Consider alternative providers (MTI experiment + MTI evaluation report + distinction between connecting and disclosing network)	New mandate for provincial deputy: negotiate inclusion of MTI
Bilateral meetings between provincial deputies, the Arriva board and the MTI board	(1c)	Compromised contract with Arriva includes subcontract with MTI (redesigned tender + Arriva + MTI)	-	Contracts signed. Development group founded and mandated to supervise project
Development Group	(1d)	MTI proposes transport plan and schedules (based on existing services + user research + generally supported by most)	Constructive suggestions for improvement (recommendations about routes, connections, frequencies, travel information and equipment)	
	(1e)	(1d) + adjustments (collective support)	-	Arriva's council of employees is to be consulted as part of the procedure because of personnel transition

Table B1 The framing of issue 1: mismatches between the requirements to and the quality level of the service

S	Displacement	Setting	Access	Attributes	Audience	Issue framing
1	Mandate for deputy: negotiate good contract with Arriva	Negotiation structures: Arriva's tender	Three authorities invited Arriva	Arriva had ongoing contract	Constituencies (Arriva's shareholders wanted profits)	Negotiations reduced to bargaining about costs, because attributes empowered Arriva and Arriva's audience wanted profits
2	With regard to Drenthe: deadlock urged negotiating deputy to return mandate	Provincial States (1)	Elected state members	Variety of (ideological) arguments, appreciation for MTI	Electorate expects good public services	Exploitation of network of thin lines became <i>relevant</i> argument due to compatibility with prevailing kind of attributes and with expectations of audience; and became <i>strong</i> argument due to specific attributes empowering MTI advocates in Provincial States
3	New mandate for deputy: negotiate inclusion of MTI	Negotiation structures: Arriva & MTI	Authorities invited Arriva and MTI	Revised requirements	Constituencies of participants	Same as in 1, but with less emphasis on Arriva's interest. Levelled positions.
4	Contracts signed. Supervision delegated to Development Group	Development Group (1)	Province invited stakeholders	Distributed knowledge about demand	No audience present (constituencies at distance)	Strong focus on service characteristics. Due to lack of audience the interests of stakeholders determined the agenda; due to the composition of the group, a client perspective prevailed
10	No displacements, issue translated within DG	Development Group (2)	Idem, but MTI did not show up	Decreasing trust, action list, shared dissatisfaction	ibid.	MTI project appears as innovative though badly managed, because 'negative' attributes come to dominate the framing of the project
11	At top of trust crisis provincial officials invited MTI for a 'good conversation'	Private meeting: Province/MTI	Provincial officials approach MTI	Province authorized to decide about next tender	No audience, only results are reported to DG	Distrust is bracketed (via exclusion of audience) in order to discuss conditions for continuation constructively

<b>S</b>	<b>Displacement</b>	<b>Setting</b>	<b>Access</b>	<b>Attributes</b>	<b>Audience</b>	<b>Issue framing</b>
12	Because the tender period ended the province commissioned an independent evaluation	Office of evaluators	Independent bureau commissioned	Instructions, interviews, minutes	Provincial States	Distrust is bracketed and MTI excused for bad management particularly due to one crucial attribute: instruction to focus on policy lessons
13	Tender period ended: new tender invitation	Provincial States (2)	Elected State members	Results from 11 and 12	Electorate not very interested	Attributes support perception of MTI project as interesting innovation (bad management is no issue)

Table B2 The framing of issue 2: the conflict about the Collective Labour Agreement (CLA)

S	Displacement	Setting	Access	Attributes	Audience	Issue framing
4	Provincial States delegated supervision to Development Group	Development Group (1)	Province invited regional stakeholders	Distributed knowledge about demand	No audience present	Strong focus on service characteristics (see table 5.1); driver resistance no issue
5	Arriva's council of employees was to be consulted as part of the procedure because of detachment contract.	Meeting of Arriva's council of employees	Elected employees, some member of labor union	Veto right, public transport CLA, supported from unions	Sceptical employees, DG is also very interested	MTI project and time schedules reframed as breach of CLA. Disapproval reflects scepticism among main audience
6	The province tries to hush up the conflict as time proceeds.	Private meetings: province/Arriva/MTI	Provincial officials approached directors of MTI and Arriva	Arguments about the costs of delay, reputations were put at stake	No audience present, behind the scenes	By bracketing antiprograms of employees (via limitations to access and exclusion of audience) persuasion of Arriva's board sufficed to remove the CLA conflict from the centre of the stage
7	Entrance of implementation phase, displacement to the office of schedule makers	MTI's office: strikes	Drivers question work of schedule makers	CLA, shared dissatisfaction, support from labor unions	Boards of MTI and Arriva	CLA conflict could return at the centre of the stage, now as sickness generator, because attributes empowered drivers
8	Unpaid bills for sick drivers is problem for Arriva and MTI	Correspondence: MTI/Arriva	MTI and Arriva accuse each other	Sick drivers, detachment contract, formal letters	Development Group, not very interested	Interpretation of driver sickness and ascription of costs again divided MTI and Arriva
14	Labour union CNV started a legal suit, because MTI would not apply public transport CLA to all employees	Court	Labour union CNV sues MTI, judge	MTI's exceptional situation versus general applicability of CLA	Other stakeholders (merely passive)	Court reduced the entire MTI project to one aspect: labour conditions. Attributes relating to other aspects were not relevant in this setting
15	MTI started a public debate about the adequacy of the current CLA	Public debate: newspapers	Access depended on interesting cases	Controversial case, links with societal trends	Everybody in principle, CLA negotiators in particular	Access conditions and attributes enabled MTI to frame the CLA as an innovation barrier instead of labour protection

*Table B3* The framing of issue 3: tensions on the level of the practicalities of the service

S	Displacement	Setting	Access	Attributes	Audience	Issue framing
9	User panel was part of contract between MTI, Arriva and province	User panel	MTI management and recruited season-ticket holders	Information from MTI management, own experience. Financial responsibility and decision-making authority remained at MTI board	No audience present. DG treated decisions as if they were MTI's	Due to the absence of an audience, the interests of the participants determined the framing of issues in terms of service characteristics. In conflicts MTI was clearly better empowered: it possessed the decisive attributes and the audience-at-a-distance was particularly watching MTI's performance



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# Samenvatting

## De Politiek van Innovatie in het Openbaar Vervoer

### *Issues, Settings en Verplaatsingen*

Aan innovatieprocessen kan een belangrijke politieke dimensie onderscheiden worden. Aan de ene kant kunnen technologische innovaties zich potentieel in verschillende richtingen ontwikkelen, richtingen die ieder gepaard gaan met een andere toekomst. Aan de andere kant hangen deze ontwikkelingen samen met de interacties tussen betrokkenen, machtsstructuren, onderhandelingen en contingentie. Karakteristiek voor dit wederkerig vormgeven van technologie en maatschappij is daarom het controversiële, de machtsstrijd, die zich onder andere manifesteert in de in- en uitsluiting van actoren. Deze karakteristiek vat ik samen als 'de politiek van innovatie'. De centrale vraag van dit proefschrift ligt in het verlengde hiervan: hoe kun je de democratische kwaliteit van de politiek van innovatie begrijpen en evalueren? Deze vraagstelling wordt in het eerste hoofdstuk langs drie verschillende routes verduidelijkt en gespecificeerd.

De eerste route gaat in op de politiek van innovatie als een proces van co-constructie van technologie en actoren met alle fricties, spanningen en machtsverschillen van dien. De tweede route bestaat uit een bespreking van de literatuur over gebruikers en technologie. Daaruit blijkt dat praktijken van co-constructie plaatsvinden in een verscheidenheid van settings. Daarom kijkt dit proefschrift naar *verplaatsingen* tussen settings. De derde route geeft een rechtvaardiging van de keuze openbaar vervoer als een domein waarin case studies worden geselecteerd. Een drietal voorbeelden van besluitvorming over openbaar vervoer geeft inzicht in de verscheidenheid van democratische vormen die zich in dit domein voordoet, een rijk onderzoeksveld in termen van effecten van verplaatsingen derhalve. Wat zulke vormen van democratie voorts met elkaar gemeen hebben is een aantal democratische principes – participatie, toerusting en invloed – die ook in de STS literatuur worden onderkend en op basis waarvan ik democratische kwaliteit definieer.

De drie routes leiden uiteindelijk tot de specificatie van de centrale vraagstelling in drie subvragen: (i) hoe kunnen we de politiek van innovatie conceptualiseren in termen van verplaatsingen, (ii) welke invloed oefenen verplaatsingen uit op democratische kwaliteit en (iii) wat is de onderliggende dynamiek van verplaatsingen?

Het tweede hoofdstuk presenteert de resultaten van een theoretisch onderzoek naar de achtergronden en implicaties van verplaatste politiek. Mijn co-auteur en ik zijn op zoek naar een genuanceerde theorie van verplaatsingen, die zowel aan negatieve als aan positieve effecten van verplaatsingen op democratische kwaliteit recht doet. In deze zoektocht stuiten wij op echter op uiteenlopende veronderstellingen en het gebruik van dezelfde concepten voor verschillende verschijnselen. Eerst hebben wij daarom een vijftal perspectieven op technologie en democratie onderscheiden en uiteengezet waarin zij overeenkomen, verschillen en complementair zijn.

Het 'intentionalistische' perspectief gaat uit van de veronderstelling dat onwenselijke gevolgen van technologische keuzes kunnen en moeten worden voorkomen door betere ontwerpkeuzes te maken overeenkomstig democratische kernwaarden. Dit perspectief levert belangrijke analytische en politieke inzichten op over de materialisatie van waarden en ideeën in het ontwerp van artefacten, die verklaren waarom deze artefacten verwelkomd dan wel verworpen worden.

Het 'proceduralistische' perspectief doet recht aan de pluraliteit van waarderingen van technologie en omarmt directe democratie als model voor besluitvorming. Dit ideaal doet evenwel geen recht aan democratische besluitvorming die totstandkomt via verplaatsingen tussen settings die aan elkaar zijn gerelateerd door eisen van verantwoording. Wij nemen alleen de drie in het eerste hoofdstuk genoemde democratische principes mee.

Het 'actor-netwerk' perspectief begrijpt zowel technologische artefacten als democratische structuren als resultaat van netwerk formatie via de mobilisatie van medestanders. Hoewel het perspectief te agnostisch is voor systematische democratische evaluatie, biedt de theorie van botsende socio-materiële actieprogramma's wel een omvattende en dynamische blik op de politiek van innovatie.

Het 'interpretatieve' perspectief benadrukt het belang van discursieve betekenisgevers die nodig zijn om technologie überhaupt effectief te laten zijn, maar ook dit perspectief is te agnostisch. Wel verrijkt de getoonde mogelijkheid van discursieve strategieën het idee van de politiek van innovatie als een strijd tussen actieprogramma's.

Het 'performatieve' perspectief benadrukt de manier waarop technologische artefacten en democratische praktijken vorm en betekenis krijgen doordat ze binnen settings op een bepaalde manier tot uiting komen. Deze nadruk op de actieve rol van settings is zeer interessant voor ons onderzoek naar verplaatsingen tussen settings. De binnen dit perspectief voorgestelde methode voor evaluatie is evenwel niet overtuigend.

Het uiteenzetten van de overeenkomsten en verschillen tussen de perspectieven geeft ons de bouwstenen in handen voor een theoretisch kader, waarmee de beperkingen van afzonderlijke perspectieven op technologie en democratie kunnen worden overstegen.

Het derde hoofdstuk beantwoordt de eerste onderzoeksvraag met de ontwikkeling van een theoretisch raamwerk op basis van de bouwstenen uit het tweede hoofdstuk. Uitgangspunt is dat de co-constructie van technologie en actoren plaatsvindt in settings die zelden neutraal zijn. Om hier inzicht in te verwerven moet men de 'issues' volgen als ze 'verplaatst' worden tussen verschillende 'settings'.

'Issues' worden gedefinieerd in termen van botsende actieprogramma's. In innovatieprocessen worden actieprogramma's ingeschreven in het ontwerp van technologische artefacten. Maar actieprogramma's roepen ook antiprogramma's op, die gericht zijn op het verwerpen of veranderen van de technologie. De 'setting' is de directe context waarin deze botsingen plaatsvinden. De metafoer van een theaterpodium suggereert dat er drie belangrijke eigenschappen van settings zijn: hun toegangscondities, de attributen en het publiek. Deze eigenschappen kunnen sommige actieprogramma's bevoordelen en andere benadelen. De manier waarop een issue vorm krijgt in een setting noem ik 'issue-framing'. Een 'verplaatsing' is de beweging van een issue naar een andere setting of een significante verandering van de eigenschappen van een setting. Aangezien daardoor de issues opnieuw vorm krijgen (issue-reframing) rijzen er (empirische) vragen naar de democratische implicaties en de onderliggende dynamiek van verplaatsingen.

Democratische kwaliteit is in hoofdstuk 1 reeds gedefinieerd. Het theoretisch raamwerk doet vermoeden dat verplaatsingen de verhoudingen tussen actieprogramma's verschuiven en dat dit onder bepaalde omstandigheden democratiserend kan werken. De dynamiek van verplaatsingen valt uiteen in twee dimensies: de routes van verplaatsingen (hoe) en de condities die eraan ten grondslag liggen (waarom). De routes kunnen worden beschreven in termen van de eigenschappen van de settings waartussen het issue verplaatst. Issue-reframing is louter afhankelijk van routes. Ten aanzien van de condities wordt onderscheid gemaakt tussen interne (actor-strategieën) en externe condities (procedures, onverwachte gebeurtenissen).

Het theoretisch raamwerk vertaalt de empirische hoofdvragen in een aantal meer specifieke onderzoeksvragen. Welke invloed hebben settings op issue-framing? Is het mogelijk om routes van verplaatsingen te karakteriseren op basis van reframing effecten? Wat zijn daarvan de belangrijkste condities? En wat zijn daarvan de belangrijkste gevolgen voor democratische kwaliteit? Drie studies van controversiële cases van innovatie in het openbaar vervoer worden uitgevoerd om antwoord te vinden op deze vragen.

In de eerste case studie, over de introductie van zelfbediening in Amsterdamse trams (1965-1973), ligt de nadruk op de notie van 'issues'. Met zelfbediening maakte een systeem waarin conducteurs kaartjes verkochten en controleerden plaats voor een systeem waarin passagiers zelf kaartjes bij voorverkoopadressen of verkoopautomaten moesten kopen om deze af te stempelen in de daarvoor bestemde automaten in de trams. De issues in deze case bestaan uit de spanningen en conflicten tussen het (gewenste) zelfbedieningsgedrag en het (verwachte en daadwerkelijke) zwartrijden. De directie van het Gemeentelijke Vervoerbedrijf (GVB) motiveerde het zelfbedieningssysteem als een alternatief voor de weinig efficiënte kaartverkoop en controle door conducteurs. Maar voordat zelfbediening succesvol was moest het GVB weerstand bieden aan de antiprogramma's van verschillende typen zwartrijders zoals de ongewisse, de onverschillige, de gokkende en de politiek bewuste zwartrijder.

De manifestatie en oplossing van hierdoor ontstane issues kenmerkte zich door verplaatsingen tussen drie belangrijke settings: de tram, het GVB management en de gemeenteraad. Deze verplaatsingen volgden vier verschillende routes met verschillende reframing effecten. *Articulatie*, ten eerste, is de verplaatsing van issues van tram naar management. Het reframing effect hiervan is de demonstratie van een antiprogramma. Een belangrijke conditie voor articulatie was het bemiddelende werk van kaartcontroleurs en journalisten. *Politisering*, ten tweede, is de verplaatsing van issues naar de gemeenteraad, waar 'onrechtmatige' aspecten van actieprogramma's centraal komen te staan. Een belangrijke conditie is het vermogen om issues op de agenda van de raad te krijgen. *Delegatie*, ten derde, is de verplaatsing van issues van gemeenteraad naar management naar tram, met de realisatie van actieprogramma's als belangrijkste effect. Delegatie is mogelijk op basis van een hiërarchische organisatie. *Depolitisering*, tenslotte, is de verdwijning van issues van de agenda van de gemeenteraad. De belangrijkste conditie daarvoor is de onwil of onmacht van raadsleden om antiprogramma's te verdedigen.

Het onderscheid tussen deze typen verplaatsingen is behulpzaam in de beantwoording van de vraag naar democratische kwaliteit. Het GVB, dat een publiek belang vertegenwoordigde tegenover de eigenbelangen van de meeste zwartrijders en dat dus voldoende controle over het zelfbedieningssysteem had moeten hebben, bleek aanvankelijk onvoldoende toegerust en invloedrijk. Later werd dit door adequate maatregelen gecompenseerd, waarbij de effecten van articulatie en delegatie elkaar versterkten. Articulatie bracht de antiprogramma's aan het licht en

delegatie legitimeerde de maatregelen ertegen. Delegatie betekent echter alleen democratische legitimatie als er een inclusief debat aan voorafgaat, waarin de verleiding van depolitisering wordt weerstaan.

Hoofdstuk vijf presenteert de resultaten van de tweede case studie over de introductie van een flexibel openbaar vervoer concept in Zuidwest-Drenthe (1999-2004). Innovatief aan het concept van het nieuwe vervoerbedrijf Millennium Transport International (MTI) waren de kleine bussen, de afwezigheid van haltes (handopsteken volstaat) en een gebruikersraad die in principe de routes en tarieven vaststelde. Kenmerkend voor het besluitvormingsproces was de grote variëteit aan settings waar besluitvorming tot stand is gekomen. In de case studie wordt dit besluitvormingsproces geanalyseerd aan de hand van de toegangscondities, attributen en publieken van de settings en de veranderingen die verplaatsingen van issues daarin aanbrengen.

Er speelden drie belangrijke issues in de case: de afstemming van de gevraagde en de aangeboden kwaliteit van de dienstverlening, een CAO-conflict en spanningen omtrent de praktische invulling van het concept. De eerste twee issues volgden lange ketens van verplaatsingen. De laatste speelde zich louter in de gebruikersraad af.

De vier typen van verplaatsingen – delegatie, politisering, articulatie en depolitisering – zijn wederom zichtbaar. Daarnaast wordt een vijfde type onderkend: autorisatie. Ten aanzien van *delegatie* wordt het belang van een mandaat als attribuut onderstreept. Het mandaat plaatst de verstrekker ervan in de rol van publiek dat toeziet op de uitvoering. Dankzij *politisering*, ten tweede, worden nieuwe argumenten en andere attributen in de discussie meegenomen. Karakteristiek voor politisering is de noodzaak voor actoren om hun achterban (publiek) te raadplegen als de delegatie niet leidt tot de beoogde realisering van het actieprogramma. *Gedeeltelijke depolitisering*, ten derde, gebeurt in besloten settings, waar slechts enkele actoren toegang hebben en het publiek geen invloed uitoefent. *Articulatie*, ten vierde, is vaak gebaseerd op een cruciaal attribuut (zoals de CAO), ofwel omdat deze tot dan toe onderbenut bleef als argument in het debat ofwel omdat kritiek wordt uitgeoefend op zijn overbenutting. *Autorisatie*, tenslotte, is het oplossen van een conflict op basis van erkende autoriteit. Aangezien het in dit geval een rechtszaak betrof is de autoriteit gebaseerd op het heersende rechtstelsel.

Deze vijf typen verplaatsingen zijn van invloed op de democratische kwaliteit van het proces als geheel. In het eerste issue had Provinciale Staten het mandaat geformuleerd waarmee gedelegeerde ambtenaren de begeleidingsgroep organiseerden en voorzaten. Echter, MTI's disfunctioneren leidde niet tot het inleveren van het mandaat maar tot gedeeltelijke depolitisering vanwege het doorgebruik van het mandaat, mede omdat Statenleden geen alert publiek vormden. Door depolitisering waren Statenleden bij de volgende aanbesteding van het gebied onvoldoende toegerust om een oordeel te vellen.

In het tweede issue waren door Arriva aan MTI gedetacheerde chauffeurs wellicht te goed toegerust door de CAO, waarmee ze hun antiprogramma daadkrachtig articuleerden. De geldigheid van de CAO werd ook in twijfel getrokken via (tegen)articulatie, aangezien de afspraken erin niet erg waren toegesneden een geliberaliseerde markt.

Het derde issue laat zien waarom de gebruikersraad minder democratisch was dan hij leek. De gebruikers in de raad ontbeerden doorslaggevende attributen tegenover het MTI management (a priori depolitisering), waardoor zijn noch bindende besluiten konden nemen (bijv. via stemrecht) noch de mogelijkheid hadden om het issue te verplaatsen naar een setting met meer autoriteit (bijv. via beroepsmogelijkheden).

De laatste case studie, over de ontwikkeling van infrastructuur voor Hoogwaardig Openbaar Vervoer (HOV) in Utrecht (1991-1999), wordt in hoofdstuk zes gerapporteerd. Deze case kenmerkt zich door heftige debatten over één issue (de ontwikkeling van het zogenaamde Masterplan) dat zich in twee opeenvolgende regeerperiodes volgens een vergelijkbaar patroon tussen een vijftal settings verplaatste. De debatten gingen zowel over de inhoud van het Masterplan als over de legitimiteit van het besluitvormingsproces. Daardoor is de case geschikt voor analyse van de relatie tussen verplaatsingen en democratische kwaliteit. Als ijkpunt voor democratische kwaliteit worden de verkiezingsuitslagen genomen.

De invloed op democratische kwaliteit van de vijf routes van verplaatsingen, die wederom zichtbaar zijn, staan in deze studie centraal. Door *delegatie* worden minderheden in de gemeenteraad buitengesloten, juist omdat het doel van delegatie de toerusting van een meerderheid is. Het mandaat, op basis waarvan het Projectbureau werkte, berustte op de verkiezingsuitslag, de samenstelling van de gemeenteraad, de formatie en het werkprogramma van de coalitie. Voor invloed moet het issue (als voorstel) weer terug naar de gemeenteraad waar het mandaat is verleend en waar nu de argumentatie in het voorstel als een nieuw attribuut de meerderheid beter toerust.

*Articulatie* gebeurt meestal wanneer tot dan toe buitengesloten belanghebbenden, met name omwonenden en winkeliers, voor zichzelf toegang en toerusting creëren in settings aan de rand van het besluitvormingsproces. Typische settings zijn inspraakprocedures en demonstraties. Toerusting werd verzorgd door activisten van de anti-trambeweging. De invloed van articulatie hangt af van de mate waarin uitkomsten van invloed zijn in en op settings waar besluiten worden genomen.

Willen delegatie en articulatie op een democratische wijze van invloed zijn, dan dienen minderheidsbelangen proportioneel in de besluitvorming meegewogen te worden. In de gemeenteraad werden deze belangen echter tussen haakjes gezet (*depolitisering*) en besluiten conform het standpunt van de coalitiepartners genomen, zelfs nadat was gebleken dat zulke besluiten tegen de wil van de Utrechtse bevolking indruisten.

*Autorisatie*, het subsidieoordeel van de Minister van Verkeer en Waterstaat, verhoogde democratische kwaliteit omdat in de afweging door de autoriteit alle belangen evenwichtig waren meegenomen. Niettemin waren de condities voor subsidie globaal genoeg voor het Utrechtse college om slechts gedeeltelijk aan de wil van de groeiende oppositie tegemoet te komen.

Het belangrijkste resultaat van depolitisering in de gemeenteraad was tot twee keer toe een *politisering* na verkiezingen, die het Masterplan ingrijpend wijzigden. Dat hing samen met de radicaal vernieuwde toegangscondities van de gemeenteraad en het college van Burgemeester en Wethouders. Omdat de invloed van verkiezingen op het werkprogramma een weerspiegeling van de actuele wil van de bevolking is, is deze politisering per definitie democratisch. Wel gingen deze politisering gepaard met ingrijpende en kostbare wijzigingen van reeds uitgewerkte Masterplannen.

Hoofdstuk zeven trekt conclusies. De conceptualisering van de politiek van innovatie in termen van verplaatsingen is gebaseerd op vier cruciale noties – ‘issues’, ‘settings’, ‘verplaatsingen’ en ‘reframing’ – die in hoofdstuk drie zijn geïntroduceerd. Het belangrijkste aanvullende inzicht op basis van de case studies is een typologie van verplaatsingen op basis van reframing effecten. Delegatie is de realisatie van een actieprogramma op basis van een breed gesteund mandaat. Politisering is de discussie van controversiële aspecten van een actieprogramma in

een bredere context. Autorisatie is de oplossing van een conflict op basis van erkende autoriteit. (Gedeeltelijke) depolitisering is het tussen haakjes zetten van antiprogramma's en de verdwijning van issues als gevolg daarvan.

De beantwoording van de twee empirische onderzoeksvragen is opgehangen aan deze typologie. Met voorbeelden uit de cases worden ten eerste de bijdragen van deze verplaatsingen aan democratische kwaliteit besproken. Het resultaat is een set van meer of minder hypothetische relaties, die soms terugkeren in de verschillende case studies, maar soms ook uniek zijn voor een bepaalde situatie. Opvallend is hoe een bepaald type verplaatsing een andere oproept of noodzakelijk maakt en hoe de interactie tussen verschillende typen democratische kwaliteit beïnvloedt.

De dynamiek van verplaatsingen, ten tweede, wordt besproken aan de hand van een vergelijking tussen de routes en condities van verplaatsingen die in de afzonderlijke case studies zijn gevonden. De routes van verplaatsingen kunnen op een consistente manier worden beschreven in termen van de veranderingen in de eigenschappen van de settings waartussen de verplaatsing optreedt. Ten aanzien van de belangrijkste condities voor de verschillende typen verplaatsingen wordt geconcludeerd dat articulatie voortkomt uit strategische overwegingen van betrokken actoren, dat de condities voor politisering, delegatie en autorisatie dikwijls vastliggen in de institutionele context en dat depolitisering vaak het gevolg is van politieke onwil of onvermogen.

Hoofdstuk zeven besluit met de bijdrage van dit proefschrift aan de literatuur waar het op leunt. Het bediscussieert het belang van conclusies over framing door settings, de verschillende types reframing door verplaatsing, de dynamiek van verplaatsingen en de relatie tussen verplaatsingen en democratische kwaliteit. Vervolgens gaat het in op de meer specifieke bijdragen aan translatietheorie, democratiseringstheorie, gebruikerstheorie en transport studies.

# Summary

## The Politics of Innovation in Public Transport

### *Issues, Settings and Displacements*

There is an important political dimension of innovation processes. On the one hand, technological innovations can develop in multiple directions, which imply different futures. On the other hand, these directions depend on interactions, power distribution, negotiations, and contingencies. The mutual shaping of technology and society involves heterogeneous actors and is characterized by contestation of plans and designs and a lack of established procedures for decision-making. Decision-making in these circumstances is referred to as the 'politics of innovation'. The central question of this thesis reads: how to understand and evaluate the democratic quality of the politics of innovation? In the first chapter, this question is clarified and specified along three different routes.

The first route deals with the politics of innovation as a process of co-construction of technology and actors, characterized by frictions, tensions and power disparities. The second route concerns a review of the literature about technology and users. It appears that practices of co-construction take place in a variety of settings. Therefore, this thesis focuses on *displacements* between settings. The third route provided reasons to focus on cases in the empirical domain of public transport. Because the call for democratisation frequently leads to stakeholder involvement, though in many different ways, this domain offers interesting cases. Moreover, the choice for this domain justifies a definition of democratic quality in terms of participation, empowerment, and impact, which are also recognized in the STS literature.

The three routes finally translate the initial question into three more specific research questions: (i) how to conceptualise the politics of innovation in terms of displacements, (ii) how do displacements affect democratic quality, and (iii) what are the underlying dynamics of displacements?

The second chapter presents the results of a theoretical research into the backgrounds and implications of displaced politics. My co-author and I have searched for a way to theorize the democratic deficits and merits of displacements without preoccupations about where the politics of innovation 'belongs'. This search led to diverging theoretical assumptions and the use of the same concepts for different phenomena. We therefore first distinguished five different perspectives on democracy and technology and clarified their similarities, complementarities and differences.

The 'intentionalist' perspective starts from the assumption that undesirable consequences of technological choice could and should be remedied by making better choices on the base of key democratic values. This perspective yields important lessons, both analytically and politically,

about the materialization of values and ideas in the design of artefacts, which explain the motivations of actors to embrace or resist technological innovation.

The 'proceduralist' perspective acknowledges the variety of appraisals of stakeholders, and embraces direct and deliberative democracy as an ideal model of decision-making. This model, however, does not do right to democratic decisions that come about via displacements between settings, which are interrelated by chains of accountability. However, we do take the three already mentioned democratic principles on board.

The 'actor-network' perspective understands both democratic structures and technological artefacts as the result of network formation by means of mobilizing allies. Although this perspective is too agnostic for systematic democratic evaluation, the theory of clashing socio-material action programs does offer a comprehensive and dynamic view on the politics of innovation.

The 'interpretivist' perspective emphasizes the discursive signifiers that are to be mobilised for artefacts to have (political) effects, but this perspective is as agnostic as the previous. Yet, the possibility of discursive strategies does enrich the idea of the politics of innovation as a clash between action programs.

The 'performative' perspective focuses on the way technologies and democratic practices are framed by the characteristics of settings. The confrontation between action and antiprograms takes place on settings that are already biased. This emphasis on the active role of settings is very interesting for our research into displacements between settings. Yet, the evaluation method proposed by advocates of this perspective is not convincing.

Spelling out the differences and similarities between the five perspectives provides us with the building blocks for a theoretical framework with which the limitations of any particular perspective on technology and democracy can be transcended.

The third chapter answers the first research question by developing a theoretical framework on the base of building blocks collected in the second chapter. Starting point is that the co-construction of technology and actors takes place in settings that are already biased. To gain insight in the politics of innovation one should follow the 'issues' when they are 'displaced' between different 'settings'.

'Issues' are defined in terms of clashing action programs. In innovation processes action programs are inscribed in the technical content of artefacts. But action programs may provoke antiprograms that aim at rejection or adjustment of the artefacts. A 'setting' is the direct context of such clashes. The metaphor of a theatre stage suggests three important characteristics of settings: their access conditions, the attributes, and the audience. These characteristics can be beneficial for some action programs and go at the expense of others. 'Issue-framing' refers to the way the characteristics of settings affect issues. A 'displacement' is the movement of an issue to another setting or a significant change in the characteristics of a setting. The reframing effects of displacements raise (empirical) questions about the democratic implications and dynamics of displacements.

Democratic quality is defined in chapter 1 already. The theoretical framework suggests that displacements shift the balance of power between action programs, which may have democratic implications. The dynamics of displacements comprises routes (how) and underlying conditions (why). The routes can be described in terms of the characteristics of settings between which issues displace. Issue-reframing merely depends on routes. With regard to the conditions a

distinction is made between internal (actor strategies) and external (procedures, contingent events) conditions.

The theoretical framework translates the empirical research questions into more specific sub-questions. How do settings frame the issues? Is it possible to characterize different types of displacements on the base of reframing effects? What are the main conditions of these types? And what are their main effects on democratic quality? Three studies of controversial cases of innovation in public transport are performed to find answers to these questions.

The first case study, about the introduction of self-service in the Amsterdam trams (1965-1973), focuses on the notion of 'issues'. Self-service meant the substitution of a system in which conductors sold and inspected tickets with a system in which passengers ought to buy tickets from ticket vending machines and stamp them in the stamping machines within the tram. In this case issues were characterized as tensions and conflicts between (desired) fare paying and (expected or actual) fare dodging. The Municipal Transport Company (GVB) Amsterdam justified the necessary investment with reference to increasing shortages and labour expenses. But the system was not successful until the GVB managed to cope with the antiprograms of diverse types of fare dodgers, like the ignorant, the indifferent, the gambling, and the politically engaged fare dodgers.

Based on how the issues were framed three different settings are discerned: the tram itself, the GVB management, and the city council. Displacements had four different reframing effects according to the routes between these settings. First, *articulation* is the displacement of issues from tram to management. The reframing effect is the demonstration of an antiprogram. An important condition was the mediating work of ticket inspectors and journalists. Second, *politicisation* is the displacement of issues to the city council, where 'unfair' (aspects of) action programs were put centre stage. An important condition is the ability to put issues on the council's agenda. Third, *delegation* is the displacement of issues from the council to the GVB management and from there to the tram. The realisation of action programs is the main effect. Delegation is conditioned by a hierarchical organisation. Finally, *depoliticisation* is the disappearance of issues from the agenda of the city council. The most important condition is the unwillingness or inability of councillors to defend antiprograms.

The distinction between these types of displacements contributes to answering the question of democratic quality. The GVB, which represented a public interest in contrast to the private interests of most fare dodgers, should have been sufficiently empowered and influential to control the self-service system and the behaviour of passengers. However, it could not create a successful self-service system until the company's lack of influence was remedied via mutually reinforcing effects of articulation and delegation. Articulation revealed the antiprograms that became manifest in the tram. Delegation justified counteraction. Yet, delegation is only democratically legitimated when it is based on a mandate that results from an inclusive debate in which the seduction of depoliticisation is resisted.

Chapter five presents the results of the second case study about the introduction of a flexible public transport concept in and between the towns of Hoogeveen and Meppel, the Netherlands (1999-2004). A small new company called Millennium Transport International (MTI) introduced a quite innovative service concept with small buses, without designated bus stops (hand rising sufficed), and with a user panel determining the principle routes. The decision-making process

was characterised by the large variety of settings where issues displaced between. In the case study this decision-making process is analysed in terms of changing access conditions, attributes and audiences due to displacements.

Three major issues are discerned: (i) mismatches between the requirements to and the quality level of the service, (ii) a conflict about the Collective Labour Agreement (CLA), and (iii) tensions on the level of the practicalities of the service. The first two issues were framed and reframed in long chains of displacements. The third remained in the user panel.

The four types of displacements – delegation, politicisation, articulation, and depoliticisation – are again discerned. In addition, a fifth type was found: authorisation. With regard to *delegation* the importance of a mandate is underscored. The mandate requires the giver to take part in the audience to look upon its proper execution. Due to *politicisation*, secondly, new arguments and other attributes enter the debate. Politicisation is the consultation of the constituency (audience) when delegation does not result in the intended realisation of an action program. (*Partial depoliticisation* occurs in private settings: when access is limited to few participants and the audience is hardly influential. *Articulation*, fourthly, is often based on an empowering attribute (e.g. CLA), either because that forms an undervalued ground to contest an action program or because this attribute becomes an object of contestation itself because it is overvalued in the eyes of others. *Authorisation*, finally, involves the solution of a conflict on the base of acknowledged authority as happened when decision-making displaces to court. It is made possible by the legal system in this case.

These five types of displacement affect the democratic quality of the process. In the first issue, Provincial States formulated the mandate on the base of which decision-making was delegated to provincial officials, who organised and chaired the group of project supervisors. Yet, MTI's malfunctioning did not lead to the return of the mandate (politicisation) but instead to depoliticisation due to overuse of the mandate, partly because State members were not a very alert audience. As a result, State members were insufficiently empowered to judge the tenders in next invitation round.

In the second issue, drivers hired from Arriva were arguably too well empowered by the CLA, by means of which they decisively articulated their antiprogram. The validity of the CLA was also questioned by (counter)articulation, because the document did not well fit in a recently liberalised market.

The third issue shows why the user panel was less democratic than it seemed. Users lacked decisive attributes in their negotiations with the MTI managements (a priori depoliticisation). Such attributes can either affect the outcomes in one particular setting (e.g. voting rights) or offer a possibility to displace the issue to another setting (e.g. notice of appeal).

The last case study, about the development of infrastructure for High-quality Public Transport (HOV) in Utrecht (1991-1999), is reported in chapter six. The case was divided in two episodes in which the process followed a similar pattern. In each episode polemical debates about one issue (the development of the so-called Masterplan) displaced between about five settings. The debates dealt with both the content of the Masterplan and the legitimacy of the decision-making process. Because legitimacy questions were explicitly addressed in the debates the case is suitable for analysis of the relation between displacements and democratic quality. Election results are used as a benchmark for democratic quality.

The case study focuses on the effects of five routes of displacements, which are again discerned, on democratic quality. By *delegation* minorities in the city council are excluded from the decision-making process, precisely because the objective of delegation is to empower a majority. The mandate, with which the Projectbureau was commissioned, was based on the election results, the composition of the city council, and the formation of a coalition. The degree of impact depends on the return of the issue (as proposal) to the previous setting and its weight as an attribute empowering the majority.

*Articulation* mostly happens when excluded stakeholders, residents and shopkeepers in this case, create access and empower themselves in settings at the periphery of the decision-making process. Typical settings are public inquiries and demonstrations. The most important contributions to democratic quality of articulation are participation and empowerment of not yet involved stakeholders. Impact depends on whether the results of articulation are important attributes in the subsequent settings.

If delegation and articulation are to contribute to democratic quality, then minority interests should carry proportional weight in the decision-making process. In the city council these interests were however bracketed (*depoliticisation*) when decisions reflected the standpoint of coalition partners, even after that appeared to be against the will of the Utrecht population.

Authorisation, the answer of the Minister of Transport on a subsidy request, increased democratic quality, because the authority took all interests into consideration. Nevertheless, the conditions for subsidy remained global enough for the Utrecht board to only partially meet the demands of a growing opposition.

The most important result of depoliticisation in the city council was *politicisation* after elections, which caused major changes in the Masterplan. This politicisation resulted from radically renewed access conditions of the city council and the Board of Mayor and Aldermen. Because the impact of elections on the work program of the coalition reflected the actual will of the people, this politicisation was democratic by definition. Unfortunately, the influence that large groups of bypassed stakeholders finally acquired went at the expense of costly reversals of maturing plans.

Chapter seven draws conclusions. The conceptualisation of the politics of innovation in terms of displacements is based on four crucial notions – ‘issues’, ‘settings’, ‘displacements’, and ‘issue-reframing’ – which were introduced in chapter three. In addition the case studies yielded an important conceptual result: a typology of displacements on the base of reframing effects. Delegation is the realisation of an action program on the base of a broadly supported mandate. Articulation is the public demonstration against (part of) an action program. Politicisation is the discussion of controversial parts of an action program in its wider context. Authorisation is the solution for a conflict on the base of acknowledged authority. (Partial) depoliticisation is the bracketing and disappearance of antiprograms.

The answers to the two empirical research questions rely on this typology. First, the contribution of these types of displacements to democratic quality is discussed and illustrated with examples from the cases. The result is a set of more or less hypothetical relations; some are unique but others recur in different cases. These relations explain why different types of displacements provoke each other and how the interaction between types of displacements affects democratic quality.

Second, the dynamics of displacements is discussed along a comparison of routes and conditions of displacements, which are found in the case studies. The routes can be described consistently in terms of changes in the characteristics of settings between which an issue displaces. With regard to the most important conditions, it is concluded that articulation depends on strategic considerations of stakeholders; that the main conditions for politicization, delegation and authorisation originate in the wider institutional context of the issue; and that depoliticisation is often the result of political unwillingness or inability.

Chapter seven ends with the contribution of this thesis to the literature on which it builds. It discusses conclusions about the framing role of settings, the different types of reframing by displacement, the dynamics of displacements, and the relation between displacement and democratic quality. Furthermore, it goes into the specific contributions to translation theory, democratisation theory, user theory, and transport studies.

# Acknowledgements

Socio-technical systems often seem more self-evident than they were at the time of their design. Not so in Utrecht. Near the centre of the city, at the crossing of the Kruisstraat and the Biltstraat, there is a very complex situation where traffic lights, street marks, different colours, and pavements control the traffic flows of pedestrians, cyclists, cars, taxis and buses. The layout of this crossing still reflects the politics of its design. Instead of simply springing from the minds of the designers in the Utrecht Projectbureau, it was the upshot of conflicting interests and hardly compatible insights, not aligned until draft designs were redrafted multiple times.



*Crossing of the Kruisstraat and the Biltstraat in Utrecht (Google Earth™ mapping service screenshot © Google Inc., reprinted with permission.)*

Until very recently I believed that my thesis would end up like this crossing. I seriously doubted whether it would become a coherent book instead of a chronology of a changing mind. Like the Masterplan of which the crossing is part, the outline changed fundamentally along the way and, as a result, chapters were rewritten so often that my directories overflow with old versions. Even the research questions were not stable until the final months.

It is up to you to judge whether the thesis has finally become a coherent book, whether you agree with the findings and whether it is interesting at all. Possibly you have read it already. If not, then I hope you will start reading soon. It may look complicated at first, but I think it is less chaotic than the Biltstraat crossing. You will be invited to take my point of view on the politics of innovation. If you do so and try to follow the lines of argument then I believe that you can cross the thesis without accidents. If you get lost or stuck in a jam, just go to the picture at the end of chapter three.

I am very grateful to my supervisors Ruud Smits, Harro van Lente, Bert van Wee, and Koen Frenken, who created and delimited the space in which I was able to manoeuvre. I especially want to mention the rather contemplative discussions with Ruud and Harro. Although we did

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Roel Nahuis

Deventer, December 2006

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