

An approach to governance or the sector/area dialogue that is based on the concept of "territory": the example of urban river projects

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Introduction: the sector/area dialogue, an approach to a public action issue that is based on the "territory"

When considering the concept of "territory", the ideas of Claude Raffestin provide us with a good starting point. While it is true that this statement may seem somewhat abrupt, when we consider the many ways the term is used, at least in geography and economic geography, it is apparent that this scholar's definition of the term "territory" as "the area covered by a system of active intentions" (Raffestin, 1996) reflects the wide variety of the ways the word is used. These intentions for a space that has been identified and the subject of a plan (the "territorial" project) involve the strategies of actors. A hierarchy for this interplay between actors can be developed on the basis of a distinction between the institutional actors (from different tiers of government) and the actors from different sectors (the operators that are present at the different local and regional levels). While this distinction operates in a very general way in the sphere of politics and economics, it also applies in the sphere of geography to networks and areas and the system of actors that is associated with them. Considering the governance of a "territory" can thus amount to observing this dialogue, as much in terms of conflicts as negotiations and compromises, between the actors from different sectors and those from institutions. This provides us with a political science approach which attempts to examine the relationship between sectors and areas with regard to public policy. The construction of public action requires an interaction between sectoral contexts (transport, hospitals, education, etc.) and "territorial" contexts whose conditions and power struggles constitute an area of research in their own right (Faure & al, 2005 ; Halpern, 2007 ; Baronne, 2008). Applying this political science approach to a spatial issue then to the case of specific areas appears to demonstrate that the "territorial" approach is able to achieve the necessary mingling of the approaches of different disciplines and non-disciplinary approaches in relation to precise scientific goals (Debie, 2010). The aim of this paper is to illustrate this relevance based on the case of urban river projects.

1. Urban river projects: the spatial problem of reconnection

Urban planning projects provide the social sciences with large-scale observation zones. Major river and port cities are particularly interesting in this regard as they contain areas where urban activities and port industry spaces are in close proximity or even coincide. We can examine this relationship by applying the approach recently proposed by Peter Hall (2010) which is centred on a process of connection, disconnection and reconnection. While the existence of the majority of coastal and river cities results from the historical relationship between cities, ports and industry (to use Chaline's expression ("the ports that created cities"), the 20th century has been marked by a gradual disconnection between the city and the port which has resulted in a separation between port space and urban space. This disconnection is part of the more general process of the functional zoning of urban areas but is accentuated in river and port cities by differences of land ownership. Publicly-owned areas (sea, ports and rivers) become extraneous to the urban area. It is only recently that new dialogues have been set up in the context of reconnection in relation to two different types of objective: bringing industrial and port wasteland back into urban use (since the 1980s and 1990s), and the more recent consideration of the utility of ports with regard to sustainable development (since the beginning of the years 2000). The attempt to reconnect the city in the port and the port in the city may also constitute a spatial issue. While Peter Hall initially approaches the disconnection/reconnection issue from the economic standpoint (whether or not the surrounding areas benefit from the added value created by ports), he also mentions the topic of institutional reconnection which implicitly raises the issue of the dialogue between sectoral and institutional actors with respect to specific "territorial" projects. We can illustrate this approach by referring to two river projects.

2. Two "territories" and two specific forms of dialogue: Strasbourg and Lyon

The two examples of the transborder metropolis project in Strasbourg and the river metropolis in Lyon illustrate the benefit of a "territory"-based approach to governance which is perceived through institution/sector dialogue.

The transborder metropolis project in Strasbourg marks out a strip of urban land oriented east-west (Strasbourg-Kehl) which passes through the north-south oriented port area that runs along the Rhine. It has been given the official stamp of approval in an urban plan known as the "two river banks scheme", which is currently the subject of negotiations. The publicly-

owned port land in question has, more than the Rhine, long marked the boundary of the conurbation on the basis of the classical city-port separation which dates from the period of disconnection. The transborder project is backed by the current municipality and sets up a phase of negotiation between actors from river sector and the port sector (the port authority and firms) and urban actors (the urban community, residents, urban planners and architects). The port authority has recently started to act as a property developer with regard to the land that is affected by the "two river banks scheme" (Starlette, Citadelle), which is a radical change of behaviour in a context where urban pressure is high. This means that it is also necessary to purchase land for industrial and port use outside the city. This development of port, industrial and logistical activities outside the city is supported by the General Council of the Bas-Rhin Département and the Regional Council of Alsace by means of project contracts. The urban location necessitated a period of negotiations describe that are described in a road map for the city and port which demands that the importance of the port be recognized in the Master Plan (Schéma de Cohérence oriale) and new discussions on the accessibility of the terminals in areas where access is highly constrained. In addition to this confrontation between the port and the city, a multi-actor encounter was held as part of a series of officially organized port workshops. These workshops allowed contrasting views on the role of the spaces in question to be expressed. The functional diversity advocated by the residents and the architects and urban planners was opposed by the industrial use advocated by the users of the port who formed a grouping under the aegis of the Chamber of Commerce and Industry (CCI). The urban and industrial points of view gave rise to opposing demands and priorities whose nature can be grasped through a study of the metropolis of Strasbourg (Figure 1).

The river metropolis project for the Lyon conurbation (Plan Bleu followed by Plan Fleuve) involves another type of dialogue in addition to that between urban actors (Greater Lyon Urban Community) and the actors associated with the river (Voies Navigables de France, Compagnie Nationale du Rhône), namely a regional and inter-regional dimension that is determined by the Rhône plan (Figure 2). The relationship between the city and river is also renegotiated by the interplay between these actors. Of course, at present this renegotiation is a gradual process involving use of the river for recreational purposes, tourism or the service sector (Lyon Confluence, Rives de Saône, Rives de Rhône, Parc de Gerland). In addition, river transport was not a primary concern of the three successive partnership charters signed by the Urban Community of Greater Lyon and Voies Navigables de France, although it did feature more strongly in the last. However, the recent thought that has been given to urban

quays (VNF/Greater Lyon) and the signing, after a period of conflict, of a partnership charter (between CNR, VNF, Greater Lyon, the Region and the Prefecture) for a consideration of the urban, economic and architectural integration of the Édouard Herriot port bear witness to fresh negotiations. The links between the parties involve the encounter between port, river and urban spaces in the context of a metropolitan port project which means due thought must be given to interfaces. The functional zoning of urban space and the extraneous nature of publicly-owned port spaces are giving way to a phase of dialogue between different institutions and sectors.

Conclusion. The "territory" and governance: a similar goal?

We feel that this brief survey of the interplay between "territories" and sectors demonstrates the similarity between two conceptual approaches. The "territory"-based approach (with its consideration of institutional levels and sectors and the associated interplay between actors) finally deals with much the same issues as most research that focuses on governance. Strangely, this similarity has been very little studied. Research on governance shows very little interest in the spatial dimension of the observed changes and "territory"-based approaches have difficulty in connecting up with governance (Dubresson & Jaglin, 2005). Nevertheless, differences in the approaches aside, the novel complexity of the process by which actors are coordinated around goals that are defined and discussed and the way a multi-level and multi-actor environment modifies interactions seem central to governance-based approaches (Le Galès, 2004, Theys 2003, Leloup & al, 2004). And at the end of the day, in the case of a specific space within which institutional and sectoral intentions develop, the complexity is the same as that involved in understanding a "territory". The urban projects we have described, which are "territorial" because they involve intentions that are negotiated for a delimited area which is covered by a plan, are one of many examples of this. The underlying sector-area dialogue makes a case for greater cross-fertilization between the approaches of geography and political science, but with the addition of knowledge about sectors which may not be disciplinary in the strict sense. From an academic standpoint the territory can therefore provide a context for this mingling of disciplinary studies (geography, political science and economics) and non-disciplinary studies (knowledge of the sectors).

Figure 1. The sector/area dialogue : the Strasbourg transborder metropolis

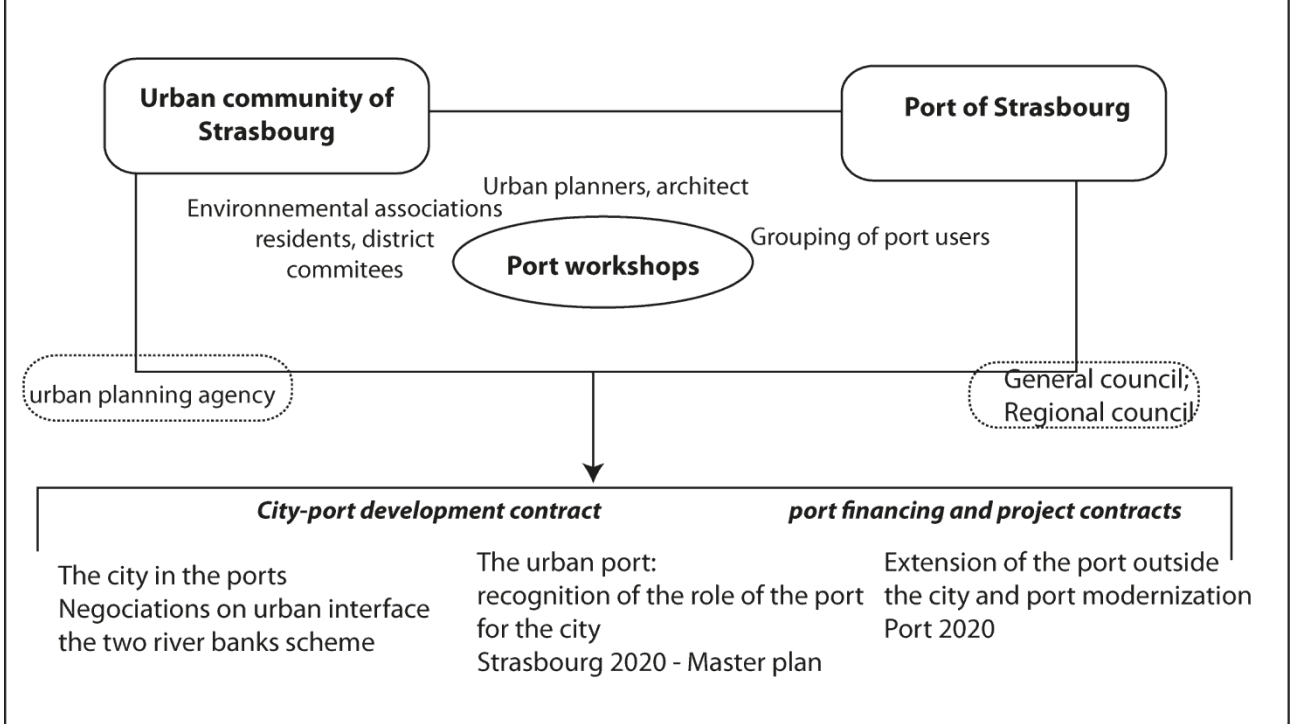
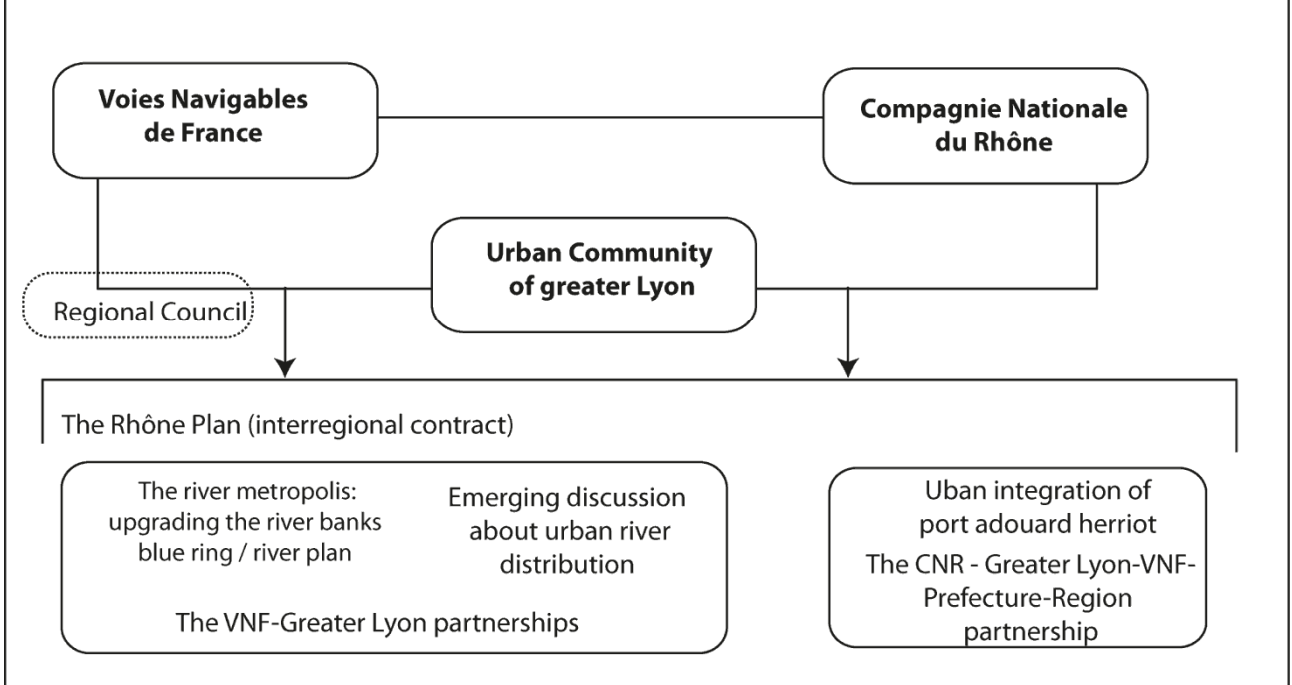


Figure 2. the sector/area dialogue. The example of the river metropolis project in Lyon



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