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**THE INFLUENCE OF (DE)CENTRALIZED POLITICS ON TRANSPORT GOVERNANCE –
THE CASES OF THE PUBLIC TRANSPORT REFORMS IN SANTIAGO AND BOGOTÁ**

**Research context**

In almost every Latin-American mega-city the environmental situation worsened dramatically and congestion level rose by reason of the increasing use of private cars due to the positive economic development and rising incomes. This development has a negative impact to the public transport rate which decreased in most of the Latin-American mega-cities in the last years. Against this background it is a big challenge to preserve the current rate of public transport which is in contrast to Europe still high. In Santiago about 40% (Sectra 2001: 71) of all journeys are made by public transport whereas this rate in Bogotá with about 60% is much higher (Secretaria de Transporte y Transito 2006: 27). To reach the aim of not loosing too many passengers to the motorized individual transport many cites in Latin-America are modernizing their public transport supply – among others the most ambitious projects are *Transantiag*o in Santiago de Chile and *Transmilenio* in Bogotá (Colombia). Both projects base on a Bus-Rapid-Transit-System (BRT) and have an extensive reorganisation of the entrepreneurial structure and the financial system in common. However the implementation strategies of both projects differ and appearing problems point out to problematic governance strategies and inappropriate power constellations instead of technical problems (Gilbert 2008: 458; Figueroa/Orellana 2007: 167). In both cities these significant changes have been and still are in the center of the public debates so that the progress of the implementations and the experiences of different users are a common topic in the media. This shows the importance of public tranport as a transport mode.

Traditionally the study of urban transport systems and trip pattern is a focus of civil engineering science. Analyses in this field have the tendency to look at transport issues mainly from the disciplines of physics, mathematics and economics. These disciplines conceive urban transport systems as a part of the city's economy and the task of the transport planner to design a sys-

tem that meets the demand of the city (Vasconcellos 2001: 34). Thus, the investigations of transport systems is focusing on issues such as computer modelling of routes or number of vehicles in the network, planning of infrastructure, or activity based genesis of transportation. However, since the 1960's scientists began to challenge this approach, promoting the integration of social and political aspects in the debates about urban transport (as discussed by Lyons 2004; Vasconcellos 2001).Since then the social function of urban transport system is being discussed, because of the indispensability of the access to work, study, social services, shopping and recreation. In addition it has a significant influence on issues such as poverty and social integration (e.g. Cass/Shove/Urry 2005). Nowadays, for reaching the aim of a sustainable transport system environmental and economical issues are as important as social issues. Furthermore the term mobility is often used instead of transport, because it refers to the general action of moving from one point to another than to a journey in specific transport modes and it expresses that for overcoming distances often more than one transport mode is used (Canzler/ Knie 2000; Hautzinger/ Meier 1999).

The focus of urban mobility strategies in different countries is nowadays located between speed-up of the motorized transport (by e.g. construction of highways) and a restriction or slowing down of private motorization (by implementing e.g. urban road charge or parking management) for promoting public and non-motorized transportation. In the last years some research was made on the implementation of such mobility policies against the background of the term governance (e.g. Bickerstaff/ Walker 2005; Viegas/ Macário 2007; Nirmala 2007; Faber 2002). It came clear that for a successful reform process it is key to understand the role of the actors and their influence in the decision making process as well as the distribution of power.

**Hypothesis and central questions**

The process of decentralization within a state has an influence on the public politics and causes different conditions in Chile and Colombia: In Chile the decentralization is mainly a deconcentration of administrativ affaires, what implies that the national state is still the main actor on the local level. In addition, the megacity of Santiago is a conglomerate of 37 municipalities, an autority for the whole city does not exist. Whereas Bogotá has a city government for the main area of the megacity which can decide autonomously from the national government. Therefore I hypothesize that the only partly developed decentralization in Chile is a main factor for the governance pattern which caused finally specific implementation problems of *Transantiago*, while

the advanced decentralization in Colombia has a positiv influence on the governance pattern and at least also on the implementation of *Transmilenio*.

The reform projects of *Transantiago* and *Transmilenio* can be seen as a kind of mobility strategy, however with unlike backgrounds. The study of these backgrounds which includes the different transport conditions, histories, project ambitions as well as the general styles of planning and political conditions is the fist aspect for answering my central questions: *How are public transport policies in the latin-american mega-cities of Santiago de Chile and Bogotá made against the background of the current efforts of decentralization? Which governance conditions are necessary for the implementation of public transport projects of this scale?*

The second aspect to answer the central questions is to analyze the institutions which lead to the following subquestions: *How are the public transport reforms connected to urban development plans? Which modifications of legal norms and regulations were required for the reforms? Where was the power located to change these norms and regulations as well as to create new plans?*

And the third aspect focuses on the action of the actors which leads directly to the following subquestions: *Who are the responsible public and private actors in the development of these transport policies and what are their interests? What are the differences of the public-private-interplay in both cities? At which political level and how the decisions about urban transport issues are taken? Which role plays the civil society in theses reforms? Which strategy of project implementation is being pursued?*

Objectives of the doctoral thesis are recommendations for governance structures and processes of the projects *Transantiago* and *Transmilenio* as well as for the implementation of large reorganization projects in general.

**Theoretical framework**

For a deeper understanding of the process of the public transport reforms and their problems I analyze the two cases by using the theoretical approach of governance. Since the 1990s the term is used in the urban planning theory because of the transformations e.g. in the constellations of actors, their responsibilities and competences which were made due to decentralization, privatization, and globalization (Benz 2004: 14). This changing political manner, the shifting of competences and power among different political levels as well as among private and

public actors, in Latin America in particular caused by decentralization processes, are modifying and expanding the spread of actors and their possibilities of influence in planning processes (McCarney/Halfani/Rodriguez 1995: 103; Myers 2002: 3). Due to the significant changes of the governance pattern effected by decentralization the analysis of governance structures and processes in Chile and Colombia has to consider the current decentralization processes in both countries. In general, decentralization is the transfer of responsibility and decision making competences from the national level to subnational levels (Rondinelli 1999: 2; Litvack/Ahmad/Bird 1998: 4) however its generally process-related character is getting obvious. With an advancing decentralization the cooperation between government, civil society and private actors modify by e.g. the reorganization of decision making processes. Overall, decentralization deals with an extensive change of the governmental system and the public authorities so that other social and political actors gain importance and urban politics generate new constellations of actors, why it is an important aspect of the analysis of governance.

In social and political science the term governance refers not only to the institutional regulation system of the state – like the term government does – but characterizes forms of coordination and management and points out to the interaction between governmental actors and stakeholders of the business sector as well as the civil society (e.g Kooiman 2000; Heinelt 2008; Pierre/Peters 2000). Hence it contains different aspects like the interaction of public and private actors as well as structures of cooperation and mechanisms of regulations. Pierre and Peters (2000: 14) differentiate Governance as a structure like hierarchies, networks and markets as well as Governance as a process like steering and coordinating. Though it become clear that the term has a static and a flexible character.

Nowadays the term governance is used in several contexts that could differ in two parts: Firstly a normative facet can be found, which is on one hand included in the ideas of global- and good-governance (World Bank 1992). These concepts propose rules for a better coordination in several contexts and have a sharing of power between the government, the civil society and the business sector in common to succeed in governance. In these concepts Decentralization plays an important role to promote good-governance by the transfer of responsibilities from the national to subnational levels (Cheema/ Rondinelli 2007: 4). On the other hand governance is often used as a phenomena which has to be managed. This understanding of governance is especially in spatial planning and geography often connected with a certain spatial level, for which reason the terms local, urban and regional governance were created. The redefinition of the re-

lations between the different actors has become the main task of this governance concept and decentralization is one way to restructurate them.
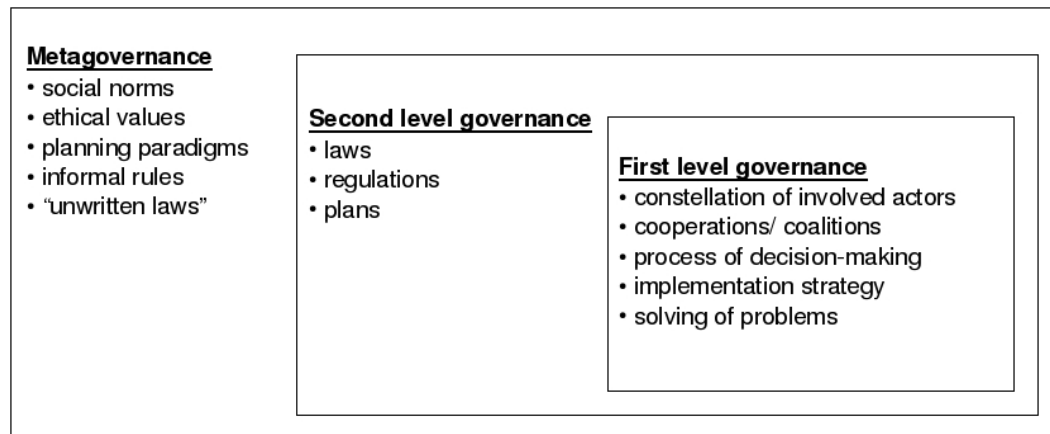
But a common confusion in the literature is between the phenomena of governance as such, which can be considered as a normative approach, and the second facet of governance as an analytical framework which "*makes us focus attention on things that happen and the ways in which they happen"* (Pierre/Peters 2000: 24). Thus, an analytical approach can be used to specify the reality of governance structures and processes of different spatial levels. In this governance approach the importance of decentralization is not so obvious because it is not focusing on a reorganizing of governance structures. However the situation of the current decentralization effort is important for the comprehension of the processes and structures of governance by shedding light on the reasons for the special constellation of actors and the mechanisms of decision-making.

In my PhD thesis I use the term governance as an analytical framework, to understand how the public transport policies of *Transantiago* and *Transmilenio* are made against the background of decentralization. Both projects base on specific plans for the public transport which define the frame of action and can be seen as policy instruments. The analysis of the implementations of theses policy instruments is the main focus of the policy-driven approach in my PhD thesis.

For a better understanding of what is ment by using governance as a analytical approach Nuissl/Heinrichs (2006: 65) propose a heuristic framework with three elements. The first element indicates the actors and has three main aspects: the constellation of involved actors, common culture in terms of social norms, ethical values and planning paradigms and the relationship between the actors with all their cooperations, coalitions and means of organization. The second element – the institutions – refers to formal rules like laws, regulations and plans as well as informal rules and "unwritten laws". These first two elements are static elements and frame the scope in which the governance takes place. With the last element – the process of decision-making – the framework responds to the flexible character of governance. For a better understanding of the interrelations between these governance elements Kooiman (2000: 154) developed three different levels of governance which can also be used as an analytical framework. On the first level are the actions themselves, thus the implementation strategy and the solving of problems. The second level covers the institutions which legitimate the policies. Finally the third level, which he calls meta-governance, includes the generell influences like ethical values and norms as well as overall concepts. In this concept the connection between different governance aspects becomes apparent. Thus, the meta-governance defines the institu-

tions of the second level as well as the actions on the first level. Moreover the institutions of the second level form the framework for the action on the first level. Both concepts of governance can be combined by interlinking the governance levels of Kooiman (ebd.: 154) with the elements of governance from Nuissl/Heinrichs (2006: 65) as shown in the following figure.

Figure 1: Combination of governance concepts



**Metagovernance**
• social norms
• ethical values
• planning paradigms
• informal rules
• "unwritten laws"

**Second level governance**
• laws
• regulations
• plans

**First level governance**
• constellation of involved actors
• cooperations/ coalitions
• process of decision-making
• implementation strategy
• solving of problems

Source: own elaboration on Nuissl/Heinnrichs (2006) and Kooiman (2000)

Both concepts, governance as well as decentralization, point out to institutions, multi-level co-operations between national and subnational units and the integration of the civil society. Thereby decentralization specifies the legal frame for the development of subnational levels, while the term governance implicates the existing process and actions which define the implementation of decentralization (Heinrichs 2005: 40). Thus, for a better understanding of the public transport policy making in the Latin-American context the knowledge of the status quo of the decentralization process is a key element which explains the structures and processes in the three dimensions of governance.

**Methodology**

The empirical analysis of the governance pattern in Santiago and Bogotá will be obtained by using a qualitative approach with guided expert interviews as a main sorce of data, which are nowadays a proved research method of qualitative investigations (Flick 2007: 194). Characteristic for this method are open questions to receive free answers of the interviewed person. Furthermore the interview guide helps the interviewer to focus on the particulare subject. The experts who I have interviewed are mainly working in the field of (public) transport in universities, private research instituts, consultancies, public authorities (ministries, municipalities,...), NGO

or private companies (e.g. bus companies). In Santiago as well as in Bogotá in most cases the experts work e.g. for a university but they do work (or worked) as well as consultants for a public authority. So I am not able differentiate between actor and expert, because experts are in many cases as well actors. This point has always to be considered in the interpretation of the interviews, because critical statements of these experts are going in the same direction like the official statements - otherwise they would hazard their jobs.

For the interpretation of the current discurs and discussion about (public) transport in the city I also use as a second source the discussions in the media and as a a third source academic articles and conferences. For the investigation of the case study in Santiago I use, as a fourth source of data, a widespread investigation about the failures of Transantiago (Cámara de Diputados de Chile 2007) which was initiated by the government. It includes many transcriptions of expert interviews which can serve as an extension of my own data, because interviews with important experts with whom I hadn't had the possibility to talk to, are part of this investigation.

Among the different techniques of text interpretation (Flick 2007: 210) the qualitative content analysis according to Mayring (2003: 468) is an established method of data analysis, which I will be carried out by a computer based analysis with MAXqda. Therefore it is required to identify categories, which in my case derive from the data of the field work.


**First results**

My first data of the field research in Santiago and Bogotá need a deeper analysis for a more detailed understanding of the governance situation to become a result. But the following aspects are obvious:

In Santiago the idea of *Transantiago* came out because the national transport ministry as the main actor decided to reorganize the so far chaotic and deregulated service. This decision arose out of the will of the modernization and development of Santiago for becoming a city of the first world and positioning the city in the global competition with other cities. Therefore the improvement and speed-up of the public transport is considered as an important aspect for not limiting the mobility which is ment to be a motor for modernization and an increasing economy. The general concept behind *Transantiago* was to design an efficient market for the private bus companies but this fact left no space for participation neither for the civil society nor the local authorities or a widespread information campaign.

In Bogotá the public transport is at the responsibility of the city authority, why the secretariate of mobility is the main actor of urban transport issues in Bogotá. During the period of the mayor Peñalosa the first step of *Transmilenio* was put in place. This reorganisation was born out of the opinion that the very deregulated public transport is too chaotic and the reason for the social exclusion of many inhabitants. In this sence, *Transmilenio* could help to modernize the cities image for not loosing in the national competition against other cities, while the international competition is not so prominent. In Bogotá the public transport is a very relevant issue for every mayor, because about 60% of all journeys are made in public transport. But due to this reason the direction of mobility politics change with every new mayoral candidate.

In summary, one main difference between both public transport policies can be found in the level of political acting: *Transantiago* is the responsibility of the national transport ministry whereas *Transmilenio* is the responsibility of the city government. Hence it made clear that *Transmilenio* is part of the discussion about the future of Bogotá, whereas the discussions about Santiago's future are made on the national level in different sectoral ministries, because of the lack of a city government. Due to this fact *Transantiago* is a very sectorial planning and is not connected to a widespread or integrated discussion about the development of Santiago. The example of Bogotá shows, that a more decentralized political system with city governments could promote the development of the discussions about the city's future and improve the implementation of modernization projects.

For deeper understanding of the governance pattern I will analyze the data of my field research along the three levels of governance. I started to work in note form in the following table as a first brainstorming of data, which is not yet a completed list.

| | Santiago | Bogota |
|---|---|---|
| **Meta-governance (generell influences)** | • will of modernization and development for becoming a city of the first world<br>• positioning of Santiago in the global competition with other cities<br>• market-oriented politics and the search for an effective market<br>• enhancement of quality of life in Santiago<br>• mobility is considered as a motor for modernization and an increasing economy<br>• public transport is considered as a sectorial problem of transport | • enhancement of quality of life in Bogotá<br>• organization of chaotic public transport<br>• will of modernization for not loosing in the national city competition<br>• public transport is important for social inclusion of inhabitants<br>• public transport is considered as a mobility issue (discussion about mobility and not transport)<br>• discussions about mobility in the city are very political<br>  – mobility is an important fact for every mayoral candidate |

| | Santiago | Bogota |
|---|---|---|
| **Second level governance (institutions)** | • centralized structure of government, so that the public transport is a task of the national transport ministry (MTT) and infrastructure of the ministry of public building (MOP)<br>• law of concessions for public transport<br>• Urban Transport Plan (PTUS) contains different programs of which Transantiago is one<br>• in the texts of bidding process the transport ministry defines norms and regulations for the service | • decentralized structure of government, so that the public transport and building of infrastructure is a task of the city authority of Bogotá (Secretaría de Movilidad and IDU)<br>• law of concessions for Transmilenio, but traditional public transport works without concessions<br>• Urban Mobility Plan contains renovation of the whole mobility system for the next 20 years |
| **First order governance (actions)** | • centralized planning of Transantiago by the ministry of transport, in which the minister for transport has the power to decide about transport in Chile<br>• one-step implementation<br>• very technocratic planning and implementation<br>• implementation process as "muddling through" or "try and error" in combination with a short term mindset<br>• no space for participation, other opinions or a widespread information campaign in focussing on efficiency<br>• bidding process for public transport concessions, in which the transport ministry defines the rules for the market | • decentralized planning of mobility issues by the city authority of Bogotá<br>• gradual implementation<br>• direction of mobility politics are changed with every new candidate for mayor<br>• short, intermediate and long-term aspects of reorganization<br>• no space for participation or other opinions in the short term of the mayor candidature |

**Perspectives/outlook**

While writing this paper I am just working on my field research in Bogotá, directly after the research stay in Santiago de Chile. Due to this reason my first results are more a first analysis of data than a result which need to be interpreted to become a result. This work will be done in the following months after the period of the field research which ends in August 2009.

**Open questions**

● Theory: Is the theoretical approach appropriate and comprehensible? How to refine the theoretical framework?

● Methodology: How to identify categories and how to cluster them?

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