MANAGING
METROPOLITAN COMPLEXITY
**Understanding metropolitan management
issues from a public managers' perspective**

Nancy van der Bol

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Managing metropolitan complexity
Understanding metropolitan management
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Metropolitaanse complexiteit managen
Problemen rond metropolitaans management begrijpen
vanuit een publiek managers' perspectief

Thesis

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DOCTORAL COMMITTEE

Promoters:	Prof.dr.ing. G.R. Teisman
	Prof.dr. J. Edelenbos
Other members:	Prof.dr. M.J.W. Van Twist
	Prof.dr. E.H. Klijn
	Dr. H.C. Wagenaar

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1

Managing the metropolitan region

Today, more than half of the world population call urban living environments their home (United Nations, 2006). The urbanization trend has resulted in the development of conurbations (United Nations, 2006) which are more commonly referred to as metropolitan regions. Metropolitan regions can be identified on all continents. In North America for instance, the metropolitan tri-state area of the states of New York, New Jersey and Long Island provides accommodation for its population of more than 18 million (Short, 1996: 45). In South America, more than 18 million people live in the Mexico City Metropolitan Area that is centered around Mexico City (OECD, 2004: 26). In Africa, Cairo is home to more than 11 million people (Brunn et al, 2003: 7). In Asia, the Tokyo metropolitan region has a population of over 12 million, housing 10 percent of the entire Japanese population (Tokyo Metropolitan Government, 2009). Metropolitan regions attract many people in Europe as well. At its center and on its outskirts, more than 2.5 million Swedes live in the Stockholm region (Hårsman and Olsson, 2003: 93). Even more people live and work in the London area, which accommodates a population of more than 18 million people (Thornley, 2003: 41). The Randstad region in the western part of the Netherlands is home to 7 million people, which accounts for 40 percent of the nation's population.

Metropolitan regions are densely populated urban regions that are continuously increasing in their numbers, size and complexity of functions (Byrne, 2001: 41). This thesis focuses on how metropolitan managers go about accomplishing development on this regional scale. Before going into the central question however, a more detailed understanding of the complex tasks that lie ahead for these metropolitan managers is presented in Section 1.1. Subsequently, a variety of approaches for dealing with these tasks are discussed in Section 1.2.

1.1 THE METROPOLITAN REGION AS AN EMERGING PHENOMENON

Metropolitan regions have the tendency to grow outwards into areas with less density (OECD, 2006: 32). Sometimes, the metropolitan region consists of a dominant city that is expanding into rural areas such as London, Paris and Mexico City. They are characterized as monocentric metropolises (OECD, 2006: 31). These metropolitan regions are built up from a single large city that has gradually expanded and merged with previously existing villages in its surrounding areas.
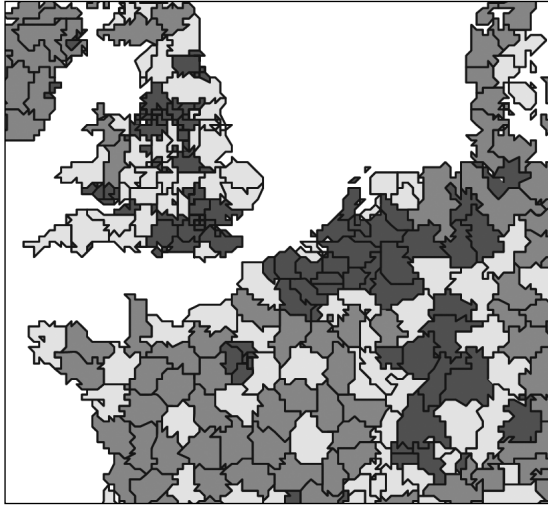
1.1 The North-West Europe metropolitan region (OECD, 2006: 35)

In other situations however, two or more cities evolve into a polycentric region. These regions consist of several larger cities that each function as a core to their surrounding urbanized areas. As a result of their expansion, these cities have become part of a larger metropolitan landscape (see Blumenfeld, 1967; Kresl and Fry, 2005; Short, 1996; Short and Kim, 1999). As a conglomeration of cities in the states of New York, New Jersey and Long Island, the tri-state area is one such polycentric region. The North-West Europe metropolitan region, which is illustrated in the Figure 1.1, is made up of a set of polycentric metropolitan regions (Brunn, 2003). The German Ruhr area of the cities of Duisburg, Oberhausen and Dortmund as well as the Dutch Randstad region containing the cities Amsterdam, Rotterdam, The Hague and Utrecht are situated in this area. Both monocentric and polycentric regions are characterized by their roles as economic nodes. Inadvertently, a high level of urbanity also puts pressure on the quality of metropolitan regions.

1.1.1 Metropolitan regions as the breeding grounds for innovation and economic growth

Metropolitan regions produce a large share of the national Gross Domestic Product. Paris for instance is responsible for producing nearly 28 percent of the French GDP, Tokyo produces over 30 percent of Japan's GDP and Seoul is responsible for

nearly 49 percent of the Korean national GDP (OECD, 2006: 38-40). Figure 1.2 reflects the employment generated by highly urbanized regions in Europe. There is clearly a strong concentration visible in the British London, Dutch Randstad, German Ruhr and French Paris regions.

In addition to being of great value to the national economy, metropolises also operate on an international economic playing field (Short, 1996: 37). One of the driving forces behind this has been globalization (Salet et al., 2003: 1). Over the years, cities have evolved from production-based economies towards becoming breeding grounds for innovation (Florida, 2002). Most metropolitan regions are characterized by a 'strong and dynamic service sector' (OECD, 2006: 32), making them especially interesting for knowledge based industries and headquarters of large multinationals. As a result of this development, competition on attractiveness to these companies increasingly takes place on the metropolitan level. Metropolitan regions are now part of a global economic network (Van Oort et al., 2006). Their success in this network is measured by rankings such as those
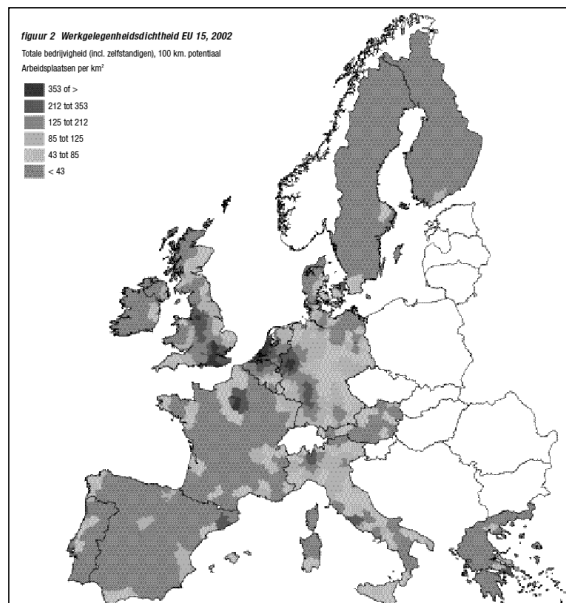
1.2 Dense employment in the North Western European corridors (Ministerie van Economische Zaken, 2004: 28)

Economist Intelligence Unit e-readiness rankings and scores, 2009				
2009 rank (of 70)	2008 rank	Country	2009 score (of 10)	2008 score
1	5	Denmark	8.87	8.83
2	3	Sweden	8.67	8.85
3	7	Netherlands	8.64	8.74
4	11	Norway	8.62	8.60
5	1	United States	8.60	8.95
6	4	Australia	8.45	8.83
7	6	Singapore	8.35	8.74
8	2	Hong Kong	8.33	8.91
9	12	Canada	8.33	8.49
10	13	Finland	8.30	8.42
11	16	New Zealand	8.21	8.28
12	9	Switzerland	8.15	8.67
13	8	United Kingdom	8.14	8.68
14	10	Austria	8.02	8.63
15	22	France	7.89	7.92
16	19	Taiwan	7.86	8.05
17	14	Germany	7.85	8.39
18	21	Ireland	7.84	8.03
19	15	South Korea	7.81	8.34

1.3 International rankings (The Economist, 2009)

published by the EIU (Economist Intelligence Unit), measuring 'Global Business Intelligence' on a variety of scales such as e-readiness, which is illustrated in Figure 1.3 (The Economist, 2009). Another economic comparative scale is that of the Institute for Management Development (I.M.D.), which publishes yearbooks reflecting rankings on economic resilience, for instance (Institute for Management Development, 2009).

1.1.2 Metropolitan regions as places of issue-accumulation

In order for a region to be attractive on a national as well as an international level, the quality of life needs to be assured (Florida, 2002). Metropolitan regions are characterized by their density and vastness. They typically reflect the network society (Castells, 1996), characterized by increased interconnections among those people involved. The dense, vast and interconnected nature of the region coincides with the rise in a specific range of urban issues (Blumenfeld, 1967). Managers of metropolitan regions are confronted with extensive spatial claims, social issues, congestion and environmental pollution (OECD, 2006), that are considered to threaten the quality of life in the area.

Due to their economic attractiveness, metropolitan regions draw many people who are in search of work and income. This causes most metropolitan regions

to face extensive quantitative as well as qualitative housing shortages (Hårsman and Olsson, 2003: 91). Metropolitan crowdedness in many regions coincides with social issues – such as unemployment, crime and violence – that occur throughout the region (OECD, 2006: 79). In accordance with this, regions have to deal with the elaborate need for investments in public and social services (OECD, 2006: 82). These include recreational, cultural and educational facilities, among others. As the urban region extends outwards, polycentric regions in particular are characterized by large distances between the places where people live and their places of work (OECD, 2006: 32). This has caused congestion to become one of the most prominent issues in metropolitan regions (OECD, 2006: 82). In addition to these land-use claims, metropolitan regions face an increasing amount of pollution – e.g. diminishing air quality – that threatens their livability (Driessen, 2005; OECD, 2006: 81).

1.1.3 Managing economic attractiveness

Metropolises are not characterized solely by their role as important economic nodes on a national and international level (Short, 1996: 36). In order to be economically competitive, managers of the metropolitan region are compelled to tackle the variety of issues that coincide with a high level of urbanity. As the issues metropolitan managers are faced with are largely physical by nature, metropolitan management can be defined as the management of physical issues coinciding with high urbanity, with the intention of realizing an attractive investment climate.

In practice, metropolitan management proves to be a difficult task. The issues at play exceed institutional boundaries, decision-making takes a long time and the quality of the eventual decisions are often debatable. This has instigated a search for high quality management on a regional, metropolitan level.

1.2 THE SEARCH FOR HIGH QUALITY METROPOLITAN MANAGEMENT

In some regions, management of the metropolitan region is mostly a public affair. In Singapore, the government's Urban Redevelopment Authority (URA) is responsible for the development of the region (Wong et al., 2008). In other regions, the management of metropolitan regions is a private affair. In the American Tri-state

area, for instance, the non-governmental Regional Planning Association devises development strategies for the region (Regional Planning Association, 2009). In Bangkok, Thailand, issues are mostly dealt with on the initiative of private developers (Askew, 2002). The role of government institutions with regard to regional accomplishment is not prominent in these metropolises.

In most European regions, such as British London, French Paris and the Dutch Randstad region, the metropolis is the mixed or hybrid responsibility of public and private managers (Salet et al, 2003; Van der Cammen and De Klerk, 2003). In these regions, the public sector plays a dominant role. For instance, management of the Stockholm region is the responsibility of 26 municipalities (Hårsman and Olsson, 2003: 91). Private stakeholders in these regions are mostly involved in the execution of interventions. However, their involvement has come under debate as public managers experiment with public-private partnerships (Osborne, 2000). These collaborative structures are considered to increase cost efficiency and the effectiveness of implementation (Osborne, 2000: 1).

This thesis focuses on public managers in regions where responsibilities for the management of the metropolitan region are mixed. In their attempts to deal with the boundary exceeding issues at play and to develop high quality, these metropolitan regions have become breeding places for alterations to management approaches. When reviewing the debates on metropolitan in literature and in public policy debates, the arguments reveal three approaches to metropolitan management (see Salet et al, 2003; Post, 2004: 67). These argumentations can be referred to as the institutional, the boundary crossing and the rule guided approach.

1.2.1 The institutional approach: in search of an adequate metropolitan government

Metropolitan management in regions that have a large role for public management is characterized by a hierarchically organized governmental structure. Within the region, authority is dispersed over a variety of institutions. The institutional approach coincides with regionalism and new regionalism (Feiock, 2004: 4, Kantor: 2006). It involves attempts to find an adequate metropolitan government structure to deal with this dispersion (Ostrom, 1990: 90, 207 and 2005; Post, 2004: 67; Salet et al., 2003).

Metropolitan public management as a dispersed responsibility

The relationship between the various authorities is most orderly in monocentric metropolitan regions. As shown in Figure 1.4, the national government (N) overlooks the dominant city (C), while it has hegemony over the authorities in the surrounding area (S). This is very much the case for the metropolitan regions of Paris and London. The ratios of the various layers of government, however, are different for each region. In Paris, for instance, development is predominantly controlled by the national government (Short, 1996: 283). In London, however, the municipal authorities have been attributed more responsibilities for defining policy goals and in the execution of policies (Short, 1996: 283). In turn, the central city of London is hegemonic in relation to its surrounding municipalities (Thornley, 2003: 41; Short, 1996: 40). Developments on a metropolitan scale are the shared responsibility of each organization.

As reflected in Figure 1.4, management is further complicated in polycentric metropolitan regions. In these regions, the allocation of metropolitan authority is spread out over different cities (C) and their surrounding municipalities (S). In turn, the various cities are also interlinked. The Ruhr area is an example of this type of structure. In this region, the cities of Duisburg, Oberhausen and Dortmund each have hegemony over their surrounding areas. However, they are interlinked with one another and while they have a high degree of autonomy, they are restricted in their development by guidelines provided by the national government (Spit and Zoete, 2002: 23, 123; OECD, 2007: 156-158). The governmental structure

Monocentric region   Polycentric region
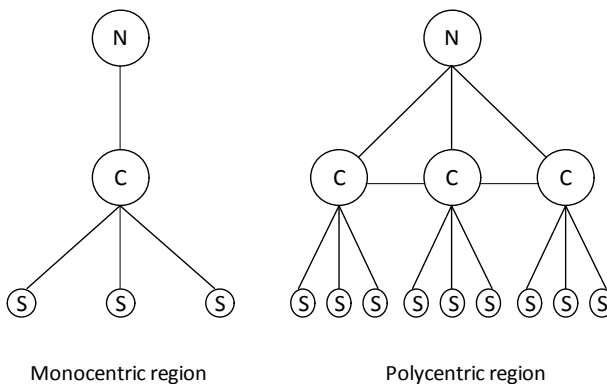
1.4 Relationships between layers of government in monocentric and polycentric metropolitan regions

in these regions causes metropolitan public management there to be more indirect. In order to realize developments in the region, a large number of authorities must provide their assistance. Authority is thus dispersed across the region.

Clustering metropolitan public management responsibilities

The indirectness and dispersed nature of metropolitan governmental structures is considered a metropolitan management issue. It is considered to obstruct the effectiveness and efficiency of metropolitan public management. This issue is dealt with in institutional literature (Salet et al., 2003; Ostrom, 1990 and 2005). This literature is mostly directed at seeking out the most effective institutional formations to deal with these issues of metropolitan public management (Ostrom, 1990: 90, 207).

In some regions, institutional reform occurs through the introduction of new institutions within the government's structural hierarchy. There are metropolitan regions, such as London, in which new governmental institutions are introduced at the regional level. This can be indicated as a monocentric, centrality-oriented approach. In London, the Greater London Authority was installed after lengthy discussions with regard to the adequate level of scale at which the government should manage (Short, 1996: 286; Thornley, 2003). From 1974, issues on the metropolitan scale were managed by the Greater London Council (GLC). After the installation of the Thatcher administration however, this GLC was abolished in 1986 (Short, 1996: 286). After this, the responsibilities of the GLC were transferred to national and local authorities, and the London Planning Advisory Committee (LPAC) was introduced to advise on strategic planning issues (Thornley, 2003: 47). After the election of Tony Blair in 1997, the Greater London Authority (GLA) was installed in 1999. Under the management of an elected mayor of the city, the GLA became responsible for safety through the Metropolitan Police Authority. It also gained authority with regard to transport, fire and emergency planning and spatial development (Thornley, 2003: 49). The story behind the installation of the GLA clearly reflects the high level of confusion with regard to proper institutional solutions.

In other regions such as Stockholm, Stuttgart and the Randstad region, the approach of collaboration is applied. Despite debates about structure in these regions, the authority of the existing governmental institutions remained intact.

Collaborative structures facilitating cooperation have been installed instead (Hårsman and Olsson, 2003: 107-108). Elaborate discussions on governmental restructuring had similar results in the German Stuttgart metropolitan region (Heeg, 2003: 172-173). This collaborative approach is part of a boundary crossing approach to metropolitan public management.

1.2.2 The boundary crossing approach: In search of interconnectivity

In addition to the institutional approach, the boundary crossing approach is often debated with regard to metropolitan public management. Instead of devising institutions that improve decisiveness however, the boundary crossing approach focuses on interconnectivity (Innes and Booher, 2003; Healey et al., 2003; Hajer, 2003).

Metropolitan public management as a result of constrained exchange

The metropolitan region is considered to be a joint action field of different organizations. It is argued that these organizations lack adequate exchange to deal with joint issues. Drawing from this, the approach stresses the need for collaboration in attempts to deal with the issues at play in the metropolitan region. Some have referred to this as the network approach: *"Traditional approaches are no longer adequate and [we] suggest the network approach as a source of inspiration for dealing with uncertainties in a more satisfactory manner"* (Koppenjan and Klijn, 2004: 2). The boundary crossing approach is directed at realizing joint action beyond the boundaries of each of the existing constituencies. For instance, in their research, Innes and Booher (1999: 419) have depicted a series of management criteria such as 'including significant actors and interests', 'leaving room for the input of participants', 'negotiating rules of engagement' and 'creating an environment that fosters creative thinking'. Different types of arrangements have been introduced to facilitate the exchange of interests by governmental as well as non-governmental actors.

Intensifying mutual exchange

Within the boundary crossing approach, there are three types of collaboration for dealing with constrained exchange. First, collaboration beyond the boundaries of the domains of the various sectors and layers of government are brought to the attention. This approach involves exchange between organizations and their departments.

Second, public-private collaboration takes place. This approach focuses on the interactions between government and private actors such as representatives of businesses. In this approach, two different perspectives on metropolitan public management are brought together: the guardian and the commercial perspective (Jacobs, 1992). In striving to ensure organization and management, the guardian perspective towards public management contradicts the commercial perspective taken on by private actors. This perspective is directed at facilitating trade and production (Jacobs, 1992).

Third, private-private collaboration can be discerned. In this case, collaboration takes place among non-governmental actors. While there are some researchers who focus on governmental as well as on non-governmental actors in the literature (e.g. Glasbergen and Driessen, 2002; Van der Bol and Van der Arend, 2007), most focus on the role played by governmental actors (e.g. Kickert et al., 1997). The search for effective boundary crossing arrangements is supported by a large set of studies that compare the arrangements of different metropolitan regions (see e.g. Salet et al., 2003; Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), 2001; 2003; 2007). By drawing on these studies, fixed and temporary coalitions of the various actors in the metropolitan region can be identified.

Fixed coalitions are regions in which collaboration has been institutionalized. In this way, it corresponds to an institutional approach to metropolitan public management. A new institution is established, which mostly has the function of facilitating collaboration on certain joint topics. In these collaborations, the influence of each participating actor is determined in advance. An example of this is the collaboration in the Dutch KAN-region of Arnhem and Nijmegen. In this collaborative institution, meetings between the actors involved are held regularly. Agreements made in these collaborative institutions are subsequently executed by each participating actor individually, or responsibility is transferred to the organization that has been established. This type of arrangement can be referred to as a relatively fixed coalition. It must be acknowledged that the composition of actors collaborating within the established institutions can vary over time.

Temporary coalitions are collaborations in which actors combine their efforts when a situation requires them to do so. Coalitions are for instance instigated by a project to realize a particular form of development in joint territory. The Dutch Deltametropolis coalition is a typical example of a temporary coalition.

In this coalition, public actors such as municipal organizations joined hands with representatives of universities and private corporations to deal with metropolitan issues (Vereniging Deltametropool, 2009).

1.2.3 The rule guided approach: in search of implementation procedures

In addition to the institutional and the boundary crossing approach, a rule guided management approach is discussed with regard to managing a metropolitan region. This approach is directed at adapting procedures in an effort to realize specifically defined interventions.

In metropolitan regions, public managers perform their tasks within a framework of rules and regulations. The regulatory framework in many metropolitan regions records the ways in which areas are being utilized. In addition, they provide metropolitan public managers with the procedural guidelines for changing these functions. Usage of these guidelines is different for each metropolitan region, as well as for each government organization.

Metropolitan public management as a lengthy, inefficient process

Public metropolitan managers in the United States and Thailand use guidelines to facilitate desired and to reject undesired developments initiated by private metropolitan managers. The regulatory framework in these regions can be characterized as one that predominantly enables private initiatives (Askew, 2002; Regional Planning Association, 2009). In European metropolitan regions, private metropolitan managers do not initiate developments. Rather, they execute the developments that are initiated by public metropolitan managers. This framework is directed mainly at preventing undesired developments from being carried out. The regulatory framework in these regions provides procedural guidelines for preparing developments in the region (Salet et al., 2003; Spit and Zoete, 2002, Driessen and De Gier, 2001). The Dutch requirement of making Environmental Impact Assessments of large spatial interventions is a typical example of this (Wood, 2003). The process of making an Environmental Impact Assessment involves a comparison of different development alternatives for an issue and selecting a preferred option (Wood, 2003). Subsequently, environmental impact assessment also includes a public participation component (Wood, 2003).

In addition to the extensive regulatory framework that metropolitan public management is faced with, each governmental organization has its own structure. This shows that metropolitan public management is faced with a variety of processes that have to be taken into account in order to realize developments in the region.

Both the regulatory framework and the organizational processes are riddled with considerable drawbacks, thus making the realization of developments a lengthy and inefficient process. The enabling framework allows for ad hoc developments in the region. In this way, it ensures that there is dynamic development in the region that caters in to the continuously changing demands of its inhabitants. The drawback to this framework is that it inhibits the involvement of public management. This threatens the experienced quality of the region, as it is the task of public management to ensure that there are socially desirable developments. This disadvantage is tackled in the preventive framework, which provides public managers with the opportunity to develop with social needs in mind. However, where the enabling framework succeeds in taking the dynamic nature of metropolitan society into account, the preventive framework lags behind. As there are procedures in place to ensure public participation and fit, interventions take up much more time than they do in countries with an enabling regulatory framework (Salet et al., 2003). On average, decision-making processes in these regions can take up to 14 years (Feenstra, 2009). There have even been cases where this process took twice or even triple the amount of time required (see Swart and Timmer, 2009).

Ameliorating lengthy and inefficient procedures and processes

The drawbacks of the enabling and the preventive regulatory frameworks have instigated a call in metropolitan public management for adaptations to be made to the framework. In regions that utilize an enabling regulatory framework, adaptations involve increasing the influence of public management. In regions that utilize a preventive regulatory framework, procedures and processes are ameliorated in an attempt to streamline private involvement. The efficiency of the framework is tackled by simplifying and replacing procedures. "*This way, we can make short work of slow decision-making.*" (Eurlings, 2007). However, it is important to note that there are ongoing discussions on the effectiveness of the regulatory efforts. The debate mostly concerns the fine balance that must be maintained between the influence of social and private actors, and the role of metropolitan public management.

1.2.4 The complexity of metropolitan public management

A variety of attempts have been made to search out high quality metropolitan public management. With each attempt, however, progress coincides with setbacks and potential problems. Table 1.5 gives an overview of the core objectives and criticisms of each approach. The institutional approach is debated for defying and ignoring existing structures. The boundary expanding approach proves to have some drawbacks when it comes to its decisive power. The rule guided approach is criticized for endangering broad societal participation in developments, and threatening the effectiveness of proposed developments.

The ongoing debates on the effectiveness of each approach are characteristic of the lack of consensus about the appropriate course of action for dealing with metropolitan issues. This is largely due to the diverging problem perspectives. Institutionalism perceives metropolitan public management as being an issue of a lack of decisive structure, focusing on the role of institutions in the problem and its solutions (Ostrom, 1990; March and Olsen, 1984). The rule guided approach depicts the length and inefficiency of procedures and processes as the problem. In contrast, proponents of the boundary crossing approach see the lack of exchange among actors as the main issue for metropolitan public management by proponents of the boundary crossing approach. In practice however, these problem perspectives have proven to be too narrow in scope. Metropolitan public management in fact involves all of the issues brought up above that need to be approached simultaneously.

The debates on the different approaches described here make it clear that metropolitan public management is indeed a complex issue. This thesis focuses on the ways in which public metropolitan managers giving shape to metropolitan regions

	Objective	Criticism
Institutional approach	To cluster metropolitan public management responsibilities	Defies and ignores existing structures
Boundary crossing approach	To intensify mutual exchange	Lacks decisive power
Rule guided approach	To ameliorate lengthy and inefficient procedures and processes	Endangers broad public participation

1.5 The objectives and criticisms of the different approaches to metropolitan public management

within this complexity. How do they make sense of this complexity? How do they perceive the system they are in? What is their 'rationality' for action?

1.3 AN INDIVIDUAL PUBLIC MANAGER PERSPECTIVE

The literature on metropolitan management literature has focused mostly on an organizational level of analysis. The different approaches discussed above also occur on this level. In addition to being criticized for their content-related drawbacks, the approaches are also criticized from an analytical point of view. In light of this, it makes sense in this thesis to utilize a diverging approach to understanding metropolitan public management. This change in perspective provides a rejoinder to the drawbacks of the organizational level of analysis. It also paves the way towards achieving a detailed understanding of management amidst complexity (Locke, 2001; Wagenaar, 2004; Hjern and Porter, 1981).

1.3.1 The problem with metropolitan public management approaches

Criticism of institutional approach, the boundary crossing approach and rule guided approaches continues to grow. These approaches are increasingly considered to be insufficient to cater to the complexity of metropolitan public management.

The government structure of metropolitan regions is dynamic rather than stable. Municipalities are continuously merging and the boundaries of their constituencies grow wider or smaller over the course of time. Proponents of the institutional approach to metropolitan public management strive for the realization of a clear metropolitan public management structure (Salet et al., 2003; Ostrom, 1990 and 2005). However, critics claim that it would be impossible to devise a set of government institutions that covers the various and dynamic issues that are at play in the complex system. The amelioration of regulations and processes is also considered to be contradictory to the dynamic nature of metropolitan government. Lengthy procedures and processes are in place to allow for contributions to be made by private actors, which represent the various interests at play in the region. Ameliorating regulations and processes thus prevents the establishment of balanced and carefully considered decision-making. *"In the face of rapid and often discontinuous change [...], we need to develop new concepts for metropolitan*

development and sustainability. Big governmental schemes, based on extensive rules and centralized direction that ignore the multiplicity and diversity of actors in the metropolitan system, simply do not work." (Innes and Booher, 1999: 153).

Finally, the focus on exchange among particular actors within the metropolitan region neglects the variety of developments that take place in the complex metropolitan system. As Yiftachel and Huxley (2002) have indicated, the communicative management theory has – in the course of its development – distanced itself from the underlying research and political processes that take place in the regions. *"Focusing on 'the production of space' does not obscure the importance of decision-making and communications for the analysis of planning, rather it firmly incorporates the spatial and political-economic embeddedness often overlooked in past theories."*

The institutional, the boundary crossing and rule guided approach to metropolitan management are considered unable to singularly deal with the varying and dynamic character of the complex metropolitan public management system. A different approach to metropolitan management should be explored. This thesis attempts to do this.

1.3.2 The individual public manager perspective

From early on, the role of bureaucracy has been critically discussed by authors such as Downs (1967), who argues that as their complexity increases, societies are likely to become more bureaucratic (Downs, 1967: 255, 256). While some extent of bureaucracy is indicated to be desirable, Downs (1967: 259) has argued that excessive bureaucracy increases unnecessary restrictions on choice, which leads to an overall reduction in individual freedom (Downs, 1967: 258). At that time, it was indicated that the size of bureaucracy was in balance: *"The overall size of the bureaucracy is not excessive in relation to the services it is providing for society"* (Downs, 1967: 258). The work of bureaucrats did not get attention of research until several years later.

Hjern and Porter (1981) indicate that to understand complex societies, individuals rather than organizations are the most important object of analysis in contexts where complex issues arise. From the perspective of individuals, management in complex systems is the result a variety of choices made by a multitude of individual public managers. These each have their own reasons to act, and each acts on behalf of different organizations. These individuals include politicians and public managers as well as non-governmental representatives such as inhabitants and corporations.

As Chapter 4 makes clear, the existing literature on metropolitan complexity and complexity management operates mostly under presumptions of the underlying individual aims and actions (Stacey and Griffin, 2006; Healey, 2007). In public management literature, an effort is made to the lack of attention to the individual public manager (see Healey, 1992; In 't Veld et al., 2005; Pollit, 2003). When reviewing this literature, it can be argued that it focuses mostly on either top managers (Mintzberg, 1978; Mintzberg and Westley, 2000; Noordegraaf, 2000) or on street-level bureaucrats (Lipsky, 1980, Ringeling, 1978).

In practice, bureaucracy in the metropolitan region extends beyond top managers and street-level bureaucrats. A large amount of public managers take an active role in preparing policies in the region. Metropolitan regions provide work for several hundreds, if not thousands, of these public middle managers. Literature has largely overlooked these public managers. As Wagenaar (2004) argues: *"The work of public administrators – their day-to-day activities, their lived experience in doing what they are required to do – is conspicuously absent from the literature on public administration."*

1.3.3 Central research question

This thesis is an attempt to gain insight into the public managerial practices that underlie metropolitan management. Yanow (2003: 238) has distinguished three communities of meaning in a policy situation: policymakers, personnel involved in implementing agency, and the affected citizens or clients. Personnel who implement agency included directors, managers/administrators, groups of professionals, lower-level employees and street-level bureaucrats. In this thesis, the focus is specifically on managers/administrators, who are also referred to as middle managers. In doing so, this thesis makes a break from existing literature on the management of complex systems, focusing instead on the individual level of metropolitan public management. Therefore, it attempts to make up for the lack of existing insight into the individual level of dealing with complexity. The following question is posed in the analysis:

How do public managers in public organizations dealing with complex metropolitan decision-making act, how can their actions be explained and what joint actions does this lead to?

In order to answer this question, the inductive research approach is applied here. As opposed to most metropolitan management literature, this thesis does not involve a series of case studies followed by an analysis of the findings. Apart from an practical case-example in Chapter 7, the analysis focuses on public middle managers in the Dutch metropolitan Randstad region, without confining the analysis to a restricted number of cases. The next chapter explains the issues at play in the Randstad region and the various metropolitan public management approaches that are wielded there.

Following this explication of metropolitan public management in the Randstad region, Chapter 3 applies a grounded theoretical approach to studying public managers. Chapter 4 explains some of the theoretical discussions on the aims of metropolitan managers, the complexity within which they have to achieve these aims and the strategies employed in this context.

The subsequent chapters discuss the results of the empirical analysis. Chapter 5 describes the characteristics of the public managers who work in the metropolitan region. To this end, the aims and strategies employed to by individual public managers are highlighted. Chapter 6 discusses the social environment within which public managers in the Randstad region work to achieve their aims. By using three accounts of individual public managers involved in the Regional Building Strategy case, Chapter 7 explores the relationship between the strategies adhered to by public managers and their interpretations of their social environment. Chapter 8 then takes the findings on the individual level that are described in the earlier chapters and applies them to the regional level. Here, the question of *what joint actions the individual actions of public managers will lead to on the level of metropolitan development* is tackled.

Chapter 9 concludes by reflecting on the focus on individual public managers. This chapter also provides an overview of the implications of the findings on existing insights into metropolitan public management.

2

Governing complexity in Europe

There are several metropolitan regions situated in close proximity in the North-Western part of Europe. The European commission (1995) has divided the area into mega corridors, while stressing the interrelations between the agglomerations. One of the agglomerations is the Randstad region, situated in the Netherlands. In his account of the Dutch Randstad region, Hall (1966: 95-121) has indicated that the region is the fourth greatest metropolitan center in the western part of Europe, after London, Paris and the Ruhr area.

The polycentric Randstad region is faced with the typical metropolitan issues described in Chapter 1. In particular, the Randstad region is involved in international economic competition and social issues due to its density. In the Netherlands, metropolitan management is a mixed or hybrid responsibility with an emphasis on government institutions; public management in the Randstad region thus has to deal with these issues. However, it is also confronted with economic decline on international competition scales (Ministry of Economic Affairs, 2004: 25). Different approaches have therefore been put into practice in attempts to increase the attractiveness of the region. These approaches correspond with the different approaches mentioned in the first chapter, and the variety of institutional, boundary crossing and rule guided approaches applied in the Randstad region are now discussed in this chapter. It will become clear that the ongoing debates and applications of these approaches together create a complex working environment for public managers in this metropolitan region.

2.1 THE RANDSTAD METROPOLITAN REGION

The Netherlands is home to 17 million inhabitants, and seven million of them live in the Randstad region. The region is densely populated: 40 percent of Dutch inhabitants live in the metropolitan region, taking up 25 percent of the country's surface area.

There are four large cities and their suburbs in this region: Amsterdam, The Hague, Rotterdam and Utrecht. Their surrounding cities, such as Leiden, Gouda, Dordrecht, Haarlem and Almere, are quickly increasing in size. These function mostly as residential areas for inhabitants who work in one of the larger cities. The city of Almere, for instance, functions as residential area for Amsterdam-oriented
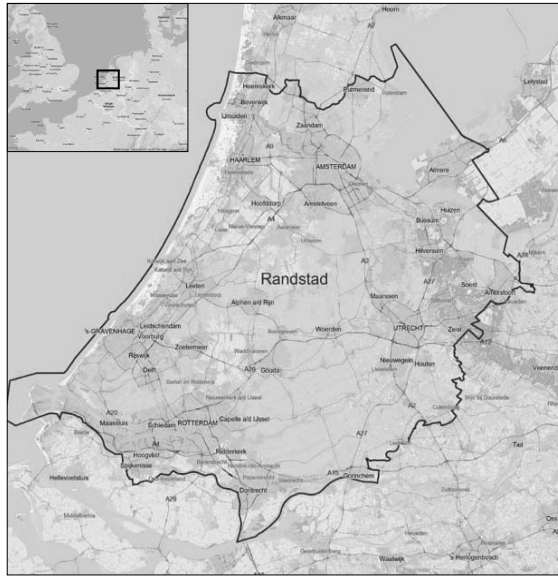
2.1 The Randstad region in the Netherlands (Google maps, 2009; Ministerie van VROM, 2007)

residents. Together, the urban area forms a horseshoe-shaped polycentric area referred to as Randstad, which literally is translated as 'ring city' (Hohenberg and Lees, 1985; Meijers, 2005; Hall, 1966: 96, Buijs et al., 2009: 102). The center of the urban area is made up of an area mostly known for its lower density and its agrarian and recreational functions, and this is referred to as the Green Heart.

2.1.1 Economic function of the Randstad region

The Randstad region generates the largest portion of the national Gross National Product, making the region a strong economic driver. "*The Randstad region is the heart of the Dutch economy. On approximately 25 percent of the country, 50 percent of the national GDP is earned. Of the foreign companies in the Netherlands, nearly 55 percent is stationed in the Randstad region.*" (Ministry of Economic Affairs, 2004: 26). The greatest contribution to the Gross National Product comes from the transport sector (Ministry of Economic Affairs, 2004: 27).

In the northern Randstad, the Schiphol airport serves as one of the most important economic drivers. It functions as an important hub for international passenger traffic. In addition to this, Amsterdam is home to a variety of headquarters

of large internationally operating corporations. Utrecht is most well-known for its office-economy and its transport function as a portal to the inland (Ministry of Economic Affairs, 2004: 35, 53).

The port of Rotterdam plays an important role in the economy of the southern Randstad region. This is the largest transshipment harbor in Europe, and has even gone through outward extensions by regaining land from the sea referred to as the Maasvlakte. The second Maasvlakte is currently in the process of being constructed (Van Gils et al., 2009). Meanwhile, The Hague has a government-oriented economy, as it is home to a number of national government institutions. It also accommodates embassies, several UN institutions, as well as the International Criminal Court. Another important economic driver in the Randstad region is the horticulture sector, which in this area focuses mostly on the growth and trade in greenhouse vegetables and flowers (Ministry of Economic Affairs, 2004: 35, 58-61). Despite the variety of economic activities here, however, the Randstad region is faced with fierce international competition and is losing valuable economic ground.

2.1.2 Losing ground in economic competition

The international orientation of the Dutch economy, focusing on the Schiphol airport and the Port of Rotterdam, makes the Randstad region especially liable to international competition. This increases the need for a qualitative settling climate: *"For a small and open economy like ours, an internationally competitive settling climate is of vital importance."* (Ministry of Economic Affairs, 2004: 26). In recent years, the Randstad region has been losing ground in economic competition and, reflecting this, the Randstad has dropped in international rankings. "*A recent comparison of the Randstad with the Greater London Area lay bare the weak point in our settling climate* (Ministry of Economic Affairs, 2004: 29; The Economist, 2009; Institute for Management Development, 2009).

The Randstad region is characterized by a lot of congestion. The historically developed dispersion of housing and economic functions throughout the region has resulted in an extensive amount of commuter traffic in the area (Van der Cammen and De Klerk, 2003). This has placed much pressure on the transportation facilities, which consist of roads and an extensive public transport system made up of trains, trams and buses. The system of roads connecting cities was mostly drawn up in the early 1950s. Congestion is one of the most prominent issues in the

region today, and is high on the agenda of many political parties (Buijs et al., 2009: 102-105; Ministry of Economic Affairs, 2004: 29).

Another persistent issue in the Randstad region is the lack of coherence within the densely built landscape, referred to in Dutch as 'Verrommeling', which literally means disorganization of spatial functions in the area. *"For the living environment, it is important that there are enough green areas for recreation. […]. Due to the lack of coherency of the landscape, the quality of these areas is questionable."* (Ministry of Transport, Public Works and Water management, 2007: 17). The disorganization of the landscape is seen to threaten the quality of the region.

Congestion and disorganization are depicted as the causes of the declining economic position of the Randstad region on various competition lists (Ministry of VROM et al., 2004; Ministry of Economic Affairs, 2004).

2.1.3 The administrative division of tasks

The Dutch spatial management system leans on four government layers, namely the national government, the provinces, the regional authorities and the municipalities (Neelen et al., 2003: 57-114). This division dates back to 1848 when it was introduced by Dutch statesman Johan Rudolph Thorbecke.

National government

Along with the Ministry of Spatial Development ('Volkshuisvesting, Ruimtelijke Ordening en Milieubeheer', VROM), the Ministry of Economic Affairs ('Economische Zaken': EZ), Agriculture ('Landbouw, Natuur en Voedselkwaliteit': LNV) and Transport, Public Works and Water management ('Verkeer en Waterstaat': V&W) each produce policies for the development of the Randstad region. The Ministry of VROM publishes 'National Notes on Spatial Development' (2004), which outline the strategic developments for the country in forthcoming years. In turn, the Ministry of Transport, Public Works and Water management publishes a 'Mobility note', which conveys its policy with regard to infrastructure development. The fifth and latest formal spatial policy is the 'Nota Ruimte' (transl. 'Spatial Note', Ministry of VROM et al., 2006). Braking from the tradition of ministerial policy making, the 'Nota Ruimte' was a product of the combined efforts of various ministries. In 2006, the Minister of Transport, Public Works and Water management was named program-minister for the Randstad region. This made

him responsible for coordinating the input of the national government with regard to the development of the region.

Provinces

Four provinces are responsible for the Randstad Region: North-Holland, South-Holland, Flevoland and Utrecht. These provinces translate the strategy outlined by the national ministries in their regional policy documents called 'Area-plans' (Streekplannen). In addition to translating the policies outlined by the ministries, it is the task of the provinces to ensure the compliance of the municipalities with these plans. Compliance is left mostly to the municipalities, although the provinces have recently been given the authority to adapt municipal policy to fit their own (Van Buuren et al., 2009: 9).

Municipalities

The Randstad region incorporates more than 140 municipalities, which also have a formal responsibility in the development of the region (Province North-Holland, 2009; Province South-Holland, 2009). These include the four largest municipalities of Amsterdam, Rotterdam, The Hague and Utrecht. Amsterdam is the Dutch capital, while the government is located in The Hague.

Municipal institutions draw up 'destination plans' (Bestemmingsplannen) by which they are able to manage developments in their constituency. Destination plans indicate the function of each particular plot of land in the constituency. In order to give direction to their constituencies, an increasing number of municipal authorities are developing 'structure visions' (Structuurvisie). Instead of focusing on the level of each plot of land, these documents look at the level of the municipality as a whole. The structure vision reflects the desired development of the constituency in the near future (Van Buuren et al, 2009; Spit and Zoete, 2002).

2.1.4 Regional issues for management

The issues of economic decline, congestion and disorganization that are at play in the Randstad region extend beyond the boundaries of government constituencies. Authority for dealing with these issues is dispersed across ministries, provinces and municipalities.

A variety of managerial approach are applied in order to tackle the issues at play and deal with the dispersion of authority in the region. In concurrence with the metropolitan public management approaches described in Chapter 1, a number institutional, boundary crossing and rule guided strategies can be identified in the Randstad region.

2.2 INSTITUTIONAL STRATEGIES EMPLOYED IN THE RANDSTAD REGION

In the Randstad region, governmental institutions that focus on different types of development and different levels of scale are involved in its development. A total of four ministries, four provinces and more than 140 municipalities share authority over the Randstad region. This network of authorities is often criticized in the Netherlands for endangering decisive decision-making in the region, and is depicted as 'managerial crowdedness'.

In order to deal with the perceived crowdedness in the region, municipal rearrangements are regularly made. In these rearrangements, multiple smaller municipalities come together to become one larger municipality. In the southern part of the Randstad region, for instance, the municipality of Middle-Delfland came about as a result of a merger of the municipalities of Schipluiden and Maasland in 2004 (Municipality Middle-Delfland, 2009). When the municipalities of Monster, De Lier, 's Gravenzande, Wateringen and Naaldwijk merged in the same year, the new municipality of Westland was created (Municipality Middle-Delfland, 2009). In addition to municipal rearrangements, provincial rearrangements are regularly in the Randstad. Thus, the installment of city provinces has a lengthy precedent.

2.2.1 Debating the installment of a Randstad province

The installment of a single provincial authority to be responsible for developments in the Randstad region has been discussed at great length (Buijs et al., 2009: 105-107; Witte, 2002). In 2002 for instance, the organization of provinces installed the 'Geelhoed committee', a research committee that was instructed to research opportunities for making government improvements in the area. In its recommendations, it advised reducing the number of Dutch provinces from 12 to

four, and making a single province responsible for the Randstad region. While this advice was not incorporated into national policy, the discussion on restructuring the provincial management of the Randstad region persisted. In 2006, the four large municipalities in the region installed the 'Burgmans committee' with a task similar to that of the earlier Geelhoed committee. The Burgmans committee also advised replacing of existing regional government institutions with a combined Randstad authority (Burgmans Commission, 2006). Subsequently, the national government installed the 'Kok committee' in 2006 (Buijs et al., 2009). This committee shared the view of its predecessors in stressing the need for a Randstad province. However, this report was also dismissed.

2.2.2 City provinces

The boundary exceeding issues in the Randstad region have grown due to urban expansion. In the early 1990s, this process led to a discussion on the possibility of introducing 'city provinces'. These institutions would to replace the existing municipalities and have authority over a larger physical domain. Later, however, several confrontations and referendums held in Amsterdam and Rotterdam prevented the installment of such an authority. Eventually, the argument about sovereignty has become the most important argument for voting against the formation of city-provinces in 1995. This period of intensive structural debate was followed by a period of silence. The issues that were the catalysts for the debate persisted, however, as did the need for a fitting solution. Most of the municipalities had been experimenting with bilateral contacts and government collaborations. Having failed to install city-provinces, the municipalities resorted to the Law of Communal Arrangements (in Dutch 'Wet Gemeenschappelijke Regelingen': wgr), which had already been put in place (Witte, 2002).

In 2000, 'wgr-regions' were created. Managing issues that extended beyond constituencies became a part of the wgr-regions' assignments. City-regions are headed by a board made up of the mayors of the various municipalities in the region. Sector-specific decisions are usually made by the aldermen of the municipalities involved, in portfolio-meetings. A distinction has been made between 'wgr-regions' and 'wgr⁺-regions'. The latter are given additional authority with regard to developing and maintaining transport facilities such as public transportation. In wgr-regions, the province functions as the transportation authority (Buijs et
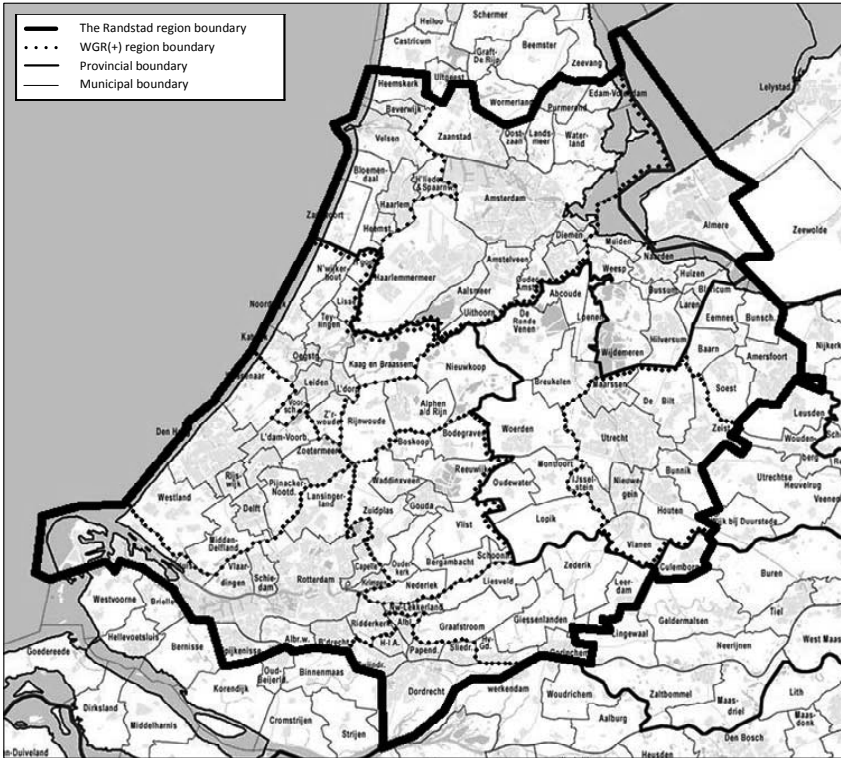
2.2 The Dispersion of authority in the Randstad region

al., 2009; Witte, 2002). The inclusion of the transport authority allows for the provision of additional funding from the national government. Wgr⁺-regions are therefore often considered to be more powerful than regular wgr-regions.

In addition to wgr-regions, institutions referred to as Environmental Service ('Milieudienst') were brought into being. These institutions advise municipalities on environmental policies and cater to the lack of manpower within smaller municipalities. Figure 2.2 depicts the constituencies of the municipalities, provinces and wgr⁽⁺⁾-regions that are responsible for the Randstad region. It thus illustrates the dispersion of authority in the region that is characteristic of polycentric regions.

2.3 BOUNDARY CROSSING STRATEGIES EMPLOYED IN THE RANDSTAD REGION

As discussed above, the institutional approach reflects on Randstad management difficulties as an issue of administrative crowdedness, while the rule guided approach understands the issues in terms of lengthy decision-making processes. When applying the boundary crossing strategy, the difficulties in the region are understood as being a result of the lack of interactions among the large variety of authorities. In reaction, a variety of (temporary) collaborations have appeared in the Randstad region. Some alliances, such as the Organization of Dutch Municipalities (Vereniging van Nederlandse Gemeenten: VNG) and the Interprovincial Consultation (Interprovinciaal Overleg: IPO), mostly represent a group of institutions. Other alliances are directed at a common purpose, such as obtaining funds from the authorities or engaging in administrative collaboration on joint issues. A variety of collaborations on joint projects do exist. In addition, several collaborative structures have come into being on the regional level. Their origins and hegemony are largely based on a shift in national policy.

2.3.1 North- and South-Wing alliances

The year 2000 marked the introduction of alliances in the northern and southern Randstad, referred to as North- and South-Wing alliances. In 2003, the newly formed cabinet introduced a new approach towards the Randstad. This approach abided by the distinction between the North and the South Wing. Alliance-wise, this renewed state-approach to the Randstad caused the alliances of the South and North Wing to gain influence. They became the highest priority for the collaborating organizations, increasing in intensity while other alliances were relegated to the background. *"During the last cabinet – or two cabinets ago actually – the focus went from the Randstad to the Wings. And, at one point you got those program-secretaries […]. And all of the financial arrangements, execution agreements, financial agreements, were going to be organized through that program-design. Well, then the [alliance] obviously gained an enormous interest there."*[1]

With the focus of the national governmental on the two wings of the Randstad, the Minister of Transport, Public Works and Water management was made responsible for the North Wing, while the Minister for Spatial Planning was made

responsible for the South Wing. As there were many funds to be distributed across the areas, government organizations that were involved in both quickly began developing ambitious development plans for their area. In the Northern area, this concerned the municipalities of Amsterdam and Utrecht as well as the province of North-Holland (Buijs et al., 2009). In the Southern area, collaboration were begun by the municipalities of The Hague and Rotterdam and the province of South-Holland. At a later stage, the number of participating government organizations increased in both the North and the South Wing. These plans involved the construction of controversial roads, as well as the development of large economic facilities. Each plan was presented as having an important role to play in the economic development of the area.

The distinction between the North and South Wing is an indicator of the differences and the struggles between the northern part of the Randstad region and its southern part. In practice, there is not much unity in the Randstad region as a whole. The distinction between the north and the south becomes immediately clear when commuter traffic in the cities is mapped out. More people travel regularly within either the northern or the southern municipalities than between cities in the northern and the southern parts of the Randstad. This clear distinction is also clearly reflected in collaborations between government institutions. It was their preference for working amongst themselves that led to the building of the North Wing and the South Wing alliances.

After the government initiated the abolishment of the Wing-orientated policy, the South Wing alliance was reduced in size and importance by 2008. The North Wing remained and shifted its attention towards the 'Amsterdam metropolitan region' (Amsterdam Airport Area et al., 2009). Eventually, The Hague and Rotterdam decided to increase their partnership, following the lead of the North Wing to develop a metropolitan region of their own.

2.3.2 Randstad alliances

The turn of the century saw the emergence of a variety of collaborative structures in the Randstad region (Buijs et al., 2009: 108-111). It was not just the North and South Wing alliances that came about in 2000. That year also saw the initia-

tion of the 'Region Randstad' alliance. This was a collaboration among the four municipalities of Amsterdam, Rotterdam, The Hague and Utrecht, the four largest wgr[(+)]regions and four provinces in the Randstad region. In the same year, government organizations in the Randstad joined private parties to form the 'Association Deltametropolis' alliance.

One of the most important drivers of the increasing number of alliances in this time period was the rising popularity of the 'urban networks' concept within the Ministry of Spatial Development. This concept was endorsed by minister Pronk when he introduced it in his fifth Spatial Note. In reaction to and anticipation of this development in the state-department, Randstad-government institutions combined forces within these alliances, in varying compositions. However, the fifth spatial note using the urban network idea was never formalized, as the Dutch cabinet was overturned in 2002.

After the installment of yet another national government, the new cabinet broke from the focus on the two Wings of the Randstad. It was decided that the Minister of Transport and Waterworks – Eurlings – would become the 'program minister' for the Randstad. Minister Eurlings began his duties on the Randstad by determining the 'Randstad Urgent', announcing the renewed ideas on the Randstad. Later on, in 2008, Randstad 2040, a visionary document on the desired development of the area, was published. Eurlings also introduced the concept of Faming and Shaming to stimulate good public management practices and discourage failing approaches. This period of time saw the actors in the region coming together again at a regional level. The G4/P4 alliance regained focus as a collaboration of the four largest municipalities and the four provinces. The 'Region Randstad' alliance also gained ground at this time.

2.4 RULE GUIDED STRATEGIES EMPLOYED IN THE RANDSTAD REGION

The rule guided approach tackles the perceived issues of lengthy decision-making. Decision-making processes concerning infrastructural interventions in the Netherlands generally take an average of 14 years. Newly built quarters near the large cities have taken over 15 years to develop. Roads connecting Almere with Amster-

dam and The Hague with Rotterdam have discussed for over 30 years without being constructed.

In order to make a formal decision to realize a form of development in the Netherlands, Dutch law prescribes a variety of characteristic procedures. These are laid down in a regulatory framework that consists, for instance, of the General Law of Administration (Algemene Wet bestuursrecht) and the European guidelines for nature conservation: the Habitat and Bird directives (Van Buuren et al., 2009). One of these is the prescription of a specific amount of time after which the intended decision is to be publicized for inspection. In addition, a period during which stakeholders are allowed to participate is part of the procedural characteristics that decision-making processes are required to comply with. On another note, decision-makers may be obligated to conduct additional research – for instance by drawing up an Environmental Impact Assessment – before making a formal decision about a particular development (Wood, 2003). In practice, stakeholder participation and the requirements for additional research often lead to lengthy delays in decision-making processes.

In order to prevent regulations on developments from thwarting decision-making processes, new laws are introduced and existing regulations are adapted. The adaptation of the Tracé law and of the new Law for Spatial Development (nWRO) and the introduction of the Crisis law are examples of approaches directed at stimulating the course of projects in the Randstad region.

2.4.1 Adapting the Tracé law and the Law for Spatial Development

In order to realize infrastructural interventions, the national government has to follow the prescriptions of the Tracé law, which translates as 'Route law'. This law was installed in 1993 in an attempt to streamline civil participation. Before this, the Law for Spatial Development and the General Law of administration laid down the procedures for the construction of large infrastructural facilities such as roads and rail. However, these laws involved multiple procedures – for instance, obtaining permits to cut down trees – which each had their own periods of civil participation. The Tracé law makes the procedural guidelines in these laws obsolete for large infrastructure projects, and this drastically shortens the procedures. Stakeholder participation is concentrated on the procedure concerning the infrastructural intervention, instead of on various secondary procedures.

In 2007, the Minister for Transport, Public Works and Water management indicated that the Tracé law had not sufficiently lived up to its expectations. Underlying this assertion was the notion that there had been several infrastructure projects that persisted – such as the A6/A9 connecting Almere with Amsterdam and the A4 connecting The Hague and Rotterdam – despite the application of the Tracé law procedures. The minister announced that he was going to alter the procedural guidelines in an effort to further streamline the law, with the aim of shortening further the legally required time periods and opportunities for participation in infrastructural decision-making processes.

2.4.2 Initiating the Crisis and Recovery law

The discussion on altering the regulatory framework is a contemporary one. In 2009, the Dutch cabinet announced the introduction of a new law that is intended to come into effect in January 2010 and foreseen to expire in January 2014. This is called the Crisis and Recovery law.

Underlying this temporary law is the argument that the worldwide economic crisis under which the country suffers makes it even more imminent to realize sizable interventions. These interventions are considered necessary in order to make the country and the Randstad region in particular more attractive to foreign investors. Generally, the Crisis and Recovery law *'shortens procedures, streamlines regulation, reduces the amount of necessary permissions and creates more clarity in administrative responsibilities.'* (Rijksvoorlichtingsdienst, 2009). In light of this, the national government has nominated a total of 58 projects to which the law would apply. In the Randstad region, these include coastal protection projects, improvements to existing infrastructure facilities, the development of new roads and expansions on housing and commercial facilities in the region.

2.5 A DYNAMIC STAGE SET FOR PUBLIC MANAGERS

The Dutch Randstad region is a good example of a polycentric region in Western Europe. As discussed in this chapter, the region is exemplary of the complexity of metropolitan public management described in Chapter 1. Randstad metropolitan public management is subject to ongoing debates and changes.

The dynamic nature of these various metropolitan public management approaches sets the stage for metropolitan managers who are working in this region. Public metropolitan managers find themselves working within a governmental structure that is subject to ongoing discussion and reorganization. As such, they need to adapt to the variety of changes in the regulatory framework. Changing alliances and agreements among organizations in the region also lay out the background for metropolitan managers. With the variety of developments that take place in the background, public metropolitan managers are expected to deal with the issues of economic tumbling and spatial concentration.

The research described in this thesis involves a study of the public metropolitan middle managers in the Randstad region. As part of a system of continuously changing government structures, regulatory frameworks and collaborations, how do these Randstad metropolitan managers act, and what joint actions does this lead to? Before going into this question, however, Chapter 3 describes the research approach and Chapter 4 discusses the theoretical framework that was wielded for the analysis.

Notes

[1] "Ten tijden van het vorige kabinet – of twee kabinetten terug al – is eigenlijk die focus van de Randstad naar die Vleugels gegaan. En, toen kreeg je op een gegeven moment die programmaministers […]. En alle financiële regelingen, uitvoeringsafspraken, financiële afspraken zouden via die programmaopzet geregeld worden. Nou, toen kreeg de [alliantie] natuurlijk een gigantisch grote belang daarin."

3

Developing a grounded theory on metropolitan public management practice

As stated in the introduction, the aim of this thesis is to further our understanding of metropolitan public management. In particular, the focus is on public managerial practices. Metropolitan regions provide a complex context consisting of a physical environment of interrelated spatial issues and a social environment of politicians, organizations, inhabitants and businesses. Metropolitan managers have the task of navigating within this complex context. As discussed in the previous chapters, the complexity arises from the specific economic and quality issues at play in the region. The dispersion of authority that is especially characteristic of polycentric regions is perceived to complicate the managerial possibilities for dealing with these issues. Public managers have to work on metropolitan interventions in a context that is subject to continuous debates on institutional, regulatory and boundary crossing strategies of improving metropolitan public management.

There is abundant research on complexity and complexity management (Byrne, 1998; Healey, 2007; Innes and Booher, 2002; Mitleton-Kelly, 2003; Stacey et al., 2000; Teisman et al., 2009; Waldrop, 1994). However, the literature has largely overlooked the level of individual public managers, reviewing complexity and complexity management mostly from a systems or organizational perspective. The perspective of individual metropolitan managers working within the complex context has therefore been largely unexplored. In an attempt to fill this void, an inductive– grounded theoretical – research approach is taken in this thesis.

This chapter makes it clear that the empirical and inductive character of grounded theoretical research render the approach particularly suitable to the study of actions amidst complexity (Locke, 2001: 95).

3.1 GROUNDED THEORY

Developed by Barney Glaser and Anselm Strauss as an alternative to theory-reflective research (1967), grounded theory is a qualitative research approach that facilitates theory-development. Corbin and Strauss (2008) have indicated different properties of qualitative research.

- *Analysis is an art and a science;*
- *Analysis is an interpretive act;*
- *More than one story can be created from data;*

- *Concepts vary in levels of abstraction;*
- *There are different levels of analysis;*
- *Analysis can have different aims;*
- *Delineating contexts is an important aspect of analysis;*
- *Analysis is a process;*
- *Analysis begins with the collection of the first pieces of data;*
- *A researcher can do microanalysis or more general analysis as the analytic situation demands.* (Corbin and Strauss, 2008: 47)

Locke (2001: 95) has noted that the inductive, qualitative research approach of grounded theory is especially valuable in cases where existing research does not provide sufficient and distinct enough insights into the object of study. It offers the opportunity to study micro as well as macro-level issues (Miller and Fredericks, 1999: 550). This makes it useful for the analysis of the individual public manager and the level of joint actions that is aimed for in this thesis. The grounded theoretical research approach provides the methodological framework that makes the development of theoretical insights possible.

3.1.1 The discovery of grounded theory

When Glaser and Strauss put forward the idea of a grounded theory approach in 1967, a positivistic stance towards research reigned in the social sciences (Glaser and Strauss, 1967: 1; Charmaz, 2006: 4). Positivistic research called for methodological frameworks that were made up of experiments, the development of hypotheses and systematic observation to be introduced into the social sciences. The approach also aimed to verify and refine existing theories. *"Most writing on sociological method has been concerned with how accurate facts can be obtained and how theory can thereby be more rigorously tested"* (Glaser and Strauss, 1967: 1). The accuracy of the analyses is subsequently measured in terms of their objectivity, generalizability and falsification (Charmaz, 2006: 4-5). The success of the positivistic stance in research caused qualitative research to be overshadowed. The qualitative stance was generally criticized for its lack of methodological rigor, not providing the researcher with adequate tools for research.

In their introduction of grounded theory, Glaser and Strauss (1967: 1) argued for the added value of qualitative research. They argue that research from the positivistic stance has led to the development of abstract theories that no longer do

justice to specific empirical situations. Instead, the empirically orientated qualitative research approach is thought to be able to generate theories that are more 'grounded' in practice. *"We believe that the discovery of theory from data – which we call grounded theory – is a major task confronting sociology today for […] such a theory fits empirical situations and is understandable to sociologists and layman alike."* (Glaser and Strauss, 1967: 1).

3.1.2 Constant comparative analysis

Up until 1967, qualitative research had been criticized for its lack of methodological rigor. In order to counteract this argument, Glaser and Strauss (1967) introduced the 'constant comparative analysis' as a methodology to develop grounded theories. The method involves alternately interpreting and comparing rich data, and developing categories that form the building blocks of the resulting grounded theory. The constant comparison analysis is completed either when the developed theoretical insights cover the empirical data, or when other factors in the researcher's reality, such as the availability of time and money, demand it. Section 3.3 further elucidates the constant comparative analysis will be elucidated further.

Glaser (1978: 4-5) has depicted four criteria to which grounded theories should adhere. First, there has to be a fit between the data and the developed theoretical categories. This implies that while theoretical insights are generally more abstract than raw data, they should not contain contradictory elements. A second criterion is that the developed theory should be relevant, focusing on the core of the problems and processes at play. This implies that grounded theories should not be concerned with factors that are only marginally indicated by the data. Third, the theoretical result should work. This implies that it should be useful to "*explain what happened, predict what will happen and interpret what is happening*" in the area under study. Finally, the grounded theory should be modifiable when new data presents itself. In this way, grounded theories are flexible and can be altered as the object of study changes over time (Glaser, 1978: 4-5).

3.1.3 The role of existing theory in grounded theory research

In the initial presentation of grounded theory, existing theoretical insights were considered to have the potential to inhibit the development of theories that are

free of preconceptions. In the years that followed the 'discovery' book however, a difference of opinion with regard to the role of existing theory developed between Glaserian and Straussian grounded theory.

Glaser (1978, 1992, 2002) continued to argue that existing theoretical notions should not play a role in the process of developing grounded theory. According to Strauss (1987; Corbin and Strauss, 2008), however, researchers cannot be expected to enter their object of study without any preconceived theoretical assumptions about it. Researchers are arguably incapable of leaving all their years of experience and knowledge at the door when starting grounded theoretical analysis. Straussian grounded theory (especially reflected in Strauss and Corbin, 1990 and its revised edition, Corbin and Strauss, 2008) therefore presents a change in perspective. Existing theoretical insights, according to the Straussian approach should not be seen as threatening, but rather as being useful in the early stages of the analysis of rich data. Theoretical notions are perceived as 'sensitizing concepts' that provide support in the development of grounded theoretical insights. The idea of 'sensitizing concepts' was introduced by Blumer (1954). He argued that in most studies in the social sciences, concepts are used as static truths. However, Blumer (1954: 4) argued that researchers subsequently use these concepts to model the world they study, instead of letting the world they study inspire the adaptation of their concepts. In reaction, Blumer (1954: 7) suggested the use of the term 'sensitizing concepts': *"A sensitizing concept lacks such specification of attributes or benchmarks and consequently it does not enable the user to move directly to the instance and its relevant content. Instead, it gives the user a general sense of reference and guidance in approaching empirical instances. Where definitive concepts provide prescriptions of what to see, sensitizing concepts merely suggest directions along which to look."*

3.2 GROUNDED THEORY CRITICS: 'THEORY' OF GROUNDED THEORY

The grounded theoretical research approach is not without controversy. Three points of criticism have arisen from the debate. These concern the theoretical value of grounded theories, the emergence of grounded theories and the claim of discovering theory.

3.2.1 The theoretical value of grounded theory

One of the most important criticisms of grounded theory concerns the value of the theories developed (Thomas and James, 2006: 769). Theory is claimed to be an abstract representation of practice. Grounded theory, it is argued, does not fulfill this requirement of abstraction. Some argue that its close relation to rich data is only serves to highlight that which is already apparent and observable in practice. This restricts the level of abstraction in the resulting grounded theory (Thomas and James, 2006: 769). As a result, grounded theories are criticized for being descriptive, rather than theoretical (Becker, 1998; Silverman, 2001). They are unable to provide adequate, reliable explanations for what they are studying (Miller and Fredericks, 1999: 550; Silverman, 2001: 46).

Most researchers claiming to do grounded theoretical research stress their using grounded theoretical methods. Even though they do have an idea of theory, these researchers rarely claim that they are developing substantive or formal theories (Charmaz, 2006: 133). Instead, they can be understood to be generating empirical generalizations, categories, predispositions, process explications, relationships, explanations, understandings and descriptions (Charmaz, 2006: 133). Charmaz (2006: 133) acknowledges that grounded theory analyses are partly descriptive. However, she stresses the analytical and abstract nature of the development of theory in grounded theoretical analysis.

Glaser (2002) has argued that constant comparative analysis leads to theories with a high level of abstraction. This implies that even though the outcomes of grounded theory research may be descriptive in nature, the constant comparative analysis is ongoing, resulting in theoretical explanations of the object of study as a whole.

3.2.2 The 'Emergence' of grounded theories

A second aspect of grounded theoretical research that is often debated has to do with the conception that theoretical insights gained from grounded theoretical research 'emerge' from the empirical data (Glaser and Strauss, 1967). *"If the data are collected by theoretical sampling at the same time that they are analyzed (as we suggest should be done), then integration of the theory is more likely to emerge by itself."* (Glaser and Strauss, 1967: 109). Critics argue that the individual interpretations of

the researcher play an influential role in this research. Atkinson et al. (2003: 144) for instance argued that even when grounded theorists use computer software to structure the emergent process, this does not diminish the role of the researcher. In qualitative research, the interpretation of researchers cannot be ignored. What grounded theoretical researchers claim to be theoretical insights that have emerged from empirical data, Thomas and James (2006: 783) argue, is largely dependent on their personal perceptions of what they see as 'emerging'.

In reaction to this point of criticism, grounded theorists refer to the qualitative nature of their approach. In grounded theoretical research, getting from rich data to theoretical explanations occurs through an intensive analysis of the data through a process of constant comparison. In this way, Glaser (2002) has asserted that the approach requires innovative researchers who are open to new insights: *"The grounded theory researcher moves into an area of interest with no problem. He moves in with the abstract wonderment of what is going on that is an issue and how it is handled."* (Glaser, 1992: 22). Straussian grounded theory goes further by providing the researcher with methodological tools for the analysis of rich data (Corbin and Strauss, 2008; Charmaz, 2006). In both Glaserian and Straussian grounded theoretical research – as qualitative research alike – the interpretation of what is seen by the researcher plays an important role. The resulting theories are therefore reflections of personal interpretations.

Interpretations on the part of the researcher are an inherent aspect of conducting research. Acknowledging their influence primarily acts as a reminder of the importance of a clear depiction of the researchers' predispositions and empirical argumentation. This allows readers to understand the interpretations of the researcher. On the other hand, the grounded theoretical process of the constant comparison of data also functions as an important filtering process for the analysis. Theoretical categories that may emerge at an early stage of analysis as a result of predispositions are filtered out as they are confronted with other data.

3.2.3 'Discovering' grounded theory
The third aspect of the grounded theory research approach that is often criticized concerns the claim that the approach makes it possible to 'discover' theories. By using this term in their description of the approach, it is argued that Glaser and

Strauss (1967) understand there to be a truth that exists outside the world of perception. This is cause for criticism from positivists as well as from qualitative researchers. Each group of researchers argues that there is a philosophical conflict between the qualitative data analysis that consists mostly of perceptions and the inclination towards a detectable, measurable reality. Based on this conflict, Thomas and James (2006: 785) have proposed that the use of the term 'discovery' by grounded theorists is unjustified.

It is likely that the aim of providing an acceptable alternative to theory-testing positivist research was the reason why Glaser and Strauss used the term 'discovery' in their introduction to the approach (Glaser and Strauss, 1967: 1). The aim of grounded theoretical research is to develop theoretical insights by way of interpreting what is happening in practice. In this way, the result of grounded theoretical research is inherently an interpreted account of events. This is in accordance with the general qualitative perspective on research. The term 'discovery' should therefore be understood as the process of laying bare this account of events, instead of laying bare a universal truth. In this way, grounded theoretical research is closely related to constructivist research. It shares the aim of studying the various ways in which people interpret a phenomenon and the interactions between these interpretations. As Charmaz (2006: 187) has stated: Constructivists acknowledge that their interpretation of the studied phenomenon is itself a construction.

3.3 THE CONSTANT COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS METHODOLOGY

As mentioned in the first section, Glaser and Strauss (1967) have introduced the 'constant comparative analysis' as their methodological framework to develop grounded theories. This framework generally consists of three research steps: obtaining rich data, analyzing rich data and developing theoretical insights. In the analytical process, these steps are followed alternately.

Upon explicating the constant comparative approach following their 1967 book, the attitudes of Glaser and Strauss diverged. The Straussian constant comparative analysis (Corbin and Strauss, 2008; Charmaz, 2006) provides grounded theoretical

researchers with a more structured methodological framework than the Glaserian constant comparative analysis does (Glaser, 1987; 2002).

3.3.1 Obtaining rich data

The grounded theoretical research process starts out by determining the object of analysis. Most grounded theorists have an initial interest in a certain field, but are relatively ignorant of the issues that require analysis in this field at first. Obtaining rich data serves the purpose of providing the researcher with the opportunity to detect the issue at stake. Subsequently, rich data is used to develop insights with regard into that issue.

Both Glaserian and Straussian grounded theorists agree that rich data is required in order to detect and explore an issue. Their interpretations of what rich data is vary, however. Glaser (2002: 145) is of the mind that 'all is data'. This implies that the type of data that can be used for constant comparison is presumed to be unlimited. Qualitative data obtained from (semi-)open interviews, observation and documents as well as quantitative data obtained from surveys, for instance, are each considered to be valuable to the process of grounded theory development. Nevertheless, the focus of Glaserian grounded theorists remains on ethnographic methods of interviewing and observation. Corbin and Strauss (2008) have claimed that quantitative data is unlikely to generate the rich data that is required for constant comparative analysis. They argue that qualitative data is more likely to generate an abundance of detailed information by the respondent. Thus, Straussian constant comparative analysis stresses the Glaserian focus on interviews and observations as the main source of rich data (Corbin and Strauss, 2008; Charmaz, 2006). Literature is also depicted as being useful in the development of grounded theories. Corbin and Strauss (2008) have identified at least seven uses for technical literature:

- *It can be a source for making comparisons;*
- *It can enhance sensitivity;*
- *It can provide a cache of descriptive data with very little interpretation;*
- *It can provide questions for initial observations and interviews;*
- *It can be used to stimulate questions during the analysis;*
- *It can suggest areas for theoretical sampling;*

- *It can be used to confirm findings and just the reverse, finding can be used to illustrate where the literature is incorrect, simplistic or only partially explains a phenomenon.* (Corbin and Strauss, 2008: 37)

Interviewing for rich data

Interviews can generally take the form of structured, semi-structured or open interviews (Weiss, 1994: 2; Van Thiel, 2007: 106). In attempting to give some direction to the interviews from the theoretical framework, positivist researchers mostly give preference to structured and semi-structured interviews. In applying these, the researchers have prepared a set of questions that need to be answered (Soss, 2006: 135).

The explorative nature of the interviews means that grounded theoretical interviews are less structured and more in-depth (Yanow and Schwartz-Shea, 2006; Schaffer, 2006: 150-160; Soss, 2006: 127-149). The interviewer works with a list of subjects that he or she has come across in the course of study: a 'topic list' (Weiss, 1994). As the data is used to adapt the object of analysis, the topic list can be adjusted over time. This allows the researcher to focus data collection on the specific topic of study. If at any time during the interview the respondent discusses a topic that is not listed but is of interest to the study, the researcher is at liberty to explore this with the respondent. The topic list thus functions mostly as a guide rather than a stipulation.

The open interviewing approach allows for the exploration of the empirical practice under study in great detail, without being influenced by preconceptions that guide the formulation of questions in (semi-)structured interviews.

Observation techniques

Observation is another research technique that is used in constant comparative analysis. The observer's position can vary from being a participant observer, to being a silent observer. The participant observer not only watches what is going on, but also contributes to it. For instance, this could involve the researcher sharing some initial insights with respondents that are observed at the same time. This technique is mostly applied by action researchers (Reason and Bradbury, 2001). In contrast, the silent observer does not share his initial insights and simply directs his attention to studying the situation under observation instead. Depending on

the object of study, several situations can be the focus of observation by grounded theorists, ranging from conferences to meetings to deliberations. In addition, it is possible to observe a respondent for a certain amount of time (as done for instance by Mintzberg and Westley, 2000; Healey, 1992; Noordegraaf, 2000).

3.3.2 Developing theoretical insights: Analyzing rich data

According to Glaser (1992, 2002), the discovered theory is at its most valuable when it is based on empirical evidence alone. In his early work, Glaser (1978) elaborated on coding and writing memos as methods for researchers to develop theoretical insights from rich data. When discussing how these efforts can be used to develop theoretical insights, Glaser (2002: 3) pointed to the need for innovativeness on the part of the researcher.

Straussian constant comparative analysis (Strauss, 1987; Corbin and Strauss, 2008; Charmaz, 2006) provides a methodological framework for describing the process of developing theory from coding and writing memos. A Straussian research process visualized by Charmaz (2006: 11) is illustrated in the adjacent Figure 3.1. The figure shows the various steps taken in a grounded theoretical study. The steps involve data-collection, coding data, writing memos and drafts and reflecting on earlier steps in order to ensure the validity of the theoretical account that is the result.

Both Glaser and Strauss have stressed the non-sequential order of the research process. Rather, processes of data collection and analysis continuously alternate and take place simultaneously at times (Glaser and Strauss, 1967: 101).

Coding data

After having established the focus of the analysis, for instance a case or on an issue (Weiss, 1994: 152), the coding process begins during the empirical data collection stage. Coding is described by Corbin and Strauss (2008) as "*Extracting concepts from rich data and developing them in terms of their properties and dimensions*". Coding data involves going through the rich data in an attempt to reach the higher level of abstraction needed to develop a theory. Codes are established through the continuous comparison of data. Corbin and Strauss (2008: 73) have described how comparative methodology reflects on the actions of the researcher: "*As the researcher moves along with analysis, each incident in the data is compared with other incidents*

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          ┌─────────────────┐
          │ Writing the first│
          │      draft      │──────────┐   ┌──────────────┐
          └─────────────────┘          │   │   Further    │
                   │                     └──│  theoretical │
          ┌─────────────────┐              │ sampling if  │
          │Integrating memos │              │    needed    │
          │diagramming concepts│            └──────────────┘
          └─────────────────┘
                   │
  Theoretical              ┌─────────────┐            Adopting
  memo-writing             │Sorting memos│            certain
  and further              └─────────────┘            categories as
  refining of        ┌────┐ ┌────┐ ┌────┐            theoretical
  concepts           │    │ │    │ │    │            concepts
                     └────┘ └────┘ └────┘
          ┌─────────────────────┐
          │Theoretical sampling │
          │seek specific new data│
          └─────────────────────┘
          ┌─────────────────────┐
          │   Advanced memos    │
          │refining conceptual  │
          │     categories      │
          └─────────────────────┘
          ┌─────────────────────────────┐
          │Data collection ----- Focused coding│
          └─────────────────────────────┘
          ┌─────────────────────┐
          │   Initial memos     │
          │raising codes to tentative│
          │    categories       │
          └─────────────────────┘
          ┌─────────────────────┐
          │   Initial coding    │
          │   data collection   │
          └─────────────────────┘
  Sensitizing concepts  ┌─────────────┐   Reexamination
  and general           │  Research   │   of earlier data
  disciplinary          │problem and opening│
  perspectives          │research questions│
                        └─────────────┘
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3.1 A Straussian constant comparison research process (Charmaz, 2006: 11)

for similarities and differences. Incidents found to be conceptually similar are grouped together under a higher-level descriptive concept". This coding process is applied, for instance, to interview-transcripts. This process involves writing down categories in the margins and developing categories more elaborately on cards, for instance (Glaser and Strauss, 1967: 106). In coding the rich data that has been gathered, the researcher should, according to Charmaz (2006: 49) remain open, stay close to the data, keep codes simple and precise, construct short codes, preserved actions, compare data with data and move quickly through the data.

There are several types of coding techniques that can be used. Charmaz (2006: 42-71) discriminates between initial coding techniques. This involves word-by-word coding, line-by-line coding and incident-to-incident coding. The initial codes developed reflect on the data and review what the studied part of the transcript is an instance of. Codes can be deduced from the empirical data, but may

also be drawn from the theoretical presuppositions of the researcher (Weiss, 1994: 155). In grounded theoretical research, empirical data is the most prominent basis for codes.

After the variety of rich data is analyzed by way of initial coding, the researchers are required to generalize the codes in order to develop grounded theoretical concepts. Charmaz (2006: 57) has referred to this as focused coding. This involves the development of codes that are able to provide explanations of the data across a larger section of the data than the initial codes are able to. These codes can be enriched by way of axial coding, which involves using empirical data to supplement focused codes (Charmaz, 2006: 60). In addition to initial coding and focused coding, theoretical coding is possible. This coding technique links codes developed by focused coding (Charmaz, 2006: 63). Theoretical coding is supplemented by the writing of memos, which functions as a way for the researcher to develop ideas on the empirical evidence.

Writing memos

During the coding process, the researcher may perceive certain codes to be of particular importance in understanding the object of analysis. In order to explore these further and to maintain some distance from the raw data, grounded theorists recommend the writing of memos (Strauss, 1987; Corbin and Strauss, 2008; Charmaz, 2006). These memos are careful explications of certain codes that stand out from the coding process. *"Memo writing on the field note provides with an immediate illustration for an idea"* (Glaser and Strauss, 1967: 108). By writing short explications of what these codes imply, by drawing from the empirical evidence, the researcher is able to form theoretical categories (Charmaz, 2006). For example, Corbin (in Corbin and Strauss, 2008: 161-192) wrote her memos of an analysis she performed on the war in Vietnam from the perspectives of veteran soldiers.

The process of writing a memo is begun by taking a piece of rich data that is used as a *'springboard'* for analysis (Corbin and Strauss, 2008: 163). Heuristics are useful in attempting to make the memos as accurate as possible. Abbott (2004: 110-136) has found a distinction between search heuristics and argument heuristics. Search heuristics involve, for instance, making an analogy with other similar instances, or borrowing a method from other similar studies. Argument heuristics involve problematizing the obvious, making a reversal, making an assumption and

reconceptualizing. Each of these heuristics provides innovative ways of reviewing the data and interpreting it adequately.

After selecting the piece of data that will function as a *'springboard'* for analysis, the grounded theorist attributes a number and a clear title to it. In addition, the empirical piece of data that is central to the memo is reflected upon before starting to write the memo.

3.3.3 Empirical results: Reaching theoretical saturation

The development of theory from the empirical data is complemented when constant comparative efforts no longer lead to additions to the codes and memos developed. As data collection, coding and writing memos are applied alternately, the accumulation of insights results in accurate, complex and lengthier theoretical insights (Corbin and Strauss, 2008: 164). Glaser and Strauss (1967: 111) have referred to this point in the analysis as the point of theoretical 'saturation'. After this point of saturation is achieved, the researcher can start writing the draft of the final study. This draft is generally based on a selection of concepts that are drawn from expanded codes and memos. These concepts are described to adequately elucidate the object of research.

3.4 CONSTANT COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF METROPOLITAN PUBLIC MANAGEMENT

The accounts in this thesis are the result of a grounded theoretical approach. In an effort to explore the actions of individual public managers in the metropolitan region and the joint actions to which these lead, I conducted a constant comparative analysis. As a result, a descriptive as well as a theorizing account of metropolitan public management was developed. This account aimed to meet the criteria of fit, relevance, work, and modifiability indicated by Glaser (1978: 4-5).

The approach used coincides with a Straussian perspective on grounded theoretical research. This on the one hand implies that preconceptions from theory are incorporated into the analysis as sensitizing concepts. The theoretical sensitizing concepts of this thesis are elucidated in the next chapter. On the other hand, the Straussian approach used in the analysis also implies that the methodological framework used is relatively structured.
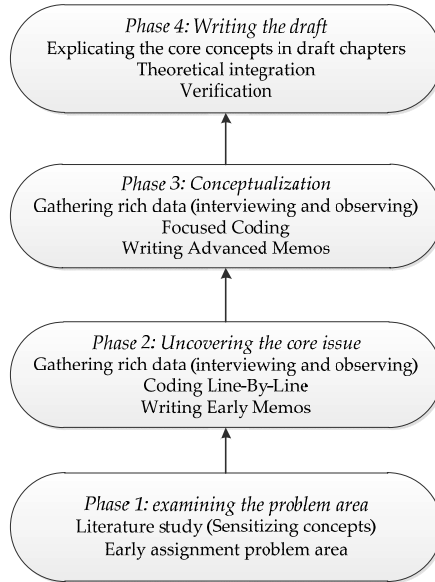
3.2 *The applied constant comparison research process*

Figure 3.3 the process of analysis is reflected. Four phases of analysis are discriminated: Phase 1 – Examining the problem area, Phase 2 – Uncovering the core issue, Phase 3 – Conceptualization, and Phase 4 – Writing the draft. Starting out from a general notion of the problem area for analysis, a process of alternately collecting data and analyzing it through coding and writing memos has resulted in the development of a theory on metropolitan public management.

The way the analysis has taken place for this thesis is explained in detail in the Appendix. This Appendix anticipates on the empirical analysis discussed in Chapters 5 to 9, which is why it has not been fully included in this chapter. In the following Section, I will elaborate on the collection of data and theoretical integration that has taken place in light of this thesis.

3.4.1 Collecting rich data

In an effort to learn about the issues at play in metropolitan public management, I collected a large amount of rich data throughout the duration of the study (see Appendix). In the first phase, the data collected concerned literature on metropolitan management. The second and third phase concerned in depth interviews

and observation. In the fourth phase, the findings were verified by consulting practitioners once again.

The collection of focused on the Dutch Randstad region, particularly the southern part of the region. In particular, data was collected from the province of South Holland, the municipalities of Delft, Dordrecht, Rotterdam, The Hague and Wassenaar. Also, the wgr and wgr⁺regions Haaglanden, Holland Rijnland, ISMH and the Stadsregio Rotterdam were the source of data. During this phase, I observed silently at several occasions, held open interviews and studied local and regional policy documents and news articles continuously.

Silent observation

In the early stages of the analysis, I attended two conferences of the South Wing platform. At these conferences, the political and public managers working together within the alliance gathered. The conferences functioned as forums where joint ambitions were presented to the outside world and agreements were formally sealed. In addition to the South Wing conferences, a meeting of public managers from a large governmental organization in the region was observed. At this meeting, colleagues from several sectors of that organization exchanged their insights and the progress made on regional projects. Following this, I attended a meeting between public managers from different organizations about housing and nature development on a recently release plot of land they shared an interest in. On another occasion, a meeting of the various aldermen involved in spatial development in a wgr⁺-region was observed. I also studied an alliance of the various municipalities in the area, as well as a variety of conferences where practitioners exchanged their insights with regard to the Randstad region's projected development.

In the observation occasions, careful notes were made with regard to the contents of what was spoken, as well as the process that took place among the participants.

Open interviewing

In addition to observations, qualitative interviews were conducted with public managers who were active in public management in the Randstad region. The respondents were selected on the basis of their direct or indirect involvement with the South Wing alliance. The interviews took place within two time periods – Phase 2 and 3 -taking place year apart from each other. This allowed for a detailed

analysis of the interview transcripts through initial coding and memos as described in the Appendix. The analysis in phase 2 lead to the establishment of the core issue for research. The third phase involved more focused interviewing, coding and memos, resulting in the establishment of central concepts explanatory to the core issue.

In total, twenty-three public metropolitan managers working for fourteen different organizations dispersed over the southern part of the Randstad region were interviewed extensively. Thirteen respondents were interviewed in the second phase, and ten in the second period. Interviews of two tot two-and-a-half hours duration were held with the respondents in an open setting, using a topic list that included discussions of their backgrounds, their activities, aims, successes and failures. This topic list was constructed to be as free from theoretical predisposition as possible. When a respondent indicated a particular aspect of their work was of importance, this was explored further with the respondent. In the second round of interviews in phase 3, those markers that concerned the core issue found in the second phase were particularly explored further with the respondents. The interviews that contained detailed accounts of public managers and their work were transcribed for further analysis. Eventually, more than 600 pages of transcripts were analyzed in the way described in the Appendix.

Document study

Three sources of rich data were tapped into. Written data was collected in the form of policy documents, media statements, newsletters, organizational websites, case studies and research publications. The aim of studying these documents was to be able to facilitate an analysis of the observational and interview data. It was also useful in expanding theoretical insights.

3.4.2 Theoretical integration

At the start of the PhD project this thesis is the result of, the focus of analysis was metropolitan spatial management. As described in Chapter 1, these regions are characterized by their managerial complexity: *National governments still have a strong stake in metropolitan development, but the policy arena has turned into a 'multi-actor and multilevel game' (Hooghe and Marks, 2001). The challenge for metro-*

politan governance and spatial policy coordination is increasingly complicated under these dynamic and more open-ended circumstances." (Salet et al., 2003: 3) Despite this assertion, the core issue in metropolitan public management remained unclear. The analysis of the data collected in the second phase led to the establishment of the core issue at play in metropolitan public management: *'the difficulty experienced by individual public managers to get regionally agreed upon developments put into practice'.* The object of the analysis was to develop a theory on metropolitan public management. Without denying the reflexive nature of practice, the core concepts explaining the difficulties experienced by public managers working on regional metropolitan developments were uncovered. This was done through a process of coding, writing memos, theoretical integration.

Coding data and writing memos

In accordance with Corbin (in Corbin and Strauss, 2008: 163), the analysis of the data collected was begun by initial coding. Interview transcripts were coded line-by-line and incident-to-incident (Charmaz, 2006: 50-53). As the analysis progressed, initial coding gave way to focused coding. In the Appendix, examples of the way the interviews were coded for this thesis are given.

In addition to coding, a variety of memos were written during the analysis. In these memos, initial and focused codes were explored by reverting to the empirical source. In accordance with Straussian grounded theory, part of the initial memos written were guided by the sensitizing concepts discussed in the following chapter. During the analysis, these concepts – in accordance with Blumer (1954) – suggested directions along which to look for the establishment of codes and theoretical views.

The processes of coding and writing memos on codes found and their interrelation lead to the establishment of a variety of concepts. Each of the concepts developed from these codes holds part of the explanation of the difficulties experienced by public managers to get regional agreements put into practice. In the final, fourth phase of analysis, theoretical integration took place. In this phase, the core explanatory concepts and their interrelation were elaborated on in the shape of draft-chapters. Subsequently, the implications of the findings for the object of analysis – public management in the metropolitan region – were analyzed.

In order to assure the validity of the findings of this theoretical integration, they were verified by checking them with some of the respondents and others involved in metropolitan management. This lead to refinement and confirmation.

The result is an empirical analysis that is close to the rich empirical practice, while also being more generalized and reflective. The close relation to the empirical practice is illustrated throughout this thesis by exemplary excerpts from the transcripts. As the interviews were in Dutch, I have tried to stay as close to the Dutch meaning of articulations as possible. In order to safeguard the anonymity of the respondents, references to their actual names and the organizations they work for are left out.

3.5 AN INDUCTIVE APPROACH TO THE STUDY OF METROPOLITAN PUBLIC MANAGERS

This chapter described the Straussian approach to grounded theoretical research that was utilized for the analysis of individual public managers in the metropolitan Randstad region. A constant comparative analysis was conducted to develop a theory that is rooted in empirical data.

An exploration of the object of study caused the analysis of this thesis in the initial stages of constant comparison to be influenced by sensitizing concepts. These concepts guided the initial stages of analysis by functioning as a springboard for an inductive analysis of the empirical data. Therefore, it is useful to conduct an exploration of these concepts before conveying the empirical results. The next chapter provides insight into the three theoretical concepts preceding the analysis: spatial quality, complexity and complexity management.

4

Sensitizing concepts: Striving for spatial quality through complexity management

This thesis aims to provide an understanding of metropolitan public management from the perspective of individual public managers. To this end, the grounded theoretical research methodology of constant comparative analysis was applied to obtain theoretical insights with regard to from rich empirical data. In applying the Straussian approach to grounded theory, the absence of a preconceived theoretical framework does not disavow the role of existing theory. It is virtually impossible for researchers to enter a research area uninhibited. Therefore, this chapter explains the sensitizing concepts (Blumer, 1954) that influenced the analytical process, especially in the initial stages of analysis, in an effort to account for the empirical results.

Following an orientation on the object of study, three concepts are sensitizing for the analysis of public management in the metropolitan region: spatial quality, complexity and complexity management. Preceding the analysis, it was conceived that the difficulties experienced with realizing spatial quality stemmed emanated from the complexity of the metropolitan region. This, in turn was interpreted mean that metropolitan managers are required to be skillful in complexity management. The three theoretical sensitizing concepts are discussed in the upcoming Sections 4.1, 4.2 and 4.3.

4.1 SPATIAL QUALITY IN THE METROPOLITAN REGION

As noted in the first two chapters of this thesis, metropolitan regions are characterized by issues that stem from their urbanity. There is economic competition with regard to mobility, housing and commercial qualities. Chapters 1 and 2 discussed the level of quality needed to make the metropolitan region competitive. In the debate on urban quality, the Dutch literature often refers to the concept of spatial quality (Dauvelier and Luttik, 2001: 3; Driessen, 2005; Verbart, 2004; Ministry of VROM, 1990). A large degree of explications and re-conceptualizations have been debated in the literature. Quality is considered to be achieved either when coherence in the region is achieved, when societal needs are incorporated, or when individuals act upon frames on complex metropolitan issues.

4.1.1 Defining spatial quality

The debate on the quality of spaces had a history of researchers who define the quality that actors should strive for. One of the most highly debated concepts is 'sustainability', developed by the World Commission on Environment and Development in 1987. This concept states that actors should strive for *"Development that meets the need for the present without promising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs"* (1987: 8). Elkington (1999) specified that this concept implies that managers should strive for a balance between social, physical and economic development, factors he refers to as PPP (People, Planet, Profit). In addition to the sustainability concept, the concepts of Environmental Using Space (Opschoor: 1987) and Ecological Footprint (Wackernagel and Rees, 1996), for instance, are applied to metropolitan regions. These concepts represent the amount of space, such as the amount of agricultural land, for instance, that is required for a actors to perform their daily activities. According to this perspective, issues arise in areas such as metropolitan regions where the amount of space required (potentially) exceeds the amount that is provided.

The quality concept has been implicitly and explicitly discussed since the 1980s, focusing on environmental quality, nature quality, water quality, landscape quality and spatial quality (Driessen, 2005: 5). The latter was put forward in Dutch policy by the national fourth note of spatial development (Ministry of VROM, 1990). Spatial quality was operationalized as '*having value for usage* ('gebruikswaarde')*, value in experience* ('belevingswaarde') *and value for the future* ('toekomstwaarde')' (Ministry of VROM, 1990; Driessen, 2005: 7; Dauvelier and Luttik, 2003). This operationalization however leaves much room for interpretation.

4.1.2 Societal interpretation of quality

Counteracting the practice of unilaterally defining the quality of areas that is desired, a growing number of researchers stress the role of interpretation in defining quality (Dauvellier and Luttik, 2003: 3; Driessen, 2005: 5; Hooimeijer et al., 2000: 10). Two streams of research have been identified with regard to this.

On the one hand, there has been a lengthy debate on the personal interpretations of actors. Some researchers depict actors as aiming for self-interest, which is measured in economic benefits. Managers are referred to as economic humans or 'Homo Economicus'. In reaction to this, Dahrendorf (1959) introduced a coun-

terpart: 'Homo Sociologicus'. Here, actors are portrayed as acting in the social interest instead of based on economic interests. From this perspective, the actions of actors are a result of an individual's work in the interests of others. In addition, other researchers focus their attention towards identifying the using-, experience- and future-value of an area (In 't Veld, 2005; Janssen-Jansen et al., 2009: 5).

On the other hand, there is literature that focuses on the role of external factors on the interpretation of quality on the part of individuals. In order to cater to the requirements of individuals, the planning literature developed a 'survey-before-plan' approach (Geddes, 1915; Meller, 1990: 123). Here, metropolitan managers were presented with an extensive methodology to gather information about the people living in their constituency. Subsequently, plans could be adapted to the findings. However, criticisms of this approach have grown, as its application had led to a feeling of placelessness and a sense of anonymity among users of spaces. Spaces were considered to be impersonal, consisting of massive structures and traffic (Ellin, 1996: 16). In reaction to these criticisms, the focus of the literature shifted from learning about users towards learning from users of spaces. From this stance, spatial quality is described as the value attributed to spaces by those who use them, concerning their using-, experience- and future-value (In 't Veld, 2005; Janssen-Jansen et al., 2009: 5; Ministry of VROM, 1990: 9). This perception suggests that a growing amount of attention is being paid to the interpretation of spaces (Driessen and De Gier, 2001). Researchers who follow this line of thought aim to capture the 'frames' of individuals: the meanings that are attributed to spaces, consisting of values, beliefs and feelings (Yanow, 2003: 237-238).

4.1.3 Framing quality

The concept of framing was discussed by Schön and Rein in their article "Frame-reflective policy discourse" (1986). Oren (2006: 231) has described frames as "*sets of taken-for-granted assumptions. These sets of assumptions shape understanding of reality or definitions of the situation*". This makes frames generally acknowledged views on situations, driving the way individuals interpret a situation. Drawing on Fischer (2003: 193-196), frames have an ideological, a societal, a situational and a technical side to them. This stresses the normative, social and case-specific character of frames, as well as their technological feasibility and effectiveness. According to Weick (1995), frames are at the very core of the way individuals in their organiza-

tion make sense of interactions. Indirectly, frames are understood to be, making them a key element for understanding why individuals act the way they do. The actions of public managers are however understood to exceed frames as general principles: *"A strategy is more than a framework of principles. It has the quality of an inspirational, motivating 'vision', supported by a way of 'seeing'. It offers a direction and provides some parameters within which specific actions can be set."* (Healey, 2007: 183)

As frames are described in more abstract terms, the frames underlying the actions of individual public managers usually remain tacit. The tacit nature of frames complicates the discovery of the underlying sets of assumptions shaping the understanding of a situation (Schön and Rein, 1994). In the attempt to provide insight in the underlying set of assumptions in fields of study such as metropolitan planning, most of the literature portrays the formally acclaimed organizational aims as the aims strived for by individuals.

4.2 COMPLEXITY OF METROPOLITAN DEVELOPMENT

Complexity has been a subject of study in exact science for many years. However, it is relatively new in the field of public administration. This section shows that the insights gained from the concept of complexity in public administration are also applicable to achieving an understanding of metropolitan public management.

### 4.2.1 Wicked problems in the complex context

The study of complexity has its origins in chaos theory and systems theory (Teisman, 2005: 24; Waldrop, 1994). Both of these start out from the assertion that the various developments taking place within the physical and social context are difficult to trace. Complex contexts are characterized by their dealing with 'wicked problems' (Van Bueren et al, 2003; Radford, 1977: 3; Rittel and Webber, 1973: 160). These are types of issues that are exceptionally difficult to manage. There are a number of reasons for this. Firstly of all, the problems cross the boundaries of traditional constituencies of organizations and the boundaries between the private and public sectors. Secondly, wicked problems are characterized by a high number of disagreements amongst those involved with regard to the solutions to the problems as well as the nature of the problem (Koppenjan and Klijn, 2004: 1).

4.2.2 Boundary judgments in the multi-level complex system

In order to be able to study these complex contexts, system theory has provided an extensive analytical framework. While admitting that the boundaries are debatable, it is suggested that the researcher delineate the 'system' under study (Cilliers, 2001; Flood, 1999: 92; Gerrits, 2008: 16). Delineating the complex context in which wicked problems occur is part of an effort that researchers make to be able to analyze incidents. Complex contexts are considered to be vast and are subject to continuous changes in shape. Delineation is a strategy that allows the researcher to obtain an overview of the complex context (Flood, 1999: 92-93).

   Delineation requires researchers to make temporary 'boundary judgments'. Flood (1999: 92) has indicated that a boundary judgments should be interpreted as a process in which an *"action area is temporarily created in a local context"*. In order to properly understand complex systems, Flood (1999: 92) has argued in favor of demarcations in time and place. The boundaries that are distinguished should not be interpreted as physical, biological and social. Instead, they are considered to be mental constructs that decide which factors to take into account, and which not to. Chapter 1 reflects the demarcated part of the metropolitan system under study in this thesis: the Randstad region. Drawing from Cilliers (2001: 141), the boundaries drawn around the Randstad are the result of an interpretation by the researcher: *"The boundary of the system is therefore neither purely a function of our description, nor is it a purely natural thing. We can never be sure that we have "found" or "defined" it clearly."*

Within the metropolitan region, three levels of analysis on which events take place can be depicted: the micro-level, meso-level and macro-level (Loorbach, 2007: 20). Figure 4.1 reflects these different levels of analysis. Each level contains a high number and a large variety of actors. Generally, the micro-level is understood to be the level at which different organizations and individuals interact with one another. The individual public manager is part of this level. The meso-level is described as the level at which alliances go about their business. Finally, the macro-level is depicted as the landscape level; i.e., the level where decisions made on a micro- and meso-level are translated into physical interventions.
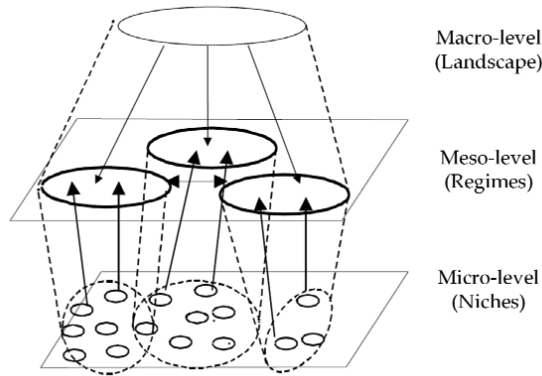
4.1 Multi-level interaction (Geels and Kemp, 2000: 17 in Loorbach, 2007: 20)

4.2.3 Interaction in the complex context

Interactions among these actors are a prominent focus of analysis in the study of complex contexts (Williams, 2005: 406). Different types of interactions can be discerned. On the one hand, actors interact at the micro-, meso- or macro-level they are involved in. On the other hand, interactions take place between the different system levels. Figure 4.1 reflects the interactions between levels. Understanding developments of the system requires a thorough understanding of the interactions within it. This is complicated, however, as Mitleton-Kelly (2003: 26) has indicated: "*In a human system, connectivity and interdependence means that a decision or action by any individual […] may affect related individuals and systems.*"

In light of this, researchers have devoted much attention to understanding interacting actors at the micro- and meso-levels of the complex context. They have discovered four ways in which actors interact. When the interaction is stable, the intended results are achieved and no conflicts appear due to a successful interaction. Interaction leads to inertia when difficulties in interactions cause results to not be achieved. For instance, actors may be involved in an argument, leading them to temporarily shirk contact with each other. When actors interact and conduct exchanges intensively, this can lead to a dynamic situation. Dynamic processes are lauded for their ability to generate innovative developments. Dynamicity can, however, also lead to undirected and uncoordinated deliberations, which may lead the complex system into a chaotic state, where potentially fruitful results may evaporate in the chatter (Edelenbos et al., 2009: 174-175).

4.2.4 Management in metropolitan complexity

Public management literature increasingly accepts management as a complex task (Klijn, 2008: 8; Teisman, 2005). Researchers utilize the concept to depict large urban areas such as metropolitan regions. As Salet et al. (2003: i) have argued, *"Cities are having to formulate their urban policies in a very complex and turbulent environment."* Byrne (2001: 41) has also acknowledged the development of metropolitan regions into more complex, postindustrial areas.

In accordance with this depiction of metropolitan management as complex, the issues faced with in the area are considered wicked (Klijn, 2008: 8, Rittel and Webber, 1973). The issues in the urban region cross the boundaries of constituencies, private and public sectors. They also face conflicts between the large number of actors and their views on solutions and on the nature of issues (Klijn, 2008: 8). When confronted with wicked problems, public managers are forced to develop approaches that diverge from their known practice. As Koppenjan and Klijn (2004: 1) have stated: *"Standard operating procedures are no longer adequate."*

In concurrence with the depiction of large urban regions as being complex, researchers in these areas increasingly use the analytical framework. Researchers make temporary demarcations of their areas of study in an effort to study specific developments in the vast and complex system.

4.2.5 The role of individuals in the complex context

Developments on the macro-level of complex contexts are considered to be the consequence of an emergent process, resulting from developments on the micro- and meso-levels. However, they are depicted as being more than the sum of their parts, a reference to the added value generated by the number of players at the micro- and meso-levels (Peltoneimi, 2006: 13). This stream of thought causes researchers to withhold from ascribing too much influence to individuals. For example, in his account of management in complex contexts, Teisman (2005: 169) has stated that *"Complex systems have their own course of development, where people don't have so much influence over."* Questioning the influence of individuals on developments of the system as a whole, most researchers using the concept of complexity take on a system perspective.

The low expectations with regard to the contributions of individuals, however, do not imply a complete lack of attention paid to the individual level. Several

researchers have studied individuals in public management as they aim to reflect on developments within complex systems. Some have focused on managers in general (e.g. Mintzberg, 1978; Stacey, 1992), while other have devoted their efforts to understanding public managers better (e.g. Noordegraaf, 2000; Healey, 1992).
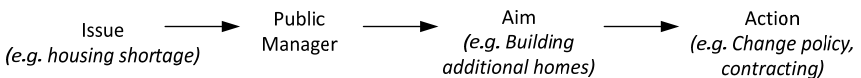
4.3 COMPLEXITY MANAGEMENT

As mentioned earlier, the wicked problems at play in metropolitan regions require particular qualities on the part of the public manager involved. The concept of complexity management has thus gained more attention in the literature. By using this concept, the variety of traits that (public)managers should have in order to be able to deal with complexity in achieving their quality aims can be described. These traits draw mostly from a conception of individuals as improvising within the complex context. This is a deviation from the rational actor perspective.

4.3.1 The rational actor perspective

The public management literature has a long tradition of portraying its objects of research as rational, consciously acting individuals (Wagenaar, 2004; Stacey et al., 2000; Klijn, 1996: 39). This implies that they are considered to have a complete understanding of the world surrounding them and the issues that are at play in it. Consequently, they are able to define their objectives rationally and devise policies and strategies to deal with the issues adequately. This stream of thought is also reflected in the blueprint approach to the development of regions. Figure 4.2 shows the rationalist relationship between aims and actions. The figure also gives examples within metropolitan reality.

   Should policies and strategies fail to meet their objectives, a system of political accountability is in place to provide the necessary democratic control. Public managers do not face this political accountability directly. They experience a different

Issue
(e.g. housing shortage) → Public Manager → Aim
(e.g. Building additional homes) → Action
(e.g. Change policy, contracting)

4.2 Public managers dealing with issues through aims and action

types of accountability (Hupe and Hill, 2007). They are described in the literature as having a certain amount of discretionary space in which they can give their task their own interpretation where their task-description does not provide them with detailed action prescriptions (Bovens et al., 2007: 372; Ringeling, 1978). In order to prevent public managers from diverging too much from the desired actions, the New Public Management literature introduced measurements of performances and audits. This means that public managers are now judged on a variety of criteria for their work (Noordegraaf and Abma, 2003; Pollit and Bouckaert, 2000). From this perspective, public managers are conscious of their actions and there are hierarchical relationships are in place to govern developments.

4.3.2 The improvisational actor perspective

The rational, hierarchical typology of public management is increasingly being criticized. Critics state that their studies of individuals engaged in public management reflect a deviation in practice. These critics are referred to as behavioral geographers (De Pater and Van der Wusten, 1991) and managerial behaviorists (Noordegraaf and Stewart, 2000), as they focus on the behavior of managers (see e.g. Noordegraaf, 2000; Mintzberg and Westley, 2000; Mintzberg, 1978).

The perspective taken by these critics deviates from the rationalist perspective in several ways. First, behaviorist researchers reject the rationalist presumption that managers have a comprehensive understanding of the issue that they are dealing with. Instead, they claim that the issues managers deal with are rarely completely understood (Wagenaar, 2004). Another critical claim made by researchers who focus on managerial behavior is that the aims strived for by managers are not as static and clearly stipulated as is indicated by rationalist studies. In practice, it is claimed that managers strive for aims that are imprecise and that may change over time as the situation changes. This changeability also plays a role in the third difference between rationalist and behaviorist research. Their analyses concur with the assertion by Lindblom (1959) of 'muddling through' as a general principal for governing. Wagenaar (2004), for instance, has stated that management is improvisational, rather than premeditated as indicated in the rational typology of management. Much of the work of managers is interpreted to be influenced by factors that are external to the manager. This is clearly reflected by Mintzberg (1987) who has pictured the development of the strategies employed by managers.
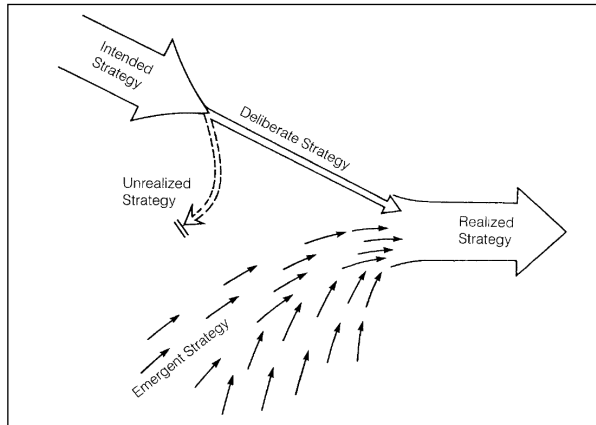
4.3 Realized strategies from intention and emergence (Mintzberg, 1987: 14)

Based on his account, which is illustrated in Figure 4.3, it can be concluded that the improvisational actor perspective diverges from the goal rationality of the rational actor perspective. The strategies employed by public managers are depicted as being based on personal intentions – described as intended strategy – only to a certain extent. The influence of external factors, referred to as emergent strategy, is also attributed an important role in the work of managers. From this perspective, the work of public managers is characterized as continuously adapting to recent developments.

4.3.3 Required traits for managers of complexity

From a detailed understanding of how complex contexts such as metropolitan regions are governed, system-complexity researchers have drawn up a variety of characteristics managers within these systems should comply with in order to deal with the complexity adequately (Edelenbos et al., 2009: 173; Senge, 1990; Stacey et al., 2000). By managers, the variety of actors from different backgrounds who are active in the system is implied. The focus is mostly on a specific case – for instance, a spatial development process. Improved interaction is considered to be one of the most important factors in creating successful managers. As Wagenaar (2007) has argued, complexity limits the success of 'traditional' hierarchical management, which draws largely from a rational actors perspective. Participatory and deliberative management approaches are considered to be more successful at dealing

with the issues within complex contexts. These approaches are believed to increase interactions between individuals, causing the complex system – in this case of the metropolitan region – to be dynamic.

The first characteristic that is expected of managers is to be alert to developments within the complex system. Managers should be capable of observing the variety of complex factors in the system, understand what is going on and respond accordingly. Thus, it is essential for managers to understand the complex characteristics of their context, as described in the paragraph above. Secondly, managers are required to be flexible in dealing with the large number of interactions, actors and unexpected developments. This means that managers should be quick to make changes to their behavior. Thirdly, and related to this, managers need to be able to adapt. This means that managers must be able to change their ways in reaction to developments in their surroundings. The fourth characteristic that managers are deemed to live up to in dealing with the complex system they work in is that they should be specific. This stresses the difficult role of managers in the system, since their actions require specificity in order to be effective in the continuously interacting complex context (Edelenbos et al., 2009: 173; Senge, 1990; Stacey et al., 2000).

In dealing with the characteristics of the complex system in an alert, flexible, adaptive and specific manner, the literature suggests that researchers are not the only ones who make boundary judgments: managers also demarcate their 'action area' (Teisman et al., 2009: 6; Pel, 2009: 117). This is a strategy that managers use to create order in their complex context (Teisman, 2005: 60).

4.4 A THEORETICAL PREDISPOSITION OF SPATIAL QUALITY, COMPLEXITY AND COMPLEXITY MANAGEMENT

Chapter 3 explained that theoretical presuppositions on the object of research influence the constant comparative analysis utilized in this thesis. These presuppositions generally take the form of sensitizing concepts. This stresses the absence of distinct theoretical indicators that frame the analysis, which are in place in deductive research. Earlier in this chapter, a variety of literature was discussed that deals with the actions of public managers, explaining them and describing the role played by complexity. In the analysis of public managers, three concepts from this

theoretical account have influenced the analysis in the first and second phase of empirical analysis: spatial quality, complexity and complexity management. These concepts have guided the analysis, rather than provided an extensive analytical framework.

The next chapter discusses the results of the empirical analysis. The focus there will be on the level of the individual public manager. Chapter 9 then reflects on the inductively developed insights and the existing theoretical insights.

5

The aims and strategies of metropolitan public managers

In the Randstad region, thousands of public managers work for the ministries, provinces and municipalities responsible for development in the region. This chapter describes the characteristics of the public managers at work in this metropolitan region. Thereby, it will provide insight in the first part of the central question: How do public managers in public organizations dealing with complex metropolitan policy making act?

In order to provide insight into the actions of public managers, first the aims they strive for need to be explored. In Section 5.1, these aims will be discussed. In the effort to realize these aims, public managers in the metropolitan region wield a variety of actions. As will be illustrated in Section 5.2, these actions can be brought back to three general strategies.

5.1 THE AIMS OF PUBLIC MANAGERS

The work of public managers in the Randstad region is closely related to the aims they strive to achieve. When reviewing the variety of activities undertaken by public managers, it becomes clear that there are generally three types of aims that are strived towards in these actions: organizational advantage, regional accomplishment and the implementation of interventions. Public managers striving for them consider achieving each of these aims to be in the common interest.

5.1.1 Aiming for organizational advantage

One aim that public managers devote their efforts to involves guaranteeing organizational advantage, striving for the enhancement of quality in their constituencies. The work of these public managers includes defining the organizational interests, applying the interests to interventions, and marketing the interests of the organization to others.

The interpretation of the organizational interests differs for each public manager. Each organization is populated by both generalists and specialists. Generalists draw from their specialist colleagues, policy documents, orders from their superiors and earlier experiences in attempting to define the organizational interests on a higher level of aggregation. Specialists generally interpret organizational interests in a narrow sense: *"Someone from the department of Water-affairs just stands for, well,*

making sure there's enough water and that the quality is adequate, to say it plainly. So that's a sector-interest." [1]

Generalists are mostly responsible for laying out the organizational interests in visionary documents. Specialists not only inspire the organizational interests depicted in these documents, but are also expected to abide by the interests indicated in them. The visionary documents reflect the attempts of the generalists to generate a shared interpretation of the organizational interests. *"Everyone should tell the same story. So, it doesn't matter who does the talking, that's the story that should be told everywhere."* [2] Public managers working on developments on the scale of the metropolitan region are mostly generalists.

5.1.2 Aiming for accomplishment on a regional level

Another aim strived for by public managers can be referred to as accomplishment on a regional level. This aim has emerged along with the emergence of regional collaboration in alliances and in wgr-regions. This emergence has resulted in public managers being assigned to work on the regional level. Achieving quality on this level is expected to inherently lead to the achievement of quality on the level of the organizational constituency.

The objectives of these public managers are twofold: on the one hand, they aim to protect the organizational interests on a regional level. This mainly involves making sure that developments organized on a regional level correspond to or do not interfere with the organizational interests. On the other hand, these public managers aim to translate regional arrangements for their own organization. This facilitates the implementation of the arrangements. *"I'm engaged in formulating the [organizational] standpoint on mutual collaboration [...]. And that's what I do for three days a week. And in addition to that, I'm in the [alliance] for one-and-a-half days a week. So then I'm an executor of the program."* [3]

In order to establish which interests to strive for, public managers draw from their own organization. This means that when aiming for the protection of organizational interests on the regional level, they draw from their organizational colleagues. *"Then I go like 'this is the agenda, and it says that a decision needs to be made, is that right? I think it is, but maybe I've got it wrong?' So I emphatically ask for the information. That's the ammunition to formulate my advice."* [4] Subsequently, when working on the task of translating the agreements of the alliance to their own

organization, they draw their aims from regional agreements. These are described in regionally established vision-documents.

5.1.3 Aiming for the implementation of interventions

In addition to the aims of achieving organizational advantage and regional accomplishment, the aim of implementing interventions is identified. Public managers striving for this aim have the task of implementing an intervention as well and as swiftly as possible. This involves spatial interventions within the constituency as well as those within a regional working area. In their effort to realize the intervention, the interests of their own organization make way for the interests of the intervention which are generally set by political policy. *"An integral arrangement-plan for the city, that was what they wanted. They were looking for a project-leader for that. Well, I did that for the first three years that I worked here. And now I'm busy working out the details, or at least coordinating the elaboration of that arrangement-plan."* [5]

5.2 PUBLIC MANAGER STRATEGIES

In order to achieve their aims of obtaining an organizational advantage, regional accomplishment and intervention implementation, public managers undertake a great variety of actions. Public managers devote most of their effort to working on enabling their aims to be adopted and applied. When the actions of public managers are analyzed, three general strategies for achieving their aims can be identified: the power-adhering strategy, the informal strategy and the procedural strategy.

5.2.1 The power-adhering strategy

The power-adhering strategy is characterized by the use of formal power-relationships between actors on the part of the public manager. This includes the organizational hierarchy of politicians, department heads, team leaders and executors. It also includes the regional hierarchy of the national ministries, provinces and the municipal authority. Regulatory prescriptions and restrictions make up part of the formal power-relationship between actors.

Public managers who employ the power-adhering strategy for instance look to the politicians of their organization in their effort to achieve the aim they are

working towards. *"Then you do think 'how does management look at this, and are we allowed to bring this further?' Because look, if we don't get the political support for a project like that, it's not much use to go and talk to the province or whoever. So we first ask for political support, asking them if 'is this as fantastic as we think it is?'"* [6]

The division of tasks prescribed by the legislator plays an important role in these contacts with external organizations. In the Randstad, the Law on Spatial Development prescribes the distribution of authority over governmental institutions. For public administrators who abide by power-adhering strategies, regulations are not just important in distributing authority over organizations, but regulations and the accompanying procedures are also used as rules of engagement within the municipality, for instance when it comes to stakeholder confrontation: *"When I first came here, we had a standard product to do that exception-procedure. Well, that's a whole underpinning of why you want to divert from the destination plan. Then everyone said 'well, if you're that far with your exploring studies, a discussion isn't really possible. Can't we develop some kind of pre-phase before that?' So we have developed a special product/instrument - a development vision, and if there are more than one for a whole area we call it an area vision - which is especially aimed at communication with the neighborhood."* [7]

5.2.2 The informal strategy

Another strategy employed in the Randstad region is the informal strategy. This strategy entails writing strategic documents and engaging (in)formal deliberations with direct colleagues, colleagues from other departments and colleagues from other organizations. Public managers who employ the informal strategy also organize meetings with colleagues. *"For [the department], I've organized an assembly in the basement […]. I think it was seventy people or something […] who joined in."* [8] This is supplemented by frequent informal (e.g. over the phone, dropping by the office) and more formal deliberations (e.g. talking to the manager of other departments, consulting with the political representative of the department). Some deliberations take place in a more formal setting: *"Within the organization, we […] work with a program-team […]. Several policy directions are represented in there. So the policy departments of Nature, Water, Economy and Environment each play a role. And our job is to make sure that decision–making on the [regional] level is brought up."* [9] Working to convince others through deliberations in both formal and informal

meetings is especially reflected in this quote: *"You do it [red. Organize involvement] with department heads through a sounding board. And sometimes you organize workshops, where you put together a couple of key-figures from those organizations, together with those market parties you also involve. And those really are the people that if you get the story across there, they can subsequently bring it across in their own circles. That's really the way you try to work."* [10]

5.2.2 The procedural strategy

In addition to the power-adhering and the informal strategies, public managers in the Randstad have also been found to employ a procedural strategy. There are two elements to this strategy: phasing the task and organizing stakeholders.

Phasing the task

The first element of the procedural strategy is that the public manager carefully establishes the particular phases needed to achieve their aims. The task worked on is divided into different procedural steps that have to be taken in order to obtain results. These phases include the *orientation phase*, where the initiation of a task takes place, followed by a *visionary phase*, where the intentions for the projected development are formulated in general terms. Drawing on these agreements, a *plan-development phase* is then set up, which involves specifying the intentions envisioned earlier. *"So then [...] you get involved in questions of phasing and prioritizing. But then you already have agreement on the principle idea."* [11] Execution of the *plans* takes place in the final phase. Progress of the task at hand is guaranteed by carefully closing each phase with a formal political decision.

Organizing stakeholders

Another element of the procedural strategy is the organization of groups in which stakeholders are placed. This mostly occurs in the orientation, vision-development and plan-development phases. Think tanks, advisory groups, project groups, sounding groups and coordination groups are populated and organized by public managers who employ the procedural strategy. *"You have a project-group, and a steering group above that, and under that a couple of administrative groups you need. And you organize a sounding group from the department - on the level of department managers - that reacts to all the intermediary steps and products we submit to them."*

[12] Installing these groups of stakeholders creates a more formalized development process for public managers. Each group is attributed a certain degree of influence on the task that is worked on.

5.3 THREE TYPES OF PUBLIC MANAGERS IN THE RANDSTAD REGION

When reviewing public managers in the Randstad region, it becomes clear that the aims and strategies employed are connected. In practice, public managers who strive for organizational advantages mostly employ a power-adhering strategy. Public managers who strive for accomplishment on a regional level generally employ an informal strategy. Finally, public managers who strive for the implementation of an intervention mostly employ a procedural strategy. This allows for the identification of three types of public managers: the organization-manager, the region-manager and the intervention-manager.

In metropolitan practice, public managers can be characterized as either organization-manager, region-manager or intervention-manager. These types largely correspond with the task assigned to a public manager working on policy development in the metropolitan region. The organization-manager corresponds with the task of line-managers, region-managers show similarities with program-managers and intervention-managers are similar to project-managers. However, there is a difference that must be stressed. By describing 'types' rather than 'tasks', emphasis is put on the way a public manager goes about his or her work, rather than the assignments attributed to them. This accounts for public managers having a task that implies them to act in one way, while actually acting in another. Public managers who have been assigned the task of defending the organizational interests, but who in practice focus on achieving regional accomplishment (even if that implies subsiding some of the organizational interests) can be referred to as a region-manager.

It should be noted that in some cases, typifying a public manager is complicated by a diversified task-assignment. Among the respondents, only one example of this mixed type of public manager was identified. This public manager combined his task of working on a regionally agreed upon intervention with working on

an assignment for organizational prosperity. In this case, the public manager is characterized as an intervention-manager as well as an organization-manager.

5.3.1 Organization-manager

Organization-managers make up the largest number of public managers in the Randstad region. This type of public manager primarily aims for organizational advantage. This implies that they understand it to be their job to defend the interests of their organization. In doing so, organization-managers tend to employ a power-adhering strategy.

Administrative division of time

Generally, the tasks attributed to organization-managers include managerial functions within the organizational hierarchy. *"I spend most of my time on managing those eighty people."* [13] In addition, organization-managers are tasked with working on particular interventions that the organization has initiated or is confronted with. *"Well, and then I've got some pet-projects. […] That's really something I devote much of my attention to"* [14]

   The amount of time spent on putting this into practice in specific interventions and in administrative duties varies. For instance, department heads do spend time on implementation tasks, facilitating others to work on interventions. *"So I try to create the conditions, that facilitate my people, other people, in organizing good plans, good products and good procedures."* [15] However, the majority of their time is spent on managing their department. As the following excerpt makes clear, this focus on processes limits the amount of time they have to spend working on projects. *"I have a managerial function. According to the norms, I'm supposed to spend 50 percent of my time purely managing, […] and the other half on the contents of the work. Well, that distribution is about right, but you don't easily make it in the given amount of time. So most of the time, you spend a little extra time trying to work on contents, because it wouldn't be done otherwise."* [16]

Obtaining political support

Working on specific interventions, obtaining political support for these interventions and conveying the organizations interests also depend on hierarchical structures. The process of developing certain interventions in the constituency

is guided by a large number of rules of conduct. *"Within the [organization], we have a […]discussion. And that's where the decision is made whether or not to make a project out of an initiative. So, after that a starting note is made. And then the […] consultation decides to say 'this starting note can go to the council and possibly to the board', depending on how much money is required. Then a project manager is appointed. […] Under the direction of the project manager, the starting note is established. He is in the picture from the beginning until the end, right? […] Until implementation. And meanwhile, my people – under the direction of the project manager – do their work."* [17]

Gaining the support of politicians requires obtaining sufficient funds for the various developments that are being worked on to achieve organizational advantages. *"January 2009, we discuss the spring note 2010. So the spring note precedes the realization of the budget. First you have the strategic discussion of where to invest the money. And when that discussion has ended, the ideas are put on the agenda. And the final decisions on the budget are in October, November. Well, if you structurally need money, you have to take part in that process."* [18]

5.3.2 Region-manager

Region-managers are characterized by their efforts to achieve regional accomplishment. They are mostly active in large government organizations and wgr[(+)]regions. Region-managers work on regional accomplishment while dividing their attention into two areas. On the one hand, they are involved in deliberations with colleagues from other organizations in the region; on the other hand they work on tasks with their own organizational colleagues. This influences how public managers interpret the interests they should strive for: *"And that's a whole other job, because at that point I work for the eight parties, while for my [organizational] task, I only work for the [organization]. […] That works fine, but you have to have a clear idea of who your principals are."* [19]

Connecting colleagues with regional interests

In order to secure the regional interests in their work, region-managers tend to employ an informal strategy. This means that they work on connecting colleagues from their own organization with other organizations, in the attempts to convince them of regional interests.

For region-managers, communicative skills and the maintenance of good relationships are important for their work. As one respondent explained: *"I just compare it to a relationship. A personal relationship can become less successful too. Right? So these things happen and they should. However, as I always say in the [alliance] – you also need to have the guts to tell each other the truth. If you strongly disagree with something, and if you just so much as sense that someone else isn't reliable, say so!"* [20]

5.3.3 Intervention-manager

Intervention-managers have the task of achieving organization- or region-wide interventions. In order to do this, they conceive of their tasks as projects. Intervention-managers are public managers who play a leading role in a project or who play a role in the preparation of an intervention, such as a participant in a project-team.

Many projects in metropolitan regions such as the Randstad region are initiated following agreements that are made in alliances. After this decision is made, an intervention-manager is placed on these projects. Most intervention-managers have to distribute their efforts. On the one hand, they are active in working to ensure progress for the project they are assigned to. On the other, they often have an organizational task to accomplish. The intervention-manager serves as the representative of the project within the organization. While working on the project, he represents the interests of the organization.

Tasks and phases

Intervention-managers tend to employ a procedural strategy. This means that the project has to be divided into tasks and phases. intervention-mangers therefore devote their time to informing their colleagues about the intervention strived towards and convincing them of its added value. Intervention-managers also work on establishing authority for their project. Projects that involve organization- and region-wide interventions often have unclear hierarchical relationships of authority.
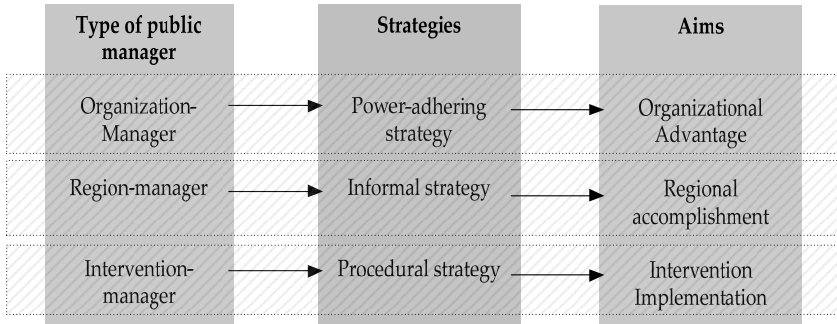
Intervention-managers also identify the different phases a project needs to go through in order for an intervention to be successfully executed. This can include preparatory phases, visionary phases and specification phases. Each phase involves different actions and is generally concluded with a formal document or political decision.

5.4 CONCLUDING: USING POWER, INFORMAL CONTACTS AND PROCEDURES TO ACHIEVING AIMS

This chapter presented an overview of the various strategies and aims adhered to by public managers in the Randstad region. By that, the first part of the central question on how public managers in the metropolitan region act is catered to. It was indicated that public managers are not striving for aims that they have defined on the basis of their own personal opinions on the matter. In fact, they partly establish the aims they strive to achieve by reviewing what the interests of their organization are through existing policy documents such as structural visions. When it comes to specifying these mostly general and formal aims, public managers in the metropolitan region work in interaction with colleagues, including specialists, politicians and colleagues from other organizations, in deciding what they will strive towards.

In their effort to achieve their aims, the actions of public managers are diverse. For this reason, public managers in the Randstad region often stress that it would be impossible to write a script for their work. *"No day is alike. Explaining my comical remark earlier that we are always curious of what we're going to do today. We do have the same calendar, but the reality is that you often get unexpected phone calls that cross right through your calendar. And that means that you really have to make other types of plans in reality."* [21] In this chapter, it was indicated that despite the variety of actions taken, three general strategies can be distinguished in these actions: the power-adhering, the informal and the procedural strategy.

Drawing on the different aims and strategies adhered to by public managers in the metropolitan Randstad region, three types of public managers were identified: organization-, region- and intervention-managers. Each of these types of managers adheres to different aims and strategies, as shown in Figure 5.1. In practice, public managers in the metropolitan region have to realize their aims in an extensive social environment. In clarifying the actions of public managers in the Randstad region, two interrelated aspects of their strategies and aims stand out: public managers draw on others in working to achieve their aims; and they have to achieve these aims within a dynamic complex environment that consists of a multitude of stakeholders. The next chapter explores the way public managers in the metropolitan region are socially embedded in this complex environment. Subsequently,

Type of public manager	Strategies	Aims
Organization-Manager	Power-adhering strategy	Organizational Advantage
Region-manager	Informal strategy	Regional accomplishment
Intervention-manager	Procedural strategy	Intervention Implementation

5-1 Three types of public managers in the Randstad region

it will provide insight into the way metropolitan public managers experience this embeddedness.

NOTES

[1] "Iemand van de afdeling Water die staat gewoon voor,…, zorgen voor voldoende water en voor voldoende kwaliteit om het maar gewoon heel algemeen te zeggen. Dus dat is sectoraal belang."

[2] "Iedereen moet hetzelfde verhaal vertellen dus het maakt niet uit wie er ergens optreedt, dat verhaal moet verteld worden."

[3] "Ik hou me dus bezig met het formuleren van het [organisationele] standpunt inzake die onderlinge samenwerking […]. En dat doe ik voor 3 dagen in de week, en daarnaast zit ik ook anderhalve dag in de week zit ik in [het samenwerkingsverband], dus dan ben uitvoerende van het programma."

[4] "Daar ga ik even van 'goh dit is de agenda, en daar staat bij dat er dat besluit genomen moet worden, klopt dat wel? Ik denk zelf van wel, maar misschien heb ik het mis?' Dus ik vraag ook heel nadrukkelijk dan weer de informatie. De munitie om mijn advies samen te stellen."

[5] "Een integraal structuurplan voor de stad…dat was de vraag, daar zochten ze een projectleider voor. Nou dat heb ik de eerste drie jaar dat ik hier werkte gedaan en nu ben ik bezig met dat uit te werken of tenminste de uitwerking van die structuurvisie nog wat te coördineren."

[6] "Dan heb je wel zoiets van 'hoe kijkt het bestuur hiertegen aan, en mogen we hiermee de hort op?'. Want kijk, als we bestuurlijk geen medewerking krijgen voor een dusdanig project heeft het ook weinig zin om met een provincie of wat dan ook allemaal te gaan praten. Dus we vragen eerst ook wel van bestuurlijke dekking, van 'is dit inderdaad wel zo fantastisch als dat wij het hebben bedacht?'"

[7] "Toen ik hier net kwam toen hadden we een standaardproduct om die vrijstellingsprocedure te doen. Nou dat is een hele uitgebreide onderbouwing waarom je dan wil afwijken van het bestemmingsplan. Dan zei iedereen van 'ja, maar ja, als je al zo ver bent met je onderzoek, is er eigenlijk geen gesprek meer mogelijk, kunnen we niet een soort van voorfase daar aan bouwen?' Dus we hebben een speciaal product, instrumentje ontwikkeld, een 'ontwikkelingsvisie'"

8   "Ja, voor [de afdeling]…ik heb hier toen in het souterrain […] een oploop georganiseerd. Volgens mij waren het zeventig mensen of zo, […] om dat te doen."

9   "We werken intern via een […] programmateam […]. Daarin zitten alle beleidsdirecties vertegenwoordigd. Dus alle beleidsafdelingen groen, water, economie, milieu, die hebben daarin een plek. En onze taak is dan om te zorgen dat besluitvorming in [regionaal] verband daar aan de orde komt."

10   "Je doet het [red. Betrokkenheid organiseren] met die afdelingshoofden via zo'n klankbordgroep. En je doet soms ook workshops waar je een paar sleutelfiguren uit die organisaties propt, […] met die marktpartijen die je ook mee laat doen. En dat zijn toch mensen als je daar het verhaal over het voetlicht krijgt, dan kunnen die dat in hun cirkeltjes weer verder brengen. Dat is toch een beetje de manier waarop je langs probeert te werken."

11   "Dan kom je wat […] in die vraagstukken van fasering en prioritering, maar dan ben je het eigenlijk wel eens over het principe."

12   "Je hebt een projectgroep en een stuurgroep erboven, en daaronder een aantal werkgroepen wat nodig is. En je organiseert een klankbordgroep die zeg maar vanuit de dienst, op het niveau van afdelingsmanagers, meestal als een klankbord reageert op alle tussenstappen en tussenproducten die wij aan hun voorleggen."

13   "Het merendeel van mijn tijd ben ik kwijt aan het managen van die tachtig mensen"

14   "Nou, en dan heb ik een paar speeltjes. […] Het is wel iets waar ik me heel erg mee bezig houdt."

15   "Dus ik probeer voorwaarden te creëren zodat mijn mensen, andere mensen, goede plannen, goede producten en goede procedures kunnen organiseren."

16   "Ik heb een leidinggevende functie. Volgens de normen zou ik ongeveer 50 procent van mijn tijd puur met management bezig moeten zijn, […] en de andere helft met inhoud van het werk. Nou die verdeling die klopt wel ongeveer, alleen dat redt je niet zo makkelijk binnen de gestelde tijd, dus meestal is het zo dat je een beetje in de extra tijd nog wat meer aan de inhoud proberen te werken, omdat dat er anders niet van komt."

17   "Wij hebben hier binnen de [organisatie] een […] overleg. En daarin wordt bepaald of een initiatief een project wordt, überhaupt. Dus dan wordt er een startnotitie gemaakt en dan wordt in 't […] overleg gezegd van 'nou, oké, deze startnotitie kan door naar het college en eventueel naar de raad.' Beetje afhankelijk van hoeveel geld er nodig is. […] Aan de hand van dat projectplan, dan gaat het lopen. Dan wordt er een projectleider aangesteld. […] Dus die projectleider, onder regie van de projectleider wordt de startnotitie opgesteld, die is van begin tot het eind is die in beeld. […] Tot en met de uitvoering. En in de tussentijd doen mijn mensen onder regie van de projectleider hun werkzaamheden."

18   "Dus januari 2009 voeren we de discussie over de, discussie over de voorjaarsnota 2010. […] Dus de voorjaarsnota die loopt, voor op de realisatie van de begroting. Je gaat eerst de strategische discussie voeren over waar je het geld wil gaan inzetten. En als die discussie gevoerd is dan wordt, die ideeën worden in de begroting gezet, en de finale besluitvorming over de begroting vindt plaats in oktober, november. Nou, als je structureel geld nodig hebt, ja, dan moet je dat in dat proces inbrengen."

19   "En dat is dus een andere pet, dan heb ik namelijk de pet van de 8 partijen op, terwijl voor mijn provinciale werk heb ik alleen de pet van [mijn organisatie] op. […] Dat gaat goed, alleen je moet goed in de gaten houden wie je opdrachtgevers zijn."

[20] "Ik vergelijk het altijd maar met, dit is ook een relatie. [...] Een persoonlijke relatie kan ook wel eens een keer wat minder lopen, hè? Dus, die dingen gebeuren en die moeten ook gebeuren. Maar dat zeg ik ook altijd in [de alliantie] – je moet elkaar ook de waarheid durven zeggen. Als jij vindt dat je het [...] er niet mee eens bent, en als jij maar enigszins bespeurt dat jij niet betrouwbaar bent, zeg het!"

[21] "Wij hebben geen dag die het zelfde is. Dus vandaar ook mijn schertsende opmerking van wij zijn altijd benieuwd wat we vandaag gaan doen. We hebben wel de zelfde agenda maar de praktijk is vaak dat je onverwachte telefoontjes krijgt die toch dwars door die agenda heen gaan. En dat betekent dus dat je toch andere planningen in realiteit moet gaan maken."

6

Multilaterally embedded: encountering threats and support from the social environment

Public managers also cannot operate in a clear path. In practice, they have to achieve their aims in a social environment that is filled with actors who each represent their own aims. Public management practice is a task that has to be performed in interaction with this social environment of politicians, stakeholders, colleagues and partners of alliances.

"So on the one hand you have the advisory role towards a director or a politician even. And then you have the deliberations with your colleagues outside on the other hand." [1]
Public managers decide what to strive towards and determine their own actions by continuously assessing this social environment and its influence.

This chapter explores the role of the social environment that public managers are embedded within. Section 6.1 describes the experiences of organization-managers with their social environment. The ways in which region-managers interpret their social environment are discussed in Section 6.2. Section 6.3 discusses the experiences of intervention-managers with their social environment. Finally, Section 6.4 explores the influence of the social environment on public managers. From these discussions, it will become clear that public managers discriminate between the elements within their social environment that are considered as threats to their aims, and the parts they consider to be supportive. This establishment is an important building block in explaining the actions of public managers in the metropolitan region.

6.1 ORGANIZATION-MANAGER EMBEDDEDNESS

In their work, organization-managers deal with those who live and work in their constituency, their organizational managers, adjacent departments, heads of the department and the politicians. In their accounts of their experiences, organization-managers consider some actors that are a part of their social environment to be valuable in their efforts to achieve their aims, while they consider that others are thwarting their efforts.

6.1.1 Conflicting interpretations of organizational interests
While organization-managers consider their hierarchically organized social context to be mostly supportive of their aims, one of the most prominent threats that is

acknowledged is a conflict of interest. Interpretations of the authorities, stakeholders or colleagues of what is to the advantage of the organization or constituency may diverge from those of the organization-manager in question.

"But political managers really have their own opinion about things, that's what they're there for. And if that isn't too wild, as a civil servant you comply with that. […] But if you'd have a politician who really wants different things than you, well…but […] I have never experienced that, actually." [2]

Diverging interpretations of authorities

Actors who have hierarchical power over the organization-manager influence the aims that they strive towards. For instance, this organization-manager described getting an order from his alderman to alter the intended intervention concerning a task he was working on as such: *"That's a really big area, and we're developing recreation, planning water salvaging and all that in it. […] But [the alderman] wants to get rid of [the building] that's situated there […]. And then he'd thought well that [building], we'll just put that in [that area]."* [3] Political and administrative actors in the social environment exert influence over what organization-managers strive to achieve. While organization-managers generally receive support from their superiors, this is not always the case. Sometimes, the wishes of their superiors do not coincide with their own interpretations of which development is beneficial for the organization. For instance, one organization-manager explained that the council of in his organization was not willing to invest in an intervention that he had been working on: *"And then the council starts to be difficult. […] 'Surely we've got enough problems in the city to spend those 800 000 Euro's on?'"* [4]. Another public manager explained that her efforts to develop certain areas were restricted by a regional authority: *"We think that from a landscape- and sometimes from a culture-historical perspective, better alternatives are possible. But you just run into the rules of the [authorities]."* [5]

Diverging interpretations of organizational colleagues

Another negative influence in the social environment of organization-managers concerns colleagues from other departments. These colleagues can resist collaborating with the proposed interventions, and act according to their own interests, as one public manager indicated: *"Well, in that sense, you do have people within the*

organization who find something really important and who are really connected to it. They will easily […] make promises or say things like 'we really want to invest in that as [organization]'."[6]

Insights into organizational interests may differ for each department within the government organization. Therefore, the maintenance of a joint perspective on the qualitative development of a constituency demands additional effort from organization-managers. *"If it needs to be realized anywhere, they're quick to shout that 'it has to be done by [his] people'. In other words by me. And that's a license for them to do nothing about it. So I always say 'I'd love to do all sorts of things, but I won't try to fight the opposition for something. You'll have to cooperate loyally, because otherwise it won't work'."[7]*

Diverging interpretations of stakeholders

In addition to having an interpretation of organizational interests that diverges from their authorities, organization-managers are also confronted with private actors who may resist the interests they are striving towards. *"If we designate large development areas in a particular existing part of [the constituency], then we'll get the whole neighborhood against us. Wondering what I'm going to do there."[8]* In practice, resistance on the part of stakeholders threatens the execution of the interventions that the organization-manager aims achieve. For instance, one organization-manager explained the difficulties that arose because of resisting inhabitants: *"That's an integral solution, that's very nice. But the businesses in [the area] really protest against it. […] And we say 'we're just going to push through, we don't care.' We did make some concessions though. […] Because we got the council against us, so we had to make concessions."[9]* As reflected in this excerpt, the threat emanating from stakeholders is direct, through public opinion, as well as indirect, through their influence on the political context of the organization.

6.1.2 Conflicting developments in the region

Another challenge that organization-managers experience from their social environment is generated by other government organizations that surround their own constituency. Actors in those organizations are considered to threaten the success of organizational developments because they develop in a conflicting manner. One organization-manager explains how an adjacent constituency attempted

to relocate an intervention in her constituency: *"[The building] isn't located on a fortunate location in [their constituency], and they're searching for another location for it. And of course at one point, they started to investigate a location outside of their constituency."* [10] This threat puts organization-managers on guard for potentially counterproductive interventions in their direct surroundings. *"We're just competing with each other. Because [the neighboring institution] says 'I don't have anything to do with [your organization]'. [...] And they don't care whether or not that disturbs the market, or brings us down in our [organizational intentions]."* [11]

6.2 REGION-MANAGER EMBEDDEDNESS

The work of region-managers involves providing input into regional collaborations and interventions, and ensuring the execution of the intended interventions within their organizations. This implies that their social environment is made up of regional and organizational colleagues and politicians. *"If you were to browse through my business cards, you'd come across [regionally] organized clubs and very few developers. No corporations."* [12] Region-managers draw from the support they receive from their regional colleagues. At the same time, there are influences in their social environment that threaten to thwart their aims.

6.2.1 Threats from the region

Region-managers often find themselves confronted with two types of threats from their regional social environment: actors involved in the alliance may retract their support from agreements made earlier, and changes on the national level may cause shifts in the condition of alliances.

Retraction of political support

The actors involved in the alliance are not always agreeable to regional accomplishments, and may cast doubts on the necessity of the interactions: *"The attitude of [collaborating organizations] towards the alliance] is sometimes a bit double. [...] Sometimes they think, they see [the region] really as an enemy or something. Too expensive, you get a discussion about 'so much money, and what comes out?'"* [13]

Politicians involved in alliances are in turn controlled by their councils. This can pose a threat to the region-manager, as this excerpt shows: *"From the regional perspective, [the politician] was a strong supporter for that [intervention] to finally be realized. But as [a politician] for [his constituency], he was forced to oppose by his council."* [14] On the other hand, politicians who withhold their influence may also pose a threat to achieving regional accomplishment: *"It's rather difficult, because so often not too much comes out of the [political] meetings. I put it on the agenda, and I try to get a discussion going, get a position or something. But most of the time, not much comes out of them. Because administrators don't have the overview. That's what's expected of me. So yeah, in the end, a lot comes down to me, really."* [15]

Shifts in the alliance

Region-managers have indicated that they are faced with constant changes in their organizational structure. Chapter 2 discussed the shifts in focus of alliances. This results in region-managers being faced with a different set of actors. It can also lead to changes in the tasks they take on. *"I became chairman and we'd been brainstorming on how we could introduce [the intervention] in the whole of the Randstad region. And we actually were making much progress, but then they blew up [the alliance], and the deliberations ended. […] So we were really close to [realizing the project] […] But well, then it…too bad…"* [16]

The interests that are strived towards within the alliance which are imposed by the national government are subjected to ongoing changes. This is the cause of much debate within alliances. One region-manager explained how the conditions imposed by a minister caused partners in the alliance to turn into opposing forces: *"Then the State tells us 'you have to prioritize'. Well, as you'll understand, that causes an unbelievable struggle. Because then [organization A] has to say 'we'll withdraw our [project]'. Or [organization B] has to say 'we'll withdraw our [project]'. Something like that. Well, no, none of them will!"* [17]

6.2.2 Resisting colleagues

Despite these threats of regional disagreements however, region-managers interpret most of the difficulties they experience as have being generated by actors within their own organizations. *"That's the aim of the alliance, to set a joint agenda and then*

for everybody to get back to their own corner with their own instruments to go and execute it. So the battle doesn't take as much place outside, as it takes place inside." [18]

Another region-manager described the struggles he experienced with colleagues within his own departmental hierarchy as follows: *"When you've decided with several other parties what the priorities are in terms of projects, you have to indicate those as a priority within the organization as well. Well, that's an internal struggle with the strategic department and with the financial…with the people that are concerned with the budget."*[19] The struggle is seen in the experiences of actors within the organizational hierarchy who neglect the programmatic agreements in their efforts: *"What easily happens is that they organize talks with a certain ministry within the framework of a certain project, while we had a conference with the same ministry with the same people within the framework of the program a week before, so to speak. […] So people don't think yet…don't pause to think 'I'll inquire whether or not something is being done about it within this program'."* [20] For region-managers, this jeopardizes the relationship between the alliance and the national government. The neglect of programmatic agreements threatens the program's reputation for integrity.

6.3 INTERVENTION-MANAGER EMBEDDEDNESS

In their work on their projects, intervention-managers are embedded in a context that is made up of colleagues and politicians who are involved in the decision-making process for the intervention concerned. For organizational projects, this involves the alderman or deputy, heads of departments and intervention team colleagues. For regional interventions, the social environment of intervention-managers is made up of politicians from different organizations, heads of departments of different organizations and intervention team colleagues from the various of organizations involved. Intervention-managers receive support from their superiors, who make formal decisions on the intervention in question. In addition, colleagues within the project team contribute to the progress of the different phases of the project. In practice, however, intervention-managers indicate that they are confronted with a variety of threats that stem from their social environment. The threats include the absence of involvement of the proper authorities, stakeholders

refraining from active participation and colleagues seeking organizational advantages from the intervention group.

6.3.1 Projects that face an administrative vacuum

In general, intervention-managers cannot build solely on the hierarchy of decision-making that is in place within the region and within their organization. Most projects extend beyond the boundaries of departments or constituencies. This can cause the intervention-manager to have to work on implementing interventions within an administrative vacuum. An administrative vacuum is especially challenging for intervention-managers who are working on regional projects, as alliances do not hold a formal decision-making authority. Formal decisions for regional projects have to be made separately from the alliance by the individual partners. In many cases, intervention-managers have found that this causes the project to be scattered across different organizations.

The absence of a formal hierarchy for projects, for instance within the alliance, causes those government institutions that are involved in the intervention to become less devoted to the project. As a result, one of the most feared threats for intervention-managers is for their projects to become just another document in the organizational bookcase. *"That's the great danger of the [alliance]. You work together with [several organizations] and each year new documents are produced, new visions are produced. And in the end, they're on a shelf in the bookcase, covered in dust."* [21] When the intervention involves a regional development, intervention-managers consider those organizations involved to be incapable of understanding regional interests: *"You could argue that [organizations] aren't – well, politicians often are, but managers mostly aren't – capable of understanding problems on a regional level. And of assessing 'well, a solution here can be a solution to problems in the other area as well'."* [22] As a result, intervention-managers find that political and administrative authorities lack the dedication that is required to realize the aims of the project. *"That just means that after half a year's work, we came to the conclusion that the formal assignment we had gotten, stating we had to make a [strategic vision], really didn't have any or very little commitment with the political nor the administrative top. At one point, they had said 'yes' to it, but if you continued asking questions and said 'that will imply this or that', everyone recoiled."* [23]

6.3.2 Stakeholders refraining from participation

Despite the variety of preparatory phases that are identified for a project, intervention-managers generally focus on executing the projected intervention. To this end, they maintain contact with those parties who are responsible for the execution of the plans that result from their work. *"We could want a lot of things as governments and we could do all kinds of research, but if you don't involve and convince those who actually do the building – the developers – you're nowhere. Then you've just made another nice plan with which nothing will be done."* [24] Despite the added value that is attributed to these stakeholders however, intervention-managers find that they tend to refrain from active involvement, claiming that the preparatory phase for implementing interventions is not specific enough. *"They thought we were too open and unfocused. So the last meeting was cancelled because too few people were coming and we got signals saying 'this is too much without obligation, we need something more concrete before we really want to talk any further'."* [25]

6.3.3 Organizational advocates in the project-group

Intervention-managers work in intervention groups to realize the completion of their projects. Organizational projects are populated by colleagues from various departments. In the meantime, intervention-managers from various government organizations that are involved in the project participate in the intervention group for regional projects. In order ensure the completion of the project, these intervention-managers are required to place the interests of the project before those of their home organization.

However, the extent to which this is required differs for intervention-managers who lead off the project and for intervention-managers who only make contributions within the project group, as this excerpt makes clear: *"Of course the intervention leader should be above the parties as it were. And that gives you a different role as an organization than when you only supply people for a intervention group, in which you are able to bring in your own interests into [the region] a bit more clearly."* [26] In practice, however, there is the constant threat that intervention group colleagues do not live up to this requirement. This organizational drive is something that intervention-managers are continuously on guard for. As one intervention-manager makes clear, the loyalty of fellow intervention-managers is assumed but not always obvious, and securing their support may require additional action to be

undertaken: *"You have to organize something in order to keep all of those people at the table. Not only those few people who have a seat in your own project group. Because if all goes well, those people are bound to be loyal to the project. If not, you'll have to make sure some connection is created."* [27]

6.4 UNDERSTANDING THE SOCIAL ENVIRONMENT

Public managers are constantly interpreting influences from their social surroundings and the dynamic developments that take place around them on a daily basis. Some public managers have developed techniques to deal with this aspect of their work: *"When I get stuck on something, I stop and think 'I'll make a list again'. […] One is 'what's the problem you're talking about, and who is the owner of the problem?' […] Two: the direction of the solution to that problem. […] Three: which is always very important, the person who pulls the cart. […] In fourth place, who else is involved? So who's working on it directly? But also, who is involved more indirectly? Because of course you have your working group, but around that are the directors, you know, but there are inhabitants too. If you've got inhabitant-groups, you have their supporters. Eh, well, you have a [organizational] council here."* [28]

Figure 6.1 provides an illustration of the public manager within a context of influencing actors. It is shown that organization-, region- and intervention-
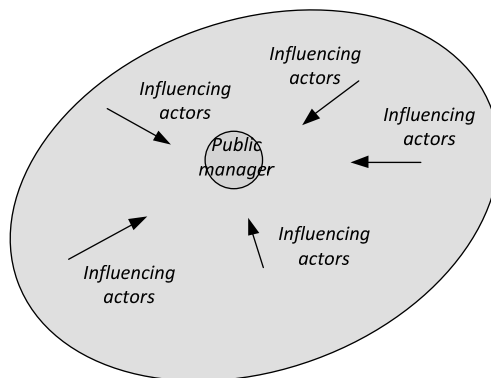

6-1 The influence of embeddedness on the working area of public managers

managers are aware of their environment as being an essential aspect of their task. *"The third function [I have] is the antenna function, the network function, being able to study things beforehand." [28]* Some public managers have specifically stressed that being able to detect developments in the social environment is an essential part of public management in the Randstad region. *"One of the competencies we require from [colleagues] is vision and initiative. Do you see things? Instead of only following developments, do you see things coming? […] Well, someone who can't do that, or hates it, could make a good colleague, but not for that responsibility." [30]*

The social environment that public managers find themselves working in through this scanning process is elaborate. They have hierarchical relationships with some actors while this type of formalized power relationship is absent with others. Thus, the social environment that public managers are embedded in can be articulated as being vertical or horizontal.

6.4.1 The vertical social environment

Public managers perform their tasks in a hierarchically organized government structure. Depending on their function within the organizational hierarchy, public managers may work within the political hierarchy of their alderman or deputy and the organizational council. They also have to comply with the intentions stated through an organizational hierarchical command structure, which generally consists of their team leaders and their department manager. This vertical embeddedness, characterized by power relations with others, is highlighted in Figure 6.2. *"We have a board, then we have a program-agency, a project agency, and then a small club of staff. And under that are ten departments. And then you have teams. So the*


Political Council

Alderman or Deputy

Department manager

Team leader

Public manager
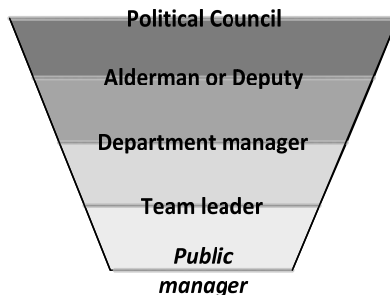
6-2 Vertical embeddedness

hierarchically layered structure is the director, the department head, the team leader and the co-worker." [31]

Government organizations in the Netherlands are 'dual'. This means that municipalities are governed by the mayor and aldermen, who are checked upon by the council. Similarly, the provinces are governed by the 'Commissioner of the Queen' and several deputies, who are also checked on by a council of democratically selected representatives. Wgr-regions are governed by a delegation of various aldermen and mayors from the various municipalities that are represented. In order to achieve their aims, public managers require the support of political representatives. Thus, public managers cannot diverge too much from the political aspirations of their representatives: *"Look, at one time, you know how a politician thinks. And if you're close to a politician, you know a little of, well 'if I write that, than he or she wouldn't like it much', right? I mean, you always know."* [32] Due to political turmoil and the holding of elections once every four years, the political situation is constantly in flux. Thus, the political context that the public managers need to work within can be characterized as being dynamic.

The political context within which public managers are embedded is not the only social context that is considered to be dynamic. This is also true for the composition of the organizations. Most government organizations are constantly reorganizing, and the composition of their departments is subject to continuous change. Each public manager takes up a place in the organizational hierarchy
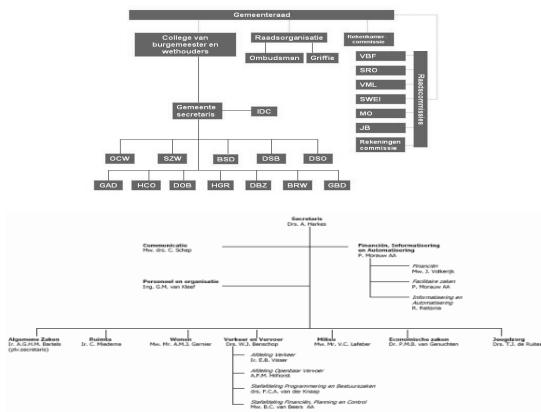

6-3 Organizational diagrams in the Randstad region

of departments and teams, as reflected in the organizational diagrams shown in Figure 6.3. Public managers who work for large government institutions in the region generally have more contact with the organizational hierarchy. In smaller organizations, it is more common for them to have contact with the politician who is responsible for the project.

6.4.2 The horizontal social environment

Figure 6.4 illustrates the horizontal embeddedness of public managers. Here, the interactions between the actors involved are not framed by hierarchical power relations. Depending on the scale of the task they are working on, public managers may be in contact with organizational colleagues, alliance colleagues and stakeholders. Like vertically embeddedness, horizontally organized social environment is dynamic. Public managers work on a variety of tasks and the social environment they deal with in this horizontal context is often specific to each task. Stakeholders mostly play a role in tasks that have specified intentions. *"It's not just one-way traffic of 'we thought about it, and this is how it's going to be'. It's not just the megaphone; it's the microphone too: also just asking people 'what do you think?'"* [33]

Organizational colleagues are involved when working on tasks that focus on the constituency. Alliance colleagues are involved in tasks where the public manager is working on interventions that extend beyond their constituency.
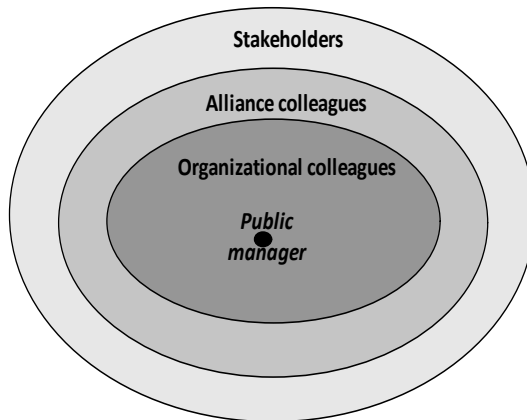
6-4 Horizontal Embeddedness

6.4.3 A supportive and threatening social environment

Based on the discussions above, it is clear that public managers in the metropolitan region are embedded both in a vertically organized social environment, as well as horizontally organized one. However, public managers interpret their vertically and horizontally organized environments differently.

Organization-managers tend to believe that their horizontal context – made up of people with whom they do not have direct hierarchical relations – threatens the realization of organizational advantages. However, they consider the colleagues with whom they have hierarchical relationships – who make up their vertically organized social environment– to be supportive of their efforts.

In turn, region-managers believe that their colleagues in the vertically organized social environment threaten the propagation of an inter-organizational message to the outside world. They are inclined to build more on the support that is offered from their horizontal context. Finally, intervention-managers believe that both their horizontal as well as their vertically organized social

environment threatens to avert the project from a coherent regional perspective. These beliefs of organization-, region- and intervention-managers with regard to the relative influences that stem from their horizontally and vertically organized social environment are shown in Figure 6.5.

	Vertical social environment	Horizontal social environment
Organization-manager	Supportive	Threatening
Region-manager	Threatening	Supportive
Project-manager	Threatening	Threatening

6-5 The experiences of public managers of their context

6.5 CONCLUDING: FEARING THE THREATENING DYNAMIC SOCIAL ENVIRONMENT

As discussed in this chapter, organization-, region- and intervention-managers each have different ways of interpreting the influences that stem from their social environment. Organization-managers consider their vertically organized social environment to be supportive and their horizontal context to be threatening,

while region-managers believe the opposite to be the case. Intervention-managers consider both their vertical and their horizontal context to pose a threat to their aims. In the following chapter, it will become clear that the interpretation of the social environment a metropolitan manager is embedded in plays an important role in explaining the actions of metropolitan managers discussed in chapter 5.

Drawing from the accounts of an organization-manager, a region-manager and a intervention-manager, the next chapter will discuss the way each type of manager deals with the threats he or she encounters. While on specific cases and tasks, the opportunities provided by the social surroundings may explain the actions of individual public managers, the actions of individual public managers on the whole can be explained rather by their hesitance towards potentially threatening influences from their social surroundings. This hesitance has its origins in a certain degree of anxiety, concern or *fear* for the dynamic social environment. In Chapter 7, the term *fear* will be used to describe the underlying attitude for action by public managers in the metropolitan region. By this, the large extent to which this attitude influences their actions is stressed.

Notes

1 "Je hebt dus enerzijds de adviserende rol die je hebt, dus ook de richting een directeur of richting een bestuurder zelfs. En dan heb je nog het overleg met je collega's van buiten."

2 "Maar bestuurders hebben toch vaak ook eigen mening over dingen, ja daar zijn ze ook voor. Als het niet te gek is dan volg je dat als ambtenaar natuurlijk. Maar als je echt een bestuurder zou hebben die echt iets heel anders wil dan jij, ja, maar goed, […] dat heb ik nog nooit meegemaakt. Eigenlijk."

3 "Dat is een heel groot gebied, en dat zijn we ook aan het inrichten voor recreatie, met waterberging erin en noem maar op […]. Maar dan wil [de wethouder] die wil [dat gebouw] hier ligt, dat wil hij kwijt, […] En toen had hij bedacht van [dat gebouw], weet je wat, die doen we gewoon in dat nieuwe [gebied]."

4 "En dan gaat het bestuur hier moeilijk doen. […] 'We hebben toch problemen zat in de stad waar we die 8 ton aan kunnen verspijkeren?"

5 "Wij denken 'vanuit landschapsgebeuren en ook soms ook vanuit cultuurhistorie zijn er soms betere alternatieven mogelijk', maar daar loop je gewoon aan tegen die regelgeving van de [autoriteiten]."

6 "Nou, dus in die zin merk gewoon dat je hier in huis mensen die dat heel erg belangrijk vinden en daar heel erg bij betrokken zijn, heel makkelijk […] toezeggingen doen of in dingen zeggen van 'We willen als [organisatie] daar echt in investeren'."

7 "Als het al ergens moet gebeuren, roepen ze al, 'dat moet in de club van [hem]'. Bij mij dus. En dat is dan voor hun dan een vrijbrief om er niks aan te doen. Dus zeg ik altijd van 'Ik wil er wel van alles aan

doen, maar ik ga niet zeg maar tegen de klippen op iets proberen te bevechten. Jullie moeten gewoon loyaal meedoen, anders dan werkt het niet'."

8   "Als wij in een bestaand stuk [grondgebied] grote ontwikkelvlakken aanduiden, […] dan krijgen we de hele buurt over ons heen, die zegt dan van 'ja, wat ga ik daar dan doen?'."

9   "Dus dat is een integrale oplossing, dat is heel mooi. Maar daar verzet het bedrijfsleven in [het gebied] verzet zich daar ernstig tegen. […]. Wij zeggen gewoon van we gaan gewoon door, het kan ons niks schelen. We hebben wel concessies gedaan hoor […]. Want we kregen de raad tegen ons, dus we moesten concessies doen."

10   "Daar ligt [het gebouw] niet op een gelukkige locatie, er wordt dan gezocht naar een andere locatie. En ja, dan wordt daar op een gegeven moment ook buiten de gemeentegrenzen gekeken."

11   "We zitten daar gewoon met elkaar te concurreren, want [de buur organisatie], die zegt van 'ik heb met [jullie organisatie] niks te maken'. […] Als dat de markt verstoort, of dat dat ons zeg maar onderuit haalt in onze [organisationele belangen], interesseert [ze] niet."

12   Als je mijn kaartjes door zou bladeren kom je meer [regionaal] georganiseerde clubjes tegen, en weinig ontwikkelaars. Geen woningbouwcorporaties.

13   "De houding van [organisaties richting de alliantie] is soms een beetje dubbel, een beetje vreemd eigenlijk. Soms zien ze [de alliantie] echt als een vijand ofzo, veel te duur, krijg je dan weer zo'n discussie van 'zoveel geld, en wat komt eruit?'"

14   "[De politicus] was vanuit de regio was hij hevig voor [die interventie], die er eindelijk een keer moest komen. Maar als [politicus] van [zijn organisatie] moest hij tegen zijn van zijn [raad]."

15   "Dat is ook best lastig want het is ook vaak zo dat er gewoon niet zoveel uitkomt bij zo'n portefeuille houders overleg. Ik zet het dan op de agenda en ik zit er steeds bij en ik probeer dan een discussie te krijgen, een standpunt krijgen of zo. Maar meestal komt hij niet zo ontzettend veel uit. Want die bestuurders die hebben ook het overzicht niet. Dat wordt juist weer van mij verwacht dat ik dat heb, dus ja, een praktijk komt het toch heel veel op mezelf neer eigenlijk."

16   "Ik ben toen voorzitter geworden en hebben we gaan zitten brainstormen, eh, over hoe wij zo'n [ontwikkeling] in de hele Randstad in zouden kunnen voeren. En daar waren we eigenlijk heel ver mee, maar ja, toen werd het dus opgeblazen. Eh, ja, toen hield het overleg op. […] Toen waren we dus heel dichtbij, dat we dat in hadden kunnen voeren. […] Maar ja, dan gaat dan…jammer dan…"

17   "Dan zegt het Rijk tegen ons van […] 'jullie moeten prioriteren'. Nou, je begrijpt natuurlijk wel: dat geeft natuurlijk een ongelooflijke strijd. Want dan moet of [organisatie A] zeggen van 'we trekken ons terug met [ons project]'. Of [organisatie B] moet zeggen van 'we trekken ons terug met [ons project]', of et cetera. Nou, dat doen ze dus allemaal niet dus!"

18   "Dat is ook het doel van het samenwerkingsverband, om samen een agenda te bepalen en die vervolgens iedereen terug in zijn eigen hok met zijn eigen instrumenten uitvoeren. Dus de strijd zit niet zozeer buitenshuis als dat het binnenshuis zit."

19   "Als je met een aantal andere partijen hebt bepaald wat je prioriteiten zijn weer in termen van projecten, dan moet je vervolgens die projecten ook intern als prioriteit aanmerken. Dat is dus interne strijd met de beleidsafdeling en met dus de financiële….de mensen die over de begroting gaan."

20   "Wat er heel snel gebeurt, is dat er een overleg met bijvoorbeeld een bepaald ministerie wordt georganiseerd vanuit dat project, terwijl we bij wijzen van spreken net een week daarvoor een overleg

met dezelfde ministerie, met dezelfde mensen van uit het programma is georganiseerd! Dus mensen denken nog niet…staan er vaak ook nog niet bij stil van 'ik zal eens even informeren of er niet vanuit dit programma al iets aan gedaan wordt'."

21 "Dat is het grote gevaar van de [alliantie]. Je zit met [verschillende organisaties] bij elkaar en er worden elk jaar nieuwe stukken geproduceerd, nieuwe visies geproduceerd en vervolgens staan ze in de boekenkast op de plank in het stof."

22 "Omdat je dan eigenlijk kunt zeggen dat [organisaties] niet in staat zijn…vaak bestuurders nog wel maar ambtelijk niet altijd, om de problematiek op een regionaal niveau te bezien. En te kijken van nou een oplossing hier kan ook een oplossing zijn voor problemen in het andere gebied."

23 "Dat betekent gewoon dat we na een half jaar werken tot de conclusie kwamen dat die officiële opdracht die we gekregen hadden om [een strategische visie] te maken, eigenlijk helemaal geen of heel weinig commitment had, bij noch het bestuur noch de ambtelijke top. Dus ze hadden wel ooit 'ja' gezegd ertegen, maar als je echt het ging doorvragen en ging zeggen 'nou, dit betekent dit of dat of zus of zo' dan schrok iedereen daar toch erg van terug."

24 "[We] kunnen nog zoveel willen als overheden en een of andere onderzoekje doen, maar als je niet degene die echt het bouwen doen – de ontwikkelaars doen – als je die niet er bij krijgt en als die ook niet gaan geloven in deze aanpak, ja dan ben je nergens. Dan heb je weer een mooi plan gemaakt, waar niks mee gebeurt."

25 "Ze vonden dat we te vrij en te open waren. Dus de laatste bijeenkomst die is gecanceld doordat er te weinig mensen meer kwamen en dat we de signalen kregen 'dit blijft te vrijblijvend, we hebben wat harders nodig voordat we echt verder willen praten'."

26 "De projectleider moet natuurlijk toch een beetje boven de partijen staan. En dat geeft je als [organisatie] een iets andere rol dan als je alleen maar toelevert in een projectgroep waarin je wat duidelijkere je eigen belangen in die [regio] kunt inbrengen."

27 "Je moet iets organiseren zodat je al die partijen aan tafel houdt. Niet alleen die paar mensen die in jouw eigen projectgroep gaan zitten. Want die zijn wel loyaal aan het project als dat goed gaat, of dan moet je ook wel zorgen dat daar een beetje binding ontstaat."

28 "Als ik zelf es ergens niet uitkom, dan denk ik 'oh ja, ik ga weer effen een lijstje weer maken.' […] 1 is, wat is het probleem waar je het over hebt, en wie is de probleemdrager? […] 2, de oplossingsrichting voor dat probleem. […] 3. Wat altijd heel belangrijk is, is de trekker. […] Op de 4e plaats, wie doen er verder mee? Dus wie werken er direct mee? Maar wie zijn er ook op meer, weet je wel in kringen bij betrokken? Want je hebt natuurlijk, je hebt je werkgroep, maar daar omheen zitten dan weer directeuren, weet je wel? Maar er zitten ook bewoners. Als je bewonersgroepen hebt, dan zit er weer een bewonersachterban, en eh, nou, je hebt hier een gemeenteraad."

29 "De derde functie is dan die antennefunctie, die netwerkfunctie, kunnen voorstuderen."

30 "Eén van de competenties waar men [collega's] over ondervraagt worden, is visie en initiatief. Zie je dingen? Volg je niet alleen, maar zie je het ook aankomen? […] Nou, iemand die dat helemaal niet kan of helemaal niet wil of helemaal niet leuk vindt, die kan een prima collega zijn, maar dan niet voor die verantwoordelijkheid."

31 "We hebben een directie, en eh, dan hebben we nog een programmabureau, projectbureau, en nog een klein stafclubje. En daaronder hangen de 10 afdelingen. En dan heb je teams. Dus de hiërarchische gelaagdheid is directeur, afdelingshoofd, teamleider, en medewerker."

32 "Kijk, je weet op een gegeven moment hoe een bestuurder denkt. En als je dicht op een bestuurder zit dan weet je ook wel een beetje van nou, 'als ik dat opschrijf dat vindt hij of zij niet zo prettig hè?' Ik bedoel dat, dat weet je altijd."

33 "Dat is niet alleen maar een eenrichtingsverkeer van 'nou we hebben er goed over nagedacht, dit wordt het'. Het is niet alleen de megafoon, het is ook de microfoon, ook gewoon aan mensen vragen 'Wat vindt u ervan?'."

7

Fearful metropolitan public management: Demarcating the working area

As mentioned in Chapter 6, public managers receive support and are faced with threats from their social environment. Their interpretations of these influences guide them in their actions to make use of the support that they receive and to act protectively of their efforts when they are faced with a threat. In this chapter, it will be made clear that the various actions taken by public managers are closely connected to their fearful interpretation of their social environment.

In order to illustrate this, the accounts of organization-manager Ben, region-manager Michael and intervention-manager Peter (whose names are fictitious in order to ensure their anonymity) are described in Sections 7.1 – 7.3. Ben, Michael and Peter all work for the same government institution in the Randstad region. As referred to in Chapter 2, regional developments in the Randstad region are agreed upon in the regional collaborative organizations such as the North Wing and the South Wing. Ben, Michael and Peter each have a task (in)directly related to one of these developments: the establishment of a Regional Building Strategy on the level of the South Wing. This strategy is intended to lead to a coherent development of building within the area.

Drawing on the discussion of this Regional Building Strategy case, Section 7.4 explores how each type of public manager in the metropolitan region acts in dealing with the threatening as well as supportive influence they experience from their social environment.

7.1 THE ORGANIZATION-MANAGER AT WORK: BEN'S PERSPECTIVE

After several years of working for the ministry, Ben became the department head of the government organization he has now worked for over the last five years. He describes this task as being threefold. First, he acts as the substitute for the alderman in his absence. This requires him to attend meetings on a variety of issues and with a variety of external actors, for instance, with those in the alliance. Second, he is in charge of up to 80 colleagues who work on a variety of interventions for the organization that vary from local to municipal to regional interventions. This task requires him to facilitate their work and to provide assistance when it is required. In order to give some direction to his departmental colleagues, Ben is in charge of developing yearly priority documents. These indicate the projected

general direction of the development of the constituency for the upcoming year. The priority documents are inspired by political shifts within the national government, as well as by the organizational development strategy that has recently been established. The third task that Ben is responsible for involves working on specific interventions himself. He represents his organization in regional projects and in projects that involve deliberations with actors outside of the organization, such as civilians, project developers and government institutions.

7.1.1 Defending the Organizational Strategy

The development of a Regional Building Strategy makes up part of Ben's task to substitute for the alderman and facilitate developments that are worked on by his department. The intentions of the organizational development strategy have been stipulated with regard to the same issue addressed by the Regional Building Strategy. In his efforts to implement the Regional Building Strategy, Ben is directed to protect these organizational interventions. Realizing the organizational intentions, however, does not simply require him to represent the intentions in the region. It also requires him to convince people in his own organization and constituency of the value of the intentions. In his efforts to realize these organizational intentions, Ben experiences a variety of influences in his social environment that may (potentially) thwart them.

7.1.2 Resistance towards the Organizational Strategy

Ben questions the intentions at play in the Regional Building Strategy. Some months ago, these actors were strong advocates of another intervention in the region that tackled the same issues that the Regional Building Strategy does. However, as this intervention conflicted with the organizational strategy, Ben rejected it on behalf of his organization. Eventually, the other intervention lacked the support that was needed for implementation. However, the process has caused Ben to doubt the intentions of the actors involved in the Regional Building Strategy, as they had also strongly supported the other intervention: *"[my organization] just says 'we're going to fight [the other intervention] to the last breath'. And they're still pushing through. That makes you wonder 'what kind of process is this? An important actor says 'we shouldn't do this', and the other parties say 'we're going to carry on regardless'."* [1]

While Ben was working on the intervention indicated in his organizational strategy, he noticed that the neighboring government organizations were exploring similar interventions that would kill the competition. Should the surrounding organizations proceed with their interventions, the success of Ben's organization's intervention would be severely compromised. *"And we're saying 'guys, don't make your program too extensive in the neighboring [constituency], because then our [intervention] won't work."* [2] The alliance is not considered to be helpful in dealing with this threat: *"Politically and administratively, we've organized things in the [alliance] in such a way that most of the results come about through competition […] rather than through collaboration."* [3]

In addition to these threatening influences from the region for the successful execution of organizational plans, Ben receives very limited support from other departments within his organization. While their support is required to ensure the successful execution of the plans, other departments question the feasibility of the ambitions. *"Then our friends of the Economics department start, right? In our own organization, saying 'the different [functions] will conflict with each other. […] So you shouldn't do that.'"* [4]

In addition to the efforts to thwart the plans by the surrounding organizations and other departments, Ben expects to have to face opposition from the inhabitants of the areas involved in the organizational intentions. *"That's just what you'll get from the [inhabitants]…we just know that from earlier experiences."* [5] Builders are also mistrusted in their ability to execute the intended organizational intervention. For example, there are cases where builders have clearly given priority to financial gains instead of to the quality of the results: *"We were just being cheated by the developers, by project developers […] The plan […] just has poor quality. And we weren't allowed to make it, because it had been in categorized under a PPP construction."* [6]

In defending the organizational strategy, Ben comes across an extensive number of potentially threatening factors. The intentions of other organizations in the region are met with distrust, as they are considered to strive for interventions that are contradictory to the organizational strategy. In addition, colleagues in their own organization as well as inhabitants and builders are considered as threats to the implementation of these interventions. Thus, it is clear that Ben's interpretation of his social environment closely relates to the actions he takes.

7.1.3 Hierarchical power play

In his efforts to implement the organizational strategy, Ben is faced with threats from other government institutions that have conflicting ambitions, departments within his own organization that disagree with the strategy and opposition (which is expected) from inhabitants and intervention developers. He is thus inclined to use his hierarchical position within his organization to deal with these threats.

In reaction to the untrustworthy intentions of other governmental organizations in the region, one of the first actions that Ben undertook was to put forward a intervention leader from his own department. *"First we were startled, thinking 'Help! What's happening here?' Because we'd just finished an organizational strategy. [...] Maybe they'll try and think of all sorts of [other interventions], and we don't want that at all. So we say 'we'll make that [Regional Building Strategy]'." [7]*

In attempting to deal with departments within his own organization that threaten to withdraw their support for the organizational strategy, Ben makes use of his role as the manager of his department. He works at gaining the support of his equals in other departments for the implementation of the interventions that come out of the organizational strategy.

In order to deal with opposition from inhabitants and builders in the areas involved in the organizational strategy, Ben indicates that he will make use of the authority attributed to his organization to make decisions for the constituency. Inhabitants and builders are restricted in their influence, and their involvement in the early stages of decision-making is limited. This enables Ben to opt for the role of a decisive administrator: *"I just think that as an administrator, you should sometimes say 'I want this, and I'm just going to push it through.' You have got to have guts to. Otherwise, you won't get anything done." [8]*

7.2 THE REGION-MANAGER AT WORK: MICHAEL'S PERSPECTIVE

Before regional alliances became apparent in the Randstad region, Michael depicted himself as working in the hierarchically organized 'line-organization'. When the alliance took shape however, he was asked by his principal to secure the integral approach of the issues in the alliances within his organization. *"I was suddenly taken out of the line by my director, saying 'you're taking a seat next to me, because I*

want that integration to take place'." [9] This was the start of Michael's career of co-ordinating between the regional accomplishment program and the organizational interests and implementation processes. He understands his task to be threefold: first, it is his job to defend the organizational interests within the region, as well as to defend the interests of the regional agreements within his organization. He does this work together with two colleagues from other organizations, both of whom play the same role within their own organizations. His second task is to defend the regional agreements within his own organization. *"That everyone knows what message we should bring across and talks with one voice again, towards the ministries too. […] That's also one of my tasks, to adequately organize that."* [10] The third task that Michael takes on is to act as an antenna for national developments. In order to bring about adequate interventions in the region, he acknowledges the importance of knowing what the national government aims for. This coincides with the process of scanning developments in the social environment described in Section 6.1.

7.2.1 Coordinating a regional program of projects

The Regional Building Strategy is one of the various projects that stems from the agreements made in the wing-alliance. Michael notes that the Regional Building Strategy was not accepted by the national government as part of the regional program that was developed after the elections. *"It was indicated that [the Regional Building Strategy] wouldn't be part of the Randstad program that was developed by the cabinet. And then the partners in the [alliance], said 'okay, we'll have to arrange [the Strategy] bilaterally with [the ministry]. But let's coordinate it within [the alliance]. Let's make a [regional strategy] that is satisfactory for all of the partners'."* [11]

A turbulent period followed, in which the Regional Building Strategy project continued to be governed under the wing-alliance, while the ministry focused its attention on Randstad alliances. While the Randstad alliance became the main area of work for Michael, the wing-alliance remained an important arena for Michael's organization to realize its ambitions. *"Well, I can sum up an whole list of projects you'd like to see represented on that level of scale, should that be the level in which decisions have to be made. But especially in the coordination, in order to arrange things with the state government without too much trouble."* [12] As a result, the Regional Building Strategy has shifted from being a part of the primary program that Michael coordinated, to becoming part of a secondary program.

7.2.2 Unwillingness to incorporate the regional program

In realizing a coherent development within the region through, for instance, the Regional Building Strategy, Michael is confronted with a variety of actors who attempt to thwart his efforts. These actors reflect an unwillingness to take regional coherency into account.

Firstly, the organizations involved in the alliance constantly threaten to pass over joint regional agreements. This was obvious, for instance, after the minister had announced that the proposed Regional Building Strategy could not be included in the agreements made by the alliance as it did not fit in with the demands. In reaction, bilateral deliberations were begun between regional actors and the ministry. This resulted in a reduced amount of attention being paid to the Regional Building Strategy. This was even more so the case when a new cabinet was installed and the focus began to shift to the Randstad region as a whole. This has caused much doubt among those involved in the regional alliance with regard to the future of this deliberative structure. Each partner is now turning away from this regional alliance and directing its attention to alliances at the level of the Randstad region. *"Well, and that [regional approach] obviously was abolished again, with the cabinet saying 'we're going for Randstad Urgent', right? And then it was a bit, we were a bit like 'what are we going to do about the [regional alliance]? Isn't that superfluous?'."* [13]

A second factor that threatens a successful outcome for the regional aim is resistance from within Michael's own organization. In the early stages of his involvement with the regional alliance, his colleagues openly questioned his intentions. *"When we started this ordeal, they were scared that I was going to take over everything. And so I got all those competent people asking 'Is Michael doing that? Isn't that our job?'"* [14]

Ignorance of developments on the regional level also threatens the success of Michael's efforts. In Michaels' experience, colleagues are often not up to speed on what the program is about. *"I want to make it clear with everyone that you don't work for yourself, and not only for your project. Know that your project is decided upon in this context, with the national government. Many people don't even know that."* [15] Michaels' colleagues do not automatically think of the program when working on interventions that extend beyond their boundaries. In the past, this has led to organizational colleagues arranging meetings with the ministry from the perspective of a project that they are working on, while the same meeting was arranged from a

programmatic perspective. Colleagues in his own organization are rather inclined to diverge from the program. *"It's a cultural turn as well, programmatic thinking. I even notice with my general director that he tends to skip away from the program. He's so busy with the projects at that point, that he just forgets certain things."* [16]

7.2.3 Informally involving colleagues in regional ambitions

In attempting to ensure regional coherency, Michael is faced with a vertically organized social environment of hesitant and ignorant actors who participate in the regional alliance and play an executive role within the organization. In order to deal with this, Michael works mostly on informally involving colleagues in the regional ambitions.

In order to be clear about the interests of his own organization, Michael keeps in close contact with his organizational colleagues: *"I do the advising myself. But I get my ammunition from the line, so from the people who work on projects. I drop by and say 'this is the agenda, and it says that this decision should be taken. Is that right?'"* [17]

In order to prevent regional actors from diverging from the regional program, Michael devotes his efforts to convincing them to keep the alliance and regional program in mind: *"Now that deals need to be made, you see that the deals aren't made with the regional alliance – because now the regional alliance isn't the playing field. Rather, they are being made directly with organizations. So what do you see? Those organizations want to work with the national government themselves. And I have to make sure to keep saying 'keep the regional agreements in mind'."* [18] While his efforts to keep the actors working together in the program have succeeded, only partial success has been achieved. In reaction to the increased amount attention being paid for the Randstad region, the regional actors have decided that the regional alliance would remain intact only as a space for regional coordination in anticipation of Randstad regional developments. The reduced amount of attention paid to the wing-program resulted in a change in Michael's position. *"And what do I still do? Together with my equals with [the other organizations], we give advice to the alliance manager. Because there isn't a director anymore. The director used to prepare the story for the administrators."* [19]

By organizing workshops, coordinating meetings and dropping those who are executing regional accomplishments, Michael works to get his colleagues within his organization in touch with regional ambitions. In addition, he stresses his

coordinating role in the process for the implementation of regional interventions. He devotes his attention to convincing his colleagues that it is not his task to take over and work directly on the interventions they are responsible for. In doing so, he addresses their concerns that he might be taking over their jobs: *"So I consciously…I leave it all to them."* [20]

However, Michael's efforts to coordinate regional accomplishments such as the Regional Building Strategy are restrained by organizational factors and dynamics in the workforce, causing him to have only a limited number of colleagues at his disposal.

7.3 THE INTERVENTION-MANAGER AT WORK: PETER'S PERSPECTIVE

Before intervention-manager Peter became involved in the Regional Building Strategy project, he had devoted his time to devising the organizational strategy for his own organization. This had been his main task ever since he began working for his organization less than four years ago, and was supplemented with projects such as gaining insight into the potential influence of the new Law for Spatial Development for the organization.

7.3.1 Realizing the Regional Building Strategy

With the views of the strategic vision in his package, Peter was asked to provide input from his organization in an exploratory process for the regional strategy. *"Someone had just been appointed here within the organization to organize the input from [the municipality] and from the region. And there was a group of two or three people. But sometimes they also ask some experts. And in the beginning, because I had something to add [from the regional strategy], I took part in some workshops and in writing advices a couple of times."* [21] Eventually, progress was made on the Regional Building Strategy and it became a regional project, with propositions and preconditions. As the regional actors were satisfied with the work of the public manager who had led the startup phase, they requested him to take on the leadership of the project. However, his organization denied them the use of his services, claiming that they had other tasks for him. Fearing the difficulty of combining the protection of interests with intervention leadership, an intensive struggle among

the other actors ensued. Eventually, Peter's organization gave in and appointed the task to Peter.

Appointment to the task of intervention leader immediately caused Peter to re-divide his tasks. The strategic vision he had spent most of his time on was now formally established, and the follow-up process of guarding coherence in the variety of execution oriented projects required less of his time. While he continued to spend three days a week on the strategic vision, Peter began to spend the rest of his workweek on the Regional Building Strategy project.

7.3.2 Absence and abstinence from the project

Having experienced the difficulty of making decisions in the regional alliance during the startup phase, Peter, was not enthusiastic about his newly appointed role of intervention leader. *"I did this job because at one point they said I had to. […] What I had seen when I was involved in that startup phase was, well, how difficult and viscously it can go in that [regional alliance]. So it wasn't something of which I thought 'this is a fun project, I can score with this, I can put my heart and soul into it'. I saw a lot of that viscosity coming at me too."* [22] Peter's viscosity comes from the authorities of the project, project colleagues and hesitant executing actors.

For projects such as the Regional Building Strategy, decisions that follow the project ought to be made formally by those government organizations that are involved. In order to guide the project, the alliance has attributed authority to two organizations. In practice however, Peter stresses that due to their allegiances to their own organization, these principals provide less guidance than the amount that he requires. Local issues are put on the agenda of the project, even when Peter stresses the regional interests that are represented in the project: *"With both [principals], you feel that they struggle too. They are first of all accountable to their own [organizational] management. So those principals of mine…they mean well, but they don't have the kind of complete, unambiguous task mastership I have with my general director here for the strategic vision or with the alderman for the visionary document."* [23]

The second influence stemming from the social environment was the tendency of the actors involved in the project to focus on their own interests instead of on the interests of the region – which is what the project demands. This occurs, for

instance, in the project group in which public managers from different organizations participate.

A third threat to the progress of the project is the abstinence of support from those who will eventually execute the intentions. In order to gain the input and support required to achieve the end-result, Peter aimed to bring builders to the table. In order to do this, the intervention group worked on organizing a variety of workshops in which builders were asked about their ideas and inputs, and given the opportunity to ask questions. However, the builders retracted their active contributions to the project after some workshops had been held, arguing that they required more political security before investing any more time and money into the project. *"That's why we tried to include parties and take them seriously. Well, that really only semi-worked, because they were really prepared to deliberate and think with us. And it generated some nice discussions. But eventually, their request was really '[Alliance], first you go and develop that Regional Building Strategy, then we'll really know what you want'."* [24]

7.3.3 Phasing the project with stakeholders

In attempting to deal with the variety of factors that are seen to be threatening to the course of the project, Peter indicates that results can only be realized with regard to the Regional Building Strategy project when it is divided into phases. *"These types of processes will almost never succeed working half a year and then finishing an end-product and then starting off with the next phase. So with the Regional Building Strategy, it was the start-up phase, really carefully saying 'we want this'. Then the Regional Building Strategy in which some strategic choices are made, but the consequences remain relatively open. So now we are trying to specify these consequences so they can make a formal decision on that again. That's how you progress by taking little steps forward."* [25] After representing his organizational strategy in the exploratory phase, Peter began to work on the Regional Building Strategy phase. In his experience, this is where most of the threatening factors have thwarted the course of the project. Actors who had been involved in the initial phase threatened to withdraw their attention to the Regional Building Strategy.

In order to deal with this, Peter initiated a study phase in which various types of data was collected on the interventions involved in the Regional Building Strategy. This data was used to make an argument to convince those involved of the project's

aims: *"We didn't have to argue about numbers […]. So that means we tried to make an inventory of all the practiced plans of all the partners. […] Well, it can be concluded from research that that demand is really changing. […] And that there actually is more demand for it and that it isn't just unfounded."* [26] At the same time, in attempting to ensure government involvement and support, Peter strived to nominate principals to the Regional Building Strategy project: *"I've now for example, well, you try to make one of the directors or [politicians] from the [alliance] the principal for my task."* [27]

This phase also involved bringing in building corporations and securing the allegiance of Peter's project group colleagues. In order to do the latter, Peter installed sounding groups of their organizational principals, in which they said over the course of the project: *"You also create sort of sounding group, just like we did with the Organizational Strategy. And here it was made up of department heads of the different [involved] departments of the partners in [the alliance]. Well, then you have to try and take them with you in the process, because they eventually advise their directors […] when we deliver a concept or end plan."* [28] As mentioned earlier, the initial involvement of building corporations was not successful as they indicated a desire for more certainty in the implications of the process. As a result, Peter decided to involve them in the phase following the establishment of the Regional Building Strategy.

In explaining Peter's actions, it becomes clear that he aims to be engaging in order to attempt to get others involved in the project. However, in these attempts, he attributes an informal hierarchy that is characterized by phases, principals and sounding groups.

7.4 DEALING WITH THREATS: DEMARCATING THE WORKING AREA

From the case of the Regional Building Strategy, it can be concluded that in particular instances, they make use of opportunities provided by their social surroundings. Discussing their activities concerning the Regional Building Strategy however, their actions are predominantly related to their interpretation of their social surroundings as threatening.

Dreading the threatening influences from their social environment to their achievement of aims, organization, region- and intervention-managers have

devised different strategies of dealing with the opposition. As reflected in the accounts of Ben, Michael and Peter, public managers resort to those measures and influences that are considered to be supportive in an effort to achieve their aims within a threatening social environment. Organization-managers, who interpret their horizontally organized social environment as being threatening, use their position within the vertically organized social environment to deal with these threats. Region-managers use their horizontal contacts in an attempt to win over opponents within the vertically organized social environment. Intervention-managers in turn use the support they get from their hierarchically as well as their vertically organized social environment in the attempt to deal with the threats they perceives from both.

In their efforts to achieve their aims, public managers demarcate their working area of actors and tasks: they have a clear idea of who to involve, what to get involved with and/or how to involve actors in order to achieve the aims described in Chapter 5. Organization-, region- and intervention-managers each wield different types of demarcations.

7.4.1 Organization-managers: Social demarcation of the working area

In their effort to realize the organizational interests – in Ben's case, the organizational strategy – organization-managers find themselves confronted with a variety of opponents outside the organizational hierarchy. In order to realize organization interests despite this resistance, organization-managers employ a power-adhering strategy. As indicated in Chapter 5, this means that they attempt to gain a powerful position over the actors whom they find threatening.

For instance, Ben supported the installation of an organizational colleague as the intervention leader for the Regional Building Strategy project and the minimization of say by societal actors who are in a relatively low position in the decision-making hierarchy. Another public manager explained the inclination to gain a powerful position as such: *"We hope that…with the new Law on Spatial Development, a lot of the provinces' authority is transposed to the municipality. So well, I'm anxious to know how that will work, because we do intend to use it."*[29] By gaining a powerful position over those actors who are threatening the organizational aims, organization-managers have the option of setting the actors involved aside in their actions that are directed towards achieving their aims. *"All of our destination plans*

are conservational. We protect the existing situation for the […] reasons […] I referred to earlier, of the characteristics of [our constituency]: We have a very critical population that really knows about urban development. They're serious opponents." [30] A strong division is therefore made between the organization-manager and his or her social surroundings.

A social demarcation is made by which only those actors who are interpreted to support the realization of organizational advantage are incorporated into the working area. Those actors who are depicted as being threatening are removed from the working area wherever possible, through the use of the hierarchical power-position.

7.4.2 Region-managers: Role-demarcation of the working area

The regional accomplishments that region-managers strive towards in their work stem from collaborations within alliances. Agreements made within these alliances require formal decision-making within the individual participating organizations. The work of region-managers consists of deliberations within the alliance, but even more so, of facilitating regional decision-making within their own organizations. In their efforts, they are often confronted with opposition from the social environment in the alliance as well as from within their own organizations.

In their attempts to safeguard the successful implementation of the regional agreements, region-managers make clear distinctions of their tasks. For instance, Michael clearly stresses to his colleagues that it is not his intention to take over their work. *"I don't do the work of others, at least I don't take over work. I just arrange it, I only coordinate it. The work stays exactly where it is."* [31] By focussing on their coordinative role, the execution of agreements is excluded from their work, as one region-manager explains: *"The other parts of [my department] are more on the level of developers and market parties. I really don't know anything about that."* [32] Apart from the careful distinction of their role as coordinator, region-managers broadly involve those actors who are responsible for the implementation of the programmatic agreements. Lacking roots in the hierarchy of the region as well as that of their own organization, region-managers deal with threatening influences by engaging the opposition. On-going informal deliberations on the regional agreements and the organizational implications is from an integral part of the region-manager's

work. For instance, Michael dedicates much of his time to organizing meetings, encounters and workshops. Thus, it can be seen that region-managers demarcate their working area focused on their task, while they include actors in their social environment adaptively.

7.4.3 Intervention-managers: Task-specific demarcation of the working area

In his efforts to realize the Regional Building Strategy, Peter was confronted with the absence of a clear project hierarchy. This was in contrast to his experiences with his former work of realizing the Organizational Strategy. In this task, he had grown accustomed the organizational hierarchy providing with clear guidance on the project that was being worked on. In addition to the difficulties faced due to the absence of a project hierarchy, Peter faced a social environment that had the tendency to abstain from playing an active role in the project. The issues that Peter is confronted with are also experienced by other intervention-managers who work particularly on projects that extend beyond their boundaries. In reaction to the lack of hierarchy – which is considered to be necessary in order to implement the intervention represented in the project - intervention-managers resort to their procedural strategy. Through a strong intervention oriented perspective, the intervention-manager works to provide structure in the course of the project. This is done by dividing the project into phases, making earlier in-between products non-debatable by opponents.

Within the different phases, the intervention-manager works to assign roles to the people involved. This is done by installing political and administrative principals from the different organizations that are involved, thus giving them a formal say in the course of the project. Sounding groups made up of key individuals within the various organizations are subsequently installed, as a way to engage them in the project and provide them with some influence on its course. This also gives them the opportunity to make these individuals transpose the intentions of the project to their vertically organized social environments. Finally, intervention-managers also work with project groups, engaging public managers from the various organizations involved. Through these efforts, intervention-managers use engaging tools that are at their disposal to deal with the vacuum that exists in the regional hierarchy. *"So each time you're going to have to fight, so that everyone individually will*

actually do what you agreed to do. Because in the execution, everyone will go their own way, talking to their own businesses or their own politicians. […] The [alliance] doesn't have strong effective power. So it will continue to be a story of convincing and getting other people to support the choices you propose." [33]

Intervention-managers mostly work at engaging those actors who are required for the implementation of their project. They make a clear distinction between the actors from their social environment who are required to participate in the project in order to successfully conclude a phase. This may involve including politicians and intervention group members in the preparatory phases and builders in the executive phases. In addition to making a selection of actors who should be involved, intervention-managers carefully demarcate the extent to which the selected actors are involved. Some actors are considered to play an advisory rather than a decisive role. Others are bestowed with decisive power with regard to the direction of the end-results. In short, it can be concluded that intervention-managers demarcate their working area based on their task, carefully selecting who should get involved and what influence these actors are allowed to bring to the project.

7.5 CONCLUDING: DEMARCATING THE WORKING AREA IN FEAR OF THREATS

In this chapter, the aims and actions of public managers that were described in Chapter 5 were connected to the interpretations of their social environment discussed in Chapter 6. It became clear that what explains the actions of each type of public manager on the whole best, is the anxiety, concern or 'fear' they have for potentially threatening influences from their social environment. Considering part of the influence from their social environment to be threatening, public managers carefully demarcate their working area. Each public manager carefully depicts who to involve, what to get involved with and/or how. Organization-managers have a clear view of who to work with to get things done, and who to exclude. Region-managers stress their process-oriented role, refraining from getting involved in the practical translation of regional agreements. Intervention-managers focus on their task and depict for each phase of their project who to involve and to what degree
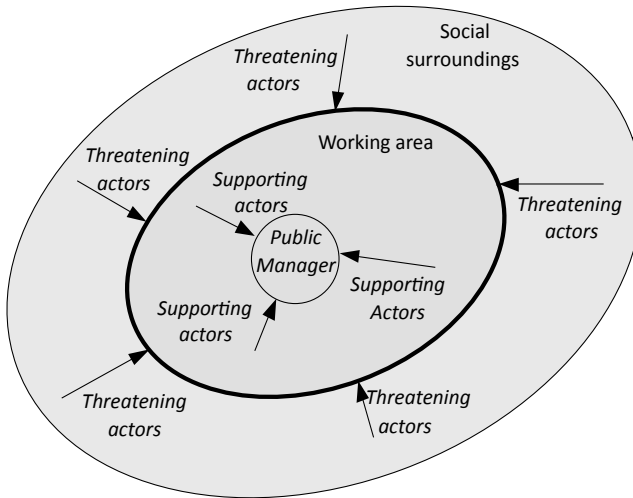
7-1 The demarcation of the working area by public-managers

these actors can influence the course of the project. In figure 7-1, the demarcation of public managers is visualized. The thick line visualizes how public managers work to exclude threatening influences, while including supporting actors in their working area.

The discussion of the demarcations made by public managers in reaction to the influences from their social environment provides some insight into the individual perspectives on metropolitan public management. By this, the actions of public managers dealing with complex metropolitan policy making, and their explanation are made clear. The next Chapter 8 discusses the consequences of these perspectives from individuals on the regional level, thereby asking the question: *To what joint actions do the individual actions of public managers lead?*

Notes

[1] "[Mijn organisatie] zegt gewoon van 'wij gaan gewoon ons er vreselijk tegen verzetten'. En het gaat gewoon door. Dan denk je nou, […] wat is dit nou voor een proces? Een belangrijke partij zegt van 'we moeten het niet doen' en de andere partijen van 'we gaan gewoon door'."

[2] "En wij zeggen van 'jongens, maak niet een te groot programma in de buurgemeente, want dan lukt onze […] opgave niet'."

3 "Wij hebben zeg maar bestuurlijk en ambtelijk de zaak zo georganiseerd binnen de [alliantie] dat eh, dat het merendeel van het resultaat tot stand komt […] eerder door concurrentie dan door samenwerking."

4 "Onze vrienden van economie die beginnen al, hè? Binnen onze eigen tent. Zegt hij van 'ze hebben last van elkaar. Dus dat moet je niet doen'."

5 "Dat krijg je gewoon als reactie uit de stad…dat weten we gewoon, het eh, uit eerdere ervaringen."

6 "Ja, we worden gewoon natuurlijk een poot uitgedraaid door ontwikkelaars, […] Het plan, […] heeft gewoon slechte kwaliteit. En wij hebben het niet mogen maken, omdat het ondergebracht was in een PPS constructie he"

7 "Toen schrokken wij […] van 'help, wat gaat er hier gebeuren?' Want we hebben nu net de structuurvisie voor elkaar […] En […] dan gaan ze misschien wel allemaal nieuwe [interventies] proberen te verzinnen en dat willen we helemaal niet. Dus we zeggen van 'wij gaan die [Regionale Strategie] wel maken'."

8 "Ik vind het soms dat je gewoon als bestuurder moet zeggen van ik wil dit gewoon, en ik eh, ik jas het er gewoon door. Je moet ook lef hebben. Anders krijg je niks voor mekaar."

9 "Ineens werd ik eruit getrokken uit die lijn door mijn directeur, van 'jij komt naast me zitten, want ik wil dat die integratie gaat plaatsvinden'."

10 "Dat iedereen weer met z'n allen tussen de oren zit van hoe we met één mond praten ook straks naar die ministeries toe. […] Dat is ook een taak van mij om dat goed te regelen."

11 "Ja, er is toen gezegd, het valt buiten het [regionale programma] van het kabinet. Toen is gezegd in [de alliantie] 'okay, dan moeten we dat rechtstreeks met [het ministerie] gaan regelen, maar laten we het dan afstemmen in de [alliantie]. Laten we een [regionale strategie] maken waarin alle partners het mee eens zijn'."

12 "Nou, zo kan ik een heel rijtje opnoemen die je dus goed op dat schaalniveau verwaardigd wil zien, mocht er ook op dat schaalniveau beslissingen plaatsvinden. Maar vooral in de afstemming, dus via hier om dan later richting het Rijk zonder al te veel strubbelingen die zaken te regelen."

13 "Nou, [de regionale aanpak] is vervolgens natuurlijk weer weggevallen, met het kabinet dat zegt 'we gaan voor de Randstad Urgent'. En, toen […] zaten we even zo van 'Wat doen we met die [regionale alliantie]? Is dat niet overbodig'?"

14 "Toen wij begonnen met dit verhaal, waren ze bang dat ik alles ging doen. En ik kreeg er dus die competenties d'r uit van 'gaat [Michael] dat doen, zijn wij toch van?'."

15 "Ik wil bij de mensen allemaal tussen de oren hebben 'je werkt niet voor jezelf, en niet alleen maar voor je project. Maar weet dat een project in déze context is besloten, met het rijk'. Heel veel mensen weten dat niet eens."

16 "Is een cultuuromslag ook hè, programma denken. Ik merk zelfs bij mijn algemene directeur dat hij de neiging heeft om af en toe uit het programma weg te schieten. Dan is hij zo met de projecten bezig, dat hij bepaalde dingen gewoon vergeet."

17 "Advisering doe ik zelf. Maar daar haal ik mijn munitie vanuit de lijn. Dus vanuit de mensen die aan projecten werken daar ga ik even van 'goh dit is de agenda, en daar staat bij dat er dat besluit genomen moet worden, klopt dat wel?'"

18 "En nu zie je het hè, want [de regionale alliantie] is in deze dan geen speelveld, want er worden geen afspraken met [de regionale alliantie] gemaakt, er worden afspraken gemaakt met de directe partijen. Dus wat zie je dan? Die partijen die willen zelf met het Rijk aan de slag. En dan moet ik er elke keer voor zorgen dat ik zeg: 'houd die kapstok in de gaten'."

19 "En wat doe ik nog? Samen met mijn evenknieën bij [de andere organisaties], geven wij advies aan de secretaris, want dat is geen directeur meer. Die directeur die bereidde rechtstreeks daar de bestuurders het verhaal voor, destijds. "

20 "Dus toen heb ik bewust…dat laat ik allemaal daar."

21 "Daar was iemand aangewezen hier binnen de organisatie, om de inbreng vanuit [de organisatie] en vanuit de regio te organiseren. En er waren een groepje van twee-drie mensen, maar daaromheen vragen ze soms ook wat experts. Omdat ik […] wat in te brengen had, ben ik daar ook een paar keer in meegedraaid in workshops en in adviezenschrijven in het begin."

22 "Deze klus die heb ik gedaan omdat ze zeiden dat het moest op een gegeven moment. […] Want ik in die tijd dat ik in die kwartiermakerfase meedraaide, nou ja, had ik toch ook wel gezien hoe moeizaam en stroperig het af en toe kan lopen in [die regionale alliantie]. Dus het was nou niet iets waarvan ik onmiddellijk dacht van 'dit is een leuk project, hier kan ik mee gaan scoren, hier kan ik mijn ei in kwijt'. Ik zag ook heel veel van die stroperigheid op me afkomen."

23 "Maar bij allebei merk je dat zij zelf toch ook worstelen, zij worden allereerst voor afgerekend door hun eigen [bestuur]. Dus die opdrachtgevers van mij…ze bedoelen het wel goed, maar zij hebben niet zo'n soort volledige, eenduidige opdrachtgeverschap als dat ik hier met mijn algemene directeur voor die structuurvisie of met de wethouder voor die structuurvisie wel heb."

24 "Dus daarom hebben wij ook geprobeerd die partijen er bij te krijgen en ook serieus te nemen. Nou, dat traject is eigenlijk half gelukt, want op zich waren ze heel goed bereidt om een beetje mee te praten en te denken en kwamen er inhoudelijk ook hele leuke discussies uit, maar uiteindelijk was hun vraag toch van 'Ja, [alliantie], maak eerst die [regionale strategie] maar af, dan weten we wat jullie echt willen'."

25 "Dit soort processen lukt het bijna nooit om een halfjaar te werken en dan het eindproduct af te hebben en dan echt helemaal de volgende fase. Dus bij deze [regionale strategie] was het ook eerst die kwartiermakerfase, heel voorzichtig van we willen het wel. Toen de [regionale strategie] waarin, nou ja wel een aantal strategische keuzes gemaakt worden, maar de consequenties van die keuzes nog wat open blijven. Dus nu proberen we die consequenties toch iets scherper in beeld te krijgen, zodat ze daar weer een besluit over kunnen nemen. Zo werk je stapsgewijs met kleine stapjes voorwaarts."

26 "Over de hoeveelheid hoefden we niets meer te discussiëren. […] Dus dat betekent dat we alle lopende plannen die er bij alle partners waren, dat we die proberen te inventariseren. […] Nou, uit onderzoek blijkt dat de vraag echt aan het veranderen is. […] Dat er ook meer vraag naar is en niet uit de lucht gegrepen is."

27 "Ik heb nu bijvoorbeeld, ja, je probeert ook één van die directeuren of een van de [politici] uit [de alliantie], als opdrachtgever voor mijn taak aan te stellen."

28 "Daarmee organiseer je ook weer een soort klankbordgroep, net als we bij de organisationele visie gedaan hadden. En dat bestond hier dan uit afdelingshoofden van de verschillende [afdelingen] van de partners van [de alliantie]. Ja, die moet je dan ook weer gaan proberen om mee te nemen in het

proces, want die adviseren hun directeuren in de directieraad weer als wij daar een concept of een eindplan voorleggen."

29 "Maar goed, wij hopen nu met de nieuwe WRO zijn heel veel bevoegdheden van de provincie, die zijn overgegaan naar de gemeente, dus nou ja ik ben benieuwd hoe dat gaat want we willen het wel gaan gebruiken."

30 "Al die bestemmingsplannen zijn conserverend. Wij bestemmen de bestaande situatie, precies om die […] redenen of kenmerken die ik net noemde van [ons grondgebied]. […] Wij hebben een zeer kritische stadsbevolking die ook echt verstand heeft van stedenbouw, het zijn echt serieuze tegenspelers."

31 "Ik neem geen werk uit handen, of ten minste, ik neem geen werk over. Ik regel het alleen maar. Ik coördineer het alleen maar. Het werk blijft precies waar het zit."

32 "Andere afdelingen van [mijn sectie] zit meer op het niveau van ontwikkelaars en marktpartijen. En daar heb ik eigenlijk geen kennis van."

33 "Dus elke keer zal je weer moeten bevechten dat wat je met elkaar afgesproken hebt, dat iedereen dat individueel ook werkelijk zal gaan doen. Want in die uitwerking gaat iedereen weer zijn eigen individuele kant op gaan ze, met eigen marktpartijen praten of met eigen politiek. […] De [alliantie] heeft geen harde doorwerkingkrachten […] Dus blijft het altijd een verhaal van overtuigen en andere mensen mee krijgen in je keuzes die je voorstelt."

8

Joint action in a threatening context

Chapters 5, 6 and 7 described the individual level of public management in the Randstad region. In their efforts to realize their aims of achieving organizational advantages, regional accomplishments and project implementation, organization-, region- and intervention-managers demarcate their working area. Organization-managers aim to exclude actors from having too much influence on their work. Region-managers stress their task of coordinating, leaving content-related discussions on the table. Finally, intervention-managers carefully decide who to involve and to what extent.

In practice, organization-, region- and intervention-managers can be found in a large number of public management organizations in the metropolitan region. Each type of public manager is therefore part of the social environment of the others. Organization-managers work in organizations where region- and intervention-managers are also active, while region- and intervention-managers also work within proximity of each other. Building on the depiction of public management in the metropolitan region based on the individual perspective, this chapter focuses on the regional level of public management. By this, the final part of the central question will be focused on: *To what joint actions do the individual actions of public managers lead?*

Section 8.1 discusses how interactions among metropolitan public managers with different types of demarcations leads to conflicts. As will be argued in Section 8.2, this conflict is amplified by the fact that organization-, region- and intervention-managers all tend to turn to like-minded colleagues as supportive actors. Section 8.3 explains that the conflicts between the aims and strategies of public managers jeopardize qualitative development in the region as a whole.

8.1 CONFLICTS OF INTEREST AND MUTUAL EXCLUSIVE ACTIONS

In Chapter 5, it was stated that public managers strive toward different aims in their work. Organization-managers strive toward organizational advantages, region-managers toward regional accomplishments and intervention-managers toward intervention implementation. In practice, aspiring to diverging aims causes organization-, region- and intervention-managers to be in conflict with one another. As other types of public managers strive for dissimilar aims than their

own, public managers tend to consider them as threatening influences. This is also reflected in their demarcations.

8.1.1 Conflicting aims for the Regional Building Strategy

As Ben strives towards the interests of his own organization, this is translated as a form of resistance to the interests of other organizations. This accounts for the fact that Ben considers the intentions of others to be threatening to his aim of realizing the organizational strategy. As noted in Chapter 6, organization-managers consider plans in the region to be intrinsically conflicting with their own aims. As Michael strives towards a coherent regional program, he struggles against public managers who are striving toward their organizational interests. Actors who are involved in the regional alliance as well as actors who are part of their own organization are considered to be threatening. They are believed to lack commitment to regional interests. As a result, they lack the willingness to comply with the regional agreements that the region-manager works towards. With his specific focus on the realization of the regional project, intervention-manager Peter does not have the interests of the program that the project is a part of as a whole in mind. In his attempt to realize the project, Peter is often confronted with public managers who lack dedication to the regional project. He believes that these public managers are more dedicated to their organizational interests than to the interests of the project.

8.1.2 Encountering threats from conflicting aims

Drawing from this, it can be stated that by singularly striving toward the advantage of their own organization, organization-managers pose a threat to intervention- and region-managers. In return, by striving toward regional accomplishments, region-and intervention-managers pose a threat to organization-managers who are striving toward their own organizational advantages. The execution of regional projects by intervention-managers is considered to be an extension of their work by the region-manager. However, intervention-managers themselves consider the program and the region-managers representing it to represent the administrative vacuum that they find themselves in. The conflict of aims that occurs is shown in Figure 8.1. The figure clearly shows that public managers in the Randstad region interpret each other as threats, based on the aims that they strive toward. In reaction
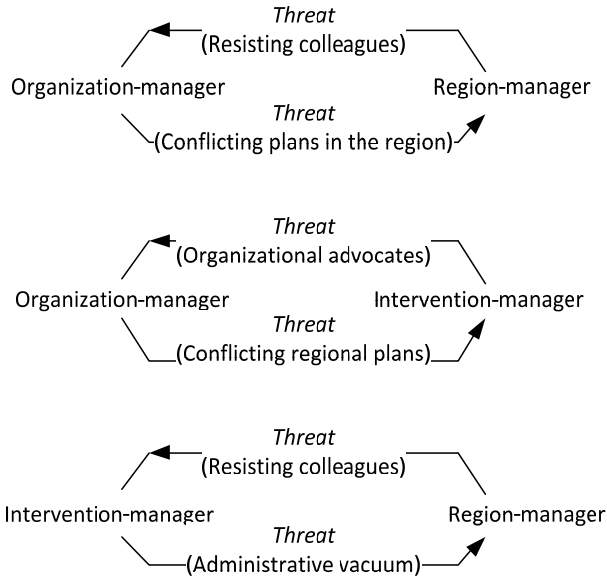
8-1 Conflicting aims among public managers

to this threat perception, public managers devote their actions to counteracting these threats.

8.1.3 Conflicting demarcations

As they work for organizational advantages, regional accomplishments and intervention implementation, public managers find themselves facing a vertical and/or horizontal social environment that is threatening. They each adhere to different strategies in attempting to deal with these threatening influences. Organization-managers focus on power-relationships to deal with their opponents. Region-managers work to involve their opponents informally. Finally, intervention-managers devote their efforts to putting in place procedures and tasks to defend against their opponents. However, these actions lead to the further divergence of the different types of public managers.

The previous chapter explored the process by which public managers demarcate their working areas. It became clear that organization-managers make social demarcations, excluding those whom they consider to be threatening. Region-

managers make role-demarcations, while working to include those actors whom they consider to be threatening to their aims. Finally, intervention-managers make task-specific demarcations, carefully deciding who to involve and to what extent they have influence over the project.

The demarcations that public managers make with regard to other actors and their influence causes different types of public managers to cancel one another out. They work in close relation to each other, without actually involving each other. The role-demarcation by region-managers is unsuccessful at breaking through these social and task-specific demarcations. Organization- and intervention-managers believe that they are more likely to achieve their aims without including region-managers in their plans. This is largely due to their own demarcation, i.e., focusing on their own process and task, instead of their implications on a regional level. By stressing this task, region-managers are unable to connect adequately to the daily working practices of organization- and region-managers.

8.2 REINFORCING CONFLICT THROUGH GROUP FORMATION

Due to the demarcation practices described earlier, interactions among different types of public managers are thwarted. At the same time, interactions between similar types of public managers are increased, thus reinforcing the conflicts that already exist between organization-, region- and intervention-managers.

8.2.1 Working jointly on the organizational strategy

Organization-managers work together in their attempts to convey a joint set of ambitions. *"Someone for instance asks us if he can build a house. Well, that house is a nice idea, but there are so many disciplines and things that play a role. And you have to know, alright: archeology, what's going on with culture, what's the deal with nature, what's the situation of the flow of water? […] As [public manager], you can't do it on your own. You can't. We cannot make advices on our own. You always need others for that."* [1]

Interactions between organization-managers are reflected in the increasing establishment of organizational and departmental visions and policies. Organization-

managers communicate through these documents, which allow them to convey the organizational interests. Therefore, they allow their fellow organization-managers into their working areas while directing their efforts at excluding region- and intervention-managers.

8.2.2 Joining together in a coherent regional accomplishment

In a similar fashion, region-managers include their fellow region-managers in their working areas as they join forces with colleagues from other organizations. For instance, three respondents working for different organizations indicated that they are in constant contact with one another to coordinate their joint regional ambitions: *"There are more people with the same double task I have. Colleagues of [organization b] and [organization c] also both have it."* [2] These three actors deliberate regularly with a colleague from the alliance: *"Once every two, three weeks, I convene with [the three colleagues from the other organizations]"* [3]. These region-managers discuss the developments in the region with one another. *"Together with my equals with [organization a] and [organization c], we give advice to the alliance manager."* [4]

Region-managers value this form of collaboration as it allows them to smooth over any inconsistencies on the regional level and therefore to filter out opposition from partners in the alliance and from within their organizations. Collaboration enables them to resort to obtaining help from one another in case they encounter difficulties from within their organizations, thus acting as an avenue for support for each other. One region-manager had joined forces with a region-manager from another organization to tackle the power issues within the alliance: *"Then we got a new [alliance manager], and we said 'what do we do about that? He doesn't know the first thing about what's going on in the [alliance]. So we're not in the mood for that'. So we actually let him, we let him dangle a while. [...] It really had to do with the [power relationship] idea of well, that [organization] is really getting a lot of power, and we don't want that."* [5]

8.2.3 Joining together in intervention-realization

Interactions between intervention-managers mostly take place within the context of a project, for instance in the project-group. In this project-group, intervention-managers work with others who have a similar perspective that goes beyond the organizational interests of departments.

This is an important condition for the project to work, as one intervention-manager explains: *"When we started I said 'It should be an integral project-group, and it should therefore also be organized outside of the line-organizations.' Well, you can imagine that resulted in a fair amount of resistance from the line-organization which felt passed over some times because the standard hierarchical decision-making lines could just be ignored. So I haven't always made friends, but that doesn't matter."* [6]

8.2.4 Divergence of organization-, region- and intervention-managers

By organizing themselves this way, public managers give preference to what they know, while avoiding what they do not know. By focusing on maintaining contact with like-minded public managers, the conflicts that exist between organization-, region- and intervention-managers and their aims and actions remain. In this way, it may be argued that they are unlikely to yield the potential profit of engaging in a joint effort for the benefit of the region as a whole.

8.3 QUALITATIVE DEVELOPMENT IN THE RANDSTAD REGION

In Chapter 2, it was discussed that the quality of the Randstad region is continuously debated. This is confirmed by the various public managers studied for this thesis. This public manager for instance characterizes the development of the region as fragmentation rather than coherent. *"My understanding is that we've organized it all in such a way, that is often doesn't lead to spatial quality. Meaning, it's all getting pretty cluttered. So we do make decisions, and we do arrange and all, but it's so snip snap and opposing each other or alongside of one another or et cetera…and the result of all that acting is just that the [region] is a really cluttered area."* [7]

Drawing from their own perspectives, they point to different types of solutions that ought to be practiced in tackling the issue. Besides these propositions, region-managers identify changes in their dynamic social environment that cause organization- and region-managers to be more open to the regional accomplishment that they act on behalf of.

8.3.1 Striving towards government, procedures and interconnectivity

The efforts of public managers in their work bear a strong resemblance to the metropolitan public management approaches discussed in Chapter 1: the institutional, the rule-guided and the boundary crossing approach.

Organization-managers for instance tend towards an institutional approach in dealing with the Randstad region. They consider the organizational hierarchy to be an important part of their working area and make use of the structures it provides through their power-adhering strategy.

Acknowledging that the quality of the Randstad region is poor, organization-managers plead for restructuring the government in the region. This public manager for instance stresses the benefits of municipal reorganization: *"I think it's an improvement for the municipalities themselves. [...] I think [...] you wouldn't be thwarted by all sorts of deliberations, all those neighboring little municipalities all defending their own little interests...sometimes the bickering is almost childish."* [8] Despite their preference for reorganization however, they acknowledge that while the proper government structures have yet to be implemented, they will have to make do with the structure that is currently available. However, they stress that this does not eliminate the problems of this structure, as one public manager argues: *"There are millions of reasons for not choosing another structure. But as long as you don't opt for that, you'll be running into these types of problems. And depending on how well people in those different levels can get along with each other and on whether the urgency from outside is high or low, collaboration will go better or worse or people will fight each other less or more."* [9]

On the other hand, through the use of their informal strategy, region-managers can be understood as reflections of the metropolitan call for increasing interconnections among actors. This coincides with the boundary crossing approach described in Chapter 1.

In their efforts to improve on development in the region as a whole, region-managers plead for more exchange within the alliances as well as for more cooperation within their own organizations with the results of deliberations within the alliances. *"It doesn't so much require me, from us as a department, to connect those interests. It also requires something from those sectors to adopt a connecting attitude, knowing that they can achieve more by working together, than by working alone."* [10]

Intervention-managers begrudge the fact that the alliances do not have the decisive power required to ensure the successful outcome of the regional interventions they are working on. Thus, they plead for more centralized and structured decision-making processes. *"If you want to organize these types of processes on the level of [the alliance], the current collaboration without obligations won't do. Because in the end, this type of organization will always result in everyone first trying to realize their own aims. And at some time, decisions will be made, but there's no supervision, no control over the way those decisions are effectuated."* [11] This plea for centralization and structure is closely related to the rule-guided approach described in Chapter 1.

8.3.2 Positive developments for qualitative metropolitan development

Region-managers are increasingly gain ground in their efforts to involve organization- and intervention-managers, getting them to acknowledge and contribute to regional accomplishments. Over time, region-managers have found it easier to gain the support of their colleagues from within their own organizations: *"It's easier now. I just call the department or team-manager in question, and then I say 'this and that is happening in the [region], it would be great if you free some time for that'. And that usually happens. […] I think that is mostly the result of people understanding that it's not a threat."* [12]

There is, however, a difference between metropolitan managers who work for large government institutions and those who work for smaller wgr[(+)]regions. In these smaller organizations, region-managers continue to be faced with organization-managers who feel threatened by them. One region-manager from a wgr-region reflects this when he states: *"Metropolitan managers in spatial planning that work there are predominantly busy working on destination plans, and aren't accustomed to think municipality-exceeding and see what the power relations of influence are outside of their own constituency. That's of course why [my organization] exists. But well, with those deliberations, you really need people to see that. And maybe that still has to grow. I try to improve that, but it's really difficult. […] It takes so much time, and their already stressed for time, and they really don't see the point of consultations and harmonizing with each other. That's difficult."* [13]

8.4 CONCLUDING: RESTRICTED INTERACTION BETWEEN ORGANIZATION-, REGION- AND INTERVENTION-MANAGERS

This chapter noted that in their efforts to achieve their aims, public managers have the tendency to restrict one another from their working area. While they are part of the same social surroundings, the demarcations made by individual public managers limit their interaction. Out of fear for the potentially thwarting influence of others, metropolitan managers opt to focus on the task at hand and the people required to bring that to a good end. In that light, the interaction between opposing types of public managers is restricted.

The product of this practice of public managers in the Randstad region is a metropolitan region that is characterized by fragmentation rather than coherence. This is closely related to the ongoing issue of disorganization in the Randstad region that was discussed in Chapter 2. The final Chapter 9 will provide with an overview of the practice of individuals in the metropolitan region and their consequences for joint actions.

Notes

[1] "Iemand vraagt bij wijze van ik wil een huisje bouwen. Ja, dat huisje dat is leuk en aardig, maar er spelen zoveel disciplines of dingen spelen daar een rol. En […] je moet wel weten van okee, archeologie hoe zit het met cultuur, hoe zit het met natuur, hoe zit het met de watergang? […] Je kan niet alleen als [publiek manager] aan de slag, dat kan niet. Wij kunnen ook zelf eigenlijk geen advies maken. Daar heb je echt altijd anderen voor nodig."

[2] "Meer mensen lopen met diezelfde dubbele pet als ik, ook collega's uit [organisatie b] en [organisatie c] die doen dus ook allebei."

[3] "Ik heb een keer in de twee, drie weken een overleg met [de drie collega's van andere organisaties]."

[4] "Samen met mijn evenknieën bij [organisatie a] en [organisatie b] geven wij advies aan de [alliantie manager]."

[5] "Toen kregen we een nieuwe [alliantie manager] en we zeiden van 'wat moeten we daarmee? Die weet van geen toeten en blazen, van wat er speelt in de [alliantie]. Dus daar hebben we geen zin in'. Dus toen hebben we toch een beetje laten…hebben we hem laten zwemmen. […] En dat had ook weer te maken binnen zeg maar het [machtsrelatie] gevoel, van nou die [organisatie] die krijgt eigenlijk wel erg veel macht en dat willen wij niet."

[6] "Toen wij begonnen toen hebben we ook gezegd 'ja, dat moet een integrale projectgroep zijn en die moet dus ook buiten de lijnorganisaties die georganiseerd worden'. Nou, je kan voorstellen dat dat de nodige strubbelingen gaf vanuit de lijnorganisatie, die zichzelf gepasseerd voelde soms, omdat de standaard hiërarchische besluitvormingslijnen gewoon genegeerd konden worden. Dus ik heb niet altijd vrienden gemaakt, he, maar dat geeft niet."

7   "Mijn stelling is dat de het zo met elkaar georganiseerd hebben, dat het vaak niet leidt tot ruimtelijke kwaliteit. Oftewel, dat het behoorlijk verrommelt allemaal. Dus we nemen wel beslissingen, en we richten wel in enzo. Maar het gaat zo hap snap en tegen mekaar in of naast elkaar heen of et cetera... en het saldo van al dat handelen is gewoon dat de [regio] een behoorlijk verrommeld gebied is."

8   "Ik denk dat het voor die gemeenten zelf wel een verbetering is. [...] Ik denk [...] dat je niet gehinderd wordt door allerlei overlegjes, al die buurgemeentetjes enzo, en die allemaal hun eigen beetje en hun eigenbelangetje willen... soms is het gewoon een gekibbel bijna op het kinderachtige af.

9   "Er zijn duizenden reden waarom er niet voor een andere structuur gekozen wordt. Maar zolang je daar niet voor kiest blijf je tegen dit soort problemen aanlopen. En afhankelijk van of mensen in die verschillende niveaus beter of slechter met elkaar kunnen vinden of de urgentie van buiten groter of kleiner is, gaat dat meer of minder goed die samenwerking, of vliegen ze elkaar meer of minder in de haren."

10 "Het vergt niet zozeer wat van mij, van ons als [afdeling], om die belangen te verbinden. Het vergt... het verlangt ook iets van die sectoren om zich, zeg maar, verbindend te kunnen opstellen. In de wetenschap dat zij ook door samenwerking meer bereiken dan alleen."

11 "als je dit soort processen op het niveau van [het samenwerkingsverband] wilt organiseren, dan ben je met de huidige vrijblijvende bestuurlijke samenwerking zoals die in het platform georganiseerd is, daar kom je er niet mee. Want uiteindelijk is deze vorm van organisatie, die blijft altijd zo dat iedereen nou eerst langs zijn eigen doelen proberen aan het bereiken is. En op een gegeven moment wordt er wel iets besloten, maar er is geen controle, geen toezicht, geen sturing op de uitwerking van die besluiten."

12 "Nu is dat makkelijker, dan bel ik gewoon de desbetreffende afdeling of teammanager en dan zeg ik 'dat en dat is er aan de hand in [de alliantie], het zou fijn zijn als daar even wat tijd voor vrijgemaakt wordt, voor de inzet'. En dat gebeurt ook meestal. [...] Nou, ja dat is toch ook gewoon het volgens mij het inzien dat het geen bedreiging is."

13 "Ambtenaren ruimtelijke ordening die daar werken zijn vooral bezig met bestemmingsplannen en die zijn niet gewend om gemeenten overstijgend te denken. En te overzien van wat nou het, buiten de gemeente valt het krachtenveld is en wat van invloed is op jouw gemeente. Daarom bestaat natuurlijk ook [mijn organisatie]. Maar ja, met zo'n overleg heb je dat toch wel een beetje nodig dat mensen dat zien of zo. En misschien moet dat nog groeien, ik probeer dat dus te verbeteren, maar het is wel lastig. [...] Het kost allemaal zoveel tijd, en ze zitten als zo krap in de tijd en ze zien er ook niet het nut van, van overleggen en afstemming, ja, dat is lastig."

9

Conclusion: Fear-based metropolitan public management crippling joint ventures for quality

In order to be globally competitive, governments in metropolitan regions stress the need to develop a coherent and economically attractive area. Despite their institutional, regulatory and communicative efforts, however, government organizations in the Dutch Randstad region have been unable to achieve this. The area continues to be fragmented, incoherent and lacking in the quality required.

Most scholarly analyses of this phenomenon have focused on the organizational level. The initial phases of the empirical analysis underlying this thesis shared this perspective, focusing on the quality achieved in the region. However, this changed as an increasing amount of empirical data has been collected and analyzed. It became clear that the organizational level of analysis lacked the specificity required to understand quality and the efforts made to strive towards it in practice. As a result, this thesis analyzes the level of individual metropolitan managers in the metropolitan region. The merits of this perspective and the inductive approach that was utilized are discussed in Section 9.1.

In Sections 9.2 to 9.4, four theoretical concepts stemming from the empirical analysis are reviewed: aims, threats, demarcation and fear. The review involves a reflection on the sensitizing concepts discussed in Chapter 4, as well as additional theoretical insights that presented themselves in the closing phase of the analysis. The account of these concepts leads to the answer to the central question to this thesis: *How do public managers in public organizations dealing with complex metropolitan decision-making act, how can their actions be explained and what joint actions does this lead to?*

9.1 THE INDIVIDUAL METROPOLITAN MANAGER PERSPECTIVE

A large number of analyses of metropolitan governance focus on regions as a whole and on government organizations (see e.g. Short and Kim, 1999; Salet et al., 2003). This thesis has adopted a different perspective: that of individual metropolitan managers.

9.1.1 The individual metropolitan manager overlooked

Individual metropolitan managers have been the object of study for a lot of research (see Healey, 1992; In 't Veld et al., 2005; Pollit, 2003; Lipsky, 1980; Mint-

zberg, 1978; Noordegraaf, 2000). However, the existing analyses focus mostly on top-managers (e.g. Noordegraaf, 2000; Mintzberg and Westley, 2000), theorizing about leadership and focussing on persons with senior and formal leadership roles in the organization (Locke, 2001: 97). Another group of metropolitan managers focuses on street-level bureaucrats (e.g. Lipsky, 1980; Ringeling, 1978), describing their object of research as '*public service workers who interact directly with citizens in the course of their jobs, and who have substantial discretion in the execution of their work*' (Lipsky, 1980: 3). The lack of interest in these public middle managers was articulated by Downs (1967). In his analysis, Downs (1967) critically assessed the magnitude of the bureaucracy in the US. From his perspective, an excessive bureaucracy – which is caused by an increasing societal complexity among other things – wrongly limits individual freedom. The bureaucracy is therefore viewed with suspicion.

From the empirical analysis in this thesis, however, it can be concluded that middle management is thriving. Thousands of metropolitan managers are devoting their efforts to preparing policies for metropolitan developments. Regardless of the question of whether the large number of public middle managers is desirable, their role in complex contexts such as metropolitan regions should not be overlooked. Metropolitan managers attempt to make changes from within the complex system, as they are a part of it. As has become clear in this thesis, their efforts to help explain the developments that are taking place on the level of the complex metropolitan regions as a whole.

9.1.2 Inductively studying individual metropolitan managers

An inductive research strategy was employed in this thesis to conduct an analysis of individual metropolitan managers. As explained in Chapter 2, this approach is dedicated to developing grounded theories through the application of a constant comparative approach to rich data (Glaser and Strauss, 1967). The approach has proven to be very useful in capturing the complexity within which metropolitan managers' actions occur (Locke, 2001: 95).

This thesis focused on the example of the Dutch Randstad region in an effort to understand and explain the actions of metropolitan managers in the metropolitan region. The metropolitan managers who were studied work for a variety of govern-

ment institutions within this metropolitan region, in a variety of positions. It is therefore important to note that the metropolitan managers in this case are mostly public managers. In keeping with a Straussian approach to grounded theoretical research (Corbin and Strauss, 2008; Charmaz, 2006), the analysis of these public managers was guided by three sensitizing concepts: spatial quality, complexity and complexity management. The research was guided by these concepts in the initial phases of the empirical analysis, which involved interviewing, observing, coding and writing memos, and this helped gain insight into the actions of individual public managers and their explanations. The analysis and synthesis of the raw data of public managers in the Randstad region resulted in the emergence of the concepts of aims, fear and demarcation as central concepts in understanding the practice of managing metropolitan complexity. Subsequently, a theory of fear-based metropolitan public management crippling joint ventures for quality was developed.

9.2 THE AIMS OF METROPOLITAN PUBLIC MANAGERS

The work of public managers in the metropolitan region starts out with the tasks they have to perform and the accompanying aims they strive towards. These public management aims have been a valuable object of analysis in public management. The aims are generally considered to explain the actions undertaken by public managers. Two aspects of public management aims have been identified in the literature and in this thesis: the contents and the way in which they come about.

9.2.1 The content of aims: Striving towards a common interest

As discussed in Chapter 4, spatial quality functioned as a sensitizing concept for the empirical analysis in this thesis. It became clear that in discussions on what aims are adhered to by public managers, different conceptualizations of quality are identified. However, difficulties in defining these concepts have however caused researchers to call for a focus on individual interpretation, rather than working with preconceived notions of quality (Dauvelier and Luttik, 2003: 3; Driessen, 2005: 5; Hooimeijer et al., 2001: 10).

Therefore, researchers are developing concepts to depict individual interpretations. For instance, drawing on the work of Schön and Rein (1994) and Oren

(2006: 231), the role of frames in understanding public managers' stance towards their work was highlighted. Frames are considered to be the basic assumptions underlying the interpretation of specific situations, which underlie the interpretations and actions of public managers. These frames are specified to have ideological, societal, situational and technical aspects (Fischer, 2003: 193-196). Frames can be considered to be at the core of how individuals make sense of situations, interactions (Weick, 1995) and of their own intended actions (Ajzen and Fishbein, 1980: 86). In practice, the tacit nature of underlying assumptions make it difficult for researchers to fully grasp the frames that are at the core of interpretations of situations and the actions taken accordingly (Schön and Rein, 1994; Weick, 1995).

By focussing on the individual public manager, this thesis set out to gain insight into the aims that public managers in metropolitan regions such as the Randstad region strive towards. It became clear that metropolitan public managers underline their devotion to defending common interests in their work, rather than striving towards quality on the level of a sector. In the practical application of these common interests indicated, public managers strive towards three types of aims: organizational advantages, accomplishments on a regional level and the implementation of interventions. Each aim is strived toward by a different type of public manager. Public managers striving toward organizational advantages were referred to in this thesis as a 'organization-managers'; those striving toward accomplishments on a regional level were depicted as 'region-managers'; and the term 'intervention-managers' was used to refer to public managers who devote their efforts to implementing interventions. The common interests of these public managers are not defined in isolation. Rather, public managers establish their aims in interactions. The analysis has provided with insight into the assumptions that are at the core of the actions of individuals. The empirical analysis has indicated that the assumption that a large part of the social surroundings are about to threaten their successful achievement of aims plays an important role in metropolitan public management. This can be interpreted as a social frame, indicating that 'part of the social surroundings (vertically and/or horizontally organized) are threatening to the successful achievement of aims'.

9.2.2 How aims come about: Establishing aims in interactions

Public managers define their aims by drawing from organizational chatter, deliberations with colleagues, the wishes of their superiors and their task description. *"When it comes to projects, most aldermen are likely to have a distinct point of view. But when it comes to general things…well, what does [my organization] think is important? […] I often go talk to my colleagues who've been here longer than me. On how should we deal with this and what should we think of this?"* [1] By deliberating with others such as their colleagues, public managers receive affirmation that they are representing an aim that is adequately supported. As a consequence of the ongoing nature of deliberations on what to strive toward, public managers are more at ease in setting their aims as they have a longer history of working for their organization and/or on a particular type of task.

As noted in the previous section, the literature on quality and individual frames discussed as sensitizing concepts in Chapter 4 suggests that the aims of public managers are closely connected to the individual. However, the findings in this thesis however point to the interacting and intertwining of quality perceptions and frames as being at the core of what public managers strive toward in practice. Thus, it may be argued that rather than being economic men ('Homo Economicus'), public managers are sociologic men ('Homo Sociologicus'), acting in the joint interests of their social surroundings (Darhrendorf, 1959). The logic of appropriateness (March and Olssen, 2006) also fits in with the ways in which public managers establish their aims. This is in reference to the human inclination to do as one thinks appropriate within the framework of rules, examples and organization into institutions (March and Olssen, 2006: 689).

9.3 FEARING THE SOCIAL ENVIRONMENT

In addition to establishing aims in interactions, public managers have to achieve these aims within a very large social environment. The actors in this social environment, the interests they represent and the actions they take are subject to on-going changes. This characteristic of the social environment is considered by public managers to result in a particular capability that is required to manage in the metropolitan region. Public managers believe that the ability to detect current

as well as future developments in their social environment an important quality to have in their line of work. Public managers leading a department may even select colleagues on the basis of these traits. *"It's something that's on the function profile. I insist that people also see it as part of their work, and I include it in assessment talks too."* [2]

Public managers are embedded multilaterally, in a social environment in which a large variety of actors with diverging interests attempt to influence decision-making. In this thesis, it became clear that public managers have an attitude of anxiety, concern or 'fear' for the different (potentially threatening) interests of actors in the social environment. Conflicting interests are considered to be threatening to the success of their aims. Therefore, in order to achieve their aims, public managers make use of support they get from their social surroundings. However, even more so, they devote their time to dealing with the social environment. This way, they strive to work at achieving their aims in a manner that is as unimpaired as possible.

9.3.1 Public manager embeddedness

Organization-, region- and intervention-managers are each embedded in a social environment that is made up of different types of actors. Organization-managers are confronted with private stakeholders, organizational politicians, council members and organizational colleagues. Region-managers are less connected to stakeholders, but regional colleagues and politicians and organizational colleagues are in their address books. Intervention-managers are in contact with private stakeholders, regional politicians and organisational colleagues. In general, the social environment can be divided into a vertically organized social environment and a horizontally organized one. The vertical context is characterized by the power-relations between the various actors. In the horizontal social environment, relationships between actors are not defined by power.

The distinction between the vertical and the horizontal context makes it possible to understand the different types of influences that public managers are faced with in their work. Public managers involved in metropolitan management perceive each of these contexts in a different way.

9.3.2 Experiencing threats from the social environment

When reflecting on the ways in which organization-, region- and intervention-managers interpret their social environment, it becomes clear that they direct most of their work to a particular part of the context. Public managers believe that this part of their context generates most of the influences that they consider to be threatening to the realization of their aims.

Organization-managers believe that their social environment is resistant to the organizational aims they intend to achieve. In some cases, the vertical context generates threats. For instance, authorities must force undesirable adaptations onto their aims. In most cases, however, organization-managers consider their horizontal context to be threatening. Stakeholders are believed to inherently oppose progressive organizational intentions, only causing delays and reducing the quality of the end-result when they are involved in early stages of the decision-making process. Other departments resist any interventions that are undesirable based on their own sectorial interests. Regional organizations in the surroundings are criticized for going ahead with interventions that threaten the success of the organizational intentions.

Region-managers experience an unsympathetic social environment when it comes to making accomplishments on a regional level. Most of the threats stem from the vertical context of those actors who are responsible for formalizing the regional agreements Authorities in the region often disagree on the interventions to be developed on a regional level. Politicians withhold their support due to organizational turmoil. Organizational colleagues resist regional accomplishments and withhold their contributions to achieving them.

Intervention-managers experience their vertical as well as their horizontal context to be absent and lacking in contribution. Authorities in the region refrain from playing an active leading role in the realization of the project. Regional authorities are indifferent to the course of the project. Stakeholders refrain from having an active role in the project. Public managers working on interventions from the region are likely to wander away from the intervention implementation aim.

9.3.3 Fearful encounters

When reviewing the experiences of public managers with their social environment, what stands out is that it is characterized by an anxiety, concern or 'fear'. The social

environment that they are embedded in is believed to generate a vast amount of opposition to the aims that are strived towards. Realizing what is in the common interest within this threatening and oppositional context is a struggle. Public managers find themselves not merely embedded in a large social environment, but caught in it.

The fear of potentially thwarting influences coming from their opponents causes public managers to react by demarcating their working area. Each type of public manager employs a different strategy for this.

9.4 THREAT MANAGEMENT THROUGH DEMARCATION

There are a large number of influencing actors in the social environment of public managers. Managing metropolitan complexity can then be largely depicted as a task of demarcating the working area. This working area consists of those actors and interests that a public manager allows to influence his work. Each type of public manager makes a different type of demarcation.

9.4.1 Demarcating the working area

By including and excluding people and by focusing on some aspects and not on others, public managers attempt to create some clarity in the vast and dynamic context of influencing actors. This concept of demarcating the working area concurs with the idea of boundary judgments described in Chapter 4 (Flood, 1999), delineating an 'action area'. In their attempts to gain insight into a complex context, scientists are described by Flood (1999) to make boundary judgments. These are described as mental constructs that delineate an action area for a certain time and place. Teisman (2005) and Pel (2009) have supported the idea that this temporary delineation of the area worked on is not exclusive to researchers. Actors within the complex context also demarcate their action areas. Public managers in the metropolitan regions have a certain number of actors and interests that they allow to influence their aims and actions. As mentioned earlier, colleagues who are consulted to define the aims are a part of this 'in-crowd'.

However, most actors and interests that public managers identify in their social environment are believed to compromise the successful realization of their aims.

Public managers therefore direct their efforts at keeping these actors and interests from being able to influence their work. These threatening actors and interests are kept outside of the working area.

9.4.2 Making social, role-oriented and task-specific demarcations

Organization-managers make social demarcations in their efforts to keep others from endangering the execution of interventions that are in the best interests of their organization. They make use of their own position within their organizational structure, for instance by consulting with the politician involved or by gaining power by legal means. *"You can do it in different ways. You can ask an official question. You can play the upper hand or the lower one."* [3] As they make use of their own position over others, it is clear that making social demarcations is part of the power-adhering strategy that organization-managers employ. This coincides with the institutional, rule based strategy referred to by Noordegraaf (2000: 2). The public managers' position of power is used as a way to exclude opposing organizational departments and stakeholders: *"And if you let people have too much say and allow them to play a part in it and all that, then everything will become faded."* [4] In doing so, organization-managers clear away some of the opposition from the road they must cross in order to realize their aims.

Region-managers are more inclusive when it comes to the social environment they allow into their working area. Catering to the dynamic nature of their social environment and the influences coming out of it, region-managers react adaptively to involve actors who are claiming their role. Instead of socially demarcating their working area, region-managers demarcate their working area through a carefully distinguished task description. Region-managers stress their role as a coordinator of the regional agreements, as opposed to being involved in the practical translation of the agreements. Region-managers focus on the process, rather than the contents. In order to make a large number of actors take the regional agreements into account in their work, region-managers employ an informal strategy. This strategy is aimed at managing relationships rather than contents.

Intervention-managers maintain a strong intervention-orientation in their work. They make task-oriented demarcations in their efforts to realize their project. This

means that only those public managers who play a role in the projects' execution are included in their working area. This clearly limits the amount, as well as the degree to which, actors in the social environment can influence the results. The intervention-orientation is reflected in the procedural strategy they employ. By splitting up their tasks into different phases and organizing stakeholders in groups with different levels of power over the results, intervention-managers work at minimizing threats to the proper execution of their tasks.

The practice of demarcation functions as a way for metropolitan public managers to adequately realize their 'common interest' aims. In practice, however, this practice of acting upon a basic assumption of fear, which can be referred to as 'fear-based practice', cripples joint actions. This practice limits the eventually achieved quality in the metropolitan region.

9.5 THE CRIPPLING EFFECT OF FEAR IN TAKING JOINT ACTIONS

Most of the analysis in this thesis has focused on the individual level of metropolitan public managers. However, it has been made clear that the practice of metropolitan public management described has implications on the regional level of metropolitan public management.

By acting from an initial attitude of fear of the potential distortion of their achieving aims through demarcation, joint actions of organization-, region- and intervention-managers are compromised. Where possible, metropolitan public managers cancel each other out of their working area, while including like-minded individuals. Rather than supplementing each other with regard to the levels of quality – organizational, regional and intervention-oriented – that each type of public manager aims for, fear-based metropolitan public management restricts interactions between organization-, region- and intervention-managers.

9.5.1 Estranged metropolitan public managers

In keeping with their interpretations of their social environment, organization-, region- and intervention-managers also view each other as potential threats. Organization-managers believe that both region- and intervention-managers work on aims that are likely to be counterproductive to the organizational quality.

Intervention-managers believe that organization-managers hold back the implementation of the intervention. They consider region-managers to be irrelevant to their efforts. Region-managers consider organization- and intervention-managers to be actors who hold back the execution of interventions. Based on these fears of the expected influences, organization-managers exclude region- and intervention-managers from their working area. Region-managers exclude the organizational and intervention-related convictions that underlie the actions of organization- and intervention-managers from their work. Intervention-managers restrict the influences of organization- and region-managers by grouping them and distributing power in terms of the project in question.

9.5.2 Metropolitan public management group formation

The estrangement of organization-, region- and intervention-managers is aggravated even more by another process that takes place among metropolitan public managers: the grouping together of like-minded public managers. Public managers have a tendency to work more closely with like-minded individuals when it comes to achieving their aims. In the metropolitan region, organization-managers work more with organization-managers, region-managers with region-managers and intervention-managers with intervention-managers. This has a long tradition in public management, and has come to shape the way many governmental organizations work. It especially shapes the work of organization-managers, as they have the longest history of grouping together, making group think more of an issue with them than with region- and intervention-managers, who are relatively new to the game. A link can be made to the idea of 'group think' (Janis, 1971). This idea was introduced to the analysis during the final Phase 4 of the empirical analysis. As group-formation plays an important role in explaining the demarcating efforts of public managers, 'group-think' deserves a short exploration.

Group think among intervention-managers occurs for each project among intervention team colleagues. Janis (1971) has identified eight characteristics of group think: Invulnerability, Rationale, Morality, Stereotypes, Pressure, Self-censorship, Unanimity and Mind guards.

Actors who are subject to group think find themselves *invulnerable* to any wrongdoing, which causes them to take irresponsible risks out of optimism. For instance, organization-managers may strive towards prestigious developments in their con-

stituency despite various warnings about regional disagreements. Group think also makes actors collectively construct *rationalizations* in order to discount warnings and negative feedback. For metropolitan managers, this involves actors continuously stressing the common interest that is only realized when they succeed in their work. This also highlights the unquestioning belief among metropolitan public managers of the *morality* of their in-group. The interpretations of others as threats to realizing their own aims is part of the *stereotypical* interpretation of enemy groups that takes place with group think. Within the groups of organization-managers, region-managers and intervention-managers that have developed, public managers are under *pressure* and *self-censor* to convey a group consensus. This compromises the extent to which they are able and prepared to change their actions, even if they understand that their current approach is crippling for joint actions. Individuals who are subject to group think support the idea of a *unanimous* approach towards others, and even tend to act as *mind guards*, deflecting any influences that might endanger the consensus that reigns in the group.

9.5.3 The metropolitan tragedy of the commons

As noted in Chapter 1, metropolitan management is faced with global economic competition, congestion, and strains on the urban environment. organization-, region- and intervention-managers each play an important role in dealing with these issues. Organization-managers focus on the level of the constituency, region-managers on the region as a whole and intervention-managers direct their efforts at tackling the issues within the confines of their intervention area. In practice however, estrangement through demarcation and group think restricts joint actions. This limits that quality metropolitan public management is able to achieve.

Drawing from this assertion, metropolitan development can be characterized as the result of a tragedy of the commons (Hardin, 1968; Ostrom, 1990: 2). In addition to the idea of group-think, this theoretical idea was also introduced in the final Phase 4 of the empirical analysis. The tragedy of the commons stems from the idea that each individual will strive towards the maximization of his own gains, eventually jeopardizing gains for the whole. *'Each man is locked into a system that compels him to increase his herd without limit – in a world that is limited. Ruin is the destination toward which all men rush, each pursuing his own best interest in a society*

that believes in the freedom of the commons' (Hardin, 1968: 1, 244 in Ostrom, 1990: 2). For metropolitan public management, this implies that each public manager will continue to work on realizing the aims that they themselves consider to be in the common interest. As no exchange takes place among public managers, the aims are not supplemental. Metropolitan public management leads to scattered metropolitan development, never meeting its full potential.

9.6 OVERCOMING THE FEAR OF COMPLEXITY

Public managers are aware of the fact that the quality in the metropolitan region does not meet up to its full potential. However, instead of reflecting on their own contributions to this situation, organization-, region- and intervention-managers generally focus on factors in their social environment they feel need to be adapted. It is especially noticeable that in their accounts, public managers remain close to the approaches to metropolitan public management difficulties described in Chapter 1: the institutional, the boundary crossing and the rule guided approaches.

9.6.1 The call to adapt the social environment

In their points of view with regard to the difficulties at play in the region, public managers are closely connected to the three approaches reflected in the first section: the institutional, the boundary crossing and the rule guided approach. They are both the products of the approaches as well as contributors to it. organization-, region- and intervention-managers depict the difficulties they experience in their work as being caused by their social environment.

The institutional approach to dealing with threats

An often-heard criticism of the social environment of generating threats is the large number of government institutions that are active in the area. This 'network development' is mostly criticized by organization-managers for causing difficult development on the regional level. Each of the organizations is believed to put their own interests first, thereby threatening the joint interests. This excessiveness of public organizations on a limited amount of land is commonly debated in the Dutch context. Governmental restructuring has been proposed as a remedy. It is

their presumption that by having fewer authorities in an area, the joint interests in a region can be put into practice. This is closely linked to the institutional approach of metropolitan public management.

In practice, the restructuring of institutions in the region takes place continuously. In the Randstad regions, this takes place particularly in municipal restructuring. This mostly results in the establishment of new government institutions that are larger than their predecessors. In practice, this leads to similar issues for public managers. While smaller organizations are believed to pose a threat to joint development within alliances, public managers within larger organizations experience threats to joint development that stem from within their organizational structure. It could be argued that by eliminating the problem on the level of interacting organizations, the issues reappear on the organizational level.

The boundary crossing approach to dealing with threats

Another often-referred to criticism of the threat that is generated by the social environment is its lack of commitment to joint agreements. Region-managers in particular indicate that while politicians from different organizations may agree on interventions on a regional level, this does not automatically ensure the co-operation of these organizations on these interventions. Thus, they call for more acceptance and internalization of regional agreements within their own and other organizations. *"They ought to work together, not that it always has to come from others, right? Saying 'we don't care about the rest, as long as [our organizational] interests are safeguarded.' Just say that 'when you work together, you should give and take, you should give and receive', so to say."* [5] This coincides with the boundary crossing approach to metropolitan public management.

However, acceptance and internalization among colleagues are not able to be achieved without force. Critics who cite a lack of commitment within organizations stress the need for politicians to be more pointed towards their employees. This has proven to be the case for some region-managers who work for municipalities with a supportive mayor. One of the most prominent factors that compromises the support of politicians is the rule of the organizational council. Aldermen and deputies are accountable to their council, and not to the alliance in which interventions are agreed upon. Elections take place every four years and change the political setting on a regular basis, causing public managers to have to work continuously

at gaining support for joint agreements. This implies that political support is not a stable solution to the interpreted issue of a lack of commitment.

The rule guided approach to dealing with threats

One criticism that is often raised by public managers is the lack of an authoritarian structure for interventions that go beyond the boundaries of constituencies. In particular, intervention-managers blame the lengthy and problematic course of development in the metropolitan region on the lack of distributed responsibilities. While the intervention is the product of a joint effort, responsibility for the intervention is fragmented. Organizations are hesitant to take on the responsibility of intervention authority, as this means having less possibilities to defend the organizational interests in it. In response to this criticism, an adaptation of the position of alliances is proposed. By shaping the alliance into a formal institution, the agreements made on the joint level obtain the formal status of decisions. This would lead public managers to be bound in their actions by regional agreements. This approach corresponds with the regulatory management approach to metropolitan public management.

Agreements made between different organizations within alliances are delicate. The accountability of politicians towards their own organization and council causes them to be very cautious. The informal nature of alliances creates a setting where political representatives are able to do more than they would in more formal settings. Despite the potential benefits of more formalization in the regional alliance, formalization also restricts the possibilities created by collaboration within alliances.

Public managers themselves refer to their social environment as the cause of the reduced quality in the metropolitan region as a whole. They call for more clarity of structure, more collaboration and a more orderly structure of rules. However, this thesis has made it clear that realizing high quality in the metropolitan region requires public managers to look at themselves for the cause as well as the solution to the difficulties.

9.6.2 Adapting individual public management

In order to tackle the issues that arise in the metropolitan region, fear-based metropolitan public management that cripples joint ventures for quality should be made a thing of the past. Metropolitan public management should become more based on trust (Edelenbos and Eshuis, 2009: 196), allowing for an honest exchange of insights between managers. In this ideal-type of metropolitan public management, organization-, region- and intervention-managers allow each other to be a part of their working area. By demarcating from a perspective of trust, rather than of fear, joint ventures for quality can become fruitful enterprises. While this may seem to be a 'just do this' recommendation, it is in fact everything but that.

Providing a mirror for metropolitan public managers

The current way of working has had a long history in metropolitan public management. Over time, the social environment and the debates within which public managers have to achieve their aims has expanded, as has the debate on what should be achieved in the metropolitan region. Public management attempts to make their work more orderly and functional by retreating and focusing on their own aims. As like-minded public managers have shared experiences, it is understandable that organization-managers look up other organization-managers, region-managers look up other region-managers and intervention-managers look up other intervention-managers.

Because public managers have strong reasons for acting the way they do, changing their actions in order to develop trust-based metropolitan public management is not easy. Trust-based metropolitan public management needs changes to occur on a joint, regional level. However, changes on this level are unlikely to come about instantly: someone needs to take the first step, after which others can follow. This involves adopting an incremental approach to realizing trust-based metropolitan public management. The first step of this approach consists of reflecting on one's own role. This corresponds with being 'alert', a characteristic discussed in Chapter 4 as being required for managing complexity (Edelenbos et al., 2009: 173). The second step of the incremental approach to realizing trust-based metropolitan public management consists of a changing endeavor. In accordance with Edelenbos et al. (2009: 173), Senge (1990) and Stacey et al. (2000) discussed in Chapter 4, this second step requires the public manager to be flexible and adaptive. However,

foremost is demands of public managers to express courage and avert from the practices they are most familiar with.

Reflexive metropolitan public management

In order to change their actions, metropolitan public managers must gain an awareness of their own role in the practice of threat-based metropolitan public management. Gaining this awareness requires a public manager to be reflexive.

This thesis has provided a mirror for public managers in the metropolitan region. This image allows for metropolitan public managers to recognize their own role as an organization-, region- or intervention-manager, and that of others. Metropolitan public managers have to gain insight into their aims and the specific strategies and demarcations they make in efforts to achieve these aims. In addition, they have to reflect on the aims, strategies and demarcations of other actors whom they deal with in their work. Only by being reflexive of their own work can public managers understand the negative, fear-based spiral in which they have become caught.

Daring metropolitan public management

After learning about the fear-based spiral that they have become caught in, public managers can devote their efforts to changing their own actions. As mentioned earlier, metropolitan public managers have understandable reasons for acting in the ways that they do. The large number of actors providing feedback on a public managers' work threatens the success of a public manager in achieving his aims. Diverging from the known way of doing things therefore requires public managers dare and work outside of their own known frame of action.

Daring organization-managers do not meet the influence of region- and intervention-managers with fear, and will take the step of including them in their actions. Daring region-managers will not be fearful when it comes to talking about the contents of what is regionally agreed upon with organization- and intervention-managers. Daring intervention-managers in turn will be more open to the position of their project in a regional as well as an organizational context.

By working outside of their known frame of action in this way, public managers are able to engage in an exchange process between the different interpretations of common interests on different levels – organizational, regional and intervention-

oriented levels. While daring metropolitan public management mostly requires work by individuals, factors of their social surroundings could aid metropolitan managers in being daring. More research on these social factors is required. Initial insights drawn from this study indicate a role for politicians and organizational managers such as department-heads, creating a working climate facilitating mutual exchange. Daring public management is thus an important step in breaking away from a fear-based metropolitan public management practice, and moving towards a trust-based practice of managing metropolitan complexity.

Notes

[1] "Als er projecten in het geding zijn dan hebben de meeste wethouders nog wel een standpunt, […] Maar als het om hele algemene dingen gaat dan…ja, wat vind [mijn organisatie] belangrijk? […] Vaak praat ik daar ook een beetje over met mijn collega's hier, die al wat langer meelopen, van hoe we daarmee om moeten gaan, en wat moeten we daarvan vinden?"

[2] "Het is bijvoorbeeld ook iets wat in het functieprofiel staat. Ik sta er op dat mensen dat ook echt als onderdeel van hun functioneren zien en in beoordelingsgesprekken heb ik het daar ook over."

[3] "Je kan op verschillende manieren kan je zoiets doen. Je kan een officiële vraag stellen…je kan het hoog spelen, onderlangs spelen."

[4] "En als je daar te veel mee laat doen, en mee laat praten enzo, dan verwatert dat helemaal."

[5] "Ze zouden ook nog wel wat beter zouden mogen samenwerken met, en niet altijd maar dat het maar van één kant komt. Van 'als de [organisationele] belangen maar veilig zijn gesteld, de rest interesseert ons niet'. Doe nou gewoon zeggen van als je samenwerkt, moet je geven en nemen, moet je brengen en halen, laat ik maar zeggen."

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Appendix: The analytical process

In this thesis, I have applied grounded theoretical methodology. In chapter 3, this type of analysis is discussed. In thesis appendix, the various research activities I have performed for the grounded theoretical analysis are discussed.

As will become clear in the following paragraphs, the analytical process has taken place in four phases. In the first phase, the problem area underlying the analysis was studied. With a general notion of this problem area as the starting point, the second phase of analysis was started. This phase, the core issue phase, revolved around locating the core issue(s) at play within the problem area. This core issue is subsequently the input for the third phase of conceptualization. Theoretical integration of the concepts developed has taken place in the final phase of analysis.

PHASE 1: EXAMINING THE PROBLEM AREA

Before I started collecting empirical data through interviewing and observation, I had a general notion of what was to be studied: the complex nature of decision-making in metropolitan regions. This was motivated by the early assignment, which initiated the PhD project (Corbin and Strauss, 2008: 21). On the other hand, I attempted to understand more about the area that was to be studied by reading literature on metropolitan development (Corbin and Strauss, 2008: 22). This literature was at the core of the sensitizing concepts described in chapter 4. As discussed in chapter 1, literature connected the development of metropolitan regions to new assignments for their management: *"National governments still have a strong stake in metropolitan development, but the policy arena has turned into a 'multi-actor and multilevel game' (Hooghe and Marks, 2001). The challenge for metropolitan governance and spatial policy coordination is increasingly complicated under these dynamic and more open-ended circumstances."* (Salet et al., 2003: 3)

While the focus for the area was established, the core issue remained unknown. Therefore, in accordance with Corbin and Strauss (2008: 23), I devoted the next phase to uncovering the core issue at play in metropolitan management.

PHASE 2: UNCOVERING THE CORE ISSUE

Following Corbin and Strauss (2008: 23) and Charmaz (2006: 11), some initial interviews and observations were done in the second phase of the analysis in order to establish the core issue. By approaching the analysis in this way, I could get to the core issues that are important or problematic in the respondents' lives. Thereby, the relevancy of the problem area studied is assured: *"While, admittedly, there is no one and only relevant focus, the particular focus arrived at trough respectful examination of respondents' concerns reduces the risk of being irrelevant or merely trivial."*(Corbin and Strauss, 2008: 23).

The initial interviews (Charmaz, 2006: 47-48) lasted an average of two hours. The respondents were selected based on their involvement – in whatever way – with the South Wing collaboration. At that time, this was the dominant metropolitan collaboration in the southern part of the Randstad region. The thirteen respondents that were interviewed in this exploratory first phase worked for a variety of organizations, varying from the Province of South Holland, to WGR and WGR[+] regions and larger and smaller municipalities.

During the analytical process, the variety of interviews and observations were studied in the order in which they were retrieved. First, the recorded interviews were converted into transcripts and the observations were discussed in observation reports. Because 'Analysis begins with collection of the first pieces of data', I started coding the initial 236 pages of transcripts whilst also interviewing respondents. However, most of the analysis was done after this time-consuming part of this second phase had come to a close. Generally, I performed line-by-line coding of the transcripts (Charmaz, 2006: 50-53). In some cases, interviews were coded incident-to-incident (Charmaz, 2006: 53). Especially in the first phase, this implied writing down codes in the margins of the page for each sentence (Weiss, 1994: 155). The different codes were then developed by writing early memos (Charmaz, 2006: 11, 80). In the account below, a selection from three different interviews is shown in an effort to explain how I applied the initial coding practice of line-by-line-coding (Charmaz, 2006: 48-53) for the analysis in this thesis. Drawing on the established codes, I developed early memos that took the shape of texts as well as figures and tables. An example of an early memo is given.

Coding line-by-line

Provincial public manager, coded in October 2007

"It's not that within the Administrative Platform South Wing entirely different projects top the list than are prioritized within the Province, that's not the case.	[Coordination in the region without much problems]
The intention is, and that's the aim of the cooperation, to decide upon an agenda together and to execute that agenda within his own pen with his own instruments.	[Task of getting to regional agreement and move to execute by organizations individually]
So the battle isn't so much outdoors as it is indoors." [1]	[Battle within the own organization]

Municipal public manager, coded in October 2007

"Actually, they were right: there isn't any unity of policy on the level of the South Wing.	[Acknowledging the incoherency of the region]
So, uhm, 'let's try to get unity in it by an urbanization strategy, thinking up a joint urbanization strategy.'	[Accepting regional coordinative efforts]
And uhm, to which we'll react by yelling 'we don't trust is, and uhm, etcetera. You know?	[Reacting from the organization by agitating against regional coordinative efforts]
Unfortunately, that's how those things go in practice too." [2]	[Acknowledging own counterproductive actions]

Wgr-region public manager, coded in October 2007

"And they often don't really see the…it all takes up so much time, and they're already so stressed for time.	[Municipalities look up to the extra work connected to regional coordination]
And they don't see the use of, of deliberating and coordinating.	[Municipalities have a critical attitude with regard to the use of regional coordination]
Yes, that's difficult	[The critical attitude of municipalities are understood as an issue]
So you're always busy convincing, really trying to bring the joint interest to the intention." [3]	[Implications of critical attitude municipalities for own task]

Writing early memos

*Memo 1: The battle of public managers to convince colleagues in their own organiza-
tion to work from a regional interest's perspective*

January 2008

*In governmental organizations in the Southern Randstad region, some public
managers have been attributed the task of working on regional agreements. As
reflected in figure A1, their task is twofold: on the one hand, it is their job to
prepare developments on a regional level. On the other hand, they have to get
their own organization to work with the regional agreements in mind. While
these public managers are happy of the first part of their task, they consider the
second part of their task more difficult.*

*When it comes to getting their own colleagues to cooperate, these public man-
agers stumble upon 'different forces' that are at play. These forces are typed by
some as colleagues defending their own department's interests. Others indicate
colleagues unwilling to invest time in regional affairs to be the issue.*

*Drawing from this, a struggle between two types of public managers, having
different tasks and areas of focus, is revealed. In the adjacent figure A1, this
struggle is reflected by the box 'regional agreement vs. organizational priorities'.
Those public managers working on regional development are confronted by those
working from the perspective of departmental and organizational interests.*

Result of phase 2: Establishing the core issue for analysis

Based on the codes and memos written in this second phase, the core issue for
analysis could be formulated as *'the difficulty experienced by individual public man-
agers to get regionally agreed upon developments put into practice'*. In the third phase
of analysis, I attempted to analyze this issue more in depth. While the second
phase of analysis was primarily directed at describing the core issue, the third phase
was intended to find an explanation in the data.
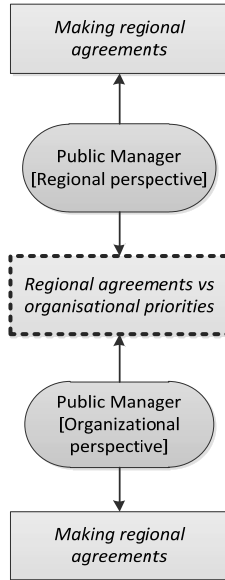
A1. The core issue in metropolitan management: regional agreements vs. organizational priorities

PHASE 3: CONCEPTUALIZATION

The exploratory interviews functioned as the starting point for the third phase of the analysis. In this phase, I revisited the codes used in the initial coding process and the memos written. The search was directed at finding explanations for the core issue established in the second phase (Charmaz, 2006: 11; Corbin and Strauss, 2008: 23).

The exploratory interviews were directed at gaining a broad understanding of public management in the metropolitan region. Therefore, the data proved to be too limited to generate a comprehensive explanation for the difficulties distinguished. In that light, an additional ten interviews lasting for up to two-and-a-half hours were held. Similar to the second phase, the respondents interviewed in this phase of data collection worked for municipalities, wgr(+) regions and the province in the southern Randstad region. In order to remain consistent, I used the same topic list for this second phase of interviewing. However, more room was left to

explore markers relating to the core issue during the interviews. For instance, when a respondent referred to his troubled relationship with his colleagues, I explored these troubles more extensively together with the respondent.

Then, over 600 pages of interview transcripts were coded through focused coding. *"Focused coding means using the most significant and/or frequent earlier codes to sift through large amount of data. Focused coding requires decisions about which initial codes make the most analytic sense to categorize your data incisively and completely."* (Charmaz, 2006: 57). Below, an section of an interview transcript that has been the subject of focused coding is given.

Focused coding

Municipal public manager, coded in November 2008

But if it's a good initiative, then we're prepared to present it to the neighborhood. [...] We have an interesting phenomenon for that, we've organized instruments for it. When I first came here, we had a standard product to do that exemplary procedure. Well, that's a whole underpinning of why you want to divert from the destination plan. Then everyone said 'well, if you're that far with your study, a discussion isn't really possible. Can't we develop some pre-phase in front of that?' So we have developed a special product/instrument - a development vision, and if there are more than one for a whole area we call it an area vision - which is especially aimed at communication with the neighborhood.	Using vision-development to facilitate desired developments
So when a project developer wants something here, and we really think it's an interesting initiative, then the same steps are taken in each time. The neighborhood has grown accustomed to it, so has management and as officials we also are accustomed to it. That's how we do it in [the city]."	Developing procedures to ensure habituation organization and stakeholders
We have to make those conservational destination plans anyway. That's to offer some legal security. That's also the basis from which we talk to the city. When a building initiative is presented, it will be alien to the destination plan beforehand. So we can always say 'no' to any developer wanting something." [4]	Using restrictive policy to inhibit undesirable developments

As the analysis progressed, concepts of '*Embeddedness*', '*Threats*', '*Spatial Quality*', '*Strategy*', '*Support*', '*Aims*', '*Fear*' and '*Demarcation*' came about. Using advanced memos (Charmaz, 2006: 81) it gradually became apparent that each of these concepts held part of the key to explaining the difficulties experienced by public managers in the metropolitan region to get regionally agreed upon developments

put into practice. In the following section of an advanced memo, the concept of 'threats' is elaborated on.

Writing advanced memos
Threats for regional managers:
Continuously being confronted with protesting actors around you

Being a region-manager implies continuously attempting to make the people around you break out of their known notions and venture into letting the program take the upper hand. This is fairly difficult since the culture of known actions is very much rooted in the historic development of the organization. This provides with specific types of issues they deal with when working with colleagues of their own organization. Region-managers are confronted with a variety of threats to the continuation of the regional collaboration, to the unity of the outcomes and to the way agreements are put into practice by individual organizations and departments.

Threatening the continuation of the regional collaboration
Some region managers are confronted with a regularly reappearing debate about the use of collaboration for their own organizations. The call for abolishment of collaboration is recurrent.

Threatening the unity of the outcome of the collaboration
Not all organizations in the region have visionary documents. Other politicians refrain from giving any feedback on their wishes on a regional scale. Both make figuring out 'the interests' the region-manager should represent an unclear affair. They run the risk of getting criticized by the organization(s) they represent in a later phase of collaboration.

Region-managers are confronted with the so-called 'Calimero-effect' (referring to a cartoon figure). By this, pessimism among administrators is implied. They find themselves resisting the idea of being the smallest boy in class, as compared to the other organizations represented in the collaboration. This can cause them to adopt a resistant attitude towards the collaboration.

Threatening the way agreements are put into practice by individual organizations and departments
Region-managers are also confronted with stakeholders neglecting to translate regional agreements to their organizational practice. This implies that they refrain from making a financial contribution to the regionally agreed upon developments and/or do not internalize them into their daily work. One of the threats is then that the documents written in cooperation find their place in a bookcase, collecting dust.

Result of phase 3:

In phase 3 of the analysis, eight concepts were drawn from the empirical data. These concepts were 'Embeddedness', 'Threats', 'Spatial Quality', 'Strategy', 'Support', 'Aims', 'Fear' and 'Demarcation'. In the explication of these concepts, the two types of public managers referred to in the exemplary early memo above were developed further. In this thesis, I have referred to these types as the 'organization manager' and the 'region manager'. However, some of the accounts of public managers did not fit the types developed. This resulted in the development of a third type of public manager: the 'intervention manager'. In practice, this can be pictured as in figure A2.

	Embeddedness	Threats	Spatial Quality	Strategy	Support	Aims	Fear	Demarcation
Organization-manager								
Region-manager								
Intervention-manager								

A2. The relationship between the concepts and the three types of public managers in the metropolitan region

PHASE 4: WRITING THE DRAFT

"Concepts alone do not make theory. Concepts must be linked and filled in with detail to construct theory out of data." (Corbin and Strauss, 2008: 103)

As this thesis aimed to develop theory on metropolitan public management, the final phase of analysis was dedicated at linking the various concepts developed in the third phase and filling them in with detail.

This was done by first writing down the findings for each concept ('*Embeddedness*', '*Threats*', '*Spatial Quality*', '*Strategy*', '*Support*', '*Aims*', '*Fear*' and '*Demarcation*'). The writings took the shape of individual chapters discussing one or more concepts. Continuously reviewing the chapters and their interrelation, the details of the concepts became more explicit. This process lead to the development of the current chapters 5, 6 and 7.

After writing the individual conceptual chapters, theoretical integration took place. In chapters 5 to 7, the individual actions – drawn from conceptualization – of public managers in metropolitan regional management are discussed. As described in chapter 1, public management in the metropolitan region can be interpreted as the result of a variety of choices made by a multitude of individual public managers. In line with that assertion, Chapter 8 was the result of theoretical integration. It is the result of the analysis of the implications of the individual actions of public managers described in chapters 5 to 7 for metropolitan public management as a whole. This was done by connecting the individual concepts and verification. Empirical literature was reviewed, as were observations and interview transcripts. Also, the findings were discussed with some of the respondents, leading to confirmation and refinements. During the analysis of the implications, the concepts developed in phase 3 were continuously refined. As a result, the discussion of the concepts in Chapters 5, 6 and 7 lead up to 3 core concepts: aims, fear and demarcation. In the figure A3, the relationship between the variety of concepts developed in the course of the analysis is reflected. The figure also reflects the location in this thesis of the explications of the concepts developed in phases 3 and 4.

After the refinement of the concepts was largely finished, the results of the empirical analysis was discussed with practitioners who weren't involved in the study as respondents. Also, the results were shared within the scientific community. This resulted in the introduction of theoretical concepts to the analysis such as of 'group-think' (Janis, 1971) and 'tragedy of the commons' (Hardin, 1968; Ostrom, 1990: 2), as potentially useful in depicting the findings. In the effort to interpret

the findings more adequately, these concepts are introduced in the concluding chapter.

The result of the analysis described in this Appendix is a study of public management of the metropolitan region. The difficulties experienced by public managers on an individual level are scaled up to provide insight into the problem area: the difficult course of metropolitan public management described in chapter 1.

Notes

[1] "Het is niet zo dat binnen het bestuurlijk platform zuidvleugel er hele andere projecten bovenaan de lijst staan als bij de provincie, dat is niet het geval. De inzet is ook, dat is ook het doel van het samenwerkingsverband, om samen een agenda te bepalen en die vervolgens iedereen terug in zijn eigen hok met zijn eigen instrumenten uitvoeren. Dus de strijd zit niet zozeer buitenshuis als dat het binnenshuis zit."

[2] "Op zich hadden ze daar wel gelijk in: er zit geen eenheid van beleid in op het niveau van de Zuidvleugel. Dus eh, 'laten we eh, laten we nou proberen daar eenheid in te krijgen door een verstedelijkingsstrategie, een gezamenlijke verstedelijkingsstrategie te bedenken.' En eh, waarop wij dan weer roepen van 'we vertrouwen het niet, en eh, et cetera,' snap je? Zo gaan die dingen helaas in de praktijk ook."

[3] "ze zien dan toch ook vaak niet heel erg het… ja het kost allemaal zoveel tijd, en ze zitten als zo krap in de tijd en ze zien er ook niet het nut van, van overleggen en bestemmingen, ja, dat is lastig. Dus daar bij je altijd mee bezig met overtuigen, toch het gemeenschappelijk belang proberen aan te geven."

[4] "Die conserverende bestemmingplannen die moeten we sowieso maken. Dat is ook om een stuk rechtszekerheid te bieden. Dat is ook de basis van waaruit wij ook het gesprek voeren met de stad. Komt er een bouwinitiatief dan is dat op voorhand in strijd met het bestemmingsplan, dus wij kunnen altijd nee zeggen tegen een ontwikkelaar die iets wil. Maar als het een leuk initiatief is dan zijn wij bereidt om dat voor te leggen aan de buurt. […]

Daar hebben we ook weer een apart fenomeen voor, instrumenten voor georganiseerd. Toen ik hier net kwam toen hadden we een standaardproduct om die vrijstellingsprocedure te doen, nou dat is een hele uitgebreide onderbouwing waarom je dan wil afwijken van het bestemmingsplan. Dan zei iedereen van ja, maar ja als je al zo ver bent met je onderzoek is er eigenlijk geen gesprek meer mogelijk, kunnen we niet een soort van voorfase daar aan bouwen? Dus we hebben een speciaal product/instrumentje ontwikkeld - ontwikkelingsvisie en als er meerdere zijn voor een heel gebied noemen we het een gebiedsvisie – waarin dat is met name bedoeld als investering in de communicatie met de buurt. […]

Dus als een projectontwikkelaar hier iets wil en we zijn het er eigenlijk over eens van ja nou dit is eigenlijk wel een interessant initiatief, dan gaat het wel elke keer op dezelfde manier in stappen. De buurt is er aan gewend, de raad is er aan gewend, bestuur is er aan gewend, ambtelijk zijn we er ook aan gewend. Zo doen wij dat in [de stad].

Samenvatting

"De Randstad moet een Europese top regio worden. Het kabinet heeft vrijdag daarom ingestemd met een urgentieprogramma op voorstel van verkeersminister Camiel Eurlings. Hij is vooral de besluiteloosheid rond tal van projecten zoals de ontsluiting van Almere zat. 'De tijd is rijp om door te pakken', zei Eurlings vrijdag na de wekelijkse ministerraad." (Volkskrant, 2009)

De besluitvorming in drukke, stedelijke gebieden zoals de Randstad komt niet gemakkelijk tot stand. In Nederland duurt een besluitvormingsproces gemiddeld 14 jaar (Feenstra, 2009). In sommige gevallen duurt het twee of drie keer zo lang om tot uitvoering van beleidsvoornemens te komen (zie Swart en Timmer, 2009). Zoals de minister in bovenstaand nieuwsbericht stelt, is langdurige besluitvorming problematisch. 'Besluiteloosheid' wordt als een bedreiging gezien voor de internationale concurrentiepositie van de Randstad (Ministerie van Economische Zaken, 2004: 25).

Het managen in metropolitaanse regio's is het object van studie in deze thesis. Metropolitaanse regio's concurreren met elkaar en het is zaak voor elke regio om tot besluiten te komen die de eigen positie versterken. Om hoofdkantoren van multinationals te kunnen huisvesten investeren regio's zoals het Duitse Ruhrgebied, de Randstad, de Amerikaanse *Tri-state area* en Greater London in een toenemende kwaliteit als vestigingsplaats. Ze moeten daarbij niet alleen verstedelijken, maar tegelijkertijd ook de problemen bestrijden die gepaard gaan met grootstedelijkheid. Het gaat dan om vraagstukken zoals druk op de ruimte, sociale problemen, congestie en verslechtering van het milieu. Dit vergt een hoogwaardig metropolitaans management. Maar hoe handelen managers in metropolitaanse regio's eigenlijk en waardoor worden ze gedreven?

METROPOLITAANSE MANAGEMENT COMPLEXITEIT

De verantwoordelijkheid voor het managen van metropolen ligt in ieder land bij andere actoren. Terwijl metropolitaans management in de Verenigde Staten meer een private aangelegenheid is, domineren in Singapore overheden (Wong et al., 2008). Europese metropolen hanteren een hybride model, waarbij het management in handen van overheden en private partijen is. Besluitvorming vindt vooral plaats door overheden, uitvoering vooral door private partijen.

Een belangrijk probleem bij het managen van de metropool ligt verscholen in de grensoverschrijdende eigenschap van metropolitaanse vraagstukken. De bestuurlijke verantwoordelijkheid is verspreid over vele overheidsinstanties en –lagen. Deze verspreiding van verantwoordelijkheden is nog sterker in policentrische metropolen, welke zijn opgebouwd uit verschillende stedelijke kernen. De Randstadregio is een voorbeeld van zo'n policentrische regio, bestaande uit de kernen Amsterdam, Den Haag, Rotterdam en Utrecht. Het management van deze regio is dan ook een verspreidde verantwoordelijkheid van de ministeries van Volkshuisvesting, Ruimtelijke Ordening en Milieubeheer (VROM), Economische Zaken (EZ), Landbouw, Natuur en Voedselkwaliteit (LNV) en Verkeer en Waterstaat (V&W); de provincies Noord-Holland, Zuid-Holland, Flevoland en Utrecht; en meer dan 140 gemeenten, waaronder de vier grootste: Amsterdam, Den Haag, Rotterdam en Utrecht. De verspreiding van verantwoordelijkheden in het managen van de omvangrijke, grensoverschrijdende vraagstukken waar metropolitaanse regio's worden geconfronteerd leidt tot een complexe praktijk van metropolitaans management.

OMGAAN MET METROPOLITAANSE VRAAGSTUKKEN

Om goed om te gaan met de grensoverschrijdende eigenschappen van metropolitaanse vraagstukken kan het management kiezen uit diverse aanpakken. Zo is er een *institutionele* aanpak, waarbij metropolitaanse verantwoordelijkheden worden geclusterd in een (nieuwe) organisatie (Short, 1996: 286; Thornley, 2003; Ostrom, 1990: 90, 207). Binnen deze aanpak valt de discussie over het oprichten van zogenaamde Stadsprovincies en een Randstadprovincie. Naast de institutionele aanpak wordt gewerkt vanuit een *grensoverschrijdend* aanpak. Binnen deze aanpak wordt de nadruk gelegd op onderlinge uitwisseling tussen de verschillende – bij het metropolitaanse management betrokken – gouvermentele en non-gouvermentele organisaties (Innes en Booher, 2003; Healey et al., 2003; Hajer, 2003). Daarbij gaat het om de bestuurlijke platforms Noord- en Zuidvleugel, de Vereniging Deltametropool en samenwerking binnen de zogenaamde WGR- en WGR⁺-regio's die zijn gebaseerd op de Wet Gemeenschappelijke Regelingen (Buijs et al., 2009: 105-107; Vereniging Deltametropool, 2009; Witte, 2002). Tot slot wordt er een *regelgerichte* aanpak onderscheiden, waarbij de lange duur en inefficiënte procedures

en processen worden aangepast. In de Randstad gaat het om het instellen van de Crisis en Herstelwet, de Spoedwet Wegverbreding en de herziening van de Wet op de Ruimtelijke Ordening (Rijksvoorlichtingsdienst, 2009).

In de praktijk van metropolitaans management komen ieder van deze drie aanpakken tegelijkertijd voor. Ze staan echter niet conflictloos naast elkaar. Zo wordt gesteld dat een geclusterde verantwoordelijkheid voor ontwikkelingen in de metropool ten onrechte voorbij gaat aan bestaande structuren (Innes en Booher, 1999: 153). De uitwisseling die wordt nagestreefd binnen de grensoverschrijdende aanpak wordt bekritiseerd vanwege het gebrek aan kracht, dat kan leiden tot bestuurlijke besluiteloosheid. Het verkorten van procedures en processen leidt tot de kritiek dat daardoor de publiek zeggenschap te zeer ondermijnd wordt.

METROPOLITAANS PUBLIEK MANAGEMENT BEGRIJPEN VANUIT INDIVIDUEEL PERSPECTIEF

In literatuur met betrekking tot metropolitaans management staan de drie verschillende aanpakken in de belangstelling. Daarbij ligt de focus op het organisatorische niveau (zie Short and Kim, 1999; Salet et al., 2003). Daarmee drijft het echter af van de onderliggende praktijk en politieke processen die in deze regio's plaatsvindt (Yiftachel en Huxley, 2002). De bestaande literatuur is daardoor niet in staat het variërende, dynamische karakter van complex metropolitaans management te doorgronden. Hoewel individuen onderwerp zijn van vele bestuurskundige studies (zie Healey, 1992; In 't Veld et al., 2005; Pollit, 2003; Lipsky, 1980; Mintzberg, 1978; Noordegraaf, 2000), is het individuele niveau met betrekking tot metropolitaanse besluitvorming onderbelicht geweest in de bestuurskundige literatuur (Wagenaar, 2004). Contexten waar complexe vraagstukken opdoemen vragen echter om een analyse van het individuele niveau (Hjern en Porter, 1981).

In een poging de variërende en dynamische metropolitaanse managementpraktijk te doorgronden is daarom in dit proefschrift naar het individuele niveau van metropolitaanse managers gekeken. Daarbij is de volgende centrale vraag onderzocht: *Hoe handelen publiek managers in publiek organisaties die omgaan met metropolitaanse complexiteit, hoe kunnen hun acties worden verklaard, en tot welke gezamenlijke acties leiden acties van individuele managers?*

Om de handelingen, hun verklaringen en de gevolgen daarvan op gezamenlijke acties te kunnen begrijpen is empirisch onderzoek verricht naar de ervaringen van individuele publiek managers in de zuidelijke Randstad regio. Deze regio is exemplarisch voor de complexe managementpraktijk van vraagstukken en aanpakken van policentrische metropolitaanse regio's in Europa. Om het handelen van publiek managers in dit gebied in beeld te kunnen brengen is een omvangrijke hoeveelheid data bestudeerd. Een veelheid aan rijke, kwalitatieve empirische data van en over publiek managers in de zuidelijke Randstadregio ligt ten grondslag aan deze studie. De aanpak wordt ook wel aangeduid als 'grounded theory' onderzoek (Charmaz, 1996; Corbin en Strauss, 2008, Glaser en Strauss, 1967). Deze analyse heeft tot verschillende inzichten geleid met betrekking tot de praktijk van metropolitaans management.

DOELEN: STREVEN NAAR KWALITEIT IN DE METROPOOL

Door de tijd heen zijn vele pogingen ondernomen om kwaliteitsconcepten zoals Milieugebruiksruimte, Ecologische Voetafdruk (Wackernagel en Rees, 1996), ruimtelijke kwaliteit (Dauvelier en Luttik, 2001: 3; Driessen, 2005; Verbart, 2004; Ministry of VROM, 1990), natuurlijke kwaliteit, waterkwaliteit, landschapskwaliteit (Driessen, 2005: 5) en duurzaamheid (World Commission on Environment and Development, 1987; Elkington, 1999) te operationaliseren. Hoewel fysieke karakteristieken vaak worden benoemd wordt ook gesteld dat de kwaliteit van een gebied grotendeels afhangt van de interpretatie daarvan.

Uit de studie van publiek managers in de zuidelijke Randstadregio blijkt dat er geen grote verschillen zijn tussen publiek managers met betrekking tot hun ideeën van wat kwalitatief goede ruimte is. In de praktijk echter streven publiek managers in de metropool in hun werk niet zozeer naar hun eigen beeld van gewenste kwaliteit, maar naar het beeld dat zij hebben van de kwaliteit waar zij naar zouden moeten streven binnen hun rol. Kwaliteitswensen komen daarbij naar voren op 3 verschillende niveaus. Zo zijn er publiek managers die streven naar kwaliteit op het organisationele niveau. Publiek managers die vanuit dit niveau opereren stellen positieve ontwikkelingen ten opzichte van hun eigen organisatie voorop in hun werk. Andere publiek managers streven vooral naar kwaliteit op het regionale

niveau. Dit houdt in dat zelfs wanneer een besproken ingreep minder positief zal uitpakken voor hun eigen organisatie, zij het belang op een hoger schaalniveau zullen behartigen. Weer andere publiek managers richten hun acties op het behalen van kwaliteit op het niveau van interventies. Daarbij staat de implementatie van de interventies waar zij zich op richten centraal.

Met het oog op de verschillende niveaus waar publiek managers zich toe richten in hun handelen kunnen drie typen publiek managers worden onderscheiden. De *organisatie-manager*, de *regio-manager* en de *interventie-manager*. Een ieder van deze typen publiek managers in de metropool is ingebed in een omvangrijke, dynamische sociale omgeving.

INGEBED IN DE METROPOLITAANSE SOCIALE OMGEVING

De specifieke ambitie die wordt vertegenwoordigd binnen een bepaalde taak wordt niet individueel vastgesteld. Publiek managers verrichten hun werk in een sociale omgeving die bestaat uit een veelheid aan mensen in diverse rollen. Ze zijn ingebed in een sociale omgeving die bestaat uit directe collega's, managers, politieke bestuurders, collega's van andere afdelingen, collega's in andere organisaties, burgers en vertegenwoordigers van het bedrijfsleven. Om te weten waar ze naar moeten streven in verschillende situaties raadplegen publiek managers hun directe collega's, politici, beleidsdocumenten en eerdere ervaringen. Naarmate iemand langer voor een organisatie werkt, wordt het voor die publiek manager gemakkelijker om na te streven doelen vast te stellen. Het vaststellen van de kwaliteit waar een publiek manager naar streeft vindt dus plaats in interactie. Daarmee volgen metropolitaanse publiek managers de 'logic of appropriateness' (March en Olssen, 2006), doelend op de neiging van publiek managers om te doen wat men passend acht binnen de regels, voorbeelden en instituties (March en Olssen, 2006: 689).

Er zijn ruwweg twee typen sociale omgevingen waar publiek managers in zijn ingebed. Aan de ene kant heeft een publiek manager te maken met een *verticaal georganiseerde sociale omgeving*. Daarbij wordt met name gedoeld op de actoren waarmee een publiek manager een op hiërarchie gebaseerde relatie onderhoudt, zoals een leidinggevende en een politieke bestuurder. Aan de andere kant hebben publiek managers te maken met een *horizontaal georganiseerde sociale omgeving*, die

bestaat uit actoren waarmee vooral een interactieve relatie wordt onderhouden. Daarbij kan gedacht worden aan collega's van andere afdelingen of organisaties.

Hoewel de inbreng van anderen in sommige gevallen de basis vormt voor de doelen waar men naar streeft, vormt in andere gevallen inbreng van anderen een belangrijke bedreiging voor publiek managers. Publiek managers ervaren de inbreng van anderen veelal als een potentiële bedreiging. Veelal komt dit voort uit eerdere ervaringen met een bepaalde actor. Zo zijn sommige ambtenaren wantrouwig wanneer het gaat om burgers, omdat ze er vanuit gaan dat zij zich zullen verzetten tegen bepaalde interventies. Aangezien de inbreng van anderen wordt geïnterpreteerd als potentiële belemmering voor het bereiken van de beoogde kwaliteit, zijn publiek managers dan ook altijd op hun hoede voor invloeden van buitenaf.

ANGST VOOR BELEMMERINGEN VANUIT DE METROPOLITAANSE SOCIALE OMGEVING

Het onderscheid tussen de verticale en de horizontale sociale omgeving is voornamelijk van belang bij het verklaren van de ervaringen die verschillende publiek managers hebben met hun omgeving. Deze ervaringen van de sociale omgeving zijn voornamelijk ervaringen van angst voor de inbreng van bepaalde groepen actoren.

Zo ondervinden *organisatie-managers* voornamelijk bedreigingen vanuit de horizontaal georganiseerde sociale omgeving. Daarnaast voelen ze zich gesteund door actoren die meer deel uitmaken van de verticaal georganiseerde sociale omgeving. De afwijkende inbreng van andere afdelingen, organisaties en private belanghebbenden wordt door deze publiek managers geïnterpreteerd als een bedreiging voor de door de organisatie te behalen kwaliteit. In tegenstelling tot organisatie-managers putten *regio-managers* steun uit de horizontaal georganiseerde sociale omgeving en ervaren ze bedreigingen vanuit de verticaal georganiseerde sociale omgeving. Deze publiek managers ervaren bedreigingen wanneer bestuurders en collega's, zowel in hun eigen organisatie als in andere organisaties, zich vanuit hun machtspositie onttrekken uit regionale afspraken met betrekking tot kwaliteit. *Interventie-managers* ervaren zowel op het horizontale als het verticale front

bedreigingen. Daarbij vormt het bestuurlijke vacuüm waarbinnen metropolitaanse interventies worden geïmplementeerd een bedreiging vanuit de verticaal georganiseerde sociale omgeving. Vanuit de horizontaal georganiseerde sociale omgeving hebben deze publiek managers te maken met het op afstand blijven van private partijen en eventuele verschuivingen van loyaliteit in de projectgroep.

DEMARCATIE VAN HET WERKGEBIED

Om hun voorgenomen doelen te kunnen bereiken is het voor publiek managers in de metropolitaanse regio van belang om te kunnen gaan met de potentiële bedreigingen die ze ervaren vanuit hun omgeving. Kern van de strategie in het omgaan met bedreigingen door publiek managers is demarcatie, wat de afbakening van het werkgebied behelst. Publiek manager maken scherp onderscheid tussen die onderwerpen en actoren waar zij hun aandacht aan besteden, en die onderwerpen en actoren die niet worden betrokken in hun werk.

Het afbakenen van werkgebied strookt met het maken van 'boundary judgments' zoals wordt beschreven door Flood (1999: 92). Deze grensbepalingen worden door wetenschappers toegepast om omvangrijke, complexe systemen in overzichtelijke eenheden te delen. Teisman (2005) en Pel (2009) suggereren dat ook actoren binnen deze systemen boundary judgments maken.

De verschillende typen publiek managers maken ieder een andere afweging in het afbakenen van hun werkgebied. Zo bakenen organisatie-managers hun werkgebied af op grond van actoren. Deze *sociale demarcatie* houdt in dat organisatie-managers zich vooral bezig houden met actoren die ze ondersteunend vinden in hun werk. Waar mogelijk proberen organisatie-managers actoren die een grote bedreiging vormen buiten hun handelen te houden. Regio-managers bakenen hun werkgebied inhoudelijk af op grond van hun coördinerende rol. De *rol demarcatie* van het werkgebied leidt ertoe dat inhoudelijke ontwikkelingen buiten hun actieve focus worden gehouden. Ten slotte bakenen interventie-managers hun werkgebied af op grond van hun taakstelling. Hun aandacht richt zich met deze *taak-specifieke demarcatie* op het gebied, de actoren en het probleem die centraal staan in de taak die zij moeten volbrengen: het implementeren van een bepaalde interventie.

INDIVIDUELE STRATEGIEËN IN HET OMGAAN MET COMPLEXITEIT

Om hun doelen te bereiken hanteren publiek managers verschillende strategieën. De handelingen die behoren bij deze strategieën zijn voornamelijk gericht tot die actoren die deel uitmaken van het werkgebied.

Organisatie-managers passen voornamelijk een op macht georiënteerde strategie toe in hun pogingen kwaliteit op organisationeel niveau te bereiken. Dat houdt in dat ze hun positie in de hiërarchie van de organisatie veelal aangrijpen als middel om anderen te overtuigen van het doel dat zij voorstaan. Wanneer bijvoorbeeld collega's van een andere afdeling hun medewerking aan een doelstelling onthouden, neemt de organisatie-manager contact op met zijn of haar manager of politiek vertegenwoordiger om medewerking van de betreffende afdeling af te dwingen. Deze op macht georiënteerde strategie valt samen met de institutionele, op regels gebaseerde strategie benoemd door Noordegraaf (2000: 2).

Regio-managers handelen voornamelijk binnen een informele strategie. Gezien hun rol binnen de organisatie staan veel regio-managers buiten de organisationele hiërarchie. Om ervoor te zorgen dat andere afdelingen en organisaties medewerking verlenen aan de afspraken die zijn gemaakt op regionaal niveau zijn regio-managers dan ook afhankelijk van hun sociale kwaliteiten. Het werk van regio-managers bestaat voornamelijk uit het overtuigen, voorlichten en coördineren van anderen.

Tot slot passen *interventie-managers* voornamelijk een zogenaamde procedurele strategie toe. Om tot uitvoering van de interventie die zij voor ogen hebben te komen splitsen interventie-managers hun taak op in fasen. Binnen iedere fase die moet worden doorlopen om een project ten uitvoer te brengen wordt vastgesteld wie betrokken is en op welke wijze deze actor invloed kan uitoefenen. Zo worden partijen bijvoorbeeld gepositioneerd in klankbordgroepen, waar zij wel invloed hebben op het project, maar geen zeggenschap.

VERVREEMDING EN GROEPSDENKEN ONDER PUBLIEK MANAGERS IN DE METROPOOL

Demarcatie is een invloedrijke factor in de verklaring van het handelen van publiek manager. Door scherp onderscheid te maken tussen dat wat wel en dat wat niet

betrokken wordt in de poging doelen te realiseren creëren ze duidelijkheid in een omvangrijke sociale omgeving van actoren en belangen. Wanneer gekeken wordt naar de gevolgen van deze individuele demarcaties worden twee ontwikkelingen zichtbaar.

Aan de ene kant vindt er vervreemding tussen de verschillende typen publiek managers plaats. Door de demarcatie handelen de organisatie-managers, regio-managers en interventie-managers buiten de werkgebieden van de ander. Organisatie-managers richten zich tot die actoren die van belang zijn in het bereiken van een succesvolle organisatie. Regio- en interventie-managers maken daar veelal geen deel van uit. Door zich te richten op het proces van coördinatie is het werk van organisatie- en interventie-managers buiten schot van de regio-manager. Om tot realisering van een interventie te komen staan interventie-managers niet toe dat betrokken publiek managers organisatiebelangen vertegenwoordigen binnen hun project. Ook ontwikkelingen op regionale schaal worden nauwkeurig buiten het project gehouden om ongewenste invloed van regio-managers te voorkomen.

Een andere ontwikkeling die zichtbaar wordt wanneer gekeken wordt naar de gevolgen van individuele demarcaties is groepsvorming. Organisatie-managers werken daarbij voornamelijk samen met andere organisatie-managers; regio-managers vormen groepen met andere regio-managers; interventie-managers werken voornamelijk samen met andere interventie-managers. Binnen deze groepen ontstaat een zogenaamd groepsdenken (Janis, 1971). Actoren binnen zo'n groep samenwerkende organisatie-managers, regio-managers of interventie-managers vormen daarbij zo'n hecht geheel, dat tegenstrijdige ontwikkelingen in de omgeving worden gezien als niet van invloed zijnde of niet bestaand of onsuccesvol. Wanneer een publiek manager desondanks tegenstrijdige ontwikkelingen erkent wordt hier als gevolg van groepsdruk en zelfcensuur niet naar gehandeld.

DE METROPOLITAANSE 'TRAGEDY OF THE COMMONS'

Als gevolg van groepsdenken en onderlinge buitensluiting komen publiek managers die doelen hebben op verschillende niveaus in de praktijk van metropolitaans management nauwelijks tot elkaar.

De kwaliteit van een metropolitaans gebied in het geheel heeft baat bij samen-
werking tussen actoren die werken aan kwaliteit op verschillende schaalniveaus.
De praktijk wijst uit dat de angst voor potentiële bedreigingen het gezamenlijk
optrekken van deze verschillende typen publiek managers belemmert. De ontwik-
kelingskansen van het metropolitaanse gebied als geheel worden daarmee niet
verbeterd. De metropolitaanse regio lijkt daarmee onvoldoende effectief om te
kunnen gaan met de altijd weer dreigende 'Tragedy of the Commons' (Hardin,
1968; Ostrom, 1990: 2), waar het gedeelde belang wordt bedreigd door het indi-
viduele. In het belang van metropolitaanse kwaliteit is het dan ook zaak deze op
angst gebaseerde manier van handelen tegen te gaan.

VAN ANGST VOOR NAAR VERTROUWEN IN DE SOCIALE OMGEVING

Dat de kwaliteit van de metropolitaanse regio bedreigd wordt, erkennen de
meeste publiek managers. De oorzaken die zij hiervoor aandragen zijn gericht
op de institutionele situatie, grensoverschrijdende vaardigheden, en procedures.
Publiek managers roepen op tot het inrichten van een metropolitaanse autoriteit,
het samengaan van bestaande instituties, het verbeteren van samenwerking door
ook te durven geven in plaats van nemen, en het stroomlijnen van procedures.

Uit de analyse in dit proefschrift blijkt de bedreiging voornamelijk voort te
vloeien uit individuele keuzes van publiek managers. Uit angst voor eventueel ver-
storende invloeden van anderen kiezen publiek managers ervoor hun werkgebied
zo af te bakenen dat *organisatie-*, *regio-* en *interventie-managers* geen rol spelen
in elkaars werk. Om kwaliteit in de metropool te realiseren moet deze praktijk
van wederzijdse uitsluiting worden tegengegaan. Onderlinge uitwisseling tussen
publiek managers van de drie verschillende typen is daartoe vereist.

Om tot onderlinge uitwisseling van organisatie-, regio- en interventie-managers te
komen is het van belang hun managementaanpak om te zetten in op vertrouwen
gebaseerd handelen. In plaats van de invloed van anderen defensief buiten het
werkgebied te sluiten, roept op vertrouwen gebaseerd handelen publiek managers
op om zich open en inclusief op te stellen naar de invloed van anderen.

Het is niet gemakkelijk om tot een verandering van handelen te komen. Het afbakenen van werkgebieden is binnen bureaucratieën sterk belegd. Ook is de sociale omgeving waarbinnen publiek managers hun doelen moeten nastreven complexer geworden, waardoor de waarde van demarcatie in het overzichtelijk maken van de sociale omgeving wordt versterkt. Afwijken van de huidige 'manier van doen' is dan ook een moeilijke opgave voor publiek managers in de metropolitaanse regio. Hoewel meer onderzoek gewenst is, zijn er aanwijzingen dat politici en managers ondersteunend zijn, maar anders handelen vergt vooral reflexiviteit en durf van de individu.

Om te gaan van op angst gebaseerd naar op vertrouwen gebaseerd handelen moeten publiek managers reflectief gedurfd zijn. Allereerst moeten ze in staat zijn hun eigen rol binnen dit geheel in te zien. Reflexiviteit vormt de eerste stap in het doorbreken van de negatieve spiraal waarin zij zijn beland. Om vervolgens te handelen naar de verkregen inzichten in het eigen handelen is durf nodig. De publiek manager moet hiervoor afwijken van gebruikelijke manieren van handelen in hun werk. Wanneer hierin durf getoond wordt door een groeiend aantal publiek managers, zal er binnen het management van de metropool een verschuiving zichtbaar worden van op angst gebaseerd handelen naar op vertrouwen gebaseerd handelen.