Chapter 10
Trading Zone and the Complexity of Planning

Vesa Kanninen, Pia Bäcklund, and Raine Mäntysalo

Abstract In this chapter, we explore the applicability of the *trading zone* approach by addressing the complexities that frame and penetrate all contested planning issues. Planning issues are thoroughly political, and the 'political' is thoroughly complex. The complexities in planning include not only issues of ontological and epistemological differences about what should be done and what is a 'good city' but also questions such as what kind of processes of decision making, information gathering and valuation should be incorporated in planning. By addressing the political, communicative and technical 'dimensions' of planning through two illustrative planning cases, we discuss how trading zone as a concept resonates with these complexities and whether it can bring theoretical and practical insights into planning. We find the nature of planning to be often more complex than the illustrations of trading zone formation thus far have portrayed. Hence, complexities may restrain the applicability of the trading zone concept as a planning tool. Overcoming the seemingly irreconcilable differences between actors in any planning case calls for creative, dialogical, locally sensitive and flexible planning. These issues are at the heart of the trading zone approach. Therefore, the trading zone approach can be suitable in a range of descriptive and normative uses within planning, when applied with due attention to different aspects of complexity.

Keywords Local boundedness • Bounded rationality • Consensus • Agonism • Normative

V. Kanninen (✉) • R. Mäntysalo
Department of Real Estate, Planning and Geoinformatics/YTK,
Aalto University, P.O. Box 12200, 00076 AALTO, Finland
e-mail: vesa.kanninen@aalto.fi; raine.mantysalo@aalto.fi

P. Bäcklund
School of Management, University of Tampere,
Tampere 33014, Finland
e-mail: pia.backlund@uta.fi

10.1   Introduction

> So the jury on what sort of planning we should have, and how much "knowledge" (and even what sort of knowledge) is necessary for good planning, is, I'm afraid, still out.
>
> [...] Such decisions are ultimately left to politicians, bureaucrats, business lobbies, urban social movements, and the media to resolve—that is, to the political process (Friedmann 2008, p. 251).

Our chapter has been inspired by the above note by John Friedmann. Indeed, planning issues are thoroughly political, and 'the political' is thoroughly complex (e.g. Innes and Booher 1999; Hillier 2003; Innes et al. 2011; Mäntysalo et al. 2011a). This complexity includes not only issues of ontological and epistemological differences about what should be done and what is a 'good city' but also questions such as what kind of processes of decision making, information gathering and valuation should be incorporated in planning. In this chapter, we explore how and to what extent can the notion of *trading zone* (Galison 1997) be used in addressing the complexities that frame and penetrate all contested planning issues – acknowledging that in modern democracies, the politicisation of planning issues should be seen more as a goal than a problem in planning practice.

The concept of 'trading zone' is coined to address situations where, in the face of seemingly irreconcilable differences and understandings, communication can progress and mutual coordination can emerge. In the context of exploring the practical applicability of the concept in urban planning contexts, we start from Galison's (1997, p. 783) idea of trading zone as a situation in which:

> [...] groups can agree on rules of exchange even if they ascribe utterly different significance to the objects being exchanged; they may even disagree on the meaning of the exchange process itself. Nonetheless, the trading partners can hammer out a local coordination, despite vast global differences.

In turn, Collins et al. (2007, p. 658) attempt to clarify what a trading zone is and is not:

> Not all trade is conducted in trading zones [...] We define 'trading zones' as locations in which communities with a deep problem of communication manage to communicate. If there is no problem of communication there is simply 'trade' not a 'trading zone'. Here, however, we consider only those cases where there are difficulties of communication and ask how they are overcome.

While we agree with the high priority asserted to communication in the trading zone concept, we also argue that only rarely can any planning problem be seen exclusively as 'communicative'. Various dimensions are most often present and intermingled in ways that make their separation impossible in practice, even if such divisions can be traced analytically.

In our attempt to scrutinise the normative use of trading zone in the face of complexities of planning, we use an analytical toolkit consisting of the political, the communicative and the technical dimensions of planning. Like many scholars before us (cf. Forester 1993; Friedmann 2008; Alexander 2008), we find these analytical tools useful for highlighting the way in which these dimensions are emphasised in concrete planning situations. However, our meta-level framing

still accentuates the thoroughly political nature of all planning, in which all these dimensions coexist and are constantly interweaved. With our empirical illustrations, we make these situational dimensionalities visible.

We illustrate our theoretical thought through two cases. In both cases, the empirical data consists of actor interviews, newspaper coverage as well as technical and policy documents. The analysis is also supplemented by our previous research. Through the case illustrations, we attempt to show that, under certain circumstances, this complexity may restrain the applicability of the trading zone concept as a planning tool. Our ultimate aim is to provide fertile feedback to the theoretical discussion on the trading zone concept. Our goal is to make visible the concrete challenges associated with the complexity of planning, not to evaluate the outcomes or success of the case processes. However, this is not an easy task, as the nature and environment of planning are often more complex than what has been portrayed in the illustrations of trading zone formation thus far. Therefore, we must ask, what exactly are the planning issues for which the trading zone could be suggested as a feasible solution.

At the onset, we describe our analytical framework in more detail by shortly elaborating on the aspects of the political, communicative and technical dimensions that we see pivotal for the discussion of the limits and applicability of the trading zone concept in planning. Second, we walk through the illustrative cases. Next, we analyse the political, communicative and technical dimensions of the cases in the context of theoretical and practical trading zone frameworks. In conclusion, we discuss the terms with which the theoretical discussion on trading zones could be useful and applicable in the face of complexity in planning.

10.2   Three Dimensions of Planning: Political, Communicative and Technical

In this section, we first discuss the issues of political, communicative and technical dimensions of planning that we find to be of importance. We call them 'dimensions', as they are both interdependent and separate. However, we do not attempt to portray them as a 'conceptual space' where issues could somehow be located by asserting coordinates for these three dimensions. We see them in many ways intermingled, with the political always present in communication and technicalities alike, with communication necessarily impregnating the political and the technical and with the technical providing both the operational foundation for planning practices and 'fuel' for the issues to be communicated and politicised.

We do not attempt to make any general remarks about what are the most important issues in political, communicative or technical planning today. Instead, through these dimensions, our aim is to tap into the complexities of planning and thereby gain a better understanding of how these complexities affect the perceived potentiality of the trading zone concept for planning theory and practice. Second, we introduce the illustrative cases through which we want to show how these dimensions are

present, intermingled and conflicting in concrete planning situations (Sect. 10.3). In the following Sect. 10.4, we analyse them in the context of the trading zone concept.

For the political in planning, our starting point is that, overall, various planning processes are important in defining and reproducing the state of democracy in societies. They always demarcate both the sphere of individual political agency and the possibilities for politicisation (Bäcklund and Mäntysalo 2010; for politicisation, see, e.g. Leino, in this book). In Habermasian (1984, 1987) terms, every planning case concerns the colonisation of citizens' lifeworlds by the system via defining and controlling the need for planning, criteria of necessary and viable knowledge and the roles of individuals as participants and stakeholders. Central for the realisation of political agency is whether planning processes enable the right to define the issues that need public scrutiny. This right has been seen as the true core of a living democracy, since it is only this point at which political agency becomes possible (Rosanvallon 2008). It is seen that new participatory practices must be sensitive to what kinds of political agency they enable (Bäcklund and Mäntysalo 2010), as well as to how and to which degree perceptions of inclusion (in the sociopolitical community) are promoted (Silver et al. 2010; Agger and Löfgren 2008).

Our ontological starting point is in democracy-theoretical and politico-philosophical views of Chantal Mouffe (2000), concerning agonistic confrontation as an integral part of societal action, meaning that planning conflicts can be seen desirable rather than problematic for the development of democracy. As pointed out by critics of the consensus-seeking Habermasian deliberative view of democracy (cf. Pløger 2006) and consensus-theoretical approaches in general (c.f. Fuller 2006), consensual process based on the idea of universal reason pushes genuine political conflicts out of the arena of politics. Chantal Mouffe (2000), to whom the deliberative model represents an attempt to reach for transcendental reason beyond the realm of political struggles, argues that western democracy is characterised by the tension between two kinds of logic: one relying on individual rights and the legal state (liberal democracy) and the other on equal citizenship in the public sphere (deliberative democracy).

Therefore, we see the political dimension of planning as the ability to allow and offer possibilities for open politicisation of issues in planning practices. We hold this to be a necessary precondition for a democratically functioning society. For our discussion, this means looking at how the trading zone does function in this sense and how could it bring forward this crucial issue.

Planning processes evolve in a world of (political) ambiguity, where different and conflicting interests and operational logics coexist and collide. At the core of *the communicative dimension of planning*, we find the way in which different actors and different lifeworlds make contact, recognise each other and interact in concrete planning situations. Especially, the communicative turn in planning (Forester 1989, 1993; Sager 1994; Healey 1992, 1997; Innes 1995) made communication a pivotal part – and even a central issue – of planning practice. However, strong critique towards communicative planning theory has grown (Flyvbjerg 1998; Hillier 2000, 2002; Tewdwr-Jones and Allmendinger 1998; Mäntysalo 2002); on the practical

level, communication remains an organic part of planning work. This, in our opinion, coincides well with Galison's stress on the linguistic aspects of a trading zone, one in which 'language' is seen as a broadly defined means of communication in the local(ised) context. Also, the idea of a trading zone is geared towards providing solutions to problems of communication.

This notion of the communicative dimension of planning also begs a question: who are the communicating parties, actors or stakeholders in each concrete planning situation? In addition, the issue of framing the communication is brought up by the political dimension of planning: what can be discussed and which issues are to be taken as given in each situation?

The differing time frames of actual planning practices pose a specific challenge to communication: within a planning process, seemingly inactive and unpredictable lengths, during which some activities may or may not be in progress 'in the background', are interlaced with specific short periods of formal preparation and decision making in the public sphere. Different stakeholders and participants have their own time frames for both participating in the planning process and dealing with their own errands in relation to the planning situation at hand. From a trading zone point of view, we thus need to pose another question: how do we know that those who should be at the table today in fact are there?

We argue that communication between different actors (e.g. between inhabitants and operative administration) has become more complex due to changes in the frameworks of administrative practice. A profound and often neglected aspect of communicational complexity in planning is, for us, the multifaceted nature of its operational logic. By this, we refer to the internal ambiguity of the rationality of administration (c.f. Hajer 2004). Firstly, planning as public sector activity is in many ways directed and defined by local rules and ordinances aimed at preserving the fairness and equity of bureaucratic processes, e.g. in Finland, many administrative documents that control the working procedures of the planner (c.f. Vartola 2004; Jalonen 2007; Peters and Pierre 2004). Secondly, organisations always possess informal operational cultures and practices that revolve around modes of operation that are not explicated. Different actors may thus have very different criteria of rationality in relation to their action (Barnes et al. 2003; Jalonen 2007; Bäcklund 2007). This may lead to pathological action (Mäntysalo 2000; Mäntysalo et al. 2011b), where the actions cannot anymore be identified as connected to the official explicated goals or strategies of the planning organisation. Thirdly, the planning environments – spatial jurisdictions, actor networks and strategic goals of urban planning – are influenced by outside forces such as globalisation, international agreements and environmental imperatives. These are seen as profound instigators behind many pressures for administrative reforms. Instead of being connected to a certain rationality, existing administrative practices include aspects of different models (for Finland c.f., e.g. Hiironniemi 2005). Hence, it may be difficult to find a common language even inside one institution, e.g. the city administration.

We also see *the technical dimension of planning* important in understanding planning in practice. Technicality is underlined in planning situations in many ways. Forester (1993) attached technical planning to the world of uncertainty

(c.f. Christensen 1985), where problem solving can happen through collection of systematic and precise but unavoidably insufficient information and knowledge, aiming for rationality and acknowledging its character as 'bounded'. According to Forester, planning also takes place in the world of informational ambiguity. In this world, a more profound question is why do we need the information/knowledge we feel is needed. In this sense, the political dimension is always present in the technical. To shrink planning cases to tasks of mastering planning knowledge technically is to mask the fact that planning is not just about certainties and uncertainties in the 'factual' knowledge base.

Friedmann (1987) sees technical planning as including most of what planners and experts do in a planning process, starting with problem setting (for political processes and politicisations to work with), including specifications of goals and objectives for solutions, implementation (of actual planning tasks) as well as evaluation and impact analysis. As he sees (Friedmann 2008) the evolution of planning, over the last decades, as unfolding from technical to political activity, many aspects of planning are still technical – not the least in the planner's skills and expertise toolkit. Mazza (2002), on the other hand, provides a compelling critique of both political and communicative emphasis in planning, arguing that political and communicative aspects make little practical sense if they cannot be turned into technical-level decisions. He sees the technical level as the 'surface' of planning, one that is laden with political content (and communicative challenges, we might add) but still technical in nature.

By the technical dimension of planning, we mean those practical situations in planning in which it can be agreed that the planning problem can be solved by knowledge provided through professional perspectives (c.f. Forester 1993). In our view, the technical dimension is emphasised when the politicisation process of an issue has 'matured', maybe even a formal decision has been arrived at. For example, issues in planning for housing such as 'what is good housing' and 'in what kind of environments should we live in' are within the political dimension, but as soon as these issues are solved in some way, implementation means engaging with the technical – e.g. zoning, site specifications such as roof angles, drainage, parking – all the way to geological and soil issues or the effects of building and site design on the microclimate. In this context, also the communicative dimension is highlighted, considering how these technicalities are coordinated and what kind of cooperative action is needed. This may again be boiled down to a question, also central to the trading zone approach: how can we, with different forms of expertise, communicate so that we all may feel we are understood and respected?

10.3   Local Contexts: The Case Storylines

The complexity of planning concerns also the importance of the local boundedness of planning – legislation, culture, procedures, practices, issue sets, types of politicisation and actor positions, to name a few. In order to have a fruitful connection

between the theoretical discussions about trading zones and the planning practices, we need to pay attention to the local contexts on several levels. As Luhtakallio (2010; c.f. Leo, in this book) notes, the local context is a mixture of state and regional legal and policy frameworks, local planning cultures and place-bound specificities. In the Netherlands, the planning system has historically enjoyed a strong position vis-à-vis private interests, and the planner's position has been much stronger than in Finland. Strong meso-level government in the Netherlands has also created a powerful strategic spatial planning framework, one which has been relaxed in the recent years. In Finland, the trends have been quite the opposite.

European countries also provide very different frameworks for acting on different levels of representative democracy – e.g. in the Netherlands, neither a minister of the government nor a municipal civil servant can have a seat in a municipal council. In Finland, however, this is not only possible but common – the Helsinki municipal council includes three incumbent Ministers of the Finnish Government and numerous local civil servants. This creates quite different political contexts for individual planning issues. In terms of the dimensions of planning identified in the previous chapter, what in each case can be identified as 'technical' or 'political' depends on local differences in the scope of planning and the role of the planner (e.g. responsibility for providing impact analyses, openness of pre-planning consultations or requirements for public consultations). Therefore, local practices define quite essentially which and what kind of issues can be and are politicised and by whom (c.f. Luhtakallio 2010).

We now turn to two illustrative cases, one from Helsinki, in Finland, and the other from Tilburg, in the Netherlands. These cases, ones with which we had become familiar during our earlier research and experience, seemed to defy the notion of trading zone creation, presenting such degrees of complexities – both 'natural' and 'created' – that the seemingly irreconcilable differences proved, in fact, truly irreconcilable. With these cases, we attempt to probe the 'outer edge' of the conditions of trading zone formation, keeping in mind that these cases (like all) are, indeed, framed by both local laws, conventions and practices, as well as conditioned by broader, if not universal, issues, trends and societal norms.

The Kruunuhaka District in downtown Helsinki, Finland, is one of the oldest parts of Helsinki. The building stock includes many late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century apartment buildings. The dominant form of ownership is through housing companies who own the buildings and the land they are built on. Inhabitants own apartment-specific shares of the company. Many of the buildings' facades of the period are protected by land-use plan orders. The Finnish land-use planning law determines that a detail plan may include orders for conserving the buildings. While this is often interpreted as relating to facades and other features that affect the cityscape or are part of the public realm, governmental guidance leaves this demarcation open, thus possibly enabling conservation orders other parts of the building.

In 2002, a housing company owning a late nineteenth-century five-storey building applied for a building permission for elevators to be installed in the staircases. Upon inspection of the site, the city museum officials noted that the staircases were exceptionally well-preserved pieces of the art nouveau style, 'holistic works of art' that,

in their opinion, should be protected from any changes. As a consequence, the permission was denied.

The city museum decided to evaluate all staircases in this part of downtown in order to get a picture of how many such staircases there were in need of partial or full conservation. The evaluation study showed that there were nine buildings where many of the staircases had such cultural values that they should be conserved. These buildings, all originating from late nineteenth to early twentieth century, were placed under a building/development ban in 2004, effectively stopping any elevator schemes but also complicating other major renewals.

City planning office started, arguably sluggishly, drawing up a new plan for these nine buildings, with the aim of controlling elevator construction so that the historic and artistic values of the staircases would be preserved. In 2008, the city ordered a study of suitable elevator constructions and installing techniques in order to determine what kind of protection measures would be needed in the plan. The plan draft was publicised in 2009 and a slightly altered proposal in late 2010. The Planning Board approved the draft to be presented to the council.

The plan proposal prohibited the alteration of the staircases but provided possibilities for adding elevators on the outside or by taking the space from the apartments. This was seen by some of the inhabitants to effectively prohibit feasible installation of elevators. Others saw conservation as a welcome development. The opposing inhabitants swarmed the planning office with complaints, based, e.g. on city policy that favours and part-finances elevator installations to old buildings, equal rights of the elderly, future prospects for getting more families with children to move in and possibilities for developing the properties in the same manner as in other, non-conserved buildings.

The most compelling argument, however, was that the staircases were in fact not within the realm that could be controlled by a detail plan and that they were clearly private spaces. The planning office had made a notion in the draft that the staircases can be controlled since they are 'semipublic' spaces.

Some of the inhabitants also lobbied the interested and involved politicians heavily in order to gain political support to their views. As a consequence, in early 2011, the City Board ordered the draft to be revised so that building the elevators could be realised in all staircases of all buildings, where technically possible. The new draft reached the Planning Board in June 2011, and as the political balance in the Planning Board was in favour of conservation, it now returned the draft to be rephrased so that conservation would be more favoured. The City Board quickly reacted to this by cancelling the Planning Board decision on grounds that the new advice on revising was not in line with the earlier City Board decision. At the moment of writing, the plan revision is still underway. However, the case will progress during the autumn of 2012 to some extent, since the building/development ban – extended throughout the process – will finally expire.

Mall Tilburg, Stadscentrum Noord, *the Netherlands,* was an initiative to build a new type of shopping and leisure facility near the town of Tilburg. The scheme was initiated by OVG Development and McMahon Development Group Europe BV in 2007. The plan concerns the development of a large enclosed shopping mall on an

out-of-town location. The development was to be located on a site previously used by the military, located just north of the city and near an exit to a highway. Due to the land-use specification in the regional plan, the planning case would need to be approved by the provincial council (in accordance with the planning system of the time). However, the final decision would lie in the local council.

The case was pivotal if not historically unique in the Dutch context. Post-WW II planning has emphasised hierarchical retail service structures, with an idea of providing localised daily services within a walking or cycling distance, and town centres as the locations for most of the specialised retailing. This has created dense urban structures. Out-of-town shopping centres do not really exist in the Netherlands, despite several attempts by local and international developers. However, as a consequence of a relaxation in provincial guidance on retail location planning, basically abandoning earlier strict nationally constituted guidance in favour of the provinces' own models, a number of initiatives for out-of-town schemes were drawn up at the time when most provinces were still in the process of developing their own guidance.

The decision-making process for the Tilburg Mall started in 2007 when the developer and the local government signed an agreement to jointly study the possibilities for the realisation of the project. At the end of the survey, a no/go decision was to be arrived at. The research included impact studies that portrayed the effects of the new development to the city centre and the surrounding towns. The possible locations were scanned, starting with 15 different options. These were narrowed down to four and eventually the proposed site was chosen as the best overall compromise.

The local government and the developer shared the research costs – to add transparency and objectivity to the decision making, as noted by Janssen (2009). As a reaction to the impact study reports (…), four neighbouring cities (together with whom Tilburg is a part of a network city cooperation called 'Brabantstad') commissioned another consultant as an advisor to get a second opinion about the effects of the mall to their economic position. While considering the same informational basis concerning the development and economic performance of the towns, the two reports came to different conclusions about the effects of the mall.

In the city council, the political support for the development was not overwhelming. There was a subdivision between municipal parties: on the one hand, some political parties were concerned about the negative effects on inner-city retail; on the other hand, other political parties saw the initiative as a needed economic stimulus for the city (c.f. van Eeden 2010). The council made a decision to hear viewpoints from different interest groups. As a major contributor to the political and public discussion, the main local newspaper took a strong position against the development, stressing the negative effects to the local retailers.

When the consultations had been finalised, the political environment had turned around. As a result of local elections, political support for the project had diminished in the local council, and the probable opponents had gained majority. As an escape plan for the planner-developer cooperation contract to still operate, the mayor proposed that the feasibility of the plan would be investigated in more detail, according to 14 conditions defined by the council. Should the results of this feasibility study

be positive, the citizens of the municipality would then make the final decision via a referendum.

The discussion revolved around 'the mall' and its possible effects on the urban structure. As the concept 'mall' had been interpreted in an American context – whereas (affirmed the developer) the actual development would be more respectful of the local culture and have no such effects as a 'real mall' – the developer attempted to realign the discussion to a more favourable direction by giving a title to the project. Thus, Tilburg Mall became avenTura Brabant – emphasising the regional character of the endeavour.

As the feasibility study turned out in favour of the development, the referendum was set up. In the days prior to the referendum, the city and the developer provided an info-stand to inform the public about the planned development and its calculated positive effects, and the local newspaper brought into light the perceived and calculated negative effects to traffic conditions and retail in the city centre. The outcome of the referendum was a 53/47% split against the development. In light of the earlier commitment to the outcome of the referendum, planning was abandoned and the cooperation contract dismantled.

10.4 Analysis: Trading Zone and the Political, Communicative and Technical Dimensions of Planning?

In this chapter, the issues of planning complexities presented above are placed in context with the concept of the trading zone through the cases. First, we elaborate further the trading zone discussion in the light of our focus. Next, we present how the dimensions of complexity and aspects of the trading zone concept come together in our cases. The analyses aim to show both the main issues for each dimension and each case, as well as provide insights to the complexity of combined complexities within the cases. Lastly, we aim at further understanding and 'evaluating' the trading zone concept in planning contexts. To lay ground for our conclusions, we look at how the idea, concept and practices of the trading zone approach could provide for a better grasp and novel solutions for the complex situations found in practical planning situations.

The idea of a locally bounded cooperative solution based on a limited set of issues is found in many trading zone descriptions (e.g. Fuller 2010; Jenkins 2010; Gorman et al. 2009; Gustafsson 2009). Notions of the evolutionary nature of the trading, endorsed by Collins et al. (2007) and further developed by, e.g. Jenkins (2010), attempt to increase the descriptive scope of the trading zone concept.

In order to develop a general model of the trading zone, Collins et al. (2007) devised a typology around the two dimensions of power and exchange. The ability and way in which power is exerted in a trading zone can be seen along a continuum from coercion to collaboration. The cultural dimension runs between homogeneity and heterogeneity, providing clues to the degree of integration or hybridisation of the fields of expertise involved. This two-dimensional model of the trading zone as

tested by Jenkins (2010; see also Maarit Kahila-Tani's chapter in this book) showed promise for a normative use of some types of trading zones in specific situations. For Jenkins, the crucial 'dimension' turned out to be the level of shared language development – both coercive and collaborative situations could form into trading zones if interdependence and the mutual exchange language would reach 'threshold levels'. In Jenkins' study, questions of relative attachment and detachment in regard to the central controversies or boundary objects became a crucial issue in the ability to create interactional expertise.

Mills and Huber (2005) provide an account of trading zone formation – or rather the lack of it – in academic education. They identify two basic conditions that work against the realisation of such cooperative activities across different institutional and theoretical schools of thought and practice: their relatively weak power position and lack of perceived benefits.

Seeing the institutional and political environment of planning as Mills and Huber see in the case of education, as framed by powerful hierarchical forces, leaves collaborative planning practices – despite their often central role in determining future development – in a weak power position in relation to the stakeholders' situational positions. Each of the stakeholders has not only stronger stakes outside the planning situation but also stronger means external to planning for advancing their case.

Related to this is also the position of planning practice in relation to the institutional and personal processes of the actors. The institutional and individual planning spheres (e.g. lifeworld and personal development, corporate strategies, civil society ideals, political agendas) of the actors are most often primary in relation to the spatial planning processes in which these actors engage. As Mills and Huber note, actors act according to their own logic and expertise, utilising and necessarily connecting with their own history, modes of operation and models of thought and values.

The Kruununhaka case shows how the question about what is and is not planning – under which circumstances and in which cases the (public) system may penetrate the (private) lifeworld – can become a most practical issue. It is exactly the issues framing a successful trading zone approach that are being decided: by whom and on what grounds are the boundaries of planning jurisdiction drawn and by whom and on which grounds are the 'traders' defined.

As Galison (2010) shows, trading zones may arise under extremely unbalanced power relations (c.f. Collins et al. 2007). However, the Kruununhaka case illustrates how the local politicisation of planning may prevent even the most elementary precondition of agreeing upon exchangeability (Galison 2010). In the Kruununhaka case, many of the citizens saw no case for planning at all – they politicised the legitimacy of planning itself. This reaches beyond bringing up and discussing contested issues, the willingness to cooperate. Even a most difficult 'apparently irreconcilable' planning situation described by Fuller (2010, p. 666; c.f. Fuller 2008) does not equate with this situation. The contestation is first about do we have a planning situation at hand or not.

Another point of interest is the process by which the actors are 'found' or are able to 'join in' with planning practice, therefore becoming potential traders (e.g. Fuller

2006). In the Tilburg case, the only real trading that took place was positioned inside the planner-developer team. Otherwise, the potential actors did not become part of the planning procedure in ways that any 'official' trading could have started. This was partly due to an intended strategy of keeping the 'pre-planning' team a closed one, one that would only 'call' experts as needed to provide technical information, 'involve' citizens through controlled interaction and 'inform' politicians on a need-to-know basis. This, however, resulted in insufficiency of information to the potentially affected community, which in turn led to a politicisation of the idea itself. Partly, it was a question of trying to ensure political support for the project by concentrating on not stirring up any political discussions that might undermine the (pre-)existing slightly favourable local political climate – a strategy that could well have worked, had the unforeseen changes in the local council power relations not taken place.

Accordingly, in the Kruununhaka case, the Finnish planning law that calls for the planner to initiate and foster public participation of all relevant stakeholders meant that the planning system needed to include the citizens in the process. However, legitimate the 'citizen' is as an actor, the politicisation and contestation of the premises and need for planning meant that 'active citizenship' dissolved into several types and their combinations: there were citizens who participated through their willingness to contribute and cooperate, citizens who opposed but were willing to cooperate and strike bargains, citizens who participated but only to press the notion that there was no reason nor legitimacy for planning and finally, citizens whose main interest was to use external channels to influence the decision-making processes. One may easily conclude that the differences, concerning the procedure, practices and content of the case, between the active citizens far exceeded any other differences between other actors and stakeholders. As Leino (Chap. 7 in this book) points out, the planning practices often take an oversimplifying attitude towards the practices of everyday life and the complexity of social relations, hence marginalising the citizens' views. It is yet to be determined whether this will occur in this case.

Complexity is also produced by different time frames of the actors and the issues, which has a profound effect on the communicative dimension of planning. As Galison (2010) points out, it takes time to secure trust, understanding and respect towards your adversary. Jenkins (2010) describes the Turtle Excluder Device trading zone as having developed over three decades, with notable changes and ruptures in the actor compositions and, indeed, trading zone designs.

The focus on endurance and development over time puts emphasis on the evolving planning environments, in which forces working for a stable platform for cooperation intermingle with those working to create breaks. Different stages are evolving within a case as the process involves new actors, drops old ones and develops into new phases. In the now 9-year course of the Kruununhaka case, there are new 'incoming' inhabitants who are taking new approaches to the issue, as well as established, 'old' inhabitants for whom the process is becoming a meaningful part of their citizenship.

Eventually, instead of developing mutual 'pidgins' and sustaining cooperation and coordination, the process may become a shell in which both the actual actors (people, organisations, firms) and agendas change over time (e.g. Kanninen 2010).[1]

In the course of the process, the stages are not progressing in unison but form juxtaposed constellations that evolve over time, with possible ruptures and discontinuities. As the case progresses, the emphasis may change even quite dramatically. In the Tilburg case, new council members tipped the local political balance and forced the active proponents into adopting a 'plan B' to regain legitimacy. Consequently, new opponents were activated by this turn of events.

The Tilburg case portrays the politicisation of knowledge that also frames the discussion about planning (c.f. Bäcklund 2007). This is also a question of balance between the 'Foresterian' technical and political dimensions: whether to go for incontestable knowledge in support of legitimisation of previously defined goals or operate further in the world of ambiguity and unavoidably keep open the issue of legitimacy of goals. In Tilburg, the process was seen largely as a technical planning case by the planning team – while it was acknowledged that there might be even strong local opposition, the team was confident that support from the local representative political system (local council) would suffice in dealing with the politics of the issue, largely relying on the dynamics of partisan politics. The political decision-making bodies were to be used mainly for rubber-stamping the plans, whereas all planning would be determined by reference to expert opinions, economic calculations, market and environmental analyses and design features to match them. However, politicisations in the form of challenging the 'knowledge' produced started as soon as 'outsiders', including the local council, gained access to the initial information. This contested knowledge including not only analyses but also evaluations of these analyses. The different reports as such were not so much disputed, but the interpretations that based on them were. The economic impact figures, dependent on the scale and scope of inquiry, were seen as based on 'wrong', 'insufficient' or even 'purposeful' demarcations, limitations and omissions. Therefore, conclusions based on the knowledge were prone to dismissal (e.g. Bäcklund 2005).[2]

In Tilburg, the issues of scale, territoriality and local boundedness played important roles in the disputes: while the development was portrayed as regional and national in terms of customer catchment, the impact studies handled mostly local and city-regional effects. Decision making was also still local at the point of referendum – the project was yet to be formally discussed at the provincial level, which would have been the following step in the process. Accordingly, the regional cooperation within the 'Brabantstad' network city concept played no part – cities who market themselves as cooperating and complementary had no interest in communicating cooperatively with the case of regional/national shopping and recreational centre planning. This also reveals a rupture in strategic urban planning: while the regional 'network city' concept had been developed for years, this seemingly competitiveness-oriented venture was neither able nor willing to challenge local ideas of retail structure. However, opposing parties in the public debate over the development did utilise the connection to the 'Brabantstad' idea, presenting the development either as detrimental or innovative to the network city concept.

Just as in the case of integrative land-use and transportation planning, there are opposing forces functioning to integrate and separate 'disciplines' (Kanninen et al. 2010). Kellogg et al. (2006); note that even in the case of cross-boundary work actually

taking place, there are hindrances associated with collaborating communities protecting their local knowledge, social identities and perceived interests. This is also an intended consequence of creating well-defined separate responsibilities within the public administration. The different planning offices, while competent in their own turfs, rarely have the impetus or resources to cross-pollute their expertise even within their own institution – more likely they will compete (Hull 2008). Cooperation across different administrative units is as unlikely as between any private sector actors who operate in similar, overlapping but distinct territories – unless there are legal obligations or administrative protocols for such activities.

10.5 Discussion: The Relevance of Trading Zones in Planning?

In our account of planning as a sphere of multiple complexities, ranging from ontological, epistemological and territorial issues to the practical how-to's, the 'Galisonian' trading zone exemplifies a situation where outside the trading zone itself, the actors have already come to contact by way of force, cohabitation, mutual need or some other external influence (c.f. Galison 2010). As the very foundation of a trading zone entails mutual perception of benefits (if not necessarily equal) in the engagement, there needs to be some common ground. The positioning of actors and stakeholders within the framing hierarchies (societal, political, institutional, informational) affects their perception of possibilities to gain from cooperation. At the one end, this resonates with Flyvbjerg's (1998) notion of the lack of motivation for cooperation when power can be asserted otherwise. At the other end, the perceived powerlessness within the planning situation may lead to fears of losing, in the collaborative process, whatever small bits of influence one might have.

What may, then, provide the impetus for seeking mutual benefits? How can the actors find the motivation to work cooperatively for a local solution in a dilemmatic planning situation? Gorman et al. (2009) add an important aspect to the creation of a trading zone when they call for moral imagination – as they put it, 'the ability to disengage from a particular point of view' and create dialogue, evaluation and moral decisions – to incorporate so-called superordinate goals that may enable the parties to overcome their hostility. Galison (1997) points to a similar direction when he talks about consensual actions that can frame or facilitate the trading processes through the creation of, e.g. common goals, by reference to a larger community or common ideas of how to proceed.

Mills and Huber (2005, c.f. Barry and Porter 2011) point at a notion of a 'contact zone'. Pratt's (1991) theorising of a contact zone that, in analytical sense if not historically, can be seen as a precursor to the trading zone provides a useful addition to understanding the trading zone concept. Pratt defines contact zones as 'the social spaces where cultures meet, clash, and grapple with each other, often in contexts of highly asymmetrical relations of power'. Mills and Huber note that contact zones may be imposed, whereas trading cannot be enforced – which puts them at a slightly

different plane than, e.g. Galison (2010) and Collins et al. (2007), who see that somewhat enforced trading zone creation is rather common. Furthermore, Messeri (2010) and Wilson and Herndl (2007) see a more or less necessary interrelation between the boundary object and the trading zone: the boundary object is a facilitator of a trading zone, an embodiment of the rhetorical space of understanding and difference.

Hence, a trading zone can be said to consist of three related aspects: a contact zone where exchanges may happen (Pratt), trade that accounts for the interlingual search for coordinative solutions (Galison) and boundary objects that bind different viewpoints during the problem-solving stage (Star and Griesemer 1989). A trading zone can form or be formed when there is enough common ground for agreeing on at least what the opposition is – as in the Kruunuhaka case, that there is need for both elevators and conservation or, as in the Tilburg case, that there is need for different knowledges to be incorporated . This corresponds with, e.g. Jenkins' (2010), trading zone evolution as a consequence of accepting a design that the parties could relate to – as they really only became interacting parties after this choice.

In a Galisonian vein, a trading zone can be seen in the sense of 'hammering out a local coordination' where shared local practices, cultures and also physical places play important yet often difficult-to-unveil roles. The similarly local nature of planning practice necessitates further reflection on the relation between local and universal contexts. Without such reflection, a locally developed, socio-spatially context-dependent operational model may be taken as a universal, context-independent solution to solve methodological planning problems in general. The idea of the trading zone is then turned into a general planning method, overlooking its boundedness to unique local circumstances (see Mäntysalo & Kanninen's discussion of the Kuopio case in this book). This also runs the risk of emphasising the technical aspects of planning over the political (c.f. Forester 1993).

In line with Forester, we see that if planning is taken primarily as a technical question, it may lose the political dimension that focuses exactly on the questions of legitimacy of goals and means. This may unnoticeably take planning back towards the bounded rationality frame where the problem can be fully embraced within the 'technical'. Consequently, the role of the citizen diminishes into an object of expert planning, instead of gaining a more equal subject position. Planning is not only about dealing with a set of values within a specific issue – it is as much about values that are potentially contesting the very existence of the issue. Not only are different groups bringing different worldviews and viewpoints into a planning process, they are also challenging the notion and the knowledge base of planning. The political nature of planning includes politicisation of issues and acts of politicising by different interest groups – such as inhabitants, NGOs, entrepreneurs and the like.

However, since planning always has a strong 'technical', concrete aspect that deals with the lifeworlds of citizens, planning expertise has an important role to play: it may not be to define exclusively the nature of the planning problems, but it is most certainly about attempting to solve the problems that are framed and given form in the politicisation processes, aided by the politically sensitive expert planner himself/herself.

Indeed, we find that trading zones are needed here – in cases where the planning issues are in the process of gradually transforming from the 'political' into the 'technical'. In such planning processes, existential and ontological political debates have 'matured', contradictory antagonism has turned into respectful agonism and a degree of political will exists for agreeing on the planning task as a platform for communicative dialogue. Nurturing that dialogue may give birth to a trading zone.

10.6   Conclusions

Most of trading zone research has used the trading zone concept as a purely *analytical* tool, using the concept as an interpretive and descriptive concept in studying existing and historical local cases of interdisciplinary cooperation and exchange. Such use of the concept in planning research offers promising prospects. As the many case studies in the chapters of this book reveal, the trading zone concept is very helpful and appropriate in attempting to analyse how coordinated interaction between professionally and culturally different groups has been achieved.

However, when the analytical research tool is turned into a *normative* planning tool, as we are tempted to do in normatively orientated planning research, we may lose sight of the deeper political ambiguities involved in planning and, related to this, sensitivity to local circumstances. Successful local case analyses of politically less contested trading zones in planning may be taken as normative and generalised models for future planning processes, thus misusing the concept. Thereby, we could end up offering planning tools and recipes that unwittingly carry characteristics of political domination, 'technicising' some of the political ambiguities and turning certain local peculiarities into default prescriptions for planning platforms.

When associating the trading zone concept with our normative aspirations in planning, we should rather approach the concept as a medium for advancing our understanding of the linguistic and cultural challenges we may face in attempting to generate shared platforms for exchange between different groups with different value systems and understandings – but also of the local resources that may aid us crucially in these attempts. This calls for creative, dialogical and locally sensitive and flexible planning – not reliance on universal recipes for action. The political challenges that in some planning cases, as in the two cases studied above, are too complex to enable such platform generation (and agonism), call for adjoining political studies that go beyond the scope of the trading zone concept. Such a broader perspective is necessary for future research aiming to grasp both the limits and the full potential of the trading zone concept in the context of urban planning, addressing its political ambiguities in their full depth.

Endnotes

1. Kanninen's (2010) account of shopping centre planning in Aberdeen also showed that in the 13-year span of planning, the process saw not only several changes of developer organisation and major reorganisations of other stakeholders but also a total circulation of planners – not one of the planners stayed with the project for its duration.
2. In her study about planning a new housing district in Eastern Helsinki, Bäcklund (2005) shows how the knowledge utilised by the planners (e.g. population figures and forecasts, natural characteristics) was totally rejected by the inhabitants. Whereas the planners were in favour of a compact city model in order to save as many natural habitats as possible and avoid 'in-between shrubs', the inhabitants saw this as building overtly crowded slums and clearing natural and recreational 'pockets'. Hence, the inhabitants politicised the technical approach to planning.

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