

The paper is based upon extensive research about transport in the Paris Ile de France region with Charlotte Halpern. It argues firstly that, by contrast the case of the airport, the plan to develop a new large scale automatic metro for the region has not been challenged by social movements. By contrast, three types of conflicts have been central : 1) the conflict between the city of Paris and the regional council of Ile de France; 2) the conflict between all local authorities and the French central government (ie president Sarkozy) and 3) the long term conflict between the two major companies, RATP (running the metro system) and SNCF (railways). The paper argues those conflicts were solved by innovative mechanisms and that they led to the building of a quite massive public transport system (being built) and the making of a mode of urban governance. Conflicts around infrastructure is seen as an important process to structure mode of governance of large urban areas