

Difusion of cycling policy in the city of São Paulo: resistance, support and the role of the media

Cristiane Kerches da Silva Leite

Universidade de São Paulo / School of Arts, Science and Humanities
São Paulo / SP — Brazil

Maurício Feijó Cruz

Universidade de São Paulo / Faculty of Architecture and Urbanism
São Paulo / SP — Brazil

Lucas Bravo Rosin

Universidade de São Paulo / School of Arts, Science and Humanities
São Paulo / SP — Brazil

São Paulo is a megalopolis with a pattern of occupation marked by the prominence of the automobile. However, recently, the urban mobility agenda gained new meaning and new actors were mobilized. From the post-positivist and diffusion theoretical perspectives of public policies, the present work discusses how the idea of the cycling policy arose, adapted and faced resistance in the political and social context of the municipality of São Paulo under Fernando Haddad's government (Workers' Party). As a result of the research, on one hand, the role of the political and epistemic community of the cycling-activists and the entrepreneurial role of Mayor Haddad as elements of political support stand out. On the other hand, the São Paulo press played an oppositional role in the implementation of the policy, acting as a political actor in the subsystem of the cycling policy, by systematically attacking the image of the infrastructures implemented for the bicycles.

Keywords: public policies; policy diffusion; urban mobility; press.

Difusão da política cicloviária no município de São Paulo: resistências, apoios e o papel da mídia

São Paulo é uma megalópole com um padrão de ocupação marcado pelo protagonismo do automóvel mas, recentemente, a agenda de mobilidade urbana ganhou novos significados e mobilizou novos atores. A partir da perspectiva teórica pós-positivista e das teorias de difusão de políticas públicas, buscou-se discutir como a ideia da política cicloviária se originou, se adaptou e enfrentou resistências no contexto político e social do município de São Paulo no governo Fernando Haddad (Partido dos Trabalhadores). Como resultado de pesquisa destacam-se, de um lado, o papel da comunidade política e epistêmica dos cicloativistas e o papel empreendedor do prefeito Haddad como elementos de apoio político. Em contraste, a imprensa paulistana desempenhou papel opositor à implementação da política, agindo como ator político no subsistema da política cicloviária, por meio do ataque sistemático à imagem das infraestruturas implantadas para as bicicletas.

Palavras-chave: políticas públicas; difusão de políticas; mobilidade urbana; imprensa.

Difusión de la política cicloviaria en el municipio de São Paulo: resistencias, apoyos y el papel de los medios

São Paulo es una megalópolis con un patrón de ocupación marcado por el protagonismo del automóvil. Sin embargo, la agenda de movilidad urbana recientemente ganó nuevos significados y movilizó nuevos actores. Desde una perspectiva teórica post-positivista y de difusión de políticas públicas, se intentó reflexionar sobre como la idea de la política de ciclo movilidad surgió, se adaptó y enfrentó resistencias en el contexto político y social del municipio de São Paulo en el gobierno de Fernando Haddad (Partido de los Trabajadores). Como resultado de la investigación gana relevancia el papel de la comunidad política y epistémica de los ciclo-activistas y el papel de emprendedor del alcalde Haddad como elementos de apoyo político. En contraste, la prensa paulistana ha jugado un papel de oposición a la implementación de la política, actuando como actor político en el subsistema de la política, por medio de ataques sistemáticos a la política image de la infraestructura implantadas para bicicletas.

Palabras clave: políticas públicas; difusión de políticas; movilidad urbana; prensa.

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1. INTRODUCTION

São Paulo is a megalopolis that underwent, during the XX century, an expansion process marked by a road-based model of development and by the interests of the automotive industry to such an extent that, despite several investments in other forms of transportation since the 1970s decade, state interventions were not capable of promoting a shift to a new mobility paradigm (Rolnik and Klintowitz, 2011). Beyond the objective dimension of mobility, the use of the automobile carries a sociological dimension that can be interpreted as a resistance against changes in this area. According to Schor (1999), the exclusion of the automobile as a consumer good symbolizes deterioration and social unrest, since this mean of transportation became an unequivocal symbol of the contemporary social relationship patterns in capitalistic, democratic, individualist and market-oriented societies.

Recently, however, urban mobility public actions were given new outlines in the city of São Paulo. During the tenure of mayor Fernando Haddad (Workers' Party — PT, 2013 to 2016) the formulation and implementation of public policies for alternative means of transportation gained prominence in the city's mobility agenda. In the wake of the discussion and fruition of the Strategic Master Plan (PDE — Law 16.050/2014), the municipal government noticeably expanded the infrastructure of cycling paths, through the creation of exclusive lanes, expanded the number and extension of bus corridors, established leisure areas in large avenues during the weekends and reduced the speed limits on the main routes of the city (which had began in the previous administration).

Judging by the path of actions taken by the municipal administration since 2013 it is possible to say that there has been a significant change in urban mobility *policy image* (Baumgartner and Jones, 1993). If, on one hand, some public action instruments¹ directed towards mass transportation were no novelty to the agendas of municipal governments, on the other hand, betting on bicycle lanes was an unprecedented element throughout the historic context of mobility in the city of São Paulo. Inside a highly confrontational political context, facing a historically articulated resistance coalition (involving the media) and a social dynamic that idolizes the use of the automobile as “private, individual and mobile property” (Schor, 1999:110), the political process of developing and implementing the policy of bicycle lanes was anything but trivial.

Such a change in the orientation of the actions of the municipal government raises some analytically pertinent questions. Historically, how did the idea of the bicycle lanes policy originate and adjust to the political and social context of the city of São Paulo during the tenure of mayor Fernando Haddad? How was the policy transfer characterized (Dolowitz e Marsh, 2000) in its actors, ideas, institutions, strategic spaces and contexts in the processes of policy change? More specifically, which were the resistance coalitions and what was the role of the private corporations and consultancies, especially sectors of the São Paulo mainstream media?

The present work attempts to discuss those issues from the perspective of a case study (Yin, 2001) over the formulating process of the cycling policy for the city of São Paulo and the resistances observed against the implementation process. Particularly, the intent is to analyze the role of the ideas and the actors that formulate and defend them, as well as to raise hypotheses that help understand the diffusion

¹ On a sociological perspective, those instruments “reveal historic singularities in the structure of the relationships between governing authorities and the governed population (Lascoumes and Le Galès, 2012:19).

process of mobility policies. The attitude of resistance against the policy transfer from the written press of São Paulo is highlighted, by investigating how the actions of the São Paulo Municipal Government Policy of Mobility by Bicycles were portrayed in public reporting. They arguably constitute normative structures (Campbell, 1998) that validated positions and contributed, hypothetically, to setting up a public negative sentiment (*idem*) surrounding the use of the bicycle as a mean of transportation.

2. METHODOLOGY

This is a qualitative research, a case study based on the analysis of primary data, such as official documents and technical studies, as well as data obtained through participative observations in strategic spaces and, foremost, through semi-structured in-depth interviews with several actors relevant to the process of policy development.

The *Process Tracing* method was used to analytically build the trajectory of the cycling paths policy as a case study method (Bennett and Elman, 2006; Bennett and Checkel, 2012; Silva and Cunha, 2015), seeking to analyze evidences in the events' processes, sequences and junctures in order to develop or to test hypothesis of causal mechanisms that would explain the case studied. Furthermore, the technique is appropriate for "identifying the chains of pathways that lead to a certain result, through its historic reconstruction" (George and Bennett, 2005:215 apud Porto de Oliveira, 2013a:3).

The first stage of the data collection involved a document research (laws, normative documents, printed and digital newspapers archives) and was performed in public and private² databases, constituting the first mapping of the key actors in the process of developing the current cycling paths policy, enabling the first interviews to be planned.

The analysis of the resistance against the implementation of the cycling paths policy focused on the role of the media as a political actor that influences the public debate. In order to outline an overview of how the media of São Paulo deals with the topic of urban mobility, this study analyzed news reports published in *Folha de S. Paulo* (FSP) and *O Estado de S. Paulo* (Oesp), the two largest paid publications in circulation in the city of São Paulo, between January 2013 and December 2016, the period of the Haddad (PT) municipal government. In this process, 1681 reports (921 from FSP and 753 from Oesp) were gathered and analyzed in chronological order, framed by subject (broad or specific) and tabulation of the registered data.

Regarding the field research, two techniques were used: semi-structured in-depth interviews with relevant actors and participant observation. The 10 interviews performed sought to collect subjective information regarding the system of values and beliefs of the subjects interviewed. The interest in the role of the "strategic actors" in the policy diffusion process demanded far-reaching research tools. In this sense, the "scripts" took into consideration the "life history" (Boni and Quaresma, 2015).

Finally, three participant observations were held, all in the city of São Paulo: 1st General Meeting for the Planning of the Cycle-city for 2016, in 1/23/2016, in the *Espaço Contraponto* location; lecture

² An attempt was made to search for, beyond federal, state and municipal legislation, data referring to the city of São Paulo data on the websites of the following *think tanks* and civil societies: ITDP, UCLG, Cities for Mobility (Stuttgart) and Dutch Cycling Embassy; from Brazil: Ciclocidade, Bike é Legal e Vá de Bike; and from International Organizations — Habitat/ONU and URB-AL/European Commission, the European Cyclist Federation and the International Bicycle Consulting.

from then mayor Haddad at *Escola de Artes, Ciências e Humanidades (USP Leste)* in 4/8/2016; and *Bicicultura 2016* (Bike-culture 2016) opening ceremony, in 5/26/2016 at the *Galeria Olido* location. Those experiences were also useful to observe the normative structures (Campbell, 1998) of the public speech of relevant actors, such as grammar motivated by political strategies. The methodological proposition of Porto de Oliveira (2015) was the inspiration to combine different research techniques: document review, semi-structured in-depth interviews and participant observations in public spaces open for discussion.

3. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The theoretical foundation of this work attributes great importance to the role of ideas, values and beliefs in the process of changes in public policies. The authors are aligned with the post-positivist orientation, mobilizing sociologic analytical categories that are interesting for the analysis of the development of the bicycle lanes policy in the city of São Paulo, a process that involved the circulation of ideas and actors inside networks, multiple institutional environments and diverse political contexts.

The post-positivist alignment is understood in this work as a common orientation among the theoretical propositions that values dimensions such as subjectivity, interpretative normativity, argumentation, socio-political contextual factors and idiosyncrasies of the cases in the analysis of the public policies (Tomazini and Leite, 2016). Despite having different interpretations, to different degrees, the post-positivist authors consider, in general, the central roles and the power of argumentation and persuasion in the political process, considering that the political action is, essentially, a “rhetoric and interpretative” exercise. The agenda would be mainly built from causal stories, traditions, attitudes and “encapsulated” beliefs, codified in the speech of the social and political actors (Howlett, Ramesh and Perl, 2013).

In this work, analytical categories from authors that can be placed in the post-positivist analytical frame are mobilized (Kingdon, 2011; Baumgartner and Jones, 1993; Campbell, 1998, 2002; Hall, 1993; Sabatier and Weible, 2016; Latour, 2000). Kingdon (2011) approaches this orientation by valuing the interpretative character of the flow of problems and ideas in the analytical layout of the agenda construction, as well as sociological elements in the political flow (such as the notion of mood or public sentiment). The elements that propel change to the agenda depend on normative processes, on the creation of political meanings that refer to crisis, symbols and events from the political and social actors. Therefore, Kingdon’s concept of governmental and decision-making agenda is built on post-positivist elements, but is not necessarily entirely defined by those elements. (Tomazini and Leite, 2016).

By emphasizing the role of the ideas in the political process, analytical categories such as political communities, epistemic communities, networks³ and subsystems are fundamental in the explanatory models of the aforementioned authors, in the form of privileged spaces for experimentation, debate or multiplication of ideas (Kingdon, 2011), or in the form of central elements to understand the periods of stability of certain ideas about public policies (Baumgartner and Jones, 1993). The concept

³ For more information, see Massardier (2006), Marques (2006) and Haas (1992).

of subsystem, specifically, is considered a space of dispute between defense coalitions (Sabatier, 1988; Weible and Sabatier, 2007; Sabatier and Weible, 2016). Ideas play a central role, since every coalition has a hierarchic system of beliefs divided into three levels of “depth”: the *deep core*, the level of fundamental beliefs and values; the *policy core*, regarding the normative and cognitive structures; and the *secondary aspect*, which refers to the technical and operational ideas (Tomazini and Leite, 2016). The space for the figure of the strategic action of the political actor is displayed in the concept of the *policy broker* who, beyond defending a position, seeks to build consensus and commitments (Weible and Sabatier, 2007).

When considering the central character of ideas in the analysis of public policies, Hall (1993) and Campbell (1998) join cognitive authors and mobilize analytically pertinent categories, such as *policy paradigms* and *social learning*. According to Hall (1993) social learning is characterized by deliberate attempts to adjust goals, purposes and techniques in response to past experiences and new information. This process is gradual and involves three orders of changes: the first order refers to the definitions of the instruments; the second one refers to the techniques and instruments used to reach the goals; the third one consists of the global purposes that guide the policy, the “basic paradigm” (Leite and Peres, 2015). In line with Hall (1993), Campbell (1998) prospects types of ideas, classifying them from a sociological and organizational perspective. The author proposes a conceptual box (box 1) of the types of ideas (cognitive and normative) present in the policy making, which combine the level of exposure in the public debate (*foreground* and *background*).

BOX 1 TYPES OF IDEAS AND ITS EFFECTS ON THE POLICY MAKING

	First Plan	Second Plan
Cognitive Level	Program Ideas. Ideas that direct the actions and the possible solutions for the policy making.	Paradigms. Scientifically based ideas that restrict the reach of possible solutions for the policy makers.
Normative Level	Normative Structures. Symbolic and conceptual ideas that legitimize certain policies with the public, found in speeches and communication.	Public Sentiment. Ideas that restrict the normative reach for legitimizing the possible solutions inside the public debate.

Source: Based on Campbell (1998:384), adapted by the authors.

Recent literature on the diffusion of public policies attempts to articulate several post-positivists and cognitive concepts presented here. The field of study encompasses the dynamics and the pathways that policies traverse in different political-administrative, institutional and territorial⁴ levels. There is great polysemy in the treatment of similar phenomena: diffusion, dissemination, translation,

4 Some studies explore the analysis of internal and external determinants of the policy diffusion process. See: Leite and Peres (2015).

emulation, transference, innovation and many others (Graham, Schipan and Volden, 2013; Farah, 2008; Pimenta de Faria, 2012; Porto de Oliveira, 2013a, 2013b; Leite and Peres, 2015). Dolowitz and Marsh (2000) explore the concept of policy transfers, according to which, past knowledge is used to develop public policies, institutions or ideas in other political systems. Porto de Oliveira (2013b) proposes a scalar definition for the phenomenon: the circulation — broad and long term movement, involving flow and backflow; the diffusion — a movement of synchronized and collective adoption; and the transfer — specific movements, from point A to point B. This author highlights the importance of fortuitous connections between spaces and strategic actors: “policy ambassadors” who circulate through national and international spaces, carrying the ideas between different spaces.

Elements of the Bruno Latour’s (2000) model of diffusion of innovation by translation were also a theoretical inspiration for the present work. In this model of analysis, a “fact constructor” — which can be an individual actor or a network of people — releases a strong statement about a certain topic and seeks to establish a dialogue with people who consider the affirmation pertinent. Through this process, diffusion is enabled when the “constructor” gives space of action to those who “buy” the idea, going, therefore, through a process of “translation” of interests. Consequently, diffusion is a collective process, through which the idea is “adopted” and passed “from hand to hand”; it is a process of “negotiated persuasion” which is more likely to succeed if more open to the inclusion of adjustments.

Bearing in mind that in the processes of diffusion and transfer there are actors who are opposed to the adoption of new policies, the present work sought to analyze the role of the media as a political-ideological actor in the resistance against those innovations (Capelato and Prado, 1980; Fonseca, 2005). This work assumes the hypothesis that the media, with its daily frequency and an entire editorial and journalistic apparatus, consolidates ideas, views or framings for daily matters, exerting a subtle influence over the public opinion, over certain social segments and over those who hold governmental power (Fonseca, 2005). Thereby, the media exerts the power of influencing the public feelings regarding policies by mobilizing normative structures (Campbell, 1998) present in narratives and casual stories (Stone, 1989), which impact the outline and the instruments of the policies (or pragmatic ideas, in the terms of Campbell, 1998).

In the literature about agenda construction, with a post-positivist orientation, the works of Baumgartner and Jones (1993) are prominent authors that discuss, within the scope of a broader theory about changes in public policies from the articulation between ideas and institutions, the relevant role of the media in the development of the US governmental agenda. The authors identify that “both the frequency of certain topics and the “tone” of the coverage (positive, negative or neutral), are important observations to develop the concept of policy image, which refers to the representation of the policies within the context of the proposed theoretical model” (Capella, Brasil and Alves, 2016:11). A very similar research strategy was developed for the present work and relevant results regarding the frequency of approach to the topic of bicycle mobility and the nature of the coverage were found, with hegemonic negative remarks towards the policy of implementing bicycle lanes by the Haddad Government (PT). It is argued that the mainstream media played a crucial role in the configuration of the social representation of the policy of bicycle mobility, acting as a political actor that produces narratives and casual stories in the subsystem of bicycle mobility in the city of São Paulo, composed by two political forces: the promotion of the bicycle mobility policy and the voices of the resistance against this policy.

4. DATA ANALYSIS

4.1 THE FIRST WAVE OF DIFFUSION OF IDEAS

Two waves of diffusion of ideas about bicycle mobility are identified in the present work: the first one begins in the mid-1970s decade and the second one in the first years of the second decade of the 2000s. First wave took place when the oil crisis caused the reduction of the offer of fossil fuels, opening a window for the implementation of pioneer bicycle measures during the mandate of mayor Olavo Setúbal (Arena, 1975-79). However, few initiatives to foster bicycle travels were implemented in the next two decades. During the Erundina administration (PT, 1989-92), when the first leisure bicycle lane was created, city councilor Walter Feldman (*Partido da Social Democracia Brasileira* — PSDB) acted as a kingdonian⁵ political entrepreneur for the bicycling policies of the city. Recognized by his connection to environmentalism, he had the support of Gunther Bantel, an engineer connected to the topic of bicycle mobility since the 1970s because of his international experience and with whom he had a good relationship (I3; I6),⁶ to formulate two legislative proposals on the subject⁷. Feldman had approached the topic of bicycle mobility in the beginning of the 1980s, especially during the discussion of the Franco Montoro's government plan (*Partido do Movimento Democrático Brasileiro* — PMDB) (I1).

In the beginning of the Paulo Maluf administration (*Partido Progressista Brasileiro* — PPB, 1993-96) the Environmental Bureau (*Secretaria do Verde e do Meio Ambiente* — SVMA) was created, a space of circulation for the ideas surrounding bicycle mobility. The knowledge gathered over the topic was channeled into a space that, despite its incipient political and institutional strength, was responsible for refining the “primeval soup of ideas”⁸ (Kingdon, 2011) on the topic and represented an important political arena for social learning (Hall, 1993). In the 1990s, the public sentiment (Campbell, 1998) was favorable to the debate of environmental issues, thanks to the “Rio 92”⁹ — United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, which happened in Rio de Janeiro. The Environmental Bureau (SVMA) had Werner Zulauf, a long time environmentalist, as its first secretary. Zulauf had met Bantel when he was a consultant for Cosipa, steel company where Bantel was director of Environmental Issues. In the command of the Environmental Bureau, he appointed Bantel as coordinator for the

⁵ According to Kingdon (2011), entrepreneurs “invest their resources — time, energy, reputation, and sometimes money — in the hope of a future return. That return might come to them in the form of policies of which they approve, satisfaction from participation, or even personal aggrandizement [...] People in and around government become advocates for solutions and look for current problems to which to attach their pet solution”. (Kingdon, 2011:122-123).

⁶ We opted for the I1 to I11 classification to list the interviewees, who are identified in the end of the bibliographical references, to prioritize the fluidity of the text.

⁷ Feldman was responsible for the projects that originated the laws 10.907/1990 (destination of paces for cycling paths in the city of São Paulo), e 10.908/1990 (delimitation of spaces for cycling lanes in public squares). In 2009, proposed the project that regulated the implementation of the leisure cycling paths as secretary of Sports, Leisure and Recreation of the city of São Paulo.

⁸ According to Kingdon, “[...] There is a long process of ‘softening up’: ideas are floated, bills introduced, speeches made; proposals are drafted, then amended in response to reaction and floated again. Ideas confront one other (much as molecules bumped [...]) and combine with one another in various ways. The “soup” changes not only through the appearance of wholly new elements, but even more by the recombination of previously existing elements”. (Kingdon, 2011:116-117).

⁹ Or “Eco 92”, another known denomination.

“Cyclist Project”, opening space for him to gather to the public power all the knowledge acquired during his travels to Europe. This trajectory was responsible for integrating European experiences to the context of the city of São Paulo (I3). The project did not achieve a large scale, but formalized the bicycle, even if timidly, as a mean of transportation in the governmental agenda and enabled the creation of thematic networks (Massardier, 2006) among those who sympathized with the subject of bicycle mobility and would later become central for the current bicycle mobility policy. During the Celso Pitta administration (*Partido Progressista* — PP, 1997-2000), the production of information in the Environmental Bureau kept expanding, despite most actions being focused in parks and awareness campaigns.

The cycling-activism¹⁰ network, understood as a movement that fights for respect for the cyclists in the public space, found fertile grounds for its institutional development in the Environmental Bureau (SVMA). The ties built kept multiplying over the years in a process of translation of ideas (Latour, 2000). The conflicts were democratically brokered with the presence of fact constructors who sought to find consensus in order to achieve their ideas (Latour, 2000). In the municipal administration, the employees responsible for planning and coordinating the implementation of cycling mobility actions were connected to the network of bicycle mobility policies (I9).

The mobility agenda was in evidence since the beginning of the 2000s within the national context. There was a favorable public sentiment, institutional changes and movement in the flow of problems, politicians and solutions (Kingdon, 2011), thus creating a new image (Baumgartner and Jones, 1993): urban mobility for sustainable cities. Years later, this new image would be consolidated as a new policy paradigm (Hall, 1993), through the creation of the National Policy for Urban Mobility, conceived by the Ministry of Cities (created during the Lula administration, in 2003), which would bring support for the group of active transportations to legitimize their demands.

Between the Pitta (PP, 1997-2000) and the Suplicy (PT, 2001-04) administration, the foundation was built for the work group that would later become the Pro-cyclist Project. Laura Ceneviva, representative of the Environmental Bureau (SVMA) and coordinator of the Municipal Council for Environmental Issues and Sustainable Development (Cades) (SP) was elected president of the *Clean Air for Latin America Initiative*, an action financed by the World Bank. During this administration a project was developed and later received resources from the *Global Environment Facility* (GEF). This occurrence evidenced that the bicycle was already seen as an urban mean of transportation in the set of ideas of international organisms, such as the World Bank, “political, intellectual and financial actor” (Pereira, 2010), which acted as a “sounding board” for the exchange of ideas between countries in the 2000s (Leite and Peres, 2013:366). During that period, social actors with relevant presence in public institutions and participatory spaces, such as Arturo Alcorta and Renata Falzoni, would be responsible for attempting to sensitize the public through media actions such as the “bike reporters”, or as Suzana Nogueira, an expert on the streets of São Paulo (E6), or also as Reginaldo Paiva, a career engineer who represents the cycling approach inside the CPTM since the times of the Fepasa, in 1983,

¹⁰ In Brazil, cycle-activism begins in the 1970s decade, but it is in the 2000s that it becomes important in the *policy making*, especially with the Bike Rides for awareness (Xavier, 2007).

who also worked in the Haddad administration (PT), supporting the Traffic Bureau (CET) through the articulation with the Coordination of the Subprefectures (I11).

In summary, in the first wave of transfers a network of actors that circulated in the core of the Environmental Bureau (SVMA) was formed and would be responsible for introducing the bicycle as a programmatic idea (Campbell, 1998) connected to the demands related to the paradigm (Hall, 1993) of sustainable mobility, clean transportation and reduction in the consumption of fossil fuels, configuring connection points between the first and the second waves of diffusion of cycling ideas.

4.2 THE SECOND WAVE OF DIFFUSION

Since the early 2010s, the second wave of diffusion of cycling ideas was formed and the subsystem started a new configuration. The discussion of São Paulo regional plans, in the light of the Strategic Master Plan, was an institutional window of opportunity (Kingdon, 2011). It entailed the insertion of many of bicycle advocates in the bureaucratic structure and favored the expansion and renovation of the cycling-activists network. The active transportation group gained traction in the dispute against the group of road and collective transportations (I10). The bicycle entered the governmental agenda (Kingdon, 2011) from 2005 onwards in a complex setting. The process was fueled by increasingly heated disputes among the defense coalitions (Sabatier, 1988), mobilizing successful international experiences and the action of combative social movements.

Due to the initiative and pressure of the cycling-activist movement, jurisdiction over the policy was transferred to the Municipal Bureau of Transportation, which had more breadth and a larger budget. This bureau, however, ignored the participative process that involved various knowledgeable and experienced actors (I5). So even though the issue gained institutional relevance, the bureau's actions fell far short of what was desirable. (I2).

At the same time, the climate agenda was becoming relevant for the city government. During the Kassab administration (Social Democratic Party — PSD, 2009-12), the Municipal Bureau of International Relations organized events such as the C40 in 2011 — a forum which brought together mayors of the world's largest cities, sharing successful ideas for public policies. The same bureau signed a cooperation agreement in 2009 with the ITDP to acquire implementation *know how*. The ITDP is a *think tank* for mobility policies, headed by Enrique Penalosa, a pitchman for sustainable urban mobility policies (Montero, 2015; I5). Enrique is, in other words, a transfer agent. During that time, leisure cycling lanes were successfully implemented. They are an important action for citizen education and traffic awareness, supported by some actors linked to cycling-activism and the private sector (*Banco Bradesco*). Some actions were undertaken with the state government, but resistance among their bureaucrats was still very strong (I).

At that time, despite the orientations of the Executive power, it is important to highlight the role of Eduardo Jorge as a political entrepreneur. Jorge was head of the Municipal Environment Bureau from 2005 to 2012, during Serra's (PSDB) and Kassab's (PSD) administrations. He was constantly engaged as an advocate for the cycling-mobility issue, participating in events about mobility, visiting cities that had advanced a lot in this issue (such as London), and disseminating a public image in favor of routinely use of bicycles as a mean of transportation in Sao Paulo, when he started riding his

bike to work in the bureau (I7). The ITDP (I4) and the combination of cycling-activism movements that generated the *Rede Nossa São Paulo* are also worthy of mention during that period in which cities considered as models in cycling policies, such as Bogotá, Buenos Aires, New York and San Francisco were having their policies diffused. The ITDP is also relevant for diffusing models of bike sharing policies (from France and the Netherlands) and leisure cycling lanes (from Bogotá and San Francisco). (I7).

It is worth emphasizing how this second wave of diffusion was driven, to a large extent, by the case of Bogotá. As Montero (2017) points out, despite contextual criticism - also present in Farah (2008) -, the fact that the city was deemed an example of international “best practice” made the issue more salient in the regional agenda. We highlight the charismatic figure of Enrique Peñalosa, who acted as a “policy ambassador” — to use Porto de Oliveira’s (2013b) terms — for active mobility initiatives in Latin America and the world based on his experience as the former mayor of Bogotá (I5; Marques et al., 2015).

It was only in the Haddad administration (PT, 2013-16), however, that the bicycle, as a mean of transportation gained prominence in the governmental agenda. June 2013¹¹ represents, from the perspective of this article, a change in the political context that pressured the Haddad administration (PT) to change urban mobility policy in Sao Paulo. According to our interviewees, the June 2013 demonstrations were the turning point for building permanent cycling paths and cycling lanes, forcing the issue of cycling infrastructure to be included among the goals of the administration (I10, I11, I12). The protests took place with the motto of mobility, including the introduction of free public transport and the defense of “sustainable urban mobility”. These ideas were crucial for concrete actions to be implemented, such as: speeding up the implementation of exclusive bus lanes, suspending the bus fare increase, the establishment of the Municipal Traffic and Transport Council and the transparency of the methodology for calculating fare readjustment.

However, even though Haddad had already publicly mentioned in his Government Program the issue of cycling mobility, it was only towards the second half of his term that it really took off. In spite of the critical mass gathered over the years by a number of actors dedicated to the cycling issue, the expansion of the cycling theme as an issue happened because of a fortuitous sequence of events. The key moment was a trip made by Haddad, and later by Jilmar Tatto (Secretary of Transportation), to Buenos Aires (I10, I5, I9), where the cycling lane model (that occupies the space of on-street car parking) inspired a cheap cycling solution for São Paulo (I5).

The issue of mobility became the main focus of the city hall, and Haddad ordered Tatto to organize a number of mobility projects, including cycling paths. The city’s cycling network then jumped from 63 km of bicycle lanes and cycling paths to 468 km in just over two years, fulfilling the objective of the Plan of Goals to implement 400 km of cycling paths. The development of the Municipal Mobility Plan — PlanMob 2015, created in the context of the dispute between coalitions (I5) of the road-based urban mobility subsystem (the collective transportation group and the bicycle mobility group), institutionalized the cycling policy implemented in the Haddad administration.

¹¹ For more details about the nature of this political process, see Singer (2013) and Alonso (2017).

4.3 THE ROLE OF THE PRESS IN THE RESISTANCE AGAINST DIFFUSION

Among the 1681 news reports analyzed in the survey to verify the space dedicated to urban mobility in the two largest newspapers in the city between 2013 and 2016, the public transport system was the most widely reported issue (43,9%). It can be divided in articles about bus systems, rail networks, and general transport policy. Reports on traffic and parking were the second most salient issues (19.63%), dealing with road safety, general traffic policies, system management and road works. Active transportation (cycling and walking) made up the third largest group of news reports (14.46%), focusing in particular on the implementation and conditions of the new exclusive bicycle lanes, highlighting controversies in civil society and criticism of the model, the physical and functional characteristics of the tracks and possible dangers of pedestrian conflicts.

However, the new infrastructure for bicycle traffic was the object of the greatest number of reports during the entire period of the study, when analyzed as a specific subject matter (180 news items, 10.71% of the total), according to the classification presented in box 2. The emphasis given to this policy becomes evident when compared to the occurrence of only 79 news reports about the several delays in the subway and urban train expansion works, despite the fact that those expansions had astronomical costs destined to a reduced subway network.¹²

¹² Delays in the projects of eight CPTM, Monorail, and subway lines — that is, 97.2 km of new lines and 87 stations.

BOX 2 GENERAL MATTERS, CONSOLIDATED THEMES AND SPECIFIC MATTERS OF THE ANALYZED NEWS PIECES, WITH THE NUMBER OF OCCURRENCES AND TOTAL PARTICIPATION, BETWEEN 2013 AND 2016, IN THE FOLHA DE S.PAULO AND THE O ESTADO DE S. PAULO NEWSPAPERS

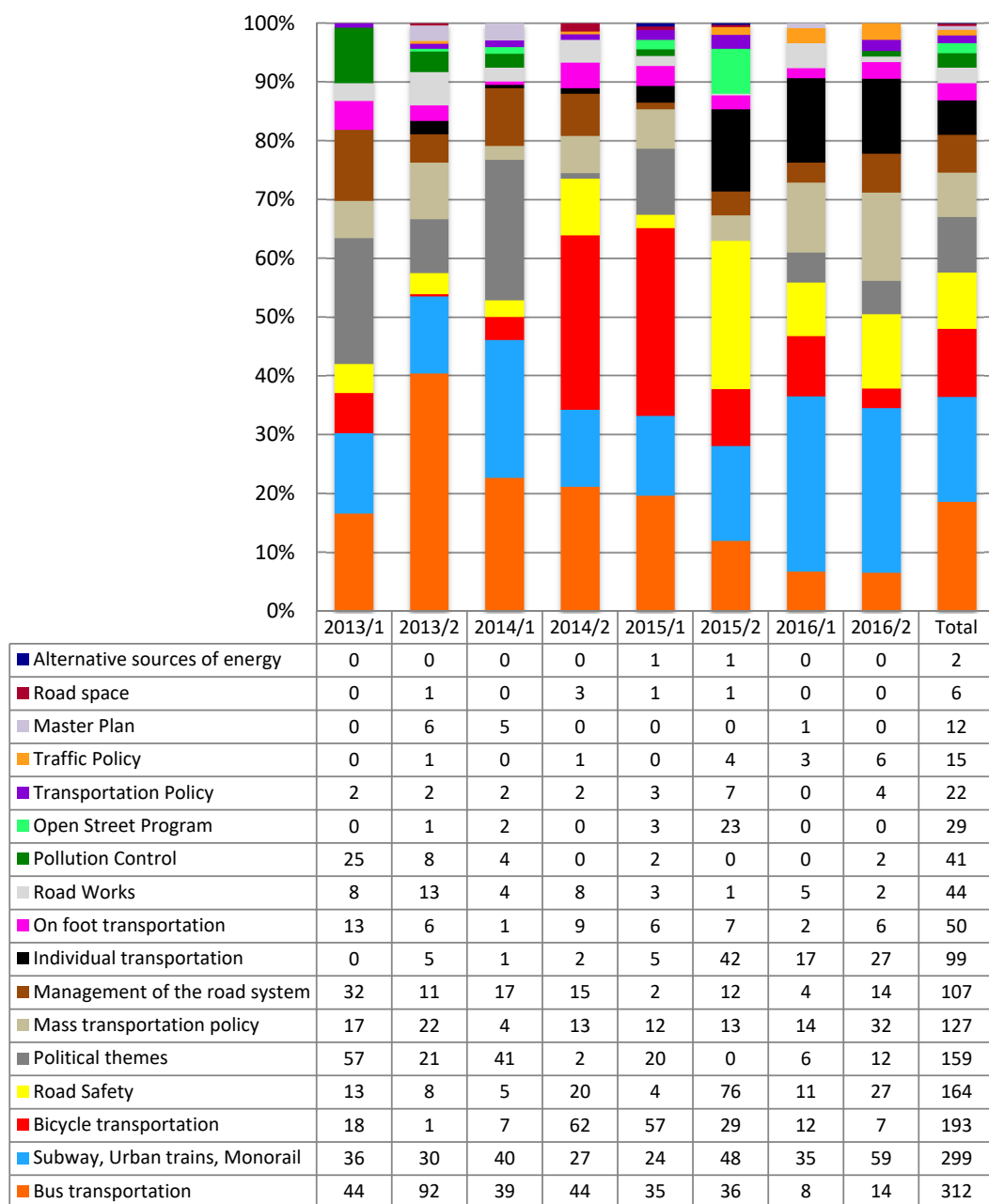
Matters, Themes and Specifics	Occurrences	%
Mass transportation	738	43.90%
Bus Transportation	312	18.56%
Bus corridors	91	5.41%
System costs and management	57	3.39%
New corridors	45	2.68%
Technology	37	2.20%
Bidding	34	2.02%
Restructuring of Bus Lines	10	0.59%
Research and data	8	0.48%
Late night bus	8	0.48%
Bus stops	7	0.42%
Terminals	7	0.42%
Fines and supervision	4	0.24%
EMTU (metropolitan bus lines)	2	0.12%
Charter buses	1	0.06%
Other Systems	1	0.06%
Subway, CPTM and Monorail	299	17.79%
Delayed works	79	4.70%
Subway lines	72	4.28%
Operational problems	40	2.38%
Projects	32	1.90%
Track work	27	1.61%
Monotrilho (Monorail)	19	1.13%
Tracks	15	0.89%
CPTM	14	0.83%
Overcrowding	1	0.06%
Mass Transportation Policy	127	7.56%
Fares	61	3.63%
Gratuity	29	1.73%
Research and data	24	1.43%
Universal accessibility	5	0.30%
Fines and Supervision	5	0.30%
Bus transportation	2	0.12%
Technology	1	0.06%
Traffic and Parking	330	19.63%
Road safety	164	9.76%
Speed reduction	80	4.76%
Accidents	46	2.74%
Fines and supervision	31	1.84%
Anti-drunk driving laws	4	0.24%
Motorcycles	3	0.18%
Management of the road system	107	6.37%
Traffic Jams	24	1.43%
Zona Azul (On-street parking)	18	1.07%
Rodizio (Peak hour car ban)	15	0.89%
Signals	15	0.89%
Off-street parking	12	0.71%
Fines and Supervision	6	0.36%
Motorcycles	5	0.30%
CET (Traffic Bureau)	4	0.24%
Truck restrictions	3	0.18%
Technology	3	0.18%

Matters, Themes and Specifics	Occurrences	%
Research and data	2	0.12%
Road works	44	2.62%
Municipal Roads	24	1.43%
Rodoanel (Beltway System)	19	1.13%
Highways	1	0.06%
Traffic Policy	15	0.89%
Fines and Supervision	13	0.77%
Research and data	2	0.12%
Active Transportation	243	14.46%
Bicycle Transportation	193	11.48%
Cycling Paths	180	10.71%
Cycling Lanes	5	0.30%
Bicycle Rental	3	0.18%
Bicycle Parking	3	0.18%
Incentives	2	0.12%
Transportation on foot	50	2.97%
Sidewalks	35	2.08%
Crossway safety	11	0.65%
Boardwalks	4	0.24%
General Mobility Policy	181	10.77%
Political Themes	159	9.46%
Protests	74	4.40%
Strike	46	2.74%
Corruption	38	2.26%
PAC (Program for Economic Growth)	1	0.06%
Transportation Policy	22	1.31%
Research and data	15	0.89%
Circulation changes	4	0.24%
Fluvial	3	0.18%
Individual Transportations	99	5.89%
Individual Transportations	99	5.89%
Uber	67	3.99%
Taxi	32	1.90%
Urban Policy	47	2.80%
Rua Aberta (Open Street Program)	29	1.73%
Av. Paulista	19	1.13%
Minhocão	5	0.30%
Pedestrians	4	0.24%
Downtown	1	0.06%
Master Plan	12	0.71%
Densification	9	0.54%
Private parking spaces	2	0.12%
Urban Mobility Plan	1	0.06%
Road spaces	6	0.36%
Elevado (Viaduct)	5	0.30%
Parklets	1	0.06%
Environment	43	2.56%
Pollution Control	41	2.44%
Inspections	41	2.44%
Alternative sources of energy	2	0.12%
New Technologies	2	0.12%
Total	1681	100.00%

Source: Elaborated by the authors.

The innovations in the municipal urban mobility policy and in the destination of the city’s road space mobilized the press especially between the second half of 2014 and the beginning of 2015, provoking a great change in the pattern of the news on mobility in the media of São Paulo, according to figure 1. In this sense, the 119 news reports on bicycle transport accounted for more than 30% of the total of 386 articles on urban mobility during this period of intense implementation of a large part of the new active transport network.

FIGURE 1 SEASONALITY OF THE CONSOLIDATED THEMES IN ALL NEWS PIECES BY SEMESTER (2013-16)



Source: Elaborated by the authors.

The synthesis of the content of the media reports allows us to point out some themes that have been published by the press as normative structures (Campbell, 1998) that frame ideas for the protection of certain disseminated values and that can manipulate public feelings (idem). In this way, the causal narratives and stories (Stone, 1989) produced by the media acted as real instruments of resistance to the paradigm change of cycling policy in the city of São Paulo, significantly influencing public sentiment against government initiatives supported by the cycling-activism coalition.

Box 3 organizes the content of the editorials and news reports collected by relating them to the narratives and causal stories presented by the press in light of the normative structures used, configuring the media resistance to the municipal cycling policy.

BOX 3 ANALYSIS OF THE NORMATIVE STRATEGIES FROM THE PRESS TOWARDS THE CYCLING POLICY IN THE CITY OF SÃO PAULO DURING THE HADDAD ADMINISTRATION

Themes/Aspects	Normative Structures	Narratives and Casual Stories	Sources
Private and personal attributes — constant association between the mayor and the cycling policy (“Haddad’s Cycling lanes”)	Emptying of the public and collective character in detriment of private contingencies; treating the existence of the cycling policy as a result of the obduracy of mayor Haddad, stripping it off its value for the city and for all who historically defended the use of the bicycle.	Haddad acts in a “clumsy” way; the cycling paths implemented by the municipal administration were the “product of improvisation and of mayor Haddad’s desire to shine at any costs”.	‘The cycling paths are <i>sinking in</i> ’ (Oesp, 15/2/15);
		The mayor is regularly called “delirious”.	‘Cycling paths – delirium and reality’ (OESP, 15/04/15)
Technical problems and criticism endorsed by “specialists” — regular view that the Traffic Bureau is not capable of implementing cycling paths and that improvisation and lack of planning were the key aspects of the São Paulo cycling path program.	The alleged general incompetence and inefficiency of the Haddad administration; the legitimacy of the arguments opposing the policy would be given by the discourse of experts.	The idea that the cycling lanes were done without serious planning and as a miraculous and demagogical proposition is defended; that they were first implemented in central areas for visibility; that they compromise an already defective road system; the topography was unfavorable.	‘Cycling paths — delirium and reality’ (Oesp, 15/4/15);
		Lack of planning and technical studies on the real need for cycling lanes, affirming they were implemented “hastily and through improvisation”.	“Cycling lanes in the Court House’ (Oesp, 24/3/15);
No need for cycling paths in the city	Cycling paths are disqualified by their low potential for usage.	“ There are cycling paths implemented in places where there is no demand, only for political reasons”, says consultant Sergio Ejzemberg.”	“In a hillside, 29 cyclists pass every hour” (FSP, 14/6/15)
		The cycling paths would have “little use”, and it would be rare to see cyclists in the paths because the few who use them belong “to the idle middle class”.	‘The cycling paths are <i>sinking in</i> ’ (Oesp, 15/2/15)

Continue

Themes/Aspects	Normative Structures	Narratives and Casual Stories	Sources
Safety in the cycling paths	Alerts about specific episodes of conflicts with pedestrians, neglecting to say that a real war, with several casualties, goes on between automobile drivers and cyclists or those who walk through the city.	<p>“With 92,3 kilometers of cycling paths, scenes of disrespect become common, with bikes running red lights and people on the pedestrian crossings.”</p> <p>“When stopping to wait at the curb, pedestrians will need to rigorously stay in the space determined for them — which got 1 meter shorter — in order to avoid invading the cycling lanes”</p>	<p>‘Cyclists and pedestrians at “war” for space in the streets’ (Oesp, 19/10/14)</p> <p>“In the final stages of the work, cycling path at Paulista Avenue will ‘squeeze’ pedestrians” (FSP, 14/6/15)</p>
Resistance against the cycling lanes from the population	The cycling paths would take away the supposed legitimate space of the cars, according to those who live in wealthy neighborhoods, tarnishing the right to come and go.	Residents of wealthy neighborhoods are interviewed without counterpoint: “If I want to have friends over for dinner, where will they park?”; “Nobody rides bicycles in the street [...] nobody rides them and this demand is nonexistent”; “We can’t lose the right to park our cars in the streets. And the cycling paths will attract assailants”; “People who ride bicycles are no good [...] They are disqualified people”.	<p>“Residents of prominent neighborhoods go to the Public Prosecutor against Haddad’s cycling lanes’ (Oesp, 7/12/14)</p>
Impact in the traffic of automobiles	Appealing to individual disadvantages in city circulation, ignoring the gain that a shift for a paradigm of sustainable mobility would have been.	<p>Headlines that focus on the reduction of parking spaces and not on the expansions of the sustainable mobility</p> <p>“Drivers stay stopped for over 1 hour at Frederico Abranches Street; ‘Estado’ did not find workers on the site.”</p> <p>“Exclusive bus corridors grab 476 km from roads and cycling lanes, 240 km; mobility strategies divide experts.”</p>	<p>“Municipal Administration will eliminate up to 40 thousand parking spaces to create cycling paths” (FSP, 5/6/14)</p> <p>‘Construction work for the cycling paths in Santa Cecília blocks traffic’ (Oesp, 20/2/15)</p> <p>‘Haddad Administration removes 716 km of car lanes’ (Oesp, 19/7/15).</p>

Source: Elaborated by the authors.

According to the box 3, the transfer process discussed in this article was strongly marked by resistance actions of the mainstream media, which were expressed in editorial and journalistic reports structured in four types of narratives and normative structures: the appeal to negative personal characteristics attributed to the mayor; the allegation of inefficiency and managerial incompetence of the administration; the alleged irrelevance and insecurity of bicycle structures and, finally, the lack of freedom for individuals to exercise their right to come and go at will. The strategy of resistance materialized in the continuous mobilization of these normative structures, forming a chain of causal arguments and histories that were presented over time, giving substance to the unfavorable public sentiment.

It can also be observed that media veto of the cycling policy issue adopted a broad strategy of disqualifying their image, which included, on the one hand, personal attacks on mayor Fernando Haddad and the technical problems encountered during the implementation of cycling paths. On the other hand, a narrative of the irrelevance of bicycles in urban mobility was constructed, ignoring the positive international image of the bicycle associated with a means of transport. Finally, it portrays and reinforces the rejection of the population to the policy, emphasizing the impact of the actions

in the reduction of the space of circulation destined to the private automobiles, argument that finds fertile ground in a city in which cars are still an important element of social distinction.

5. FINAL REMARKS

It is possible to state that a shift in paradigm happened regarding urban mobility during the Haddad administration, with more attention being given to collective transportation and cycling. This is backed up by the political discourse, as well as the institutions and instruments that were created and re-signified, in addition to a series of actions in conflict with individual motorized mobility, especially measures to reduce traffic, reduce speeds, increase exclusive lanes for collective transportation and the implementation of cycling lanes.

In a social context historically marked by the “automobile way of life”, the process of transference that resulted in cycling policy can be divided in two moments. First, the circulation of ideas about exogenous experiences (European cycle routes) and their insertion in the state bureaucracy, marking the initial policies on bicycle mobility in the city of São Paulo, led by the network of “cycling experts”.

The second wave, starting in the mid-2000s, was marked by the efforts of the Pro-Cyclist Working Group, who were responsible for transmitting knowledge to the new actors that had been in the network since the 1980s. Some actors played a prominent role as “intergenerational transmission belts”, conserving and sharing knowledge produced in the 1990s. The shift from the Environment Bureau to the Transportation Bureau eventually stimulated the strengthening of civil society associations, forums that brought together many civil servants who supported environmental issues and cycling mobility.

Networks (Massardier, 2006) were channels for circulation and transmission of different ideas, absorbing the impact of internal and external determinants and codifying them in their strategies of action. This process of absorption and re-signification of ideas, in turn, depended on political actors willing to establish consensus and create partnerships by negotiating changes in a long process of interest accommodation. In the case of São Paulo, it is clear that several figures played a prominent role as Latour’s speaks of when he mentions “facts builders” (2000). Therefore, the Latour translation model applies to the process of forming the issue within the network and therefore within the institutions, because the cycling network was inserted into the administration due to the susceptibility of the Environmental Bureau.

Finally, a few Kingdonian political entrepreneurs stand out, such as Walter Feldman in the early 1990s, Eduardo Jorge, and finally Fernando Haddad as the mayor who took the issue as a priority of his administration, during a period of enormous financial difficulties and need to be innovative at the municipal level.

The articles analyzed showed potential to influence society with the dissemination of ideas and to form public opinion about the issues, especially by systematically repeating causal narratives (Stone, 1989) in order to characterize an issue and sediment an image (negative, in this case) of the politics for cycling in Sao Paulo (“Haddad’s cycling paths”, “lack of planning”, “improvisation”). It was a clear case of how the media resistance dynamic works: the new policy initiatives were considered unwanted, clearly highlighting in a negative manner the new policies that limited the automobile’s importance in Sao Paulo’s road system. This probably happened because these newspapers’ audiences are people on the top of the socioeconomic ladder.

Instead of being a watchdog of government action, the press focused its narratives on less relevant aspects — or aspects that are especially salient for interest groups and the paper's audience — and omitted several positive changes in the urban mobility policy in São Paulo, which are in line with the state of the art of sustainable mobility in the world. On the contrary: newspaper reports often exaggerated the negative aspects of a particular cycling path in order to disqualify the whole new policy. This retro-fed people's rejection of the new interventions and gave wind to outdated values in the contemporaneous discussion of the issue, through the mobilization of normative structures linked to the freedom to come and go at will, and also to bureaucratic characteristics of the administration and to the mayor's personal traits.

At last, we observe, in this article, various ways in which the media, through narratives and the mobilization of diverse normative structures, resulted in a dynamic of resistance that was crucial for the transfer process of the cycling policy in São Paulo. From the perspective of the literature on diffusion, this article makes the contribution of highlighting the analytical and empirical relevance of considering the media an object for studying the transfer and diffusion of public policies. This happens because the media acts as a fundamental actor in the public sphere to weaken or strengthen resistance to policies that are diffused or transferred. To study the media as a political actor allows us to value the dimension of conflict and is an important perspective to analyze processes of policy adaptation in domestic contexts. The article also contributes in pointing to the importance of meshing concepts from the literature on diffusion with analytical categories, which pertain to the literature on the cognitive analysis of public policies – especially regarding studies that refer to processes of adaptation, configuration and implementation of public policies that endure different administrations.

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(I2) ARANHA, Carlos. Cycling-activist and specialist in urban mobility, member of the City Council of Urban Policy, coordinator of the Mobility Working Group of the network "Rede Nossa São Paulo". Interviewed on 07 December 2015 in São Paulo (SP).

(I3) BANTEL, Gunther. Trained as a metallurgical engineer, he started working on issues of cycling mobility after traveling to Holland in the 1970s. Interviewed on 12 December 2015, in São Paulo (SP).

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(I5) "BONEY", Odair Henrique Neto. Special Advisor on Public Policies of São Paulo Municipal Secretary of Government. He participated in the development of the Government Program for the

candidacy of Fernando Haddad to the City Hall. Interviewed on 22 June 2016, in São Paulo (SP).

(I6) CENEVIVA, Laura L.V. and HOFFMAN, Ana M. Laura is an Architect, coordinator of the 'Pro-Cyclist' Executive Group from its start until 2009. Ana has built a career as civil servant at the São Paulo Municipal Secretary of Green and Environment since 1994, participating in all the secretary's activities around cycling mobility. Laura and Ana were interviewed together on 27 November 2015, in São Paulo (SP).

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Cristiane Kerches da Silva Leite

PhD in Political Science from the University of São Paulo. Professor of the Graduate and Postgraduate programs in Public Policies Management at the School of Arts, Science and Humanities of the University of São Paulo. E-mail: criskerches@gmail.com.

Maurício Feijó Cruz

Masters in Public Administration and Government from the Getulio Vargas Foundation / São Paulo School of Business Administration (FGV EAESP). Doctoral student at the Faculty of Architecture and Urbanism of the University of São Paulo. E-mail: mauriciofeijo@usp.br.

Lucas Bravo Rosin

Degree in Public Policies Management from the University of São Paulo. E-mail: lucas.rosin@usp.br.