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ASSOCIATION DELTAMETROPOLIS
an idea factory as a tool of governance

1. idea factory

The Association Deltametropolis, in promoting the emergence of a Deltametropolis in Holland of European scope and scale, considers itself to be an idea factory. As a lobby group it has decided to produce strategic concepts rather than focus on tactical manoeuvres or operational priorities. Can an idea factory be a tool of governance in metropolitan development? This question will be addressed here by first setting the scene with regard to context and organization, then expanding a bit on theory as an introduction of three concepts the Association considers to be of strategic importance to metropolitan development: *Water realm*, a metropolitan park system, *Leiden*, as a centre of national importance within the metropolis and *Deltanet*, a metropolitan transportation system, integrating road and rail transport.

2. regional context

First of all, the Deltametropolis in its regional context. At the crossroads of the main European trading route since the Middle Ages, from the cities in Northern Italy along the Rhine to Southwest England and London, and the main intercontinental shipping lanes over the North Sea, Holland is one of the main global distribution centres of Europe. In worldwide competition, ever higher requirements are made on the efficiency of these distribution centres and their logistic system in general.

3. The Netherlands compared to Europe

Comparison of the Netherlands to the other member-states of the European Union does show this country to be the most densely populated and to have the highest proportion of people with part-time jobs as well as the highest proportion of households connected to the internet. Together with Great Britain, Ireland, Denmark and Belgium the proportion of one family dwellings is way above the European average. Down south and up north more people live in apartment dwellings.

4. position in the global economy

The global economy can be conceived as to consist of three layers. At the base one finds production and consumption all over the world. In the middle layer there are continental distribution centres. At the top production, consumption and distribution are regulated on a global scale. According to different sources of benchmarks, the Netherlands belong to the countries with the highest purchasing power in the world, together with other small countries like Luxemburg, Iceland and Denmark. As a continental distribution centre it is number five in the world, next to London, New York, Los Angeles and Singapore. As a regulation centre it has a moderate position on a world scale. Even in Europe it is not among the top five. It is interesting there seems to be no direct causal relationships between these layers of the economy. Denmark nor Iceland have important positions as distribution- or regulation centres on a global scale or even a continental scale.

5. government organisation

The present governmental organisation of the eventual Deltametropolis does show a traditional hierarchy of government levels, in this case a municipal, provincial, national and European level. In between there is a formal level of city regions, set up some ten years ago and a co-operation agreement on the metropolitan level between the main four cities, their city regions and the provinces.

6. declaration Deltametropolis

Deltametropolis is an initiative in 1998 of the four main cities, more especially their aldermen for spatial planning.

The emergence of the European Union and the introduction of the euro compelled these cities, whose spheres of influence overlap, to transform the rather loose urban pattern in an integrated metropolitan system. This is thought necessary to promote the *internal* market of the system to raise its competitiveness with the world outside.

The declaration sees human interaction as the essence of city life and conceives for that reason the metropolis at the same time as emancipation machine in a social - a source of wealth in an economical - and as a school of citizenship in

a cultural sense.

The aldermen see spatial planning as the main tool to promote their aim. This may seem a weak instrument as there are no *causal* but at best *conditional* relationships between situational qualities and urban development. What this choice implies is that the concept Deltametropolis does not pretend to solve problems but may provide opportunities.

7. Association Deltametropolis

In the year 2000 the Association Deltametropolis is founded and at present it has 38 members, public and private institutions. It defines itself as an idea factory. As a platform for the exchange of ideas between members, it is geared to combine and refine these ideas into strategic concepts that offer opportunities for private as well as public enterprise. So the product of the factory are ideas to put on the agenda of public and private entrepreneurs.

8. organisation model

The organisation model the Association uses consists of an interdependent layered system of spatial components: water system, rural system, transportation system and urban system. In practice, these four subsystems are maintained by different organisations, different rules and regulations and different financial systems. The interaction between them - and thus the dynamic of the spatial system as a whole - is influenced by three different types of initiators: free agents like art and science and all kinds of clubs, like the Association Deltametropolis; public authorities, old ones, like the 140 municipalities, 4 provinces and 13 government departments and new ones like the recently founded Randstad Region; and private bodies, such as the Water Realm Alliance, that I will come to later.

9. working program

The working program of the Association is to clarify and specify the concept Deltametropolis. Starting from a general concept derived from the statements in the declaration, step by step concepts for the different layers are joined together to see if they fit and really unite.

The work has started with the weakest of the four layers, the water system. More or less parallel the rural system has been elaborated, more specifically by specifying urban growth boundaries. These two are then integrated in the concept Water Realm, a proposal for a metropolitan park system that has a network of waterways, bicycle tracks and footpaths as its backbone. At present we work on the transportation system, next year we will tackle the urban system, joining them afterwards into an integrated system. The last step will be to integrate the four subsystems into one according to the general concept we started with. When we are ready, we hope Deltametropolis meanwhile is the leading concept of planning policy in the Holland region and the Association then can dissolve.

10. a theory of citizenship

A leading concept is at the same time indispensable and insufficient to condition metropolitan development. Even if one accepts that territorial development is only one aspect of metropolitan development, governance of such developments on several scales of action in a multi layered government system asks for a theoretical base. For Deltametropolis 'a theory of citizenship' by Herman van Gunsteren is used as such. The essence of this theory can be summarized in three citations: (1) citizenship exists in action, (2) a society of citizens need a steady diet of conflicts, (3) the essence of civil society is not consensus but a rich repertoire to deal with a wide variety of conflicts.

11. principles of citizenship

The principles of citizenship we use are the well known trio from the French Revolution: freedom of opinion; equality before the law; and brotherhood in causes of common concern, from public works to public health. Freedom of opinion needs media; equality before the law needs a public authority to make and maintain the law; and in the pursuit of common causes, the work to be done can be done most efficiently by that combination of competition, specialisation and complementarity that the market provides. Traditionally, we associate the revolutionary modernisation of society in the eighteenth century with the separation of church and state. As important however is the separation of state and means of production. By separating these three realms of action the citizens become the locus of power. As freedom, equality and brotherhood are interdependent powers without an internal hierarchy, separating these powers give citizens direct access to all three of them. So they gain power to maintain a balance. Hence this type of society is called bourgeois society, a citizens society.

12. organisation of citizenship

Each of these three principles of citizenship has its own type of organisation, adapted to the role that principle has to play in society. Freedom needs autonomy: without independence, no freedom. Equality needs hierarchy: when two parties have a conflict they have to accept the decision of a third one. Brotherhood needs networks: these accommodate competition and co-operation. Freedom feeds on chance relations, equality has to accept power relations, whereas brotherhood is enacted by contract relations. The role of freedom is conceptual recreation, that is ongoing renewal of values, norms and other mental concepts. The role of equality is to produce necessary regulations. The role

of brotherhood is useful co-operation, especially with regard to the material well-being of society.

13. citizens participation

If the core of citizenship is acting in the public realm, as Van Gunsteren proposes in his theory, how should one conceive the actors? Jan Brouwer, a friend of mine, and I have developed a scheme that shows society as an organisation produced by people - organisms - that participate in this society. The actions can be characterised along two dimensions: from individual to collective and from material to mental. People participate in society by playing, learning, working and caring.

Play belongs to the realm of freedom, care to the world of equality and work to the world of brotherhood.

Learning we think is not a principle but a necessity, an action nobody can escape.

Practical people will ask what may be the practical use of these theoretical elaborations. The answer is, as always, a theory has no other use than to clarify the mind. If democracy is government by citizens for citizens, we should have clear ideas how this may work.

14. vocabulary for spatial decisions

A leading concept for Deltametropolis will also need a theory of spatial policy. To communicate, a first necessity is a common language, a common vocabulary of spatial phenomena. Taeke de Jong has developed such a vocabulary, distinguishing between four types of land use: landscapes and cities - both places to be - and waters and roads - both spaces of flow. These four more or less coincide with their visual appearances as water, natural soil, pavement and buildings.

15. vademecum spatial policy

Dutch spatial policy is easy to understand if one accepts it is based on political rationality rather than professional rationality. In Dutch politics the mainstream consists of three enduring currents: a social-democratic current, a Christian-democratic current and what I will call a freedom-democratic current. The constituency of social-democrats lives mainly in cities, the constituency of freedom-democrats live mainly in the western provinces, in Holland. The Christian-democrats live everywhere else. There are three possible coalitions. Socialist- and Christian democrats will pursue national dispersal and regional concentration in cities. Christian- and freedom-democrats will pursue just the opposite policy, that is concentration in the west and regional dispersal. Social- and freedom democrats will promote national and regional concentration.

But as no coalition can be sustained politically for more than eight years, none of these three policies can be pursued for more than these years. Politically, they are not sustainable.. So in reality the 500 odd municipalities reign supreme and what we see is national and regional dispersal.

16. typology of futures

All policy is future-oriented. So it may clarify communication to be aware that there are different types of futures. We may distinguish possible futures (inventions), probable futures (forecasts), desirable futures (programs) and useful futures (policies). These four types can be characterised by their position on a matrix of aims and means. When both are undefined, we see possible futures. Where means are defined, but aims are not, like in nature, we see probable futures. When aims are defined, but means are not, we see political programs, private as well as public. Where aims and means are both defined, that future is apparently considered to be useful: we see public and private policies.

17. perspectives on strategy

Democracy is based on the acceptance that there will always be different conceptions of ideal society. Following the principles of the French Revolution, the three enduring currents in the mainstream of Dutch politics see the ideal society as based on freedom (freedom-democrats), equality (social-democrats) and brotherhood (Christian-democrats). It is wise to envisage a fourth possibility, that may emerge from ongoing innovation, either artificially (inventions) or scientifically (discoveries).

In the nineteen-eighties, following three reports (1977, 1981, 1983) of the Scientific Council of Government Policy, the foundation 'The Netherlands Now As Design' (NNAO) produced four perspectives for the Netherlands in 2050.

In the nineteen-nineties, ten years later, the Ministry of Housing, Planning and Environment, published a report on 'The Netherlands in 2030', specifying perspectives as envisaged by that ministry (Urban Land), the Ministry of Public Works (Flowland), the Ministry of Agriculture (Park Land) and the reality of Municipal Land (Palette).

What is important to acknowledge is that these different perspectives are not alternatives to choose from, but different

political programs that *together* form the frame of reference to test the feasibility of any project.

18. Water Realm: the present water machine

Against this theoretical background, three examples of products of the Association Deltametropolis as an idea factory will be presented. Reflecting on them, one may judge if an Association as an idea factory makes sense as a tool of governance.

The first example is the proposal to position the delta as identity and image of this Deltametropolis by combining the various recreational networks for sailing, cycling and walking into the backbone of a metropolitan park system to be called Water Realm.

To understand the physical shape of the Netherlands you can best consider it to be a vast open air water machine.

Water enters the country from all sides. Mainly from the east, the Rhine providing some two thirds of the annual fresh water load, and some volume also from the south. A quarter of the total load falls from heaven, approximately the same volume as evaporates. Salt water comes in by the tide into rivers and estuaries and seeping under dunes and dikes, salinating ground water. The annual overload of water we have to get rid of if we don't want to drown.

By dikes and dams, barriers, locks and sluices, mills and pumps, and a huge amount of rules and regulations, measures and monitoring, the water machine is maintaining a delicate balance in water levels and water tables.

For several reasons, mainly climatic changes and hence wetter winters and dryer summers, but also ongoing urbanisation and coating of natural soil with pavement all along the Rhine, the water machine needs a serious overhaul. The idea is to use this necessary overhaul to complete the existing but fragmented recreational network, giving shape to a metropolitan park system that connects the water-rich rural landscapes with the equally water-rich urban centres of Deltametropolis.

19. explorations TKA 1998

the idea of this water realm was announced in the original declaration Deltametropolis. Together with the Association for Monuments of Nature, the initiators of the declaration committed a first exploration of this concept by Teun Koolhaas Associates (TKA). This first step consisted mainly of an inventory of then available plans.

20. explorations H+N+S 2001

Some years later a second step presented two alternative models for the water system of Deltametropolis. The idea factory as a tool of governance could claim its first result: the fact that the Association presented this study triggered the membership of the water boards, who had up till then hesitated to join the club.

21. metropolitan park system 2002

when the water boards had become members, serious study of the water realm could begin. A working group developed a long-term view on the scope and scale of the water system transformation. Parallel to that another working group studied possibilities to introduce urban growth boundaries. The proposals of both groups were then integrated and unified by specifying a design method to contrast organic forms of natural landscapes with geometric forms of agricultural cultivation.

22. provisional Water Realm Alliance 2003

The annual meeting of the Association decided that as a concept Water Realm could be considered as a finished product of the idea factory. The next step had to be to promote its adoption by those parties that could implement it. The Association was lucky that several members who had actively co-operated in the development of the proposal, were willing to join in a provisional Water Realm Alliance. Furthermore, the concept was presented to the Minister of Agriculture, Nature and Food Supply, the provincial governors and the board of the Randstad Region. By doing so, the concept is slowly but not yet surely introduced into the spatial policy for this part of the country.

23. Leiden: present situation

The second example is the strategy to position Leiden as an urban centre of metropolitan importance as well as an important link in the chain of cities from Amsterdam to Rotterdam along the coast. Leiden is situated in an attractive set of landscapes with dunes, beaches and sea in the west, bulb fields northwest, lakes northeast, meadows in the east and a mix of old estates and chicue suburbs in the south.

24. Leiden: policy announcement 1999

The initiators of Deltametropolis started their strategy for Leiden with a perfunctory announcement to parliament that they would make a structural proposal for Leiden to test how a territorial situation could accommodate a metropolitan

program.

25 Leiden: regional debate 2001

When the Association had been founded in the year 2000, a working group was set up, chaired by the alderman for spatial planning of Leiden. The working group presented three alternatives and two groups of structural alternatives were produced by other parties, one being the result of a design studio in Delft Technical University, the other by a temporary alliance of four private institutions. Then the Association organised a regional debate on these proposals, followed by three workshops on dilemmas that the debate had brought to light.

The project did not lead to direct practical result, but nevertheless the local government was quite happy with it. Never before an outside party had shown any interest in Leiden and its potential for development. The regional debate had brought a positive change of atmosphere.

26. Leiden: regional study Water Realm 2003

Leiden is chosen as a case study for regional specification of the Water Realm concept. By improving the accessibility of its attractive environment, more people in the Leiden agglomeration will be able to enjoy it. The impression that the recreational network of the Water Realm does exist already is established in this study. Relatively few additional connections and facilities have to be made. These are precisely those that transform a collection of fragments into an interconnected whole.

27. Leiden: national centre in Deltanet 2003

The issue of the strategic position of Leiden has been attended to again in the Deltanet study, started last year and concentrated in a workshop of a week in which twelve teams of designers participated this year in October. Leiden is designated as one of seven primary connectors in the Deltanet transportation system as well as one of seven primary urban centres in the Deltametropolis, comparable to Utrecht, the fourth city of the Netherlands.

Like with the Water Realm, there is no certainty at all that this strategy will give Leiden a special role in policies of public and private parties. However, by focusing time and again on the potential of Leiden to develop into a major urban centre, the idea factory might help those parties to get the idea.

28. Deltanet: present network

The third and last example of a product of the idea factory is the concept of Deltanet. If one looks at the network of roads in Holland one sees an intercity highway system that has some 180 points of access, with an average distance between them of less than 4 kilometres. The railway system in Holland, however, has some 30 intercity stations. So the intercity road system is some six times more accessible as the intercity railway system. Already in the Declaration Deltametropolis the initiators had stated they would bring about more synergy between the positive characteristics of road- and rail systems. More specifically they would expand public transport by road, to substitute private car traffic.

29. Deltanet: public road transport study TUD 1998

Already before publication of the declaration, the initiators in combination with Schiphol Airport, commissioned the Technical University in Delft to do a study on an integrated road-rail system of public transport. This study of 1998 provided a general proposal for the metropolitan area as a whole and a more detailed one for the Rotterdam region. The study did not get much attention, being far beyond the political mainstream that associates public transport with rail systems only.

30. Deltanet: connector oriented study TUD 1999

In 1999 a study was made by two young architects, as part of a research program of the Faculty of Architecture on a systematic design, composed of the sub systems water, land, transport and city.

The interesting new idea in their transport design is the introduction of the *connector* as a point of access to both road and rail system. On traditional maps the transport system is shown as a network of lines. In this study a simple scheme has been added in which the different types of road- and railroad lines are presented as abstract circles; focus is on the connectors and the access they offer to these different lines in the network.

In that same year the ING bank did a study on behalf of the Deltametropolis initiative for a specific part of the public transport system, a network of line taxis, called Maxi.

31. Deltanet: node-place analysis 2001

A next step in the conception of Deltanet is to apply the idea of Bertolini of a node-place analysis on the concept of connectors between road- and rail systems. This type of analysis offers the opportunity to make a distinction between the position of the node in the transport network and the position of the place in the pattern of urban centres. This offers the opportunity to harmonize with regard to the capacity of the node as a connector and the volume of

passengers generated by that place.

32. Deltanet: policy assessment 2003

In 2002 central government announced in its fifth report on national planning policy that it would initiate a competition for a metropolitan transport system. As usual the transport system was reduced to the railway system. And because different ministries had different ideas about what such a transport system would offer beyond what the present system already provides, the report was very vague about the content of this competition. The annual seminar of the Association then decided it needed a set of requirements for Deltanet to enable it to conceive an overall concept for the metropolitan transportation system.

A year later central government had dropped the idea of a competition. The Ministries of Planning and of Public Works then agreed with the Association to use the set of requirements for Deltanet, that had been produced in the meantime, to assess national policy on Deltametropolis in the fifth report. A workweek has been organised in October of that same year that produced a concept of Deltanet consisting of a road- and rail network interconnected by connectors in combination with a concept of Deltametropolis as an interdependent pattern of Delta centres. The new idea in this concept is that both the road network and the rail network are defined by a distinction between primary and secondary points of access. This distinction is then used to give primary and secondary urban centres in the metropolis access to the transportation system in accordance with their role.

For this concept also, the future is open. The idea factory now has to market its product. As yet, there is no certainty that anybody will buy it.

33. conclusion on actors

What conclusion can be drawn from theory and practice of the Deltametropolis Association? And what may these conclusions have to tell on the issue of an idea factory as a tool of governance?

Concentrating on the actors in this ongoing process of development one conclusion is that metropolitan development can be conceived as being generated by different forces, embodied by people. Traditionally we conceive society as generated by social and economic interests, mainly of a material character, promoted by politics and business, by citizens in their role of voters and by people in their role of sellers and buyers in the market. What the Association adds to this traditional concept is the generic force of ideas, by definition of a mental character, produced by art and science.

In this concept democracy is the ability to sustain a dynamic balance between material interest and mental ideas, creating and maintaining order in the chaos of interest and ideas.

34. conclusion on actions

Concentrating on the actions, another conclusion is that in reality metropolitan development proceeds via private and public investments. For private investments profitability is the main criterion. For public investments it is taxability, in whatever direct or indirect way.

In a society of citizens, elected citizens councils have to decide on these investments, because land use is regulated by land use plans provided by public authorities according to law.

In modern times, we assumed that the judgement of these citizens councils were generated by the great narratives freedom, equality and brotherhood, that is of freedom-, social-, and Christian-democracy.

In the present post-modern period, we assume these great narratives have spent their energy.

However, in the concept of Deltametropolis, this post-modern line of thought is considered to be superficial, either cynical or escapist.

Also, the concept of Deltametropolis is strictly dualistic in its conception of public government: public councils judge and decide on the usefulness of aims on basis of perspectives based on great narratives; private and public authorities select and decide on useful projects on basis of profitability and taxability.

The robustness of projects, that is their sustainability under various circumstances, is measured by their feasibility in these different perspectives.

To sum up this tale about ideas and their use in life, my feeling is that consistency and continuity of an idea is the first and foremost condition for having any influence at all in everyday reality.