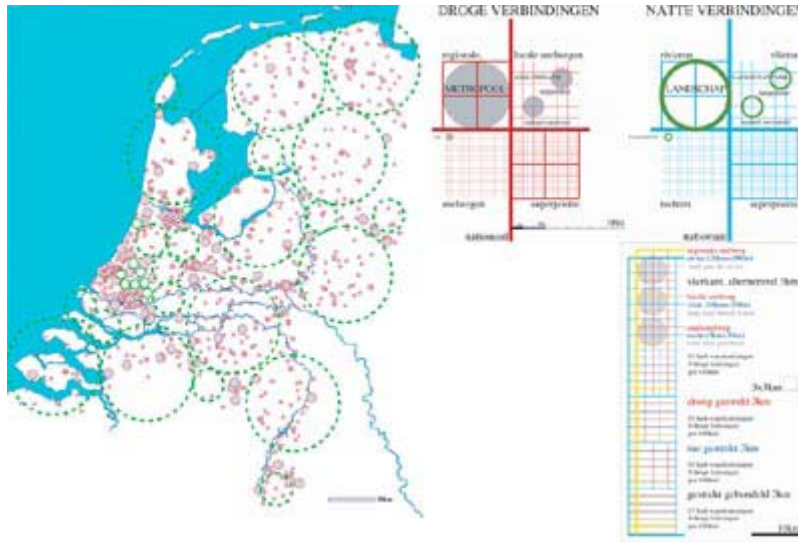


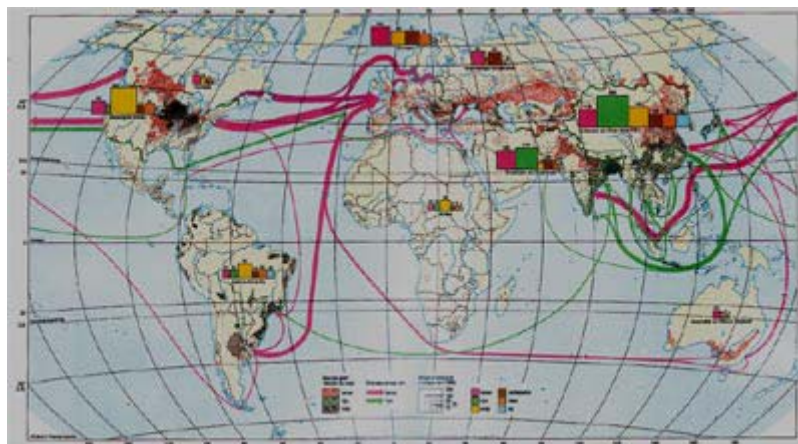
Lezingen

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DELTAMETROPOLIS connectivity, competition, co-operation



In the Netherlands, planning is a popular pastime. The roots of this national hobby go down in history to the original decision to settle in a peat bog. As our ancestors started to reclaim and cultivate the land, the peat bog lost its water and started to shrink. As the soil went down and sea levels rose our forebears did not move, as more flexible people might have done, but started to build dykes and to invent mills that they could turn to the wind to pump the water out. Adapting to their specific environment in a Darwinesque way they developed a peculiar preference to live below sea level. What with the unreliable character of the climate and the wilful behaviour of water and wind frequently flooding the land, co-ordination of water management became conditional for survival. Co-ordination I mean literally, localising the boundaries between land and water with geographical precision. This may do as a short history of planning in the Netherlands.

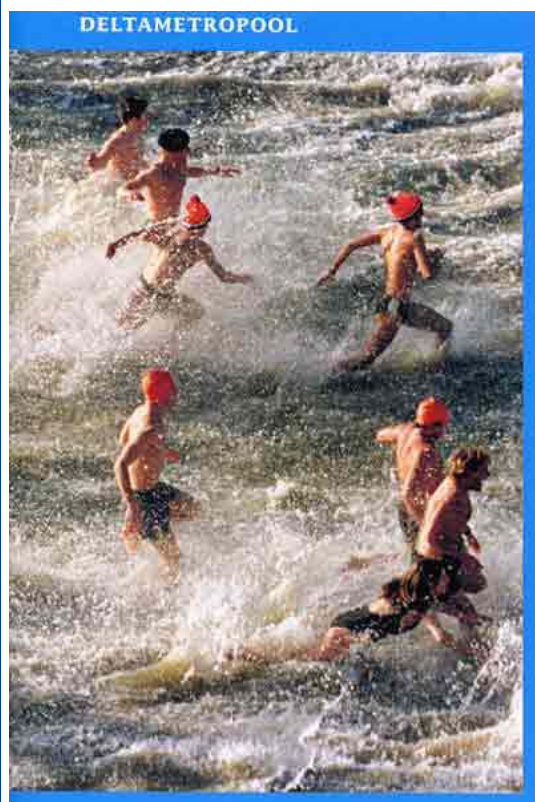


Economically, the decision to settle in the delta of the Rhine proved to be not such a bad idea after all. A moderate climate combined with fertile and soft soil make for rich agricultural production. Sitting at the crossroads of continental trading routes between Northern Italy and Southwest England and shipping routes along the western seaboard of Europe gave the Dutch the opportunity to use that position to make Holland into a centre of transport, trade and

finance. The Dutch cities competed vigorously with each other, but to cut losses by sea robbery in the East-Indian trade, they had to decide to co-operate on that matter and so they founded the Allied East Indian Company. This may serve as an example for sound economic policy for cities: compete until co-operation will offer clear gains.



Mutual independence of parties in a deal is conditional for fair trade. For the same reason, political independence is an asset of cities and countries that serve as continental or global trade centres. The Dutch see their revolt against the King of Spain and the subsequent decision to start a republic as the beginning of the boom period in international trade, later called the Golden Century. We all know, of course, that fair trade is not exactly what you may call the general rule in history. The European nation-states that emerged after the French Revolution for instance energetically colonized the rest of the world at the same time as vigorously competing with each other. It took two bloody wars, a deep economical crisis, a painful period of decolonisation and forty years of preliminary treaties to convince the European states that co-operating in a European Union might be a more convenient arrangement for this continent and a step forward to combine competition and co-operation on a global scale. This story also can serve as an example: waiting too long with adding co-operation to competition may ask a heavy price indeed.



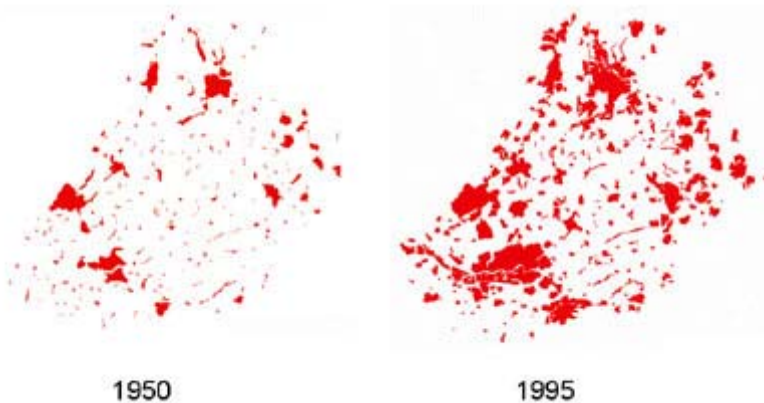
Now to the case of Deltametropolis, an exercise in the combination of competition and co-operation on the scale of an urban constellation of metropolitan size and scope. The exercise started as a planning issue. Five years ago, the aldermen for urban planning of Amsterdam, Rotterdam, The Hague and Utrecht issued what they called a Declaration Deltametropolis. They declared that the dynamism of society raises standards of environmental quality, that planning no longer can be captured within territorial boundaries of government entities, that the spheres of influence of these four cities overlap and for that reason they would gain with a common vision. This common vision is necessary and urgent, they say, because the emergence of the European Union reduces the influence of national boundaries as economical lines of defence; and the role of The Netherlands in Europe will be determined by our ability to develop a European metropolis. This development requires the transformation of the present loose pattern of cities, villages and towns into an integrated urban system. Referring to the natural environment that conditions this human ambition, the constellation in its future shape is called Deltametropolis.



To organise political support for this planning concept they then initiated a Deltametropolis Association, founded three years ago, whose members are twelve cities of more than a 100.000 inhabitants, chambers of commerce, water boards, environmental organisations, farmers - and employers unions and housing corporations, 35 members in all. Seeing that the declaration got support, the Cabinet then endorsed the concept of Deltametropolis in its fifth report on land use policy. This in turn triggered the emergence, last year, of a formal co-ordination body of local, regional and provincial government to put theory into practice. For several reasons, however, the Cabinet endorsement is paper-thin and the operational quality of the co-ordinating body is questionable.



Deltametropolis was endorsed by a cabinet coalition of Labour and Conservatives. The constituency of Labour is in the cities, the constituency of the Conservatives is in the western provinces, in Holland. Both parties look favourable on cities as concentrations of employment and commerce. The Christian Democrats however have their constituency in the southern, eastern and northern parts of the country, mostly living in villages and provincial towns. They consider the city as a place of sin and the bigger the city the worse it gets. So in any coalition with Christian-Democrats the word metropolis is out of bounds. Also, the civil service is sceptical of any conceptual change. For over forty years national policy has rather successfully aimed at national dispersal of people, jobs and income. They're not convinced that change of international environment should lead to adaptation directed at national concentration. Many, especially economists, think that the existing rather loose pattern of small size cities and towns, with a lot of cheap farmland in between, is the most flexible urban system one can think of and for that reason the most adaptable to any kind of economical environmental change.

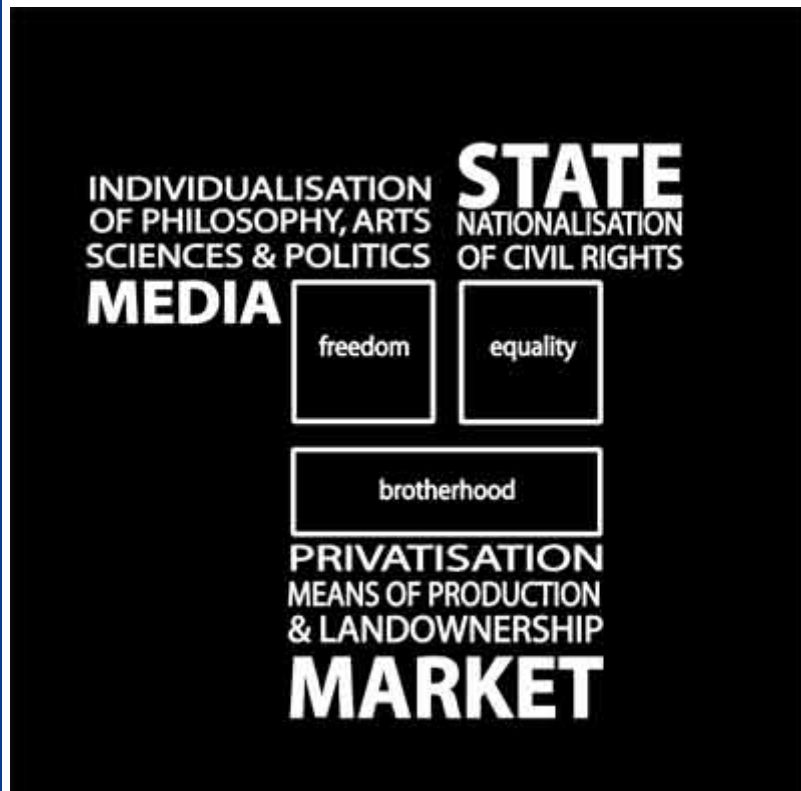


Theoretically, nobody will be able to prove his point as the complexities of metropolitan development are way beyond any kind of coherent scientific theory. Practically, the only way to settle arguments like these is deciding on investments. The availability of different concepts is a good thing, if only for the opportunity they offer to test the robustness of investment proposals. A company like Shell also uses different world scenarios to test major investment decisions. With regard to the operational quality of the regional co-ordinating body one could say that if the provincial and regional authorities really had wanted to become operational, they should not have created yet another coordinating body, but a

development corporation.

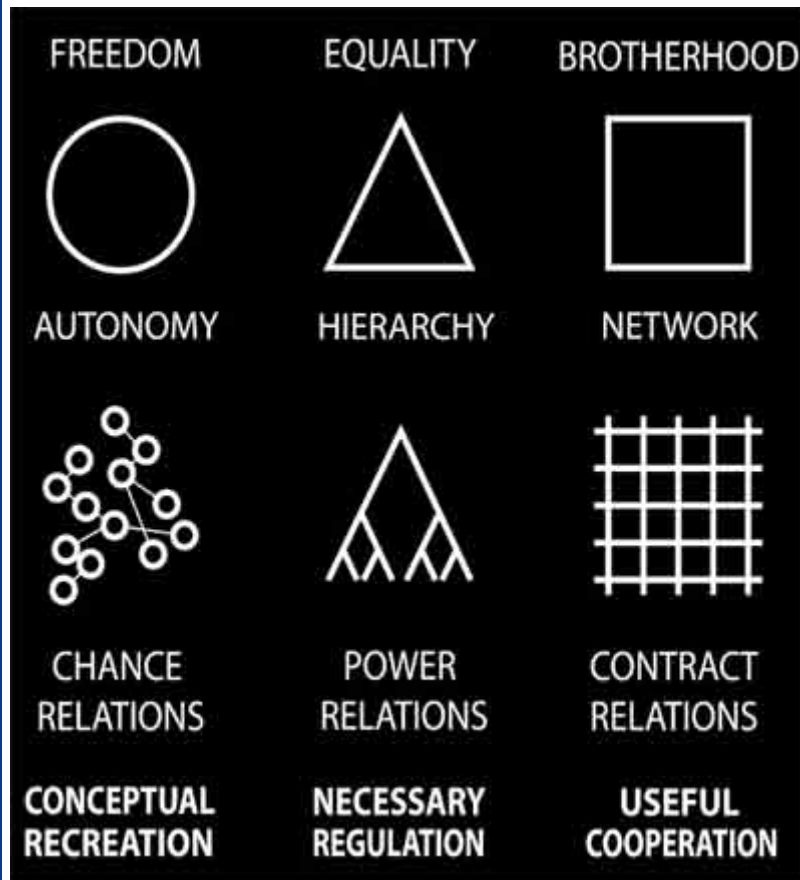


To transform the present urban constellation into a sustainable and profitable Delta Metropolis, major investments are necessary in improving the water system and in the transportation system. Because of that the Delta Metropolis Association focuses on two landuse transformations related to these investment priorities. One is called Water Realm. It consists of using the water system, that has to be transformed under all circumstances, as the backbone of a recreational network of metropolitan size and scope for boating, cycling and walking. The other one is called Deltanet. It consists of connecting the motorway system to the railroad system by means of multimodal connectors and use these connectors as points of access to old and new centres in the urban network.



One may think it naïve to launch transformations like these in an organisational environment where relevant parties seem to be willing nor able to do something with it. The Association doesn't think so. Founding the Association, the initiators took the so-called Zuiderzee Association as an example. That Association was established in 1886 after forty years of public debate on the enclosure and reclamation of the Zuiderzee. It then took another thirty years before

parliament decided on the issue. A strategic change of concept cannot happen overnight.



I think it is appropriate to conclude this story about the Delta Metropolis exercise with a few remarks on its organisational principles. The organisational principle of modern civil society in Europe is summarized succinctly by the French in the notions freedom, equality, brotherhood. Freedom of opinion, Equality before the law. And brotherhood in matters of common concern, from public works to public health. The radical change this organisational principle introduced is that it broke a power structure in which religious, political and economical powers - in an agricultural economy this means landownership - were combined. The division of powers without a hierarchy between them conditions a flexible and dynamic form of society that has to be kept in balance by the citizens themselves. For that reason autonomy of arts and sciences, democracy and private enterprise are the organisational forms of civil society.

	AIR	WATER NETWORK	RURAL AREAS	ROAD NETWORK	URBAN AREAS
EU	*	*			
STATE	*	*	*	*	*
PROVINCE	*	*	*	*	*
MUNICIPALITY	*	*	*	*	*
WATERBOARD		*			

	AIR	STATE	PROVINCE	MUNICIPALITY	WATERBOARD	TRANSPORT BOARD
AIR	*					
WATER NETWORK	*	*	*	*	*	
RURAL AREAS			*	*	*	
ROAD NETWORK		*	*	*	*	*
URBAN AREAS			*	*	*	*

TERRITORIAL ORGANISATION	SOLVE OR CONTAIN PROBLEMS	INTEGRAL AUTHORITY	POWER RELATION
FUNCTIONAL ORGANISATION	USE OPPORTUNITIES	SELECTIVE AUTHORITY	CONTRACT RELATION

The organisational structures of freedom, equality and brotherhood differ because their function is different. Autonomy, that is to say spiritual freedom and independence is an inevitable condition for the generation of new ideas. A vertical organisation of local custom, constitutional rights and international law is a prerequisite for control and containment of social problems. And horizontal transactions between parties that differ in everything to make a deal attractive, but are

equally independent and partners only by contract, is conditional for the perception and utilization of opportunities.



What we see happening now in the Netherlands is a transformation of planning processes as a legal affair, regulated by hierarchy of national, provincial and municipal plans, into a planning process on a market basis, regulated by contracts between public and private parties. What is missing in both methods of organisation is a clear place for the generation of ideas. But without it, public-private partnerships are a lopsided affair that seldom inspire its participants. Arts and sciences are indispensable here. It is this gap the Deltametropolis Association tries to fill. It considers itself to be an idea factory and a platform to discuss these ideas. As a planning issue, Deltametropolis is as much an academic pursuit of the Technical University Delft as it is a program for city governments and a commercial interest of private enterprise.

So my final remark is that in civil society, city co-operation needs connectivity between three worlds, that of ideas and inventions, of legal authority and of market forces. That their perspectives differ is good for competition and are prerequisite for conceptual recreation and useful co-operation, as it is for democratic decision process in general. Maybe a last practical example may serve to give you an idea of what a city co-operation as envisaged by the Delta Metropolis Association might actually do. It pertains to what Stuart Gulliver called the core project of city collaboration this morning: shrinking distance. In the Netherlands the road and railway network of 2015 is more or less defined: budget allocations have been made and planning is closely monitored by all authorities concerned. Now a main question of development strategy is: which nodes in these networks can and should be developed as metropolitan centres in this polycentric pattern? At the moment there are some 120 actual and potential centres. Some 30 to 40 of them might be of metropolitan importance with regard to their accessibility and their development potential. For several reasons we may just need 10 to 20 of them. The Association is now embarking on a project in which its members will try to make this selection themselves in stead of leaving that responsibility to central government or to market forces. It is a sort of test if in Association like this can really achieve co-operation when it comes down to putting the international competitiveness of Deltametropolis above the local competitiveness of the constituent cities.