

The 'new' Metropolis as a post-political script? Re-reading a vision exercise for a metropolitan region

Peter Ache¹

Abstract

Fritz Lang produced between 1925 and 1927 one of the most powerful 'allegories' (Fischer, 2003) regarding the 'Metropolis'. It was a futuristic as well as romantic script of the state of an urban society, which finds itself divided between the over ground managers and the underground workers, the latter caring for the 'm-machine', a mythical entity that keeps the society going. Metropolis is a story of salvation and betrayal, and the appearance of a first ever 'robot' that influenced all future images of an 'android'. The reception of Metropolis was diverse and mainly expressed huge levels of irritation. Siegfried Kracauer, the founding father of the sociology of film, called the movie 'a strange mixture of Wagner and Krupp' (Kracauer, (1984/1947)). In visual terms, it is safe to say that Metropolis set a standard, which was rarely met in later efforts. Despite being aged, Fritz Lang's personal vision of a metropolis still finds a link to current times, where the co-creation of metropolitan futures in group vision making processes has become very important, looking f.i. at Les Grand Paris exercise – or the exercise, which is under consideration here, the Greater Helsinki Vision 2050 (Ache, 2011). In fact, the metropolis continues to be 'the', though somewhat fuzzy, object of our times, where the globally acting research community discusses its existence (Sassen, 2001), the functions (Castells, 2010), or the way of operation (Taylor, Hoyler, & Verbruggen, 2010). The paper and presentation will reflect on the Greater Helsinki Vision 2050 process and will present a.o. the following findings: The vision exercise can be interpreted with the help of the institutional analysis and development framework (Ostrom, 2005) as an action situation with specific elements and structures. Furthermore, the GHV 2050 process shows characteristics that can be interpreted through new theoretical perspectives, like soft spaces (Haughton, Allmendinger, Counsell, & Vigar, 2010), (neo) pragmatism (Hillier & Healey, 2008), or planning in post-political times (Swyngedouw, 2009). And, returning to the outset, today the metropolis continues to be not just a new territorial form but the result of the preferences and intentions of actors, who create the metropolis in different variants. This includes the idealistic vision, that the metropolis itself is actually the 'm-machine', of unknown providence but with the capacity to mediate between 'hand and brain' (Lang).

¹ Radboud University Nijmegen, GPM, p.ache@fm.ru.nl

1. Introduction

Fritz Lang produced between 1925 and 1927 one of the most powerful ‘allegories’ regarding the metropolis. It is a futuristic, dystopian but as well romantic script of the state of society. That society is definitely an urban society and it’s most remarkable feature being a divide between over ground managers and underground workers, the latter caring for the ‘m-machine’, a mythical entity that keeps the urban society going. The romantic element comes as a story of betrayal and salvation, and the appearance of the first man-machine, an android built as the copy of the main female role/actor, an image that influenced all future perceptions of androids. This vision of a metropolis was influential in many ways. In visual terms, it is safe to say that *Metropolis* set a standard, which was rarely met in later efforts. Much of the scenery was designed by film-architects and can be found almost one-to-one in modern science fiction movies like ‘*Blade Runner*’ by Ridley Scott. The reception was, as one can read from historical comments, diverse and mainly a result of huge levels of irritation. Siegfried Kracauer, the founding father of the sociology of film, called the movie ‘a strange mixture of Wagner and Krupp’ (Kracauer, (1984/1947)), alluding to the combination of a deep mythical almost *Götterdämmerung* kind of layer with the steel juggernaut.

Film is of course not the main issue here, but urban futures are, though again, not in the futuristic terms of Fritz Lang. The creation and design of urban and in particular of metropolitan futures has become very important recently, looking for instance at the Les Grand Paris exercise, or looking at the exercise, which is under consideration here, the Greater Helsinki Vision 2050. For about a decade now, the metropolis or metropolitan region came into focus of such exercises of spatial and strategic thinking. In a EU context, the European Spatial Development Perspective (EC, 1999) could be named here first, sparking for instance in Germany a discussion about metropolitan spaces of a European importance, which many years later resulted in a debate about a new category to organize the national territory around metropolitan spaces (ARL, 2007; Knieling, 2009)³. In fact, the metropolis is the object of our times, albeit somewhat fuzzy, where the globally acting research community discusses its existence (from a global south perspective Robinson, 2006; starting obvioulsy with Sassen, 2001; UN Habitat, 2006), the function (Castells, 2010; Taylor, Hoyler, & Verbruggen, 2010), or the way of operation (Hall & Pain, 2006), and also its many variations (see the special issue of *Regional Studies*, Neuman & Hull, 2009), and the political or strategic dimensions (MacLeod & Jones, 2011).

³ Which brought as well a new interesting interpretation, the communities of shared responsibility (in German *Verantwortungsgemeinschaft*), i.e. combinations of metropolitan cores with wider hinterlands with the core taking also responsibility for the surrounding hinterland [(Peter Ache, 2008).]

The article uses for its reflection a metropolitan vision exercise that ran in Finland between 2007 and 2009, and continues as a strategy and planning process until today. The Greater Helsinki Vision 2050 exercise (hence GHV 2050) might irritate international readership right at the beginning. Finland and a metropolis sound like a mismatch, for instance due to a small overall population of five million inhabitants spread over a vast territory, with the largest city having just about six hundred thousand inhabitants in 2011. Compared with other metropolitan spaces (OECD, 2006b; UN Habitat, 2009; Wiechmann, 2009), we can speak about the lower end of the scale.

The exercise was also critically and with some irritation observed in the local context; until today a gross suspicion cannot be denied, expressing the fear that Helsinki as the capital city will be further developed on the expense of the hinterland. When looking into the constellations of that exercise, what can actually be seen is a strong link with a governmental agenda that drives territorial development into a specific, a 'metropolitan' direction. In a way, the metropolis becomes an object of intentions of the actors and the GHV 2050 Vision is the new script for that metropolis. This script, not least, is formulated as an agenda of creating the right spatial setting for a larger modernisation strategy. Finland's economy is heavily dependent on information and communication, on advanced technologies and services, operating at the technology frontier, that 'requires' so to say a metropolitan space with creative ingredients (Farole, Rodríguez-Pose, & Storper, 2009 (January)).

Terminology is important, as the reader has seen, and varies between greater region, metropolis, metropolitan space, or metropolitan region, capital city, and capital city region⁴. The spatial object of this article does not fit well the existing scientific terminology. It seems that our existing set of categories, theories or concepts is insufficient. The metropolis has probably much more of a transitional quality (P Ache, 2007) than anything else, as the current case study shows. It is a blurred definitional array, allowing for agreement or accordance, frequently operating on the basis of a 'perceived similarity' between collective actors⁵. A precise terminology is maybe not that necessary, if we accept the discursive construction of policy (Fischer, 2003). Then, the main element of the 'form', classically formulated (Benevolo, 2000 (8)) as an idea of density, morphology, mono or poly-centricity, is not that essential as an element. Seeing the metropolis from that perspective, it is not simply a new existing territorial form but the result of the preferences and intentions of actors who create the metropolis in different variants. And the 'vision' is the new script, no matter whether of or for the metropolis.

What will the paper do? This article will look into the outcomes of the GHV 2050 vision exercise, in particular the follow-up activities after the original

⁴ Readers should be aware, that the notion of metropolis (and its variants) does not refer to a simple statistical area, like in the USA.

⁵ So, one might wonder whether it is an 'empty signifier' (Swyngedouw and others?)

competition. The vision exercise can be read with the help of the institutional analysis and development framework (E. Ostrom, 2005) as an action situation with some specific elements (Part 1). The content side of the vision exercise presents interesting insights into actor's perceptions of what the metropolis should be. In particular the momentum of change is interesting to look into. The essential difficulty to cooperate over loose issues, the conflict filled opposition especially over budgets or economic items, shall be overcome by a strong but framed leadership, or in other words, by managers of change (Part 2). And finally, returning to the outset, GHV 2050 scripted a different future for the metropolis. In the reference case of the Metropolis movie, Fritz Lang, being an artist, developed an extreme and exclusive vision. He acted as an individual driven by the interest in the artistically enhanced (*but also 'poetic', see Hardy, 1998*) vision of a new life world. Lang's vision uses a conflict, not only dramaturgically, to elaborate a different future, calling for a race against the machine. Compared with that, the co-constructed future by a group of institutional actors has a different character, with one surprising aspect being, that in principle the vision is free of any conflict. In review of the process, the paper will reflect on this aspect and establish links with the discussion about soft spaces (Haughton, Allmendinger, Counsell, & Vigar, 2010), agnostic (neo)pragmatism (Hillier & Healey, 2008; following from Pløger, 2004) but also the post-political city (Swyngedouw, 2009) and the institutional void (Hajer, 2003). (Part 3)

2. Analysing a vision process in the metropolis

The metropolitan region of Greater Helsinki is an institution in the making and the Greater Helsinki Vision was and is instrumental in the creation of this new arena, addressing possible futures for the metropolitan space and creating a new action situation ⁶.

In 2006 the international ideas competition 'Greater Helsinki Vision 2050' (henceforth GHV 2050) was announced jointly by the region's fourteen municipalities, in cooperation with the Ministry of the Environment and the Finnish Association of Architects. The aim of GHV 2050 was to create a joint vision for the sustainable development of land use, housing and transport. The basic assumption of the brief was a rate of population growth similar to that in recent years, leading to an estimated 1.8 million inhabitants by 2050. Altogether 109 entries were submitted by the deadline in 2007. Out of these, nine entries received an award, which was presented in December 2007.

For the analysis of the GHV process, institutional theory provides a well-established conceptual framework for interpretation. Institutional theory has a

⁶ The article works mainly with findings obtained in participant observation over a period of now five years. At several stages the author was invited to participate in the Greater Helsinki Vision and follow up process. During that period, a deeper insight into the operations and structures of the metropolitan region were obtained.

long standing tradition with at least three distinctive scientific branches, namely political sciences (Scharpf, 1993), social sciences (Berger & Luckmann, 1966) and economics (Samuels, 1988). The work by the Nobel Prize winner Elinor Ostrom belongs to the latter group, providing the institutional analysis and development framework (IAD) ⁷. Especially the work done by Elinor Ostrom (2005) will be used as the main source for an interpretation of the observations.

Much of Ostrom's work is interested in the management of common pool resources. One could argue that with the new spatial structure of a metropolis a very complex variant of a common pool resource problem is addressed, starting with the dimension of land-use and stretching to the complex resource climate ⁸. The most exemplary theme is probably urban sprawl (European Environment Agency, 2006) as a negative land-use phenomenon which brings arguments in favour of a better coordinated metropolitan space and calling for more effective planning institutions at the level of the functional urban region. The characteristics of common pool resources create conditions for cooperative action in distributed institutional settings.

The GHV 2050 exercise is essentially a spatial planning exercise, using the metropolis as it's object. Typically spatial planning is a public service produced in shared constellations, though increasingly using also private service producers (P Ache, 2010). The orientation for the service provision can be understood as guided by a preferred state of community affairs (V. Ostrom, Tiebout, & Warren, 1961), not least emphasising the political influence on the service provision. In such a context of preferred states of community affairs, preferences and intentions are more likely to be negotiated again, re-emphasising the common pool dimension of the metropolis. Overall, the metropolis in principle fits the common pool resource criteria quite well, though in the discussion at the end of the article we also point out an alternative view.

The framework of institutional analysis as outlined by Ostrom (2005) is multi-dimensional and complex. In the context of the current article, it is especially important to look into what is called the action arena. The GHV 2050 vision process can be seen similar to an action arena. There are several elements that institutional analysis applies to understand an action arena. Biophysical or material conditions, attributes of the community, and rules are the exogenous variables of an action arena. The action arena itself consists of a specific action situation, in our case the core of the GHV competition and follow-up process, and of participants. Participants interact in the specific external framework and create in an action situation the outcomes which are evaluated, therefore having an

⁷ Which is compatible and partly integrates theories and concepts from game theory, microeconomic theory, transaction cost theory, social choice theory, public choice, constitutional theory, theory of public goods, concept of common pool resources (Ostrom 2005, 28).

⁸ The World Meteorological Organization makes this claim of seeing climate as a resource. See http://www.wmo.int/pages/mediacentre/infonotes/info_17_en.html

impact on following rounds of action situations. The internal structure of an action situation focuses on the production of solutions or outcomes. Actors, assigned to positions which literally allow to act, are linked in the action situation. They have information about and a control over actions and are knowledgeable of potential outcomes, possibly including a view towards the costs and benefits of the potential outcomes. Using additions like potential or possibly denote an obvious element of uncertainty, which is that the probability of specific actions leading to certain outcomes is unknowable. Actors are restricted in that respect and cannot fully grasp all outcomes; in other words they are not fully rational in their behaviour and decision making. One essential element of institutional analysis are the rules which both, exist as exogenous variables but which are also applied or co-created in the problem solution. Rules order relationships in the action situation. Three categories are basically in use: operational, collective choice, and constitutional rules. If individuals voluntarily participate in an action situation they must share some general sense that most of the rules governing the situation are appropriate. However, as it says most, there is always an element of ambiguity, which brings another essential element, that of learning. Actors can learn in action situations, either from each other or from the achieved outcomes, and can adjust their behaviours accordingly.

Using above outlined basic principles, the Greater Helsinki vision competition and the continuation process can be understood as an action situation which is faced with many challenges: The external framework conditions over past years have developed a metropolitan policy angle, which partly pushes actors to think and act metropolitan. The national government created some external pressure on the discussion of a metropolitan concept, including management structures and processes.

The competition as such started as a one-off exercise and turned into a continuation process; meanwhile it shifted from the rather informal original setting to the more formal institutional arena of regional planning. Using the concepts of institutional analysis and development, the one-shot action situation turned into a flow of action situations, including a change of institutional composition. Within both action situations, actors from different institutions with different powers cooperated. That starts at the level of the municipality, which can be understood as as collective actors (Le Galès, 2002)⁹. Helsinki has primacy in the current action arena, being the economic, political, cultural capital. However, the basic situation is asymmetric not least in terms of the problem solution capacity, namely the provision of developable land, which is mainly provided by the surrounding municipalities. The vision, though highly complex, can be understood as a new collective choice rule, prescribing and invoking norms for future development. The vision intends to shape the behaviour of actors, though in its final form, it provides a rather loose framework of orientation and is not

⁹ Le Galès quotes the Italian author Pichierrri (1997) and his model of the collective actor: Common interests within the city, and those perceived as such; Collective decision-making; Internal and external representation; Integrating mechanisms, and; Capacity for innovation.

strictly implemented. Sanctions cannot be given, unless the state steps in. A positive link is sought with a letter of intent, binding aims and objectives of the vision to investment programmes, partly financed by the state.

However, in the most common case participants bring back the vision into the individual institutional structures and will influence the activities there, as a script framing the mind-sets of actors. The process of taking the vision into institutions brings a separate element for consideration. If we turn away from an institutional actor perspective and bring the individual to the fore, what then can be said about the vision process and its importance?

The first perspective results from post-empiricist research and concepts in policy science, especially from an understanding of public policy as a discursive construct (Fischer, 2003). In a discursive setting, belief systems of policy makers do play an important role, not only in policy making as such but also in administrating decisions. Those belief systems shape facticity and are reflections of the myth of the given. From such a perspective, the metropolis can be interpreted in many ways: It is a metaphor, linking past experiences and perceptions in a comparative fashion to current times. As a synecdoche it stands as *pars pro toto*, resembling the nation state and its fate. It comes as a story, usually the story of globalization, which helps to accommodate the amorphous challenges resulting from global space of flows (Castells, 2010). It can also be understood as a model, a metaphor elaborated with further details, frequently using existing role models elsewhere (like the global cities London, New York, Tokyo). So, the metropolis is highly symbolic and therefore, as the interpretation of symbols says, it also has a high potential of ambiguity (Fischer, 2003).¹¹ The 'vision' of a metropolis covers before mentioned categories

Before-mentioned aspects all point out, that the metropolis as a new action arena is a very ambivalent structure and process; its main quality probably being a transitional object (Ache, 2008). On the other hand, in complex institutional settings like the ones posed by metropolitan spaces, the interactions in land-use are of such a magnitude, that a full rational control ultimately will fail.¹² The solution might be found in the creation of a 'soft space' (Haughton et al. 2010), which bring in an element of vision making. In a stepwise approach, consider the following remarks:

“What has changed today is the complexity and scale of the mega-city region, and its multiple intersections with virtual spaces and flows of globalization. This complexity and scale not only has clouded our image of the city (even as it has

¹⁰ Which is why the vision would not qualify as a rule 'proper', when for instance applying the IAD syntax (Basurto, Kingsley, McQueen, Smith, & Weible, 2010)

¹¹ And from a more radical perspective, it also has the quality of being an 'empty signifier'.

¹² In a sense, this argument is pointing back to the old debate about rational vs. incremental perspectives. The system maps on drivers of the land-use system, provided by the foresight exercise in the UK, are a good demonstration of that complexity (The Government Office for Science, 2010).

reinforced its centrality), but also has clouded our very ability to construct an image of the city region. This of course has direct consequences for the ability to govern one. If we cannot imagine, then we cannot manage.” (Neuman & Hull, 2009, emphasis added)

An approach applying an ‘incrementalism with perspective’ might be more appropriate (Hutter, 2006) in such a situation. The incremental action is taken by various institutions. The perspective is provided by the vision, an imagination of the future. The article actually proposes to reverse the argument made by Neuman and Hull (2009): We can only manage if we can imagine!

3. Metropolis - creating a new script

Section will follow later

4. Re-reading the vision exercise – a new script for the Metropolis?

In terms of evolving planning practice, a number of dimensions become visible from the previous sections that result from such an exercise: the competition setting; the quality of an informal instrument; the intention to create ownership by experts; the attempt to create an accord on the basis of a vision; but also the coexistence of many visions, including that of planning experts and that of politicians. What more can be learned from such a vision process, in terms of the metropolis and its governance?

Figure 2 Metropolitan co-operation arrangements (see Annex)

The GHV 2050 competition and follow-up process attempted to create a vision to facilitate planning processes and cooperation at the level of the metropolitan region. Figure 2 (OECD, 2006a) provides an overview on metropolitan co-operation arrangements, using already existing examples from around the world. Besides organisational forms, for the current argument it is also interesting to see the row on long-term strategic vision in Figure 2. The element of having or not having a vision is a distinguishing moment. The academic discussion here takes an even stronger stance, as the presence or absence of a vision is considered as one binding if not essential element in the strategy formation process. We have already introduced the quote from Neumann/Hull alluding to the ‘un-imaginable’ metropolis, and it was also said, that in principle a reversed version of the argument is suggested here. The example of the GHV 2050 process has shown that developing a vision is resorting to a soft instrument to steer the otherwise distributed planning action in a setting of partly cooperating, partly competing institutional actors. The exercise of ‘imagining’ or ‘en-visioning’ had a boundary

spanning element, and at least attempted to change the course of events, not to speak of breaking path dependency. The material and normative aspects of the vision provided sufficient space for interpretation, due to the principal fuzziness of their character (de Roo & Porter, 2007). However, the fuzziness contributed to the communication function, in both the expert face-to-face communication settings but also beyond that in terms of a wider communicative or symbolic setting. Following system theory ("climate as a resource,") that communication function is very important to create autopoietic ¹³ self-adjusting systems. Following the argument made by Fischer (2003) on the discursive construction of public policy, the highly symbolic value of the metropolis can penetrate the institutions and change policy and action.

And, as it seems, such strategies can be found in many other places over the recent past and provide further *prima facie* evidence (P Ache, 2011): 'Milan 2030' attempted to create an 'open space as the main resource to act upon to ensure democracy'; 'Zaragoza 2014' wanted to keep momentum by using the ExPo Landscapes 2014 as an experimental continuation of ExPo 2008; 'Belgrade 2021' provides an 'open space for visions'; 'Turin 2011' applied a communication plan utilising amongst other elements 'images, stories, narratives'; 'Bologna 2015' works with 'seven cities' and focuses on habitability; and finally 'Paris 2100' is considered a general 'consultation' exercise. Actors in metropolitan spaces are obviously experimenting with many similar processes and try to utilise the various potentials or capacities provided by such vision exercises.

The motivation side of actors can be further explored using the idea, the metropolis resembles a common pool resource. On the basis of before findings and with a view to the specific set of actors, this statement needs to be adjusted; looking at the GHV 2050 example and for the time being, the metropolis has rather a 'club good' character. The set of actors, the addressees, even aspects of the wished for metropolitan society show aspects of 'exclusiveness'. The club good feature can also be seen as the main reason, why no conflicts became visible. Using concepts of 'agnostic pragmatism', no real antagonistic behaviour was obvious during the process. The absence of conflict relates not only to the chosen aims and objectives, the material sites of which seem to go together seamlessly, but also in terms of the processes. At the time of writing the paper, some form of antagonistic behaviour becomes visible. Mergers and other forms of joining up municipalities have been put up for discussion by central government, where cities assess their options by looking into the advantages or disadvantages of the proposed new institutional structures, and not all actors subscribe to the option of a metropolitan merger around Helsinki. The conflict finds here a different arena. The stakes are negotiated and rejected, mostly in or between different political bodies, not surprising with municipal elections at the end of 2012. Politicians fear a cut back of capability, especially in economic questions, which are overly understood as competitive situations; other regarding

¹³ Applying the thoughts of H.R. Maturana and F. Varela, who developed this notion to describe self-adaptive systems.

preferences fall back behind a maximizing strategy in competition for exclusive investments. In other words, a club good perspective (if not even a private good perspective) takes over.

A critical comment made by Allmendinger and Haughton (2010) about soft-spaces and soft-planning and the post-political condition is evoked here:

“This body of literature emphasises how a consensual pluralist mainstream organised around loosely defined and hard to refute ‘feel good’ issues and labels such as sustainable development (and spatial planning) can in effect deny legitimacy and influence to more radical alternatives, in the process narrowing the search for creative approaches to planning”. (Allmendinger & Haughton, 2010, p. 804)

On the basis of his analysis of UK developments and a critical comment on a debate of the city region, Harding (2007) emphasises that not all phenomena derive from a neo-liberal logic and nuances count; his claim is more positive in that “a much more fundamental rethink [is needed] of what it means to be progressive in an age characterized by perforated sovereignty and stretched urban hierarchies ... but increased urban accessibility and more flexible work patterns ...”; and further “(w)hat we currently lack are the conceptual frameworks and practical tools which might best facilitate such a balance”, with balance referring to regional growth patterns combined with social and environmental benefits (Harding 2007, 456). The practice of the Greater Helsinki Vision process can be seen with a similar perspective. Although some institutional actors claim, that already the cooperation of the fourteen municipalities as such constitutes a creative approach, a more radical perspective was left out.

The lack of a radical perspective, in particular regarding issues of breaking up well-trodden paths, can be linked to the idea of a metropolitan identity. The metropolitan identity is not only an issue for workshop settings, the metropolis brings or requires as such a new ‘civitas’, a newly defined political subject. In the words of Agamben (2006):

“Going back to the metropolis, my idea is that we are not facing a process of development and growth of the old city, but the institution of a new paradigm whose character needs to be analysed. Undoubtedly one of its main traits is that there is a shift from the model of the polis founded on a centre, that is, a public centre or agora, to a new metropolitan spatialisation that is certainly invested in a process of de-politicisation, which results in a strange zone where it is impossible to decide what is private and what is public.” (Agamben, 2006, 2)

The polis here is the city constituted by the subjects and by identity, both linked to the power to act, as Agamben continues at a later point. Citizens and their inclusion or exclusion gets into focus as a central actor in the entire system. Agamben claims, that the metropolitan *spatialisation* invests in processes of de-politicisation. In the view of the GHV 2050 jury decision, a contribution like City

2.0 that wants to establish a social silicon valley on the basis of city-cells and direct decision making by citizens, has been selected as a resourceful idea countervailing those perspectives. City 2.0 adds one dimension to the new governance setting by introducing basic democratic features. These are combined with strong positive leadership (open mayor) but also with regional citizen assemblies. At the core are the citizens and their communities. The local administration supports their ideas and motivations. This support is channelled through the "city-cells", neighbourhoods consisting of 10.000 to 25.000 inhabitants. The support can be money, expert services or space.

GHV 2050 and the other examples mentioned here are attempts to shape life worlds which are relevant for a very large population segment in Europe. In statistical approximation, geographical Europe has about five metropolitan regions of more than five million inhabitants, seventy larger than one million, and about 650 metropolitan regions with between 500,000 and one million inhabitants, though they are not equally distributed across the European space (Wiechmann, 2009). The latter group of metropolitan regions obviously accommodates a rather large sum of inhabitants. The hypothesis of the collective actor city (Le Galès, 2002) applies to the various citizens as actors, too. It is of importance to look into issues of identity or loyalty in an actually very open or porous situation, with reference to the transitional quality of the metropolis, and how the relationships between citizens and sovereign entities are constituted in negotiated and renegotiated processes (Paasi, 2003). With the help of a vision and matching symbols, we could build the metropolis as an imagined community (Anderson, 1991; Appadurai, 1996). There is of course the risk, as other authors critically claim (Swyngedouw, 2009), of empty signifiers and a post-political agenda in favour of a neo-liberalism (or elite socialism). That argument opens up our alertness to critically address the experiments and to make sure, that the 'wronged' parts of society can claim the rights they are entitled to. As is demonstrated in various European projects (Barreiro, 2010), without that aspect of forming a community and identity, the entire process will certainly be incomplete, and we will lack crucial elements of the futures which would otherwise not be.

And, how about the new-metropolis? The movie itself has received much critical acclaim, and Fritz Lang reportedly dissociated himself from the closing sentence, 'the mediator between hand and brain is the heart!' as a political motto. The motive remains though; the construction of a new metropolis with a new 'm-machine' of unknown providence but huge expectations is high up on the agenda. There is a new mediator between hand and brain, seen as the super-manager of change; looking at the requirements almost a super-natural being, maybe a new but definitely human android? Not only the current exercise of GHV 2050 demonstrates that there is still a prevalent idealistic vision; across all observations, in the end the metropolis becomes actually the 'm-machine', the highly symbolic '*Herz-Maschine*' (heart machine) in the German original of Lang's movie.

5. References

- Ache, P. (2007). Transitional Spaces, the Metropolis, and Governance In P. Lehtovuori & e. al. (Eds.), *Prospectus. Kirjoituksia kaupungista ja suunnittelusta.* (pp. 269-285). Espoo: TKK, YTK.
- Ache, P. (2008). The ambivalent role of the metropolis. In M. Gräsbeck (Ed.), *Conference on Metropolitan Challenges and Innovation* (1 ed., pp. 28-33). Helsinki: Urban Facts.
- Ache, P. (2010). Spatial planning and territorial development policy. In A. Pike, A. Rodríguez-Pose & J. Tomaney (Eds.), *A Handbook of Local and Regional Development* (pp. 318-329). London, New York: Routledge.
- Ache, P. (2011). *Europolis - Metropolitan spaces between visions and strategies.*
- Agamben, G. (2006). *Metropolis.* Paper presented at the Seminar held in Padova at the Nomad University on the theme of war and democracy, November 2006.
- Allmendinger, P., & Haughton, G. (2010). Spatial planning, devolution, and new planning spaces. *Environment and Planning C: Government and Policy*, 28, 803-818.
- Anderson, B. R. (1991). *Imagined communities: reflections on the origin and spread of nationalism* (Revised and extended. ed.). London: Verso.
- Appadurai, A. (1996). Sovereignty without territoriality: notes for a postnational geography. In P. Yager (Ed.), *The Geography of Identity: University of Michigan Press.*
- ARL, d., ILS, IRS. (2007). *Metropolregionen - Innovation, Wettbewerb, Handlungsfähigkeit.* Hannover: ARL.
- Barreiro, F. (2010). *Workshop 4: Identity and citizen participation across boundaries.*
- Basurto, X., Kingsley, G., McQueen, K., Smith, M., & Weible, C. M. (2010). A Systematic Approach to Institutional Analysis: Applying Crawford and Ostrom's Grammar. *Political Research Quarterly*, 63(3), 523-537.
- Benevolo, L. (2000 (8)). *Die Geschichte der Stadt.* Frankfurt, New York: Campus.
- Berger, P. L., & Luckmann, T. (1966). *The Social Construction of Reality.* New York: Doubleday.
- Castells, M. (2010). Globalisation, networking, urbanisation: Reflections on the spatial dynamics of the Information Age. *Urban Studies*, 47(13), 2737-2745.
- de Roo, G., & Porter, G. (Eds.). (2007). *Fuzzy planning: the role of actors in a fuzzy governance environment.* Aldershot: Ashgate.
- EC. (1999). *ESDP - European Spatial Development Perspective. Towards Balanced and Sustainable Development of the Territory of the European Union. Agreed at the Informal Council of Ministers responsible for Spatial Planning in Potsdam, May 1999.*
- European Environment Agency. (2006). *Urban Sprawl in Europe. The Ignored Challenge* (No. 10). Copenhagen: European Environment Agency.

- Farole, T., Rodríguez-Pose, A., & Storper, M. (2009 (January)). Cohesion Policy in the European Union: Growth, Geography, Institutions.
- Fischer, F. (2003). Reframing public policy. Discursive politics and deliberative practices. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Hajer, M. (2003). Policy without polity? Policy analysis and the institutional void. *Policy Sciences*, 36, 175-195.
- Hall, P., & Pain, K. (Eds.). (2006). The polycentric me-tropolis. Learning from mega-city regions in Europe. London: Earthscan.
- Harding, A. (2007). Taking city regions seriously? Response to debate on 'City-Regions: New geographies of governance, democracy and social reproduction'. *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research*, 31(2), 443-458.
- Hardy, M. (1998). « La Reproduction interdite » Écart entre vue et vision dans The Narrative of Arthur Gordon Pym sources revue etude anglophone(5), 129-142.
- Haughton, G., Allmendinger, P., Counsell, D., & Vigar, G. (2010). The new spatial planning. Territorial management with soft spaces and fuzzy boundaries. New York: Routledge.
- Hillier, J., & Healey, P. (Eds.). (2008). Political economy, diversity and pragmatism. Critical essays in planning theory. Volume 2. Aldershot: Ashgate.
- Knieling, J. (Ed.). (2009). Metropolregionen. Innovation, Wettbewerb, Handlungsfähigkeit. Hannover: ARL.
- Kracauer, S. ((1984/1947)). Von Cagliari zu Hitler: Eine psychologische Geschichte des deutschen Films. Frankfurt a.M.: Suhrkamp Verlag.
- Le Galès, P. (2002). European Cities. Social conflicts and governance. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- MacLeod, G., & Jones, M. (2011). Renewing Urban Politics. *Urban Studies*, 48(12), 2443-2472.
- Neuman, M., & Hull, A. (2009). The futures of the city region. *Regional Studies*, 43(6), 777-787.
- OECD. (2006a). Competitive Cities in the Global Economy. Paris: OECD.
- OECD. (2006b). Competitive cities in the global economy - horizontal synthesis report. Bilbao.
- Ostrom, E. (2005). Understanding Institutional Diversity. Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press.
- Ostrom, V., Tiebout, C. M., & Warren, R. (1961). The Organization of government in metropolitan areas: a theoretical inquiry. *American Political Science Review*, 55(4), 831-842.
- Paasi, A. (2003). Boundaries in a globalizing world. In K. Anderson, M. Domosh, S. Pike & N. Thrift (Eds.), *Handbook of Cultural Geography* (pp. 462-472).
- Pløger, J. (2004). Strife: Urban planning and agonism. *Planning Theory*, 3(1), 71-92.
- Robinson, J. (2006). *Ordinary Cities: Between Modernity and Development*. Milton Park, New York: Routledge.
- Samuels, W. J. (1988). *Institutional Economics* (3 vols). Andershot: Edward Elgar.

- Sassen, S. (2001). *The Global City: New York, London, Tokyo*: Princeton University Press.
- Scharpf, F. W. (1993). Games in Hierarchies and Networks: Introduction. In F. W. Scharpf (Ed.), *Games in Hierarchies and Networks - Analytical and Empirical Approaches to the Study of Governance Institutions* (pp. 7-23). Frankfurt a.M., Boulder, CO: Campus Verlag, Westview Press.
- Swyngedouw, E. (2009). The antinomies of the postpolitical city: In search of a democratic politics of environmental production. *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research*, 33(3), 601-620.
- Taylor, P. J., Hoyler, M., & Verbruggen, R. (2010). External Urban Relational Process: Introducing Central Flow Theory to Complement Central Place Theory. *Urban Studies*, 47(13), 2803-2818.
- The Government Office for Science. (2010). *Systemmaps. Land use Futures: Making the most of land in the 21 st Century*. London.
- UN Habitat. (2006). *The State of the World's Cities Report 2006/2007. The Millenium Development Goals and Urban Sustainability: 30 years of shaping the Habitat Agenda*. London: Earthscan.
- UN Habitat. (2009). *Global Report on Human Settlements 2009: Planning Sustainable Cities*. London: UN Human Settlements Programme.
- Wiechmann, T. (2009). Raumpolitische Diskurse um Metropolregionen in Europa - eine Spurensuche. In J. Knieling (Ed.), *Metropolregionen. Innovation, Wettbewerb, Handlungsfähigkeit* (pp. 101-132). Hannover: ARL.

Annex

Table 3.4. Main purposes of a selection of metropolitan co-operative arrangements

	Informal co-operation networks (association/platform/metropolitan conferences)	Metropolitan authority/agency		Metropolitan government	Amalgamation	Tax-base sharing and redistributive grants
		Single-purpose	Multi-purpose			
Examples	Regio Randsid (Platform) Lyon Urban Region, Council of Stockholm Militar Region, Bilbao 31 - Metropolitana, Torino Internazionale (Associations) Regional conference (Rhine-Ruhr)	Many US cities Mexico City (large number of sectoral agencies) Athens transport agency	Montreal Metropolitan Community Greater Vancouver District Urban and Agglomeration Communities in France	Greater London Authority Stuttgart Verband Association Portland Comunidad de Madrid and Region Ile-de-France (Paris) as existing regional governments	Montreal, Toronto Besan/Seoul in the 1960s Maastricht in the 1960s Melbourne in the 1980s	Metropolitan Saint-Paul Stockholm County Some municipalities within Paris Ile-de-France Besan/Seoul
Administrative boundaries	No change	Possible creation of a new layer		Building on a regional tier or creation of a new regional tier with an elected body	Disappearance of municipalities. Possible creation of sub-local units	No change
Economies of scale (cost saving)	No	For one public service only	For certain public services only	For certain public services only Expected (??)	Expected (??)	No
Sharing of public services	No	Yes, for one public service only	Yes, for certain public services only	Yes, for certain public services only	Common	In a limited way
Specific advantage	Great flexibility. Might provide impetus for further co-operation	Cost saving for a particular service Better management of a metropolitan function	Ident to single-purpose + integration and co-ordination of sectoral policies	Integration and co-ordination of certain sectoral policies	No fiscal disparities Stronger political power One decision centre Better equitance of costs	Reduce fiscal disparities Still allow some variety
Specific disadvantage	Does not tackle issues such as territorial spillover/negative externalities/equality Weak implementation capacity	Emergence of sectoral constituencies	Emergence of the funding and legitimacy issues	Democratic cost	Lack of creative diversity Democratic cost	Separate the costs and benefits of local public services
Long term strategic vision	Yes, in many cases	Yes, in many cases for economic development agency but risk of avoiding the multi- sectoral aspects or urban development	In some cases only	Yes, will depend on the administrative boundaries of the new structure	Yes, will depend on the administrative boundaries of the new structure	No

Note: This table provides a typology of metropolitan governance arrangements previously discussed according to the different objectives that calls for horizontal co-operation. This typology is not exhaustive. The selections of different options that it includes are not mutually exclusive, as some metropolitan regions combine several options (e.g., Montreal experienced an amalgamation of 27 municipalities whilst a multi-sectoral agency was created at the wider metropolitan level).

Source: OECD 2006a