

2017/99
WORKSHOP IN POLITICAL THEORY
AND POLICY ANALYSIS
513 NORTH PARK
INDIANA UNIVERSITY
BLOOMINGTON, INDIANA 47405-3186
RECEIVED 8/11/99

J99-9

Workshop on the Workshop 2

WOW

Bloomington, Indiana, June 9-13, 1999

PANEL 2-3
FR, JUNE 11

**MODERNITY AND THE CHALLENGE OF METROPOLITAN GOVERNANCE:
FAILURE OF STRUCTURAL SOLUTIONS AND THE POLYCENTRIC ALTERNATIVE**

by

Jos C.N. Raadschelders
University of Oklahoma

Theo A. J. Toonen
University of Leiden

© 1999 by authors



Workshop in Political Theory and Policy Analysis
Indiana University • 513 North Park • Bloomington, IN 47408-3895
phone 812 855 0441 • fax 812 855 3150
workshop@indiana.edu • www.indiana.edu/~workshop

Modernity and the Challenge of Metropolitan Governance: Failure of Structural Solutions and the Polycentric Alternative

Jos C.N. Raadschelders, University of Oklahoma

Theo A.J. Toonen, University of Leiden, the Netherlands

1. Metropolitan Government as Political Problem

Modernity comes in many guises and one of them is urbanization, a process where people move to where work is available and willing to accept poor living conditions - for a while anyway. By the fact of that relocation they have also decided to leave a community of people behind they could rely upon in hard times. When such hard times hit in these swelling urban centers (epidemics, crime, unemployment, poverty) who else was there to turn to but the one institution these urban people shared: local government. Everywhere in the Western world urbanization, and everything that came with it, resulted in the growth of local government. There was little choice. The 'masses' called for government intervention and initiative, and they could because their voice became increasingly organized through labor unions, political parties, extension of the suffrage, and so forth. Even when the masses were not quite that strongly organized - as before the 1870s and 1880s - the elites heeded to their call, if only to prevent massive revolt. Even Bismarck was not 'insensitive' to that prospect.

Local government had to step in because, as De Tocqueville had observed and predicted so sharply, democracy loosened social ties (De Tocqueville, 1990:233). Modernity's version of democracy was (and is) far removed from that sense of community (and, we should not forget: degree of social control) that must have existed in early modern times. To be sure, these were hard times too, but in a different way, and in retrospect was increasingly looked upon in nostalgia, giving rise to inflated memories of the good old days and of a government being close to the citizen. That under feudalism or early modern monarchy few people actually could exercise citizen rights was quickly forgotten; what was remembered most was the sense of community.

Meanwhile, urban problems cried for a solution and this was initially found in a combination of functional measures (e.g., expanding public services taking the place of private collective services and charities) with structural measures concerning the existing legal arrangements at local government level, both in terms of redefining jurisdictions (i.e. amalgamation or annexation) as well as in terms of cooperation (i.e., formal intermunicipal arrangements for service provision and production). Amalgamation and intermunicipal arrangement worked fine in rural areas where the various municipalities considered one another as equals. Problems developed, though, in the urban areas where an ever-growing urban center and its interests more and more overshadowed the smaller municipalities nearby. Sometimes these tensions were temporary simply because an urban center stopped to grow further. But there were urban centers that continued to grow, and thus continued to create problems for the larger surrounding region. It is there that problems of metropolitan governance emerged, such as crime, prostitution, poor housing, and congestion. It was as if the larger central city sucked in its environment, at the same time establishing manifold interdependencies between it and the adjacent towns. From the central city's point of view this interdependency was a one-way street. The affluent part of its population would move to suburbia, while suburbia profited both from the wider range of services offered in the central city as well as from all of the infrastructural development the central city financed in order to keep itself accessible. The central city appeared to receive the short end: given its size it was supposed to solve problem of an upper-local nature (especially infrastructure), but had at the same time far larger local problems (crime, prostitution, housing conditions that it could less and less resolve because the affluent taxpayer chose to vote with his feet.

This is the moment that metropolitan governance arrangements come to be perceived as a problem. And this is also the moment that the solutions to urbanization, and metropolitan governance especially, concentrated more and more on structural measures of recasting the existing legal arrangements.

This presentation of events is, grosso modo, familiar to most if not all Western countries (Raadschelders, 1998:96-99,182). It certainly applies to the Netherlands where local government and especially the larger cities have always been a strong player, at least since the late 16th

century (Raadschelders, 1994; Raadschelders and Toonen, 1995). As elsewhere urban areas in the Netherlands were confronted with, from the second half of the 19th century on, the ever-increasing problems of inadequate housing, social inequalities, insufficient sanitary conditions, rising crime, and traffic density. These problems were acute in the emerging metropolitan areas of Amsterdam (the capital and the cultural center), Rotterdam (the harbour and motor of the Dutch economy), and The Hague (seat of government). These three cities all annexed several municipalities from the 1860s on in an attempt to create spill-over (for housing, infrastructure) and to establish a better economy-of-scale (in terms of services provided as well as in terms of tax base). They also engaged in establishing intermunicipal arrangements, to alleviate some of the pressure (joint provision of some public services). Up to this day, however, their problems have not diminished. To the contrary, for in their perception these problems have only increased in terms of scale, complexity, and intensity.

It will come as no surprise that throughout the 20th century various avenues have been proposed, and some experimented with, to 'solve' the problem of metropolitan governance once and for all. Our thesis in this paper is that the 'solutions' advanced so far, as idea or as experiment, aimed at being permanent. By the nature of, at least: Dutch, thinking about government, the solution to metropolitan problems was usually found in structural arrangements rather than through process-approaches. A permanent structural solution in the Netherlands focuses on redefining jurisdictions, on developing legal means to further voluntary or mandatory joint provisions, or on establishing a fourth tier of government. The idea that solutions could depart from a process angle, e.g. arrangements for decision making and consultation, is only toyed with in academic pursuits and rather weakly applied in covenants. We will argue that a real solution to the problems of metropolitan governance is only possible if it establishes flexible arrangements for governance, and hence are a combination of structural and processual approaches. It is in this combination that the polycentric perspective offers a 'global age' alternative to the structural modernistic approach.¹

¹ We prefer to use Albrow's concept of the 'Global Age' (1996) to 'post-modernity', which latter concept is for its definition too much dependent upon modernity and is also too much charged with negative connotations.

In the sections that follow we will therefore not offer the permanent solution. Rather we will outline three different theoretical approaches and apply them to and illustrate them with problems of metropolitan governance in the west of the Netherlands. A good theory is extremely practical. We will first outline how problems of metropolitan governance have been defined and characterized (section two) and then move to the comparative perspective that has become increasingly important (if only because governments copy from one another) (section three). In section four we will present the characteristics of the three metropolitan areas in the Netherlands in brief, followed by an exposee about the development of policy in this area (section five). In section five the adequacy of the solutions proposed is discussed in terms of the framework offered in section two. The polycentric alternative is discussed in section six. Some tentative remarks will conclude the text (section seven). After that it is up to policy makers to see how it can be put to use.

2. Theoretical Perspectives on the Nature and Challenges of Metropolitan Governance

Metropolitan areas are regions and that creates some difficulty, if not impossibility, to adequately define what a 'region' actually is. Derived from the Latin word *regio*, which referred to the countryside around Rome, the word region has a geographical connotation. When applied to administrative arrangements the definition becomes elusive. In his discussion of the administrative conceptualization of regions, and writing from a Dutch context, Van der Meer identified six different *levels of regions*:

1. *supranational regions*: e.g., the Benelux area, the Rhine delta;
2. *interprovincial regions*: e.g. the 'Randstad Holland' in the West of the country which combines the three provinces of South-Holland, North-Holland, and Utrecht, and in which the three metropolitan areas are situated;
3. *provincial regions*: e.g., the twelve provinces as the second tier in Dutch government;
4. *sub-provincial regions*: e.g., the three large metropolitan areas, and the sub-provincial areas with distinct cultural and economic characteristics (as, e.g., in the province of Guelderland);
5. *intermunicipal regions*: formal intermunicipal cooperation on the basis of the Act on Joint

Provisions; and

6. *municipal regions*: e.g., large municipalities with several nuclei (as a consequence of amalgamations) (Van der Meer, 1993:81-82).

In this list the territorial angle dominates, because the size of the area involved decreases from the supranational to the municipal region. In a somewhat different listing of types of regions in the Netherlands Kleinfeld & Toonen (1996:105-106) distinguish among seven from the provincial levels downward. In addition to the provinces and intermunicipal regions mentioned by Van der Meer, Kleinfeld & Toonen mention five others:

1. *deconcentrated government agencies*: as field organizations of a central government agency or department (there are about 100 of these);

2. *new functional regions*: that coordinate, plan, and implement sectoral policy at regional level, as, e.g., in the fields of transport and traffic, labor market administration, regional police, waste;

3. *water control boards*: among the oldest functional administration in the Netherlands (there are approximately 80);

4. *Euro-regions*: cooperative ventures with local and regional administrations along the borders with Germany and Belgium (there are five of these);

5. *new regional authorities* or *city-provinces*: while there are seven such regions recognized, the process so far concentrated mostly on the metropolitan areas of Amsterdam, Rotterdam, and The Hague.

It will be clear that *de facto* the structure of Dutch government at the regional level is polycentric. In the Netherlands problems of metropolitan governance are situated at the sub-provincial (regional) and upper-local level (intermunicipal regions) (see section five). The growth of administrative arrangements (i.e. functional joint provisions) in-between municipality and province has challenged the role and function of these formal tiers of general purpose government and resulted in a growing need to find a more permanent solution. As we shall see below (section three) problems with defining what a region in an administrative sense actually is, are not only characteristic for the Dutch.

Regional government can also be conceptualized in terms of formal decision making structure. On the basis of earlier work Toonen (1997b: 12) distinguished three such structures:

1. the *functional goal-corporation model*: e.g., intermunicipal cooperation, which has an upper-local focus;
2. the *regional-council model*: where members of a *gewest*, (county, for lack of a better translation) are indirectly elected by members of local councils; and
3. the *territorial corporation model*: e.g., the (city-)province as a formal tier of government.

In this paper we focus on the third model of regional government, since regionalization in the Netherlands has been long contemplated and recently thinking has appeared to move from functional goal corporations to territorial corporations. There are three options here:

- a) strengthening the existing provinces;
- b) subdividing the existing provinces into smaller provinces; and
- c) creating a fourth tier of government in-between municipality and province.

Linking the regional perspective to problems of metropolitan governance Dente (1990) identified three types. In the *big village perspective* the focus is on economies and diseconomies of scale. In Northwestern Europe problems of scale were attempted to be solved through amalgamations, motivated by the 'free-rider' notion that adjacent municipalities profited from the services and infrastructure provided by the central city. The large central city offers a wider range of services, and thus its administration is confronted more with problems of external responsiveness, coordination, steering and control, and management. Another element to the problem is that in large central cities problems with drugs, prostitution, crime, and poverty appear to concentrate. These inhibit effectiveness and efficiency. The administrative need is focused on internal organizational restructuring via intermunicipal decentralization (creation of subunits within the jurisdiction), administrative deconcentration, and privatization.

In the *urban agglomeration perspective* the focus is more on 'economies of scope'. In urban metropolitan areas there is more spatial-functional division of labor than in rural areas. The interdependencies of municipalities in metropolitan areas brings with it a large amount of economic-technical, social-economic, and redistributive politics issues. The government challenge here is one of intermunicipal coordination, while also considering a distinction between production and provision. Decisions in municipalities surrounding the central cities, do not necessarily take the concerns of the central city at heart (e.g., social housing, infrastructure

for traffic, recreational facilities). At stake here is the distribution of responsibilities in metropolitan area: who is going to provide the space for the public incinerator, who is going to get the public swimming pool, etc.? This has consequences for accessibility, hindrance, prestige. Who gets what and who gets nothing. The need here is for effective and legitimate frames for regional planning, coordinated decision making and (re)distribution, and opportunities for compensation (Pareto-optimal solutions).

In the third perspective, that of the *capital city*, processes of internationalization and competition among cities at European scale are most important. The focus here is on the so-called mainports: international financial centers, international cultural cities, international fashion centers, international transport centers etc. The meaning of mainports reaches beyond the region, but in terms of choices made by the administrative bodies of mainport areas, their impact has both good and bad consequences for the region. On the good side mainports attract employment both in industry as well as in the service sector. The downside is that mainports face the challenges of metropolitan governance at an even larger scale. The basic administrative need there is for administrative arrangements that help concentrate and simplify decision making about international strategic aspects and projects in the metropolitan area. These three perspectives will help us to characterize the nature of the metropolitan challenge in the three metropolitan areas (section four).

When discussing the solutions to challenges of metropolitan governance (sections five and six) we should take three different levels of analysis into consideration. The first level is that of the *intergovernmental constitution* (IGC) and is concerned with such issues as the dominating regional administrative 'philosophy', the social-economic foundation of the region, the legal and administrative framework, and the partypolitical and electoral systems. Together these form the foundation for and framework within which a variety of juridical, financial, political, and organizational interactions take place. This second level could be called that of *intergovernmental relations* (IGR) and addresses financial relations, the administrative division of labor, recruitment patterns for political and administrative incumbents, and all sorts of procedures and arenas for planning, coordination and mutual decision making. At the *intergovernmental management* level (IGM) these decisions serve as framework for activities,

procedures, and techniques that serve to solve a concrete problem. At this level the focus is on administrative culture, techniques for steering, control, and evaluation, leadership patterns and public entrepreneurship, and human resources. While this distinction between these three levels has been developed in the American context, they can easily be applied as an analytical instrument in any other Western system. It is certainly not inappropriate to apply it in the decentralized-unitary state that defines the Dutch administrative system. In these three levels one also recognizes the three levels of choice distinguished by Kiser and E. Ostrom (constitutional level, collective level, and operational level) that has found wide application (1982).

3. Administrative and Political Motives for Regionalization in Comparative Perspective

A second and indispensable element to our conceptual framework is the comparative perspective on regionalization. As is clear from section two, what the Dutch consider to be a 'region' differs from what is so considered in other western countries. It has even been suggested that at the European level, the Netherlands as a whole is a region. Most foreign and Dutch observers would disagree with this, though. However, given that in the European Union three regional levels are distinguished (NUTS-I, II, and III), Dutch policy makers identified four inter-provincial units (which they call *landsdelen*, cf. the German *Landsteil*) as the NUTS-I areas, the provinces then form the NUTS-II level, and the 62 socio-economic districts recognized by the National Bureau of Statistics form the NUTS-III level.

Our 'feeling' for and understanding of the nature of the Dutch region is enhanced when compared to regions in other countries. We will briefly discuss some of these on the basis of a three-way distinction of metropolitan models (e.g. used in ACIR, 1987). In the *hierarchical consolidation model*, which dominated for long time, the solution to metropolitan challenges is sought in the creation of independent integrated regional authorities. Next to the Rijnmond Authority in the Netherlands, Copenhagen and the Greater London Council, serve as example. They all failed in their objective and have been abolished. Since the 1960s the support for scale-decrease and more community control has been growing..

The *complementary two-tier model* originates in the U.S.A., and seeks to enhance

community control as a compromise between consolidated (centralized) regional governance and community control. The Unigov arrangement for the city of Indianapolis and Marion county serve as an example. Examples in Europe would, e.g., include counties and boroughs in England, *communes* and *departements* in France, the *Gemeinden* and *Kreisen* in Germany, the *lan* and *kommuner* in Sweden, and the *Ambtskommuner* and *primaire kommuner* In Denmark. Each of the two tiers has distinct responsibilities. There is no formal subordination of one to the other, but in practice one tier dominates (underlined in the examples mentioned above). The result is, of course, a power struggle. In some countries (e.g., Germany U.S.A., and France) there is another regional level, i.e. the deconcentrated services from the center). Division of labor between two tiers is based in vertical relation or deconcentration (not formally hierarchical), which is that policy and execution should be concentrated in one authority. Under this model there are formal and informal ways of influence. The upper tier councils in Sweden are elected by lower tier; in France the *cumuls de mandats* works in the same manner; in France, Denmark, and the Netherlands covenants and contracts have become popular as a way to link two tiers. The situation where one of the two tiers upon the other, as is the case in Norway, is quite rare.

Finally, the *polycentric negotiation model*, which is the most foreign to the Dutch perception, has to be considered. This model also originated in the U.S.A. upon the increased need for attention of neighborhood government (e.g., community development) but also as part of a larger conception of governance. This is an approach in which integration of policy develops bottom-up by bringing together various special (functional) districts together in a policy mix at - preferably - neighborhood level. At the same time the U.S.A. always had a very fragmented local government structure. In fact, the number of general purpose governments has seriously declined since the 1940s while the number of special purpose governments has grown substantially (Henry, 1999:411). How to run this, especially in urban areas, has drawn the attention of European observers and sometimes served as an example. In England, for instance, the integrated local councils gave way to a more differentiated structure based on functions that made metropolitan government an issue of national government. Also, a variety of Urban Development Corporations (UDC's) and Quasi Governmental Organizations (Quango's) emerged since the 1980s. For reasons other than efficiency, the British are not so content with this development.

The first model emphasizes vertical relations, while the second and third models appear to consider horizontal relations. To 'Strengthen the intergovernmental partnership', as was recommended in the Gore report (1993:167), appears to emphasize the equality of input, rather than a hierarchy of cities, and seems to be closest to the second model. The notion of *negotiation government* or of *cooperative state* places mutual interdependencies to the forefront and is thus an illustration of the third model.

4. *The Three Main Metropolitan Areas in the Netherlands in Brief*

The three metropolitan areas that we discuss in this paper are all situated in the western part of the Netherlands. Amsterdam is located in the province of North-Holland, while Rotterdam and The Hague are part of the province of South-Holland. Together with the province of Utrecht, bordering both of the Holland provinces to the east, these three provinces form the *Randstad Holland*, with at least four metropolitan areas (including the city of Utrecht that also gave its name to the province) that have slowly grown together. Traveling by car or train it may not strike the foreign observer as a densely populated area, but it is. Almost 45% of the Dutch population lives in these three provinces (i.e. close to 7 million). North- and South-Holland alone are inhabited by close to 6 million people, in a territory of a little over 6200 square kilometers. Population density in North-Holland is a little over 900 people per square kilometer; in South-Holland it is almost 1150 people per square kilometer. To add some comparative perspective: the State of Indiana is about 94.000 square kilometers with close to 6 million people, which is some 160 people per square kilometer.

Even though the issue of metropolitan governance is regional by nature and thus touches upon the role and function of the province, we will focus here on the three metropolitan areas in both provinces. Good introductions into the Dutch province are available in the English language (Hendriks, Raadschelders & Toonen, 1994, 1995; Kleinfeld & Toonen, 1996; Toonen, 1993, 1997a). Furthermore, the problem of governance at the regional level in the Netherlands, is not so much provincial by nature but rather concerns a problem of multiple meso's (see section two above).

At the time of the Dutch Republic, where the Seven Provinces operated in a confederation, the position of each of the provinces varied according to the rural or urban nature of it. In the western province of Holland (only separated into a northern and a southern province in 1844), which economy basically pulled the confederacy (58% of the Republic's budget came from Holland) the provincial level was fairly insignificant, for its politics was dominated by the cities. Holland was the most urbanized of the provinces. Indeed, parts of it - especially to the northeast of Amsterdam - are considered to be among the oldest urbanized areas in the world. In the more rural provinces of the north, east and south, the provincial level was far more important, for there the representatives were drawn to larger extent, and in some cases mainly, from among the landed gentry. However, these rural aristocrats also were local rather than regional or provincial elites. Hence, why we can argue that for most of Dutch government history the mesolevel was fairly insignificant.

This was further emphasized under the Monarchy, of which the Constitution gave most powers to central and to local government. While in theory, by Constitution, Dutch government recognized three tiers, in practice it was a two-tier government (Raadschelders & Toonen, 1995:36). Only in the past 30 years or so the province has attracted the attention of those that influence the political agenda. At first, because problems of governance at the mesolevel became too complex, and more recently because urban and regional management is increasingly seen in the light of Europeanization (Kleinfeld & Toonen, 1996:145). As we shall see in section five, the metropolitan areas are especially 'hit' with both the mesolevel complexity (internal problem) as well as with the European dimension (external problem).

Using Dente's classification the city of Rotterdam is mainly confronted with a capital city problem. Rotterdam has been called the motor of the Dutch economy, but its impact goes far beyond that of the region or even of the Netherlands. It is one of the largest, if not the largest, harbor in the world, specialized in the transfer of bulk goods from all over the world into other means of transportation (Rhine boats, trucks, railways) that connect it to most of the European continent. In order to maintain that position of economic motor and world harbor, the city is constantly under pressure to provide the infrastructure that assures easy access into and exit out of the area. Its needs in terms of railroads, harbor facilities, and highways are monumental. It

seems that every new infrastructure is already obsolete once opened, because the demand grows faster than the supply. This need in terms of physical development places enormous pressure on the environment (both the physical environment as well as in terms of what land is available for housing, for industry, for commercial development). That means that Rotterdam also faces an agglomeration problem, so characteristic of any city that serves as a nodal center. This is not all. Being a large city, Rotterdam also faces big village problems: diseconomies of scale (bureaucratism, low responsiveness, inefficiency) as well as the 'normal' urban problems of drugs, high unemployment (despite the fact that the harbor provides so much employment), crime, social inequality, and deteriorating neighborhoods. By all definitions, Rotterdam faces a monumental challenge. The political-administrative elites of the city as well as of Parliament believe that the solution to its problems is in the consolidated city-region concept based upon the dominant regional interest, the harbor. While the solution developed in Rotterdam (between 1964-1986 the Rijnmond Authority, and in the 1990s the *Openbaar Orgaan Rijnmond*, i.e. the Rijnmond Public Authority) (OOR) appears to be that of a two-tier model, in practice it amounts to a regional-consolidation model, i.e., the creation of a city-province. In light of Rotterdam's national and international importance its capital city problems override its urban agglomeration and big village problems, and it is upon those grounds that a monocentric solution is befitting.

This is much less the case with Amsterdam. This city includes a variety of international functions: a harbor, a major airport, a cultural and tourism center; as well as a financial center, but it is also the capital of the Netherlands and probably the most cosmopolitan of all Dutch cities. Its metropolitan problems, however, are as much characterized by that of the urban agglomeration and of the big village as of capital city. Unlike in Rotterdam, a clear hierarchy of needs does not exist in Amsterdam. Rather a variety of multiple metropolitan and economic interests compete for attention, the solution of which has been sought in the creation of the *Regionaal Orgaan Amsterdam* (i.e. Regional Body of Amsterdam) (ROA). There is no recognizable sustained general regional and international issue that dominates.

The same can be said for The Hague. Even though this metropolitan area includes some international functions as, e.g., tourism, the center for European Union police (Europol), and as home to the International Court of Justice, problems in the The Hague area are more those of an

urban agglomeration and, to a lesser extent than in Amsterdam, those of a big village. Dutch authors agree that the problems in The Hague are basically of a regional nature. The urban agglomeration problem dominates, especially since so many issues (accessibility, density, traffic congestion) require an upper-local, i.e., regional, solution. This in turn requires coordination between the 8 municipalities that together form the Haaglanden region. Metropolitan problems in Haaglanden therefore have all the characteristics of a classic regional steering issue. While in the capital city region the homogeneity of the regional interest is emphasized, in the urban agglomeration the focus is more on the variety of municipalities and needs within the region. As one of these cities The Hague does experience some big village problems, especially in terms of shortage of land in combination with social problems in certain neighborhoods. The need in the Haaglanden area is to develop a two-tier solution of partnership in governance implying that the division of labor between province and municipalities is not phrased in enumerative terms and along functional-sectoral lines but rather along lines of administrative function such as decision making, implementation, and evaluation. Hence, shared responsibility in decision making on regional affairs and a division of labor in the execution of tasks (i.e. the interactive province).

We have summarized some of the most important data on these three areas in tabular form (see below)

[table 1 about here]

A quick view shows us that the Rijnmond Authority (3a) had a 1.1 million population, encompassed 15 municipalities, that the city of Rotterdam was the largest municipality with close to 600.000 people, while the smallest municipality had around 12.000 inhabitants. The OOR-area

(3b) is a bit larger in terms of number of municipalities. If, however, a city-province would be created for this area, and thus (as a trade-off to the smaller municipalities) the city of Rotterdam would be subdivided into 12 municipalities, we see quite a different picture in terms of number of municipalities as well as in terms of the difference between largest and smallest municipality. We can see that the same thing would happen for Amsterdam if the city of Amsterdam in the

ROA-area would be subdivided into 16 local governments. The reader will appreciate the fact that in a popular referendum in 1995 the citizens of both cities voted with a large majority against the fragmentation of the historic jurisdiction of their cities. The facts for Haaglanden are slightly different. There a fragmentation of the historical jurisdiction is not considered, and even in the extended variant of Haaglanden (which includes the horticultural area known as the *Westland*) (1b) the differences in terms of population size remain about the same. The last column of this table is the most interesting, though, for it compares the administrative-geographical distance ratio (AGDR) for the various administrative arrangements possible in these three metropolitan areas (Toonen, 1997b:64). If the AGDR approaches a value 1 the territory of the administrative agglomeration is close to or the same as the territory of the municipality and if that is so, there is a major metropolitan problem. If the ratio reaches beyond value 3, the metropolitan problems are considered non-critical. If nothing is done the The Hague and Amsterdam agglomerations are in the semi-critical zone (both an AGDR of 1.7), while the Rotterdam situation is considered critical (AGDR of 1.0). We see that the 2b and 3c options, for Amsterdam and Rotterdam respectively, would take both areas out of the critical zone. It is also apparent that Haaglanden region would profit from fragmentation of its major city, The Hague.

What is striking about this table is that its line of reasoning departs from a structural problem solving approach to metropolitan government. There appears to be no other option but that of a city-province or that of a fragmentation of initial territory. Citizens find both solutions equally undesirable, but they are very much lodged in the mindset of decision makers. A brief overview of attempts to adequately address the problems of metropolitan governance will show how much structural solutions always dominated.

5. Attempts at Restructuring Metropolitan Government

Growing problems of governance in urban areas became subject of attention in the second half of the 19th century. At the time the Dutch believed the solution to be rather simple: amalgamation of local governments or annexation of smaller towns with the larger central city on the one hand, or intermunicipal cooperation on the other hand. It was not until the early 20th century that a variety

of observers, both academics and practitioners, started to contemplate a regional level of government. There were three reasons for this:

1. amalgamation and annexation increasingly met with resistance from smaller towns, and has indeed not been an option after the Second World War;
2. intermunicipal cooperation was voluntary by nature and lacked sufficient foundation in a public law context; and, as a consequence of 1. and 2.
3. upper-local and/or regional problems were not adequately addressed.

The response of government officials to proposals by Struycken (a professor of law), Van Poelje (a civil servant, and professor of public administration), and In 't Veld (a professor, as well as a political officeholder) (see table 2), was to enhance the public law basis for intermunicipal cooperation (1931-amendment of the Municipal Act of 1851). Their proposals amounted to a strengthening of upper-local and regional coordination mechanisms. A fourth tier of government was not considered until 1947 by the Koelma-committee (Koelma was a professor of public administration, city manager and mayor). And again, the government response was to enhance opportunities for intermunicipal cooperation (the 1950 Act for Joint Provisions)

[table 2 about here]

Failing to develop proper legal arrangements may be the explanation as to why the approach to solving problems of metropolitan governance shifted in the 1960s from a legal to a managerial approach. The first and second national memo and planning and zoning are illustrative of that and resulted in the creation of the Rijnmond Authority, a body in which the participant local governments consulted and informed one another about regional problems. That this approach cannot have been very satisfactory is evidenced by the fact that in the 1970s the creation of a formal regional body was again considered. This time it did not stop at a report by an investigative committee but actually reached the stage of a draft Act (1971-1977). It died silently. And, it is repetitive, once again government responded by improving the legal basis for intermunicipal cooperation (1985) (Van der Meer & Raadschelders, 1988).

Of course this did not do too much for the three metropolitan areas considered in this

paper. In fact, the Montijn-committee (Montijn is a businessman) expressed its concern for the competitiveness of the urban areas and advocated strongly the establishment of a city-province, at least for the Rotterdam area. For a time it seemed as if this proposal would carry the day, for political officeholders and civil servants at central and local level were actively carving-out the city-province. All went well until, by popular referendum in the cities of Amsterdam (May 1995) and Rotterdam (June 1995), the proposal of a city-province and the related proposal of fragmenting the original (historical) jurisdiction of both cities was overwhelmingly rejected by the local population (Toonen, 1997a: 134).

Now, four years after that devastating referendum, there is no clear direction in the policy concerning metropolitan areas. That is to say, it appears that the support for structural solutions has dwindled down to a minimum. At the same time this may have created the possibility to explore another avenue of solution(s).

6. Process rather than Structure: The Polycentric Alternative?

The main challenge in the three Dutch metropolitan areas is how to adjust to multiple metropolitan values and economic interests. Scale enlargement through amalgamations or annexations, or the creation of smaller units instead of or below existing provinces (structural solution, i.e. county, district) and intermunicipal fragmentation has no permanency and lacks support of the citizenry (i.e. legitimacy). Certainly a uniform application of structural reform misfires enormously since what is politically feasible in the one area may be totally off-the-wall in the other. The question then becomes: what then? It is this question that brings the focus to the style of governance (process approach) rather than the structure.

The political interest in the province, or at least the regional level, is of relatively recent origin (say: the past three decades), and is a consequence of the fact that the larger cities in the west of the country literally have grown together. The challenges they face go beyond the existing jurisdictions at local level and are not always the same as at the existing provincial level. A solution to this problem of multiple jurisdictions is available when we shift our focus of attention from structure, or what E. Ostrom called the theory of the monocentric order (1997:10),

to process and polycentric arrangements. In the U.S.A. there is familiarity with this notion of general and specific purpose governments that overlap. In the U.S.A. a multiplicity of local jurisdictions in metropolitan areas can be seen as a polycentric political system (V. Ostrom, Tiebout, and Warren, 1961). And in the American literature there has been attention in the past for 'government by association' (Follett, 1918,1924; V. Ostrom, 1974) as a more processual solution. In the Netherlands the structural emphasis dominated, perfectly understandable in a country of which the legal tradition is firmly rooted in the continental-European Roman law approach to government (cf. Berman, 1983). In that approach it is assumed that everything can be codified and that problems of government merely require proper structuring (i.e. legal arrangements of jurisdiction, of central-local relations, of authority of institutions, and so forth) until recently, and while the regional and provincial levels have been on the political agenda for some three decades now, it is only recent that the time seems to be ripe for a more polycentric approach which was defined by V. Ostrom et al. (1961:831) as follows:

Polycentric' connotes many centers of decision-making which are formally independent of each other... To the extent that they take each other into account in competitive relationships, enter into various contractual and cooperative undertakings or have recourse to central mechanisms to resolve conflicts, the various political jurisdictions in a metropolitan area may function in a coherent manner with consistent and predictable patterns of interacting behavior. To the extent that this is so, they may be said to function as a system.

In this approach there is no optimal, let alone permanent, form of organization for all metropolitan areas. What a polycentric approach emphasizes is the creation and nurturing of consultative relations between various tiers of government. It may involve a separation of provision, production, and governance (ACIR, 1987), but not necessarily so. This a deliberative democracy and, of course, is not limited to consultation between governments, but includes more interaction between citizen and governments. In a polycentric approach public services requires the active coproduction of citizen-consumers to complement the inputs of the producers. It thus

requires participative citizenship at least. Better would it be if, as Martin Albrow suggest, to work on the basis of 'performative citizenship' (1996:178).

7. Concluding Remarks

While there are signs that Dutch government officials are becoming more sensitive to processual rather than structural solutions, it is a challenge to discard a 'legal-rational' mind set that existed for centuries. It is no less a challenge to operate on the basis of 'performative citizenship' many believe that such citizen performance needs to be revived. Conceptualizing citizen - government relations in terms of 'civil society' appears to indicate that for the first time in our modern age solutions to problems and challenges of governance are not only considered to be found 'inside' government, but may well include a revision of the division of labor between citizens and their governments. This notion of enhancing citizen responsibility, instead of relying solely on government performance and reform, has consequences for the way in which we solve problems in our metropolitan areas. Indeed, by virtue of the citizen rejection (1995) of structural solutions (which, after all, only government can supply for it has the legislative authority) the citizen can now be called upon to investigate its own effort in making the metropolitan area a better place to live. However, the literature does not provide us with much guidance, and we may well be at the verge of a drawn-out trial-and-error process in which citizens and governments together forge a new society.

References

- ACIR, Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations (author: Ronald Oakerson) (1987). *The Organization of Local Public Economies*. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office.
- Albrow, Martin (1996). *The Global Age. State and Society Beyond Modernity*. Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Berman, Harold (1983). *Law and Revolution. The Formation of the Western Legal Tradition*. Cambridge, Mass./London: Harvard University Press.
- Dente, Bruno (1990). Metropolitan Governance Reconsidered, or How to Avoid Errors of the Third Type. In *Governance: An International Journal of Policy and Administration*, vol.3 no.1,
- Follett, Mary Parker (1920, originally 1918). *The New State. Group Organization the Solution of Popular Government*. New York/London: Longmans, Green and Co.
- Follett, Mary Parker (1924). *Creative Experience*. New York/London: Longmans, Green and Co.
- Gore, Al (1993). *Creating a Government that Works Better and Costs Less. The Gore Report on Reinventing Government*. Report of the National Performance Review.
- Hendriks, Frank, Jos C.N. Raadschelders, Theo A.J. Toonen (1994). Provincial repositioning in the Netherlands: some models and the impact of European Integration. In Udo Bullman (ed.), *Die Politik der dritten Ebene. Regionen im Europa der Union*. Baden Baden: Nomos Verlagsgesellschaft, 147-160.
- Hendriks, Frank, Jos C.N. Raadschelders, Theo A.J. Toonen (1995). The Dutch Province as a European Region: National Impediments versus European Opportunities. In Barry Jones & Michael Keating (eds.) *The European Union and the Regions*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 215-230.
- Henry, Nicholas (1999). *Public Administration and Public Affairs*. Upper Saddle River, nJ: Prentice Hall.
- Kiser, I.L., E. Ostrom (1982). The Three Worlds of Action. A Metatheoretical Synthesis of

Institutional Approaches. In E. Ostrom (ed.), *Strategies of Political Inquiry*. Beverly Hills: Sage, 179-222.

- Kleinfeld, Ralf, Theo A. J. Toonen (1996). Political, Institutional and Legal Aspects of the Regions in the Netherlands. In Gisela Färber and Murray Forsyth (eds.), *The Regions - Factors of Integration or Disintegration in Europe?*. Baden-Baden: Nomos Verlagsgesellschaft, 91-108.

- Meer, Frits van der (1993). Toward a Conceptualization of Regions: Regionalism and the Dutch Organization of Government. In John L. Mikesell (ed.), *International Perspectives on Regional Development and Regional Organization*. Bloomington: School of Public and Environmental Affairs, Indiana University, 76-87.

- Meer, Frits M. van der, Jos C.N. Raadschelders (1988). Urbane problematiek in Nederland. In *Bestuurswetenschappen*, vol.42 no.7, 487-498.

- Ostrom, Elinor (1997). *The Comparative Study of Public Economies*. Acceptance paper as recipient of the Frank E. Seidman Distinguished Award in Political Economy.

- Ostrom, Vincent (1974). *The Intellectual Crisis in American Public Administration*. Tuscaloosa: The University of Alabama Press.

- Ostrom, Vincent, Charles Tiebout, Robert Warren (1961). The Organization of Government in Metropolitan Areas: A Theoretical Inquiry. In *American Political Science Review*, vol.55, 831-842.

- Page, Edward C. (1991). *Localism and Centralism in Europe. The Political and Legal Bases of Local Self-Government*. Oxford/New York: Oxford University Press.

- Raadschelders, Jos C.N. (1994). Understanding the Development of Local Government: Theory and Evidence from the Dutch Case. In *Administration and Society*, vol.25 no.4, 410-442.

- Raadschelders, Jos C.N. (1998). *Handbook of Administrative History*. New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Books.

- Raadschelders, Jos C.N. and Theo A.J. Toonen (1995). Governance and government in the Netherlands in the 19th and 20th centuries. In Walter J.M. Kickert, Frans A. van Vught (eds.) *Public administration and public policy in the Netherlands*. London etc.: Harvester Wheatsheaf, 27-44.

- Tocqueville, Alexis de (1990). *Democracy in America*, edited by P. Bradley. New York:

Vintage Books.

- Toonen, Theo A. J. (1993). Dutch Provinces and the Struggle for the Meso. In L.J. Sharpe (ed.), *The Rise of Meso Government in Europe*. London etc.: SAGE Publications, 117-153.
- Toonen, Theo A. J. (1997a). Provinces versus urban centres. Current developments, background and evaluation of regionalisation in the Netherlands. In Patrick Le Galès and Christian Lequesne (eds.), *Regions in Europe*. London/New York: Routledge, 130-149.
- Toonen, Theo A. J. (1997b). *Haaglanden als provincie gedacht. Een interbestuurlijk perspectief op de herschepping van een provincie*. Leiden/Rotterdam: Report for the Haaglanden Region.

Table 1 *Metropolitan government and the 'Member' Municipalities: The Administrative-Geographical Ratio*
 (*=x 1000)

<i>metropolitan administration</i>	<i>Population*</i>	<i>Local government</i>	<i>Average population local government*</i>	<i>Population of largest local government*</i>	<i>Population of smallest local government*</i>	<i>Administrative geographical distance ratio</i>
1a The Hague (Haaglanden area)	765	8	96	445	8	1.7
1b Haaglanden + Westland	873	15	58	445	7	2.0
2a Amsterdam (ROA)	1.190	23	52	718	0.3	1.7
2b ROA subdivided into 16 local governments	1.190	39	31	128	0.3	9.3
3a Rotterdam (Rijnmond)	1.105	15	74	596	12	1.0
3b Rotterdam (OOR)	1.138	18	63	596	8	1.9
3c Rotterdam subdivided into 12 local governments	1.138	30	38	77	8	14.8

Table 2 *Restructuring Subnational Government: Upper-Local and Regional Attempts* (based on Van der Meer and Raadschelders, 1988).

<i>Year/Period</i>	<i>Problem</i>	<i>Focus</i>	<i>Solution</i>
Second half 19 th century (Municipal Act of 1851)	a) in urban areas: tension between central city and surrounding municipalities b) in rural areas: democratic accountability of joint provisions	(upper-)local	a) Annexation in urban areas and amalgamation in rural areas b) voluntary cooperation (joint provisions) in rural areas under private law Limited possibility for joint provision under public law
1912(Struycken)	growth of cities 'touching' each other's jurisdiction	upper-local	considering mandatory cooperation in urban and rural areas under private law
1924 (Van Poelje)	adequate economies of scale and link between spatial-economic problems and necessary administrative arrangements	upper-local/regional	regional councils (<i>gewestelijke raden</i>)
1929 (In 't Veld)	optimal use of land for industrial and housing purposes	regional	integral administrative body at metropolitan level (e.g., annexation/amalgamation in combination with intermunicipal decentralization)
1931 (government response amendment to Municipal Act)	see above	upper-local	enlarged possibilities for joint provisions under public law
1947 (committee Koelma)	resistance against policy of annexation and amalgamation	regional	fourth tier of government (<i>district</i>) in between province and municipality
1950 (government response)	see above	upper-local	Act for Joint Provisions
1955 (committee De Quay)	adequate administrative arrangement for metropolitan areas and distance between government and citizen	local	intermunicipal territorial and functional decentralization
1960, 1966 (first and second national memo on zoning)	economies of scale	regional	creation of metropolitan area as experiment (e.g. Rijnmond)

1971-1977 (<i>Gewestwet</i> , and draft Act Reorganization of Government)	economies of scale	regional	regional bodies
1985 (Government response: Act on Intermunicipal Cooperation)	economies of scale	upper-local	enhancing the 1950 Act on Joint Provisions
1989-1995 (committee Montijn)	competitiveness of urban areas in international context: urban development from the perspective of private business	regional	strengthen position of central city in urban agglomeration via: a) establishment of city-provinces for three metropolitan areas (next to the traditional provinces) and b) subdividing central city into municipalities
1995 and after	rejection of city-province by popular referendum	lost	none