Redefining Amsterdam Airport Schiphol

Universiteit Utrecht

Bart de Jong
Supervisors: Luuk Boelens (UU),Oedzge Atzema (UU), Gerlach Cerfontaine (Schiphol Group / UU)
Bart Wissink (UU), Joop Krul (Schiphol Group), Maurits Schaafsma (Schiphol Group)

B.deJong@geo.uu.nl

Departures

The institutional and administrative constellation which nowadays influences the planning process of mainport Schiphol, was been the subject to some severe changes the last twenty years. While at the beginning of the nineties, the mainport stood for economic growth and opportunities, today Schiphol is being reputed to be a problem area, which seems to find no balance between economic growth and ecological sustainability. At the same time the rise of the network society triggered a growing complexity concerning the decision-making process of international airports. Economic and social shifts enter the domain of the state, politics and administration, elite networks, lobby groups and social movements, stretching between and across cities, regions and even countries. As a result next to the government

a growing number of public and private actors emerged that try to influence the spatial planning to their advantage, fragmenting and disintegrating it along the way. Established policy discourses are challenged, traditional arenas and government networks questioned, and actors search for new relations with actors in economic and socio-cultural spheres. Thus, Schiphol changed, the surrounding

area changed, the world as a whole changed. As a result it becomes difficult to define the airport. Mainport Schiphol is a multi-interpretable theme: an airport, a company, a business park, a region, a network, an urban complex, and so on. In addition, a mismatch seems to exist between administrative entities and the developing functional regions, which – together with a growing number of parties involved – leads to indecisiveness, a lack of trust, unclear roles and a policy making patchwork quilt or excessive governance which means there is simply too much co-ordination which is seen as oppressive and obstructive. This hampers the decision making process concerning the future of mainport Schiphol. Therefore, this research focuses on the question: How can one, by combining an actor-network point of view and actor-oriented planning, come to more decisive institutional enactments, which fit the dynamics of and around Schiphol in the changing context of the network society?

Arrivals

The research identified two research objectives; a practical and a theoretical one. The first, practical research objective is that this thesis must gain insight into the continuous tension concerning the decision-making process of Amsterdam Airport Schiphol and form policy recommendations to tackle this continuous tension while in addition reason through to more general

comments concerning interacting in a network society. The second, theoretical research objective is that this dissertation must contribute to a more innovative view on the establishment of theories trying to understand complex spatial situations in the changing context of the network society where local and global forces interact in general and the relevance of the Actor Network theory for planning in particular.

To meet these objectives, an operational framework was created linking the Actor-Network theory and the actor-oriented planning approach to form an Actor-Network Approach on planning. This operational framework is implied on three case studies, all resembling one layer of the mainport concept

The SADC case: How to intervene in a seemingly stale but precarious governmental equilibrium between platformrelated, Schipholrelated and Schipholoriented economic activities while searching for a new interpretation of SADC and the formation of an airportcorridor?

The Second Terminal case: To what extent does the airport and the possible realization of a second terminal really compete with its surroundings and what kind of durable solutions are needed to (partly) resolve this competitiveness to everyone's advantage?

The "Alders tafel" case: Is the Alders tafel as formal structure and as an addition to existing administrative constellations, the correct vehicle to take decisions concerning the interpretation of the worldwide network and come to new successful associations?
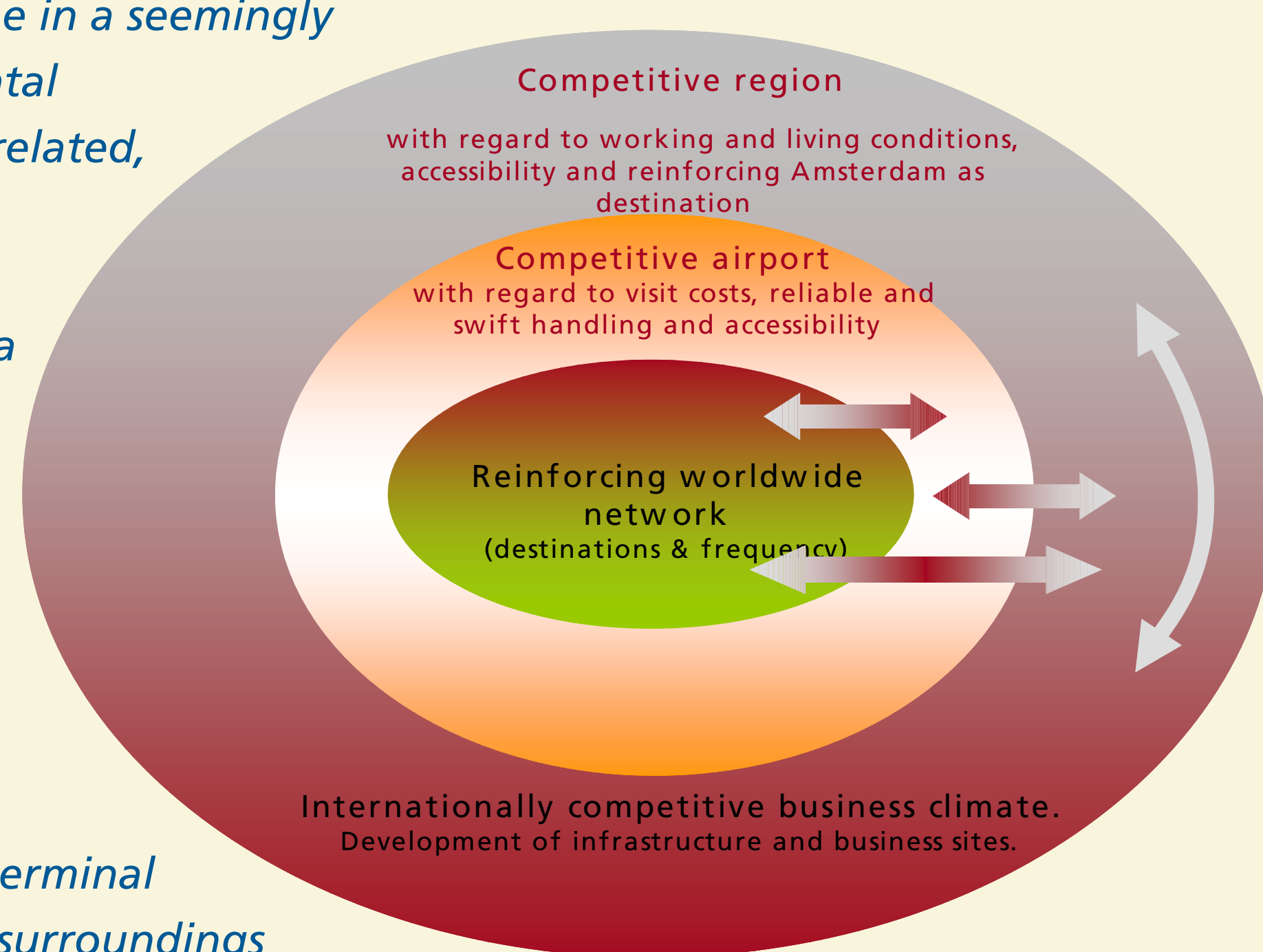
Taking into account

Perplexity, Problematization
1

Consultation
2
• Search for a region's Unique Selling Points
• In-depth actor identification and actor analysis

Arranging in rank order

Institution
• Developing spatial regimes with added-value for the original intentions and/or ideas
• Democratic broadening and embedding
• Maintaining the durable and associative character of the collective

Hierarchy
• Create maps with opportunities and development directions
• Organize bilateral meetings and roundtables
• Formulate concrete business cases and pilots

Operational Framework combining the Actor-oriented framework by Boelens & Mommaas (2006) and Bruno Latour's original powers of taking into account and arranging in rank order (2004)

Status of the research

After designing the research and formulating an operational framework between September 2005 and December 2007, the theoretical part of the dissertation has been written.

Since January 2008 the research is concentrating on the case studies. The dissertation is due for completion by the end of this year.

Geosciences