

**THINKING THE SPACE(S) OF EUROPE
BEYOND THE 'SPACES OF FLOWS'/'SPACES OF
PLACES' DIVIDE**

A VIEW FROM THE EUREGIO MEUSE-RHINE

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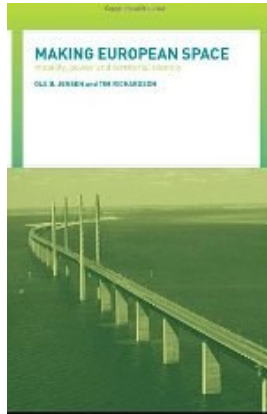
'Territorial Cohesion in Europe' – Pécs, 27-28 June 2013

INTRODUCTION

- Research project ‘Cross-border spatial development in the Dutch borderlands’
- Reflecting on ‘EUropean’ spatial development politics
- Thinking European space in terms of ‘spaces of flows’/‘spaces of places’ does not allow for a nuanced perspective



THINKING EUROPE IN TERMS OF 'SPACES OF FLOWS' AND 'SPACES OF PLACES'



“the EU spatial policy discourse, with its twin key issues of polycentricity and infrastructure networks, is a classic manifestation of the embedded tensions between mobility/flow versus nodes/places”

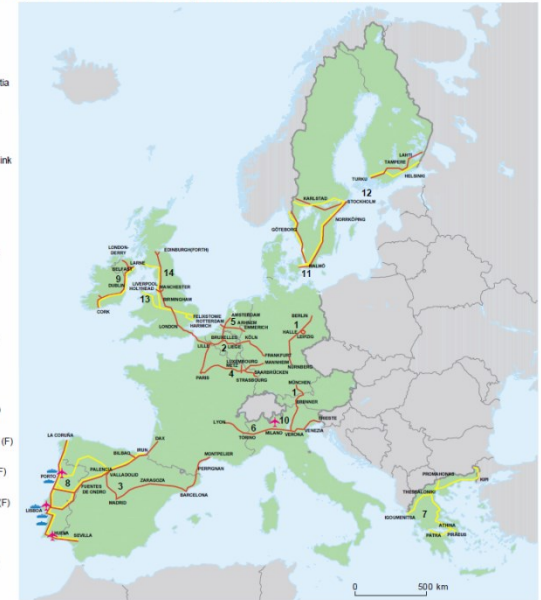
(Jensen and Richardson 2004, p. 218)

Map 2: The 14 Priority Projects of the Trans-European Transport Network

1. High-Speed Train / Combined Transport North-South
2. High-Speed Train PBKAL
3. High-Speed Train South
4. High-Speed Train East
5. Beltway-Line, Conventional rail / Combined Transport
6. High-Speed Train / Combined Transport France-Italy
7. Greek Motorways Pathe and Via Egnatia
8. Multimodal Link Portugal-Spain-Central Europe
9. Conventional rail Cork-Dublin-Belfast-Larne-Stranraer
10. Malpensa Airport, Milano
11. Öresund Fixed railroad Link Denmark-Sweden
12. Nordic Triangle Multimodal Corridor
13. Ireland-United Kingdom/BeneLux road link
14. West Coast Main Line

— Rail
— Road
✈ Airport
— Harbour

Source: European Commission GD VII



(territorial)

'spaces of place' = 

identity, self-
empowerment,
democracy,
redistribution...

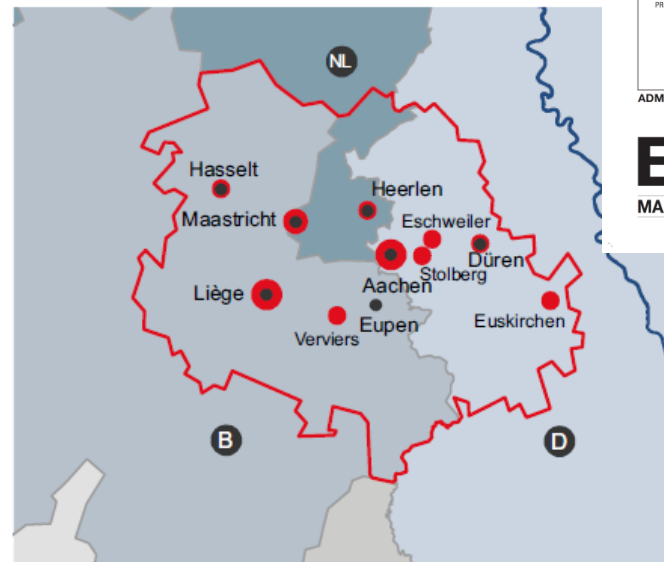
(networked/non-
territorial)

'spaces of flows'
= geared towards
efficiency and
competitiveness

TOWARDS A RELATIONAL VIEW OF EUROPEAN SPACE(S)

- Flows/networks cannot be promoted in isolation from territorially framed interventions
- Places and territories can be understood as the effects of networked relations among actors
- “[t]erritory and flow do not exist in pure form [...] each is involved in the formation of the other” (Massey 2008, p. 328)
- All spaces are constituted by social relations (see e.g. Allen et al. 1998; Massey 2005)
- Exposing the power-laden, political processes in which particular relations are forged and not others

A VIEW FROM THE EUROREGIO MEUSE-RHINE



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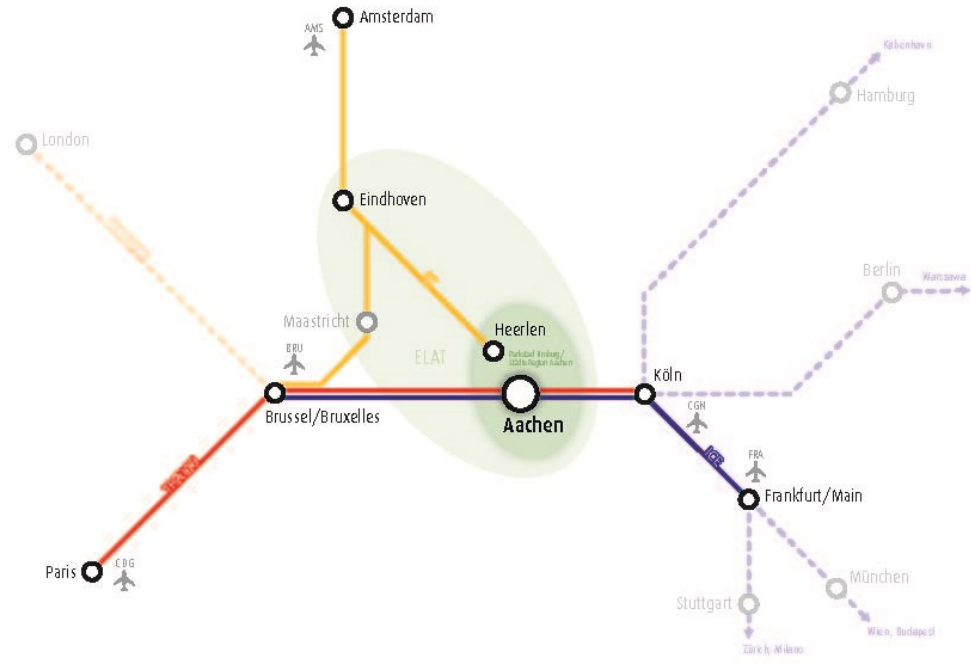
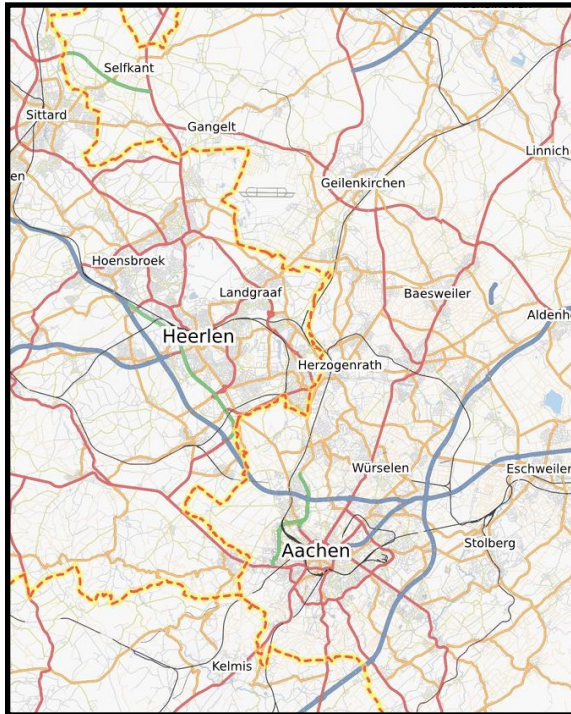
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BADLY CONNECTED PLACES IN THE SHADOW OF FLOWS?



ENTANGLED IN SCALAR-TERRITORIAL POLITICS

EMR2020

Een toekomststrategie voor de Euregio Maas-Rijn



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Aangrenzende gebieden
 Adjacentes Gebiete
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CONCLUDING REMARKS

- ‘Flows’, ‘networks’, ‘territories’ and ‘places’ are enacted through relational practices
- Multiple tensions in actors’ spatial agendas – the making of European space(s) is inherently political
- ‘Europeanization’ is an open-ended process
- “For the future of Europe to be open, European space must be open too” (cf. Massey, 2005, pp. 11-12)