

‘Storied Landscapes’

Narrating changing Dutch cultural landscapes

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Maartje Bulkens

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Introduction

Participatory planning has been a dominant approach in spatial planning in the Netherlands since the 1980s. It is characterised by an emphasis on consensus building, cooperation and consultation (Aarts and Lokhorst 2012; Evers et al. 2000; Hagens 2010; Needham 2007; Roodbol-Mekkes et al. 2012). In participatory planning processes, non-governmental parties, such as interest groups and citizens, are invited to participate to voice their vested interests, preferences and demands for the future of the area concerned. These parties therefore become co-decision makers in these processes (Van Assche 2004). The involvement of non-governmental parties is often inspired by the ideal to create more legitimate and democratic processes that take into consideration the different needs and wants of individuals who are thought to be affected by these processes (Turnhout et al. 2010). These participatory planning processes concern questions of the nature and management of the landscape, involving definitions of cultural landscapes and its meanings, and the subsequent plans of these processes are supposedly a reflection of the different vested interests, opinions and desires among those involved. Yet, as Van der Zande and During (2009) have claimed, there is a lack of material and understanding as to how individuals perceive and understand cultural landscapes, how these landscapes affect them, and what individuals feel and think about particular landscapes in the Netherlands. Indeed, individual meanings of cultural landscapes have been little considered in spatial planning practices, or acknowledged in spatial planning research, even though it has been argued that an understanding of these is necessary to adequately deal with them in spatial planning and policy making in the Netherlands (Van der Zande and During 2009). Moreover, an understanding of the diverse individual meanings of the cultural landscape can contribute to a recent claim made by Beunen et al. (2013: 287) arguing that 'a re-politicization of planning is [...] needed, followed by a reinstatement of local planning as a space for adaptation and integration of policies, interest and narratives.'. In this light, this thesis focuses on the ways in which the many vested interests, desires and opinions of those living and using the areas involved in participatory planning processes are taken forward within the broader power play

among individuals, non-governmental parties and governmental parties in participatory planning. While participation in spatial planning can be achieved through different degrees of involvement of non-governmental parties and citizens, participation in this thesis is perceived as any planning process in which these parties are invited to express their interests in particular areas for which spatial plans and policies are developed (which is usually a legal obligation prescribed by the Dutch planning system) (de Wro 2013).

Objective and research questions

Within this context, the objective of this thesis is,

to analyse and so grant recognition and acknowledge the many different voices in participatory planning processes reflected in both representations and conceptualisations of the landscape, as well as the more intimate relationships individuals have with, and diverse meanings attached to, cultural landscapes, and how these reflect and affect both the material and imagined reality of the cultural landscape.

This has been further specified in three research questions:

What intimate relationships do individuals have with cultural landscapes, and which diverse meanings do they attach to these, and how do these reflect and affect the cultural landscape in participatory planning processes?

How are cultural landscapes represented in policies, plans and other related documents, and how do these representations reflect and affect the cultural landscape in participatory planning processes?

How do individuals feel and think about participatory planning processes in relation to their own role and position and those of others?

Since language, either verbal or written, plays an essential role in these processes as the key communicative device through which diverse meanings of the cultural landscapes are reflected in spatial planning processes, the main focus of analysis has been the language that individuals use to communicate these diverse meanings, as well as how they experience and explain

particular participatory planning processes. For this reason, a language-oriented methodology was chosen in order to examine the adoptability and usefulness of storytelling and narrative analysis as key methods to investigate the diverse meanings and intimate relationships attached to the cultural landscape, and how participatory planning processes reflect and affect these. Therefore a fourth research question was formulated:

How are the different intimate relationships with cultural landscapes, the diverse meanings attached to cultural landscapes, and the different experiences of participation in spatial planning captured in the different stories of individuals?

This choice will be elaborated later in this introduction, and extensively discussed in the methodology chapter. First, I will position my work within both cultural geography and spatial planning, and argue how it contributes to these respective fields. Afterwards, I will argue the contribution storytelling can make, predominantly within the fields of spatial planning, and to a lesser extent. within cultural geography.

Positioning the thesis

Since my thesis focuses on the diverse meanings attached to cultural landscapes and how these are reflected and affected in participatory planning processes, it draws from and speaks to two academic fields: cultural geography and spatial planning. In this sense, it follows on earlier work done where spatial planning is analysed through a cultural geographical lens, as exemplified in the work of Ernste (2012). In the following paragraphs, I will position my work within both cultural geography and spatial planning.

As mentioned before, my thesis analyses both the intimate relationships and the meanings attached to cultural landscapes as captured in individual stories, as well as the diverse representations of the landscape in plans, policies and documents produced and used in participatory planning processes. For this reason I draw from what in cultural geography is known as the 'more-than-representational' approach (Lorimer 2005). It argues how these representations of the cultural landscape might have 'deadening effects' (Lorimer 2005) on the lived cultural landscape, which in spatial planning occurs through the performance of power of

particular dominant conceptualisations of the cultural landscape and what should and should not be allowed in these. Although participatory spatial planning aims to be and can be characterised as a bottom-up approach, the representations captured in policies and plans continue to perform a top-down conceptualisation of the landscape. In line with this, I have drawn from the 'more-than-representational' approach, since it acknowledges that representational practices and the consequences and effects brought forward by these remain important in defining and managing the cultural landscape (Dewsbury et al. 2002; Cadman 2009; Anderson and Harrison 2010).

Spatial planning in these terms remains treating the landscape 'representationally', with strong emphasis on particular dominant and vernacular characterisations of the landscape. However, my work also shows that landscapes are not only representational in what they mean and how they ought to be managed. I have gone further to acknowledge what landscapes do to the everyday practices of individuals. Hence, because my work focusses on the different meanings individuals and the intimate relationships individuals attach to the cultural landscape, my work speaks to and draws from the 'more-than-representational' approach. In this respect, my work does not take representations '[only] as a code to be broken or as an illusion to be dispelled rather [it also apprehends] representations as performative in themselves; as doings' (Dewsbury et al. 2002: 438). The representational is not only taken as communication about the landscape and what should and should not be allowed within it, but is also an act capable of transforming individuals and their surroundings. The landscape in my work is treated as an active agent, and understood not only for what it represents, but also for how the landscape is performed in everyday practices. In this sense, my research speaks to what Lorimer (2005) introduced in cultural geography as the 'more-than-representational', denoting how landscapes are not only to be understood as representational, in what these mean, but also what these do. It goes further to view how landscapes are practised and performed on a daily basis, and the relationship this has with more dominant representations of landscapes.

The more-than-representational treatment of the landscape in my work, also speaks to a recent claim in spatial planning for a 'post-representational' (Hillier 2007) take on spatial planning. Hillier (2007) claims that planning practices still focus largely on 'visual' representations captured in maps and plans. In planning practice, she argues, these representations all too often remain to be taken-for-granted as natural, hegemonic and absolute truths of the world out there, rather 'than reflecting the multidimensional, often conflicting representations which coexist in reality' (Hillier 2007: 195). She also argues for a much needed step back to reflect upon the coming about of these representations, how these affect planning practices, and the ways they may be contested (Hillier 2007). Healey (2004: 46) also argues how planning studies lack an 'analysis of the nature of concepts of place and space being deployed', while these concepts have a performative capacity in shaping the actual spatial developments of areas (see also Healey 2002). Thus a focus on the more-than-representational or post-representational seems to be relevant in examining participatory planning processes, especially when it recognises that '[p]olicymakers and planners [do not] care much about lived schemes of signification' (Pløger 2006: 393).

Through focusing on the 'more-than-representational' aspects of the cultural landscape, my work also recognises the critique that planning within the communicative turn denies all too often broader issues of power, as will be elaborated in the literature review. My work incorporates a broader understanding of how power works in spatial planning processes by examining the intersection in participatory planning processes of, on the one hand representations of the landscape as captured in policies and plans, and on the other hand, more intimate and individual meanings of the landscape as reflected in the stories of individuals. It is at this intersection where decisions are made about the extent to which particular meanings attached to the landscape are reflected and affected in participatory planning processes, which concerns what should and should not be allowed in particular landscapes. Essential to this is the role which power plays in these processes. In my work, I have both focused on the power wielded by particular conceptualisations of the cultural landscape in constituting and

performing the cultural landscape, as well as the power through which particular subjectivities and positionalities are constituted and performed. These conceptualisations of the landscape and subjectivities and positionalities, in their turn, perform power in affecting both the material and imagined reality of the cultural landscape.

Thus, my thesis is inspired by the more-than-representational approach in cultural geography to examine both the representations and conceptualisations of the cultural landscape, as well as the more intimate relationships and diverse meanings attached by individuals to these landscapes. Moreover, my work investigates how these representations and diverse meanings are reflected and affected in participatory planning processes, especially when decisions are made about what should and should not be allowed in particular landscapes.

Storytelling in this thesis

The different meanings attached to cultural landscapes by different individuals involved in participatory planning processes and their intimate relations with these landscapes have been elicited from storytelling. Such stories were then subjected to a narrative analysis, as will be further elaborated in the methodology chapter. Storytelling was chosen because it is in line with the 'more-than-representational' approach adopted in this thesis. Furthermore, Cameron (2012: 575) claims - with the recent interest in non-representational and affective geographies - that 'stories' are increasingly seen as 'an expressive method and an affective tool, designed both to demonstrate affective and emergent geographies and to move audiences toward new realms of thought and practice.' Thus, storytelling is used here to move beyond the realm of representations of cultural landscapes captured in the form of official discourses, in favour of stories engaged with the lived experiences of landscape by residents and users, not only in terms of how landscapes are understood, but also practised. In this sense, my research speaks to what Lorimer (2005) introduced in cultural geography as the 'more-than-representational' approach. Within spatial planning, storytelling has been characterised in two strands; first, storytelling as a model 'of' the ways in which planning is practised, where planning is perceived as a type of storytelling; and second, as a model 'for' the ways in which planning can and should be

practised, in which the focus is on how storytelling can improve planning practices, particularly in the framing of different planning alternatives (Van Hulst 2012: 302, 303). My thesis represents a third strand where storytelling is used to acknowledge the many voices in the field and the diverse meanings individuals attach to cultural landscapes and their intimate relationships with them. Moreover, storytelling in my thesis provided an insight into how these meanings and relationships are reflected and affected in participatory planning processes, as well as how different subjectivities and positionalities are constructed. In the methodology chapter, this will be further elaborated and explained.

The individual stories that are used in this thesis narrate two participatory planning processes in two different areas; The Wageningse Eng and the Millingerwaard. The Wageningse Eng, a former small-scale agricultural area, currently characterised in the municipal allocation plan as a city-edge area with a diversity of activities (Gemeente Wageningen 2012a). The Wageningse Eng was selected because at the time of conducting this research, the municipality was in the process of determining a new allocation plan for the area, and residents and landowners were allowed to comment and react to the proposed plan. Although the Wageningse Eng is a rather small scale case-study, the planning processes are characterised by a high involvement of different parties, such as interest groups, residents and users of the area. The Millingerwaard is a former nature area currently undergoing the implementation of national (spatial) programmes on water safety and nature development which have transformed it into a nature area. The implementation of these spatial programmes was the reason for selecting the Millingerwaard. Being an example of a radical transformation of the landscape, this case was chosen to examine how planning processes that involve national plans and policies are experienced at the grassroot level. Attention is given to intimate and individual meanings attached to the Millingerwaard.

Structure of the thesis

This thesis is structured as follows. The following chapter is a literature review of: the first part is dedicated to how the concept of landscape has evolved within cultural geography, and the transition of spatial planning into the communicative turn, as well as how this was criticised. The

second part also incorporates particular guiding concepts, drawn from Judith Butler's performativity theory and Foucault's understanding of power, directed at answering the research questions mentioned earlier. In the second chapter, I will discuss the overall methodology, the chosen methods and the case studies, and I will reflect on the issues and limitations of this research. The third chapter is an article on how particular conceptualisations of landscape, when decisive in how the landscape should be managed, are perceived as means to deny the rights of residents and users, and are thought to favour particular strong voices on what can and cannot be done in the landscape in question. Yet these conceptualisations remain salient in spatial planning practices, and have very real implications for the landscape. The fourth chapter consists of an article on how storytelling is useful for the study of spatial planning. It reveals how storytelling has the capacity to destabilise dominant discourses and processes, and how within these stories, particular subjectivities and positionalities are created reflecting the inclusivity and exclusivity of planning processes. The fifth chapter is a paper on how the discourse on 'new nature', although criticised for what the term implicates, has both physically and socially transformed the landscape in question, and how this is described and experienced by those whose lives are intimately tied to the landscape. The final chapter comprises the conclusion and the discussion.

It needs to be noted that chapters three to five have been submitted to different academic journals, as current practice in doing a PhD allows. However this has also resulted in a degree of overlap among the subsequent chapters, especially in the methodology chapter. The particular papers are arranged in such a way that the results of the different case studies are discussed in the separate papers, with two papers being about the Wageningse Eng, while the third paper focuses on the Millingerwaard. Together, these form the general discussion of the two cases.

Chapter 1

Literature Review

Since my thesis focuses on the diverse meanings attached to cultural landscapes, it draws from and speaks to two academic fields: cultural geography and spatial planning. In the following paragraphs, I will position my work more elaborately within these two fields by briefly reviewing relevant literature on these fields, particularly where my thesis builds upon and contributes to these fields. Firstly, I will elaborate on how the concept of landscape has evolved in cultural geography over the last decades, and position my own work within this discussion. Secondly, I will position my work within spatial planning by elaborating on the communicative turn in spatial planning and the critique towards this approach.

A cultural geographical perspective

Within cultural geography, the concept of landscape generally represents the lens through which interactions between individuals and the environment are examined (Wylie 2007; see also Minca 2007a). I will briefly describe how this concept of landscape has evolved over the past decades in cultural geography before positioning my work within this field.

The traditional morphological approach

Up until the 1960s, landscape was regarded as nothing more than a physical reality, knowable and real through the visual sense (Cosgrove 1988; Oakes and Price 2008). This was inspired by the work of Vidal de la Blanche who, in the first half of the 20th Century, advocated a conceptualisation of the landscape as an object, and as a representation on a map, a desubjectified landscape, that could be understood through vision (Minca 2007a, 2007b). By the founding of the Berkeley School in the early 1930s, this morphological approach became established in American cultural geography (Oakes and Price 2008). One of its proponents, Carl Sauer (1963: 343), claimed that cultural landscapes were the result of cultural processes transforming natural surroundings, 'cultural landscape is fashioned from a material landscape

by a cultural group. Culture is the agent, the natural area is the medium, the cultural landscape is the result.' Detailed descriptive observations of the landscape served to reveal how the visible landscape was shaped by human intervention (Cosgrove 1988; Duncan and Ley 1993; Oakes and Price 2008). By the 1960s, the morphological approach was criticised for being too static, descriptive, particularistic and subjective in the conceptualisation of the landscape (Oakes and Price 2008; Wylie 2007). Furthermore, the conceptualisation of culture understood as a homogeneous entity, denying the role of humans and the mechanisms through which culture works, was dismissed (Duncan 1980; Mitchell 1995; Wylie 2007). This super-organic understanding of culture, as Duncan (1980: 198) states, 'impedes explanation by mastering many problematic social, economic and political relationships'.

Landscape-as-text approach

In response, and under the influence of social and critical perspectives such as feminism and Marxism, the approach to landscapes became more politicised (Oakes and Price 2008). Following the 'cultural turn' of the late 1980s, a 'new cultural geography' evolved, its main focus being on the analysis of (elements of) landscapes, not only as physical manifestations in the world, but also as highly symbolic and profoundly ideological in terms of the meanings imputed within or projected through them (Cosgrove and Jackson 1987; Duncan and Ley 1993; Mitchell 2000, 2001, 2002; but also Cosgrove and Daniels 1988; Cresswell and Verstraete 2003; Minca 2007b). A more general awareness emerged, which claimed that the landscape 'also acts to reproduce, naturalize, as well as contest power relations.' (Oakes and Price 2008: 150). To uncover the mechanisms through which particular ideologies are reproduced through landscape, the landscape became conceptualised as a kind of text that could be read (Wylie 2007). Cultural geographers, like James Duncan and Denis Cosgrove, after this 'cultural turn' in the late 1980s and the 1990s, turned to questions of how language and representations are passed on through the landscape. Methods and theories, focusing on how meaning is constructed through linguistic and symbolic systems and originating from the humanities, were adopted (McDowell 1994; Oakes and Price 2008; Wylie 2007).

Far from being reified and necessarily accepted, meanings of landscape are often contested by others with different ideas not only of what the landscape should look like, but also about what it should represent. This has become a defining framework adopted by many scholars interested in studying the representational politics of landscapes (Wylie 2005, 2007; Minca 2007b). This was further influenced by the use of poststructuralist approaches in cultural geography in which emphasis was placed on the varied and multiple ways in which the landscape could be read. These poststructuralist influences also caused cultural geographers to question the link between the symbolic elements within the landscape, and what these were meant to represent (Oakes and Price 2008). This analysis of the symbolic has become known as symbolic representation, as Cosgrove (1988: 125) argues:

'[t]o understand the expressions written by a culture into its landscape we require a knowledge of the 'language' employed: the symbols and their meaning within that culture. All landscapes are symbolic, although the link between the symbol and what it stands for (its referent) may appear very tenuous.'

Thus, in cultural geography, there was a shift in this period from description to interpretation in which representation became a key focus (Wylie 2007).

Non-representational approaches

These so-called 'new cultural geographies' (McDowell 1994; Wylie 2007) were criticised by Tim Ingold (2000) for their adherence to the Cartesian dualism emphasising the projection of cultural ideas and meanings onto the landscape on the one hand, and the natural, material, and embodied world on the other. Following this critique, Ingold (2000) builds upon the Heideggerian concept of dwelling, which refers to an active engagement with the material world. After all, he argues, 'the world becomes a meaningful place for people through being lived in' (Ingold 2000: 168). Similarly, Thrift (1996, 2007) has claimed through his highly influential 'non-representational approach', that the new cultural geography has somehow 'drained life out' of what was being studied, further echoed more recently by Cadman (2009: 1) in terms of the tendency within cultural geography 'to retreat from practice into the (cultural) politics of

representation; creating deadening effects in an otherwise active world'. Such 'deaden- ing effects', according to Thrift (1996), may however be counteracted by turning away from the idea that landscapes are a sort of 'end-product of social and spatial processes' towards considering them as 'practices' in and of themselves. The non-representational approach emphasises that the landscape is a rather fluid construct which is in a continuous process of becoming, the approach 'see[s] landscape as a sort of performance that is enacted much as is music or theatre.' (Oakes and Price 2008: 151).

This is what Lorimer (2005: 85) refers to as the 'embodied acts of landscaping' or the ways in which we actively and materially shape and engage with the landscapes of which we are a constitutive part. Within this approach, it is the interactions between people and their use of, and relationships to, their everyday environments that constitute more of a landscape, rather than just the meanings underlying them. In these terms, the landscape therefore becomes a fluid construct constantly in the process of 'becoming', never 'fixed', and thus moving away 'from a view of the world based on contemplative models of thought and action toward theories of practice which amplify the potential flow of events' (Thrift 2000: 556; see also Lorimer 2005; Wylie 2007). In recent years, such an approach has been applied to different landscape-related issues: from Crouch's (2000, 2003) research on encounters and embodiment in leisure and tourism via the study of caravanning and allotment gardening, to Dewsbury's (2000) and Harrison's (2000) discussion of the relationship between embodiment and space, and to Lorimer's writings on 'learning geography' (2003) and herding (2006), as well as to Wylie's (2005) reflections on walking. However, representations are not completely abandoned in the non-representational approach (Wylie 2007). As Dewsbury et al. (2002: 438) put it

'[n]on-representational theory still takes representation seriously; representation not as a code to be broken or as an illusion to be dispelled rather representations are apprehended as performative in themselves; as doings.'

Acknowledging this, Lorimer (2005: 84) argues for the 'more-than-representational' approach in which the act of representing, writing, talking, etc, is seen as an embodied act, a practice, or a

performance. In analysing cultural landscapes, the focus turns accordingly to practices of landscape, the 'embodied acts of landscaping' (Lorimer 2005: 85; also Wylie 2007). As argued in the introduction, my thesis is largely inspired by the 'more-than-representational' approach introduced by Lorimer (2005) which contributes to the recent claim by Hillier (2007: 195) that these representations all too often remain to be taken for granted as natural, hegemonic and absolute truths of the world out there, rather 'than reflecting the multidimensional, often conflicting representations which coexist in reality'. However, not only does my work bring the 'more-than-representational' to the field of spatial planning, the focus on stories - and more broadly language - contributes to the debate in spatial planning on the workings of power in spatial planning, which became of particular relevance after the communicative turn in spatial planning. This is what I will focus on in the following paragraphs, in which the evolution of planning after the communicative turn is discussed.

A planning perspective

The communicative turn in spatial planning

The communicative or deliberative turn in spatial planning was a response to the more rational-technical top down approaches. These approaches were considered as morally unjust and unfair, since planners were thought to impose their ideals and convictions upon those with vested interests in the particular areas involved in spatial decision making. In contrast, the communicative approach was inspired by an emphasis on interaction and dialogue (Healey 1997, 2003; Sager 1994; Schon 1983). After the communicative turn, spatial planning was regarded as an inherently interactive activity and process. These interactions were seen to be framed by broader economic, environmental and social issues which influenced the institutional arrangements in which spatial planning is embedded (Healey 2003). Due to the emphasis on the interactive nature of spatial planning, power was explained as relational and located within the particular interactions in these processes (Healey 2003). A misbalance in power positions and relations could be overcome in the perspective of planners adhering to the communicative turn

through adhering to Habermasian communicative rationality (Healey 2003). To reach this, particular conditions had to be met; 'within the content of the communication, no party should dominate, participants must put aside all motives except that of reaching agreement, and criteria of comprehensibility, truth, rightness, and sincerity must be present' (Irazábal 2009: 121). However, as Irazábal (2009) points out, these particular conditions will never be fully reached and an ideal speech situation would therefore never be established.

In line with this critique of Irazábal, more criticism was directed towards the communicative approach. For example, the approach was seen to focus too much on interaction and communication in spatial planning. This narrow focus was taken to deny the (broader) role power plays in planning processes. As Flyvbjerg and Richardson (2002: 59) state, '[c]ommunication is part of politics, but much of politics takes place outside communication.' (see also Gunder 2003; Yiftachel 1998; Allmendinger and Tewdwr-Jones 2002; Flyvbjerg and Richardson 2002; Booher and Innes 2002). Moreover, the use of Habermasian notions in relation to power was also criticised by theorists in spatial planning who based their arguments on post-structuralist understandings. Hillier (2003: 41), for example, claims: '[i]n reality, actors may see little benefit in behaving 'communicatively rationally' when strategic, instrumental powerplays and manipulation of information could result in more favourable outcomes for themselves.' In response to this critique, spatial planning theory witnessed a more post-structuralist stance towards planning, focusing more prominently on issues of power in their analyses (e.g. Duineveld et al. 2013; Van Assche et al. 2011; Duineveld et al. 2011; Hillier 2007; Gunder 2000).

Power in participatory planning processes, although aimed at bottom-up processes, cannot be ignored, since 'crudely: powerful people can generally do more, say more, and have their speech count for more than can the powerless. If you are powerful, there are more things you can do with words.' (Langton 1993: 298, 299). Thus, power in spatial planning is essential in both defining whose representations of the landscape count more, and how the landscapes based on these representations are developed and managed, as an end-result of deliberation in planning

practices where a continuous struggle takes place among different parties clamouring to have their voices heard. Power also plays an essential role in defining who is able to voice their interests in participatory planning. As Turnhout et al. (2010: 27-28) state:

‘Participation is inevitably selective when it comes to who is able to participate. Some individuals recognised as relevant participants are considered to be part of the citizenry, while those excluded are left without a voice, without a way to express their involvement and enact their citizenship.’

Thus, power in participatory planning processes also plays an essential role in defining who is able to participate, and who is not, resulting in particular conceptualisations of the landscape becoming included in the spatial planning processes and in the ensuing documents, while other conceptualisations are excluded. Power in spatial planning, in this sense, continues to play an essential role in the eventual development and management of cultural landscapes.

In the following paragraphs, I will introduce the conceptual background of this thesis, which takes language as its most prominent focus point. Language is viewed as both a representational and a ‘more-than-representational’ act, bringing about performative effects which are inherently tied to a broader framework of power.

Conceptual background

In accordance with the ‘more-than-representational’ (Lorimer 2005) or ‘post-representational’ approach (Hillier 2007) taken in this thesis draws conceptually from Judith Butler’s performativity theory, in which the uttering of language, be it verbal or written, is argued to be an act or a doing. Butler (1997) argues that language is, on the one hand, what we do, i.e. the act in itself, and on the other hand, language is what we achieve, bring about, i.e. the act with its effects and consequences. Adhering to this theoretical perspective allows us to understand how representations, as an act or a practice, bring about particular effects. I, therefore, take the representational, in line with Castree and MacMillan (2004: 474) as, ‘not everything, and it is only one dimension of politics (broadly conceived). But it certainly should not be subject to the ‘been there, done that’ attitude’.

This is especially of importance when considering that spatial planning continues to take representations for granted as natural, hegemonic, and absolute truths of the world-out-there (Hillier 2007). Moreover, adopting a performativity inspired conceptual perspective allows to integrate broader relations of power in uttering language as a 'more-than-representational' act which brings about particular effects that either reinforce particular hegemonic discourses on landscape and spatial planning, or resist these through the formulation of counter-discourses. Thus, language is taken in this thesis to have both the power and the authority to produce an effect (Dong 2009). One of the performative effects of the act of representation is the transformation and formation of the materiality of the landscape (see e.g. Duineveld et al 2013; Duineveld and Van Assche 2011; Beunen and Duineveld 2010); another is the creation and constitution of particular subjectivities and positionalities in participatory planning processes. As Henkel and Stirrat (2001: 179) state:

'In the language of discourse theory, participatory approaches 'afford' certain subject positions to the participants, and thus, to some extent, presuppose and shape 'participants' from the very beginning.'

Thus, the uttering of language, either verbal or written, in this thesis is taken to bring about a performative effect in affecting the materiality of the landscape, and affording particular subjectivities and positionalities in participatory planning practices.

Since Butler's work is originally a post-structuralist theory on gender and sexuality predominantly, academics working on geographies of sexuality have drawn from her work (e.g. Bell et al. 1994; Browne 2004, 2007; Hanson 2007; Hubbard 2001, 2008; Johnstone 1997). Her theory has also been adopted in, for example, design studies (Dong 2007, 2009), photography studies (Langton 1993; Van House 2009), organisation and management studies (Borgerson 2005; Spicer 2009; Tyler and Cohen 2010), tourism and leisure studies (Aitchinson 2001; Browne 2007; Hubbard 2008), pedagogy studies (Stern 2012; Philips and Bellinger 2011), and for example geography (Bialasiewicz et al. 2007; Little 2002; Nash 2000; Rose-Redwood 2008; Olson 2013). In spatial planning studies, however, Butler's work has only been touched upon

slightly to claim that speech is a performative act (Gunder 2003; Gunder and Hillier 2004; Van Assche et al. 2012), but without further elaboration on how speech is actually performative in its effects. In this sense, adopting a performativity inspired perspective to analyse spatial planning practices, in which the uttering of language is taken as a possibly powerful and effective act, counterbalances the critique to spatial planning after the communicative turn; it acknowledges the importance of communication in spatial planning. However, it dismisses the notion that an 'ideal' speech situation in spatial planning can be established. Instead, it takes communication, in the form of verbal and written language, as a powerful representational and 'more-than-representational' act, either reinforcing or destabilising dominant discourses of landscape and planning in participatory planning processes. In the following paragraphs, I will introduce Butler's performativity theory, which will be concluded with a reflection on where in this thesis her work has provided valuable insights in how language in participatory planning brings about particular performative effects.

Language as a performative act

Performativity theory, as drawn up by Judith Butler, was inspired by Austin's (1955, 1962) speech act theory, however since Austin's theory has been criticised for under theorising the relation between language and power, she incorporates broader notions of power in her performativity theory. J.L. Austin (1955) introduced the term 'performative' in linguistics, by which he understood the uttering of language not as just saying something. Instead, he understood the uttering of language as the performing of an action (Austin 1962). A performative utterance, he argues, affects or constructs reality; however for an utterance to be performative, particular conditions have to be met, which he calls 'felicity' conditions (Austin 1962). To meet these felicity conditions, there should be an accepted conventional procedure. Included in this is 'the uttering of certain words by certain persons in certain circumstances' (Austin 1962: 5). An example of an accepted conventional procedure is the wedding ceremony, in which an authority figure proclaims the marriage between two persons.

In her work 'Gender Trouble' (1990), Butler borrows from Austin's speech act theory, to introduce her understanding of performativity, so to make an anti-essentialist claim against notions of gender and sexuality being installed from the natural outside of society or culture, instead, she argues that these are fundamentally installed by discourse. Performativity, Butler (1990: 112), defines 'as the disruptive mode by which ontological effects are installed'. So, gender is not something we automatically have. Instead, it is something we perform in certain contexts, something composed of discursive practices. Gender in this sense is constituted through the repetition and recitation of discourses regulating sexuality, and takes place under conditions of cultural constraint, our performances in these 'regulatory regimes' (Butler 1990: pp.) construct 'the illusion of a primary and interior gendered self' (Butler 1990: 138). So, gender does not come or exist before the subject but it has an effect on the constitution of the subject. What follows, according to Butler (1990), is that gender is independent of bodily materiality; instead, gender is inscribed into the body. The body is not a fact, the body 'has no ontological status apart from the various acts which constitute its reality' (Butler 1990: 136); Butler (1994: 32) 'wanted to work out how a norm actually materialises a body, how we might understand the materiality of the body to be not only invested with a norm, but in some sense animated by a norm, or contoured by a norm.' (Butler 1994: 32). Thus, performativity is 'not the act by which a subject brings into being what she/he names, but rather [...] the reiterative power of discourse to produce the phenomena it regulates and constrains' (Butler 1993: 2). Following Foucault and Derrida, Butler (1993) understands discourse as something potentially contradictory and multiple, but always productive. A discourse has effects and this is where the power of discourse is located. According to Butler (1994), discourse should be seen as a force with which power is put into effect, which produces and destabilises 'subjects'. Butler argues that the enactment of discourse articulates already existing formations of knowledge, and it is this articulation that produces social subjects.

Thus, power in Butler's performativity theory is understood to be productive. This is inspired by Foucault's (1984) argument that power should not only be interpreted in a negative way, as a

system of oppression, constraints and restrictions, because even the most oppressive, constraining and restrictive measures are productive, making new ways of behaviour possible, rather than excluding these. To underscore his point, he says in the same work '[...] if power was never anything but repressive, if it never did anything but say no, do you really believe that we should manage to obey it?' (1984: 36). The conceptualisation of productive power as a system of networked relations functioning at the micro-level is important, because it is within these networks of power that possibilities for resistance can be found. As Foucault (1970: 123) states 'as soon as there is a power relation, there is a possibility of resistance', and in one of his later works (1984: 95) he argues '[w]here there is power, there is resistance, and yet, or rather consequently, this resistance is never in a position of exteriority in relation to power.' It is within these networks of power that we as subjects have the capacity to act, to resist, to challenge, to create counter-discourses, and to destabilise. It creates possibilities to analyse individuals as active subjects, as agents rather than the innocent victims of power (Mills 2003).

Butler has been criticised for her understanding of agency in her earlier work. As Barad (2003: 824) puts it in relation to Butler's theorising on the body, '[u]nfortunately, however, Butler's theory ultimately reinscribes matter as a passive product of discursive practices, rather than as an active agent participating in the very process of materialization' (see also Vasterling 2003; Brickell 2005). Thus, in 'Undoing Gender' (2004), Butler introduces a more active and conscious agent in her work. Here she argues that humans have the agency to create and communicate oppositional norms and discourses that call for action. Action or doing, in her words, is closely linked to being. She states, 'if I have any agency, it is opened up by the fact that I am constituted by a social world I never chose' (2004: 3). Thus, agency is the result of our constitution as subjects, something over which we have no control; this does not mean agency is an impossibility but that agency comes from this paradoxical position (Butler 2004). Our understanding of how we are constituted as humans is for Butler a prerequisite to undo, resist and transform the norms that lead to our constitution.

What is important in the question of human agency is the notion of intelligibility, the question of who counts as human. The norms and categories of who counts as human are temporal creations, and work through the inclusion and exclusion of particular groups within society. For Butler (2004: 13), this means that 'its [the category of human] rearticulation will begin precisely at the point where the excluded speak to and from such a category.' More particularly she (2004: 223) argues for the need of 'inclusive transformation' by which she means a radical criticism aimed at a continuous disruption of what has become 'settled knowledge and knowable reality and to use, as it were, one's reality to make an otherwise impossible or intelligible claim [so that] something other than a simple assimilation into prevailing norms can and does take place' to eventually reform reality at the level of the body (Butler 2004: 27).

In her earlier work 'Excitable Speech', which is more language-oriented than her other works and therefore of more relevance for my thesis, Butler (1997) argues that language is predominantly thought of as acting and as doing. Language is thought to be an act with particular consequences brought about by means of the language we use, i.e. something one does. Thus, language is on the one hand what we do, the act in itself, and on the other hand, language is what we achieve, bring about, the act with its effects and consequences (Butler 1997). Nevertheless, Butler (1997) argues, acting by means of language does not necessarily mean that effects can be brought about. Language can also be an act without being effective in its consequences. Butler (1997) defines a successful performative as one which is not only an action or a doing, but is characterised by setting along a series of effects.

According to Butler (1997), Austin accepts every utterance as an act to a certain degree. We could follow Austin's argument, but, she argues, even when every utterance can be regarded an act, this does not mean that every utterance acts on the receiver in a mechanical or prescribed manner. The point is not to make an absolute division between language and acting. Instead, that an utterance is a kind of act, more specifically a speech act, is indisputable according to Butler (1997). Many speech acts are forms of behaviour in one way or another, but not all of these are successful in the sense determined by Austin (Butler 1997). Here, Butler clearly takes over

Austin's notion of language as doing, something which brings about certain effects and consequences, but not without at the same time criticising his notion of successful performatives.

In 'Excitable Speech' Butler (1997) wants to draw a theory of the performativity of political discourse. She wants to show that there is already a theory of the performative at work in the practice of political discourse. When we understand performativity as a renewable way of acting without a clear origin or destination, language is neither governed by its original context nor by the speaker. At the core of performativity, she argues, is a two-sided structure in which performativity is determined by its original context, and performativity's ability to break with certain contexts. This enables resistance within political discourse to be partially caused by the power against which these are aimed. However, this does not imply that resistance can be reduced to these powers or that resistance has always been part of these. Using the power of the speech act as an act of resistance is politically possible by appropriating the power of language in a deviating way. Additionally, she also points to the question of how language is being governed, and where the power of the performative originates from. Butler (1997) states that in Austin's understanding of performativity, the sovereign subject is central. The sovereign subject, then is the person who speaks and who by speaking does what one says. The person who effectively utters the performative is assumed to act in accordance with an undisputed power.

However, Butler (1997) argues that the idealisation of speech acts as sovereign acting seems to be linked to the idealisation of the sovereign power of the state. An idealisation in which uttering language is exaggerated as being utmost effective. It seems like, she continues, the power of the state has been taken over, and transferred to civil society, and in turn the state seems to return as a neutral instrument which has to protect us against other citizens who let sovereign power relive (Butler 1997). This longing to return to language as something sovereign is where the attempt to guarantee the effectiveness of speaking is based upon (Butler 1997). Effective speaking would mean, according to Butler (1997), that the meanings of speech actualise themselves in the deeds or actions which these are meant to have. Moreover, it would also mean

that the ways in which speech is interpreted are controlled by the intention of the speech act. However, language as something sovereign does not exist anymore, and maybe even never existed, she continues. She argues that we should regard this as something positive for political reasons. Reinventing the speech act, and detaching it from its context is a way to displace the authority over an utterance, and resistance is only found in a renewed appropriation of speech (Butler 1997).

Butler (1997) argues, however, that language is always excitable, by which she means that it is at the same time the meant and the unmeant effect of the speaker. The person who speaks is not the origin of such language, as this subject has come into being through language, more specifically through performative language. Moreover, she argues, language used by the subject is conventional and therefore always a citation. The speaker is only responsible for the citational character of language. Responsibility, therefore Butler (1997) argues, is connected to language as a recitation and never as something newly created. Thus, the responsibility of the speaker is not to create language out of nothing. Instead, Butler (1997) argues, the responsibility of the speaker is how to deal with language as we know it, which created the possibilities for the subject to exist and at the same time constrains her/him.

Moreover, that the power of the speaking subject is always in some sense a derived power, the origins of which are not part of the speaking subject, can also be concluded from the notion that one is able to speak with power, and so establishes what one says, because of being addressed in language, and therefore gains linguistic capacity. The subject, according to Butler (1997), is dependent on being addressed by the Other to come into existence in language. As she states in the beginning of 'Excitable Speech' (1997: 2): 'Being called a name is also one of the conditions by which a subject is constituted in language [...]'. Here Butler (1997) bases herself on Hegel and Freud and their assumption that one comes into existence through a dependent relationship with the Other. This assumption should be connected to language, according to Butler (1997), as recognition and acknowledgement are regulated, appointed and refused by conditions which are part of more encompassing social addressing rituals. Moreover, she argues (1997), someone

does not just exist by being recognised and acknowledged, but in a more fundamental sense by being recognisable. We remain dependent on the ways in which we are addressed to be able to realise a capability to act. When we start to realise the extent of this, we have even more reason to take a critical look at the sorts of language which lie at the basis of the regulation and the coming about of subjects (Butler 1997).

Nevertheless, the subject not only comes into being by being addressed by the other, but the subject itself achieves a certain power through the structure of address, which creates the possibilities for language to be used (Butler 1997). Thus, the subject has to orient oneself in a field with different forces in which it is both addressed by as well as addressing. When one comes into being by being addressed by the other, Butler (1997) asks, can we then imagine a subject which is free from her/his position in language? No, she answers, the subject cannot be what it is when free from the constitutive possibility to address others and be addressed by others. When subjects cannot exist without this linguistic involvement with one another, this linguistic involvement seems to be essential for who we are, and is necessary for saying that subjects exist. The involvement in one's language does not just come as an addition to the social relations among subjects, but this involvement is a social relation in itself (Butler 1997). However, this constitution of the subject in language through being addressed is a selective process which regulates the conditions for being interpretable and understandable (Butler 1997).

Performativity, planning and landscapes

In the previous paragraphs I have outlined Judith Butler's performativity theory, in the following paragraphs, I will explain how an understanding of language as performative reveals how language, as a powerful 'more-than-representational' act, brings about particular effects.

In a similar vein as Butler (1993, see also 1990) who argues that phenomena are produced through the reiteration of discourses, the recitation of particular discourses on the cultural landscape in participatory planning - communicated through particular powerful representations of the cultural landscape defining what the landscape is - produces policies and

plans that prescribe how the landscape ought to be developed and managed. These plans and policies, as representational devices, in their turn through being implemented and reinforced by planners and policymakers, produce as an effect an 'ideal' landscape, affecting not only the materiality of the landscape, but also what can and cannot be done with and in the particular landscape, the 'more-than-representational' everyday practices of landscape.

In the third and the fifth chapters, the performative effect of plans, maps, and policy documents is discussed. In the fourth chapter, it is argued how in the spatial development of the Wageningse Eng, particular representations of the landscape have had 'real' effects on the materiality of the landscape. How particular discourses affect the materiality of the landscape is also discussed in the sixth chapter. This chapter shows how particular discourses on water safety combined with nature management have transformed the materiality of the agricultural landscape of the Millingerwaard to a nature area. Thus, this corresponds to Butler (1990, 1994) who claims that the body is materialised through particular norms informed by broader discourses, the materiality of the landscape is contoured by particular 'taken-for-granted' representations informed by broader discourses on how the landscape ought to be developed and managed, be it 'open landscape' or 'nature area'.

However, what is also shown in chapters three and five is that the performative effects of these representations of the landscape not only affect the materiality of the landscape, but also deny the everyday 'lived' and 'practiced' landscapes of their residents and landowners. The everyday 'lived' and 'practiced' landscape is captured in intimate and (deeply) emotional meanings, based on, for example, family history. The 'more-than-representational' act of uttering and representing 'ideal' representations of the landscape has for some residents and landowners a 'deadening' performative effect (Lorimer 2005) on the landscape-as-a-place-to-live. This argument will be more extensively discussed in the fourth chapter. A similar argument will be made in the sixth chapter, where the 'more-than-representational' performative effect of the dominant water safety and nature development discourse in the Netherlands on the 'practiced' and 'lived' landscapes of the Millingerwaard is examined.

However, Butler (2004) argues that individuals have the agency to create and communicate oppositional norms and discourses. When individuals in spatial planning processes find themselves confronted with 'their' lived and practised landscapes being affected by plans and policies implemented, or have the feeling that their vested interests are not being taken into consideration in the determination of particular spatial plans and policies, they have the ability to put their language into effect through the creation of counter discourses. These counter-discourses are put into effect as acts of resistance to destabilise the discursive constructions and representations of the cultural landscape which planners and policymakers take for granted. The formulation of counter-discourses on the cultural landscape reveal the 'more-than-representational' components of the landscape, and cause these to be taken into consideration when formulating spatial plans and policies. Thus, the act of uttering language in participatory planning not only has as an effect on the reconstitution of particular discourses of the cultural landscape, but also might be used as a performative act to resist and destabilise dominant understandings of the landscape.

In the third chapter, it is discussed how 'more-than-representational' acts of resistance, as revealed in the stories of residents and landowners of the areas being studied, are produced by residents and landowners through actively producing a counter-discourse against dominant representations of 'their' landscapes. In their counter-discourses, a landscape is constructed so as to bring about as a performative effect, being the acknowledgement and incorporation of 'more-than-representational' elements of the landscape in dominant representations as captured in plans and policies involving the management and development of the particular landscape being studied. A similar argument is developed in the fifth chapter, where it is shown how residents produce a counter-discourse against the water safety and nature development plans and policies being implemented in the Millingerwaard.

Whether these linguistic acts of reconstitution or resistance are effective, Butler's theory explains, is highly dependent on the particular subjectivities and positionalities created in participatory planning processes. As Butler (2004) argues, agency is highly dependent on who

counts as human; the categories who count work through the inclusion and exclusion of particular groups. In relation to this, participatory planning processes, although aimed at bottom-up processes, remain highly selective in determining who are able to participate, and so make their voice heard, and put their language into effect. Spatial planning processes, in this sense, is inherently a process of exclusion and inclusion, through which particular subjects and positionalities are created, defining who counts as an acknowledged party in these processes. To become acknowledged as a speaking subject, Butler claims (1997), is dependent on being addressed in language. This reflects how power not only plays an important role in questions of how the landscape ought to be developed and managed, but also how power is essential in participatory processes in constituting particular parties through being addressed in language, and so become invited to participate. As Butler (1997) argues, only through being addressed in language does a subject gain a linguistic capacity, a certain power creating possibilities for language to be used, in participatory planning processes and has the capacity to voice vested interests. However, only the parties recognised and acknowledged as knowledgeable or experts, as Chapter Four reveals, are more powerful in putting language into effect, and so to determine how particular landscapes ought to be developed and managed.

In the fourth chapter, an analysis is given of how particular subjectivities and positionalities within the planning process at the Wageningse Eng are constituted. Different individuals were interviewed because of their involvement with the landscape and its planning processes. Their stories reveal that in the Wageningse Eng case, broadly speaking, two groups are constituted: 'just citizens' and 'knowledgeable experts'. The fifth chapter draws from Butler's understandings (1997) to argue that particular parties involved are addressed, and as an effect constructed, as 'knowledgeable', and therefore are acknowledged as eligible to participate as 'experts' in the planning process concerning the Eng. These parties, as will be discussed, are more powerful in putting their language into effect, one of these being a 'deadening effect' on the landscape, where these 'expert' representations of the landscape are experienced as denying the 'more-than-representational' elements of the daily 'lived' and 'practiced' landscape of residents and

landowners. One other performative effect of this is that residents and landowners at the Eng construct themselves as 'just citizens', reflecting a feeling of powerlessness to have their voices heard and to put their language into effect. This argument will be extended in Chapter Five.

So, the performative effect of particular plans and policies is highly dependent on subject positions created within participatory processes, where powerful parties are more capable of having their representations of the landscape put into effect due to being recognised as an acknowledged party, while other parties might feel powerless in having their vested interests heard. In this sense, spatial plans and policies are not performative in themselves, but only through the subjects involved in spatial planning processes that are capable of putting these into effect. Thus, language as a 'more-than-representational' act or doing in its effect is dependent on the subjectivities and positions of those who utter language in participatory planning processes. These acts of uttering language either reinforce particular representations of the landscape, or destabilise these through revealing and formulating counter-discourses with a 'more-than-representational' understanding of the landscape, as something 'lived' and 'practiced' on a daily basis. (This will be extensively be discussed in Chapters Three to Five.)

Chapter 2

Methodology

This research aims to examine the different meanings individuals attach to cultural landscapes, and how these meanings are reflected and affected in participatory planning processes. In the following sections, I will elaborate on the methodology and subsequent methods adopted to answer the four main research questions stated in the introduction. After introducing the overall research approach followed by a discussion of the methodological foundation and methods underlying this thesis, the chapter will focus on how the data needed for answering the research questions was gathered and analysed. This is then followed by an introduction of, and justification for, the two case studies that have been selected. In the final section, I will reflect on the limitations of the research design.

Research approach

In line with the objective to acknowledge the many voices of individuals involved in participatory planning processes and their relations with the landscapes being studied as valuable in themselves, this research is framed within the interpretive research approach. The interpretive approach understands meaning-making in human life as always context-specific in nature (Yanow 2007: 407). The context-dependent nature of the approach means that research cannot be conducted from a standpoint outside of its context; the researcher and the subjects of study are (thus) connected to one another in the sense that they are situated within the same context, making the research essentially subjective (Yanow 2007: 407). This context dependence is, moreover, reflected in the notion that the research depends highly on the many different views and perspectives on a given situation or phenomenon being studied (Creswell 2003: 8). In this research, the phenomenon of study, or the research context, is formed by both the cultural landscapes being investigated as well as the participatory planning processes involving these landscapes. Additionally, the interpretive approach was chosen for the notion that it is 'word-

based, from data “collection” instruments to data analysis tools to research report formats and contents’ (Yanow 2007: 407). Since this thesis focuses on the expressions of language of the meanings people attach to landscapes as well as how they experience participatory planning processes, I adhered to the interpretive approach with its focus on language and words.

Storytelling

The focus on language, as explained in the Introduction, has resulted in the choice to use storytelling as a method for this research. Within the literature on spatial planning, the importance of storytelling has been shown by a diversity of authors (e.g. Sandercock 2003; Throgmorton 1992, 1993; Myers and Kituse 2000). Sandercock (2010: 20) states that ‘[a] better understanding of the role of stories can make [planning practitioners] more effective as planning practitioners, irrespective of the substantive field of planning’. Van Hulst (2012: 302, 303) argues that storytelling may be mobilised in two ways in spatial planning: first, as a model of the ways in which planning is practised, where planning itself is perceived as a sort of storytelling; second, as a model for the way planning should be practised, a more normative approach in which the focus is on how storytelling can improve planning practices, particularly with its potential of bringing in other possible planning alternatives.

To the first strand, the work of Forester (1999) and Throgmorton (1993, 1996) might be said to correspond, as both consider storytelling as a way in which planning is practised. In his book ‘The Deliberative Practitioner’, Forester (1999) uses the stories of planning professionals about their experiences in order to provide insights on how deliberative planning practices actually feed into and facilitate participatory planning processes. Throgmorton (1993: 128, see also 1996) argues that storytelling in spatial planning could be a means to persuade people that particular kinds of spatial developments should be implemented, where ‘in the end, such stories shape meaning and tell readers (and listeners) what is important and what not.’ The difference between this narrative strategy and more conventional planning descriptions (which are usually self-defined as more ‘factual’ and seemingly objective) is that, through storytelling, arguments

are more infused with emotions, which supposedly give more credibility to the plans and their related objectives before the broader public.

Sandercock's (2003, 2010) work fits within the model of storytelling for the way planning should and could be practised. Sandercock shows in her work how storytelling can be used to facilitate the process of participatory planning, either in framing alternatives for the future, or in challenging and changing the old foundational stories of the now cosmopolitan, multiracial cities, or in eliciting the local knowledge in and of the area and/or community. In this regard, storytelling refers more to the act of soliciting the personal stories, desires and experiences of residents and users of a particular landscape, and taking these into consideration within planning discussions. Rather than as a tool of hegemony, therefore, this model of story-telling *for* spatial planning emphasises the concerns of the people on the ground rather than those of the 'elites'. Although this mode of storytelling is aimed at democratising planning processes, it is not always clear how these stories do feed into the planning processes:

'What is not always clear is how these collected stories will be used in the subsequent process, but the belief operating here is that it is important for everybody to have a chance to speak and to have their stories heard. This is linked with an argument about the political and practical benefits of democratizing planning.' (Sandercock 2010: 20)

What is also rather unconsidered in the literature is how storytelling might be used by people to achieve their own objectives, or how these stories might expose the limits of participatory planning. Nevertheless, these different stories might serve as a basis to counterbalance dominant narratives by reconstructing and contesting the meanings conveyed in these (Kane 2000). This requires the opening up of an opportunity for often subordinated voices and narratives to be heard in which people can share their views, thoughts, and emotions in their own voice (Gilbert 2002; Harvey and Riley 2005). However, the narratives we explore as researchers are filtered by the choices we make (Gilbert 2002). To acknowledge this, I will reflect on my own positionality in this research in the final paragraphs of this chapter.

In a similar vein, within cultural geography, Harvey and Riley (2005: 7) argue that not only one voice or one story should be acknowledged, but a variety of different stories, 'some scientifically 'correct' and others [more] personal, ironic or symbolic'. So, while stories of the people on the ground might be a means to feed into planning practices with the aim to democratise these, they can also be used to contest the stories of others, or other interpretations of the landscapes in question, through which an opportunity is created for subordinated voices and dissenting stories to be heard (Gilbert 2002; Kane 2000). Stories could be perceived here as an act of resistance against the dominant stories within particular planning practices, opening up space for other views and interpretations of both these processes and the landscapes involved. In this regard, they can therefore,

'both destabilise the linear and scientifically derived narratives of landscape development, and also offer alternative, personally or socially embedded narratives that reflect the contingency of all processes of knowledge production – to allow a hidden community to 'speak out' (Harvey and Riley 2005: 14).

In the light of this, storytelling in this research serves another means than that of describing the planning process (storytelling as a model *of* planning) or storytelling as a prescriptive tool (as a model *for* planning). Instead, storytelling in this research is used to give a voice to the individuals affected by the spatial planning projects being researched into, so as to gain an understanding of the different concerns of these individuals and their respective positions. I therefore deliberately focus on how individuals use language to construct themselves in relation to the political (planning) processes in question, to other individuals and groups involved, and to the landscape. By doing this, I reflect on how participatory spatial planning in the particular case studies is realised and 'performed' from the 'bottom-up'.

Additionally, I also follow up on Jensen's (2007: 216) claim, in line with Soja's critique that the spatial in narrative is ignored, that '[the] linkage between place and narrative is an under-developed theme in the conceptualisation of narratives'. Dormans (2008: 12) makes a similar claim arguing that 'narrative studies remained a relative marginal phenomenon in geography'.

However, as Cameron (2012: 575) claims, with the recent interest in non-representational and affective geographies, 'stories' are increasingly seen as 'an expressive method and an affective tool, designed both to demonstrate affective and emergent geographies and to move audiences toward new realms of thought and practice.' This allows for alternative stories to be heard in defining and characterising the cultural landscape, and for more 'practised' and 'lived' understandings of the landscape revealed. Regardless of this, storytelling is used here to move beyond the realm of representations of cultural landscapes captured in the form of official discourses, in favour of stories engaging with the lived experiences of landscape by residents and users. In this sense, my research speaks to what Lorimer (2005) introduced in cultural geography as the 'more-than-representational', denoting how landscapes are not only to be understood as representational, but also as practised and performed on a daily basis.

Nevertheless, storytelling has been adopted within (cultural) geography. Harvey and Riley (2005), for example, seek to acknowledge the alternative stories around hedgerow management in the UK. They conclude that there are multiple narratives involved in the history of hedgerow management, and hedgerows have different meanings for different people in these narratives (Harvey and Riley 2005). Thus, objects in the landscape have different meanings for different people, and through narratives, it is possible to recover or retrieve these different meanings. They, moreover, argue that

'[r]ather than trying to impose 'truths' that are derived from abstract theory, [...] we need to make space for the situated and contextualized knowledges of (local) informants, alongside our recognition of these informants' relationship with (and wider role of) ourselves as researchers.' (Harvey and Riley 2005: 285).

Thus, narratives in cultural geography have been used to examine 'more-than-representational' understandings of the cultural landscapes captured in 'lived' practices and experiences of the landscape, here exemplified in the practice of hedgerow management. Examples of tracing down 'more-than-representational' elements of landscapes in narratives can also be found in Lorimer's work; he, for example, investigated the day-to-day engagements between herders and

the herd through biographical accounts (Lorimer 2006), and provides an insight into the practice of learning geography by analysing written documents, such as letters, of a geography course participant (Lorimer 2003).

Also, Tuan (1991) argued for the crucial role played by language in the making of place, and introduced the 'narrative-descriptive' approach. Making use of extended biographies Finnegan (1998) used storytelling in great depth to explore how the residents of Milton Keynes construct stories about their town. Another example of the use of narrative analysis to research the meaning of space can be found in the work of Tamboukou (1999; 2000; 2010; 2012), who analysed the letters of female artists in the late Nineteenth and early Twentieth centuries to research how these women make use of and interact with space in the framing of their lives as female artists (see for other work on stories and landscape also Dormans 2008; Hendriks 2005; Jensen 2007; Kitchell 2009).

Thus, although storytelling has received some attention in both spatial planning and cultural geography, it remains largely underexplored as an overall methodology in both fields. Since this research aims at examining the diverse meanings individuals attach to cultural landscapes, and how these different meanings are reflected and affected in participatory planning process, storytelling was adopted because these different meanings are captured in stories individuals tell about the particular landscapes and the spatial planning processes. Moreover, by doing so, a contribution is made to the role storytelling can play in examining participatory planning processes.

There are different reasons why storytelling was selected as an entry point into the life worlds of those involved in this research. Storytelling, for example, is a universal practice, forming an essential part of social interaction and integration, and therefore an essential part of everyday life in all human cultures (Bury 2001). Storytelling does not require a need for sophisticated language skills, or profound knowledge of grammar and spelling, which makes the telling of stories a skill almost all of us have (Jovchelovitch and Bauer 2000; Carr 2008). Moreover, it is through stories that individuals organise, recall and structure their physical, social and cultural

realities and worlds (Bruner 1990; Cronon 1992; Crossley 2003; Foster 2006; Kirkman 2002). Meaning plays an essential role in this process of how individuals deal with their realities and worlds through narrating these. As Hydén (1997: 50) suggests, stories are ‘one of the ways in which we create and give meaning to our social reality.’ Stories provide individuals with a powerful tool to make sense of their worlds and realities and its different meanings (Bury 2001; Cronon 1992). Furthermore, personal stories are not just factual accounts of the different worlds and realities of individuals, they are subjective and embedded with interpretations, thoughts and emotions (Bailey and Tiley 2002; Chase 2005). This subjective nature is moreover reflected in the value judgements passed through stories (Cronon 1992). These characteristics of storytelling as an organising and structuring means of our social realities, which are endowed with subjective meanings and experiences, provide an in-depth source of data on the meanings individuals attach to cultural landscapes, their experiences, and how these are reflected and affected through participatory planning processes.

Methods of analysis

Narrative analysis

The stories told by the individuals involved in this research have been analysed using narrative analysis. These stories were analysed with both a structural and a thematic analysis (Riessman 2008). I have chosen a structural analysis since it places major emphasis on language-in-use. Structural narrative analysis implicates that the analysis focuses on the structure of the narrative being told. The rationale behind this is that ‘the *how* of the telling is as important as the *what* that is said, for it is through choices in form that narrators persuade listeners, and ultimately, readers of their text’ (Riessman 1990: 1196). Thus, the focus on the ordering of the events is based on the assumption that the narrator has strategic reasons for structuring what he/she tells in order to communicate what did happen in an effective and persuasive way. Therefore, one of the tasks of the researcher during the analysis is to re-capture the organisation of this structure as brought into the story by the interviewee (Riessman 1990). This means that I

have looked particularly at how the individuals interviewed for this research 'plot' their stories focusing on beginnings, middle parts and endings. I also looked at how they narrate and structure their own roles and positions, as well as those of others, in relation to the particular landscapes studied, as actors in their stories. I focused on these structural elements to provide an insight in how individuals structure their stories to bring about particular effects. Thus, I have not paid attention to narrative elements such as tropes, duration, the frequency of repetitions, and the like. The structural narrative analysis was - also - chosen in line with the understanding of language as performative, since this provides an insight in how individuals use and structure their language to bring about particular effects (in line with Butler 1990, 1993, 1997). As Riessman (2008: 103) states '[b]ecause [structural narrative analysis] takes language seriously, [it] provides tools for investigators who want to interrogate how participants use speech to construct themselves and their histories'. This is moreover reflected in the notion that a structural narrative analysis is used to research how speech is being used by people to construct their realities. Although narratives are not defined in structural analysis as complete biographies, but as bounded units of speech or narrative segments, the method is time-consuming and therefore not suitable for large numbers of interviews, 'but can be very useful for detailed case studies and comparisons across a few cases.' (Riessman 2008: 103).

Additionally, I used a thematic narrative analysis for all the interviews conducted. The focus in a thematic analysis is, in contrast to structural analysis, only on the content being communicated in a narrative. The basis of interpretation of the narratives is the theoretical and conceptual framework. In a thematic narrative analysis, the researcher maintains long sequences of the interview data in which thick, rich and detailed information is conveyed on the level of the case. I used this method to gain an insight in the meanings individuals attach to cultural landscapes, and to gain an insight in dominant discourses about the cultural landscapes being studied as either being reinforced or challenged in the stories of the individuals being interviewed. The thematic analysis also served to acknowledge that the 'what' that is said is as important as 'how' it is said (Riesmann 1990: 1196).

Discourse analysis

Since the narrative analysis is only used for the stories of the individuals, and participatory planning processes are informed by broader political and planning discourses captured in plans and documents, a discourse analysis was conducted to cover these aspects. Although the narrative analysis does serve to reveal the subjectivities and positionalities of different parties in the planning processes being researched, a discourse analysis of the plans, policy documents, and public commentaries contributes to the full exploration of the role of power and power relations in these processes beyond what is captured in the individual stories. Also, since this thesis is about meanings attached to cultural landscapes, and how these are reflected and affected in participatory planning processes, a discourse analysis contributes to the acknowledgement of the social production of meaning. This is confirmed by Howarth (1995: 94, emphasis in original), arguing that a discourse analysis involves questions of ‘how the discourses, which structure the activities of social agents, are *produced*, how they *function*, and how they are *changed*’. Thus, a discourse analysis was adopted to explore the ideological underpinnings of these productive and constitutive discourses, in order to understand how these and the subject positions made available within the participatory planning processes being studied, resonate with and reconstitute group interests and wider relations of dominance and power within these processes (Wetherell 1998).

The narrative and discursive analysis of both written and spoken language provides a clear overview of not only the arguments for how landscapes are to be shaped in certain ways within planning practices, but also the ways in which these have been structured and performed to particular ends. In line with Butler’s understanding of how discourses bring about particular effects, the discourse analysis provides an insight in how power is being performed through particular discourses of landscapes and spatial planning, and how particular ‘taken-for-granted’ understandings and conceptualisations of the cultural landscape concerning participatory planning either reflect or affect the diverse meanings individuals attach to these landscapes. In this sense, I take discourses as the wider understanding or knowledge-formation of cultural

landscapes and spatial planning, while the narratives are considered as smaller, individually elicited, units of analysis that either reaffirm or challenge these particular discourses. It provides an insight in how both discourses and narratives of the cultural landscape and participatory spatial planning feed into each other, where discourses might reflect elements of the individual narrations of the landscape, and the narratives of those involved in spatial planning processes either confirm, challenge or destabilise these. Moreover, as also argued, the subjectivities and positionalities are afforded through the performative effects of particular discursive practices in participatory planning processes.

Research Strategy

In this section, I will explain how the data for this research was collected, as well as how participants were selected for this research. To elicit stories from individuals, I used the technique of narrative interviewing. Narrative interviewing consists of four phases (Jovchelovitch and Bauer 2000). In the first phase, the interviewer introduces the 'initial central topic' (Jovchelovitch and Bauer 2000: 6) and provides a short explanation of the interview procedure. In the second phase, the interviewee is invited to tell his/her stories. The interviewer in this phase takes a step back, and only listens attentively, giving non-verbal signs of his/her attention and, if needed, encourages the interviewee to continue the story. The third phase is characterised as the questioning phase. In this phase, the researcher fills possible gaps in the story by asking particular questions based on notes made in the previous phase (Jovchelovitch and Bauer 2000). Jovchelovitch and Bauer (2000: 5) call this the translation of exmanent questions into immanent questions: 'Exmanent issues reflect the interest of the researcher and are his or her formulations and language. These are distinguished from 'immanent' questions, which are themes, topics and accounts of events that appear during the narration of the informant'. In this phase, the researcher seeks additional information needed that was not generated during the story-telling. In phase four, the interview ends with small talk in which possibly additional information is conveyed of a more 'informal' nature (Jovchelovitch and Bauer 2000).

Following these phases, I formulated two initial central topics in the form of broad questions which create possibilities for extended stories about experiences with, and meanings attached to, the cultural landscapes being studied:

Can you tell me what you know about the (particular case study area)?

Can you tell me what role the (particular case study area) plays in your life, and what meaning the (particular case study area) has for you?

These questions are related to the research objective to gain an understanding of the meanings attached by individuals to cultural landscapes, and their experiences with and the role of these landscapes in participatory planning practices. As can be seen in both questions, no mention was made of the spatial planning projects and processes involving the landscapes being studied. This was a deliberate choice, since I wanted to find out if people would bring these up themselves during the interview, and if so, at what stage of the interview. This was based on the idea that the more important people regard these planning processes, or the more they feel affected by them, the earlier they will bring these up during the interview. This idea was proven valid when those who appeared to feel affected by the spatial planning processes had a tendency to bring up these processes rather early during the interview, while others who were less affected only brought them up later on or not at all. When the research participants did not bring up the spatial planning processes themselves at the end of their stories, I would then specifically ask them about these. As expected, when I asked these questions to officials when they were being interviewed, they would usually start with the spatial planning processes they were in charge of and/or involved in, since the planning processes being researched were more prominent in their work than in their personal lives.

The interviews lasted between 1 to 2.5 hours. The interviews were recorded with a voice-recorder after oral consent. All interviews took place in the period that the planning processes were still on-going. For the Wageningse Eng, this meant that the interviews were conducted after the pre-design of the yet to be established allocation plan was published in June 2012 and continued till September 2012. This period was chosen as it was the first opportunity

individuals had to have a look at the new plan and to react to it when deemed necessary. Since the Millingerwaard project is a long-term project, I have been less specific about the period in which to conduct the interviews; these took place in the months of October and November 2012. For both case studies, a division in participants was made. Since the focus of this research is on the meanings attached to, and the experiences with, cultural landscapes and the planning processes related to these, in order to acknowledge the diverse set of stories, interviews were conducted with individuals of the residential, governmental and non-governmental layers involved in these processes. Moreover, the choice was made not to include the non-residential users of the particular areas, since the Dutch planning system is so organised that only individuals with a direct stake (for example, owning land in an area involved in a spatial planning project), are invited to participate in the planning processes (deWRO.nl 2013). To acknowledge the diversity amongst residents of both the Wageningse Eng and Kekerdome near the Millingerwaard, most of interviews were conducted with them so to elicit a diverse set of stories. For both case-studies, I first interviewed residents in order to gain initial insights and understandings of the meanings and experiences they attach to cultural landscapes through their stories before I was told the stories of those involved with interest groups and governmental institutions. I did this to prevent myself from being influenced by the latter. Besides, I used the information conveyed by residents during the interviews with individuals of interest groups and governmental institutions so as to give a voice to the residents and their concerns on a more official platform.

To acknowledge the diversity amongst parties involved in the planning processes, I interviewed at least one representative from the non-governmental and governmental organisations involved in the planning processes in the two case studies. On the governmental level, this meant one interview with the alderman responsible for the implementation of the new allocation plan for the Wageningse Eng; for the Millingerwaard, a project implemented on different governmental levels, I interviewed individuals of the two municipalities in which the Millingerwaard is located, two individuals working at the provincial level, and one individual

responsible for the implementation of the project at the national level. In the Wageningse Eng case, in which different non-governmental groups are active in the spatial planning process, I conducted interviews with individuals and representatives of these groups. However, I am aware that this selection of interviewees will never cover the full story repertoire of any one particular group; these stories remain the stories of individuals. The research is also not aimed at coming up with generalisations, but at providing particular narratives to cover a (full) range of different experiences and meanings of the cultural landscape, and reveal insights into the participatory processes implemented. I interviewed a total of 16 individuals for the Wageningse Eng case and 13 individuals for the Millingerwaard case.

	Wageningse Eng	Millingerwaard
<i>Type of interviewee</i>	<i>Number of interviewees</i>	<i>Number of Interviewees</i>
Residents	8	8
Interest groups	7	1
Policy makers	1	5
Total number of interviews	16	13

(Table 1: Interviewees of the Wageningse Eng and the Millingerwaard)

I contacted the interviewees in different ways. The residents were sent letters. Out of 80 letters sent for the Wageningse Eng case, seven individuals responded. I contacted those who were involved in interest-groups active at the Wageningse Eng through email addresses found on the websites of the different interest groups. The individual from the municipal level in Wageningen was contacted in the same way. In the Millingerwaard case, I adopted a similar way of working; however, though I sent out 85 letters, only four residents reverted back. Since I regarded this number as too small, especially in comparison with the Wageningse Eng case, I used the technique of ‘snow-ball sampling’ and received the contact details of two more residents whom I could interview. Two more residents were contacted through their websites where they provided information on their guiding activities in the area. The individuals interviewed at the

governmental level in the Millingerwaard case were contacted through their email addresses as well. Since the spatial planning processes in both cases will continue until even after this research is concluded, the interviewees have been anonymised by the use of pseudonyms to protect the identity of those involved in the spatial planning processes, so as to prevent the creation of additional tensions among particular groups.

Moreover, data was elicited through a diversity of documents, such as newspaper articles, websites, non-scientific books and literature, minutes of meetings, annual reports, and policy documents. One reason for doing so was to gain background information about the different case study areas, for example their historical development and their physical characteristics. This review was conducted before I went into the field to have a preliminary understanding of the places and get a feel of these. Also, since participatory planning processes are informed by the plans to be implemented, and major discussions in the field take place over the content of these plans, I deemed it necessary to gain an in-depth understanding of these documents, so as to be able to fully understand what was actually happening in the field. Furthermore, the Openness of Government Act created the opportunity to not only research the different plans and policies, but also the political discussions through, for example, reports of the municipal council of Wageningen, (public) commentaries on decisions made and published plans. This not only provided a broader understanding of the planning processes, but also offered a more in-depth insight in how particular relations and positions, representations and discourses play their essential role in these processes.

As explained earlier, this is one of the reasons why a discourse analysis was conducted in this research, in which the stories of individuals are analysed with a narrative analysis to examine the role of particular discourses about participatory planning processes, and how counter-discourses are formulated to resist particular planning practices and outcomes. This choice was also inspired by what Duncan and Ley (1993: 8) refer to as the 'inter-textual field of reference', where particular texts may serve as the basis for the production of other texts. I regard spatial planning as taking place within the 'intertextual field of reference', as the plans and documents

produced within these processes supposedly reflect not only the opinions, ideas and interests of planners and politicians, but also of those affected by these processes. The intertextual field in my research here refers to both the 'official' discourses of planners and politicians, as well as possible counter-discourses formulated to resist particular dominant conceptualisations of the cultural landscape in spatial planning processes. I have used the narrative analysis to examine if and how these 'official' discourses are either confirmed or resisted in the stories of the individuals interviewed. In this sense, it relates to the question of whether and how individual meanings attached to cultural landscapes are reflected and affected in participatory planning processes. It also provides an understanding of how particular subjectivities and positionalities are both created within these discourses, as well as how these provide particular individuals, especially those within the governmental and interest groups, with the power to reproduce dominant discourses of the cultural landscape and how it ought to be managed, whereas more individual stories of the cultural landscape might within these processes be marginalised.

The interviews, or individual stories, were then analysed with a narrative analysis. For each story narrated, I first conducted the thematic analysis to explore overarching themes in the different stories. The reason for doing the thematic analysis before the structural analysis was that a first reading of the different stories seemed to be useful before conducting the more in-depth structural analysis. First, the thematic analysis as an initial screening of the stories of individuals turned out to be useful for identifying important themes and gave a first understanding of how different meanings of the cultural landscapes being studied are articulated by these individuals. Second, it also provided an understanding of the degree to which the planning processes are touched upon in the different stories, which different parties involved are being mentioned, and different understandings and emotions experienced in relation to the landscapes and planning processes in question.

All these different aspects and themes were then examined in greater depth during the structural analysis. The structural analysis was inspired by looking specifically at how the different themes in the individual stories were integrated, and how these related to each other.

What I essentially did was trace the full story of how individuals use language to construct their own subjectivities and positionalities, the subjectivities and positionalities of other involved parties, how these relate to each other, and the relations these different constructions have with the particular landscapes being studied. This gave a more in-depth understanding of the construction of subjectivities and positionalities in participatory planning processes, and in the different meanings individuals attach to these landscapes and how these are reflected and affected by the spatial planning processes. Moreover, it provided 'explanations' for the ways in which the different constructions of subjectivities and positionalities are understood and experienced in participatory planning processes. Examples of the results of the narrative analysis can be found in Chapter Four.

The documents were examined with a textual analysis. In this textual analysis, I looked again at constructions in language. However, here I focused on how particular conceptualisations of the landscape and spatial planning were defined, and became politicised through forming the guiding principles of spatial development in the case-study areas. In a similar vein as the narrative analysis, the textual analysis served to gain an insight in how particular discourses on the cultural landscape are captured in policies and plans defining how these particular landscapes ought to be developed and managed. Also, it allowed me to gain an understanding on how particular representations of the landscape as captured in these 'texts' reinforce or resist dominant discourses of the landscape, and how these discourses through being represented in these spatial plans and policies are put into effect. A clear example can be found in chapters Three and Five. This analysis provided an insight into how particular powerful discourses form the foundations of the policies and plans, as representations of how the cultural landscape is characterised and ought to be managed. However, the analysis of the different data has shown that not only are the landscapes defined in discourse, the parties involved in the different planning processes are also essentially constructed in discourse, in line with Butler's (1997) performativity theory. The textual analysis and narrative analysis were eventually used not only to examine how both the text in the form of policies and plans, and the stories of the individuals

involved, are framed around particular discourses, but also how counter-discourses are created to resist these discourses in participatory planning processes.

The case studies: Wageningse Eng and Millingerwaard

In this section, I will first explain how and why the case-study areas were selected. After this, I will introduce and elaborate on the two selected cases; the Wageningse Eng and the Millingerwaard. The selection of the cases was instrumental in the sense that they served the purpose of answering the questions pertaining to the multiple meanings attached to cultural landscapes, and how these are reflected and affected by participatory planning processes (Stake 1995). Through the selected cases, I aim to maximise the usefulness of the information obtained (Flyvbjerg 2006). To attain this, particular criteria for the selected cases informed the choices eventually made.

The first criterion was influenced by the focus on meanings attached to cultural landscapes. The particular case study areas, therefore, indeed had to be cultural landscapes. Cultural landscapes, as has been discussed in the literature review, can be defined in a multiplicity of ways. The eventual definition used to select the cases was the one adopted by the governmental agency for cultural heritage: 'cultural landscapes are those parts of the Dutch territory defined and shaped by human thinking and acting. This includes both land and water, as well as the city and rural areas.' (Rijksdienst voor het Cultureel Erfgoed 2012). The problem with this definition, however, is that paradoxically the whole Dutch territory can be defined as cultural. Therefore I framed a second and more narrow criterion. Since an essential element of this thesis is an investigation of how the meanings attached to cultural landscapes are reflected in and affected by participatory planning processes, the second criterion was that in the cases indeed a participatory planning process was going on at the time of conducting this research. For the Wageningse Eng, this was the determination of the new allocation plan, which has direct legal consequences for citizens. This plan forms the basis for the assessment of whether a permit will be granted when citizens wish to put up a construction or change a particular land use (Needham 2007; Van der Valk 2002). For the Millingerwaard, the participatory planning process was the implementation of

national policies of water safety and nature development (see below). Since participation in this thesis is taken as any moment in which non-governmental parties are invited to respond to particular plans, as stipulated by the Dutch law on spatial planning, the spatial planning projects studied have a degree of participation, even though this degree is relatively low.

To obtain 'information about the significance of various circumstances for case process and outcome', 'maximum variation cases' were chosen (Flyvbjerg 2006: 230). This can be achieved by selecting cases which are substantially different in one or more dimension(s). Therefore, the two cases have also been selected on the basis of their variation in terms of size, level of governmental involvement, degree and mode of (self-) organisation, and physical characteristics. These variations provided me with the opportunity to see if differences in both the social and political organisation of the area, as well as the material characteristics of the two cases, influence the verbalisation of the multiple meanings attached to cultural landscapes, and how these are reflected in and affected by planning processes.

First, the cases differ to a large extent with respect to their physical characteristics. Whereas the Wageningse Eng can be characterised as an old agricultural enclave located in a hilly landscape, and nowadays described as a city-edge area in the current allocation plan (Gemeente Wageningen 2012a), the Millingerwaard is a wetland area, where the main functions used to be the production of bricks, and later the grazing of cattle or hay land, and is now a nature area. In terms of size, the Wageningse Eng is about 595 acres, while the Millingerwaard is about 1730 acres. Moreover, in the two cases, policies of different governmental levels are being implemented, a situation which allows for inquiry into whether the level of governmental involvement influences how people experience the participatory planning processes. The planning process at the Wageningse Eng involved the municipal allocation plan, while national and provincial plans and policies aimed at water safety and nature development are involved for the Millingerwaard. A consequence of this difference in governmental involvement is the terms in which these policies are being implemented. The determination of the new allocation plan at the Wageningse Eng for example started in 2011 and was determined in 2013, while the policy

implementations in the Millingerwaard started in 1993 and will be finished in 2015. This, therefore provided me with the opportunity to find out if the difference in the duration of the implementation of the processes has any influence on the aforementioned processes.

Additionally, participatory planning processes were ongoing in both areas during the period of research although with different degrees of involvement by 'private' parties, such as residents or non-governmental interest groups. This enabled me to research how different parties use language differently to articulate the meanings they attach to particular areas, and how these meanings are reflected and affected in participatory planning processes, as well as how the particular planning processes are experienced. Focusing on different stories from different parties created the opportunity to look at the differences in the verbalisation of expert knowledge and 'ordinary' knowledge, and the differences in language being used to verbalise the meanings attached to cultural landscapes, as well as when people verbalise their experiences in participatory planning processes.

In the following sections, I will introduce both cases in more detail, initially in terms of a short description of the historical-physical landscape, followed by an overview of the different plans and policies that have been or are implemented in situ.

Wageningse Eng

The addition of 'Eng' in Wageningse Eng refers to arable land at a high and dry location. The land at Wageningse Eng has historically been used for the farming of grain, predominantly rye. In the western part of the Eng, tobacco was grown from the Seventeenth Century till approximately 1890. The location of the Eng at one of the flanks of the lateral moraine, the Veluwe, was an attractive environment to live in during the Middle Ages due to its physical characteristics and the land being arable (Renes 1993). At the bottom of the lateral moraine, farmlands were located, while at the lower grounds, pastures and meadows could be found. The people lived during this time between the farmlands and the pastures. The height difference of the Eng ranges from the farmlands located at twenty meters above sea level - the largest part of the Eng being situated at thirty meters above sea level - to the highest point at forty meters above sea

level. This graded landscape is even more emphasised by a dry, wide valley running to the west (Renes 1993).



(Figure 1: Location of the Wageningse Eng, source Dienst voor het Kadaster en de Openbare Registers, 2006)

Typical for the residential areas of the west flanks of the Veluwe are the hamlets at the foot of the lateral moraine. These hamlets each had their own eng. These original engens were bordered by a wooded bank to keep the cattle and wildlife out of the fields. Within these engens, ditches were used to separate the parcels, giving rise to the development of an open structure at the Eng. The hamlets eventually grew together, since the fields had to be expanded to be able to produce enough crops for the growing population, and became bordered by one large wooded bank on the east-side of the farmland. This has, since the Sixteenth Century, been the border of

the Eng on the east side, and can be recognised by the street name 'Wildgraaf', which refers to the wooded bank used to keep the wildlife out of the arable fields (Renes 1993).



(Figure 2: The Wageningse Eng from the highest point of Wageningen, photo by Maartje Bulkens)

In the Twentieth Century most of the Eng was overtaken by the city expansion of Wageningen combined with the construction of residential buildings at the west-side. The Eng on the west-side then becomes bordered by the Diedenweg, and is bordered in the south by the Rhine, and in the north by the city of Ede. The area size of the Eng since then is approximately 595 acres. The threat of the city growing over the current edges into the Eng has been one of the reasons why local organisations like Mooi Wageningen have been established (Renes 1993; Klaver 2011).

The actual use of the Eng for agricultural purposes nowadays is very limited. The area currently can be characterised as a city edge, recreational, area with some residential buildings. Many plots are in use for horse-keeping while, on other plots, one can find allotment gardens. Other features that can be found at the Eng are sports-fields and a camp site. A small-scale biological farmer, two flower picking gardens, some cultivation of trees, and the municipal cemetery can also be found at the Eng (Gemeente Wageningen 2012a; Renes 1993).



(Figure 3: Allotment gardens at the Wageningse Eng, photo by Maartje Bulkens)

The Wageningse Eng within the broader Dutch political and planning landscapes

As one of the reasons for selecting the Wageningse Eng in this thesis was the determination of the new allocation plan, in the following paragraphs I will focus on the political and planning processes taking place at the local level. However, in order to give a broader notion of the political and planning landscapes of the Wageningse Eng, it needs to be mentioned that the Wageningse Eng falls under two national policies that are more specified on the provincial level; the Nationale Landschappen (National Landscapes) policy, and the Ecologische Hoofdstructuur (National Ecological Network) policy. The Nationale Landschappen are landscapes that are regarded as having a (internationally) rare or unique combination of nature, culture and history. There is a relationship between maintenance and development of nature, relief, land use, and buildings. The Wageningse Eng is part of National Landscape De Veluwe (Servicenet Nationale Landschappen 2012; Rijksoverheid 2012). The Ecologische Hoofdstructuur is a project aimed at the prevention of the extinction of animals and plants in isolated areas by connecting different nature areas (further elaborated below under the Millingerwaard case) thereby enlarging and improving these small areas. However, since these different national and provincial plans do not

play an essential role in the determination of the allocation plan, I have only tangentially touched upon these.



(Figure 4: The Northern part of the Wageningse Eng, photo by Maartje Bulkens)

The implementation of the new spatial planning law in 2008 stipulated that in the subsequent five years, all allocation plans had to be less than ten years old (deWro 2013). At the time I was making the selection of case study areas, Wageningen was still in the process of meeting this requirement and, for this reason, fitted well in the criterion of having a participatory planning process taking place during my research period. In this process, there are two defining opportunities for the public to participate in the shaping of the allocation plan. The first one is optional and the format is determined by each Municipality independently. This takes the form of a 'pre-design', which is a draft design used for the initial public discussion that should lead to the crafting of the official final design. After publishing its pre-design, the Wageningen Municipality received 55 public comments concerning the future Allocation Plan, 28 of which were about the Wageningse Eng (Gemeente Wageningen 2013; deWro 2013). The second crucial moment of 'public participation' normally takes place after the first draft of the Allocation Plan has been completed. This is then made public both in print at the town hall, and electronically through the national website reporting all legal spatial plans of the Netherlands, a procedure which allows citizens to again express their views. Municipalities are legally obliged to facilitate this. Within a specific time framework, citizens can express their views on the document either verbally or in written form, a prerequisite to lodge an appeal later on to the

determined plan in which a change in allocation or conditions is applied. Within twelve weeks after the end of the period of public consultation, the Municipal Council digitally determines the Allocation Plan (deWro 2013). The plan consists of three main components: the official design; the accompanying explanation; and the rules describing what is allowed and what is not within particular allocations.

As one of the chapters will show in detail, the determination of this allocation plan and the accompanying planning processes have, now and also in the past, always been complicated by the presence of different parties involved in the planning processes at the Eng. Although some of these have now been disbanded, others still remain rather influential. One such party is the Stichting Wageningse Eng (Foundation Wageningse Eng) founded in 2009 after a long consultation process aimed to streamline the different parties active in developing and managing the landscape at the Eng. The Stichting Wageningse Eng is composed of three layers of organisation: the Stichting Wageningse Eng, an advisory council, and the Territoriale Advies Commissie (Territorial Advisory Committee) (Huijbers 2009; Klaver 2011).

In the final agreement, the goal of the Stichting Wageningse Eng (Foundation Wageningse Eng) is stated as:

‘to stimulate the maintenance – and where possible, the reinforcement – of the natural landscape and cultural historical values of the Eng, as well as the development and facilitation of new sustainable forms of use at the Eng which are beneficial to it.’

(Stichting Wageningse Eng 2012, translation by author).

The foundation is headed and managed by an executive committee consisting of five people and has a representative function. The advisory council has as its goal to provide the foundation with solicited and unsolicited advice. In this council, each of the various parties (users, residents, owners, recreational users, and environmental and landscape organisations) has a seat. The

members of the council accept these seats on their personal account without burden and consultation. The Territoriale Advies Commissie (TAWÉ) is appointed by the Mayor and Aldermen. The members of this committee have no involvement with the foundation or the advisory council. The TAWÉ advises the Mayor and Aldermen, solicited and unsolicited, on the municipal policy developments, licenses, and all other issues involving the Wageningse Eng. The aim of this construction is to separate the maintenance and the advisory tasks as taken up by the different committees in matters involving the Eng (Stichting Wageningse Eng 2012).

Nevertheless, current planning processes remain complex due to the diversity of parties which continue to be involved. Aside from the Stichting Wageningse Eng there are two other rather influential parties involved in the spatial planning processes involving the Wageningse Eng and the environs of Wageningen generally. Although these parties were involved in the consultation process that led to the founding of the Stichting Wageningse Eng, they have withdrawn from this process for different reasons. By doing so, they have remained independent and influential parties; Mooi Wageningen (Beautiful Wageningen) and the Wageningse Milieu Overleg (Wageningse Environmental Deliberation). These different parties have rather different visions on how the Eng ought to be spatially developed in the future. Following the interviews and the analysis of public comments to the spatial plans, it seems that Mooi Wageningen and the Wageningse Milieu Overleg have a more 'conservative' vision for the Wageningse Eng, focused mainly on preservation of the landscape and keeping new spatial developments to a minimum. In contrast, the Stichting and the advisory council seem to have a rather more progressive stance on this, in which they do consider the possibility of allowing spatial developments for the landscape of the Wageningse Eng. This has been one of the reasons why I have chosen the Wageningse Eng as a case-study area since it provides a broad array of different meanings and opinions represented by these different parties to the field of spatial planning at the Wageningse Eng.



(Figure 5: The Southern part of the Wageningse Eng, photo by Maartje Bulkens)

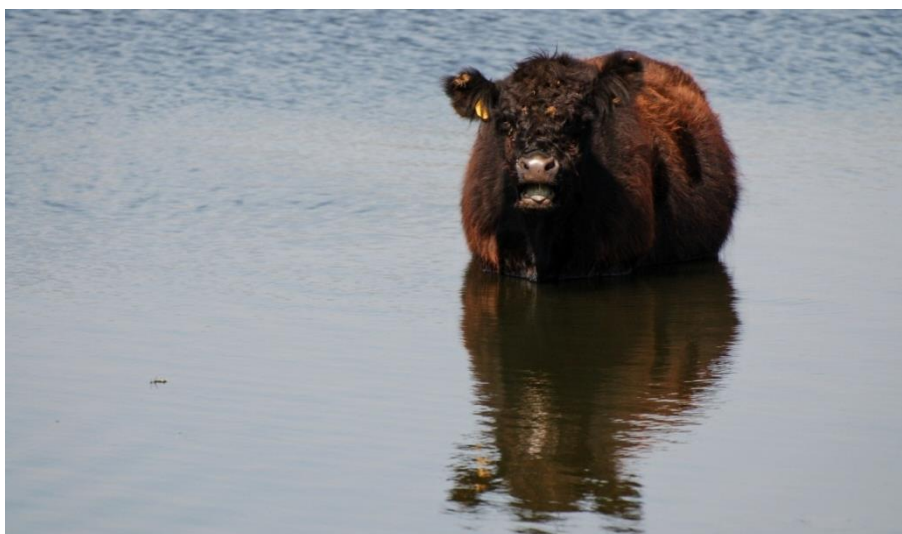
Millingerwaard

The Millingerwaard is located in one of the inner curves of the river De Waal. In the past centuries, De Waal has changed its course in a westerly direction, which to a large degree determined the historical spatial development of the area.



(Figure 6: Location of The Millingerwaard, source Dienst voor het Kadaster en de Openbare Registers, 2006)

Many traces of a dynamic and shifting Waal meander can still be found. These remaining canals have their origins in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth centuries, their direction characterised by a north-south pattern. Therefore, the dyke and its direct environment are a valuable remainder of the water management that was necessary in this area through the years. Several floodings of De Waal left small layers of deposits of clay in the river forelands, eventually creating a thick layer of clay on the original sandy soil. In the Nineteenth Century, these layers of clay were dug off for the production of bricks. Three brick kilns were located in the Millingerwaard, and some relics still exist to remind us of this productive past. Nowadays, one company is still located in the area: sand and gravel transshipment De Beijer. After extensive clay mining in the area stopped, the main form of land use in the Millingerwaard until 1989 was agriculture, but due to the implementation of national spatial programmes, agricultural areas have been converted to nature area. (This development is extensively discussed in Chapter Five). The Millingerwaard can now be characterised as a nature area consisting of 400 hectares of hardwood and softwood forests, pools and river dunes. In this area, several rare animal species can be found, such as the beaver and the corncrake. Moreover, the nature in the area is managed by the presence of cattle, like Galloway's and Konik horses (Millingerwaard.info 2012; Provinciale Staten van Gelderland 2012a; Stichting ARK 2012).



(Figure 7: Galloway in the Millingerwaard, source Ton Houkes, reproduced here with permission)

The area nowadays is attractive for leisure purposes such as walking or cycling. In the area, different routes for these can be found, some of which extend over the river or in the direction of the border with Germany, and excursions are being organised. Located in the middle of the Millingerwaard is the Millinger Tea Garden, one of the main attractions in the area. The natural characteristics and leisure opportunities provided in the area have led to people moving to Kekerdom, the small village located near the Millingerwaard (Millingerwaard.info 2012; Provinciale Staten van Gelderland 2012a; Stichting ARK 2012).



(Figure 8: Walking in the Millingerwaard, source Bart Bulkens, reproduced here with permission)

The Millingerwaard within the broader Dutch political and planning landscapes

While the spatial planning process at the Wageningse Eng is predominantly informed and framed around the determination of the new allocation plan, the spatial planning processes at the Millingerwaard evolved (and continue to evolve) around the implementation of national plans and policies rather than local ones. Since these national plans are also implemented and further specified on a provincial level, I will merge the descriptions of the national and provincial plans and their implementation.

In the period when I had to choose the different case-studies for my research, I came across the Millingerwaard project, a national spatial development project with three project goals:

- To decrease water levels by 9 centimetres during high water levels;
- To realise 265 hectares of new river nature; and,
- To improve landscape quality.

(Dienst Landelijk Gebied¹ 2012c, translation by author)



(Figure 9: Information panel on the spatial development project in the Millingerwaard, photo by Maartje Bulkens)

These three goals are the result of a combined implementation of different national policies on water safety and nature development. (How these policies are intertwined in their implementation is discussed further in Chapter Five) One of the national programmes implemented in the Millingerwaard is the Ruimte voor de Rivier (Room for the River) programme established by the Dutch government in 1996 after high water levels in 1993 and 1995 (Rijkswaterstaat Ruimte voor de Rivier 2012). The Ruimte voor de Rivier programme is part of the Delta programme, which aims to enable rivers to drain off 18,000 cubic metres per second. As part of this programme, the Dutch government in 2006 has put forward the Planologische Kernbeslissing Ruimte voor de Rivier (Planological Core Decision Room for the

¹ The Dienst Landelijk Gebied is the governmental agency responsible for the implementation of spatial projects in the rural areas.

River), which aims at compliance to current prevailing legal water security norms. These security norms prescribe that a drain-off, which can occur statistically once every 1250 years, can safely pass through the Dutch river system. To meet this aim, measures have been taken at 39 locations in/near the rivers, of which the Millingerwaard is one, to give more space to the large rivers (Ministerie van Infrastructuur en Milieu and Ministerie van Economische Zaken, Landbouw en Innovatie 2006).

In the Millingerwaard, these water safety goals are tied to nature development. This was initiated under the auspices of Stichting Ark (Foundation Ark) when the Millingerwaard became a trial area in 1990, for the implementation of Plan Ooievaar (Plan Stork), which won the first EO-Wijers² prize in 1986 for tying together nature development and water safety. The theme of the EO-Wijers competition that year was 'Nederland Rivierenland' (The Netherlands: Land of Rivers), and the winning team created a plan envisioning the creation of nature in the river floodplains. The plan combined a retreat of agriculture from river forelands with nature development in the river areas. The plan aimed at more space for nature development in the forelands with concentration of agriculture in the inner dyke areas for which land consolidation was needed.

In 1992, WWF-Netherlands also launched the Living Rivers project introducing clay mining as a new economic driver, for which the Millingerwaard served as a trial area, which could:

- (partly) substitute the declining role of agriculture;
- contribute to the ecological restoration of the riverine landscape;
- contribute to improved and sustainable flood prevention.

(Bekhuis et al. 2005: 6, translation by author)

Moreover, the Dutch government puts forward in 1990 a new Nature Policy Plan aimed at the development of nature combined with the creation of a national ecological network. The rationale behind the National Ecological Network (EHS) was that valuable nature areas, comprising different small reserves that were separated by barriers, could be connected via the

² This was introduced to promote supra local planning (EO Wijers stichting 2013)

ecological network (Van der Zande and Wolters 1997, see also Van Baalen and Van der Zande 1991; Van der Zande and Roeske 1992). The wetlands should form an important part of the EHS and agreements were made at an international level to extend and protect these (Van Zadelhoff and Van der Zande 1991). The aim was the creation of one nationwide National Ecological Network composed of core areas and nature development areas, eventually to be connected to other similar European Networks (Beunen and Duineveld 2010; Beunen, Van Assche and Duineveld 2013, Keulartz, Van der Windt and Swart 2004; Van den Belt 2004). The Millingerwaard is one of the areas to be connected to the ecological network, and the area goal as stipulated in the provincial Streekplanuitwerking (an area specific elaboration of the regional plan) is the realisation of one large nature area with dry and wet softwood river forests, river valley grasslands, reed swamps and pools (Provinciale Staten van Gelderland 2012a).



(Figure 10: Nature development in the Millingerwaard, source Ton Houkes, reproduced here with permission)

The intertwining of water safety and nature development is, moreover, reflected in the NURG (Nadere Uitwerking Rivierengebied) [Further Elaboration River Areas] programme, a covenant signed in 1997 by the Ministry of Transport and Public Works and the Ministry of Agriculture, Nature Management and Fisheries, in cooperation with the Dienst Landelijk Gebied (DLG), the governmental agency responsible for the implementation of spatial developments in rural areas. In the NURG programme, water safety interventions are combined with the realisation of 'new nature' in the river floodplains. The aim of the nation-wide programme is the creation of 7000

hectares of 'new nature' in the Netherlands, an objective to be met by 2015 (Rijksoverheid 2013), of which 265 hectares are to be realised in the Millingerwaard (Provinciale Staten van Gelderland 2012a).

All these different policies and measures to be taken were tied together in 2010 in an Alternative of Preference for the spatial reorganisation of the Millingerwaard. Within the process of reaching this Alternative, Dienst Landelijk Gebied was advised by an advisory board consisting of a number of residents and users of the area. In February 2011, the state secretary of Infrastructure and Environment approved the proposed design for the Millingerwaard. The most important characteristics of this so-called Voorkeursalternatief (Alternative of Preference) are:

- The sand and gravel transshipment company, De Beijer, is no longer to be located in the area, and the access road will be removed. On the 25th of April 2012, the province of Gelderland should have established a plan aimed at the relocation of De Beijer located at the southwest side of the Millingerwaard. The road as well as the company are seen as being located at a crucial place, and relocation is the best option to meet the development goals within the area;
- Next to the former transshipment area, a broad and deep canal in connection with the Kaliwaal³ to the river can be found. In the centre of the area, the old pattern of canals will be recreated by deepening and lengthening the existing canals;
- In the north-eastern part of the foreland, tight canals will be dug, which are clearly distinguishable from the old pattern of canals in the centre of the area;
- To prevent the ground in the inner dyke areas from setting, measures are taken to prevent too much decrease of the ground water levels;
- The Millingerdam will retain its height. The road will be upgraded for the use of cars and will be open to local traffic and cyclists;
- The route through the middle of the area used by cyclists going to the Millinger Theetuin and the ferry will be replaced;

³ The Kaliwaal is a deep pool created in 1950 through the mining of sand located south of company De Beijer (Province of Gelderland, 2012).

- The whole foreland will remain accessible for walkers.

The goal to decrease the water level by 9 centimetres in cases of extremely high water levels needs to be met in 2015, while the spatial reorganisation should be completed in 2020 (Dienst Landelijk Gebied 2012b, translation by author).



(Figure 11: Sand and gravel transshipment De Beijer, photo by Maartje Bulkens)

These different plans and measures taken to reach the goals for the Millingerwaard was the most important reason for selecting the Millingerwaard as a case study area. While the Wageningse Eng was selected for its complexity in terms of the number of non-governmental parties involved, the complexity in the Millingerwaard is defined by the different policies and plans implemented, and subsequent measures taken in the landscape. In the Millingerwaard, the major players are the different governmental levels comprising Dienst Landelijk Gebied and the province, and the local residents who might be affected by the spatial project. This difference between the Wageningse Eng and the Millingerwaard provides the opportunity to examine how the level of involvement of local parties, the level of involvement of the governmental parties, and the diversity of plans implemented are experienced differently by individuals, and how these might reflect and affect differently the meanings attached to cultural landscapes.

Issues and limitations of the research

In this final section of this chapter, I will reflect on the issues and limitations of this research, and on my own role and position as a researcher. I will reflect on the experienced advantages and

disadvantages of the chosen methods. Since key methods adopted were storytelling and narrative analysis, I would like to start this section with a quote by the author of 'The Narrative Construction of Reality', Bruner (1991: 4), who argues that

[u]nlike the constructions generated by logical and scientific procedures that can be weeded out by falsification, narrative constructions can only achieve "verisimilitude" [truth likeness]. Narratives, then, are a version of reality whose acceptability is governed by convention and "narrative necessity" rather than by empirical verification and logical requiredness.'

Although this quote is a generally accepted notion about qualitative research, criteria have been developed and acknowledged as enhancing the trustworthiness of qualitative research. Yvonna Lincoln and Egon Guba (1985) belong to the most influential writers on the development of criteria to assess the validity or quality of interpretive research. Pertaining to the issue of trustworthiness in relation to interpretive research, they ask the following question: 'How can an inquirer persuade his or her audiences (including self) that the findings of an inquiry are worth paying attention to, worth taking account of?' (Lincoln and Guba 1985: 290).

In terms of *credibility*, Lincoln and Guba (1985) argue that the manner in which we conduct our research should be such that it leads to an enhancement of the likeliness that our research findings will be regarded as credible, demonstrated by getting the approval of the people whose realities we are studying. I have sent full transcripts of the interviews to the interviewees to enable them to read and comment on these where necessary. Moreover, I made use of the method of *triangulation* to enhance credibility in this research. With triangulation, the researcher employs different data sources, in this case interviews and document reviews, combined with multiple methods of analysis (such as, here, through narrative analysis and a textual analysis) (Creswell 2003; Lather 1986). Triangulation, however, should not be regarded as a tool for validation of research results but used as an alternative to validation, and it should not and cannot be used to improve validity (Denzin and Lincoln 1994).

By *transferability*, Lincoln and Guba (1985) mean the degree to which research findings found within a particular context and time can be applied in another context, or the same context at another time. Transferability in terms of qualitative research means the extent to which other researchers would come to a similar interpretation or description of the data and findings. One way to deal with this is the provision of rich and thick descriptions (Geertz 1973). These are formed by the narrative segments analysed and discussed in the subsequent chapters. These segments are directly quoted from the original transcripts to provide: first, a straightforward insight in the interview results; second, to show how particular segments confirm or disconfirm other interview segments in this research. In narrative analysis, rich descriptions are used to strengthen the persuasiveness of the research. However we should bear in mind that these '[v]erbatim quotations without context can be deceptive' (Riessman 2008: 191), a reminder that interviews are never the result of a one-way dialogue. The histories and positions of the interviewees as well as my own position have influenced the interview results to a particular extent in the dialogic construction of the narratives provided in this thesis.

This brings me to the notion of *reflexivity* as a means to increase the validity of this research. According to Lather (1986), reflexivity refers to the researcher being aware of, and reports on, how his or her assumptions influenced, or have been influenced by, the data gathered. We as researchers cannot escape our personal selves when we conduct research, and our personal selves become intertwined with our researcher selves (Creswell 2003). I acknowledge that I have not been value-free and my own subjectivity has been of influence in my research. Reflexivity means that we as researchers reflect on how particular personal factors influence our research, and in the following paragraphs I will do so on my own role in this research, and how I have sought to mitigate these.

Awareness of your position as a researcher seems especially important when using narrative analysis. The reason is that there are no predefined guidelines available to conduct the (structural) narrative analysis, and the researcher depends to a high degree on his/her own intuition and feel for the material to make the necessary choices. For these reasons, I will briefly

reflect on my own position within this research. I hold a BSc and a MSc degree in Spatial Planning and Architecture with a specialisation on Socio-Spatial Analysis. The reason for choosing this particular specialisation was influenced by a perceived lack of attention to the social aspects of spatial planning. In this research, a strong emphasis was placed on acknowledging the voices from the field, especially those of residents. Moreover, I grew up in a small rural village near the river Maas, one of the other large rivers in the Netherlands, and this landscape of my childhood was reflected in the cases where agricultural functions have slowly given way to nature development. My roots caused me to experience a closer relationship with those that have similar roots, and are now confronted with their landscapes changing from agricultural to either natural or city edge area. This created in me a greater sense of empathy with those whose familiar and childhood landscapes are being negatively affected by the spatial developments in these areas. On the one hand, this helped me in relating to these interviewees, but on the other it has also at times clouded my judgements. Being aware of these personal ties and emotions, I have consciously attempted to prevent these from influencing the results of my research.

In adopting storytelling and narrative analysis, one of the main advantages is the depth and richness of the material being generated during the fieldwork phase. The degree of freedom given during the interviews and the encouragement to interviewees to 'just talk' led in most cases to very detailed and extended interviews in which a high degree of information was conveyed. However, individuals have different skills in telling stories, which led to interviews differing in quality in terms of depth and richness. Moreover, although I think of myself as a good listener, I am aware that I do have a tendency to be rather disruptive when people tell me something. This has proven to be a challenge in adopting storytelling as a method of eliciting data. Riessman (2008: 24, emphasis in original) confirms this: 'creating possibilities in research for extended narration requires investigators to give up control, [which] can generate anxiety [since it] necessitates following participants down *their* trails.' It has indeed been a challenge for me in terms of letting go of control, while being aware at the same time of having to obtain

particular data to meet the objectives of my research. I regard this as one of the relatively negative aspects of the use of storytelling. The stories told show that some individuals have a tendency to elaborate on many different aspects, which cannot be denied since these too belong to their story, even though not all of these aspects were relevant for my work. Here, a major difference can be found between residents and those interviewed because of their involvement with interest groups or governmental institutions. Residents have a clear tendency to elaborate more on biographical aspects and episodes in their lives - such as how they met their spouses, or about difficult periods in their lives, etc. - aspects that are not necessarily relevant for my research, while those involved in interest groups and governmental institutions have a 'clear-and-to-the-point' story that proves highly relevant for my work. Obviously, this is not surprising as I interviewed the latter because of their involvement in these groups and institutions. Moreover they probably are far more experienced in talking about the landscape and the planning processes than the residents. In this sense, there is a difference in the quality of the data. Nevertheless, it is important not to regard the stories narrated by residents as less worthy, since I would then be dismissing one of the goals of this thesis. However, what this situation did confront me with is how storytelling as a tool for participatory planning might lead to unbalanced situations in the processes. The structural narrative analysis adopted here with a focus on how individuals structure their stories to effectively and persuasively communicate their experiences, goals, and visions concerning the future of particular landscapes, revealed that policy makers and planners are more experienced storytellers and construct a more persuasive and convincing story, while residents might struggle more to have their stories told in a convincing and effective way.

Selecting two cases with different characteristics made it possible to examine if storytelling and narrative analysis are useful methods in researching participatory planning practices by investigating how these differences are narrated by different individuals, and the extent to which this is the case becomes clear from these stories. If I had only one case to work on, I could not have made a claim on the degree of usefulness of storytelling and narrative analysis as

additional methods in spatial planning, since the methods might prove useful in one case, but not in another. Nevertheless, the two cases have confronted me with one particular difficulty: balancing between having sufficient data to answer the research questions on the one hand, and conducting a well-organised and structured narrative analysis on the other.

This brings me to one of the largest problems encountered with the chosen methodology, which has to do with the number of interviews needed to eventually meet the objectives and come up with proper conclusions, even though it is not my aim to make large claims or generalisations. Writing a PhD thesis is an exercise limited by available time. I was confronted with this limitation often, most importantly in the generation and analysis of the data needed to answer the research questions. To generate enough data to underscore particular important points and conclusions, I might have to admit that more interviews would have been necessary. (I never reached the so-called 'saturation point' (Glaser and Strauss 1967), possibly also because the analysed stories were unstructured and individually inspired). However, more interviews would have meant that the chosen method of a structural narrative analysis would have become impossible given the amount of time that a proper analysis requires. Firstly, the transcription phase is highly demanding since the interviews generally lasted between one and two-and-a-half hours, and comprise a high degree of details to be fully transcribed. Secondly, the structural analysis of these long and extended stories is also very time-consuming. Thus, although storytelling and narrative analysis do have the potential to research into the experiences of individuals, and has provided valuable insights in how the meanings attached to cultural landscapes are reflected and affected in participatory planning processes, and how individuals experience these, the time and effort that this method entails is constraining and does not allow for large quantities of interviews to be conducted and analysed. On the basis of this, I would argue that storytelling and narrative analysis can be suitable methods to research small-scale spatial planning processes with a limited number of parties involved, for example neighbourhood projects. When the size of spatial projects move beyond this level, the method of narrative analysis becomes too time-consuming and complex to be used properly.

Chapter 3

Sightlines, Sightareas and Unbroken Open Spaces?

More-Than-Representational Conceptualisations

in Dutch Landscape Planning[†]

Introduction

On 30 July 2012, *'De Veluwepost'*, a local newspaper of Wageningen, a town of about 37,000 inhabitants located just north of the river Rhine in the Dutch province of Gelderland (Gemeente Wageningen 2012a), reported that, by order of the Municipality, a walnut tree of 25 centimetres in diameter had to be eliminated from the landscape following a neighbour's complaint that it was 'blocking the view out of her window'. The decision to cut the tree was announced by the Alderman – second in command after the mayor, and responsible for spatial planning in Wageningen – with the claim, according to the newspaper, that 'The Allocation Plan states that the Eng should be open. Trees are just not allowed.' (Boer 2012).

This local episode provides a useful and provocative entry point into examining how the Wageningse Eng, a former agricultural area of 595 acres in size, located at the east-side of the Municipality, has become an object of controversy when its development plans are concerned. The specific 'tree incident' in fact coincided with a period in which the Municipality was in the process of determining a new plan aimed at defining the legally-binding rules for future spatial developments in the whole area, which inevitably raised the question of deciding, as highlighted by the Alderman when interviewed, '[w]hat are you going to allow and what are you not going to allow' (pers. comm.), especially when citizens are given a say and there is no clear consensus over how the rules are to be formulated. The complication here arises from the fact that several (former) associations and foundations play a key role in this public debate over local spatial planning, some of which are in formal cooperation with the Municipality, such as the *Territoriale*

[†] This chapter has been submitted to *Geografiska Annaler B: Human Geography* as Bulkens, M., Minca, C. and H. Muzaini (---) 'Sightlines, Sightareas and Unbroken Open Spaces? More-Than-Representational Conceptualisations in Dutch Landscape Planning.'

Advies Commissie Wageningse Eng (or Territorial Advisory Committee Wageningse Eng) (TAWE) which gives advice on decisions concerning the spatial development of the Wageningse Eng. The TAWE is one of the committees, together with the executive and advisory committees, constituting the *Stichting Wageningse Eng* (or Foundation Wageningse Eng), founded to promote a more inclusionary planning process at the Eng (Klaver 2011). Other involved associations are *Mooi Wageningen* (Beautiful Wageningen), constituted by individuals concerned with the protection and preservation of 'irreplaceable values of the surrounding nature and landscape of Wageningen' (Mooi Wageningen 2012), and the *Vereniging van Gebruikers en Eigenaren van de Wageningse Eng* (Association of Owners and Users of the Wageningse Eng, now disbanded), made up predominantly of residents and users of the area who want more opportunities for participating in the spatial development at the Wageningse Eng.

Drawing on the analysis of two texts that have been most influential in determining how the Wageningse Eng is to be developed and which have provoked much controversy – the yet-to-be-determined Allocation Plan (Gemeente Wageningen 2012c, 2013) and a map of 'sight areas, sightlines and perspectives' produced by the TAWE (2012) – this chapter specifically analyses the key geographical metaphors that have been employed in local spatial planning, their effects on the landscape in question, as well as how residents have ambivalently responded to them. In doing so, it provides an in-depth case study of landscape governance and hegemonic spatial planning practices (with real impacts, such as in the cutting down of the walnut tree) in the (albeit localised) Dutch context, and how these may be contested by groups or individuals with vested interests on the ground. More broadly, it takes inspiration from Lorimer's 'more-than-representational' approach (2005) in terms of reflecting upon the continued salience of representational practices and their attendant consequences within society (Anderson and Harrison 2010; Cadman 2009; Dewsbury et al. 2002). Indeed, even as scholars have criticised the 'deadening effect' of representational practices (Lorimer 2005), this chapter argues that, at least in Wageningen and possibly in the Dutch context in general, such a framing is not only still

relevant but reveals how power is performed via the metaphorical conceptualisation of the landscape.

Following a brief review of recent theoretical shifts within cultural geography, we shed some light on specific features of participatory spatial planning in the Netherlands. This is dovetailed by a description of the case study area and of the methods adopted in the research, alongside with introducing the spatial Allocation Plan for the environs of Wageningen and the above mentioned map produced by the TAWÉ. Particular emphasis is placed on how spatial/geographical metaphors such as 'open fields and spectacular views', 'sightlines', and to a lesser extent, 'sight areas' and 'perspectives' have been utilised towards justifying specific practices within the Wageningse Eng. Drawing upon a series of in-depth interviews, the chapter then demonstrates how these conceptualisations and representations of the landscape – as forwarded by the two key texts here examined – are indeed perceived as 'obvious' and 'historical' by some, as 'undesirable' and 'arbitrary' by others. Based on the findings of the chapter, the conclusion first argues for a reconsideration of how representations, in their apparent abstractness, still matter a great deal in the crafting not only of ideas about the related landscapes, but also of the material geographies and the spatial practices that those ideas may produce when mobilised to become part of a plan for the development of specific areas. Secondly, it highlights the ways in which, despite well-established discourses presenting Dutch spatial planning as a fundamentally democratic process involving long and extenuating negotiations among the residents and the decision makers (Evers et al. 2000; Hagens 2010; Needham 2007), public debates about the nature and the management of landscapes, in Wageningen, and presumably elsewhere in the Netherlands, are undermined by the workings of specific representations of landscapes delivered by 'top down documents'; these documents all too often treat spatial representations, including geographical metaphors like that of 'sightline' or 'open space', as unproblematic and taken for granted 'landscape values', to be recognised, protected and strengthened. Landscape formation, when incorporated in spatial planning strategies, in Wageningen and perhaps in many other Dutch contexts, despite being the result of

widely recognised (and formalised) participatory processes, is importantly influenced by a specific set of landscape ideologies and by their related more-than-representational 'power', which have an impact on the real and imagined spatialities at the Wageningse Eng.

Towards a 'more-than-representational' conceptualisation of landscape

As a concept, 'landscape' has become the indelible 'lens' for many cultural geographers trying to make sense of the interactions between individuals and their environment (Wylie 2007; see also Minca 2007a). Following the 'cultural turn' of the late 1980s, under the umbrella of what was referred to as 'new cultural geography', the main focus has been on the analysis of (elements of) landscapes not only as physical manifestations in the world but also as highly symbolic and profoundly ideological in terms of the meanings imputed within, or projected through, them (Cosgrove and Jackson 1987; Duncan and Ley 1993; Mitchell 2000, 2001, 2002; but also Cresswell and Verstraete 2003; Cosgrove and Daniels 1988; Minca 2007b). Far from being reified and necessarily accepted, these meanings are often contested by others with different ideas of not only what the landscapes should look like but also represent, which has been a defining framework adopted by many scholars interested in studying the representational politics of landscapes (Minca 2007b; Wylie 2005, 2007). Yet, such an approach has subsequently also been criticised as neglecting the natural, material and embodied aspects of landscapes, and how these affectively and emotionally relate to people. Drawing on the Heideggerian concept of 'dwelling', which refers to an *active* engagement with the material world as 'a meaningful place for people through being lived in', anthropologist Ingold (2000: 168) highlights how cultural geographers have over-emphasised the representational facets of landscapes ('what they mean' or 'what they represent') at the expense of considering the materiality of landscapes and how individuals immanently 'engage' with these and are consequently impacted upon by them (see also McHugh 2009).

Similarly, Thrift has claimed (1996, 2007), through his highly influential 'non-representational approach', that the new cultural geography has somehow 'drained life out' of what was being studied, further echoed more recently by Cadman (2009: 1) in terms of the tendency within

cultural geography 'to retreat from practice into the (cultural) politics of representation; creating deadening effects in an otherwise active world'. Such 'deadenning effects', according again to Thrift (1996), may however be counteracted by turning away from the idea that landscapes are a sort of 'end-product of social and spatial processes' towards considering them as 'practices' in and of themselves. This is what Lorimer (2005: 85) refers to as the 'embodied acts of landscaping' or the ways in which we actively and materially shape and engage with the landscapes, of which we are a constitutive part. Within this approach, it is the interactions between people and their use of, and relationships to, their everyday environments that constitute more of a landscape, rather than just the meanings underlying them. Oakes and Price (2008: 151) liken this to seeing landscapes 'as a sort of performance that is enacted as much as is music or theatre'. In these terms, the landscape therefore becomes a fluid construct constantly in the process of 'becoming', never 'fixed', and thus moving away 'from a view of the world based on contemplative models of thought and action toward theories of practice which amplify the potential flow of events' (Thrift 2000: 556; see also Lorimer 2005; Wylie 2007). In recent years, such an approach has been applied to different landscape related issues: from Crouch's (2000, 2003) research on encounters and embodiment in leisure and tourism via the study of caravanning and allotment gardening, to Dewsbury's (2000) and Harrison's (2000) discussion of the relationship between embodiment and space, to Lorimer's writings on 'learning geography' (2003) and herding (2006), as well as to Wylie's (2005) reflections on walking.

One problem with the non-representational approach, however, is that it all too often underplays the fact that, in many spheres of life, landscapes are still viewed and treated 'representationally', with a strong emphasis placed on the set of meanings that make them up and/or that they have been engineered to project (Lorimer 2005). This is especially the case in the context of the work on/in landscape planning and participatory politics (Cadman 2009). Hillier (2007), for instance, uses the term 'post-representational' to argue that planning practices still largely revolve around representations, particularly representations of planning areas captured within visual texts such as plans and maps. She indeed maintains that in

'planning practice', these representations are all too often taken-for-granted as natural, hegemonic and absolute truths of the world out there, 'rather than reflecting the multidimensional, often conflicting representations which coexist in reality' (Hillier, 2007: 195). She also argues for a much needed step back to reflect upon the coming about of these representations, upon how these affect planning practices, and how they may be contested (Hillier 2007). A similar claim is made by Healey (2004: 46), suggesting that the 'analysis of the nature of concepts of place and space being deployed' is a less developed field of planning studies, while these concepts have a performative capacity in shaping the actual spatial developments of areas (see also Healey 2002). This seems especially relevant when it is recognised that '[p]olicymakers and planners [do not] care much about lived schemes of signification' (Plöger, 2006: 393). The present article thus touches upon these debates within cultural geography and spatial planning by exemplifying the still dominant position of landscape representations (compared to people's everyday landscape practice) in one illustrative case of local Dutch spatial planning, as well as engaging with the complex entanglements of representations and meaning in planning as not only ideological and hegemonic but also polyvocal and contested.

Further, to consider the non-representational aspects of landscape (i.e. the practices that constitute it) does not necessarily imply that questions of intended meaning and the resulting (often contested) interpretations of this same meaning become unimportant. In fact, as Dewsbury et al. (2002: 438) have argued, we should perceive representations 'not [only] as a code to be broken or as an illusion to be dispelled rather representations [should be] apprehended as performative in themselves; as doings'. The focus, therefore, should not only be on the act of representing itself, an act that does not solely communicate a message – which may either be accepted or resisted (hence leading to contestation or negotiation) – but on the act as being capable of changing and transforming individuals and their surroundings. Accordingly, landscapes may therefore be seen as representational not only in terms of what 'they mean' but also in terms of what they 'do' to people's everyday practice. It is in line with this thinking that

Lorimer (2005) introduces the term 'more-than-representational', a term that allows landscapes to be understood and studied not only for what they represent but also for how they are performed towards real impacts (see also Anderson and Harrison 2010). In this regard, landscapes also become active agents in themselves and not merely the end-product of human actions and cognition, as hitherto conceived under the auspices of 'new' cultural geography.

Landscaping the Wageningse Eng: case study and methodology

The contemporary political and social climate in the Netherlands has often been described as embracing the values of compromise and consensus building (Evers et al. 2000; Hagens 2010). British planner Barrie Needham (2007: 37), studying land use planning in the Netherlands, famously traces this back to the 'polder model' adopted in Dutch history, when water boards – governmental bodies maintaining the water system and safeguarding water safety – were created before any other form of public administrative body. Given the authority by the citizens to manage and maintain the polders, the water boards applied a deliberative process which mediated the interests of land owners and land users towards finding consensus or, when impossible, an acceptable compromise. This strategy and the 'philosophy' behind it soon became a way of managing public life, including that of spatial planning carried out in the entire country. Such an arguably 'inclusive' approach, however, is not devoid of problems. Needham (2007: 37) argues that it may produce 'grey compromises' or, even worse, 'lowest common denominator solutions', thus leading to comments about Dutch spatial planning as 'viscous' and 'sticky'. Similarly, Habiform (2003) – an influential network of professionals in spatial planning and area development – describes issues pertaining to the management of conflicts of interest as among the major challenges faced in spatial planning in the Netherlands in past decades. Even so, as part of broader processes in which citizens and non-governmental organisations are able to participate in decision-making processes at the local level (Van Assche 2004), ideas such as 'consultation' and 'cooperation' among different groups continue to be key to the ways in which landscapes in the Netherlands, including the Wageningse Eng, are planned (Needham 2007: 35).

Although the Wageningse Eng⁴ was historically used for grain farming, predominantly rye, in the 18th and the 19th Centuries, tobacco later became its chief crop. In recent years, however, the actual use of the Eng for agricultural purposes has been rather limited since this is no longer profitable, resulting in recreational and residential uses becoming more dominant. These include horse-keeping, allotment gardening, small-scale organic farming, flower picking gardens, and the cultivation of trees and plants (Renes 1983; Gemeente Wageningen 2012a, 2012b).



(Figure 12: Location of the Wageningse Eng, source: Dienst voor het kadaster en de openbare registers 2006)

To manage such a variety of vested interests in the area, and in favour of public participation in spatial planning, formal organisations have emerged. In 2009, for example, the 'Stichting Wageningse Eng' (SWE), was established to:

⁴ The addition 'Eng' refers to arable land at a high and dry location.

‘to stimulate the maintenance – and where possible, the reinforcement – of the natural landscape and cultural historical values of the Eng, as well as the development and facilitation of new sustainable forms of use at the Eng which are beneficial to it.’ (Stichting Wageningse Eng 2012; translation by authors).

In order to keep its diverse tasks distinct, the foundation has three layers of organisation: the executive committee, the advisory committee and the above mentioned TAWE. The executive committee is responsible for managing the foundation and representing the many different interests in the area. The advisory committee – composed of members with different stakes in the area, including residents, recreational users, users, etc. – provides the foundation with solicited and unsolicited advice. Finally, the TAWE was appointed by the Mayor and the Aldermen to garner advice on matters pertaining to the granting of licenses, municipal spatial development policy, and any other issues related to the landscape of the Wageningse Eng. (Stichting Wageningse Eng 2012). The members of this committee have no involvement with the foundation or the advisory council, and acts as an ‘independent’ body.



(Figure 13: The Wageningse Eng, photo by Maartje Bulkens)

The fieldwork took place in the weeks immediately following the release, on the part of the Municipality of Wageningen, of the ‘pre-design’⁵ of the Allocation Plan in June 2012. During this period, 15 ‘narrative interviews’ (Jovchelovitch and Bauer 2000), each lasting between 1.5 to 2.5

⁵ A pre-design is the first draft of an Allocation Plan open to public discussion.

hours, were conducted with 7 residents, 2 members of the TAWE, 1 member of the executive committee of the SWE, 1 member of the advisory committee of the SWE, 2 members of Mooi Wageningen, 2 members of the former Vereniging van Eigenaren en Gebruikers van de Eng representing the needs and demands of the owners and users, and with the Alderman. Because of the direct involvement of the interviewees in the projects examined here, only pseudonyms are used. These interviews, which were further supplemented by policy documents published in the process of determining the Allocation Plan and their accompanying publicly available commentaries, provided data on 'political' processes at the Eng in relation to the definition of the Allocation Plan. Central to the issues discussed during these interviews were ideas promoted/presented by the Allocation Plan and 'the map', to which we now turn.

The forthcoming Wageningen Allocation Plan and TAWE map

Dutch spatial plans are produced at different levels of government: national, regional/provincial, and local/municipal. However, only the local or municipal Allocation Plan has direct legal consequences for citizens (see, for example, Van der Valk 2002). As a consequence, any decision to build or change a particular land use requires a permit granted by the Municipality, which is evaluated on the basis of the Allocation Plan, normally revised every 10 years. Indeed, the Municipality is obliged to grant permits when the applications conform to the current plan. For rural areas the implementation of an Allocation Plan is compulsory, while this is optional for urban areas (Needham 2007; Van der Valk 2002).

At the time of the research (Summer 2012), the Wageningen Municipality was currently in the process of determining an up-to-date Allocation Plan. This was a consequence of the 2008 Dutch law on Spatial Planning which required that, within the following five years, after the introduction of the new law, all Allocation Plans had to be less than ten years old (deWro 2013), Wageningen met this requirement at the end of September 2013 when the renewed Allocation Plan was officially decided upon by the municipal council. The new legislation clearly prescribes the procedure to be followed when determining a new Allocation Plan. Municipalities are obliged to give public notice of these very procedures through the local media, the State Courant,

and on the internet. In addition, the owners of the land parcels included in the area in question must be adequately informed. In the definition of an Allocation Plan in the Netherlands, there are two defining moments of participation for residents. The first one is optional and determined in its format by each Municipality independently. This takes the forms of a 'pre-design', which is a draft design used for the initial public discussion that should lead to the crafting of the official final design. After publishing its pre-design, the Wageningen Municipality received 55 public comments concerning the future Allocation Plan, 28 of which concerned the Wageningse Eng (Gemeente Wageningen 2013; deWro 2013).

The second crucial moment of 'public participation' normally takes place after the completion of the first draft of the Allocation Plan. This is then made public both in print (for example through the local newspapers) and electronically through the national website which reports all legal spatial plans of the Netherlands⁶, a procedure taken to allow citizens to express their views again. Municipalities are legally obliged to facilitate this. This is how the Wageningen Municipality announced their new plan:

'Content-wise, there are no major changes in the new Allocation Plan compared with the current one; the plan is conservative in character. Because of the general standardisation of the plan set-up, there may be differences in some of the details.' (Staatscourant 2013; translation by authors).

Citizens can express their views about the document either verbally or in written form, but this must be done within a specific time framework, a prerequisite for lodging an appeal later on for a change in allocation or conditions to the established plan. Within twelve weeks after the end of the period of public consultation, the Municipal Council digitally⁷ determines the Allocation Plan (deWro 2013). The plan consists of three main components: the official design; the accompanying explanation; and the rules describing what is allowed and what is not within particular allocations. It is beyond the scope of this chapter to fully examine the rules applied to

⁶ www.ruimtelijkeplannen.nl

⁷ In the Netherlands, the legal plan is a digital plan and not a hardcopy (Interview Alderman Wageningen, 19/10/2012)

the Wageningse Eng (see www.ruimtelijkeplannen.nl for the full plan) although, where necessary, references to these will be incorporated in this discussion. For instance, it is perhaps useful to report how the conceptualisation of the Eng is given in the accompanying explanations:

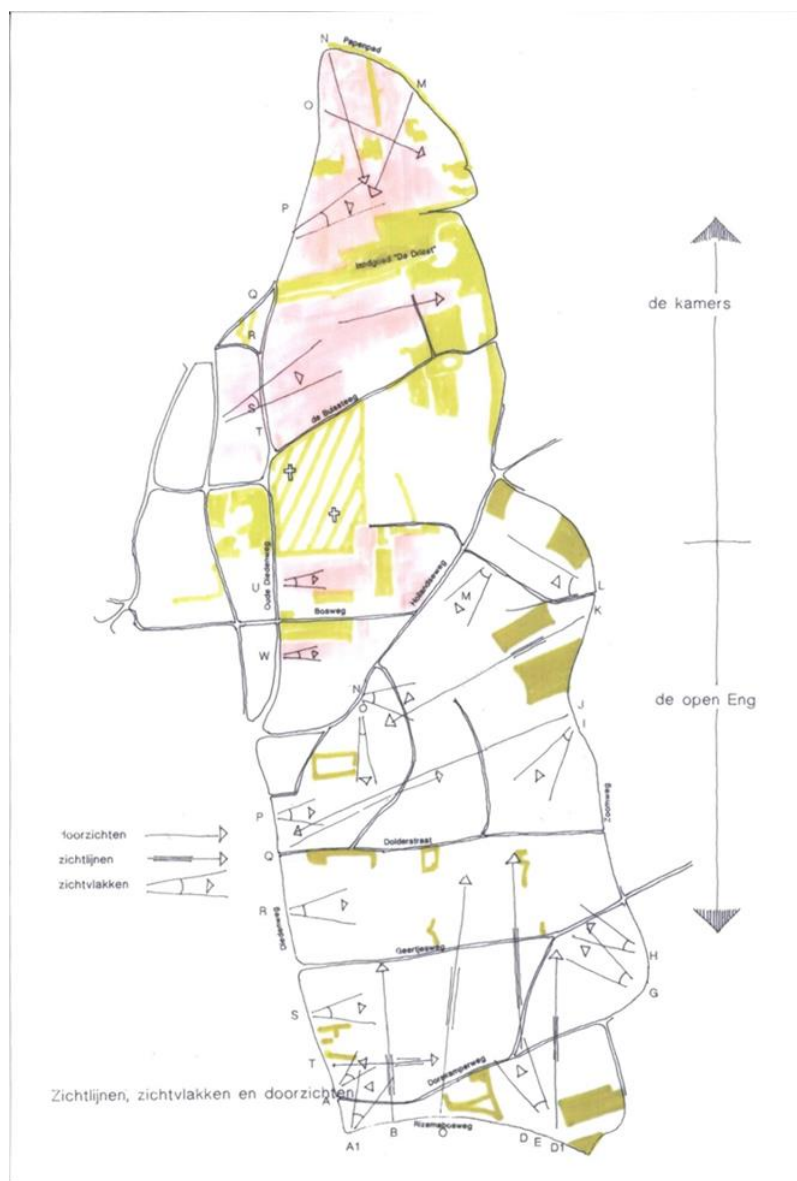
'In the past, *engen* developed at the flanks of the Veluwe. Engen are old agricultural areas characterised by an *unbroken open area*, surrounded by plants and buildings with small-scale parcelling and cultural historical landscape elements. Located between the city and the enclosed landscape of the Wageningse Berg, the eng is an attractive landscape, with nature and ecological values. Due to the differences in height [...] *very striking views* featuring the urban area, the forest area, and the eng itself can be enjoyed .' (Gemeente Wageningen 2012c: 26; translation by authors; emphasis added).

'In the current Allocation Plan the area is defined as 'city edge area with special landscape values' [...] One of the basic principles is that of structurally preserving and improving the Eng as a landscape with rich land variations and an *open character*. The current rights of use will be maintained. Relevant area zoning, with respect to allotment gardens and equestrian sports, are adopted in the Allocation Plan. [...] New developments are not allowed in the area.' (Gemeente Wageningen 2012c: 26; translation by author; emphasis added)

Within the Allocation Plan, no further specifications were made with regards to what terms like 'unbroken open area' or 'striking views' actually meant, although the second key 'text' - the 'sight areas, sightlines and perspectives map' - produced by TAWÉ, attempts to visually capture precisely these. Due to the way in which spatial planning is organised in the area, the map has thus become a specific representation of what both terms entail.

According to the TAWÉ, a *sight area* is a broader/vast area over which "you can see far away"; a *sightline* instead denotes "a point from which you can gaze at something from a great distance" – the example given is that of the windmills near the highway about 10

kilometres away; finally, a *perspective* is when you have “a view in between two objects”, for example a viewpoint in-between two lanes of trees. Altogether, the map highlights 17 sight areas, 3 sightlines, and 9 perspectives. On the map, two general subareas are also demarcated: (1) the ‘open Wageningse Eng’ (with sight areas, perspectives and/or sightlines) in the southern part of the Eng, and (2) the ‘enclosed Eng’ or an area with ‘chambers’, which are delineated areas enclosed within pieces of forest or a wooded bank, in the northern part of the Eng (TAWE, 2012).



(Figure 14: Sightlines, sight areas and perspectives map, source Territoriale Advies Commissie Wageningse Eng 2012, reproduced here with written permission)

Arguably, although terms like ‘unbroken open area’ and ‘striking views’ are not further specified in the Allocation Plan, they nonetheless emerge in the TAWÉ’s conceptualisations of the Wageningse Eng landscape, the former coinciding with TAWÉ’s visualisation of the ‘open Eng’ and the latter as visualised by TAWÉ’s ‘sightlines and perspectives’. However, in contrast to the Allocation Plan, the TAWÉ map does not have legal status, and public proposals made during the predesign and design phase for the sightlines to be formalised in the Allocation Plan were turned down by the Municipality for not fitting into the conservative character of the plan. It remained unclear during the research why this was so, given how the map did indeed play a key role in the spatial development of the Wageningse Eng. In any case, the map and the specifications of both terms by the TAWÉ still play an important role in the spatial development of the Wageningse Eng, especially in granting permits (TAWÉ member, pers. comm. 13/09/2012). The map has become, in practice, a powerful representation of the Eng landscape because the TAWÉ makes use of it when advising the Municipality. The rest of the chapter will thus turn to the different and conflicting ways in which ‘unbroken open area’ and ‘sightlines, sight areas and perspectives’ are interpreted, despite their prominence in the official documents in characterising (and shaping) the Wageningse Eng landscape. More specifically, we will show how representations and textual conceptualisations of the landscape continue to play an important role in local spatial planning, also in terms of how the material landscape is actually managed and developed.

Dissonant interpretations of ‘unbroken open areas’

According to the pre-design of the Allocation Plan (Gemeente Wageningen 2012c), an ‘eng’ is defined as ‘an unbroken open area’, pertaining to the idea that the Wageningse Eng has historically been very much an ‘open’ landscape. This view is also echoed by Mr Allen, a member of Mooi Wageningen, although the real extent of this ‘openness’ remains uncertain:

“[...] well, from that history you look at the landscape, and then uh certain expectations come up, then it would be nice if in that landscape the historical characteristics remain recognisable, thus that openness is in that sense important. Then you immediately get into discussions about how open it should be, and uh how many hedges or wooded banks or bushes are allowed, and what kind of sightlines do you need.”

This notion of openness is also often mentioned by other respondents when asked to reflect upon the historical development of the Eng. For the Alderman,

“Considering the structure, it has been reasonably open the last period, twenty-five, forty years, and it has actually always been like that, except for periods when the crops were growing, but that is of course only one part of the year.”

The Alderman’s description here is temporally qualified, referring to how the Wageningse Eng has not always been as open as it is today, since “there was tobacco grown for a while, and then it gradually but surely remained an open area with some small-scale agriculture and cultivation.” This indicates how, contrary to what is stated in the Allocation Plan, the eng was not always an ‘open area’ despite the fact that, in the last decades, it has become more so.

The conceptualisation of the Eng as an open landscape, according to policy documents, may perhaps be attributed to a longing for the ‘museumification’ of the landscape, a process in which the landscape is represented as a still frame, to be preserved in its present form, thereby denying the possibility of change, now and in the future, as declared by Mr Hall, former member of the Association of Owners and Users of the Eng:

“But if one perspective about the Eng becomes dominant, namely the Eng as a beautiful cultural landscape, that should predominantly be maintained, that should remain open [...] the Eng is an area which is used in many different ways by the urban population of Wageningen, let us steer it in the right direction, let us applaud that, and not with a long face of the sightline, no just this is what it is.”

All too often, interviewees refer to how the definition of the Eng as an 'open landscape' denies many of the current uses of the area, such as, for example, that of flower picking gardens. In her public comment to the predesign, the owner of one of the flower picking gardens makes a plea to gain permission to create new facilities on her terrain, like a shelter, a toilet, a covered wagon, and the possibility of selling coffee, tea and sodas to the general public. She also claims that the TAWE agreed on these plans. However, in the formal response to this request, the Municipality states that the TAWE has never agreed to these plans, and turned them down for not fitting in with the conservative character of an 'open Eng'. By representing the Wageningse Eng as an 'open landscape', therefore, many potential land uses are inhibited. A specific set of representations incorporated in the Allocation Plan may thus have a 'deadening' effect on the landscape, in line with Healey's (2002: 1785) claim that 'once an imagination is brought to life, it has material effects', by defining particular restricted practices in/of that landscape, even if there seems to be no historical basis for sustaining such a view. This reflects how dominant representations of a landscape may be questionable in their rendering of the past. As argued by Graham and Healey (1999: 641), planners often tend to let the representations of 'articulate and powerful groups' become dominant, and may reveal a potentially 'performative' capacity where these representations also symbolise 'acts' with real impacts on the landscape and its users, as the flower picking garden example shows.

The interpretation of the Eng as an 'open landscape' has also been criticised by other users on the basis of landscape typologies normally adopted in the Netherlands. As Ms Wilkinson, member of the advisory committee avers:

"Just take the term open landscape; in Dutch terms this one is not an open landscape, this is a half-open landscape with carefully chosen boscages, often, at least that is how it should be, often also to protect, for example uh to protect against the sun, where the agricultural worker could shelter."

Later, she adds that the term also causes problems "because it offers people, who, uh who want to get rid of boscages and sheds, all opportunity to say it does not fit in an open landscape [sic]."

Here again, the idea emerges that, historically, the Eng has never been a totally open landscape. More importantly, however, this quote reflects upon how dominant representations of landscapes within official documents may be skewed in order to achieve particular objectives, in this case to 'get rid of boscages and sheds' and prevent alternative spatial developments. By highlighting the presumed openness of the Eng, therefore, rules may be implemented – such as the limiting of sheds belonging to allotment gardens to a maximum height of 1 meter and a maximum surface of 2 square metres and restricting any forms of construction (not only buildings but also partitions) to a maximum height of 1.5 metres. Hence, with the representation of the Eng as an open area, there is no longer room within the new Allocation Plan for shelter opportunities or larger storage spaces. It is not surprising therefore that the 16 public comments to the predesign requesting for the building of shelters or larger storage spaces were all disregarded. This decision was justified by the basic principle guiding the new Allocation Plan, specifically its conservative character, meaning that no changes were allowed, including no opportunities for further spatial developments. More importantly, it highlights how such 'conservative' conceptualisations of the Eng, along with policy goals and the accompanying rules, decisively affect the materiality of the landscape.

The idea of maintaining and reinforcing the 'open character' of the Wageningse Eng has led to more regulations, restrictions, and prescriptions on what is allowed and what is not in the spatial development of the area. Remarkably, despite the fact that the predesign was published in order to allow citizens to have a say on its implementation, the majority of public reactions concerning the Wageningse Eng were either rebutted or turned down right away for not fitting into the 'conservative' character of the plan. Again, although the publication of the predesign was meant to encourage public participation and ensure a sense of transparency to the process – the cornerstone of spatial planning in the Netherlands – it appears that only comments in line with the established predesign were incorporated into the following stages. This very fact thus possibly questions the notion of public participation in Dutch spatial planning and the ways in which, at the local level, this may be incorporated in practice into the decision making process.

The performative power of the 'sightlines, sight areas and perspectives' map

Another example of how particular representations may have real effects on the material landscape is provided by the accounts from Mr and Mrs Evans who have been long-time residents of the Wageningse Eng. In 2002, they participated in a project aimed at strengthening the 'ecological structure' of the area by reintroducing 'old' landscape elements, and signed a 10-year contract with the commission of Landschapsbeheer Gelderland⁸ (Landscape Management Gelderland) responsible for the implementation of this project. Specifically, they sought to bring back a standard tree orchard on their property conforming to the location of the orchard as captured by old aerial pictures of the area. As the couple was then keeping their horses where the standard tree orchard was to have been established, and there was no follow up by the commission of Landschapsbeheer Gelderland, they decided to postpone the project. When they stopped keeping their horses there, they decided to proceed with the original plan and went on to plant 8 standard trees. However, reminiscent of the walnut tree incident mentioned at the beginning of this chapter, a neighbour lodged an objection to this. Even with the presence of a signed contract with Landschapsbeheer Gelderland, the Municipality declared the trees illegal. When the couple consulted the TAWÉ, they too came to the conclusion that the trees were illegal for obstructing an 'important' sightline (see figure 14). After a protracted debate, a compromise reached with the TAWÉ led to the removal of two trees perceived as blocking the sightline. The neighbour who lodged the initial objection remained unsatisfied with the situation and the dispute was still unresolved at the time of this research.

This particular dispute aside, what emerges here is again a discrepancy between historical conceptualisations of the landscape – including tree orchards, as shown by old aerial photos in the possession of Mr and Ms Evans – and other contemporary conceptualisations where the

⁸ The aim of Landschapsbeheer Gelderland is taking care of a vital, experiential and recognizable regionally characteristic landscape (Landschapsbeheer Gelderland, 2012).

trees no longer have a place, as determined by the 'sightline' rationale depicted by the TAWÉ map. This is clearly reflected in the following quote by Mr. and Mrs Evans on the turn of events:

“Because the line of approach was to restore the old cultural elements in the landscape, right, and the orchard also belonged to those as well as hedges. But of course it goes against the regulations of the Municipality, because woody vegetation is not allowed. (Mr Evans:) “Precisely, so that is all a bit contradictory.” (Ms Evans:) “Thus those trees, that is woody vegetation, but it is also an element in the cultural landscape. A standard tree, we especially selected an old apple strain.” [...] “And they [Landschapsbeheer Gelderland] say restore the cultural landscape but what moment of the past are you going to restore, right?.”

This raises the important question of which historical period should be taken as foundational when one speaks of 'returning' to the landscape of the past, something that has clear implications for how the 'right' landscape ought to be conceptualised and governed today. As the case shows, answers to this question potentially vary depending on *who speaks*. Even so, formal sets of representations, as concretised by 'the map' as much as by the forthcoming Allocation Plan, do seem to take precedence when material changes to the actual landscape are involved, hence demonstrating the way in which formal plans are not only subjective, but also instrumental in influencing real landscape production and practice, as these representations travel from the framing of policy to those who make the decisions on regulations and permits (Healey 2002).

According to the rules of the current plan, a permit is needed when planting woody vegetation. The criteria for granting a permit are: the proven necessity of this kind of vegetation for an efficient use of the land, and whether the resulting vegetation will substantially affect the 'open character' of the landscape. While the standard tree orchard discussed above may be seen as respecting and reinforcing the parcelling structure of the presumed (by some) 'authentic' historical landscape, it does however go against the (also presumed) 'open character' of the Eng,

as defined by the Allocation Plan. What is important for the sake of my argument, is indeed the more-than-representational role played by the term 'sightline' (as stated in the TAWÉ's map) and how this led to the removal of the trees.

The discussion here therefore sheds light on the performative capacity and the impact of representational practices within spatial planning. Regardless of their basis in historical accuracy, and notwithstanding the fact that these are in fact contested on the ground, spatial metaphors used to describe the Wageningse Eng – as defined by the formal planning documents and maps, such as 'openness', 'sightlines', 'unbroken area' and 'very striking views' – hold real implications *beyond the representational*; indeed they have led to actual material interventions in the landscape, such as the removal of trees. What we would like to argue then is that representations of the landscape, although contested, often remain important elements, or even 'acts', in shaping the materiality of the landscape: they perform real 'work' and produce real impact via the planning process. Landscape representations, in other words, despite the 'non-representational turn', must still be taken seriously when it comes to their actual effects on the spaces where people live and identify with; or at least this is illustrative of the Wageningse Eng, and possibly of many other Dutch cases.

This can indeed be interpreted as a plea for a 'more-than-representational' approach to the landscape within spatial planning, in which the landscape is as much part of the politics of representation, as it is of the daily spatial practice of the people gravitating around it. The performative power of the map in question, reflecting a representation of an ideal landscape made of sightlines and sight areas is derived from the map gaining a status of 'regime of truth' (Harley 1989; Woods 1992, 2010), as the comments from Ms Turner, a member of the SWE, suggest:

"That sightline map, I do think that is rather special, that map gains a status of truth, but that is located in a sightline, and then I think like well we can see five meters on the other side of the sightline and half a meter on the other side we also still can see."

Mr Hall, former member of the Association of Owners and Users of the Eng, even went as far as to make an analogy with religion when discussing the 'sightlines', which he refers to as 'a new article of faith'; their arbitrariness notwithstanding, they are still perceived as the way to go:

"[Name of a party] takes it extremely far in "nothing is allowed", the eng should remain open, and one building block of the fragile construction of the Wageningse Eng is absolutised, it is almost a religious something right, 'That's it, we're going for it, and up to the Council of State we're going to stop everything', and well that danger is enormous that that will ever happen."

The analogy with religion shows how this map is perceived by some as having the power of a revealed 'truth'.

Nevertheless, like the open character of the Eng, the notion of 'sightline' is also criticised:

"[Y]ou always get a situation with each sightline map you create that on paper there is a line, at the moment someone has a corner next to it is allowed, and someone in the centre cannot do it. That has a kind of inherent rigidity and arbitrariness, because you can draw the line of course a bit different." (Mr Hall, member of former Association of Owners and Users)

"[The map] where they only talk about sightlines, when I saw that ten years ago for the first time, really the piece was absolutely full of arrows implicating that everything was a sightline, yes that is not a sightline." (Ms Wilkinson, member of the Advisory Committee)

The most recent version of the map consists of 29 different elements (ranging from 'sight areas' to 'sightlines', to 'perspectives'). The map is a clear example of how, although arbitrary in nature, since those very lines could indeed be drawn differently, this representation of the landscape of the Eng creates the conditions for the actual implementation of future spatial developments in the area. As, again, Ms Evans puts it:

"That [the sightlines] is really questionable, you see, you can debate about it. And it is like this, there is a shed in the middle of the pasture [...] we agreed that the

shed actually stands in a sightline. So, then we thought, well, nice, if we would plant those fruit trees in the same line as the shed, then the shed would be more integrated in a piece of nature, that is what we thought.”

She then continues:

“We asked the opinion of a landscape architect, an independent person, and he said well those trees stand in the perfect place as they do now [...] because the trees of that neighbour over there those stand in the same line, and that reinforces the view. And in the past they also used to stand like this, yes. But well for peace and quiet we decided to agree with the TAWE, like we want this to end, we just want it solved, and yes.”

These quotes reflect on the arbitrary nature of the sightlines drawn by the TAWE; according to Ms Evans, an independent landscape architect would have drawn the lines differently. They also provide a concrete example of how powerful the ‘sightlines’ have become in the spatial development of the Eng, and how they have assumed the status of ‘regimes of truth’. The powerful impact of the ‘sightlines’, as determined by the map (and the ‘sight areas’ and ‘perspectives’, although these were not analysed in detail in this chapter for lack of space), is something that critically problematises the actual participatory nature of the planning process, at least in the cases described here. The TAWE, also thanks to its map - not an official document, but a potent more-than-representational tool indeed - has gained a dominant and powerful position in its role as advisory committee, while the map itself has achieved the status of a ‘regime of truth’ in the definition (and the management) of the Wageningse Eng landscape.

Conclusion

The Wageningse Eng has proven to be a useful example of how spatial planning, even in a country characterised by a long tradition of participatory practice like the Netherlands, may be affected by the more-than-representational power of some representations, and not others. In addition, the case studied here reveals how, while the traditional focus on ‘the visibility’ and on the representational aspects of landscape may rightly be criticised by the literature on non-

representational theory in geography, at the same time, representations remain powerful 'acts' if employed in documents produced by institutions with the capacity of incorporating them as 'regimes of truth'. This is precisely what we have tried to highlight in this chapter by emphasising the role played by spatial metaphors like the ones adopted within the two key documents taken into consideration here.

All in all, this chapter has shown how, within spatial planning practice, that is, the very 'act of spatial planning', the representational may still play a decisive role in conceptualising and 'naturalising' – as the realm of the taken-for-granted – what should and should not be allowed within the landscape. Representations captured in plans and maps in the case studied here have indeed become key and powerful sources in the definition of the natural and historical vocation of that landscape, for example by presenting it as 'open to spectacular views'.

Moreover, particular terms and representations of the (cultural) landscape of the Wageningse Eng appeared to have a performative power in affecting not only the materiality of the landscape, but also the practices of and within the landscape. Ad Maas' walnut tree was cut down for not fitting within the dominant institutional planning representations of the Wageningse Eng, such as those produced and circulated by the Municipality and the TAWE.

However, this chapter has also demonstrated how, despite the hegemonic affordances of such representations of the landscape, these do not always go uncontested. Their historical veracity aside, some of those who 'practise' the landscape on a day to day basis, such as residents and visitors, have also argued that a representation of the Wageningse Eng as an 'open' landscape with 'spectacular views' makes the actual use of the Eng very difficult (if not impossible). This implicitly accuses the politics of representation inherent to the incumbent planning of creating a 'deadening effect' (Cadman 2009: 1; Lorimer 2005: 83) on the landscape-as-a-place-to-live, where to keep horses, practise gardening, etc. A plea for a more-than-representational or post-representational approach to landscape planning practices would possibly allow for more attention to be paid to the actual practices *of* and *in* the Wageningse Eng landscape. This is particularly important in order to prevent 'participation' from becoming a mere pacifier term

denoting a process of consensus in building and cooperation, while actual decisions are made from the top-down. If spatial planning is indeed aimed at being an inclusive participatory process of decision making, the more-than-representational role of some spatial metaphors like the one analysed here should be taken into full consideration, also for their implication for the actual practice of landscape.

Chapter 4

Storytelling as Method in Spatial Planning*

Introduction

'In the constitutional state lies the basis for an enduring society. This asks for more than regulations considering government and decision-making. It is mostly about attention to each other's desires and opinions, and orientation to common interest.' (Former Dutch Queen Beatrix, Christmas Speech 2012).

This quote describes the core argument of this chapter, focused on the new allocation plan for the Dutch city of Wageningen and its consequences for the Wageningse Eng, a former cultivated area of the municipality now mostly devoted to leisure and recreational activities. In the Netherlands, an allocation plan represents the fundamental document regulating what is permissible in terms of 'spatial developments' at the local/municipal level. While the process of determining an allocation plan, in line with the quote above, is supposedly oriented towards the realisation of 'a common interest' encapsulating the 'desires and opinions' of its people, very much the cornerstone of Dutch participatory planning (Evers et al. 2000; Hagens 2010; Needham 2007), this chapter shows how the actual planning process can be highly vexed by myriad interests that are often incompatible, particularly when it comes to defining the cultural landscape and its meanings, and how these may in turn influence spatial development. In order to plug into geographical and planning literatures in terms of how certain positionalities are discursively constructed towards specific ends (Healey 2004), we also reflect on the ways in which notions such as 'just citizens' and 'knowledgeable experts' are socially constructed and mobilised towards undermining tenets of participatory planning within the Netherlands, often perceived more as a top-down decision making process which ultimately privileges some individuals while marginalising others.

* This chapter was accepted for European Planning Studies as Bulkens, M, Minca, C. and H. Muzaini (---) 'Storytelling as Method in Spatial Planning.'

By adopting 'storytelling' as a method of exploring the polyphony of different voices in the studied area, we also tap into current discussions about the role of 'storytelling' within planning practice. Rather than conceptualising this concept, as usually done within spatial planning, as being 'for' or 'of' spatial planning (to be elaborated later), we apply 'storytelling' in a different manner. Following what Riessman (2008: 103) refers to as 'structural narrative analysis', we investigate how 'speech' (within story-telling) is used as a means of revealing not only the ways in which individual positionalities are constructed but also how spatial planning is 'experienced' by those officially responsible for designating the 'right' landscape, as well as the people who 'practice' the landscape on a more everyday capacity. In this sense, it speaks to what Lorimer (2005) introduced in cultural geography as the 'more-than-representational', denoting how landscapes are not only to be understood as representational, but also how these are practiced and performed on a daily basis. Cameron (2012: 575) claims that, with the recent interest in non-representational and affective geographies, 'stories' are increasingly seen as 'an expressive method and an affective tool, designed both to demonstrate affective and emergent geographies and to move audiences toward new realms of thought and practice.' In a similar vein, storytelling is used here to move beyond the realm of representations of cultural landscapes captured in the form of official discourses, in favour of stories engaging with the lived experiences of landscape by residents and users. Nevertheless, what will become clear is that official representations of the landscape do still affect the 'actual' landscape practices of those living and making use of it on a daily basis.

This chapter also responds to Healey's (2002: 47) suggestion that within spatial planning all too often space and place have been treated as 'objective' and 'naturally given' materialities that could be incorporated 'in spatial concepts for strategic purposes', while the 'lived landscape' is instead materialised through the diverse and contested meanings attached by those living in, working in and using one particular landscape. The workings of these conceptions of space and place, she further argues, have received too little attention within spatial planning research and practice. Likewise, the chapter contributes to Hillier's (2007) plea within spatial planning theory

for a post-representational approach, by asking planning practitioners to reflect upon the role of spatial representations in their work and their impact in the process of 'actually planning'. This chapter thus attempts to demonstrate, adopting a narrative analysis, how the politics of representation within spatial planning affects landscape practice of those who live in and make use of the Wageningse Eng. Moreover, the chapter discusses how spatial planning sometimes produces landscape representations constraining or even banning some key practices of/in/from the landscape. We conclude with a general discussion on the use of 'storytelling' as a method within spatial planning research, and on how this speaks to some of the 'more-than-representational' concerns of contemporary cultural geographers.

Storytelling in Participatory Planning

Dutch spatial planning is often depicted as a process based on consensus building, cooperation, and consultation (Evers et al. 2000; Hagens 2010; Needham 2007). These participatory planning processes are often characterised by the involvement of non-governmental actors (including various stakeholders as well as ordinary citizens) who are invited to voice their vested interests, preferences, and demands for the area in which the planning process takes place, and become co-decision makers in these processes (Van Assche 2004). This contrasts with other, more traditional planning approaches, where policy makers are responsible for deciding what is best for the people, often on account of their assumptions of 'the collective good', and conceived in order to achieve particular material effects and often legitimise the authoritative power of the state (on this, see Gunder 2003; Healey 2002).

Diverse authors have shown the importance of storytelling within spatial planning (e.g. Myers and Kituse 2000; Sandercock 2003; Throgmorton 1992, 1993). Sandercock (2010: 17, 20), for example, argues that 'a 'story turn' is well under way in planning', since a 'better understanding of the role of stories can make us more effective as planning practitioners, irrespective of the substantive field of planning'. According to Van Hulst (2012: 302, 303), there are two strands in which storytelling may be mobilised within the work of spatial planning: first, as a model *of* the ways in which planning is practiced, where planning is perceived as a type of storytelling;

second, as a model *for* the way planning could and should be practiced, a more normative approach in which the focus is on how storytelling can improve planning practices, particularly in terms of allowing for planning alternatives to be considered.

The work of both John Forester (1999) and James Throgmorton (1993, 1996) may be described as corresponding to the first strand, where storytelling is a way in which planning is practiced. In his book 'The Deliberative Practitioner', Forester (1999) uses the stories of planning professionals about their experiences in order to provide insights on how deliberative planning practices actually feed into and facilitate participatory planning processes. For Throgmorton, within planning, storytelling is capitalised upon as a means of persuading people that particular kinds of spatial developments should be implemented, where 'in the end, such stories shape meaning and tell readers (and listeners) what is important and what not.' (1993: 128) The difference between this narrative strategy and more conventional planning descriptions (which are usually self-defined as more 'factual' and seemingly objective) is that, through storytelling, arguments are more infused with emotions (to move people or tug at their heart-strings), something supposedly giving more credibility to the plans and their related objectives before the broader public.

Sandercock's (2003: 2010) work instead fits more within the second strand, intending storytelling as a way in which planning should and could be practised. Her work indeed shows how storytelling may be used to facilitate the process of participatory planning, either in framing alternatives for the future, or in challenging the old foundational stories that often no longer accommodate the changing nature of contemporary cosmopolitan cities, or even in eliciting the local knowledge in and of the area and/or community. In this regard, storytelling refers more to the act of obtaining the personal stories, desires and experiences of residents and users of a particular landscape, and then taking these into consideration within planning. Rather than operating as a tool in support of hegemonic discourses to be proposed to the larger public, this model of story-telling *for* spatial planning privileges the concerns of the people rather than those of the institutional planning elites, thus being more representative of the 'democratic' nature of

participatory planning ideology, even as 'it is not always clear... how these collective stories will be used in the subsequent process' (Sandercock 2010: 20). The latter pertains to how the act of harvesting local stories may lull people into thinking that they have been heard (and give the impression that planners do care), although the stories themselves may not necessarily be taken into account in the actual planning processes, a form of paying lip service without a genuine commitment to ensure voices 'from the ground' have been incorporated into the process, even if this allows 'planning authors [to] announce that the citizen[s] have authorized the plan' (Eckstein 2003: 19). Yet, less considered within the literature are the ways in which the people themselves may capitalise upon 'story-telling' as a means of achieving their own objectives, or of exposing the limits of participatory planning. Within cultural geography, Harvey and Riley (2005: 7) argue that not only one voice or one story should be acknowledged, but a variety of different stories, 'some scientifically 'correct' and others [more] personal, ironic or symbolic'. While such narratives may be perceived as a means of corroborating commonly accepted interpretations of the landscapes in question, they can also be used to contest these very interpretations, thereby creating the opportunity for subordinated views and dissenting stories of people to be heard (Gilbert 2002; Kane 2000). In this regard, they can therefore:

'both destabilise the linear and scientifically derived narratives of landscape development, and also offer alternative, personally or socially embedded narratives that reflect the contingency of all processes of knowledge production – to allow a hidden community to 'speak out' (Harvey and Riley 2005: 14).

In light of this, the present article instead engages with a third strand, one that understands story-telling not only as a way of describing the planning process ('of') or as a prescriptive tool of participatory planning ('for'), but also as a strategy to allow individuals affected by a spatial planning project to voice their concerns and their respective positions. We thus deliberately focus on how individuals use language to construct themselves in relation to the political process in question, to other individuals and groups involved, and to the landscape. By doing

this, we reflect on how participatory spatial planning in the particular case-study is 'performed' from the 'bottom-up'.

In this last respect, we follow up on Jensen's (2007: 216) claim that '[the] linkage between place and narrative is an under-developed theme in the conceptualisation of narratives'. Dormans (2008: 12) similarly states that 'narrative studies remained a relative marginal phenomenon in geography.' Nevertheless, there are important exceptions. Within (cultural) geography, for example, Tuan (1991) has famously argued for the crucial role played by language in the making of place. Finnegan (1998) instead has used storytelling in great depth to explore how residents in Milton Keynes construct narratives about their town making use of extended biographies. Riley et al. (2005) have adopted the oral history approach often used in landscape archaeology to frame alternative narratives of landscape. Another example of geographical use of narrative analysis is the work of Tamboukou (2000, 2012), who has analysed the letters of female artists at the late nineteenth and early Twentieth Century to research how these women made use of and interact with space in the framing of their lives (see also Dormans 2008; Jensen 2007; Kitchell 2009). Yet, none of these interventions have touched upon the ways in which narrative analysis may be applied in the study of how participatory planning is experienced and constructed by the parties involved. This article thus intends to cover that void and aims at investigating how, through storytelling, different subjects construct themselves, other subjects, their histories and their relationship to the Wageningse Eng landscape – and the spatial plans that may intervene in those relationships. Storytelling then is understood as an act of resistance, but also as a way of voicing concerns about these subjects' actual possibility of using the area in question, of practicing the landscape in line with their own vested interest and their own vision of that highly contested piece of land.

Narrative interviewing and narrative analysis

In their stories, individuals recall, structure and create order out of their experiences with and in their physical, social and cultural realities (Bruner 1990; Cronon 1992; Crossley 2003; Foster 2006). Thus, stories help individuals to come to know, understand and make sense of their life-

worlds (Somers 1994). An essential role in this process of dealing with different realities and worlds is played by meaning. One of the ways in which individuals 'create and give meaning to [their] social reality' (Hydén 1997: 50) is through narratives. While constrained by social conventions and linguistic rules, narratives nonetheless help people understand the world around them, and provide them with meaning (Bury 2001). However, personal stories are always inherently subjective, embedded with interpretations, thoughts and emotions (Chase 2005). The subjective nature of stories is thus reflected in the value judgements individuals make in their stories (Cronon 1992). The process through which people create a coherent, logically structured narrative has been described as *emplotment* (see Hydén 1997). According to Kane (2000: 316), '[t]hrough emplotment, narratives explain experience, evoke emotion, engage participation, and normatively evaluate courses of action, all crucial functions of interpretation'. Hence, in narrative analysis, particular emphasis is placed on the plot and the construction of the story by individuals, and on the motivations for the 'telling'.

As part of my investigation concerning spatial planning and landscape at the Wageningse Eng ten people were thus interviewed; four residents, five individuals (formerly) involved with one of the organisations concerned with the development of that area, and one representative of the municipality. Following Harvey and Riley (2005), this selection was conceived in order to capture the diversity of stories circulating around the spatial planning process at the Eng, and particularly the discussions pertaining to the 'allocation plan'. As these discussions were still ongoing during the period of fieldwork, pseudonyms are used in this article to protect the identity of the interviewees. The interviews were formatted according to the four phases of narrative interviewing, as introduced by Jovchelovitch and Bauer (2000):

- First, the "initial central topic" is introduced with an explanation of the interview procedure;
- Second, the interviewee is invited to tell his/her stories;
- Third, the interviewer fills up possible gaps by asking questions, often in relation to important information not mentioned during the storytelling;

- Fourth, the interview is ended with episodes of small talk, where possibly valuable additional contextual information is revealed.

The “initial central topic” was introduced by the question: ‘Can you tell me what role the Wageningse Eng plays in your life, and what meaning the Wageningse Eng has for you?’ This question aimed at getting people to narrate their own experiences, role(s) and interests in the area. At this stage, we did not make reference to the allocation plan for the Wageningse Eng, in order to see whether the respondents would bring this issue up themselves. When this was not the case, the topic was raised during the ‘questioning phase’ of the interview. The data collected was then examined using ‘structural narrative analysis’ in order to research ‘how participants use speech to construct themselves and their histories’ (Riessman 2008: 103), through the way in which they structure their narrative. This focus on the ordering of events was based on the assumption that the narrator aimed for a particular effect and had strategic reasons for structuring her/his story in order to communicate the related content in an effective and persuasive way (Riessman 1990, 2008). However, as Finnegan (1998: 173) argues:

‘if stories are realised in their tellings, their roles must depend on the participants in that enactment (listener/readers as well as tellers) and on how the tales are told and heard. Some tellers are more powerful than others in particular situations or for particular people, or deploy their skills and formulate their ideas more effectively, or draw larger audiences.’

Acknowledging this, we used storytelling to examine how individuals experience and give meaning to spatial processes. The focus, therefore, is on how they use language to construct not only themselves in relation to the political nature of spatial planning, but also others, as well as their visions of the landscape, towards specific ends although to varying degrees of success. A thematic analysis was thus applied in order to identify overarching themes emerging from the interviews. In addition to the structural narrative analysis above mentioned, the focus here was also on the thick, rich and detailed content of the narratives being communicated (Riesmann 2008).

Wageningse Eng

This research was conducted at the Wageningse Eng, a former agricultural area of about 595 acres located on the eastside of the municipality of Wageningen, a city of about 37,000 inhabitants located in the Dutch province of Gelderland north of the river Rhine (Gemeente Wageningen 2012a). While historically an agricultural piece of land at a dry and elevated location (thus known as an 'Eng'), it is now mainly used as a residential area, as well as for leisure and recreational activities such as horse keeping, allotment gardening, small-scale biological farming, flower picking gardening, and the cultivation of trees and plants (Gemeente Wageningen 2012a; Renes 1983).

The research took place during a period immediately following the publication on the part of the municipality of a pre-design for the determination of a new allocation plan, including the Wageningse Eng. In the plan the rules and allocations for future spatial developments are specified. Reason for doing so was that this is the first instance in which people are invited to participate before the formal procedures starts (Gemeente Wageningen 2012b). The second moment follows from the obligation of the municipality to put the design out for inspection, so that people are again able to express their views (Wro 2012). These two moments are the key 'sites' of actual (though virtual) interaction between planners and the public. Both pre-design and design are made available electronically, at the national website containing all Dutch spatial plans⁹, and in print to be consulted at the Town Hall.

However, the area in question knows a longer history of public participation. To streamline the planning processes a foundation was in fact established in 2009, the Stichting Wageningse Eng (SWE), made up of a group of volunteers with no direct vested interest in the area, its goal being to stimulate maintenance and reinforcement of the natural, cultural and historical significance of the Eng alongside developing sustainable forms of use within it (Stichting Wageningse Eng 2012). The foundation is managed by an executive committee that represents different parties involved with the Eng. There exists also an advisory council composed of different parties

⁹ www.ruimtelijkeplannen.nl

(users, residents, owners, recreational users, and environmental/landscape organisations) that provides the foundation with solicited and unsolicited advice. Additionally, another layer of organisation includes the Territoriale Advies Commissie Wageningse Eng (Territorial Advisory Committee of the Wageningse Eng, or TAWE), appointed by the Mayor and Aldermen to advise on matters pertaining to municipal policy developments, licenses, and all other issues concerning the Wageningse Eng (Huijbers 2009). The members of this committee have no involvement with the foundation or the advisory council, and act as an 'independent' advisory body.

Aside from the SWE, other important associations operating in the area include Mooi Wageningen (literally: 'Beautiful Wageningen') and the Wageningse Milieu Overleg (WMO) (roughly, 'Wageningse Environmental Deliberation'). These two bodies, due to differences in views, did not become part of the SWE, but have remained interest groups involved in the spatial planning processes at the Eng. A variety of social actors beyond the municipality is thus involved in the development of the Wageningse Eng. The rest of the chapter examines the ways in which the role and importance of these different social actors have been constructed through language, and their attendant impacts on the planning of the Eng.

Narratives of the Eng and 'its people'

'Just a citizen'

When looking at the stories of the residents of the Wageningse Eng, it becomes clear that they highly appreciate their living environment, something often expressed by their reference to the 'quietness' and the 'natural character' of the Wageningse Eng. Yet, family and personal biographies also play an important role in the residents' attachments to, and appreciation of, their landscape. Referring to the trees in her garden, Ms Davies, a 69 year old woman living at the Eng for 27 years, describes the emotional value that the immediate surrounding has for her due to family history and 'life work':

“I mean that tree is of my oldest daughter, a little crooked, and then here the tree of my youngest daughter, and there the oak of my son...then there are trees for my grandchildren. So for me it has quite some emotional value... yes here lies our life’s work, and I find that very valuable. Look, in the front garden there stands a walnut tree, and I gave it to my husband on the day he received his PhD. So on the day of his defence he first planted a tree, because I once read that a man in his life should write a book, plant a tree, and beget a son.”

Here Ms Davies constructs a narrative in which she carefully introduces her children and grandchildren symbolised through the trees planted in her garden. She extends the fragment by also introducing her husband, who passed away in 2007, but is memorialised in the landscape through the tree he planted on the day of his PhD defence. The structuring of all these different narrative elements referring to objects in the landscape, and what they symbolise in Ms Davies’ life, construct an emotionally laden narrative, as she adds herself “it has for me quite some emotional value”.

Similarly, Mr and Ms Collins, who have lived on the same property for generations, also echoed sentiments on the high degree of emotional value attached to their property:

(Mr Collins:) “I quite often realise, or think what would my grandfather have done during this season, you know those kinds of things.” (Ms Collins:) “And you once said that when you are digging you think with every dig how often was this soil dug up by us... By my family. And you still gain food from it, from the same soil. [...] And then you really continue on what your father and grandfather started here.” (Mr Collins:) “That’s why you feel involved with your environment when you live here this long, that is how it is.”

Just like in the case of Mrs Davies, therefore, an emotionally laden narrative is also constructed by Mr and Ms Collins whilst referring to elements of family life and togetherness when talking about their environment, the result of living as a family in the area for a long time and their sense of belonging to the landscape of the Wageningse Eng.

These fragments are clear examples of the 'more-than-representational' quality of the cultural landscape, as important elements of their stories are formed by so-called 'life-work', here referring to practices in/of the landscape, like 'digging the same land as generations did before them', or 'planting a tree to commemorate a watershed moment in their lives'. For them, these practices have transformed and continue to transform the landscape into 'home' and an indelible part of their Selves. Home becomes defined through the 'affective aspect' in their stories, as home can 'only be lived through. Therefore, a lifeworld cannot be observed from any point of view other than the community itself.' (Kiisel 2013: 238)

Despite the intimate and emotional relationship these residents have with the landscape, and their related desire to have a say in how it is planned, however, when asked about the planning processes at the Eng, many of them constructed themselves as 'just a citizen'. Indeed, in contradiction to the idea that planning practices in the Netherlands should as much as possible involve the local population (Hagens 2010; Van Assche 2004), the residents of the Eng not (having been) affiliated with groups such as the SWE, Mooi Wageningen, or the WMO, tend to see themselves as relative outsiders with respect to the official planning processes. One reason for this has to do with to the (low) degree of influence they believe to have, an assessment usually based on their first-hand encounters with the municipality, such as that experienced by Ms Collins:

"An uncle of ours, was a town clerk in a big city in Gelderland, and he had a lot of experience in these things, he was of great help to us, because otherwise we would long ago have been bogged down in all the rules, we would have been intimidated by all the letters and penalties, and there are different means to enforce it. Really very unpleasant, now I let it go a bit, but in the beginning you could get sick of it."

In her perception, if not for the personal ties she had, to be directly involved in planning practices at the Wageningse Eng would have been an overwhelming experience due to the use of technical jargons and the complexity of the bureaucratic regulations, what Agger and Larsen

(2009: 1087) refer to as 'discursive exclusion', which have an intimidating effect on, what Mr Collins, her husband, defines as "just a citizen".

In addition, Ms Moore, among other residents, also expressed scepticism on the commitment planning practitioners in the area has to improve the landscape or/and the well-being of its residents:

"I feel at home in this area, but I do not trust politics actually, eventually it is all about money I think, and yes. [...] an ordinary citizen like me, who says I like to live here, and I would like the Eng to remain as it is, then they think "Nice but that does not bring us anything" and that she should look the other way or something."

Arguably, their sense of being 'just a citizen' was borne out of rules and regulations officially stipulated, which made them feel as if they did not have the right knowledge and expertise to act, or the financial means to bring about change. These explain why residents at the Wageningse Eng do not often react when spatial developments threaten their living environment. A structural narrative analysis of their overall comments also reveals that their own narrative constructions as 'just a citizen' denotes a feeling of powerlessness within the participatory planning processes at the Eng, in which they do not feel they have a voice. Structural narrative analysis of the stories told by the residents of the Wageningse Eng here may thus provide those working on and in spatial planning the actual possibility of getting in-depth insights on how planning is experienced by people and how the latter perceive and construct themselves within these processes. However, considering the relatively low response to the online consultation, one wonders whether this low participation may indeed be read as a sign of their (often manifested) feeling of their voices not actually being heard

Knowledgeable experts

While residents have a general feeling of inadequacy in terms of contributing to the shaping of spatial processes at the Eng, there are others who instead construct themselves as being knowledgeable and having the right expertise to be able to act. Many of these are indeed

members of interest groups of the Eng, in relation to which they unsurprisingly tend to portray themselves as more than 'just a citizen' as far as questions of landscapes are concerned. Mr Wood, for example, a member of the TAWÉ, is adamant about this: "I know more than a citizen, because I studied soil science. I can read the landscape." This makes clear how the professional background of some members of interest groups is the basis for a narrative constructed around knowledge and expertise about area developments, allocation plans, environmental protection, and land leases, which render them more authoritative in processes of spatially developing the area. This positioning is confirmed by Mr Adams, the alderman responsible for spatial planning in Wageningen, who, when interviewed as the representative of the local government, explains how the municipality deals with the advice given by the TAWÉ:

"And the TAWÉ can give us solicited and unsolicited advice about what would be useful for the situation there. [...] we do not have to abide by their advice as council, but then you have to have what it takes to do that. In principle we have seen that those people of TAWÉ and their expertise do not give us any reason to not abide, not at all."

The TAWÉ is here constructed as a body composed of 'knowledgeable experts', thus legitimized to have an authoritative voice in the planning processes at the Eng. Members of these 'authoritative' stakeholder groups may not necessarily have any vested interest in the area, but are asked because of their skills and expertise. More importantly, it also constructs an image of the committee in relation to others in claiming an authoritative voice capable of playing a more significant role in the planning process. Here is an indication of how the concerns of the 'ordinary citizens' highlighted above may not at all be unfounded, their voices possibly sidelined due to their lack of professional expertise in the matter, and a widespread sense of powerlessness in the process. Those without a vested interest in the Eng (vis-à-vis those discussed earlier with intimate relationships with its landscape), might have other reasons for their involvement, like for example, Ms Mitchell, member of the SWE:

“I am not particularly asked as a devotee of the Eng, but more because I had experience with area processes, because that was my work, and uhm I was seated in the municipal council, and those two connected apparently made me an attractive chairman to pull the club of people who are very much connected with the Eng. [...] It is more of a hobby, a kind of a means of passing the time, and it is more because I like to manage, than that I really think the Eng has my heart or something like that.”

Similarly, Mr Wood, member of the TAWÉ, claims:

“I think it is a beautiful part, I enjoy being there, but I don’t go there often, and I like it as material to think about it, uh how can we maintain and enforce it.”

While the involvement of ‘knowledgeable experts’ does not necessarily entail their direct stake in the landscape of the Eng, however, this does not mean that they do not care for the Eng, although their emphasis tends to be more on an objective vision of the landscape and less on the subjective elements related to ‘living (in) the landscape’ itself, as clearly expressed by the declared aims of the Stichting Wageningse Eng (of which the TAWÉ is part) as stipulated earlier. It appears, therefore, that, even within participatory planning at the Eng, formal and rational knowledge and expertise takes precedence over more quotidian aspects (as captured in biographical narrations and emotional attachments to the landscape experienced day to day), which perhaps explains why residents feel yet again that they do not have much of a say.

Nevertheless, the research shows a difference in the value attached to the landscape between those with and without direct stakes in the Eng. Ms Thompson, a member of the advisory council of the SWE, also owns land at the Eng on which she keeps her horses. Although affiliated to those with vested interests in the area, she is also an ‘expert’ being employed by one of the national governmental agencies focused on landscape management:

“Those are just all different lines of approach, which really all exist next to each other. At the moment, let me say it like this, when I have horses and would not have land, it becomes important to own land. And at the moment the Wageningen

municipality came up with the idea that uhm well yes like it is now put in that vision, no hiding places, no horses, those users, that committee becomes very important again. So it is a bit shifting between different fields at the same time at the Wageningse Eng.”

Here, Ms Thompson reflects upon how being a land user and a committee member at the same time requires a bit of juggling between her different subjectivities (as resident and as ‘expert’), although she did highlight how there can be dissonance in terms of how planning of landscapes should entail more than just firm knowledge and rational decisions:

“Because I wonder if we here uh well yes are we eventually handling the landscape properly, are we capable of finding something for it. In terms of [name of governmental agency she is working at], let me put it like that, it is not going well with that area, because you are not looking at the current situation, you are not looking at the users. Well then you already ignored the two most important points for the development of an area.”

This quote reveals how she perceives landscape development processes as more than just something to theorise about. Given her ownership of land at the Eng and her horses, she expresses a sense of attachment to that landscape. This leads her to manifest a degree of frustration about the current planning process of the Eng, related to the policy of ‘no hiding places’, ‘no horses’ mentioned in her quote. This is in line with a more general frustration voiced by people owning and using land at the Eng, not only in terms of the existing limitations imposed by the municipality on what is allowed at the Eng, but also in their voices not being heard.

Other residents, when interviewed, have also questioned the positionality of the ‘knowledgeable experts’ and expressed frustration at the fact that some of those who do not live at the Eng (but are members of interest groups) sometimes totally disregard the needs of local users. Ms Thompson, for instance, complains about the attitude of the WMO and Mooi Wageningen:

“Some never come at the Eng, but are loud-mouthed about what they want at the Eng. [...] And that is a situation that actually never occurs, that people, who

actually do not use an area, are so loud-mouthed, who have that, and [due to their expertise they are still] listened to, [while] the actual users [of the landscape are put] actually a bit at the back.”

Mooi Wageningen, in particular, is a group that is constructed, in the residents’ and users’ narratives, as a relative outsider with a strong position in the local planning process. As Mr Parker, a member of the former Association of Owners and Users of the Wageningse Eng, puts it:

“One group, I say it, you can already feel a little where my sympathy lies, that group has a tendency as a relative outsider to shout that the Eng should remain open.”

In these narratives, several groups, such as Mooi Wageningen, are indeed presented as composed of outsiders, who are however perceived to have a larger say in what happens at the Eng. This leads to frustrations among those with a direct stake in the area. Similar comments are made about the role of the municipality, lacking involvement with the area and presented as negatively influencing the planning processes. The municipality is also accused of listening more to the voices of these ‘authoritative’ groups, than to those of the self-defined ‘just citizens’, residents and users:

(Ms Collins:) “And you are confronted with it again and again, that they at the municipality don’t know how it is, they don’t know how to do it themselves.” (Mr Collins:) “That’s a shame... indeed an affinity with the area is missing in a lot of people there.” (Ms Collins:) “Yes they do not feel a connection with it, they only focus on the rules. They should be more involved.”

(Ms Thompson:) “This is also the municipality right, and I don’t know why the municipality listens so strongly to this, I don’t know why that is the case, it can be a lot of politics right, and uhm yes I suspect it to be the case.”

These narratives thus depict an unbalanced situation in which users of the Wageningse Eng complain of not being heard by the municipality, while those not living or making use of the Eng are presented as being much more influential. They also highlight clear dissonance between

conceptualisations of the landscape-as-a-place to which one belongs and those of the landscape-as-a-space to be consumed for recreational purposes only. We also recorded a perceived discrepancy between 'external' authoritative voices and those considering the Wageningse Eng part of their biography, their everyday life. The narrative analysis therefore shows a tension inherent to the ways in which participatory planning is implemented. Often, the very committees claiming to represent residents and users in advising municipality are constructed by the residents and users themselves as undermining their own interests and visions for future developments of the area in question. This confirms Graham and Healey's (1999: 641) claim that

'planners often also unwittingly allow the conceptions of articulate and powerful groups, who have clear ideas about their space-time parameters and relational orientations, to dominate. Too often, the relational time-spaces of powerful, corporate economic and social interests are presented as the single alternative available, to capture, present and characterize a 'place'.'

Conversely, the research also highlights how these same residents and users are constructed, in the narratives of the interest groups, as being very demanding and expressing needs often seen to (negatively) affect the landscape. As Mr Smith, member of Mooi Wageningen, states:

"So it is setting course to uh yes the interests of maintaining a high landscape quality, but mainly with a realistic image of what is necessary and desirable for current users without falling for every argument that everything is necessary [...] You can plan all kinds of use there, and say like we need this now, because we have this kind of use [horse keeping], yes you started to use it like that, that is your choice, but then you cannot say that use should be accompanied by a stable."

A member of the SWE expresses similar concerns:

"Yes you know what bothers me the most is, so to speak, the attitude like uh I have a horse, [...] and uhm that is now also your problem. Then I think 'No I don't have a horse, and I also don't have a problem'. No, you know that you bought a

piece of land over there of which you knew you could not build something, that you decide to put two Arabian horses there, well yes I am sorry, but that really is your own problem.”

Despite the importance, within participatory planning in the Netherlands, of building consensus around planning practices and ensuring that all voices are heard, these two quotes demonstrate that users of the Wageningse Eng are indeed a variegated group of individuals, each with their own agendas and motives, the constructions of whom disrupt how ‘inclusive’ the process may be perceived by the different constituencies. For example, in the last quote horse keepers are constructed as ‘highly demanding’ and somehow selfish in their claims.

The Alderman made a similar comment on the construction of sheds and stables, showing how, in the formulation of the new allocation plan, the requests of some of the users are dismissed:

“I have seen the wildest plans, but basically at the moment you bought that piece of land did you realise that you cannot put up constructions, or a building for animals, or for tools, so that is out of order. [...] We are again fully confronted with it, we are again not going to allow it in the new allocation plan.”

All in all, structural narrative analysis reveals how, even within participatory planning, parties construct themselves and others in a variety of ways, at times generating deep tensions and frustrations, which in turn complicate the planning process based on the principle of building consensus. More importantly, it shows how the multiple constructions of ‘selves’ and ‘others’, through the use of specific narratives, may have material consequences not only for the landscape, but also for the ways in which people are treated and planning practices actualised on the ground.

Conclusion

In this chapter we utilised ‘storytelling’ as an alternative approach for a more in-depth understanding of how participatory planning processes are experienced and perceived in the specific context of the Wageningse Eng in the Netherlands. Two overarching themes, as presented by the different ‘narrating subjects’ interviewed, have been highlighted in terms of

how these subjects describe their respective roles as well as others': 'just a citizen' (in the context of ordinary residents) and 'knowledgeable experts' (often members of non-governmental institutions). These narratives/stories have real implications not only for the landscape, but also for the ability of these different narrating subjects to have an influence on or to exercise effective planning procedures. Such narratives, as revealed through the stories told by the interviewees, indeed show how participatory planning may, at different scales and times, result in feelings of empowerment – as in the case of TAWÉ's influence in municipal decision making due to their expertise – or, in other cases, of powerlessness – as evidenced by residents' feelings of inadequacy due to bureaucratic red tape and their perceived lack of expertise.

Moreover, this perceived high degree of bureaucracy also limits the interaction between planners and 'just citizens'. Due to the jargon being used, the pre-design and design consultation stages prove too convoluted for 'just citizens' to verbalise their interests in a language that fits those of the planners. Matters become more complicated when the virtual platform on which citizens could interact with planners via the national webpage is also experienced as highly inaccessible.

More importantly, through the narratives analysed, questions about the real commitment on the part of the municipality to ensure that all interests have been considered in the process have emerged. Despite the ideals encapsulated by the Dutch tradition in landscape participatory planning, based on the notion of building consensus among vested interests (Hagens, 2010; Needham, 2007; cf. Allemendinger and Haughton 2012), the actual planning practice can indeed make it a highly contested process - seen by some as emancipatory, by others as highly tyrannical (Cooke and Kothari 2001). In this article, we have thus presented 'storytelling' beyond a mere means of describing the planning process (as model *of* spatial planning) or as a resource that planners may tap on towards realising more inclusivity in the process (as model *for* spatial planning) (van Hulst 2012); rather, we have treated it as a means through which different perspectives on participatory planning may be sought, especially where hidden frustrations may be brought to the fore. This knowledge 'from below' may provide planners with

the necessary awareness of how people perceive participatory planning on the ground and subsequently address these negative concerns (Allmendinger and Haughton 2012).

Finally, the chapter has shown how planning entails more than just reasoned and rational arguments for how the development of a landscape should take place; in addition to that, there is also the need to engage with, as Davies et al (2012: 356) put it, 'the effective connections, materialities, and experiences which structure public interactions with urban spaces'. This relates to the necessity for planners, particularly those abiding by the principles of participatory planning based on consensus, not only to refrain from using technical jargons and protracted procedures so as to allow for more people to conveniently engage with the process, but also to take serious considerations of the 'lived' engagements and the 'many ways of knowing' of those who use, or reside at, that specific landscape (Sandercock 1998: 217). Indeed, the stories highlighted here reveal the deep attachments that some parties have with the Eng's landscape, such as when it is intimately presented as 'home' and part of their (family) life and history. Where these ran up against 'expert' or 'scientific' discourses, particularly sourced from those seen as lacking emotional ties to the landscape, it may lead to frustrations when the latter are privileged, the end result being that the bottom-up process of participatory planning is in turn seen as a top down event which marginalises, if not excludes altogether, the voices of those that matter.

More than contributing to the planning literature, this chapter also speaks to some of the 'more-than-representational' concerns of cultural geography (Lorimer 2005; cf. Thrift 2007). First, the focus on storytelling adds to the growing corpus of works within the discipline interested in how, via the use of individual narratives, 'personal experience and expression interweave with the social, structural, or ideological' towards shedding light on peoples' lived and every day encounters with their environment, which could serve to corroborate or destabilize dominant discourses (Cameron 2012: 574). Second, it reflects on the ways that representations of landscape are more than mere signifiers of what is 'out there'; they hold real implications on the ground. Yet, given how intentions for landscape appropriation are 'often entangled in a series of

contingent, networked relationships in circumstances' (Hillier 2008: 26; also 2007), it is also a reminder that the end results are all too often not only 'volatile' but unpredictable. Finally, narrative analysis has confirmed once again that landscape is not only something to think about rationally but also something that may be intimate and subjectively 'felt', bound as it were, with the biographies of those who come across it. In the spirit of the 'affective turn' within the social sciences' (Clough and Halley 2007), storytelling, we argue, offers one useful way in which to get to these visceral perspectives of landscapes, thus, portending 'a return to the living, feeling, experiential, and relational dimensions of being' (Cameron 2012: 575).

Chapter 5

Dutch New Nature: (Re)Landscaping the Millingerwaard[∞]

Introduction

'New nature' started to feature in Dutch nature development discourses when in 1968, 'spontaneous nature' began to emerge out of the marshy part of the reclaimed South Flevoland polder. This area was initially earmarked for industrial activities and glasshouses, but protracted delays due to prevailing economic circumstances in the 1970s meant that by the time the plans for this area were brought up again, a thriving diversity of plant and animal species had begun to inhabit the area without any human intervention. Today, this area, known as the Oostvaardersplassen, is regarded as an ecologically valuable wetland area and plans to industrialise it have been shelved (Keulartz 2009; Vera 2009). More generally, the Oostvaardersplassen case marks the beginning of what eventually became the implementation of 'new nature' as conceptualised within Dutch nature development thinking, where nature is 'created' and 'restored' rather than merely preserved (Doevendans et al. 2007; Keulartz 2009; Onneweer 2009; Van den Belt 2004; Van der Heijden 2005; Vera 1988, 2009).

The 'spontaneous' nature development in the Oostvaardersplassen in fact evolved in a nature development discourse captured in spatial plans aimed at the creation of 'new nature'. The 'new nature' concept has, since then, dramatically changed the Dutch landscape, including the Millingerwaard where the fieldwork was conducted. Located in the province of Gelderland, in one of the inner curves of the river Waal, the Millingerwaard is currently the focus of a national development project aimed at 'decreas[ing] the water level by 9 centimetres in times of high water levels, creating 265 hectares of new nature, and improving the landscape quality' (Dienst

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Landelijk Gebied¹⁰ 2012c, author's emphasis). The intended effect of this project is the transformation of this former clay mining and agricultural area into a 'nature development' area. The employment of the concept of 'new nature' in the Netherlands may be understood as part of a broader discourse on ecological restoration in Europe. In this context, it is often presented as the result of a return to a natural environment exempt from human intervention, one example of which is the Rewilding Europe project, aimed at making Europe a 'wilder place' (Rewilding Europe 2011). Much has been written within the field of restoration ecology on both 'rewilding' and the Dutch implementation of 'new nature', particularly in terms of their effectiveness as ecological restoration procedures (e.g. Hedberg and Kotowski 2010; Hodder and Bullock 2010; Soulé and Noss 1998; Soulé and Terborg 1999; Vera 1988, 2009). However, how such discourses are ultimately practised and perceived by residents and users has been less investigated (although, see Buijs et al. 2004; Buijs 2009). Yet, as this chapter goes on to demonstrate, discourses of 'new nature' have very real social and economic implications 'on the ground' in terms of material, social and symbolic transformations of the landscape, and of the communities living nearby.

This chapter thus plugs into prevailing gaps in the literature by exploring the perceived impacts of 'new nature' discourses on the physical landscape and the people experiencing it on an everyday basis. After a brief introduction to the concept of 'new nature', particularly within the domain of ecological restoration, we explore how 'new nature' has recently become part of mainstream political discourse shaping nature development policies in the Netherlands, and how this is often intertwined with discourses and policies of water safety. Finally, we examine how the 'new nature' philosophy is implemented in the case of the Millingerwaard, and how – according to interviews conducted with residents living nearby – this has led to multifarious ways in which actual lives have been affected. The overall objective of this article is thus not so much a critique of the concept of 'new nature' and its implementation in the Netherlands, which

¹⁰ The Dienst Landelijk Gebied is the governmental agency responsible for the implementation of spatial projects in the rural areas.

is beyond the scope of this project, but rather to provide new insights on how selected groups of residents adopt specific narratives to describe (and engage with) the transformations introduced by 'new nature' in specific sites, something that planning practitioners and the other experts involved in these projects may find of use in order to assess their actual impact on local communities and their landscapes.

The philosophy of 'new nature'

The concept of 'new nature' as applied in the Netherlands should be analysed as part of a broader discourse on ecological restoration, which explores the efficacy of restoration techniques to reach particular ecological goals (see Hedberg and Kotowski 2010). Ecological restoration has been applied to many sites internationally with the declared aim of restoring 'lost' ecological qualities of specific nature areas, often under the ambit of the broad concept of 'rewilding', a current example being the abovementioned Rewilding Europe, the result of a cooperation between Stichting Ark – an innovative nature organisation (also active in the Millingerwaard) focused on the creation of areas in which nature can develop in a spontaneous fashion – World Wildlife Foundation-NL, Wild Wonders of Europe and Conservation Capital. Rewilding Europe envisions 're-wilding' at least 1 million hectares of abandoned land in Europe by 2020 (Rewilding Europe 2011). Originating in the USA (see Fraser 2009), the 'rewilding' approach to nature management explicitly aims to 'giv[e] back the land to a state of nature after possibly millennia of human control and modification' (Carver 2012: 386).

The philosophy behind this approach is thus about restoring nature without direct human intervention (Hodder and Bullock 2010). Central in the North-American approach to rewilding is the introduction of large carnivores to maintain viable nature areas or reserves. Isolated nature areas should also be connected, thus creating an 'island biogeography' to expand living spaces while maintaining healthy populations and reinforcing genetic diversity through exchanges among the different animal and plant populations occupying these areas (Carver 2012; Soulé and Noss 1998; Soulé and Terborgh 1999). In the Netherlands, however, it has been large herbivores (rather than carnivores) that have been (re)introduced in most areas developed as

'new nature' (the Dutch equivalent of 'rewilding') for the 'passive' management of these areas through grazing (see Lorimer and Driessen 2013 for a discussion on this 'passive' management). The grazing of these animals (usually Heck cattle and Konik ponies) is believed to create mosaic-like landscapes in Europe with different vegetation types attracting a diverse range of other animal species (Vera 1988, 2009).



(Figure 15: Grazing ponies in the Millingerwaard, source Ton Houkes, reproduced here with permission)

This notion of 'island biogeography' has also contributed in shaping the implementation of the National Ecological Network (abbreviated as EHS) policy in the Netherlands. The policy was in fact largely inspired by the realisation that carefully situated and robust 'natural structures' (sic) provide more space for natural developments, and contribute to counteracting 'negative external influences' (see Van Zadelhoff and Van der Zande 1991: 63). This policy was part of the New Nature Policy Plan put forward in 1990 by the Dutch government, to which we will return later. During that period, one of the factors seen to negatively impact on Dutch nature conservation projects was the notion that the valuable natural areas 'comprise[d] numerous very small reserves, separated by insurmountable barriers [...]', therefore a national ecological network ought to be established in order to expand and connect these dispersed reserves (Van der Zande and Wolters 1997: 221, see also Van Baalen and Van der Zande 1991; Van der Zande and Roeske 1992). The EHS is an assemblage of 'core areas' and 'nature development areas'

connected nationally through ecological corridors (Beunen and Duineveld 2010; Beunen and De Vries 2011; Beunen, Van Assche and Duineveld 2013, Keulartz, Van der Windt and Swart 2004; Hagens and Beunen 2009). However, as noted above, in the Dutch context, in lieu of the term 'rewilding', 'new nature' is more commonly used to denote the restoration of nature to a state prior to human intervention.

While this specifically Dutch approach is undoubtedly influenced by the 'rewilding' philosophy as developed in the USA (Vera 2009), it can also be regarded as a reaction to old preservation discourses in the Netherlands (Hajer 2003; Van den Belt 2004; Van der Heijden 2005). Two argumentations in fact influence mainstream discussions on nature development in the Netherlands: the 'ecological restoration discourse', on the one hand, and the 'preservation/conservation discourse', on the other (Van der Heijden 2005). While the latter aims to preserve already existing nature areas in the Netherlands in their present state, this approach to nature is not sufficient in the opinion of restoration ecologists. According to their perspective, nature areas should also be 'restored' and possibly extended (Hajer 2003; Van den Belt 2004). One influential advocate of the restoration discourse in the Netherlands is ecologist Frans Vera, who has suggested that nature should and could be expanded by the creation of 'new nature'. Similar to the approach to nature in the 'rewilding' philosophy, 'new nature', for Vera (2009), represents 'nature' as a high ideal, as real, authentic Dutch nature, nature of the primeval past (see also Onneweer 2009; Van den Belt 2004). With regards to how this may be accomplished, Vera (2009: 36) states:

'[One] option is to develop large functioning areas where natural processes get the chance to evolve [...] including wild cattle and horses [...]. We shall then also have to learn to co-exist with animals living a truly wild existence [...]. If we are unable to do this, we run the risk of making the presence of unfettered nature impossible.'

Frans Vera was also a key member of the team of policy makers, ecologists and landscape architects that was awarded the first EO-Wijers¹¹ prize in 1986 for their 'Plan Ooievaar'. In this plan, the concept of 'new nature' was the leading principle towards the restoration discourse, the rationale behind it being that nature could indeed be 'helped' in its restoration. The theme of the EO-Wijers competition in 1986 was 'Nederland Rivierenland' (The Netherlands: Land of Rivers) and, accordingly, Vera and his partners crafted a plan envisioning the creation of nature in the river floodplains. To realise this, agricultural activities had to be relocated to the inner dyke areas to make way for both the river as well as 'nature development'. The final result would be a river system with a combination of grass vegetation, open water, woodland and morasses (Van den Belt 2004; Van der Heijden 2005). The Dutch government in 1990 decided to create, under the auspices of Stichting Ark, a trial area for this idea of nature development in the Millingerwaard. Considered a 'hot spot' for the yet-to-be-developed river system, the Millingerwaard thus became a 'generator site' from which various species of plants and animals could migrate along the river floodplains, and one of the first projects in which 'new nature' was implemented (Van den Belt 2004: 317). Plan Ooievaar was named after the black stork, one of the species which has disappeared from the region, and which planners hoped would return to 'new nature' areas. When a first black stork arrived in August 2011, this was conceived as a sign of the success of the plan (Eshuis, Van Buuren and Van den Berg 2011). This plan was also the first step in intertwining 'new nature' development with river policies. Eventually this led to the introduction of the NURG (Nadere Uitwerking Rivierengebied [Further Elaboration River Areas]) programme, a covenant signed in 1997 by the Ministry of Infrastructure and Environment and the Ministry of Economic Affairs, Agriculture and Innovation, in cooperation with the Dienst Landelijk Gebied (DLG), the governmental agency responsible for the implementation of spatial developments in rural areas. In the NURG programme, water safety interventions are combined with the realisation of 'new nature' in the river floodplains. The aim of the nation-wide programme is the creation of 7000 hectares of 'new nature' in the

¹¹ This was introduced to promote supra local planning (EO Wijers stichting 2013)

Netherlands, an objective to be met by 2015 (Rijksoverheid 2013), of which 265 hectares are to be realised in the Millingerwaard (Provinciale Staten van Gelderland 2012a).

The restoration discourse thus proved to be significantly influential in the crafting of the Nature Policy Plan put forward by the Dutch government in 1990 aimed at the development of 'new nature' and the creation of one national ecological network. One way in which nature developers sought to accomplish this is by reverting nature back to the state prior to human intervention, for which they used a 'scientific reconstruction of what living nature under given physical conditions would have looked like in the absence of human influence.' (Keulartz 2009: 37). However, the Nature Policy Plan not only involved the 'restoration of nature', but also included areas significantly affected by humans, something in line with the preservation discourses of the nature conservationists (Van Zadelhoff and Van der Zande 1991). The Plan in this sense resulted from the merging of both discourses. Nonetheless, more attention was undoubtedly paid, compared to previous plans, to the self-regulating capacities of nature, especially in terms of the management of these areas (Hemel 2003; Van Zadelhoff and Van der Zande 1991).

The EHS was thus part of this broader approach and aimed at creating one nationwide 'ecological structure' out of the newly established nature areas, eventually to be connected to other similar European networks (Van den Belt 2004: 323). To create the necessary connections for the implementation of the EHS, 'new nature' areas had therefore to be identified and developed (Van Baalen and Van der Zande 1991).

Consequently, to determine 'how much and what kind of nature we want to conserve, restore and develop in the Netherlands' (Van den Belt 2004: 319), 'new nature' in the Nature Policy Plan is specified in no less than 132 different target types¹² for areas with a natural potential (Keulartz 2009), such that 'biodiversity is rendered as much a mode of governing nature as understanding it' (Lorimer 2006: 539). Although 'new nature' is meant to restore nature to a state before human intervention, critics have however pointed out the paradox that its implementation requires intense human intervention (Doevendans, Lörzig and Schram 2007;

¹² The types of animal and plant species targeted to be restored in particular areas

Onneweer 2009; Van den Belt 2004). The measures to be taken accordingly create what Hajer (2003: 90, original emphasis) has defined as ‘a slow motion ballet mécanique of draglines and bulldozes, excavators and trucks’.



(Figure 16: Ballet Mécanique in the Millingerwaard, source Ton Houkes, reproduced here with permission)

In this sense, as Van den Belt (2004: 314) has argued, the restoration of ‘new nature’ would be better captured by the term ‘nature building’, although ‘[s]trategically, ‘nature development’ might be a much better definition, since it leaves undecided whether it is man (sic) who is developing nature or whether nature develops itself’. Although restoration ecologists aim at reverting nature back to a primeval state, ironically, as Van Koppen (2002: pp) puts it, ‘natural nature does not exist anymore in the Netherlands; nature is a part of the cultural landscape and includes (some forms of) culture.’ (author’s emphasis).

For Elliot (2009: 383), adopting a normative perspective inspired by aesthetics:

‘environmental engineers are proposing [...] that we accept a fake or forgery instead of the real thing [...] perhaps an adequate response to restoration proposals is to point out that they merely fake nature, that they offer us something less than was taken away.’

Despite his critical comment, Elliot does not mean to argue that restored natural elements are of no value, but rather that what is restored is less valuable than the original since it is necessarily

a replication. Similarly, Katz (2009: 391) criticises ecological restoration engineers for selling highly engineered nature as ‘real nature’, while it represents an anthropocentric project in which:

‘[o]nce and for all, humanity will demonstrate its mastery of nature by “restoring” and repairing the degraded ecosystems of the biosphere. Cloaked in an environmental consciousness, human power will reign supreme’.

Again, this does not mean that ecological restoration should not be applauded for compensating the harm often caused to the environment by past human intervention, although according to critics, this may also inadvertently (or perhaps intentionally) sidestep the more important issue of preventing damage done to nature in the first place.

As much as discussions on ‘new nature’ pertain to ecological restoration, Baker and Eckerberg (2013) also point out that they are also played out within a highly political platform. In a recent article, they explore how ecological restoration is negotiated at different political scales in order to provide ‘a more informed understanding of ecological restoration as embedded in wider social and political complexities and interests.’ (Baker and Eckerberg 2013: 17). Arguably, associated to the benefits and costs of the ‘new nature’ concept, it is a highly politicised process which involves various parties, ranging from national, provincial and municipal governments, to local communities and ‘environmentally concerned’ organisations. In the following sections, we will therefore reflect on how the discourse on ‘new nature’ has influenced different policies and, through these, transformed many Dutch landscapes. We do so by turning to the case study area, the Millingerwaard, as an example of how the discourse on ‘new nature’ is intertwined with water safety discourses within Dutch planning, but also implemented with the aim of changing the landscape as well as the lives of the related local communities.

Millingerwaard

The Millingerwaard is located in one of the inner curves of the river Waal near the border with Germany and the city of Nijmegen. The historical development of the area were to a large extent determined by the presence of the river. Over the centuries, the Waal has in fact left a thick layer

of clay dug out in the Nineteenth Century for the production of bricks. Until 1989, the main form of land use was agriculture. However, due to measures associated to the national policies discussed above, the area was slowly converted into a nature domain. Consisting of 400 hectares of hardwood and softwood, forest, pools and river dunes, the Millingerwaard is populated by several rare animal species, such as geese, beavers and the corncrake. Moreover, wildlife or cattle such as Konik horses and Galloway's have been introduced for 'nature management'. Now the area is used predominantly for leisure purposes such as hiking and cycling. Another attraction is the Millinger Tea Garden located in the centre of the Millingerwaard (Millingerwaard Info 2012; Stichting Ark 2012).

As mentioned above, the Millingerwaard is one of the 'nature development areas' included in the National Ecological Network, its implementation accomplished at the regional planning level by the province of Gelderland. As stipulated in the Streekplanuitwerking (an area specific elaboration of the regional plan), the Millingerwaard was to become a large nature area with dry and wet softwood river forests, river valley grasslands, reed swamps and pools (Provinciale Staten van Gelderland 2006). In 2009, a revised version of the Streekplanuitwerking stipulated that the 'EHS nature is mainly formed by existing nature and bordered new nature' (Provinciale Staten van Gelderland 2009: 5). Further down it specifies that:

'[t]he core qualities leave little room for other developments. The agricultural land located in EHS-nature is designated as new nature. In the long term agricultural functions will disappear.' (2009: 24).

This change in function from agricultural land to 'nature area' is clearly one of the major performative effects of the 'new nature' discourse, having dramatically changed the Millingerwaard landscape. Identified as the trial site for the implementation of Plan Ooievaar, in line with mainstream discourses on ecological restoration and 'new nature', combined with water safety policies, the area was transformed from the 1990s onwards into an area of 'new wilderness'.

In the Millingerwaard, the intertwining of 'new nature' and water safety discourses is captured by the combined implementation of the National Ecological Network policy and the NURG programme in the Streekplannuitwerking. The final result – the creation of 265 hectares of 'new nature' – is to be the by-product of the realisation of a 9-centimetres water level decrease, together with an improved distribution of water between the two rivers that split the Waal by the Millingerwaard. All these are to be met in 2015 (Dienst Landelijk Gebied 2012b). The water safety measures are organised in the framework of the Ruimte voor de Rivier (Room for the River) programme implemented in 1996, after high water levels in 1995 led to the evacuation of the Millingerwaard and its environs (Rijkswaterstaat Ruimte voor de Rivier 2012). These water safety measures are included in the 2006 Planologische Kernbeslissing Ruimte voor de Rivier¹³, a plan targeted to comply with current prevailing legal water security norms prescribing the conditions under which a potentially catastrophic drain-off (which could occur statistically every 1250 years) may safely pass through the Dutch river system (Ministerie van Infrastructuur en Milieu and Ministerie van Economische Zaken, Landbouw en Innovatie 2006). Concrete measures to be taken in the Millingerwaard are described in the 'Preferred Alternative', an area-specific spatial development plan for the Millingerwaard, put forward in 2010. Under the authority of the national government, Dienst Landelijk Gebied, the governmental agency responsible for the implementation of spatial projects in the rural areas is responsible for establishing water safety and 'new nature' development imperatives. The most important interventions to reach these goals are:

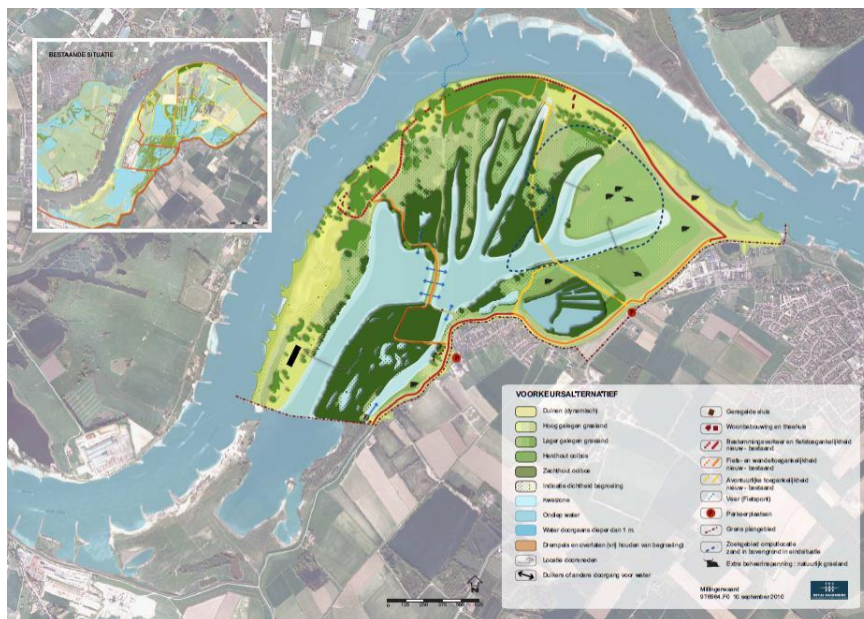
- The relocation of sand and gravel transshipment De Beijer¹⁴, located in the Western part of the Millingerwaard, and the removal of its access road;

¹³ A spatial development plan concerning the river areas put forward by the Dutch government.

¹⁴ A company producing, selling and transporting raw material to be used in civil engineering, the concrete industry, the recreation market, the park- and landscape architecture and the raw ceramic industry (De Beijer Groep BV 2013).

- A wide and deep canal dug alongside the former terrain of De Beijer, connected through the Kaliwaal (an abandoned sand pit) with the river. At the same time, the old pattern of canals is restored by deepening and lengthening the existing canals;
- In the North-eastern part of the floodplain, new tight canals are dug. These are easily distinguishable from the historical canals in the centre.

(Dienst Landelijk Gebied 2012c). The Preferred Alternative is presented in figure 17, which gives an overview of the area after ‘new nature’ has been developed.



(Figure 17: Eindbeeld Millingerwaard, Veiligheid en Natuur, source Dienst Landelijk Gebied, 2012a, reproduced here with permission)

Hence, discourses on water safety and ‘new nature’ development, as implemented through the above measures, have transformed the Millingerwaard from an agricultural landscape occupied and used by people, into a ‘pure and pristine’ new nature area, the result of actually providing more room for the river. Not only is the agricultural character of the area transformed, the plans also have an impact on the industrial activities in the area. Probably one of the most dramatic effects, both in terms of the material changes in the landscape as well as for the community living nearby, is the relocation of the sand and gravel transshipment De Beijer, which, as we will show later, portended major socio-economic consequences for residents. Situated at a crucial location where the measures to meet the water safety goals are to be implemented, it represents

a good example of how discourses over water safety and 'new nature' are closely intertwined. The 'Inpassingsplan Millingerwaard', a related planning procedure providing the juridical basis for the change in allocation from industry to nature, states that:

'The redevelopment of the Millingerwaard and the relocation of De Beijer make sure that before 2015 an important contribution is made to the realisation of the EHS as new nature.' (Provinciale Staten van Gelderland 2012b)

This raises questions as to whether the realisation of new nature would have indeed been possible in the absence of water safety related interventions. Due to ongoing disagreement over issues of financial compensation for the relocation of De Beijer, and the related pressure to finalise the overall project by 2015, an expropriation procedure was started in March 2013 to relocate the company to outside the Millingerwaard (De Gelderlander 2013). The relocation of De Beijer (alongside other farms during the 1990s) might explain why the introduction of 'new nature' in the river areas needed to be combined with water safety policies. Buying out farmers and relocating companies are in fact expensive procedures. The project implemented in the Millingerwaard, for example, is estimated to cost 23.4 million euros. The financial support needed for these interventions is easier to obtain when embedded within discourses of water safety, since the effects of floodings would be disastrous. As one 'nature developer' of Stichting Ark has argued:

'For nature development, there has never been an expropriation in the Netherlands, never, nature is not high enough on the priority list.'

This was also reflected in some of the narratives adopted by the residents to describe the most recent developments. The rest of this chapter will therefore examine how the introduction of 'new nature' in the Millingerwaard has been viewed and perceived by those involved in the project or living in the vicinity of the area.

Methodologically, this chapter is based on fieldwork conducted between September and November 2012, which comprised 13 in-depth interviews. Eight of these were with residents of Kekerdom (a village bordering the Millingerwaard), one of whom is also a representative of the

Stichting Ark). Interviews were also conducted with 4 civil servants, representing the province, and the municipalities of Ubbergen and Millingen in which the Millingerwaard is located. To ensure that all layers of the grand project were covered, we also interviewed the project leader of Dienst Landelijk Gebied. A further specification of the interviewees is given in the table below.

Residents living in Kekerdome before the spatial developments	5 (among whom a former farmer, a former director of De Beijer, and a representative of Stichting Ark)
Residents who came to live in Kekerdome after the spatial developments	3
Civil servants	1 of the municipality of Ubbergen 1 of the municipality of Millingen 2 of the Province of Gelderland 1 of Dienst Landelijk Gebied

(Table 2: Interviewees for the Millingerwaard case)

For the sake of anonymity, pseudonyms are used in the article. The interviews were unstructured and mainly focussed on one theme: the interviewees' opinions about the spatial developments in the area. Inspired by what Duncan and Ley (1993: 8) have referred to as the 'inter-textual field of reference', where particular texts may serve as the basis for the production of other texts, data collected from the interviews were further triangulated with an extensive review of policy documents pertaining to the implementation of 'new nature' within the Millingerwaard.

Transforming Landscapes

The conversion of the Millingerwaard area from farmland to nature is perceived and experienced differently by nearby residents depending on whether they moved there before the area became a nature area or after. This is an indication of how the discourse on 'new nature' has not only had dramatic repercussions for the physical landscape of the Millingerwaard, but has also influenced the meanings that residents attach(ed) to these landscapes. As one of the municipal civil servants maintains:

“You have here, I think, two kinds of residents, those are the people that have lived here from way back, and who are used to the work at the brickyards... Which provided employment [and] a nice bustle in the polder. And the people who came for quietness, often people from the city who come to live in the polder for the peace and quietness.”

We will thus first highlight how the changing landscape of the Millingerwaard is experienced by those who arrived in the area after ‘new nature’ was developed, and then those who were already living in Kekerdom before. Taken together, they show not only how such procedures of ecological restoration, as encapsulated in ‘new nature’ projects – although this may also be extended to other similar projects, such as ‘rewilding’ – have impacted selected groups of residents differently, but also the ways in which there can be multiple layers of understanding a specific landscape beyond its actual materialities (see, among others, Wylie 2007).

The appeal of new nature

Residents who started to live in Kekerdom after the Millingerwaard has become a nature area tend to experience and perceive this transformation as a positive one. Many appreciate the area for its ‘natural values’ and recreational possibilities, which often were the very reasons why they moved there in the first place. Indeed, the most popular housing website in the Netherlands (Funda, 2013) reveals that many of the houses for sale in the area are advertised with taglines such as ‘Attention, nature lovers’, ‘Within walking distance to a nature area’, and ‘Located near the nature area, the Gelderse Poort’. This is also further confirmed by the quotes of this group of residents:

“I like to hike, and I find it delightful that the Millingerwaard is immediately on the other side, and uh it gives me peace, pleasure, and yes fresh air, [...], beautifully divine. Yes and also some sense of excitement when there are new [walking] paths and I think: “God, something has changed”. And uh yes seeing the young cattle I also find wonderful, yes, young foals.” (Ms Davies)

Ms Davies points out that the dynamic character of the area is in contrast to the rather static agricultural land use that marked the area prior to 'new nature' developments. Dynamism here refers to the ways in which nature here is passively managed, that is, with minimal human intervention, which allows nature – commonly perceived as 'rough' and 'uncontrolled' – a large degree of freedom to develop in its own ways. It also relates to the influence of high water levels and floodings that can occur in the area. This dynamism inherent to the new river nature in the Netherlands turns out to be an appealing element for the Millingerwaard area, as Mr Wilson explains:

“But the dynamics that first, because, again uh a storm caused damage, or a beaver, or a flooding, and yes when you see how fast an interesting community of toadstools developed on a tree, that is great.”

Another appealing element of the area is the degree of freedom this group of people attest to experience, thus confirming what Buijs et al. (2004) also demonstrated in their quantitative study. Here, the Millingerwaard is considered as 'struinnatuur', or 'rambling nature', which refers to the absence of restrictions, and to the possibility for people to freely ramble in the area, something impossible when it was an agricultural and industrial land in large part privately owned and publicly inaccessible. As Mr Green, a recreational user of the landscape, remarks:

“That I find a huge given, that that is possible, not to be curtailed by fences and signs, like you can walk here and not there, but that I can walk wherever I would like to, that gives me a sense of freedom. And that makes the area fun.”

Furthermore, the representative of the environmental organisation 'Ark', Mr Carter, despite being an 'older' resident of Kekerdom, confirmed when interviewed that 'most of the people find it pleasant to have the freedom to walk around. It is just convenient to have the feeling that you have that kind of freedom.' Thus, for the residents involved in this research who arrived after the Millingerwaard underwent its dramatic landscape changes, the area is seen as appealing primarily because of its natural values and its peaceful and quiet atmosphere. 'New nature' is for these residents a highly appreciated element of their living environment.

New nature replacing past landscapes

While the first group of residents interviewed largely expressed positive comments, a different picture is painted by those who have all the while been living in Kekerdom, some for more than 60 years, and who tend to have a more negative perspective on 'new nature' developments (see also Buijs et al. 2004). Previous research shows in fact that the length of residence is usually correlated to a positive emotional relationship with a landscape (Kearns and Collins 2012) which seems to be affected by these latter transformations, as the quotes below confirm. Some experience 'new nature' developments as a loss of the landscape of their childhood and the living environment as-they-once-knew-it, something clearly emerging from Mr Daniels's comment:

“For a long time... I cycled through it [the Millingerwaard] every day, which was my work in the past, here at the Beijer. Then I also came there every day, yes that is just something of me. In the past I walked there as a child and I had my work there, so every day I went to the Millingerwaard. I kept on going through the area after the changes as well, but that mess [referring to the new nature developments] is only getting larger and now I cannot cope with it any longer.”

For Mr Daniels, new nature has replaced a landscape he knew since childhood. He seems to be deeply affected by these transformations. Moreover, as former director of the brickyard, he was responsible for clearing out all the trees and plants from the area dedicated to the production of bricks to create a structured and ordered landscape. Thus, both the landscapes of his childhood and of his productive life have been converted into 'new nature'.

The longing for what was before, this time the past agricultural landscape, is also echoed in the narratives of Mr Morgan, a former farmer who sold his property during the land consolidation in the 1990s with the implementation of Plan Ooievaar:

“cows everywhere in the meadows, parcels with maize, parcels with beets, everybody lived and worked there, the fishermen, everyone knew each other.”

His past as a farmer and the related memories bring about mixed feelings when he looks at the area today:

“when I see those cows and horses, no dairy farmer would ever let its animals walk around like that, covered with burrs, and in the swamp, and scraping out their living, and in summer and winter.”

The transformation of the Millingerwaard into ‘new nature’ for both Mr Daniels and Mr Morgan are experienced as a ‘loss’ and a ‘mourning’ for landscapes they once knew, since the introduction of ‘new nature’ elements (much appreciated instead by those who recently moved to Kerkerdom) also implied the eradication of what was before, along with the meanings embedded in them. After all, a vast and rich geography literature has by now demonstrated (see among many others, Wylie 2000) that landscapes are not just what is ‘scientifically’ talked about, materially produced and formally represented, but also something intimately ‘felt’, a palimpsest of multiple uses, provenances, imaginations and memories of lived experiences enfolded within them (see, for instance, Mah 2010; Tolia Kelly 2006). Thus, to these residents, for all that ‘new nature’ makes present, it is also a reminder of what has been made absent, erased in the process. New nature itself is a ‘co-structor’ in what was lost, ‘taking away’ what they hold personal and dear (Millington 2013).

The extent to which this has happened, however, differs among the residents. For a few, there have been some redeeming qualities. Mr Morgan, for instance, is less affected by these transformations in the area where he lives compared to Mr Daniels, given that some elements of the agricultural past that Mr Morgan remembers very fondly have, as part of the ‘new nature’ project, been retained or recently brought back into the landscape. Examples of these are the ‘wildlife’ that maintains the present landscape by grazing, and other relics kept as part of the landscape as it stands today. Mr Walker, for example, mentions a preserved old windmill as an indication of how much he appreciates that some elements of past landscapes have been retained in the face of ‘new nature’ developments in the Millingerwaard:

“Here you have a typical piece of new nature, these were all pastures, squares with small paths over which we used to ride our bikes, and over there a small mill used to spin, and attached was a gigantic concrete trough, drinking water for the

cows, and here those black and white spotted animals used to walk. The mill was symbolically preserved.”



(Figure 18: Preserved windmill, source Ton Houkes, reproduced here with permission)

Despite the transformations of the area as a result of the ‘new nature’ discourse, these residents are glad that some relics have been preserved. Aside from the windmill, others mention the chimneys that were a salient part of the old brick factories. The way in which the so-called ‘new’ landscapes have triggered memories for some residents was also highlighted by Mr Morgan:

“walking around in the polder, dealing with your cattle, what you had earlier on the farm for a large part came back, in another way, but with your cattle, and that was in a way fun. And I did some excursions, yes a completely other way of agricultural life, so to say.”

Mr Morgan uses the term ‘cattle’ to describe the herbivores used for the passive management of the ‘new nature’ areas, a clear reference to his past occupation as a farmer. However, in the new nature development and management discourses, the more common term for these ungulates is ‘wildlife’, possibly to break away from what domestic cattle connote (in terms of the Millingerwaard’s agricultural past) and to reaffirm the ‘wild and pristine’ character of the ‘new nature’.

Messy, fake, lost (new) nature

For the older residents of the Millingerwaard, especially farmers and former employees of the brickyards, 'new nature' is also experienced as 'a mess'. As mentioned, a big part of the official discourse is to let nature take its course without or with absolute minimal human intervention, hence the introduction of the big grazing herbivores for managing the area. These older residents experience this form of management and its results in the landscape as a 'downgrade' compared to how things were done before. As Ms Daniels argues:

“No no improvement, really not, those farmers [who used to maintain the area] kept an eye on [the land] very well. They had all their own fences and their own thing.”

Whereas residents who moved to Kekerdom after the development of 'new nature' value the dynamic character of the area today, older residents see this dynamic, little managed 'new nature' as a mess. To them, this 'messy nature' is the complete opposite of the neat landscape they once knew, when it was managed and kept by the farmers in the area. Thus, older residents experience the transformation in the landscape in rather negative terms. This confirms the indications of Buijs (2009) of the existence of a general negative attitude towards floodplain restoration among residents who have their roots in a specific area, mostly combined with an agricultural background.

Ironically, although the formal 'new nature' discourse is meant to restore and extend the 'natural' areas, these older residents tend to claim that, in the creation of 'new nature', real nature has instead been lost. Arguably, Ms Daniels explains how some animal and plant species have, in her perception, disappeared with the creation of 'new nature',

“But yes almost everything disappeared, the pheasants are gone, the hares are gone, the rabbits are gone.”

To this, Mr Daniels adds, “You don't see those at all anymore in the polder.”

Later Ms Daniels continues, “A lot of plants and flowers disappeared, those never returned, also because of all that farce [the nature developments].”

Even so, it seems unlikely that the creation of 'new nature' has actually led to a loss in biodiversity in the Millingerwaard. It is rather more the case that the plant and animal species populating the Millingerwaard when it was an agricultural area have simply become less visible due to the higher and denser vegetation in the environs. Another possible explanation here is that those who are against these 'new nature' developments may simply perceive the agricultural landscapes of the past as more 'natural' (Buijs et al. 2004).

Another often-heard comment, which reprises some of the critiques of the ecological restoration discourse as highlighted earlier (see Elliot 2009; Katz 2009), is that new nature is indeed 'artificial nature'. According to Mr. Walker, who already lived there as a child, and now a photographer/guide in the area,

"What they sometimes call Wilderness, it is new nature, and let us be fair, it all is a bit fake. Except for some old parts then. [...] I find it beautiful, that is not the point, but I know that I am tricked a bit here."

This feeling of being tricked has to do with the terminology used within official discourses, where 'new nature' is often described as 'wild' or 'wilderness' (hence the term wildlife used to connote the herbivores used to manage the 'new nature' areas), despite the fact that it is largely human-led and planned from the very start. As Mr Wilson states, 'You know they say it is wild nature, but meanwhile everything again is planned in advance.' Besides, these policies of crafting 'new nature' have also brought other, sometimes major, interventions into the landscape. At the Millingerwaard, for example, canals have been dug up to create particular 'natural' circumstances for the 'wild' to develop. As mentioned by civil servant Mr Moore, working for the municipality of Ubbergen:

"I am a true nature lover, and in general I think the Millingerwaard goes over the top in uh creating all kinds of circumstances for new nature, then I think it is sometimes so artificial, so little natural, maybe you should not call it nature anymore."

Thus, although 'new nature' is characterised – within the ecological restoration discourse, and subsequently adopted by the Dutch planning polity to describe its nature developments – as primeval nature uninfluenced by human intervention (Vera 1988, 2009), many of the long-time residents seem to be well aware of 'new nature' being far from pristine; rather, they often characterise 'new nature', in the interviews, as 'fake', 'artificial', and 'planned', an indication of the multiple and nuanced understanding of 'nature' famously highlighted, among many others, by Raymond Williams (2008; see also Castree 2006).

Relocating for new nature?

In addition to the perceived loss of familiar landscapes, and the contestations over whether 'nature' (as represented by 'new nature') is real or fake, some residents also highlight how new nature developments in the Millingerwaard have impacted them socio-economically. As mentioned above, aside from the transformation of the area from agricultural to natural land, the most drastic consequence of the realisation of 265 hectares of 'new nature' is the relocation of the sand and gravel transshipment company De Beijer. For those who came to live in the area after 'new nature' was developed, this relocation is seen as a positive change in their living environment, not only because more space has been created for the development of nature, but also because this will remove the noise pollution from the trucks of the company as they make their way to and from the factories.

For long-time residents, however, the planned relocation of De Beijer is perceived as having negative repercussions for their livelihoods, particularly since the company is responsible for many of the jobs that sustained them, and plays an important role in the social life of the village (such as by sponsoring local sports clubs). As Mr and Ms Daniels commented on the relocation of De Beijer (the company where Mr Daniels used to be the former director):

“They have been there since 1985, and they have to leave in 2015. Which is nonsense, because it simply is a beautiful company, [...] nobody is hindered by it. But now the State Forestry Service says it is a blot in nature. [...] But you cannot live from nature right, or can you? And I think that is the biggest problem, they all

talk about nature, nature is sacred, and the companies have to go, but then there are no decent living conditions left. That only costs money.”

For a small village like Kekerdom, the relocation of its most significant employer will indeed impact the livelihoods of many residents. Although the employees of the company will continue working for it, they will have to travel further to Dodewaard where De Beijer is to be relocated. Mr Morgan too describes this operation as a waste of tax money:

“I think it is financially a tough job, so to say. I rather have my tax money spent on something else.”

Nevertheless, the project leader of Dienst Landelijk Gebied responsible for the implementation of the project offers a different perspective:

“Uhm, [in The Millingerwaard] we are spending the money from society in an efficient way. [...] And uhm in my experience, when I look at the Euros in relation to the centimetres decrease of water level which we create here, it is a relatively cheap project.”

Arguably, residents tend to think that the landscape of the Millingerwaard is transformed mainly for the purpose of developing ‘new nature’. However, as we have indicated, the measures taken for water safety and new nature development go hand in hand. This raises pertinent questions as to whether the imperative of water safety, if better illustrated, may influence the residents’ opinions about – and level of acceptance of – ‘new nature’.

New nature or water safety?

As also implied by the former two quotes, there seems to be a point of friction between the ‘official’ reasons and what residents think are the real reasons for the measures implemented in the area, including the relocation of De Beijer. Although the official narrative has inherently intertwined the objectives of water safety and ‘new nature’ developments, with the latter often being seen as a by-effect of the former, nonetheless residents tend to focus on the effects of the ‘new nature’ discourse which are more visibly apparent. This becomes clear when, for instance, Mr Wilson hints at the existence of a ‘nature lobby’, or when Ms Daniels states that ‘everyone

bows for nature, why is that?’ These two comments confirm how ‘new nature’ is thought to be the leading principle for which the landscape has to be dramatically transformed. We have shown, however, that the discourses on water safety and ‘new nature’ development, which have given rise to the measures taken at the Millingerwaard, cannot be detached from each other. Nevertheless, some residents are not convinced by this. One frequent remark is that vegetation allowed to grow within ‘new nature’ developments actually blocks the water from draining off. As Ms Daniels indicates:

“because of nature and all that mess, all that water cannot flow away. If everything keeps lying there, and that mess piles up, then that water cannot flow, it keeps lying there.”

Measures that have explicitly been implemented in the name of water safety are also challenged by residents such as Mr Walker:

“I think that it is a big joke. I experienced 1995¹⁵, that evacuation, and then we had to leave, because the water level was extremely high. But what was happening at the North Sea, you had inland wind, so the North Sea bashed against the coast, and did not allow the water of the rivers to flow in. Then you can make those canals [one of the measures taken to reach the 9cm decrease in water level], and it will work if the wind direction is right. But if we experience something like in 1995 again, then a canal will help 0.0. [...] So what those people are doing, I do not understand anything of it.”

The two quotes here provide an additional explanation of why residents have negatively perceived the transformation of the Millingerwaard landscape as the result of the ‘new nature’ interventions, even though this is tied to measures related to water safety which, from their own perspective will not work with high water levels. This is made all the more remarkable given that many of these ‘older’ residents have directly experienced the ensuing evacuation of 1995, in the reason for which the Ruimte voor de Rivier plan was implemented. This shows, in my view,

¹⁵ In 1995, the area was evacuated due to high water levels.

how powerful (and controversial) the discourse of 'new nature' has become in the development of the Millingerwaard. This also seems to contradict results from earlier research suggesting that residents living in river areas with agricultural (grass) land are more sensitive to issues related to water safety than those living in areas where other forms of nature development took place (Buijs et al. 2004). My own investigation, however, has demonstrated that some residents believe developments of 'new nature' will create higher risks during floodings. Here, personal histories possibly also play a role, as the old director of the brickyard explains how he, in times of high water levels, had to control these by opening and closing the sluices:

“Because in 98 it did not flood, and then it was 16 meters 40 or something like that, right. And, that I find strange [the water levels now aimed to be prevented]. I probably do not understand it, but I did walk around here all those years, and had to arrange it [the water levels], right.”

Arguably, although residents have vivid memories of the evacuation in 1995, something they do not wish to experience again, they do not seem to perceive the looming calculated threats of high water as being real. The reason for this skepticism is that the so-called risky water level yardsticks used to justify measures recently taken in the Millingerwaard have never led to any cases of floodings or threats in the past. Moreover, the calculated high water levels can statistically occur once every 1250 years, so the perceived risk that these levels will be reached while the residents are still alive is low. This is confirmed by earlier research showing that the majority of people living in river areas do not tend to feel unsafe due to risks of flooding (Buijs et al. 2004). This also shows that there can be varying ways in which landscapes – as well as the threats that could potentially destroy them – are perceived by users and residents, especially in relation to how 'scientific' discourses may jar from more personal understandings and knowledge of what can or cannot happen in any given situation (see, among others, Ingold 2000).

Conclusion

The Millingerwaard has proven to be a useful example of how 'new nature' may dramatically affect not only the landscape, but also the communities living in these areas. Although 'new nature' in the ecological discourses is often described as pristine, and its restoration aims at the putative state of nature previous to human intervention (Vera 2009), this chapter has shown that a diversity of measures is taken to create 'new nature' and that it can hardly be regarded as pristine or primeval (see Keulartz 2009; Van den Belt 2004). Rather, 'new nature' is as much a human creation as most landscapes in the Netherlands. However, what further complicates the case here is the fact that the measures taken are predominantly related to water safety. 'New nature' in this sense might be regarded as a by-product of the more powerful discourse in water safety in the Netherlands. It remains indeed an open question as to what extent 'new nature' would have been restored without being tied up with the water safety discourses. As we have discussed above, the creation of space for the development of 'new nature' presents serious financial challenges; however, when 'new nature' is implemented within water safety programmes, for which larger budgets are normally available, 'new nature' plans become easier to realise.

Nevertheless, 'new nature' in the Dutch context, and 'rewilding' on a European level (Rewilding Europe 2011), have been and still are transforming many landscapes considered to have a high value by policy makers, users and residents, while the effects of these developments on communities living in the designated areas have thus far remained largely unexplored. This chapter has attempted to provide in-depth insights on how a selected group of individuals belonging to one particular Dutch local community has responded to 'new nature' transforming 'their' landscape. Arguably, major differences have emerged between residents who have lived in the area before 'new nature' was developed, and those who have decided to live in the area because of the appeal of 'new nature'. The former group tend to perceive these developments as less positive than the latter. The findings are rather in line with previous research conducted by Buijs et al. (2004), one of few existing studies exploring people's attitudes towards the

restoration of 'new nature'. This shows how 'new nature' as a concept has not only different meanings for different people involved in its development, but its effects are also experienced differently. Residents who have been born and brought up in the area have described 'new nature' as a mess, a loss of biodiversity, a fake, and a nonsense measure for water safety purposes.

Moreover, the transformation of the once agricultural landscape of their past to a 'new nature' area leads to mourning for the lost landscapes of their childhood and, in some cases, their professional past. Thus, 'new nature' has, according to these interviewees, very real effects, not only on the material landscape, but also on those who live in or near these 'new nature' areas. Other (more recent) residents have instead expressed clear appreciation for the new developments, arguing for the increased value of the new nature landscapes and how these have positively affected their quality of life. At the same time, policy makers and institutional representatives, somehow reinforce with their comments the line of thought that has guided this new approach to nature in many Dutch areas (and the related official documents), explaining that water safety measures on the one hand and the improvement of the natural environment of some ecologically sensitive areas on the other, fully justify the transformations produced by the new policy.

The results of the study therefore seem to suggest that the question of 'new nature', of Dutch 'new nature' more specifically, is not only of great relevance for its implications in terms of how it modifies many Dutch landscapes – and the Millingerwaard landscape in particular – but also because it has been, and presumably will continue to be in the near future, an object of controversy on diverse scales. If one considers that the ecological 'restoration philosophy' that has inspired the restoration of 'new nature' in the Netherlands is currently going to be implemented in an European-wide restoration project named Rewilding Europe, than it appears clear that more ethnographic research could and should be done on how these very developments affect those living in areas being converted from agriculture (or other activities) to 'new nature'. By adopting in-depth interviews and textual analysis of policy documents

related to one experimental 'new nature' area, the Millingerwaard, this chapter is a first attempt in the direction of making the debate on ecological restoration a broader one, so that such a debate is no longer only a matter for ecologists and politicians, but also for academic interventions including the voices, albeit selectively, of those who live in areas actually transformed by the force of mainstream 'new nature' discourses.

Chapter 6

Conclusion

In this thesis, I have examined the diverse meanings attached to the cultural landscape, and the intimate relationships individuals have with it, and how these reflect and affect both the material and imagined reality of the cultural landscape through participatory planning processes. By doing so, the many different voices involved in these processes were analysed, and so are granted recognition and acknowledgement. This was done to gain a more in-depth understanding of what individuals perceive, understand, feel and think about cultural landscapes, and how these landscapes affect them. To do so, three research questions, were formulated:

What intimate relationships do individuals have with cultural landscapes, and which diverse meanings do they attach to these, and how do these reflect and affect the cultural landscape in participatory planning processes?

How are cultural landscapes represented in policies, plans and other related documents, and how do these representations reflect and affect the cultural landscape in participatory planning processes?

How do individuals feel and think about participatory planning processes in relation to their own role and the position and role of others?

Knowledge of these diverse meanings, as Van der Zande and During (2009) claim, is necessary to adequately deal with them in spatial planning and policy making. Moreover, as has been argued, participatory planning processes are far from straightforward in taking account of these vested local interests and 'lived schemes of signification' (Pløger 2006: 293; see also Graham and Healey 1999; Healey 2002, 2004; Hillier 2007). I have drawn from the 'more-than-representational' (Lorimer 2005) approach as explicated in cultural geography to gain an in-depth insight in how participatory planning processes evolve around representations of the

landscape as captured in plans and policies, and individuals' intimate relationships with and meanings attached to cultural landscapes.

To gain insight into these diverse meanings of individuals, storytelling and narrative analysis were adopted in this thesis, and so the fourth research question was formulated:

How are these different intimate relationships with cultural landscapes, the diverse meanings attached to cultural landscapes, and the different experiences of participation in spatial planning captured in the different stories of individuals?

The method of storytelling and narrative analysis was adopted since meaning is thought to be embedded in the stories we tell about our lives, incorporating the cultural landscape in which we live. Storytelling in spatial planning, however, has been adopted before. Two strands of storytelling in spatial planning can be defined; storytelling as a model *of* the ways in which planning is practiced, where planning is perceived as a type of storytelling; and, as a model *for* the ways in which planning can and should be practised, in which the focus is on how storytelling can improve planning practices, particularly in the framing of different planning alternatives (Van Hulst 2012: 302, 303). My research, however, examined how a third strand could be adopted in spatial planning. In line with the 'more-than-representational' approach, I have adopted storytelling and narrative analysis to gain an insight in the diverse meanings individuals attach to cultural landscapes, as it is within these different stories narrated by individuals that meaning is embedded and verbalised. By doing so, my research has contributed to current work incorporating individual narratives to understand how

'personal experience and expression interweave with the social, structural, or ideological 'towards shedding light on peoples' lived and every day encounters with their environment, which could serve to corroborate or destabilize dominant discourses (Cameron 2012: 574)

To research the representations of cultural landscapes in policies and plans, a textual analysis was adopted.

The research was conducted through examining two case studies: the Wageningse Eng and the Millingerwaard. The Wageningse Eng is a former agricultural area currently characterised in the spatial policy documents as a city-edge area. The case was chosen because at the time of this research, a new allocation plan for the area was being determined by the municipality. This provided the opportunity to research into how diverse meanings attached to the cultural landscape of the Eng are reflected and affected in the determination of this plan. For the same reason, the Millingerwaard was chosen, with the difference that in this area, national programmes on water safety and nature development are implemented, transforming the Millingerwaard from an agricultural area to a 'new' nature area.

Although the preceding chapters have discussed and concluded different elements as found in the case studies, in this chapter, I draw general conclusions based on the case-studies and answer the different research questions posed in the introduction. I first reflect upon the diverse meanings attached to cultural landscapes of both the planners and policy makers involved, and more extensively those of the residents and landowners of the areas studied. Second, I argue how the representations of the cultural landscape of planners and policy makers still play an ever important and performative role in participatory planning processes. Further, I argue how these representations tend to deny the everyday 'lived' and 'practised' landscapes. Third, I show how particular subjectivities and positionalities are created in participatory planning processes, and have an effect in themselves on the processes and outcomes. Finally, I reflect on the usefulness of the narrative approach taken in this research for studying participatory planning processes, in line with the fourth research question. In relation to this, I will end with some suggestions for further research related to the issues and limitations of this research.

Diverse meanings of the cultural landscape

The first research question addresses the diverse meanings attached to the cultural landscape and the intimate relations with it. The multiple stories of the individuals interviewed during this research have shown that there is a diverse set of meanings attached to cultural landscapes. While planners and policy makers predominantly perceive the landscape as a matter to be

planned and managed based on 'objective', 'expert' and 'scientific' conceptualisations, residents and landowners attach stronger emotional and intimate meanings to 'their' landscapes. Nevertheless, in the Millingerwaard a difference is found between residents and landowners who have been living near the Millingerwaard since a long time ago, and those who have started living in the area more recently. The latter attach less emotional meanings to the different landscapes. Although they regard these landscapes as valuable for their daily lives to a certain degree, their attachment to the area is less deep and intimate than residents who have been living near the Millingerwaard for a longer period of time, some even since their childhood. This also means that they are less affected by the spatial planning practices in the area. For the Millingerwaard case, this can be explained through findings that individuals who started living near the Millingerwaard after the spatial plans were implemented came to live there precisely because they appreciate the living environment due to the development of 'new' nature. In the Wageningse Eng case, I have only interviewed residents who have already been living in the area for longer periods of time, some since their childhood, or with families who have lived there for several generations. Their relation to the cultural landscape and its meaning evolve around elements incorporating (family) history, childhood memories and landscape elements which remind them of their roots and episodes in their own and their families' histories. Their stories not only present an intimate relationship with the cultural landscapes, but also a deep attachment to these. A similar conclusion can be drawn for residents who have been living near the Millingerwaard for a longer period of their life, or all their life.

However, although these 'felt' elements of the landscape are experienced as highly valuable, the spatial plans implemented in the areas seem to neglect these deep attachments and intimate meanings. There is no difference in this sense between the Wageningse Eng case and the Millingerwaard case. Since the new allocation plan in the case of the Wageningse Eng does not allow for any spatial developments in the area, local residents and landowners experience this as a loss of freedom to use their land and property as they wish, and that their vested interests in the area have been denied. In the Millingerwaard case, the implementation of the national

spatial planning programmes on water safety and nature development have transformed the landscape from an agricultural area to a 'new' nature area, causing local residents to have feelings of having lost the landscape they once knew and valued as part of their (productive) daily lives. Thus, regardless of whether the spatial plans implemented in the different landscapes block spatial development or create large scale landscape transformations, these plans bring about feelings of loss in both cases, the loss of freedom to do what one wishes to do with one's highly valued and meaningful property, and the loss of the landscape of one's individual past.

The performative effect of planners' representations of the landscape

The feelings of loss as experienced by residents and landowners are the result of the perceived neglect of the strong emotional and intimate meanings attached to cultural landscapes in the conceptualisations of the landscape in plans and policies. The second research question addresses how cultural landscapes are represented in policies and plans. The results have shown that 'expert' representations of the landscape often continue to be taken for granted as natural and real characterisations of the cultural landscape, thereby denying how the landscape is 'practised' and 'lived' by those who have a strong attachment to them. These representations of the landscape have proven to be very real in their effects on both the 'material' and 'imagined' reality of the particular landscapes as experienced by individuals on the ground.

The Wageningse Eng case has shown how the conceptualisation of the Eng as an open landscape with spectacular views by municipal planners and the particular advisory bodies involved in the planning process has had very real implications on the materiality of the landscape. This conceptualisation has been captured in an allocation plan which does not allow for any transformations made to the landscape, so as to reinforce the 'open and spectacular' conceptualisation of the Eng. The act of representation therefore has had very real implications not only on the 'real' landscape, but also on the 'imagined' landscape of the Eng. For example, as explicated in Chapter Three, the walnut tree of Ad Maas was cut since it affected the supposedly open character of the Eng. For the Millingerwaard case, the representation of 'new nature' as

pristine, real and authentic nature, as discussed within the academic literature and by the residents living nearby, has transformed the agricultural landscape in the area to a 'new nature' area. In this sense, the spatial plan implemented in the Millingerwaard has been performative in its effects through the particularly powerful governmental discourse on water safety. This proves, following Butler's (1990, 1993) understanding of performativity, how the recitation of particularly strong discourses produces performative effects in affecting and shaping the materiality of the landscape, but also the more 'imagined' realities of these as narrated by residents and landowners. The development of 'new nature' in the Millingerwaard in this sense, I would argue, should be regarded as a side-effect of the measures taken in line with the national programmes on water safety. One of the performative effects of the national programmes implemented is, for example, the relocation of the sand and gravel transshipment De Beijer, perceived to negatively affect the social and economic basis of the community of Kekerdom. Nevertheless, what became clear is that those practising or having practised the landscape on a daily basis tend to view the transformation of the Millingerwaard as the result of the development of 'new nature'. Furthermore, the performative effect of these 'expert' representations of the cultural landscape is reinforced by their powerful positionalities and subjectivities created in the particular participatory planning processes, which I will discuss in the following section.

Subjectivities and positionalities in participatory planning

The third research question examines how individuals experience participatory planning processes in relation to their own roles and positions, and those of others. Therefore the 'structural narrative analysis' (Riessman 1990, 2008) was used to examine how individuals involved in the participatory planning processes being studied construct both their own subjectivities and positionalities, as well as those of others, since planning processes in this research were taken to be performative in creating and constructing these. This research has shown how those who are in these processes constructed as 'knowledgeable' and 'experts' remain more powerful in putting their conceptualisations of the landscape into effect than those

'practising' and 'living' the landscape on a daily basis. This confirms Langton's (1993: 298, 299) statement that 'crudely: powerful people can generally do more, say more, and have their speech count for more than can the powerless. If you are powerful, there are more things you can do with words.'

This became particularly clear in the Wageningse Eng case, where strong advisory bodies constructed as 'knowledgeable' concerning landscape matters have shown to have a stronger voice in matters on how the landscape ought to be managed. The representational acts of these bodies, capturing their conceptualisations of the landscape of the Wageningse Eng in maps and policies, has proven to be effectively performative in defining what should and should not be allowed at the Eng. In this sense, the performative power of these representations shows to be highly dependent on who counts as an acknowledged party in these processes. These parties, apparently, are more powerfully capable of putting their language into effect, in a similar vein as Butler (1997) argues about subjects in general. In the Millingerwaard case, these representational acts can be less traced to particular positionalities and subjectivities in these processes, although one might assume that policies and plans brought about by the national government in general hold a strong performative capacity since this represents the highest level of government in the Netherlands. The 'knowledgeable experts' at the Wageningse Eng – composed of the municipality, the foundation and its advisory bodies - are perceived and narrated in stories as having little involvement with the Wageningse Eng on a daily lived and practised basis. For them the Wageningse Eng is just an interesting area to work in and think about. The level of involvement by those who can decide on how cultural landscapes ought to be managed seems to be an important element for the particular communities in accepting or rejecting these plans and policies. In the Wageningse Eng case, for example, the planners and parties involved in the participatory planning process are constructed as being hardly involved with the area, and should therefore not have the 'right' to determine how the area should be developed. This creates tensions and frustrations among residents and landowners at the Wageningse Eng in participating in planning processes in which residents and landowners with

a direct stake in the area are not being heard, whereas those without a direct stake are being heard. More involvement by planners and decision makers in the particular landscapes might lead to more social support for the particular plans. Furthermore, the Millingerwaard case has shown how the debate on ecological restoration and other debates about the management of the cultural landscape should no longer remain a debate for ecologists, planners and politicians, but should include the voices of those who live in the area to be transformed.

What also became clear when analysing the narrative constructions of residents and landowners of their own roles and positions, and those of others, is while planners and policy makers construct themselves as 'experts' and 'knowledgeable', the stories of residents and landowners have revealed a strong feeling of powerlessness in participating in the planning processes, as represented by the construction of their role as 'just citizens'. In their narrative, 'just citizens' express a feeling of being less involved and recognised as an acknowledged party in the participatory planning processes; this feeling is reinforced by their feeling that their voices are not heard, let alone that their language can be put into effect (as follows from Butler's (1997) understanding of performativity). In its effect, the perceived denial of their 'lived' and 'practised' meanings of the landscape has as an effect that residents and landowners to feel rather powerless in the different planning processes studied, reflected especially in the Wageningse Eng case. In general, these 'local' residents and landowners have the feeling of not being heard during the planning processes, and construct themselves as having little control over what is decided in terms of how particular landscapes ought to be developed. This is to an extent caused by the technical jargon being used in the documents and plans, and in replies to particular requests for permits or other adaptations to the landscape, as well as the protracted procedures characterising spatial planning in the Netherlands. More remarkable is that, although the Wageningse Eng case involves only the local government in its planning process, and the Millingerwaard, national governments, these feelings seem to be stronger in the Wageningse Eng case than in the Millingerwaard. One could expect that these feelings of powerlessness are stronger when confronted with a higher governmental level and less strong when involved in

processes on a local governmental level. In this sense, power in participatory planning processes is both productive, since it creates and constructs particular (powerful) subjects and positionalities, but also repressive in its effects, as the conceptualisation of the landscape by powerful subjects are decisive in how landscapes ought to be developed and managed, denying 'lived' and 'practised' aspects of the landscape, and thus have a 'deadening effect on the landscape' (Cadman 2009: 1; Lorimer 2005: 83).

There is another possible reason why the stories of residents and landowners at the Eng revealed a high degree of frustrations and negative feelings concerning the participatory planning processes. It might be that residents involved in planning processes on a local level expect to have a higher degree of influence in what happens in their area, also because of their land ownership, than those involved in planning processes involving higher levels of government. When this degree of influence is experienced as turning out to be lower than expected, the result will be frustrations about the participatory planning processes. As shown in the Wageningse Eng case, residents and land owners experience a great degree of frustration from not having their stories heard and taken into account in the determination of the allocation plan, while also having to deal with a highly bureaucratic planning system and its use of jargon. For the Millingerwaard case, the stories of residents also show a degree of frustration, but this has less to do with the degree of influence they perceive or expect to have, but more with the landscape being transformed due to policies they do not regard as necessary or contributory to the stated objectives.

In both cases, frustrations about the participatory planning processes lead to residents and landowners creating counter discourses against dominant representations of the landscape captured in the different policies and plans being implemented. As Butler (2004) argues, individuals have the tendency to create counter-discourses as an act of resistance. In the case studies, these are attempts to destabilise the discursive and representational constructions of the cultural landscape. As this thesis has shown, it is within these counter-discourses, or more particularly these individual counter-stories, that the 'more-than-representational' (Lorimer

2005) elements of the landscape formed by 'intimate' and 'strong emotional' meanings, are revealed. At the Wageningse Eng, this has led to a discourse being created against the conceptualisation of the Eng as an open landscape, in which its historically open character is being questioned, and constructed as a museumification of the landscape that denies everyday, lived practices of the landscape. In a similar vein, the notion of sightlines, sightareas and perspectives is being criticised for their arbitrary character, and residents and landowners argue that in this sense the landscape could be full of these imaginary lines representing valuable aspects of the landscape and block any spatial development in the area. In the Millingerwaard case, residents tend to deny the necessity of the implementation of the national programmes on water safety in their counter discourses, since water levels which these aim to prevent have been reached before without disastrous effects. Furthermore, in their counter discourses, they criticise the added natural value of the 'new' nature being developed, in particular the terms of being 'new' and resembling pristine and real nature; 'new nature' is criticised as representing artificial and fake nature.

Thus, the participatory planning processes in both cases are experienced as having neglected the diverse intimate meanings attached to cultural landscapes, especially by long term residents and property owners. The on a daily basis 'lived' and 'practised' cultural landscapes are experienced as being affected through the participatory planning processes, felt as a negative impact on the 'individual' cultural landscape.

More generally, my thesis has shown how planning practices entail more than just rational, expert and reasoned arguments for how particular cultural landscapes ought to be developed. What is needed more is a reflection on 'lived schemes of signification' (Pløger 2006: 293) to prevent the creation of a 'deadening effect' (Cadman 2009: 1; Lorimer 2005: 83) on the landscape-as-a-place-to-live. Following a more-than-representational (Lorimer 2005) or post-representational (Hillier 2007) approach would allow participatory planning practices to reflect the actual practices *of* and *in* the landscape. Not only should planners and decision makers be aware of their use of technical jargon and protracted procedures which can create an

unbalanced situation in the degree to which interaction in participatory planning can take place, they should also seriously take into consideration the 'lived' engagements and the 'many ways of knowing' of those who use or live in the landscape (Sandercock 1998: 217). If spatial planning aims at participatory and bottom-up processes, defined as one of the characteristics of participatory planning, the 'more-than-representational' role of particular landscape characterisations and conceptualisations should be taken into full consideration, also for their effects on the actual practices of landscape. This thesis thus reflects a plea for participatory planning practitioners to be aware and take into account 'the living, feeling, experiential, and relational dimensions of being' (Cadman 2002: 575), so as to create a more complete and full story of the cultural landscapes being planned.

Storytelling as a method in spatial planning

In this thesis, storytelling and narrative analysis have been adopted to acknowledge the many different voices in the field explicating the diverse meanings individuals attach to cultural landscapes, and how they experience participatory planning processes. Therefore the fourth research question was formulated on how these diverse meanings and relationships, as well as the different experiences, are captured in the stories of individuals.

Advantages of storytelling and narrative analysis

Storytelling has proven a useful method in gaining an in-depth insight in how the landscape is 'more-than-representational' (Lorimer 2005), and is composed of affective, lived and felt elements that are part of the biographies of those who practise the landscape on a daily basis. Additionally, it has become clear how storytelling provides a way into understanding the many different ways residents, landowners and other parties involved in participatory planning processes define, understand and feel the cultural landscape.

Storytelling, rather than a model *for* or *of* spatial planning (Van Hulst 2012), but as a method *in* spatial planning has proven useful in understanding the different perspectives on participatory planning processes of those in the field, revealing hidden frustrations and challenges faced by

individuals. This knowledge 'from below' might provide planners with the necessary awareness of how people perceive participatory planning on the ground, and how they describe this in their narratives in order to ensure that negative concerns are addressed (Allmendinger and Haughton 2012). Thus, storytelling not only provides an insight in the more-than-representational elements of the cultural landscape, but also reveals how participatory planning is experienced on the ground by those involved in participatory planning processes, and how they construct their own roles, the roles of others, and their position in relation to these.

Issue and Limitations, and Suggestions for further research

The use of storytelling and narrative analysis also has its limitations, as explained earlier. One of these limitations is the time-consuming character of both the transcription phase and the actual analysis of the stories. Storytelling and narrative analysis therefore prove to be less suited for studying large-scale spatial development projects. Nevertheless, the method might prove fruitful in researching small-scale projects, such as neighbourhood projects. Therefore, a suggestion for further research would be to use both methods to study a small-scale planning project so as to gain a further understanding of the usefulness of the methods used here. This might especially be of importance, since these small-scale projects most probably have a higher degree of participation than the projects studied here, and it would be interesting to find out how a higher degree of participation might lead to different experiences among those involved.

One other limitation, or in this research rather a 'eye-opener' as argued before, is that the stories told in this research have shown that individuals have different skills in eliciting persuasive and convincing stories, shown by the difference between the stories of planners and policy makers versus those of residents and landowners. Moreover, what has not been touched upon in this thesis is how these many different stories work out in the interaction between planners and the individuals affected by the plans and policies. The stories told in this thesis were narrated to me, a PhD student examining participatory planning practices, and have not been brought into the particular participatory processes themselves. So although storytelling has proven useful in studying participatory planning, although limited by its time-consuming character, the actual

effects of these different stories on planners and decision makers remains to be seen. A suggestion for further research, therefore, would be to take the many different stories of those practising the landscape on a daily basis to the world of planning and decision making, and examine how these stories are read, interpreted and understood by planners and politicians, and possibly taken further in planning and managing the cultural landscape.

Summary

Participatory planning has been a dominant approach in spatial planning in the Netherlands since the 1980s. Participatory planning can be characterised by an emphasis on consensus building, cooperation, and consultation, in which non-governmental parties are involved. These participatory planning processes concern questions on the nature and management of the landscape, involving definitions of cultural landscapes and its meanings, and the subsequent plans of these processes are supposedly a reflection of the different vested interests, opinions and desires among those involved. Nevertheless, these participatory processes do not genuinely reflect these ideals and the actual processes evolve all too often around struggle and contestation. This thesis discusses how the many vested interests, desires and opinions of those living and using the areas involved in participatory planning processes are taken forward within the broader power play among individuals, non-governmental parties, and governmental parties in participatory planning. The objective of this thesis is therefore to grant recognition and acknowledgement to the many different voices in participatory planning processes. This was achieved by both analysing the representations and conceptualisations of the landscape, as well as the more intimate relationships individuals have with and diverse meanings attached to cultural landscapes, and how these reflect and affect both the material and imagined reality of the cultural landscape. I have done so by analysing policy documents, maps, and plans related to the particular planning processes studied, and by making use of storytelling and narrative analysis to investigate understandings and meanings attached by individuals to cultural landscapes. This also was done to analyse how spatial planning is experienced on the ground, with particular emphasis on how subjectivities and positionalities are constituted in these processes.

Storytelling in spatial planning has been adopted according to two different models; as a model of the ways in which planning is practised, where planning is perceived as a sort of storytelling; while the second is a model for the way in which planning should be practised, a more normative approach in which the focus is on how storytelling can improve planning practices,

particularly with its potential of bringing in other possible alternatives. Storytelling in this research represents a possible third model, and is used to give a voice to the individuals involved in and affected by the spatial planning projects being researched, so as to gain an understanding of the different concerns of these individuals and their respective positions. By doing this, I reflect on how participatory spatial planning in the particular case-studies is realised and 'performed' from the 'bottom-up'. In this sense, storytelling is used here to move beyond the realm of representations of cultural landscapes captured in the form of official discourses, in favour of stories engaging with the lived experiences of landscape by residents and users.

In this vein, storytelling has also been chosen in line with the 'more-than-representational' approach adopted in this thesis, since the recent interest in non-representational and affective geographies are increasingly inspired by stories as a method to explore affective geographies. The 'more-than-representational-approach' acknowledges that representational practices and the consequences and effects brought forward by these remain important in defining and managing the cultural landscape. Moreover, these representations have 'deadening effects' on the lived and practised cultural landscape, since these are the foundations on which decisions and plans on how cultural landscapes ought to be developed and managed are based. However, the landscape, as this thesis shows, is not only representational, but it does something to the everyday practices of individuals. In this sense, this thesis also adheres to a claim for a post-representational approach to spatial planning, arguing that all too often representations in planning practice are taken for granted as natural, hegemonic, and absolute truths of the world out there. This thesis is also a response to the critique on the communicative turn in spatial planning for focusing too much on the ideal speech situation and thereby ignoring and neglecting broader issues of power. Power in this thesis is integrated through the powerful effects particular representations of the landscape have, and how power is essential in the constitution and performance of subjectivities and positions in these processes. Following this understanding of the role of power, the thesis draws conceptually from Butler's performativity

theory, which argues that language is both the act of uttering language, as well as the act that brings about particular effects, and it is inherently intertwined with broader issues and relations of power. Butler's work is used to reflect upon how particular acts of uttering language in planning processes, either verbal or textual, bring about particular effects, not only on the materiality of the landscape, but also on the 'more-than-representational' landscapes of those that 'practise' and 'live' the landscape on a daily basis.

The fourth chapter draws on the case study of the Wageningse Eng in the Netherlands to examine a set of spatial metaphors (and their attendant grounded impacts) employed within two key policy documents – the Allocation Plan and a related map – pertaining to how the cultural landscape is to be spatially managed and developed by the Municipality. Although forwarded as based on historical facts and a cornerstone of Dutch commitment to participatory planning, the case being studied reveals the ways in which these metaphors are at times not only entirely subjective and arbitrary but also perceived by residents and users as neglecting their rights with respect to the landscape and as instruments constraining what can or cannot be done in that area. More broadly, in the face of calls for more non-representational approaches to landscape analyses, the chapter argues for the continued salience of representational practices within spatial planning as well as the ways in which these may hold very real implications for landscapes.

Drawing on the case of the Wageningse Eng in the Netherlands, the fifth chapter considers the role of 'story-telling' within spatial planning practices. It moves away, though, from seeing it as merely a model of spatial planning, where 'story-telling' is sometimes used to justify planners' ideals for the landscape, or a model for spatial planning, which pushes for a normative use of 'story-telling' as a means of encapsulating local knowledge and views of those who live in and use the landscape. Instead, the chapter engages 'story-telling' as a method for revealing how formal planning practices may be destabilised by more vernacular narratives seeking to subvert dominant discourses and processes. In doing so, it seeks to not only show the contested nature of participatory planning within the Netherlands, but also the ways in which narratives – as

revealed via such a method - construct specific positionalities with real implications for notions of inclusivity within planning practices.

The sixth chapter acknowledges that while much has been said about 'rewilding' processes within the discussions of ecological restoration in Europe, , less consideration is being given to another related phenomenon, that of the realisation of 'new nature', an approach which shifts the focus from the more common preservation of nature to the actual creation and restoration of natural domains. This chapter analyses the ways in which discourses of 'new nature' have been implemented in the Dutch context, frequently tied to imperatives of water safety. Drawing on the specific case of the Millingerwaard, we first examine how such discourses have materially as well as socially transformed the landscape in question. The chapter then explores how these transformations have affected those living in the area, in ways that are perceived positively or negatively according to different groups of residents and users. In doing so, we critically reflect not only on 'new nature' as it is conceived within planning processes, and empirically practised in the Netherlands, but also on how it is described and experienced by those whose lives are intimately tied to the landscape.

The thesis shows that while planners and policy makers predominantly perceive the landscape as a matter to be planned and managed based on 'objective', 'expert' and 'scientific' conceptualisations of the landscape, residents and landowners attach stronger emotional and intimate meanings to 'their' landscapes. These intimate meanings evolve around elements referring to (family) history, incorporating childhood memories and landscape elements which remind them of their roots and episodes in their own and their families' histories. Their stories not only present an intimate relationship with the cultural landscapes, but also a deep attachment to these. These strong emotional and intimate meanings are perceived to be neglected in the conceptualisations of the landscape in plans and policies. In this sense, 'expert' representations of the landscape are often taken for granted as natural and real characterisations of the cultural landscape, thereby denying how the landscape is 'practised' and 'lived' by those who feel strongly attached to these. These representations of the landscape have

proven to be very real in their effects on both the 'material' and 'imagined' reality of the particular landscapes studied as experienced by individuals on the ground.

The performative effect of the 'expert' representations of the cultural landscape is reinforced by the powerful positionalities and subjectivities created in the particular participatory planning processes. Those who are constructed as 'knowledgeable' and 'experts' in these processes remain more powerful in putting their conceptualisations of the landscape into effect than those 'practising' and 'living' the landscape on a daily basis. At the same time, the denial of these 'lived' and 'practised' meanings of the landscape has as an effect that residents and landowners feel rather powerless in the different planning processes studied, and therefore construct themselves in their stories as 'just citizens'. This is to an extent caused by the technical jargon being used as well as by the protracted procedures characterising spatial planning in the Netherlands. The stories of 'just citizens' show a high degree of frustrations caused by the feeling of not being able to have their voice heard, and this leads to the creation of counter discourses against dominant representations of the landscape captured in the different policies and plans being implemented. Through these 'acts of resistance', they attempt to destabilise, in these particular cases, the discursive and representational constructions of the cultural landscape. The thesis thus shows how planning practices should entail more than just rational, expert and reasoned arguments for how particular cultural landscapes ought to be developed. What is much more needed is a reflection on 'lived schemes of signification' to prevent the creation of a 'deadening effect' on the landscape-as-a-place-to-live.

Storytelling has proven to be a useful method in gaining an in-depth insight in how the landscape is 'more-than-representational', and is composed of affective, lived and felt elements that are part of the biographies of those who practise the landscape on a daily basis. Moreover, storytelling, rather than being a model *for* or *of* spatial planning, but as a method *in* spatial planning has proven useful in understanding the different perspectives on participatory planning processes of those in the field and in revealing hidden frustrations and challenges faced by individuals.

Samenvatting

Sinds de jaren tachtig is in Nederland participatie gebruikelijk in ruimtelijke planvormingsprocessen. Participatie wordt gekarakteriseerd door een streven naar consensus, samenwerking en consultatie, waarbij niet-overheidsorganisaties betrokken worden in het proces. Participatieve planningsprocessen streven er naar invulling te geven aan de aard en het management van het landschap, een belangrijke rol daarbij spelen de verschillende definities en betekenissen van het cultuurlandschap. De plannen die voortkomen uit deze processen zouden dan ook een reflectie moeten zijn van de verschillende belangen, meningen en wensen van hen die betrokken zijn bij deze processen en/of het cultuurlandschap in kwestie. Desondanks is de werkelijkheid vaak anders, en karakteriseren deze processen zich vaak door (te) verschillende standpunten en onderlinge strijd. In dit onderzoek is gekeken hoe de verschillende belangen, meningen en wensen van diegenen die het landschap bewonen en gebruiken worden gereflecteerd en in acht genomen in het politieke spel wat gespeeld wordt tussen individuen, niet-overheidspartijen, en overheidspartijen binnen ruimtelijke planning.

Het doel van dit onderzoek is dan ook het herkennen en erkennen van de verschillende meningen, gedachten, gevoelens en wensen die een rol spelen binnen participatieve ruimtelijke planningsprocessen. Dit is onderzocht door zowel representaties en conceptualisaties van het landschap, als meer intieme, individuele relaties en meningen toegekend aan het landschap, te bestuderen. Hiervoor heeft een analyse plaatsgevonden van overheidsdocumenten, kaarten en plannen, die gerelateerd zijn aan de in dit proefschrift bestudeerde planningsprocessen, en door individuen verhalen te laten vertellen die geanalyseerd zijn met een narratieve analyse om zo inzicht te krijgen in hoe individuen het landschap begrijpen en welke betekenis zij hieraan toekennen. Daarbij is ook gekeken naar hoe ruimtelijke planningsprocessen worden ervaren door de verschillende betrokkenen, daarbij is in het bijzonder aandacht besteed aan hoe bepaalde subjecten en hun respectievelijke posities worden geconstrueerd binnen deze processen.

Verhalen zijn binnen ruimtelijke planning op twee manieren toegepast; als een model voor de manieren waarop planning beoefend wordt, waarbij planning zelf wordt gezien als het vertellen van een verhaal; en als een model voor de manier waarop planning beoefend zou moeten worden, wat een normatiever model is waarbij de nadruk ligt op hoe verhalen van betrokkenen planning kan verbeteren, waarbij gezocht wordt naar een veelvoud aan planningsalternatieven. In dit onderzoek, echter, zijn verhalen gebruikt om een stem te geven aan hen die betrokken zijn bij en beïnvloed worden door ruimtelijke planningsprocessen en -projecten. Dit had als doel, het verkrijgen van inzicht in de verschillende belangen, gedachten, gevoelens, en wensen van individuen die betrokken zijn in planningsprocessen en in de verschillende posities die zij in (kunnen) nemen. Op deze manier wordt er gereflecteerd op hoe participatieve planningsprocessen in de onderzochte casus gebieden worden gerealiseerd en uitgevoerd van de 'bottom-up'. De verhalen die in dit proefschrift geanalyseerd zijn dienden om de verhalen van hen die dagelijks het landschap beleven en gebruiken naar voren te halen, en daarmee voorbij te gaan aan representaties van het landschap zoals deze worden vorm- en weergegeven in officiële discourses.

Het vertellen van verhalen is ook gekozen in lijn met de 'meer-dan-representatieve' (more-than-representational) benadering in dit proefschrift. Verhalen spelen een steeds belangrijkere rol binnen niet-representatieve (non-representational) en affectieve geografie. De 'meer-dan-representatieve' aanpak erkent dat representaties en de consequenties en effecten die hiermee voorgebracht worden belangrijk blijven in het definiëren en managen van cultuurlandschappen. Maar er wordt ook gesteld dat representaties een mogelijk 'dodelijk effect' kunnen hebben op het geleefde en beleefde landschap, omdat deze representaties de basis vormen waarop beslissingen en plannen worden gemaakt over de ontwikkeling en het management van cultuurlandschappen. Echter, het landschap, zoals dit proefschrift laat zien, is niet alleen een representatie, maar het landschap doet ook iets binnen het dagelijks handelen van individuen. In die zin is dit proefschrift dan ook gebaseerd op de claim in ruimtelijke planning voor een post-representatieve aanpak (post-representational), waarbinnen gesteld wordt dat maar al te vaak

representaties in ruimtelijke planning vanzelfsprekend worden gezien als natuurlijke en absolute waarheden van de wereld om ons heen. Daarnaast is dit proefschrift ook een reactie op de kritiek jegens de communicatieve benadering in ruimtelijke planning, die gedacht wordt te veel nadruk te leggen op een ideale spraak situatie, waarbij meer algemene vraagstukken van macht onvoldoende in acht worden genomen. In dit proefschrift wordt macht conceptueel geïntegreerd als het mechanisme waardoor representaties van het landschap krachtige effecten tot gevolg kunnen hebben. Daarnaast is macht geïntegreerd in het idee dat binnen planningsprocessen bepaalde subjecten en hun respectievelijke posities geconstrueerd worden. Theoretisch is het begrip macht in dit proefschrift ingevuld volgens Butler's performativiteitstheorie, waarbinnen zij stelt dat taal zowel de handeling van het uiten van taal is, alsmede dat taal bepaalde effecten voort kan brengen. Butler's werk is met name toegepast als een reflectie op hoe bepaalde handelingen van het uiten van taal, zowel verbaal als tekstueel, bepaalde effecten voortbrengen, niet alleen op het fysieke landschap, maar ook op de 'meer-dan-representatieve' landschappen van hen die deze dagelijks beoefenen en leven.

In het vierde hoofdstuk wordt ingezoomd op de Wageningse Eng, één van de casussen die bestudeerd is in dit proefschrift. Het hoofdstuk behandelt een aantal ruimtelijke metaforen (en de impact die deze hebben), zoals deze zijn toegepast in twee voor de Eng belangrijke beleidsdocumenten – het bestemmingsplan en een gerelateerde kaart – die sturend zijn in de ontwikkeling en management van het landschap door de gemeente. Ondanks dat deze documenten worden beschreven als gebaseerd op historische feiten, en als het resultaat van participatie in ruimtelijke planning, laat de casus van de Wageningse Eng zien dat deze metaforen op bepaalde momenten niet alleen compleet subjectief en arbitrair zijn, maar door bewoners en gebruikers ook gezien worden als een ontkenning van hun rechten aangaande het landschap en als instrumenten die de manieren waarop het landschap gebruikt kan worden beperken. In algemenere zin, wordt in dit hoofdstuk aangetoond dat planning zich te vaak en te veel baseert op representaties van het landschap, die mogelijk daadwerkelijke effecten hebben op dat landschap.

Door te focussen op de casus van de Wageningse Eng wordt in het vijfde hoofdstuk de rol van het vertellen van verhalen binnen ruimtelijke planning nader bestudeerd. Verhalen binnen ruimtelijke planning zijn op twee manieren toegepast; als een model van planning, waarin het vertellen van verhalen wordt gebruikt als een verantwoording van de idealen die planologen hebben ten aanzien van het landschap, en als een model voor ruimtelijke planning, waarbij het vertellen van verhalen op een meer normatieve manier wordt gebruikt en de verhalen dienen als een manier om lokale kennis en percepties van hen die betrokken zijn in een planningsproces naar voren te brengen. Daarentegen, wordt in dit het hoofdstuk het vertellen van verhalen gebruikt als een methode om te onthullen hoe formele planningsprocessen in alledaagse verhalen van betrokkenen worden gedestabiliseerd, waarbij de vertelde verhalen een tegenwerping zijn van dominante discoursen en processen. Zodoende, laat dit hoofdstuk niet alleen zien hoe tegenstrijdig participatieve planning in Nederland is, maar maakt ook de manieren duidelijk waarop binnen verhalen – zoals de methode laat zien – bepaalde posities worden geconstrueerd die werkelijke implicaties hebben voor de inclusiviteit binnen ruimtelijke planning.

In het zesde hoofdstuk wordt gesteld dat, terwijl er binnen discussies over ecologische restauratie in Europa veel aandacht gegeven is aan het herstellen van ‘natuurlijke’ processen (rewilding), er minder aandacht is gegeven aan een gerelateerd fenomeen, namelijk hoe ‘nieuwe natuur’ gecreëerd wordt, een aanpak waarbij de aandacht verlegd wordt van het beschermen van natuur naar het daadwerkelijk creëren en restaureren van natuurlijke domeinen. In dit hoofdstuk worden de manieren waarop discoursen over ‘nieuwe natuur’ zijn geïmplementeerd in de Nederlandse context, vaak verbonden met doelstellingen voor waterveiligheid, geanalyseerd. Gekeken wordt naar de Millingerwaard, de andere casus die in dit proefschrift bestudeerd is. Eerst is onderzocht hoe het discours over ‘nieuwe natuur’ het landschap zowel fysiek als sociaal veranderd heeft. Daarna is gekeken wat de invloed is van deze veranderingen op diegenen die in het gebied wonen. De resultaten laten zien dat de verschillende groepen bewoners en gebruikers de veranderingen dan wel als positief of als negatief ervaren. Zodoende wordt er een kritische

reflectie gegeven op niet alleen het concept of idee van 'nieuwe natuur' zoals dit gebruikt en fysiek vormgegeven wordt in ruimtelijke planning, maar ook hoe 'nieuwe natuur' wordt beschreven en beleefd door diegenen wiens levens op intieme wijze verbonden zijn met het landschap.

Dit proefschrift laat zien, dat terwijl planners en beleidsmakers het landschap met name zien als iets wat gepland en gemanaged moet worden op basis van 'objectieve', 'deskundige' en 'wetenschappelijke' conceptualisaties van het landschap, hechten bewoners en eigenaren daarentegen sterk emotionele en intieme betekenis aan 'hun' landschappen. Deze intieme betekenissen ontstaan rondom elementen die verwijzen naar hun (familie)geschiedenis, waarbij herinneringen uit de kindertijd en landschapselementen die herinneren aan hun geschiedenis en episodes uit hun leven een belangrijke rol spelen. Verhalen van bewoners en landeigenaren reflecteren niet alleen een intieme relatie met het cultuurlandschap, maar ook een sterke verbondenheid met deze. Echter ervaren zij dat deze sterk emotionele en intieme betekenissen die zij toekennen aan het landschap, onvoldoende worden erkend en meegenomen binnen conceptualisaties van het landschap, die de basis vormen van ruimtelijke plannen en beleid. In deze zin worden representaties van het landschap door 'deskundigen' nog vaak vanzelfsprekend beschouwd als natuurlijke en werkelijke karakterisering van het cultuurlandschap, waarbij hoe het landschap wordt beoefend en geleefd door diegenen die zich sterk aan het landschap gehecht voelen wordt ontkend. Representaties van het landschap blijken dan ook werkelijke effecten te hebben op zowel de materiele als denkbeeldige werkelijkheid zoals deze beleefd wordt door hen die verbonden zijn met en ingebed in de landschappen die in dit proefschrift bestudeerd zijn.

Dit performatieve effect van de representaties van het cultuurlandschap door deskundigen wordt versterkt doordat zij sterkere posities, gecreëerd binnen de hier bestudeerde planningsprocessen, bekleden. Diegenen die in deze processen worden geconstrueerd als 'verstand hebbende van' en 'experts' blijven sterker in het tot effect brengen van hun conceptualisaties van het landschap, dan diegenen die het landschap dagelijks 'leven' en

'beoefenen'. Tegelijkertijd, leidt de ontkenning van 'geleefde' en 'beoefende' betekenissen van het landschap er toe dat bewoners en landeigenaren zich redelijk machteloos voelen in de in dit proefschrift onderzochte planningsprocessen, en zichzelf daarom construeren in hun verhalen als 'slechts burgers'. Voor een deel wordt dit veroorzaakt door het technische jargon dat gebruikt wordt, maar ook door de langdurige procedures die karakteristiek zijn voor planning in Nederland. De verhalen van 'slechts burgers' laten een hoge mate van frustraties zien, die veroorzaakt worden door het gevoel niet gehoord te worden, wat leidt tot de creatie van contra-discoursen tegen dominante representaties van het landschap zoals vastgelegd in verschillende beleidsdocumenten en plannen die geïmplementeerd worden. Door deze 'handelingen van weerstand' proberen zij, in deze twee casussen, de discursieve en representatieve constructies van het cultuurlandschap te verwerpen. Dit proefschrift laat dus zien dat ruimtelijke planning meer inhoudt dan alleen rationele, deskundige en beredeneerde argumenten voor hoe bepaalde landschappen ontwikkeld zouden moeten worden. Wat hoognodig is, is een reflectie op 'geleefde schema's van betekenisgeving' om te voorkomen dat er een 'dodelijk effect' wordt gecreëerd op het landschap als een plek om te leven.

Tot slot, het vertellen van verhalen is een toepasbare methode gebleken waarmee een diepgaand inzicht kan worden verkregen in hoe het landschap 'meer-dan-representatief' is, en een samenstelling is van affectieve, geleefde en gevoelde elementen die deel zijn van de biografieën van diegenen die dagelijks het landschap beoefenen. Het vertellen van verhalen, niet als een model van of voor ruimtelijke planning, maar als een model om inzicht te krijgen in ruimtelijke planningsprocessen, is een bruikbare methode gebleken, waarbij verborgen frustraties en uitdagingen waarmee individuen geconfronteerd worden in ruimtelijke planningsprocessen zichtbaar(der) gemaakt kunnen worden.

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Completed Training and Supervision Plan
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Wageningen School
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Name of the learning activity	Department/Institute	Year	ECTS*
A) Project related competences			
Writing research proposal		2009	6
Participatory approaches in Planning & Development	WASS	2011	3
‘The verbalisation of cultural landscapes’	PhD symposium, Cultural Geography (GEO), WUR	2011	1
‘Narrating changing Dutch cultural landscapes’	PhD symposium, Cultural Geography, WUR	2012	1
‘Politiek in het Buitengebied van Wageningen’	Presentation Werkbezoek Gemeenteraad Wageningen aan WUR	2013	1
B) General research related competences			
‘ ‘A Delicious Leisure Activity’: Spatial Resistance to Heteronormativity in Public Spaces’	Workshop Sexy Space, Brighton and Sussex Sexualities Network	2009	2
‘ ‘A Delicious Leisure Activity’: Spatial Resistance to Heteronormativity in Public Spaces’	Self, Selves and Sexualities, 1st International Conference in Sexuality Studies, Dublin City University	2010	2

PhD discussion (internal)	GEO, WUR	2011 - 2013	3
Landscape Conversations	GEO, WUR	2011-2013	1.5
Geography Lectures	GEO, WUR	2010-2014	2
Supervision MSc student	Leisure, Tourism and Environment, GEO, WUR	2010	1
Coordination and lecturing course: The historical geography of the European cultural landscape	GEO, WUR	2011	2
Lecture in Human Geography UK	GEO, WUR	2011, 2012	0.5
Lecture in Cultural and Historical Geography	GEO, WUR	2012	0.5
C) Career related competences/personal development			
Competence assessment	WGS	2010	0.3
Career assessment	WGS	2014	0.3
Organising Landscape Conversations (internal)	GEO, WUR	2011	0.5
Organising internal PhD symposium	GEO, WUR	2011-2013	3
Total			30.6

*One credit according to ECTS is on average equivalent to 28 hours of study load

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