

On Eros, Rural Encounters and Local Responses: Rural sociology's 25th and 50th anniversary

Since rural sociology in Wageningen celebrates its 75th anniversary, this implies we had two previous anniversaries: the 25th and the 50th. At both occasions, anniversary books have been published.

Images and Realities of Rural Life was published at the occasion of 50 years Wageningen rural sociology. Edited by Henk de Haan and Norman Long, the anniversary book offers “a sample of recent work by sociology staff members and sketches out possible future trajectories” (Haan and Long 1997: vii). The book does not look back, as claims to reputation should be built on achievements, and not on the past, the editors state. “Ancestral rituals have their function in strengthening the sense of identity among current staff members and students, and may also serve as an historical claim on the present and future existence of a robust sociology in Wageningen”, yet the identity and standing of sociology in Wageningen, the editors contend, should be constructed on current “research profile, thinking and academic performance” (ibid.).

The introduction to the anniversary book makes a brief reference to Evert Willem Hofstee and Rudie van Lier, the “distinctive and sometimes idiosyncratic” yet “formidable intellectuals” who after the second world war “shaped the contours of Wageningen sociology”. Hofstee, appointed in 1946, the editors argue, “is best remembered for his fine-

grained regional analyses of differential farming and cultural styles”, while van Lier, appointed in 1955, did the groundwork for a sociology of development that “took a critical and reflexive stance to understanding intervention processes” (Haan and Long 1997: vii). Even though this 50th anniversary book does not survey history and personalities of the first fifty years rural sociology in Wageningen, its contributions show how the pioneering work of the founding fathers gave rise to a firm tradition, if one likes, school, in rural sociology: an actor oriented and cultural approach to rural development.

Multifunctionality, celebrating 25 years rural sociology in Wageningen, is no less ambitious, even though editor G.A. Kooy presents it as an “unpretentious book” and in spite of the book's playful tone (“It was not so long ago that the professor in Leiden wondered what on earth they were doing in Wageningen during winter, if they were doing anything at all during that season”). The first chapter gives an introduction to Wageningen sociology's past and its founder, Hofstee. This introduction to the book situates the establishment of rural sociology against the development of Wageningen as an agricultural university and discusses the advancement of rural sociology as a discipline in relation to the person, Hofstee and the group he established. There's also ample reference to Steinmetz, the founder of the Amsterdam sociography-school, and Hofstee's

mentor). The sociographical approach which Hofstee adhered to aimed to develop analytical concepts and understanding through meticulous empirical exploration – an approach which had left its mark on Wageningen rural sociology. Anyone interested in a thorough overview of the first 25 years, the people, approaches and themes should read Kooy's extensive introduction to the book (in Dutch).

The 25th anniversary book offers samples of recent work by staff members too. The thematic in the 25th anniversary book covers a wide range of topics, from contributions on rurality and radical farmers as well as contributions one would not directly associate with the field of rural and agrarian studies, such as abortion, anti-conception, sexuality, and Eros. This diversity was an expression of the two souls in Wageningen sociology in the late 1960s and 1970s: rural sociology and demography. The demography section, would later secede and institutionalize around household-, family- and health-studies.

The contributions to the 50th anniversary book are firmly rooted in agrarian and rural studies of the 1990s, debating commodification, neoliberalism, peasant- and social move-

ments, globalization and local responses. Discussing rural encounters at the intersection of agriculture, environment and tourism, the coming differentiation between rural sociology and new institutional off-shoot was already becoming visible. In the years that followed, recreation and tourism studies (which would become Cultural Geography) and environmental studies (which would become Environmental Policy) were carved out from Wageningen rural sociology.

Gemende Bedrijvigheid Een Kwart Eeuw Wageningse Sociologie 1946-1971

Aangeboden aan Prof. Dr. E. W. Hofstee ter gelegenheid van zijn 25-jarig jubileum als Hoogleraar aan de Landbouwhogeschool G.A. Kooy (redactie) 1971

1. Een kwart eeuw Wageningse sociologie – G.A. Kooy
2. Max Weber als agrarisch socioloog - Q. J. Munters
3. Radicale boeren - A. T. J. Nooij
4. Productie op contract J. H. de Ru
5. De ontwikkeling van het aantal landbouw-bedrijven in de toekomst - L. J. M. Weerdenburg
6. Het rural-urban continuum in het licht van sociale veranderingen

Group picture at the 25th anniversary



- J. H. W. Lijfering
 - 7. De leefbaarheid van plattelandskernen in gemengd agrarisch-recreatieve gebieden - J. P. Groot
 - 8. Prognoses en planning; openluchtrecreatie in de toekomst - A. P. C. Kerstens
 - 9. Abortus provocatus en het geboortencijfer - C. de Hoog
 - 10. Aspecten van anti-conceptie en seksualiteit - C. J. Cramwinckel-Weeda
 - 11. Ontmythologisering der erotiek (?) G. A. Kooy
 - 12. Theoretische benaderingswijzen van het gezin vergeleken - L. Th. van Leeuwen
 - 13. De toekomst beschouwd vanuit Wageningen - W. H. Douma
- BIJLAGE: Publicaties Afdeling Sociologie en Sociografie 1946-1971 241

Multifunctionality: A Quarter of a Century of Wageningen Sociology: 1946-1971

Presented to Prof. Dr. E. W. Hofstee on the occasion of his 25-years jubilee as a professor at the Wageningen Agricultural University G.A. Kooy (editor) 1971

- 1. G. A. Kooy
A Quarter of a Century of Wageningen Sociology
- 2. Q. J. Munters
Max Weber as an agrarian sociologist
- 3. A. T. J. Nooij
Radical Farmers
- 4. J. H. de Ru
Production under contract
- 5. L. J. M. Weerdenburg
The development of the number of farms in the future
- 6. J. H. W. Lijfering
The rural-urban continuum in the perspective of social change
- 7. J. P. Groot
The viability of rural cores in mixed agricultural and recreational areas
- 8. A. P. C. Kerstens

- Forecasting and planning; outdoor recreation in the future
- 9. C. de Hoog
Abortion provocatus and the birth rate
- 10. C. J. Cramwinckel-Weeda
Aspects of anti-conception and sexuality
- 11. G. A. Kooy
Demythologisation of erotica(?)
- 12. L. Th. van Leeuwen
Theoretical approaches to the family compared
- 13. W. H. Douma
The future seen from Wageningen

Images and Realities of Rural Life

Wageningen Perspectives on Rural Transformations
Henk de Haan & Norman Long (editors) 1997

Images and Realities of Rural Life. Introduction
Henk de Haan and Norman Long

Part One: Current Work and New Approaches

- 1. Agency and Constraint, Perceptions and Practices. A Theoretical Position
Norman Long
- 2. Some Reflections on Anthropology in Development Studies
Jan H.B. den Ouden
- 3. On Rurality, Rural Development and Rural Sociology
Jan Douwe van der Ploeg

Part Two: Regulation, Intervention and Social Movements

- 4. The Changing Parameters of Social Regulation and Governance in Agriculture
Jaap Frouws
- 5. Towards Responsibility. On Development Administrators' Fantasies and Field-Level Workers' Anxieties
Pieter de Vries
- 6. Modern and Endogenous Development. Civilization and Empowerment
Ad Nooij

- 7. Discourse Formation in Social Movements. Issues of Collective Action
Dorothea Hilhorst

Part Three: Local Responses to Globalization and Commoditization

- 8. Locality, Identity and the Reshaping of Modernity. An Analysis of Cultural Confrontation in Two Villages
Henk de Haan
- 9. Globalization and Food Objects
Alberto Arce
- 10. Dynamics of Agricultural Production. An Analysis of Micro-Macro Linkages
Paul Hebinck and Jan Douwe van der Ploeg
- 11. Agrarian Change, Neoliberalism and Commoditization. A Perspective on Social Value
Norman Long
- 12. Entrepreneurship, Projects and Actor-Networks. Reconceptualizing Small Firms
Gerard Verschoor

Part Four: Rural Encounters: Agriculture, Nature, Tourism and the Environment

- 13. Ecological Modernization Theory and Agricultural Reform
Jaap Frouws and Arthur Mol
- 14. Claims of Culture. Social Representations of Nature and their Consequences for Agriculture
Chris van Koppen
- 15. Sustainable Development of Tourism. A Framework for Discussion and Research
René van der Duim
- 16. The Multiple Realities of the Rural Environment. The Significance of Tourist Images for the Countryside
Jaap Lengkeek, Jan Willem te Kloeze and Renze Brouwer

Haan, H. d. and N. Long (1997). Images and Realities of Rural Life: Wageningen Perspectives on Rural Transformations Assen, Van Gorcum.

Kooy(ed.), G. E. (1971). Gemeende Bedrijvigheid: kwart eeuw Wageningse sociologie 1946-1971: Aangeboden aan Prof. Dr. E. W. Hofstee ter gelegenheid van zijn 25-jarig jubileum als Hoogleraar aan de Landbouwhogeschool. Wageningen, Veenman & Zonen NV.