Negotiating urban conflict: Conflicts as opportunity for urban democracy

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NEGOTIATING URBAN CONFLICT
CONFLICTS AS OPPORTUNITY FOR URBAN DEMOCRACY

NANKE VERLOO

This study argues that episodes of urban conflict can serve as a lens into the challenges that society presents to citizens and to those responsible for governance. Struggles around representation, inequality, belonging, and governance are negotiated among citizens, professionals, and policy practitioners at the street-level of urban neighborhoods. Therefore, the interactions between stakeholders in situations of conflict can function as laboratories to understand how citizenship is performed through informal and unconventional street-level practices. My study is the result of four years of ethnographic case study research in which I immersed myself into the dramas of people who inhabit, govern, or practice in the urban environment. The study reveals if, when, how, and where episodes of urban conflict can be understood as moments of opportunity for 'negotiated democracy'.

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Conflicts as opportunity for urban democracy

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For my grandfather who taught me how to appreciate the everyday.

For my father who taught me how to appreciate the salt of the earth.

Table of contents

Preface

On our way to The Hague David pulled out two earphones and a little plastic piece to connect both of them to his iPhone. 'This way we can listen to my new collection of blues songs together', he said kindly. Fifty minutes and many beautiful songs later, we arrived at Hollands Spoor to interview a professional named Tonie. Little did I know that these two men would turn out to be two of the most important people in my work, research, but also life over the next five years. That same evening David and I stepped into a small red Ford Ka in which Tonie would introduce us to the neighborhood Ypenburg. That night the infamous Cockpitgroup together with local police officers, policy makers, and welfare professionals would reflect on the successful organization of a traditional The Hague ritual, the New Years Eve fire.

Later, Tonie told me that he did not have much trust in researchers, but that he enjoyed the interview so much, that he dared taking us to this important meeting. He wanted us to meet Gees, Manus, and Lange Ron, who would be the gatekeepers to understanding what had happened in Ypenburg in the years before. Tonie was right. Looking back, this day in January 2010 was not only the starting point of rich friendships, it also marked the real start of my PhD. In the years to come, Tonie, Gees, Manus, and Lange Ron, immersed me into the celebrations and struggles of their community lives, after which I would return to David's office and share my stories.

Soon, however, I found out that what I was about to do was in fact not that easy. In the first place because people did not appreciate that I called the situation they were in a 'conflict'. Secondly, in order to understand the different sides of that so called 'tension', I had to undertake rather contradicting practices. In the days I joined local police officers, I sometimes chased the same youngsters with whom I hung out the days before. It took time to build relationships with the people in the neighborhoods so that they would allow me to have these rather conflicting experiences. It took trust to convince them that I would tell their stories with integrity, as these people had experiences with their stories being manipulated or denied. This thesis would not be written without their trust and support. The best thing that I can do in return, is to tell the stories that were left untold.

This pursuit sounds political, and honestly, it is. Although I think the dissertation shows that I took careful measures to work with my own biases, I cannot deny that the stories of the people with whom I worked touched me deeply. First of all the stories of people who tried so hard to establish a role for themselves – the Moroccan neighborhood fathers who were so tired of being discriminated and did everything they could to improve the lives of their future generations. But also the stories of Gees, Manus, and Lange Ron were in a similar way infused with the frustration of not belonging. Or the people of 'neighbors for neighbors' in Utrecht who spent all their free time and little money on doing things for their community and who cannot get subsidies because of some request format that they do not live up to. These stories make me wonder about our inability to recognize how unequal our society really is.

But not only citizens inspired me to tell untold stories. I saw how welfare workers reinvent their practices everyday and find little acknowledgement, both in their bureaucracies as well as on the street. I met ambitious policy makers and politicians, who have so many great intentions but so little means and time to really make a difference. This dissertation is an attempt to reveal these worlds. To place them besides each other and see where they meet, overlap, and conflict. And hopefully to provide them, although with a critical eye, with much deserved recognition.

There are many people to thank who are a part of the many worlds that I inhabit in my own life. First of all my family, whose innocent questions always made me aware of the blessed position I am in as a person who is in love with what she does. Mom, dad, Youki, and Tara, your never-ending support makes my world go round. My friends, who granted me with the much needed distractions that allowed me to write a dissertation and have a rich personal life at the same time. Sabine, Fleur, Irena, and all the others, I hope we will be celebrating life together for many years to come. Marlies van der Wel, thank you for your talent to translate my ideas in a marvelous illustration and your dedication in drawing that picture during such a challenging time. Steffie Verstappen, who somehow always knew what I meant in improving this text. Furthermore, I have the honor of having my dearest friends as my paranymphs, Richard and Mario, there are no words for what you mean to me.

Luckily, I am also blessed with exceptional colleagues at the University of Amsterdam. The people in the Nicis research project, John Forester, Arnold Reijndorp, Maarten Poorter, Freek Janssens, Mireille Klaverweide, Ivar Halfman, the discussions we had on Friday mornings were the foundation of my research. Imrat Verhoeven, you are like a brother to me. Sander van Haperen, thank you for your critical mind. I want to thank everyone in my program group 'Transnational Configurations, Conflict and Governance', and in particular Marlies Glasius, John Grin, Anne Loeber, Jeroen Doornernik, Darshan Vigneswaran, Lee Seymour, and Jesse Hoffman who provided me with helpful comments. The process of writing this book has been easier because of the support of Luc Fransen, Kris Ruijgrok, Eric Besseling, Leila Abouyaala, Joris de Vries, and many others at the department of political science and the Amsterdam Institute for Social Science Research.

Finally, I want to turn to the four people who made this project a true life changing experience. First of all, David Laws, you are much more than a supervisor. You did not only teach me how to be an academic, you also took me in as your own in your house as well as your circle of friends. You taught me how to dine with fine people, and engage in heartfelt intellectual battles without loosing patience – I am still working on the latter. Throughout the years we found a way of working together that needs no more than a word or a look. I am very proud to be your friend and I hope we keep on learning and teaching together for many years to come.

Secondly, Maarten Hajer, since the first lecture of public administration I admire your ability to translate theory into issues that are important to real people in the real world. I am proud that I made it as your PhD student, but I am even more proud of the intellectual and personal friendship we established over the years. You and David always challenged me to take that one step further and rewrite that chapter one more time. But frankly, writing this, I cannot wait until the day the three of us are done with my PhD and we toast to a glass of well deserved Pouilly-Fumé.

Last but definitely not least, I want to thank Sara Cobb whose work on narrative, her personality, passion, and wonderful mind are my greatest example. And I would know, because she and her husband Carlos Sluzki took me in to their DC home for almost five months. In these months, where I worked as a visiting scholar at George

Introducing a puzzle:
the drama of urban conflict

'If they are not letting us in, we won't leave!' Sjaan exclaimed. She had come to the neighborhood facility to open the doors for the women's club that she held every week. But now she found it closed. The club itself had changed since Sjaan and her fellow neighbors had to close the self-organized community center they called 'The Cockpit', after the airport that had existed in Ypenburg prior to the development of neighborhood. The 'cockpit group' became notorious in the new neighborhood. They shared a history in the working class neighborhood the Schilderswijk and had brought this life to the new town of Ypenburg, a suburban extension to the city of The Hague. Now their history in the Schilderswijk created a stigma suggesting that many activities in the cockpit were 'lower class', 'criminal', or 'not for the common good'. The local government first took an interest in the cockpit but then forced it to close and replaced it with a new welfare center in which professionals took over the responsibility for organizing community activities. As a compromise the cockpit group was allowed to 'volunteer' and organize some activities in the new center.

Yet today the professionals had crossed a line. They changed the locks so that Sjaan's group could no longer enter the building without professional supervision. Sjaan called her neighbor Gonnie, who immediately jumped on her 'scoot mobiel' and joined Sjaan in her occupation of the building. Tall Harry arrived 5 minutes later. He brought some mattresses along because he expected this might last a while. Within an hour the cockpit group had occupied the building. Other neighbors supported their initiative and brought food and beverages. The group did what came naturally. They celebrate their sense of community and autonomy. A few days later, the cockpit group was still there, sitting on their mattresses, waiting for the director of the welfare organization or for someone of the local government to show up and talk. They wanted to tell their story. Unfortunately, nobody showed up.

This vignette provides a window into a local urban struggle. But what was happening here? How can we understand this action? Was it a desperate revolt? Or a genuine effort to regain a sense of inclusion in the organization of community activities? Some might say the Cockpit group was simply causing havoc. A more cynical analysis might describe the cockpit group as living up to the expectation of public officials who expected them to be irresponsible and unable to collaborate for the common good. Regardless of the effect, this story, along with others, raises the question of what informal contentious interactions like the occupation of the center mean for our understanding of urban conflicts?

This thesis is an account of what I observed when collective action develops at the street-level – in community centers, on benches and playgrounds, and in park and squares. I wondered how we should understand these moments when people suddenly become politically active and, de facto, part of a public process. I came to the insight that we should not see these urban conflicts as episodes that should be 'managed', but as opportunities for democratic governance. This leads to a radical proposal that urban conflict might be treated as a moment of democratic importance. I wanted to investigate, given the prominent urge to engage citizens into decision making, what the meaning of local conflict might be in processes of democratic policy making at the neighborhood level? Can we see through the thrill of confrontation and the improvised clumsiness that come with such impromptu conflicts? Can we recognize an unexpected form of citizenship engagement, a call for sharing voice? An episode like Sjaan's scream and the subsequent occupation of the cockpit provides a window into the contentious public actions that people perform in response to the decisions of public authorities. Moreover, we can also see how authorities perform their role in these dramas of contention. These sequences of acts and counteracts do not come out of the blue. A trail of decisions of local policy actors had led the cockpit group to believe that they had to fight for their position. The loss of their club and the ongoing exclusion from decisions about community organizing created a conflict between neighbors, local political authorities, and welfare practitioners.

Already in 1937 Lewis Mumford argued that 'the city creates drama' (Mumford in LeGates and Stout [1996] 2011: 93). He described the city as a 'theatre of social action' in which politics, art, commerce, and communities make the social drama more

significant—a stage-set, well designed, intensifying and underlining the gestures of the actors and the action in play (ibid: 91). Could the city be our theatre – the living laboratory – in which we can grasp the value of conflict for democratic decision making? As cities become more diverse and complex, underlying tensions about varying lifestyles, class differences, cultural rituals, planning processes, and other public policy decisions are bound to increase. The city is and has always been a space for drama. In other words, it is in urban conflicts that that we get access to social tensions as they bubble over from time to time.

Urban conflicts engage people on the basis of their own subjective experiences and within their repertoire of action. Social conflict refers to 'conflicts in which the parties are an aggregate of individuals, such as groups, organization, communities, and crowds, rather than single individuals' (Oberschall 1978: 291). The dynamic process of conflict is my unit of analysis. I treat conflicts as 'social dramas' that can be understood as 'objectively isolable sequence of social interactions of a conflictive, competitive or antagonistic type' (Turner [1987] 1992: 33). Treating conflict as a social drama enables me to develop an approach to analysis that crosscuts the level of the individual, the social, and the political. Theories of social conflict argue that conflict can be understood as a force for creative innovations that mobilize collective action that to contest unequal power-relations (Coser 1956, 1957, 1961; Oberschall 1978). People who do not know each other become partners in organizing against a shared antagonist. They organize to disrupt the status quo in what I call 'critical moments' that challenge governments to re-establish legitimacy and strengthen their capacity to govern. In this sense, this study seeks to operationalize conflict as a moment of opportunity for urban democracies.

In recent years, city streets have turned into dramatic stages as people have taken to the streets to contest public policies and political structures. The Arab Spring, Occupy Wall Street, fast-food workers in the United States, and youngsters in The Hague are just a sample of examples of people developing public action to contest injustice and communicate their voice in the public sphere. One could say that 'angry citizens' characterize our time. People organize themselves for voice and recognition. At the same time, governments are seeking ways to engage citizens in democratic practices as complex societies challenge them to rethink representation (Mansbridge 2003; Castiglione and Warren 2006; Norval 2009). Thus two forces are shaping modern

democracies: a bottom-up need for recognition on the part of citizens and a top-down need to find ways to include these citizens in order to enhance public legitimacy.

These challenges of democratic legitimacy do not only take shape in political structures and large-scale protests, they also take place in informal interactions at the street-level. These range from initiatives by highly educated citizens who become professionally organized advocates against local policy programs to 'hanging-youth' who seek to engage in the debates about the design of the neighborhood, or the cockpit group fighting for their of community center. These diverse groups of people form 'publics' (Dewey [1927] 2012) that seek to be heard in the democratic state. People experience politics concretely in their everyday experiences. These are also settings in which tensions tend to escalate as people experience the meaning of class, identity, and positioning in their interactions with street-level workers;

> … people experience deprivation and oppression within a concrete setting, not as the end product of large and abstract processes, and it is the concrete experience that molds their discontent into specific grievances against specific targets … People on relief [for example] experience the shabby waiting rooms, the overseer or case-worker, and the dole. They do not experience American social welfare policy … In other words, it is the daily experience of people that shapes their grievances, establishes the measure of their demands, and points out the targets of their anger. (Piven and Cloward 1977: 20-21)

Thus the state, democracy, public policy, and social identities become tangible at the level of the street. This is also the realm in which citizens challenge public decision making. In moments of conflict, citizens, welfare practitioners, policy makers, and politicians interact. These interactions are not marked by policy strategies, but by street-level experience, tacit emotions, and subjective interests. In the realm of the neighborhood people contest policies close to their homes and their everyday lives. In these informal, everyday forms of contestation everyone can take part. Outside the conventional repertoire of political engagement they can voice protest in their own language, irrespective of their ability to engage with the formal political vocabulary. A key challenge for democracy lies in the response to these voices (Ranciere 1995, 2004;

Jenkins and Klandermans 1995; Tilly and Tarrow 2006). In Chapter One I rethink this challenge more thoroughly and look into the practices through which governments seek to engage citizens or control their contestations.

In Chapter Two I lay out my approach to analyzing street-level interactions as moments of opportunity. I propose to a framework for operationalizing social conflict as a moment of democratic opportunity. The Social-Spatial Narrative grounds analysis in the empirical details of interaction and provides a way to grasp when, where, and how street-level interactions can provide opportunities for urban democracies.

To answer the puzzle of urban conflict as an opportunity for urban governance I followed the everyday practices of residents, street-level bureaucrats, and policy-practitioners in an ethnographic approach to the study of conflict. For three years I immersed myself in three dramas of urban conflict. I developed my insights through observing. I 'hung' with youth and then, weeks later, chased them with local police officers. I cooked with women in the community center and played cards with men in their club. From informal practices like dog walking to the formal measuring of a future square, I took every approach to the city seriously and learned from the knowledge of everyone who identified with the conflict at stake. I therefore frame my own practice of doing research as 'learning-in-action' (Schön 1983) and challenge scholars and practitioners to go with me on this journey through the big and the small stories of urban conflict in the Netherlands. In Chapter Three I discuss my methods and develop a reflective approach to learning in action.

After operationalizing urban conflict as opportunity, three ethnographic case studies are analyzed to unravel the challenges that urban governments face in episodes of conflict. The cases dive directly into the heart of urban dramas that disrupt urban life and trigger people's emotions. I distinguish three forms of urban conflict: crisis, controversy and latent conflict. The first case study in Chapter Four is an episode of crisis that takes place in Amsterdam. Crisis is a form of conflict that disrupts the status quo in a short and immediate manner and has relatively clear actors. In Amsterdam, the death of a Dutch boy of Moroccan descent unleashed a trail of interactions between the Moroccan community and local politicians and policy makers. The tragedy demanded an immediate response from the local government and the street-level bureaucrats who

tried to control chaos and prevent further escalation. The story reveals how action and reaction at the street-level and in the local council quickly followed each other in a week of high tensions that resulted in a missed opportunity and a controversial march.

The occupation of the center that opened this Introduction is an episode from the second case study. This case study of controversy in Chapter Five, takes place in Ypenburg, a newly developed neighborhood in The Hague. Controversies challenge governments to deal with long-term patterns of escalation, dispute, and latent tensions. They take place over a longer period and involve multiple actors whose identities can also change over time. Here the controversy started during the construction phase when a group of ambitious residents started their own neighborhood center. In 'the Cockpit' they organized bingo, karaoke, and sporting events. When the construction of the neighborhood came to an end, the local government took an interest in the neighborhood center and decided that it should be operated like any other community facility in the city. It had to be 'professionalized'. The closing of the beloved Cockpit and the subsequent opening of a new community center opened a ten-year period of controversy that provides a window into the value of emotions, uncanny forms of citizenship, and escalated violence.

The final case study of urban conflict analyzes a latent conflict. In latent conflicts tensions do not bubble over into escalation, but remain under the surface. They pose a different challenge for local governments that must try to understand what is creating the latent tensions and how they can engage local groups in their efforts to improve the neighborhood. In a so called 'problem neighborhood' in Utrecht youngsters, elderly residents, welfare professionals, and policy makers sought ways to increase the quality of the public space. Their stories reveal how well intended policy strategies can unintentionally disrupt the tactical efforts of citizens and the fabric of the local community.

The concluding chapter returns to the controversy in The Hague, but now in a period where a new welfare professional deals with the conflict in a markedly different way. Chapter Seven rethinks how the effort to deal with urban conflict blurs the boundary between theory and practice. Where governments in the other case studies were often unable to engage the improvised actions and subjective stories of citizens, this

detailed account of practice describes a different approach to dealing with urban conflicts that brings out the inherent opportunities. This repertoire, that I call 'narrative practice,' suggests how governments and scholars might engage the diverse stories and performances of case actors to develop 'critical moments' that are inclusive and democratic. To understand conflict as an opportunity it is necessary to be embedded in the urban experience. 'Learning-in-action' is a central puzzle throughout my research in urban conflict situations. Only through a close look into the perspectives of actors one can see when, where, and how conflict is negotiated, which stories become dominant or marginal, and how informal practices of citizenship can be engaged into strategies of urban governance.

Part I
Urban conflict as opportunity?

Chapter 1
Rethinking conflict as an opportunity for urban democracy
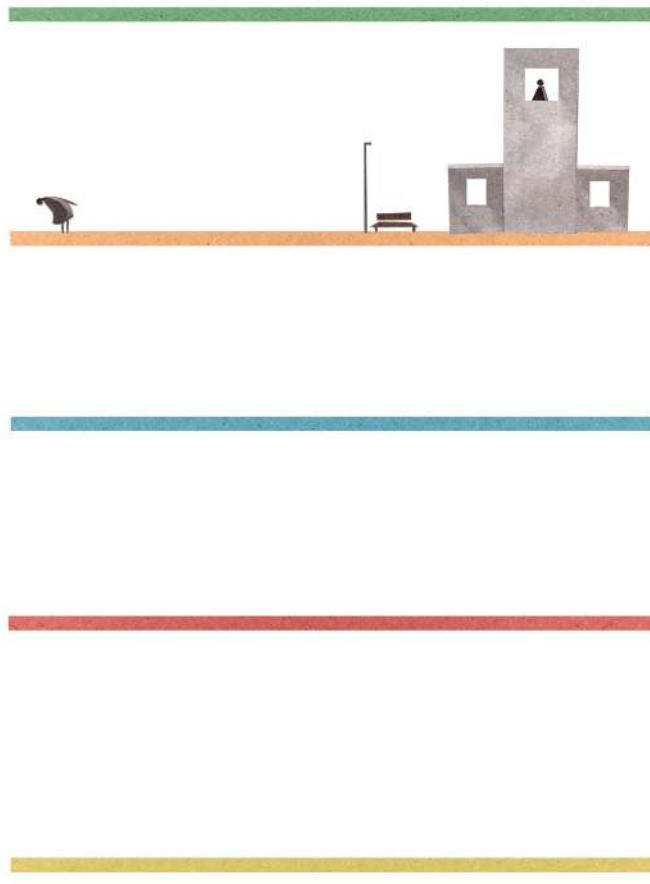
A challenge for democratic governance

The urban theatre is becoming increasingly complex as angry citizens, ambitious welfare organizations, socially conscious housing corporation's, local police offices, and other groups and organization demand a say in urban governance. Societies have become more complex, plural, and diverse, raising the need for new modes of representation (Ranciere 1995, 2004; Mansbridge 2003; Castiglione and Warren 2006; Norval 2009). Governments face the challenge of a 'democratic deficit' (Norris 2011; Bekkers et al 2007) and encounter limits in their ability to govern (Hajer and Wagenaar 2003). In this complex age, the demands of democratic legitimacy and capacity push politicians and civil servants to formulate new ways to actively engage diverse public and involve groups in decision making.

Conflict is often overlooked in the search for new opportunities for engaging groups in the practices of democratic governance. This is despite the diversity of groups that become involved and the depth to which they are engaged when they have something at stake, in episodes of conflict. If we look further into the history of the cockpit group, for example, we see residents trying to challenge decisions made by local officials. Their informal act of occupation was not understood as a democratic challenge by the local authorities, however. Instead of political action, officials saw a 'problematic' group making demands and seeking to disrupt the status quo. The cockpitters' efforts were experienced as 'noise' that needed to be controlled (Serres [1980] 2007), rather than as a contentious street-level performance by a group of motivated citizens. Whether this episode and others are seen as democratic opportunities hinges on the capacity of local officials to recognize anger as a sign that people are engaged. It presses us to rethink local government's practical ability to involve angry citizens as stakeholders in constructive forms of dialogue, debate, and negotiation (Laws and Forester, forthcoming).

In this chapter I describe and compare the strategies that government agencies rely on when they seek to engage citizens. This overview of theory and practice situates the analysis of local controversies in Dutch cities in the context of broader concerns about citizens' role in contemporary democracy and urban governance. I begin from a broad definition of political action that stems from the work of Hannah Arendt. To Arendt, men become political beings through their interactions in the public realm (Arendt [1958] 1998: viii). The public realm is the space between people and thereby relates and separates men at the same time (ibid: 52). Politics is the process of inserting the self into an arena and in a way that constitutes that arena as public and political. 'The political realm rises directly out of acting together, the sharing of words and deeds' (ibid: 198). For Arendt, this claim to politics is central. She proposes a performative understanding of democratic politics in which everyone who performs can have a voice and contribute to the production of a public sphere. These actions or performances, Arendt said, create chains of actions and reactions that can be understood as processes (ibid: 190). This makes every actor a participant in the public sphere and every person able to engage in political meaning making. The biggest threat to democracy for Arendt is when these political performances are ignored and groups are excluded from the public realm (ibid: 9). If we want to make sense of democracy in this light, we must analyze the contentious performances (Tilly 2008; Tilly and Tarrow 2006) of residents and citizens as actions that can produce a public sphere – establishing relationships among actors and developing processes of deliberation and negotiation from contestations in the public realm.

Arendt's definition of political action orients the study of democracy to the level of the street. Lipsky captured the significance of street-level interactions in his account of the policy bureaucracy. 'Citizens directly experience government through street-level bureaucrats, and their actions are the policies provided by government in important respects' (Lipsky 1980: xvi). In Lipsky's account, interactions with street-level bureaucrats shape citizens' understanding of policy and public institutions and also 'mediate aspects of the constitutional relationship of citizens to the state … [holding] the keys to a dimension of citizenship' (ibid: 4). The dynamic identities of individuals and groups as citizens and neighbors become tangible in interactions that unfold on the street. These street-level interactions in urban communities provide a window to study the dramas of citizenship and the way they are intermediated by the practices of

government agencies.

Studying democracy at the level of the community is hardly a new insight. Already in 1927 the pragmatist scholar John Dewey called for 'a search for the public'. Dewey tried to understand the state by looking at concrete acts that were performed by people who were living in association with one another (Dewey [1927] 2012: 255). To understand the function and legitimacy of government, he argued, we must not merely look at institutions, but at the performances in which publics come into being as people take action. These publics have the opportunity to grow rapidly with new forms of social life, but institutions tend to obstruct the organization of new publics (ibid: 255). Dewey saw in these publics the opportunity of democracy that creates the 'fulfilment of community life'.

The public, however, is not only to be found in the conventional practices of the street-level bureaucracies – public meetings and participatory planning programs. Publics can also emerge when citizens engage each other and the state in processes of urban conflict that can be found in everyday life. Citizens perform politics through informal practices in alleys, on benches and squares, and in the community centers that are part of the urban environment. This everyday repertoire of civic engagement relates directly to people's needs and identities. It challenges public officials to engage citizens on their own terms. One challenge of representation in a 'decentered' modern democracy is to understand these informal structures and opportunities in which citizens seek to engage in governance (Norval 2009: 299; Bevir and Rhodes 2001, 2003). I treat these informal performances as forms of citizenship that demand attention from government and get negotiated in interaction at the street-level and develop a theory and a form of inquiry that can bring out this character of practice and share it with those who have a stake.

There are several studies that contributed to the idea that everyday life spaces of the city are sites for the constitution of different forms of citizenship and a medium through which citizenship negotiations take place (Holston and Appadurai 1999; Isin 2000, 2002; Secor 2004; Davis and Raman 2012). Especially studies that examined ethnic diversity call for an urban public domain that incorporates plural and conflicting claims to negotiate diversity (Amin 2002) and acknowledge the legitimacy of ethnic identities seeking representation (Uitermark et al 2005). I seek to build on these accounts as they

provide a basis for my claim to focus on street-level interactions as forms of citizenship practice. They deepen my concern that that a moral and performative dimension of citizenship defines the meanings and practices of belonging to society (Holston and Appadurai 1999: 14) and thereby excludes forms of citizenship that do not fit the dominant repertoire of action. These studies do not look into the informal repertoires of action that come into play in episodes of urban conflict or seek to understand how citizenship emerges in the interaction between state actors and citizens. In this chapter I therefore seek to do two things. I provide an overview of Dutch urban governance practices that try to engage diverse forms of citizen participation *and* I review practice-oriented theories that observe, analyze, and critique interactions between citizens and the state to identify where further work is needed[1].

To order this literature for this task, I distinguish three forms in which democratic governance takes shape in cities: 1) a form where governments exercise *control and rule* in the interaction with citizens, 2) a form of governance in which public organization and officials seek *collaboration* with citizens and other stake holders, and 3) a form that focuses on the role of conflict and *contention* in creating and sustaining democratic governance. I conclude with a summary that sets the stage for the presentation of my research design and findings, which focus on local practices of conflict and contention.

Table 1 presents an overview of forms of governance that foster and shape citizenship. The rows draw two distinctions. The first is between political theory and political practice. Row 1 notes the form of political theory most closely associated with the form of democratic governance in each of the columns. The remaining rows differentiate between formal and informal practices. The *formal political realm* refers to regulated process of decision making that are performed in institutional settings that strongly regulate interactions between the state and the public. A courtroom or a meeting with planners and civil servants at the city hall would be a clear example of the formal realm. The *informal domain* refers to citizenship practices take place in everyday life in neighborhoods. It is closer to the private lives and citizens and would include the work of welfare practitioners who work with families 'behind the front door' and more ad

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[1] This chapter is not meant to be comprehensive of all the work that is done on urban governance. It merely seeks to carve out the specific focus of my study in relation to urban governance practices in the Netherlands.

hoc interactions that develop on the street. These informal settings of governance are carried out in public and have effects that extend beyond the people who are directly involved to a broader public (Dewey [1927] 2012: 244). Practices in the informal realm depend less on the rules of the institutional and more on the unfolding interaction between street-level bureaucrats and citizens. They happen occasional instead of in a continuous pattern of participation organized by government bodies (see lower arrow). This is where I place the types of urban conflict that are the focus of this study.

Realm of governance		Control/rule	Collaborate	Contention
Theoretical				
Political theory		Representative democracy	Deliberative democracy	Radical/Agonistic democracy
		Liberal citizenship	(Neo) republican notion of citizenship	(Neo) Republican notion of citizenship
Practical				
Formal	Practice-oriented theory	Bureaucracy	Negotiation theory	Social movements
		Ladder of participation	Deliberative planning theory	
	Governance practices	Voting	Deliberative Spatial Planning	'Angry citizens' / 'Citizens on standby'
		Public meetings (inspraak)	Interactive policy-making	Amsterdam squatter movement
		Vogelaar neighborhood policy	Referenda	
Informal	Practice-oriented theory	Street-level bureaucracy	Studies on Active citizenship	?????
		Front-line workers	Everyday maker	
	Governance practices	The history of Dutch Welfare practices	Active citizenship	(Community Organizing in the US)
			'Doing' democracy	Dutch practice ???

Continuous ←   → Occasional

(Table 1)

Consider, for example, the occupation of the community center in Ypenburg highlighted in the introduction. The act was contentious, challenging the practices of the local welfare organization that managed the center. This case falls under the right hand column. Because it developed as an improvised protest by the cockpit group, rather than in an organized forum such as a public meeting or an organized protest, it would be associated with informal practice. This is the cell in which my research fits and in which, I will argue, conflicts create moments of opportunity for urban democracy in the informal public domain. I do not argue that these informal contentious and local interactions are the most salient aspect of democracy, but as I will show in this study, they are an important part of the puzzle if we seek to understand how democracies can foster in todays complex society. Before turning to the cell in which my study takes place, I discuss the other cells, focusing on theories, policies, and practices that shed light on historical and contemporary developments of urban governance in the Netherlands.

Control and rule

The first variation of democratic governance that I analyze treats democracy as representation and governance as a mix of support and control. Representative democracy took shape as a parliamentary democracy based in the principle of representation of the vote of the people through parliament and the state (Tromp in Engelen and Dhian Ho 2004: 343). Citizens elect state officials exercise control and to provide for those in need. These aspects of representative democracy came together in a strong and relevant form in the liberal-democratic welfare state. Here the basis for democratic governance is the authority that is legitimately and appropriately vested in the state through elections that also serve to articulate and aggregate interests. Citizens are bearers of 'rights' – the right to speech, to vote, to housing—that can be understood in positive and negative terms. These rights also limit the ability of government to pursue control functions and enhance the ability of citizens to hold government accountable (Isin and Turner 2002: 132). But what does a control approach to governance look like in practice? To get a picture I turn to theories and practices that inform and give shape to this approach to governance and see how they get performed on the street-level.

Formal

The Dutch liberal-democratic welfare state can be understood as 'social-democratic regime type' (Asping-Andersen 1990: 28). The state protects liberties, but also promotes

equality and takes responsibility for health care, education, and social insurance. This extends to policies of emancipation that address both the market and the family (Asping-Andersen 1990: 28). Equal opportunity became a central goal as researchers and activists revealed how inequities and inequalities excluded "have-nots" from the political arena (Harrington 1962; Dahl 1963; Marris and Rein 1967). In the general, these insights fit the situation in the Netherlands where citizens from lower socio-economic backgrounds and migrants are acknowledged to be underrepresented in local and national politics (Pennings 1987; Fennema and Tillie 1999, 2001; Van Heelsum 2005). As a response, politicians have been eager to develop alternative forms of representation that seek to include these groups in democratic decision making.

The depth of the commitment to control was demonstrated historically by efforts to open governance practices to broader participation by citizens. Arnstein (1969) found, for example that no one was against efforts to increase citizen participation. In theory 'the participation of the governed in their government' was a 'cornerstone of democracy – a revered idea that is vigorously applauded by virtually everyone' (Arnstein 1969: 216). When she examined efforts to increase 'citizen control' and achieve 'maximum feasible involvement of the poor', however, she found that they were more likely to create forms of 'nonparticipation' and 'tokenism' than 'citizen power' or control. Actual practice in anti-poverty and urban renewal programs like 'Model Cities' was dominated by 'empty rituals' that fell on the lower rungs of her 'ladder of citizen participation'. At meetings of the citizen advisory committees that brought citizens to participate in urban renewal, 'it was the officials who educated, persuaded, and advised the citizens, not the revere' (ibid: 218). Arnstein's critical analysis showed that the very efforts to provide the means for the poor and excluded to 'induce significant social reform which [would] enable … them to share in the benefits of the affluent society' deepened the commitment to control (ibid: 216). Thus although policies set out to involve citizens, the experience was one of control. How did that play out in Dutch policy practices?

Arnstein's ladder inspired urban governments in the Netherlands. A common practice that developed was the public meeting organized to ensure the citizens would have a 'fair say' in decisions about policy and implementation. As in the U.S., power holders were more likely to inform citizens about decisions that had, at least in part already made, and to provide a kind of public talk "therapy." At best, citizens were able to

voice their wishes within a marginal space of sub-decisions that critics have described as "allowing citizens to choose the color of the streetlight". Arnstein argues that 'under these conditions the have-nots lack the power to ensure that their views will be heeded by the powerful' (ibid: 217). Dutch research reached similar conclusions: 'residents are usually engaged in later stadia of the policy or planning process, when the 'real' decisions about changes in the neighborhood have been made already' (Engbersen 2007 in van der Wijdeven & Hendriks 2000: 24).

In 2007 a national policy forced a governance practice of control through a program that combined social and physical planning to improve urban neighborhoods. The '*Vogelaar policy*' – named after former minister Ella Vogelaar – identified 40 multi-problem neighborhood and provided these '*Vogelaarwijken*' (Vogelaar neighborhoods) with additional funding to cooperate with welfare organizations and housing cooperation's to bring down crime rates school dropouts, to support low-income families, and to stimulate citizen participation. The policy emphasized a strategy called 'social-mixing' that expressed the national ambition to 'upgrade' residents with lower social and economic capital by using physical design to 'mix' them with people from higher socio-economic, and, often, different ethnic backgrounds. These efforts at control persisted even after research showed that forced mixing did not lead to intermingling and often created new tensions (Kleinhans et. Al. 2000; Uitermark 2003; Uitermark, Duyvendak, and Kleinhans 2007).

Governance forms characterized by control and rule establish highly controlled forms of citizenship. It is confined to authorizing authority by voting or by becoming involved in participation program that keep power with the state. The state is responsible for the quality of city neighborhoods and is able to shape them through physical planning. Participation takes place when, where, and how government invites citizens. The sites of these interactions, in the city hall and meeting rooms, are far removed from the street-level interactions that shape communities and urban governance. I therefore turn to examine how governance strategies of control and rule take shape in the informal realm of politics that unfolds in neighborhoods.

Informal

An example of governance practices characterized by control and rule in the informal realm is Dutch welfare policy. Welfare states that function as social-democratic regimes

fuse welfare and work, which creates a heavy social-service burden because the right to work has equal status with the right to income (Asping-Andersen 1990: 28). The associations that are contracted to provide social service are endowed with state-like functions that, in turn, give welfare practitioners considerable power in regulating everyday life in the neighborhood (Warren 2001: 33). These street-level bureaucrats mediate between the rules and regulations set by bureaucracies and the fuzzy everyday experience at the street-level. In this setting, '[t]he decisions of street-level bureaucrats, the routines they establish, and the devices that they invent to cope with uncertainties and work pressures, effectively become the policies that they carry out' (Lipsky 1980: xii). The implementation of commitments to providing for the welfare of citizens have, in practice, been marked as much or more by control as they are by a compassionate effort to lift citizens up (Lipsky 1980: 117). It is therefore important to pay close attention to the practices of these professionals, their negotiation between policy strategies and everyday life, and the interactions between them and residents (see for example studies like Maynard Moody et al 1990; Maynard Moody and Musheno 2000; Durose 2009).

The position that Dutch professional welfare practices took up in local communities must be understood in its historical context (de Broer en Duyvendak 2004; Tonkens 2009; van der Lans 2010; Spierts 2014)[2]. The first ministry of social work was established in 1952. Its mission was to 'develop a society where people can have a sense of being at home and where everyone has a chance to develop him or herself' (Duyvendak 2002: 26, author's translation). In this period, the Dutch state developed a broad repertoire of forms of welfare professionalism that sought to help citizens of lower socio-economic classes evolve into better and more educated citizens (van Doorn in Tonkens 2009: 115). A common welfare practice of that time was to re-educate 'a-social families' in special 'life schools' where a social welfare worker would teach them how to live an appropriate, hygienic, and decent life (Dercksen en Verplanke 1987: 144). Citizens were expected to either lead or be passive receivers of policy strategies (Tonkens 2009: 9). The newly established ministry identified the neighborhood as the most promising level for intervention (de Haan and Duyvendak 2002: 26). The period of the 1960s and 1970s can be characterized by two central policy commitments: develop a strong bureaucracy and organize a professional welfare practice (Tonkens 2009: 9).

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[2] In the Netherlands, each city has a different organization of welfare work at the level of the neighborhood. Therefore I will further define the particular presence of welfare practitioners in the neighborhood at the beginning of each case study.

The 1970s are an exception to welfare work characterized by control and rule. In this period, organized professionalism was criticized as 'paternalistic' (Milikowski 1969; Achterhuis 1980). Instead, citizens were compelled to take up responsibility, to be critical of government interference, and to make active choices about the services they received (Clarke and Newman 1997). The neighborhood that was the prime level of intervention during the 1970s later became the benchmark for citizen participation (Reijndorp in Reijndorp en Reinders 2011: 172). The 'Welfare act' of 1987 compelled municipalities to enhance public participation and to decrease poverty and social exclusion (De Boer and Duyvendak 2004: 31). The state became a central actor in large-scale gentrification projects of city neighborhoods. In an effort to protect housing rights, citizens started to organize against the state. These movements were so successful that they transformed from a movement into official organizations to provide support and legal assistance (Uitermark 2009: 353). This was a paradoxical development—the state increasingly took social work out of the hands of activists and organized it professionally. Social workers from welfare organizations saw themselves as the allies of residents who were struggling for their housing rights (Uitermark 2009: 253; Duyvendak en Uitermark 2005). These community workers were able to help citizens translate their desires into formal representations that informed policy. Welfare organizations were professionalized as policy partners for local governments that could formulate the output of welfare practices in each city (De Boer and Duyvendak 2004: 43). A wide range of activities – community work, social work, youth work, elderly work, day care, etc. – were still professionally organized at the level of the neighborhood, but were now understood as the vehicle to engage residents in decision making and community development. The welfare practices in the 1970s and 1980s could be argued to have temporarily moved to the right hand side of Table 1, to the box of governance marked by contention against the state. The organizations that supported citizen activism improved the quality of urban democracies. That development, however, changed as the state captured contestations in formalized welfare practices and moved welfare back into a governance practice of control and rule.

The new public management reforms of the 1990s made welfare governance the responsibility of cities and municipalities. Welfare became highly professionalized and bureaucratized in a growing network of providers that were contracted by cities based on their output. Urban governments regulate and optimize welfare services as

they function as contractor. The introduction of two government programs, the WMO (Social Support Act) in 2007 and *Welzijn Nieuwe Stijl* (New Style social work) in 2010, had a large influence on welfare practices and the work of the 'professional'. This new type of welfare work formulated paradigms[3] that demanded professionals to work on the basis of client requests, to 'directly go to people' (especially to the ones who might be 'afraid to ask for help'), and, most importantly, to focus on developing practices of self-support and community organizing[4] (WMO raad Duiven 2012). The programs seek to transform the welfare state into a 'participation state' in which citizens have to pick up their responsibility to participate in their communities[5]. The Minister of Interior Piet Hein Donner developed a review of citizenship in mid-2011, in which he explicitly demanded that state organizations should decrease their direct social responsibilities and reallocate these resources to engaging citizens (Nota 'Integratie, binding, burgerschap', Ministry of the Interior, June 16, 2011: 14). Under the term 'facilitation' instead of 'stimulation', the Dutch government has argued that the state should limit itself to facilitating activities and processes devised by residents without interfering or trying to dictate what kind of activities to pursue.

In practice, however, the program returned welfare practitioner to the front door. Under the banner of 'outreaching welfare work' practitioners no longer receive families in their offices but visit them at home. These 'outreaching' professionals take the initiative and reach out actively to people who seem to be in need (van Doorn in Tonkens 2009: 114). Youth workers, for example, are asked to build friendly relationships, 'but [still] with the goal to fulfil pedagogical, educative, and social-cultural goals' (Spiers 2014: 221). Governments retains the responsibility for regulating the activities that residents organize to ensure that they are 'distributed equally over citizens with different

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[3] See http://www.invoeringwmo.nl/content/welzijn-nieuwe-stijl, consulted on 20-10-2014.

[4] Arguably, the Dutch government that was always strongly influenced by developments in Anglo-Saxon countries here took up the neo-liberal project that encourages greater citizen responsibility and reduce the role of the state (Muehlebach, 2012). Since the second Cabinet led by Jan Peter Balkenende ('Balkenende II', 2003-2006) the Dutch government developed an outspoken interest in the communitarian goal of active citizenship and stimulates individual responsibility at the local level.

[5] The particular type of active citizenship that developed in this period moves away from the notion of liberal citizenship into a more communitarian understanding. Communitarian theories focus on group and communities responsibility to bind individuals together in order to produce coherent state policies (Etzioni 1995). The practices of citizenship are not oriented at participating in political decision making but at fostering the community.

ethnic and socio-economic backgrounds, align active and inactive citizens, and pay extra attention to people who are excluded' (Tonkens 2009: 18-19). To achieve this goal, governments have used financial, moral, and regulatory stimulation to cultivate solidarity among citizens (Trappenburg 2009; Veldheer en Jonker et al 2012; Kampen et al 2013). Community workers bear the responsibility for organizing community activities, but the authorities' eagerness to create a participating society often does not correspond with the reality at the street-level (Spierts 2014: 235).

The policies that organize empowerment and participation in the neighborhood seem to reposition welfare practice to the middle column of collaboration in the informal realm of politics. In theory they are efforts to govern in collaboration with citizens. In practice, however, sociologists have observed that these welfare programs created highly orchestrated forms of participation that are characterized by the effort to control (Kruiter in Spierts 2014: 201). The 'participation state' has been criticized as obstructing the ability of citizens to 'problem-solve' and 'fair-say' practices prolonged control policies (Uitermark and Van Beek 2010). Thus despite the efforts to collaborate, also new forms of welfare practice can be understood as an implicit example of governance that is characterized by control and rule.

In sum, the neighborhood is the primary level of intervention for governance strategies designed to engage and activate citizens. Welfare governance at the level of the neighborhood has a history of control and rule and continues to be dominated by top-down interventions. Welfare practices based on continuous interaction with communities became, in practice, vehicles for the state to cross into the private domain, regulate everyday life, and control what citizenship is and 'how it means' (Yanow 1996). Public meetings organized to give citizens a 'fair say' can turn grim and contribute to conflicts between citizens and local authorities in the informal realm. Participation and welfare practices in the Netherlands have historically sought to educate citizens and coordinate their participation. Research that has taken a close look at the practices of front-line workers has, much like Arnstein's study, revealed local government's capacity to maintain its position of control. Governance practices of control and rule regulate processes of change, integration, engagement, and decision making. These practices keep the state in control and limit the repertoire of the 'good citizen' to structured forms of engagement. Governance marked by control and rule is likely to exclude ad hoc

actions at the left hand sight of Table 1 as noise that falls outside the approved repertoire of participation. Let us therefore move to another form of governance, and see how theory and practice have moved beyond the continuous processes of control and rule to governance that is marked by 'collaboration'.

Collaboration

The second variation of governance is based on efforts by government to engage citizens in decision making with a commitment to collaboration. This shows continuity with the upper rungs on Arnstein's ladder of participation, but was marked by developments in both theory and practice. One of the most important developments coalesced around 1990 as theoretical discussions shifted from a liberal notion of democracy towards a deliberative account (Dryzek 2000; Young 2000; Goodin 2000; Goodin and Dryzek 2006). The deliberative turn stemmed from the dissatisfaction with 'aggregative' conceptions of democracy that gave priority to individual and group preferences and processes of bargaining between interest groups. Scholars of the deliberative democracy stressed the importance of increasing democratic legitimacy by fostering public debate and organizing deliberative approaches to decision making in a 'talk-centric' conception of democracy (Kymlicka 2002: 323; Dryzek 1990; Young 2000). Democracy became an instrument for deliberation (Briggs 2008: 7) that challenged the 'vote-centeredd' conception of democracy and emphasized the importance of settings and practices in which citizens and representatives reasoned with one another about public problems. Deliberation theory emphasized the importance of forums in which citizens were directly involved in deliberations with each other and with representatives of the state over shared problems. Scholars of the deliberative turn responded to the perverse effects that prior efforts had on organizing and regulating citizen participation through public meetings and referenda and the way they created mistrust instead of better relationships between governmental organizations and citizens (Mansbridge 1980; Gastil 2000; Sanders 1997; Fung 2004; Innes and Booher 2004). They recognized that voices of minorities, less educated, diffident, or culturally subordinate participants 'are often drowned out by those who are wealthy, confident, accustomed to management, or otherwise privileged' and sought to respond in theoretical and practical terms (Fung 2004: 5).

One important influence on this deliberative turn was American Pragmatism, which tied the quality of democracy and decision making to inter-subjective interactions among

citizens in the public debate (Peirce and Wiener 1958; Dewey 1927; Mead 1934). Pragmatist writers emphasized the need for mechanisms that would allow for better and more equal human communication. Jürgen Habermas developed these pragmatist notions in his work on the public sphere and communicative action that allows for deliberation through communication among citizens in the public sphere (Habermas 1984, 1991, 2000). Thus the deliberative turn emphasized the public sphere as a space for democratic deliberation among citizens and between government and citizens. From this perspective, citizens not only have 'rights' but also 'duties'. Citizenship in a deliberative democracy implies living up to the demands of being an active citizen in public deliberation and participating in public discourse and decision making. In this line of thought Habermas argued that democracies have to encourage citizens to overcome the 'syndrome of civic privatism' that liberal citizenship implies (1996: 78).

'Citizenship' recaptured a central position with the turn to a deliberative account of democratic governance (Sandel 1982; Heater 1990; Dagger 1997; Kymlicka 2002; Hurenkamp, Tonkens en Duyvendak 2012). It became 'a normative category of choice, invoked by critics of the status quo – on both the Left and the Right – as a vehicle for demanding that the state do more, or less, to advance equality, justice, and participation in the civil society, economy, or polity' (Schuck in Isin and Turner 2002: 131). Citizenship meant 'republican citizenship' that is pragmatic and instrumental,[6] framing active participation as a citizen's duty that is essential to the functioning of democratic institutions (Kymlicka 2002: 294). Deliberation among and with citizens became a prerequisite to efforts to preserve basic liberties and foster democratic governance.

The commitment to deliberation demanded a practical repertoire of action. Deliberation made it more urgent for democracies to attend to the issue of civic virtues[7] (Kymlicka

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[6] In thinking about republican citizenship Kymlicka distinguishes two strands of republican citizenship: first, the 'Aristotelian' interpretation of republicanism that frames 'political life as the highest form of social life' (Oldfield in Kymlicka 2002: 294). This Aristotelian citizenship prescribes the political life as the 'good life' as it was understood in ancient Greece. Second, an understanding of republicanism that recognizes that participation in deliberation can be a burden, but frames it as an instrumental duty to the functioning of our democratic institutions and to preserve basic liberties (Kymlicka 2002: 294). I will focus on the second conception of republican citizenship as instrumental because the Aristotelian understanding of republicanism grounds in a devaluation of the private and everyday life that, according to Kymlicka, does not take historical changes such as the rise of romantic love, the nuclear family, increased prosperity, and the dignity of labour into account. Therefore, the notion does not find consensus in modern democracies (Kymlicka 2002: 294-299).

2002: 293; Galston 1991). Personal virtues like courage, social capacities of independence, and political virtues that showed a capacity and willingness to engage in a public discourse became central to deliberative practices (Kymlicka 2002: 221). The state remains in an authoritative position, but its role is to inform and facilitate collective action. Citizens have to overcome their individual interests and set forth 'public reason' so that they are not bounded by conflicting interests of others (Pattie et. Al. 2004; Van Gunsteren 1998). The shift towards deliberation thus ascribed behavioral patterns to the notion of citizenship (Kymlicka 2002: 221). Although many approaches to deliberation attempted to engage a wide variety of citizens in decision making, the demand for particular civic virtues required a practical repertoire for organizing engagement. I turn now to examine the ways in which the commitment to deliberation has been translated into practice. How have planners and policy practitioners sought to enhance the practical expression of civic virtues? And how do collaborative practices of governance take shape in the formal or informal domain of politics?

Formal

Two practice-oriented strands of theory have influenced the governance style characterized by collaboration: negotiation theory and deliberative policy-making. Negotiation starts from the assumption that public problems involve multiple stakeholders with diverse interests. Negotiation is the effort to reconcile these differences in a constructive and creative manner by distinguishing between people and problems and facilitating interest-based problem solving instead of position-based strategic bargaining (Fisher and Ury [1981] 2011; Kelman 1996; Neale and Bazerman 1991; Pruitt 1981; Raifa 1982). A third party, a mediator, who seeks to stay as neutral as possible with respect to stakeholders' interests, often facilitates negotiations in the public sphere. Scholars of deliberative planning drew on negotiation theories and argued that planning and policy practices depend on the ability of practitioners to deliberate, learn, and negotiate with diverse stakeholders (Forester 1999, 2004, 2006, 2012; Fung 2004; Susskind & Cruickshank 1987; Susskind et al 1999; Mansbridge 1980; Healey 1997; Innes and Booher 1999; 2003; 2004). They embraced the idea that good planning can raise hope and enhance the ability to imagine communities, whereas

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[7] Kymlicka argues that the Aristotelian notion of republican citizenship is closely related to communitarian citizenship that centers on the development of civic virtues (Kymlicka 2002: 221; Etzioni 1995). With the focus on civic virtues the communitarian approach developed a normative baseline to define well-behaving citizens, citizenship became understood as a responsibility to virtuously organize community and facilitate collective action that were not focussed on participation in political decision making.

planning done poorly diminishes what people can imagine and discourages hope and future deliberative actions (Forester 2006; Sandercock 2003). Some focused on the need to 'break the impasse' of decision making by organizing 'co-production' among authorities, citizens, and other stakeholders (Susskind and Cruikshank 1987; Susskind and Field 1996).

Interestingly, the clearest examples of efforts to engage multiple stakeholders can be found outside the domain of the city governance, in land use planning and infrastructure. Dutch spatial planning is rooted in efforts to control as its institutions regulate well-maintained physical environments that improve the quality of life and avoid conflict (Van der Valk 2002: 202). It has historically been characterized by a highly controlled regulatory system that caused planning to be slow, aiming at policy writing and not enough at implementation (Grijzen 2010: 73). That regulatory history would place the practice of spatial planning in the 'formal control and rule box' of my table. However in the 1990s scholars of planning called for an effort to rethink the institutional approach from a deliberative stance and include public opinion (Salet 2002: 33). The response was 'interactive planning,' which stood for the involvement of stakeholders and citizens during the policy phase and was formulated as a new central steering philosophy in Dutch planning practices (Grijzen 2010; Hendriks and Tops 2003). The Department of Public Works (Rijkswaterstaat) started to experiment with interactive planning in large infrastructure projects (see for example 'Infralab' in Rijkswaterstaat 1997 or cases like the IJsseldelta Zuid in Hajer, Grijzen, en van het Klooster 2010). These processes transformed spatial planning into collective efforts at problem solving (Briggs 2008) and made the planner more focussed on the process – facilitating coordination between government and citizens (Grijzen 2010: 77). Studies, however, concluded that these efforts didn't replace the highly controlled bureaucratic system, but were merely an addition to it (Hajer en Zonneveld 2000; Edelenbos 2000; Wolsink 2003; Grijzen 2010). In the efforts to engage stakeholders, governments seem to be the main obstacle to implementing collaborative planning. As a result 'formal institutions only support participation at the level of information and consultation in Arnstein's ladder (Wolsink 2003: 718). Nevertheless, Dutch spatial planning practices come closest to collaborative forms of governance. The examples, however, take place on the national and provincial level of governance and not so much in the city.

At the municipal level, governance as collaboration became known as 'interactive policy-making' (Akkerman, Hajer, Grin 2004; Klijn en Koppenjan 2000). In the 1990s, local politics experimented with referenda and, later, consulting citizens in municipal decision making became a common practice. 'This development in local politics signifie[d] a break with a long Dutch tradition in which there has hardly been any room for direct democracy' (Van Holsteyn in Akkerman, Hajer, Grin 2004: 85). By 1999 almost all municipalities had experimented with modes of public participation and interactive policy-making (Van de Peppel 2001: 41). These experiments directly contradicted the Dutch 'polder culture', a tendency of voluntary political associations to prefer consultation and collective bargaining within the state or within the market to an oppositional role (Akkerman, Hajer, Grin 2004: 86). Interactive policy-making practices 'not only create[d] new channels for formerly excluded groups, they also stimulated individual citizens to participate in policy deliberation, thus bypassing the mediation via elected representatives or intermediary organizations' (ibid: 84). Engaged citizens were now interacting with civil servants instead of local politicians. Civil servants in local municipal offices became key to the development of deliberation processes.

Thus, both in interactive policy making and in the practice of spatial planning, professionals became the vehicle to mediate the process between governments, private organization, and citizens. They shaped the interactions between residents and governments as formally organized deliberation. Through interactive policy-making, citizens have been given more voice and the ability to comment on the organization of the process as it unfolds. But state actors still provided the opportunities and regulated the spaces in which voice could be expressed. In my attempt to rethink ways in which citizens can become engaged in politics there is much to learn from these planning efforts. Deliberative planning theories proposed interesting insights to engage in everyday stories (Throgmorton 1996; Sandercock 2003; Forester 1999, 2006), everyday talk (Mansbridge 1999), and emotions (Hoch 2006). Also in these practices, however, state actors remained in the position to orchestrate deliberation in the formal realm of politics, determining which cases can be up for negotiation, who could be included as a legitimate partner in deliberation, and at what moments citizens should be invited to participate. They thereby do not speak to the opportunity of engaging citizens and other stakeholders where and how they perform their repertoires of citizenship and voice their stories: in the informal domains of politics. I seek to look into governance that is

responsive to informal processes of citizenship, let us therefore look into approaches of collaborative governance that unfolded in the informal realm of everyday life in the city.

Informal

Governance in the domain of the neighborhood and the street-level is highly influenced by the transformations in welfare policies that I described earlier. Dutch governance became infatuated with the effort to create 'active forms of citizenship' in the informal context of urban neighborhoods. Some have described this as third generation of participation (Lenos, Sturm and Vis 2006). The Dutch government was inspired in these efforts by a multitude of reports that urged 'self-regulation' and provided opportunities for residents to become 'active' in their own neighborhood (WRR 'vertrouwen in de buurt' 2005; VROM-raad 'Stad en Stijging' 2006; WRR 'vertrouwen in burgers' 2012; Sociaal en Cultureel Rapport 2012). In the effort to collaborate with citizens, citizenship became an obligation. The policy did not explicitly try to cultivate civic virtues, instead it left citizens free to make their own choices and to start their own processes. In the review of Minister Donner, however, the idea that citizens need instruction by government on how to be a good citizen is not open to dipute (Hurenkamp, Tonkens, and Duyvendak 2012: 17). In fact, it allowed cities and municipalities to broaden their repertoire for engaging citizens, if necessary with legal obligations (Ministry of the Interior, June 16, 2011: 13).

Within this approach the notion of the 'doe-democratie' (doing democracy) (Van der Wijdeven and Hendriks 2010; Van der Wijdeven 2012) became prominent. The study calls for citizens to actively contribute to public welfare by getting up and doing something. The 'doing-citizen' is primarily involved in concrete projects that by definition implment, rather than altering, decisions made by government. The 'doing democracy' is therefore not a form of republican citizenship as the practices of doing are in fact de-politicized (Verhoeven and Oude Vrielink 2012). Thus 'active citizenship' at the level of the neighborhood came to mean that citizens work in collaboration with welfare professionals to organize activities for their community. These collaboration, however, are generally structured by state-led repertoires of organizing and very few intend to address political issues.

Dutch practice-oriented studies reviewed these developments and studied what citizens themselves think about participation (Hurenkamp, Tonkens and Duyvendak 2012).

Some examined how active citizenship is organized at the local level (Verhoeven and Tonkens 2011; Wagenaar and Specht 2010; Specht 2012). Others examined the craft of citizenship (Hurenkamp, Tonkens, and Duyvendak 2012). Together these studies provide an overview of where, how, and why active citizenship has emerged in Dutch neighborhoods. They also reveal, however, a focus on particular community activities. The empirical observations and analysis in these studies reveal much about the dominant understanding of citizenship in the Netherlands. The repertoire for engagement and collaboration remains controlled by state actors and thereby leave out ad hoc practices of citizenship that take place outside state-led interactions. From this perspective, the occupation of the center in The Hague would remain an annoyance, not an expression of citizenship or an invitation to negotiate.

Bang and Sorensen (1999). did look at grassroots informal practices is urban development The 'everyday makers' they studied did not seek interaction with the political system, however. They were active, but did not seek or find recognition in the political realm of decision making. Although they might cooperate with each other, their efforts neither contest public policy nor seek to deliberate about governmental decision making. They shape urban development through efforts that remain separate from the political domain. In this sense, everyday makers are very different from the everyday practices of citizenship that are the focus of study here.

In sum, despite this mixed experience, the effort to organize collaborative forms of governance has enhanced the pragmatic understanding of the public sphere. Negotiation and deliberative planning theories usefully extend the repertoire for dealing with urban problems and conflicts. They provide practices that build government's, particularly local government's, capacity to engage in deliberation, to involve citizens in problems solving, and to enhance its legitimacy. In this pragmatist approach to democracy, voice is a central concern. Politics is not just about 'who gets what, when, and how' (Lasswell [1950] 1999), but who can speak, when, where, for whom, and with what legitimacy. Perhaps even more important is the question, 'what does it mean to be heard'? (Norval 2009: 298) If we believe that deliberation and citizen engagement are the answer to a democratic deficit, we may have to rethink our repertoire for listening and responding to citizens and consider how to engage them when, where, and how they raise their voices. This draws our attention to what happens when citizens voice discontent through

contentious practices.

Contention

In the introduction to this chapter I discussed Arendt's work as my starting point for understanding political action—it takes shape through interactions in the public sphere. I argued that a broad notion of citizenship should include the performances of citizens in episodes of conflict that can, be understood as a form democratic engagement. This insight demands attention to a third variety of democratic governance: contention. Chantal Mouffe has addressed the democratic significance of contention most directly in political theoretical terms. Mouffe's (2000) work on the 'democratic paradox' criticizes the notion of a deliberative democracy. She argues that the practice of deliberation replaces one type of rationality with another. Deliberation's emphasis on seeking rational agreements excludes the possibility of a pluralism of values (Mouffe 2000: 93). According to Mouffe the challenge for democracy is not to develop rational, equal, and fair procedures, but to engage democratic citizens in their individuality and subjectivity. In this sense, plural values are essential to the political nature of society and antagonism and contestation are necessary in an inclusive and democratic public sphere.

> I consider that it is only when we acknowledge the dimension of 'the political' and understand that 'politics' consists in domesticating hostility and in trying to defuse the potential antagonism that exists in human relations, that we can pose what I take to be the central question for democratic politics (Mouffe 2000: 101).

Mouffe is concerned that no matter how equal and fair they are, deliberative models will always have exclusionary effects as not all citizens are equally equipped to take part in deliberative procedures. Her conception of citizenship is not rooted in civic virtues that allow people to formulate arguments and deliberate according to procedures, but in the passions that move citizens and the affect with which they express their ideas. Citizens are not simply bearers of natural rights or utility maximizing agents. The kind of citizenship that I look for in this study is 'abstracted from social and power relations, language, culture and the whole set of practices that make agency possible' (ibid: 95). Not everyone has the ability to develop the political virtues needed for deliberation. Therefore it is important to look in detail at moments of contestation and see what goes on when people express their passion and protest power dynamics, policies, and

decision making. Democracy demands an appreciation of the value of these utterances; the way the state responds to them is a critical feature of a viable democratic system.

Democratic decision making, in Mouffe's 'agonistic' perspective, is always happening within a structure of power-relations. This does not mean, however, that democracy is a matter of overcoming the dichotomy between 'us' and 'them'. On the contrary, politics depend on this dichotomy. Democracy is about establishing the us-them discrimination in a way that is compatible with plural values (ibid: 101). The agonistic understanding of democracy sees the 'them' as legitimate adversaries and therefore emphasises types of practice that embrace people's subjective identities and positions instead of seeking to change them through forms of deliberate argumentation (ibid: 96). 'Agonistic pluralism' as a form of democracy sees collective passion as a channel through which citizens express themselves, and democratic politics as a means to mobilize those passions towards democratic designs (ibid: 103). In this perspective, contention is a prerequisite for democracy and forms of protest are an opportunity to communicate plural voices in society. The capacity to govern hinges on the capacity to engage these voices.

Treating governance as a form of contention puts the notion of republican citizenship into a new light – it is dependent on citizens who protest and thereby reproduce legitimacy[8]. The contentious citizen does not have to be taught civic virtues because the ability to be a citizen lies in the subjective actions that citizens undertake in the public sphere. Governance that embraces such contention creates a situation where not only the happy few have the ability to engage in governance–the entire population can play a role in the development of forms of self-government.

Formal

To study contentious forms of political action we can make use of social moment theory. In the 1980s a generation of urban sociologists analyzed the city and its governments through the analysis of contestation and protest. Manuel Castells' 'The city and the grassroots' (1983) is often posed as a basic theory to understand how urban conflict construes the city and its communities (Lowe 1986). It suggests that cities and their governments are the product of contending interests and negotiations among different

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[8] Here the notion of republican citizenship tends to move to the more 'Aristotelian' strand that understands the political as intrinsic to human action and happiness. Arendt argued that if 'we deny the very existence of public happiness and public freedom' if we 'insist that politics is a burden …' (Arendt, in Isin and Turner 2002: 152).

parties like planners, politicians, citizen groups, etc. (Gottdiener and Hutchison 2006: 80). The end result is a built environment that is constructed socially through these processes of contestation and negotiation. Castells (1983) argued that in modern welfare states 'the meaning of the urban will be a process of conflict, domination, and resistance to domination, directly linked to the dynamics of social struggle' (Castells 1983: 302). Castells and David Harvey were indebted to Henri Lefebvre whose 'right to the city' inspired them and others to rethink the alienation of everyday life in the modern city (Lefebvre [1970] 2003; Harvey 2003). For both Harvey and Castells, the structure of economic and power relations are central in understanding the process of marginalization of the urban poor. Their Marxist lens provides insights into the way power relations are construed through the state and the construction of the urban environment.

Power relations and the built environment are one way to make sense of the interaction between state and society in a contentious democracy. Another insight from social movement theory focuses on the performance of contentious citizenship. Tilly (2008) broadens the idea of citizenship by saying that contentious politics bring together 'contention', 'collective action', and 'politics.' Protests are the 'interactions in which actors make claims bearing on someone else's interests, leading to coordinated efforts on behalf of sharing interests or programs, in which governments are involved as targets, initiators of claim, or third parties' (Tilly and Tarrow 2006: 4). Tilly's analysis shows that, together, these elements form the set of actions that people undertake when they disagree with a political or public decision. Tilly's definition of political protest includes all actions that target politics.

Social movement theory has also shown how even when targeted at the state, contentious voices need to be heard and recognized. Protest needs to interact directly with the state to be heard (Jenkins and Klandermans 1995; Tilly and Tarrow 2006). This is, first, because social movements are inherently political, second, because the state provides the environment in which social movements can operate or not, and, finally, because social movements constitute a claim for political representation (Jenkins in Jenkins and Klandermans 1995: 16). Thus social movements – or collective actions – target the state, but the state can also be the sponsor or the enabler. To use the opportunity of conflict, the organization of the state should be regarded as a system of alliances and conflicts that provide the political opportunities in which social movements emerge

(Jenkins and Klandermans 1995: 4). The study of social movement has emphasized that the opportunity for contentious politics centers on the interaction between the state and challenging groups, It enables us to see how, on the one hand, the state, as a system of political representation, plays an inevitable role in creating opportunities to restructure power relations. On the other hand, it helps us grasp how instances of collective action have to develop their sense of agency within the boundaries of the complex system of the state.

When we look into protests, they open insights into the changing relationship between the state and society. They reveal how plural voices can become part of a public debate and change public policy. The kinds of organized protest emphasized by social movement theorists remain, however, in the formal realm of democracy. This kind of contention gets performed through well-organized collective actions that start out in the grassroots, but become significant as they contest power dynamics on a national scale. Even on a more local level, many accounts of citizens organizing contention remain in what I call the formal realm. Hajer's 'Citizens on standby' (2003) demonstrates how people can very swiftly adopt a radical stance if they are irritated by policy initiatives from the state, even though they seemingly are happy consumers. Hajer's study also shows, however, government's responses translates such contention into planning processes organized and regulated by state actors. In a similar vein, Verhoeven's (2009) study of how citizens contest policies remains in the formal realm of organized discontent. His detailed description of the way citizens successfully organize against government plans offers insight into contentious participation, but does not extend to the improvised forms of contention, often undertaken by people with less social capital and fewer deliberative virtues, that define the informal realm. These studies do not move across the boundary between formal to the informal realm of politics because the practices with which governments engage these ad hoc moments of contention remain in the formal process of participation.

A practical example of a social movement that started out in the informal realm of everyday life ,but became (in part) a social movement in the formal domain is the squatter's movement in Amsterdam. The movement emerged in the 1970s as a response to growing dissatisfaction with government plans to decrease the number of affordable housing units and modernise streets and infrastructure. In the beginning, the squatters

were aligned with neighborhood activists and social workers who were also fighting for their housing rights. But squatting soon became framed as a form of political action in itself (Uitermark 2004a: 231). There is no such thing as 'the' squatter movement. Squatters in Amsterdam did show, however, how a social movement can transform into a relatively stable institution without disappearing (ibid: 233).

The local government of Amsterdam recognized the problems squatters were addressing. Planning processes helped tenants move from old to new housing and squatters also became entitled to rehousing (Pruijt 2003: 152). As the movement continued into the 1990s, it became increasingly fragmented but – as Uitermark (2004b) argues in response to Pruijt (2003) – responded to the changing circumstances and was in part co-opted as a service provider for specific (cultural) events. Other pieces of the movement entered into an intense relationship with the local government, and still others operated outside government structures (Uitermark 2004b: 696). The Amsterdam squatter movement is an interesting example of how urban governments can include the contentious voice of a social movement that protests against policy schemes thorugh both violent (see, for example, the 'no house, no coronation' protest during the coronation of queen Beatrix in 1980) and non-violent (see for example the 'free spaces' or 'breeding places' for artistic and sub-cultural activities) action.

In short, there is much to learn from social movement studies if we want to understand contention as a form of citizenship. The relationship between power as constructed by the state on the one hand, and power as a space for civil society to develop agency on the other is central in informal moments of contestation. People develop agency within complex structures of power relations and depend on the response of governments. Tilly's definition of political protest highlights how the interaction between state and society provides opportunities for plural voices to express themselves. On a local level, studies show how citizens organize contention via regular repertoires of protest that take place in the city's symbolic places and through these protests communicate well-formulated political rhetoric. The Amsterdam squatters movement shows how a social movement can place social issues on the political agenda, find representation in urban governance, , and even transform policies. The improvised actions of citizens in local episodes of conflict like the occupation of the community center lack the coordination of movements and rarely share interests or programs with government (Tilly and

Tarrow 2006: 4). They often take place outside the symbolically valued sites of the city in neighborhood centers or on the playground of a local square. The questions that remain are thus: how can public officials engage these informal forms contention in the pursuit of democratic governance? How can we understand protests that do not mobilize large numbers of people do not seek to overthrow government or to change governance schemes, but, in fact, emerge from, and get performed in, everyday interactions with the government?

Informal

In this introductory chapter, I have discussed numerous theories and practices of democratic decision making that all aimed to engage citizens in democratic decision making. None of them truly dealt with the everyday interaction between state actors and citizens as opportunities for informal contentious democracy, however. I started out from the idea that democracy is experienced concretely at the street-level (Piven and Cloward 1977; Lipsky 1980). If it is true that citizens experience social identities, policy, and the state through the interactions at the street-level, scholars who seek to understand governance in modern democracies must engage these encounters directly. Episodes of urban conflict offer a perfect opportunity to enter into the experiences of citizens as they interact with street-level practitioners. The interactions in conflict speak to Dewey's challenge to develop democracy by giving space for publics to emerge in the context, language, and practices of the local community (Dewey [1927] 2012: 255). In other words, to understand the democratic opportunity presented by this form of collective public action, we must immerse ourselves in the bottom-up episodes in which public action is organized and street-level policy practitioners respond.

Although there is a lack of practice-oriented theory that looks at improvised actions of citizenship, we can draw on community organizing as practiced in the United States. Community organizing celebrates the notion of activism at the level of the neighborhood. Harvey argued that the right to the city might happen through community activism that can be an important moment for general mobilization (in LeGates and Stout 2011: 235). Urban governance practices in the United States have historically emphasized that community organizing is a practice to mobilize citizens in order to counteract authority. Saul Alinsky, an influential community-organizer explained that good community organizing can be measured by the degree of opposition and exasperation that it arouses among the guardians of the status quo (interview in Playboy magazine 1972). He

describes his practice as an effort to avoid apathy by striking back at the establishment that oppresses. Alinsky's take on community organizing as a bottom-up process starts with discomfort and conflict amongst people of the community and seeks to build from this to open to ways to counteract authoritative decisions. Community has more broadly been a focal point in American politics. Many efforts to promote equal opportunity and social welfare have been embedded in the local context of the community. As these efforts attracted the attention of academics, they inspired work on 'community power' (Hunter 1953; Dahl 1961). In practice, such efforts have allowed community activists to speak directly with people in authoritative positions and, thereby, to influence politics at the local level. Therefore, this practice straddles the boundary between the formal and informal domains of governance.

But when we translate this interesting understanding of community organizing to the Dutch environment we find a gap in theory and in practice. The practices of local welfare practitioners in the Netherlands, historically and today, have generally been marked either by a control and rule approach to governance or by seeking to engage citizens in apolitical community activities. Contention is neither a practical focus nor a political virtue. Although Dutch social work drew on community organizing in the 1970s, contemporary local welfare practice rarely seeks to mobilize people to contest authority. Instead it regulates conflict into processes of controlled 'fair say' or interactive policy-making that demand civic virtues. We could return to US forms of community organizing to empower people, but I would like to start my approach to conflict as an opportunity by saying that power is not something one can give to people, it is something that they already posses or take. Democratic governance depends on the ability to engage such power through interactions with people at the street-level.

This implies that there is something like the power 'from below'. Social movement theories have engaged that kind of power, but seek to translate it from the grassroots to political power. I seek to analyze power from below where it is performed in the street-level interactions between state actors and citizens. Instead of understanding power as a resource, something one can achieve only at the expense of another, I use Piven's notion of 'interdependent power' (Piven 2008). 'This kind of interdependent power is not concentrated at the top but is potentially widespread' (ibid: 5). Piven refers to the services each individual adds to social life, whether these are the service of cleaning the streets or being the prime minister. Every position is needed for society to function

and therefore there is interdependent power among the members of a community. 'Even people with none of the assets or attributes we usually associate with power do things on which others depend' (ibid: 5). Following Dewey, we can see that institutions must give space to the public to enable them to take up this power and challenge the state. One could say, in order for the public sphere to be strengthened through informal political action, the state must balance a space for agency within the regulating structure of power relations.

To recognize these moments of agency, in which power from below gets established, we return to Arendt's notion of political action through interaction in the public sphere. Mouffe's understanding of agonistic democracy and Arendt's notion of political action are crucial to understand contentious acts of the public as political. The interactions between state actors and citizens are what make up for democracy as the 'fulfilment of community life' (Dewey [1927] 2012). Taking this approach emphasizes the role of the public sphere. It is important to note that the public sphere is different from public space as it 'is not the city-state in its physical location; it is the organization of the people as it arises out of acting and speaking together, and its true spaces lies between people living together for this purpose, no matter where they may be' (Arendt [1958] 1998: 198). In moments of conflict, a well-functioning public sphere would allow for underlying tensions to be brought to the surface and be discussed in a meaningful manner. This implies that we can use Arendt's theory to see to what extent the existing democratic practices allow for such meaningful interplay.

This understanding of power and political action seems, however, to require that every citizen is politically conscious or to focus on such citizens. This limits the significance of citizens who are less interested in general politics, but may feel strongly about the politics they experience in their own living environment – the kind of sensibility or awareness that Hajer (2003) pointed to in his account of 'citizens on standby'. Urban conflicts mark the moments when the frustrations of these seemingly unconscious citizens become tangible and get expressed in the public sphere. In these moments, citizens who are usually absent from public debates become invested. They express their frustrations in the public sphere, but not in organized public meetings, deliberative consultations, or large-scale collective action. Instead they act in the everyday realm of the street. This makes them dependent on the interactions that follow with state actors

who are in the position to either recognize their voices or exclude them.

The study of urban conflict as an opportunity for democratic governance thus depends on recognizing what seems to be political unconsciousness. Noelle McAfee has argued that political unconsciousness is not separate from a political entity, but the foundation of the political as an absent presence (McAfee 2008: 55). The public sphere is as much constituted by what cannot be said or shown as by what is included (McAfee 2008; Butler 2004). Therefore McAfee calls for a *discursive* public sphere that engages people in talking, writing, expressing, demonstrating, signifying, and performing in the way they want to because it is in the silencing of some—the rendering of speechlessness and deeming of meaninglessness—that political unconsciousness get produced (ibid: 16). Thus as long as people keep acting in the public sphere they discursively construct the world surrounding them. Discursive performances or practices are all ways in which people actively produce social and psychological realities' (Davies and Harré 1990:45). Through discursive practices people position themselves and others in interaction so construct identity, conflict, power, and democracy. From a discursive perspective, political unconsciousness exists in a reciprocal relationship with the political. They make up the public sphere together. Political action includes those informal acts that can be cast aside as 'noise,' but in fact reveal the story of a specific, often marginal, group attempting to contribute to the public sphere.

In order to read these dynamics in interactions between governments and citizens, we need to grasp the subjective, sometimes unconscious, complex, and contradicting experience of different parties at the street-level. The repertoires through which citizens engage, however, are often unexpected. Youngsters hanging around on benches and in playgrounds become community organizers. Elderly people protest by blocking the entrance to community centers. Vandalism can become street art. Everyday routines turn into performances of protest. Dealing with urban conflict as an opportunity demands that both policy practitioners and researchers enter the complex and fuzzy world of everyday life in order to perceive and to understand the significance of the practices that unfold there. The remainder of this study takes the reader into these subjective urban experiences and reconstructs the different 'emic' perspectives on the conflict stories in order to unravel the ways in which everyday conflict and contestation create opportunities for democratic governance.

Conclusions

In this chapter we have seen how practice-oriented theories and government practices are informed by political theoretical insights into the working of democracy. The notion of democracy has changed over time and with it the meaning of citizenship and practices of governance. I distinguished three variations of democratic governance that formulated different approaches to engage citizens in decision making. I reviewed theories and practices of urban governance by exploring how they take place in the formal and informal realm of politics. That distinction allowed me to carve out where I make my contribution: in the informal interactions between the citizens who contest urban governance and the street-level professionals who are in the position to recognize and include the political character of their actions in the negotiations triggered by conflict in the neighborhood.

The first form of urban governance that I explored was control and rule. Control and rule governance practices are informed by the notion of a representative democracy that expects liberal citizenship to center on voting and regulated forms of participation invited by state actors. In the formal realm of politics control and rule practices formulate participation schemes that rarely move beyond what Arnstein (1969) called 'tokenisms' of participation. Policies like the 'Vogelaar neighborhoods' reveal the commitment to control as they determine state-led neighborhood developments. The modern Dutch welfare state practices control and rule in ways that reach far into the informal realm as welfare practitioners are responsible for the welfare of families 'behind the front door' and the development of communities. My case studies take place in these neighborhoods where a large and diverse arsenal of welfare workers is present and interacting with citizens on a daily basis. My challenge is to grasp what happens if repertoires of control and rule interact with ad hoc and improvised forms of political agency of citizens who contest urban governance in their everyday living environment.

The second mode of governance that I reviewed was the notion of democracy as collaboration. Here the citizen became an active participant in decision making. The republican notion of citizenship that supported deliberative processes demanded a repertoire of civic virtues, however, that would allow citizens to move beyond personal interest and take part in a public debate, but within a limited repertoire of action that is established by governments or mediators. Negotiation and deliberative planning

theories provided interesting insights into how to engage citizens in processes of common meaning making. Dutch planning practices experimented with this form of governance, but the examples primarily took place outside city politics. Moreover, the initiation and repertoire of deliberation remained in the hands of professionals. In an effort to translate the deliberative democracy to the level of the urban neighborhood, Dutch national policies demanded active citizenship focused on practical, rather than political, goals. Today, active citizenship has become the dominant understanding of what citizenship entails. This understanding, does not speak to the types of citizenship that I observed in instances of urban conflict, however; it has a limited eye for practices outside the repertoire of deliberation.

To understand how conflict could be understood as an opportunity for democracy, I turned to the notion of democracy as contestation. Following Arendt ([1958] 1998), I argued that the quality of the public sphere is central in the development of radical or contentious democracy. Hence it is also needed to understand conflict as an opportunity for urban democracy. Here the republican citizen acts by participating in the public sphere. The political meaning of actions is not dependent on civic virtues, but on the performances of citizenship that express a voice. These types of actions develop on an ad hoc basis in the grassroots of the city, rooted in the demands of citizens instead of state actors. We can grasp the meaning of contentious performances in these interactions between the state and society. The institutions they seek to challenge can capture citizens who protest and organize against the state. Social movements theories provide resources to analyze the interaction between contentious performances and the state, but they also focus on collective actions that start in the grassroots and get translated into more formal representation.

The overview led finally to the informal realm of city neighborhoods where my cases of urban conflict take place. Urban conflicts mark the moments in which a variety of stakeholders express anger, frustration, fear, or disappointment. As they voice a story they discursively perform citizenship in the public sphere. Urban democracy depends on the ability of local governments to engage these voices, not through state-led forms of representation, but right there at the sites in which they are voiced and in the repertoires in which they get performed. To make sense of urban conflicts as an opportunity for democracy, we have to study the uncanny acts of citizenship that get expressed at the

street-level and the way they prompt interactions with street-level bureaucrats and other state actors. This study therefore provides detailed case studies of urban conflict in which stakeholders perform their stories in interactions on the streets of three Dutch cities. In the next chapter I will present a framework that provides a way to inquire into their stories and performances and the responses they generate in the public sphere. This framework provides a way to examine urban conflict as a chain of action and reaction – a necessary step if we want to follow community progress through conflict. In other words, let us take up Dewey's challenge and develop a scholarly practice-oriented approach that contributes to the capacity for democratic governance.

Chapter 2
Social-spatial narrative:
an analytic framework to operationalize the
potential of conflict

Introduction

Urban conflicts engage people on the basis of what is important to them. Processes of urban conflict emerge when people disagree, when dissatisfactions lead to them to respond. These responses are embedded in repertoires of action that often take place in everyday environments. This study follows such people as they challenge government through informal and ad hoc practices ranging from occupying, marching, story telling, dog walking, hanging, celebrating, to fighting, and threatening. How can we analyze these performances? My approach draws on Hannah Arendt's notion of the quality of the public sphere (Arendt [1958] 1998) to make sense of conflict as an opportunity. Although Arendt did not conceptualize conflict in particular, her understanding of social processes as chains of action and reaction that relate people to one another provides a basis for analyzing conflict in the public sphere. It can help us grasp what happens when citizen contest and what happens when governments ignore their efforts. Arendt's account can also help us to get a handle on the cumulative effects excluded stories and denied recognition have on the quality of the public sphere. Citizens become entangled in conflict as they seek to disrupt, alter, or participate in political decision making. Their discursive acts can 'misfire' and have no effect or 'thwart' in the interplay with authorities. Conflict is an opportunity for the development of the public sphere creates a demand for practitioners and scholars to look into the street-level interactions between public officials and citizens that take place in the informal, improvised, and local setting of the city. In the informal realm of politics, conflicts emerge as local contestations where citizens, street-level bureaucrats, and politicians negotiate meaning.

In this chapter I provide a theoretical framework to make sense of the everyday experiences in and through which contestation develops at the local level. I propose a way to analyze urban conflict as an opportunity for democratic governance implicit in

street-level interactions. This chapter outlines the Social-Spatial Narrative framework ('SNN-framework') I developed through my fieldwork on urban conflict episodes. It is a grounded theory rooted in the empirical details of conflict. It should help scholars and practitioners to understand how the dynamics among stakeholders change through the process of conflict. Where, when, how, and why do people engage and disengage? And finally, where and how can we recognize moments of opportunity in episodes of conflict?

This demands an approach that is attentive to the details of interaction among citizens, street-level practitioners, and the state. I draw on narrative analysis to grasp the experiences of case actors (MacIntyre 1990; Bruner 1990, 2004; Czarniawksa 2010; Georgakopoulou 2006). Narrative analysis also provides a way to inquire into processes of planning (Polinkhorne 1987, 2007) and policy making (Roe 1994). Moreover, the stories that people use to make sense of past, current, and future events provide insight into their conflicting interests and agenda's (Poletta 1989; Cobb 2006, 2013a). A narrative perspective assumes that meaning and experiences get structured and organized in narratives. In this sense processes of social and political interactions can be grasped through the way case actors narrate stories of conflict. The analysis that I propose starts from the stories of case actors and seeks to analyze how and where they intersect, overlap, and contradict with one another in sequences of events at the street-level.

In the pursuit to understand conflict as negotiated democracy it would be paradoxical to focus solely on stories. Like in any social interaction, some people have difficulty giving voice to their story in the public sphere. People have varying communicative repertoires. They use different languages, accents, performances, and symbols. Professionals might address a problem by organizing a public meeting. Citizens might organize a form of symbolic protest to contest or convey a message. On the street, stakeholders use a repertoire broader than language to voice stories and define episodes of conflict. If we want to understand how conflict get negotiated in the informal and everyday contentious realm of the city, we must look at what people say *and* at what they do. An exclusive narrative approach leaves a gap when it comes to analyzing what people do. In order to analyze everyday practices of citizenship that are both talked and performed, I employ a performative approach in the study of narratives.

My approach starts from the assumption that storytelling and street-level performances have a discursive effect on power relations, events, and consequently identities. Street-level interactions are discursive performances through 'which people actively produce social and psychological realities' (Davies and Harré 1990: 45). 'An individual emerges through the process of social interaction, not as a relatively fixed end product but as one who is constituted and reconstituted through the various discursive practices in which they participate' (Davies and Harré 1990: 46). Authors like Davies and Harré (1990) and Hajer (1995, 2009) have shown the interdependence between discursive dimensions and performances of social action. Yet the particular importance of the sites where discursive exchanges took place has not been spelled out in detail. I analyze the performances of case actors as linguistic repertoires and as spatial practices. Spatial practices broaden the repertoire of citizenship because they take place in the informal realm of the city. Symbolic performances are not only communicated via speech acts, but also through the way people use spaces. The social-spatial narrative approach that I employ provides a way to analyze how parties discursively produce politics, meaning, and relationships in street-level interactions in episodes of urban conflict. This approach recognizes the importance of particular social and spatial components of storytelling and other performances that make up for the process of urban conflict.

A social-spatial narrative is grounded in the empirical details of a process of conflict. It depends on qualitative data that can help us grasp the subjective experiences of each party in the conflict. In the next chapter I describe and reflect on how I gathered my empirical data. In this chapter I lay out the framework that I use to analyze the urban conflicts I studied. Each of the social-spatial narratives I analyze is different in content, but similar in the way stories are told and reconstructed, and in the way performances provide a lens to view interactions among state actors, welfare professionals, and citizens.

A narrative approach

Understanding how people interact in the process of conflict begins with understanding how people make sense of the situation they are in. We have to first grasp the subjective character of experiences in a conflict. A narrative perspective provides insight into how individuals make sense of the self, of others, and of the situations they encounter by telling stories (Mishler 1995: 1999). People tell stories to express emotions and explain their intentions, experience, and position. Czarniawska notes that the 'everyday use

of the narrative form is all pervasive' (Czarniawska 2010: 59). Stories are the natural forms through which we engage others in our perspective. Narratives are also a means of everyday communication (Fisher 1984, 1987). They get enacted in everyday life (MacIntyre 1990). Narrative scholars also claim that stories are constitutive of social life itself. For example, Bruner (1990, 2004) argues that 'the mimesis between life and narrative is a two way affair, narratives imitate life and vice versa' (Bruner 2004: 692). In other words, stories are a powerful way to understand everyday subjective experiences from the perspective of different stakeholders, and the way that stories also help produce social reality. The narratives told by case actors help them make sense of a situation. These narratives also discursively ascribe what behavior is appropriate. From this starting point I argue that conflicts can be understood through stories of stakeholders, but that these stories at the same time have direct effect upon the experience and positions of actors at the street-level. Thus the first step in analyzing conflict is to describe and relate the varied experiences of case actors by reconstructing their storylines.

Social-Spatial Narrative Framework for analysing the process and opportunity of Urban Conflict

narrattive dynamics in a timeline

storylines of case actors
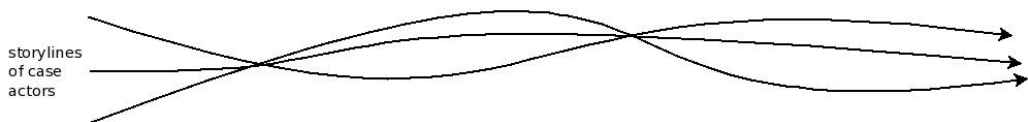
(figure 1)

Figure one is a visual representation of a set of storylines told by case actors. Each storyline presents a description of a sequence of events as experienced by conflict actors. The storyline of a given case actor can change position as the sequence of events produces a change in the interpretation of the relationship among parties. In the next chapter on methods I describe how I engaged the subjective experiences of case actors through narrative interviews. Here I address how the sequential stories of case actors form storylines in a conflict. Storylines can be regarded as strands in a braid; each strand has the quality to be folded around each other and merged as a braid (Cobb 2013b). Each strand is both a separate entity and part of the braid. If the strand would merge there would no longer be a braid. The difference between strands is essential to

the braid[1]. In an analogues way, the individual stories of case actors form chronological storylines that together formulate the storylines of parties[2]. These storylines together create the starting point of the social-spatial narrative.

Constructing an analysis of storylines in a SSN-framework demands a distinction between two types of voice: the voice of case actors and a voice that analyzes the relationship among these subjective storylines. This distinction prompts a question about the difference between stories and narrative? I draw on the convention that distinguishes stories as descriptions of a sequence of events in action, and narratives as conveying these stories in an analytic representation (Porter Abbott 2008: 19). This implies that the stories that people share about their experiences in conflict are their descriptions of the sequence of events. These chronological stories turn into a narrative when these stories become 'emplotted', when they include analytical reflections on the stories (Labov and Waletzky 1967; Porter 2008; Polinkhorne 1987). A narrative is then the result of a process of active sense-making, the narrator reflects upon experiences, weighs the value of different events, and creates a storyline with a plot. In this process the narrator distinct him or herself from being the subject (experiencing a story) and becomes the object of her or his own reflection (by narrator of the story). A narrative has a plot line to which the narrator added meaning through reflection (Labov 1972). In the construction of a story, on the other hand, the narrator does not remove herself from the immediate interaction, but retells the story as a lived experience. Some have explained this as the challenge to include both big and small stories (Bamberg 2006; Freeman 2006; Georgakopoulou 2006a). In a 'small story' people provide first hand descriptions of the sequence of events. These stories are the 'real story of our lived

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[1] The metaphor of a braid is something I have been working on with Sara Cobb and David Laws. During my time as a visiting scholar in the center of narrative at the School for Conflict Analysis and Resolution at George Mason University in 2012 I was able to further develop this idea in close cooperation with Sara Cobb who has also translated the idea in a paper (2013).

[2] As the ssn-framework is a description grounded in the specifics of empirical data, the parties that make up storylines can vary per case study. For analytic purposes I structured individual storylines into the storylines of a conflict party. These parties are based on empirical findings that showed which individuals would take up common positions, identify with common interests, and develop a shared story of the sequence of events. Of course, individual case actors can belong to multiple parties. For example when policy-practitioners and welfare professionals are also residents of the neighborhood. I realize that these parties by no means are homogenous, in the context of these specific conflicts, their account, however, portrayed similar positions, interests, interpretations, and experiences. For the purpose of analysis I narrated them into storyline of parties. A discussion on the methodological and ethical implications of bringing individual stories into one storyline follows in the method chapter.

lives' (Bamberg 2004: 356). These stories are often shared in everyday conversations and miss a reflective element because they are embedded in the experience. Narrative scholars do not treat small stories as narratives because they have no evaluative element (Labov 1972[3]). A story might be small because it represents a lived experience and gets expressed in an informal context like the street or in a park, nevertheless, I treat them as a story that needs to be included into the storylines of case actors. In that respect, stories are both an analytic and a methodological feature of my ssn-framework[4].

In creating a social-spatial narrative I thus make a distinction between stories and narratives. I treat stories as something that case actors tell. Stories reveal first hand experiences and are told in interviews *and* interactions at the street-level. Narratives are the analytic interpretations of these stories that I produce as a social-spatial analysis of the stories told by case actors. The latter reflects on the shifts in relationships, differences in meaning, and the dynamics that exist between the storylines. Each SSN thus consists of two different voices, the voice of case actors who provide the details of conflict and my voice as a researcher who brings the stories together in a social-spatial narrative that analyzes the process of conflict. In figure 1 the storylines are also related to one another. They change position, intersect, contradict, and overlap. I turn now to describe how I analyze the relationship between storylines – or what I call the 'narrative dynamics'. How can we make sense of changing relationship between storylines of case actors? How can we analyze the way storylines of actors discursively produce power relations in conflict? This is a question of narrative dynamics.

Narrative dynamics

In conflict stakeholders produce stories to make sense of their situation. In that process, some stories become dominant and other stories become marginal. When a conflict story becomes dominant it defines the problem and what is at stake. Negotiation theories demonstrated that the definition of a problem also has a direct relationship with possible solutions (Fisher and Ury [1981] 1999; Kelman 1996; Neale and Bazerman 1991; Pruitt 1981; Raiffa 1982). Problem definitions construe appropriate repertoires of action. For example, stories about citizenship produce a repertoire of what can be understood as citizen engagement and what cannot. In any given context some stories

[3] Later Labov revisited his perspective on what narrative analysts should pay attention to, arguing that stories with a lower degree of reflection deserve attention as much as narratives that are derived from interviews (Labov 1997)
See page 104 of the methodology chapter for the methodological implications of this insight.

are more accepted than others; some stories serve the position of people in power better than others. To analyze how the stories of people in power relate to the stories of people who take up more marginal positions, we need an approach that can relate multiple storylines.

Roe (1994) proposed to be attentive to 'objectively weaker arguments' that are the result of unequal power relations that 'work themselves out through stories, through their asymmetries, and through getting people to change their story' (Roe 1994: 266). Roe argues for a 'meta-narrative' that does not focus on the facts, but on the divergent stories people tell. Roe's proposition on narrative in public policy is valuable for the study of conflict because is recognizes that all policies are in themselves moral stories. He proposes to create a 'shared' narrative with which all parties can identify and in which they can find common ground – a 'meta-narrative that turns this polarization in another story altogether' (ibid: 4). Here my approach to narrative dynamics opposes Roe. Such meta-narrative approach is, in my view, overly optimistic about the ability of different storylines to take up equal position or to be reconciled in a single consensual master narrative. Although Roe seeks to include 'weaker' stories, his proposition is to summarize stories into a meta-narrative. I seek to include dominant stories, but also stories that are not expressed through well-structured stories but everyday interaction or even symbolic actions. Therefore, I argue that in order to understand the dynamics between contradicting storylines, it is necessary to stay very close to the direct voices of case actors and the way they narrate or perform their stories of conflict.

An alternative approach to including divergent stories and grasping the relationship among storylines is to distinguish between master and counter stories. Narrative scholars claim that stories become dominant when they refer to widely accepted interpretations of what is at stake (Bamberg 2004: 360). 'Dominant narratives' – or 'master narratives' – are understood as storylines that support of hegemonic power and guide action, and understanding of events[5] (Bamberg 2004: 360). They produce power and have the capacity to exclude contradicting stories from the public sphere (Bamberg 2004). Storylines that pick up elements of the master narrative are more likely to be accepted

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[5] Porter Abbott and other scholars problematize the use of the term 'master narrative'. According to Abbott it is better to speak of a master or counter plot because it is not the rendering of narrative that becomes dominant or marginal, but the plot of a narrative that gets legitimized or contradicted (Abbot 2008: 47). I use the term master or counter narrative to refer to the way in which stories legitimize or counteract power positions and discursively produce action repertoires.

as 'real' or 'true'. Case actors who do not identify with that master narrative might produce an opposing story that scholars have called these 'counter narratives' (Talbot et al 1996; Bamberg 2004). Counter narratives are less accepted interpretations of what is going on and often are told by groups in marginal positions (Talbot et al 1996; Bamberg 2004). Counter narratives are usually understood as less appropriate interpretations of what is at stake. Analysis of conflict through the SSN-framework seeks to include these contradicting storylines, and analyze the dominant and counter quality of these storylines told by case actors.

The dynamics of these dominant and counter stories are directly related to who has the right to voice their story and whose story describes what is at stake. To analyze power relations between master and counter narratives in the public sphere, narrative scholars have proposed to analyze the 'tellability' of stories (Ochs and Capps 2001; Norrick 2005; Georgakopoulou 2006 a & b). Stories that are easily accepted as the "truth" are understood as having high tellability – they are easily expressed in interactions. On the other hand there are stories that have difficulty getting voiced, these are considered less appropriate understandings of the situation and thus have low tellability. Thus the notion of tellability helps us to understand what stories get expressed more easily in the public sphere and what stories tend to get excluded, but how does a story that has high tellability become dominant?

To answer that question I want to turn to Cobb (2003) who tried to make sense of identity-based conflicts. She argued that stories about the 'self' and the 'other' in conflict situations tend to be 'thin narratives'. She analyzes the content of stories by distinguishing four characteristics of 'thin narratives': 1) regarding time, they are focused on the past and contain a description of the future, 2) regarding characters, there is often a small array of characters or roles and the self is often portrayed as the victim whereas the other is the victimizer, 3) regarding causality, they have a linear logic that externalizes responsibility, 4) regarding values and themes that tend to concentrate around suffering, vengeance, in-group loyalty, etc. These four characteristics of 'thin narratives' provide us with an analysis of the way stories of conflict get higher or lower tellability. When we apply this insight to the notion of tellability we could say that thin narratives usually have higher tellability because it appeals to a broader audience as more people can identify with the simple characters in this narrative (victim vs perpetrator). A

thin narrative will provide a more convincing story of conflict because it gives singular meaning to past events (a moment of threat or a moment of victory). Such story will also formulate clear-cut solutions to the problems because it has a linear logic (this led to that) and it ascribes who are the perpetrators (usually the 'other') and who are the victims (usually the 'self'). Ironically, Cobb also shows that thin narratives preserve, reproduce, and sustain conflicts. When the stories of case actors are 'thin narratives' they will have higher tellability in interaction, but their characteristics will also deepen the tensions between parties. Therefore, Cobb called for 'better-formed stories' (Sluzki 1992) that allow for more ambiguity on all four elements. Better-formed stories allow varying narratives to coexist. They are, however, more complex and their content will have lower tellability in interactions.

Thus Cobb's theory helps us to make sense of how the content of a narrative construes relationships of dominance. Thin narratives have higher tellability and are thereby prone to become dominant. But the degree of tellability is not only constructed through the *content* of stories, but also through the *context* in which stories get performed. The results of interactions are 'not only from its (detached) content, but also from the contextual (embedded) relevance of the story for the participants involved' (Norrick 2005: 325). As case actors perform stories in interactions with each other, they negotiate the level of tellability. Thus to understand how stories with low tellability tend to get excluded from into the negotiation of conflict, we have to make sense of the context in which stories are voiced, the interaction among parties[6]. This is why I argue to analyze 'narrative dynamics' through the interactions at the street-level where people negotiate the degree of tellability and there might be an opportunity to formulate better-formed stories.

I approach stories as ongoing interactions. They are not only abstract, but also tangible interactions that unfold at the street-level. When for example the cockpit group occupied the community center, they improvised an effort to counteract the dominant storyline that excluded them from community organizing. They did not speak as much as perform their counter narrative to challenge and change the narrative dynamics. They drew on the fact that in conflict stories are never stable. Dominant narratives are apparent in

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[6] This insight also has implications for the execution of narrative interviews because the interview is also a context in which some stories might have higher or lower tellability. I will return to this interaction between interviewer and interviewee in the methods chapter, page 101.

every social interaction and define sequences of action and events as routines, thereby 'they delineate agency and reduce the repertoire of action' (Bamberg 2004: 360). At the same time, however, without the guidance and sense of direction that dominant narrative construes, we would be lost (ibid: 360). Thus dominant narratives guide and structure our understanding of our position in society, but 'people have room for improvisation and careful management of perspectives that is sensitive to possible counters from the audience' (ibid: 363). Bamberg calls this space for agency 'juggling several storylines simultaneously'. 'Counter narrative always operate on the edge of disputability and require a good amount of interactional subtlety and rhetorical finessing on the part of the speaker' (ibid: 363). Thus, to negotiate storylines, case actors use elements of the dominant narrative to foster a counter story. Understand conflict as an opportunity for urban democracy therefore hinges on our ability to grasp how conflicts can produce a situation of instability that allows case actors to juggle storylines and reposition themselves in the public sphere. But how do people juggle several storylines?

To understand how citizenship gets negotiated in the informal domain of the city, we need a way to look at the moments in which people contest the narrative dynamics. The cases of conflict that I study are not only characterized by uneven power positions, but also by the ability of case actors to challenged power relations. When actors demand a place in the public sphere, they disrupt the dominant narrative and voice a counter story. Within a structure of power relations, case actors have agency to contest and renegotiate storylines. Therefore I seek to look at the ways in which case actors perform stories in interactions with each other. Not only through the content of stories, but also through interactions, the degree of tellability of a story gets negotiated. How do case actors seek to *change* the dominant stories in situations of conflict? In other words, how do people *perform* the negotiation of the storylines at the street-level?

Critical moments: how people disrupt stories

Conflicts are characterized by the moments in which case actors do something to try to produce a change in the sequence of events. When people disagree with the way they are treated, they act. These moments construe the process of action and reaction because they mark when and how people engage in negotiation. I define these episodes as 'critical moments' when they shape the way conflict unfolds. Scholars of negotiation have argued that a critical moment involves a shift in the meaning of events in a social process (Wheeler and Green 2004; Cobb 2006; Leary 2004). They are, thus, disruptive

of one or more of the elements of the prevailing narrative. A critical moment can function as a tipping point (Gladwell [2000] 2002) or a turning point, which refers to a shift of action (Cobb 2006: 148). Critical moments are not abstract, but are tangible and observable in practice, in the analysis of actions of people at the street. To understand how processes of conflict unfold, where escalation takes places, and how parties are in- or excluded, we have to look into the interaction – action and reaction – between case actors that define critical moments.

Social-Spatial Narrative Framework for analysing the process and opportunity of Urban Conflict

narrattive dynamics in a timeline

storylines
of case
actors
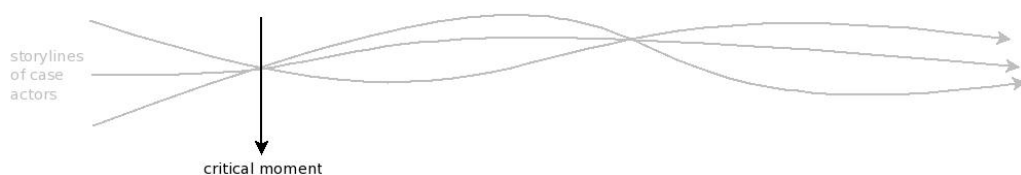
critical moment

(Figure 2)

Figure 2 illustrates how a critical moment can emerge in existing storylines. A critical moment springs from the action of case actors at a moment in time. It cuts across the different storylines in play and may disrupt the power dynamics. By examining the way such moments unfold in practice, we can thus grasp how case actors enact agency by provoking or acting in a critical moment. This is not to say, however, that critical moment always have the effect that was intended. The effect of a critical moment depends on what actors *do* and how other case actors *respond*. If authorities ignore the occupation of a neighborhood center, for example, the attempt to open a critical moment might fail. Critical moments may deepen tensions, corrode relationships, and strengthen dominant narratives. Leary (2004) has characterized critical moments as 'relational moments' that are depending on the ability of parties to engage one another in a dialogue. To understand how the process of conflict shifts, we have to analyze how case actors perform critical moments and how these moments effect or cease to effect negotiations at the street-level.

Leary argues that 'most efforts to understand critical moments in negotiation reflect top-down applications of analytic frameworks to existing case material' (Leary 2004: 315). She suggests that 'developing effective theory about critical moments can only be

enhanced if we can include the distinctive perspectives of practitioners and disputants in our accounts of decisive shifts in negotiation' (ibid: 314). The SSN-framework responds to this quality. It starts out from the stories of case actors and analyzes conflict as idiographic sequences of events in which one event follows the next, as in Arendt's notion of action and reaction. Critical moments are, in this sense, a strategy for empirically analyzing shifts in the narrative dynamics of conflict. By highlighting the unfolding process, rather than outcomes or ends, critical moments provide a way to structure the analysis of sequences of action and reaction, that Arendt argued are essential for understanding the quality of the public sphere. But if critical moments are not always visible through their disruptive effect, then how can we define and recognize them?

Analyzing performances

To understand how case actors provoke critical moments I focus on street-level interactions. Many of these interactions unfold through the telling of stories. An exclusive focus on stories would miss critical moments that stem from action however. To make sense of street-level interactions and include both stories with high and low tellability, we have to look at what people *do* as well as what they say. The performances of actors in conflict express how they create meaning, how they position themselves and others, and how they understand identity. Often these performances reveal the interests of stakeholders who lack linguistic repertoires to voice their story in the public sphere. Thus small, performed stories reveal interests in a different repertoire of citizenship. A performative approach to action and reaction allows engaging in stories with low tellability. The SSN-framework provides a way to relate a performative analysis to the study of narrative in the analysis of street-level action.

To analyze how actions communicate stories we have to treat performances as symbolic actions 'as they too communicate a narrative' (Abbott 2008: 25). Although narrative scholars acknowledge the idea of symbolic performances, they do not provide a way of doing a performative analysis. I therefore turn to the work of Hajer (2009) on the dramaturgy of performances. By analyzing the dramaturgy of performances, the negotiation of stories with high and low tellability become tangible in interactions at the street-level. Stories can be expressed through the uttering of language as well as through other symbolic acts. Hajer argues that governance is 'performed' or 'enacted' in the activity of governing (Hajer 2009: 54). He claims that performance 'is the way in

which the contextualized interaction itself produces social realities like understanding of the problem at hand, knowledge, decisions, and new power relations' (Hajer 2009: 66). The notion of performance assumes that 'policy-makers and politicians are seen as constantly and actively trying to create order and structure in potentially unstable situations' (Hajer and Laws in Hajer 2009: 54). Hajer sets out a framework that allows us to look at that dramaturgy of authority. I draw on this framework, but apply it more broad than the dramaturgy of authority. I include the performances of all actors who constitute the public sphere – policy practitioners, politicians, street-level bureaucrats, but also residents. This way, I seek to develop a dramaturgy of contention.

Alexander has called this the 'mise-en-scene', the 'arranging and the doing of actors movements in time and space' (Alexander 2004: 3). To analyze the mise-en-scene of a social interaction would mean to describe in detail the movements, speech acts, body language, and symbolic gestures of the players in a certain setting. Drawing on the studies of Burke (1969), Lynch (1991), and Benford & Hunt (1992), Hajer defines 3 basic concepts to analyze the dramaturgy of performances: scripting, staging, and setting. The scripting of a situation is the effort to create a setting by identifying the characters and setting the cues for appropriate behavior (Hajer 2009: 66). The script is a logical result of the dominant narrative that defines the problem and thereby the appropriate repertoire of interaction. We can imagine how a script of citizen participation initiates a public meeting. When the politician and planner take their place on a stage and proceed to let the audience ask questions one by one. We can also imagine an interaction in which the script does not unfold as intended because people disagree and speak up instead of listen. They might shout or turn their back and leave the room. Such deviations from the script separate social life from theatrical performance. Hajer introduces the notion of a counter script to capture these dynamics, the effort of antagonists to undo the script of protagonists (ibid: 66). Counter scripts are important in my analysis because conflict is treated as a negotiation between dominant and counter stories. The interplay between construe dominant and counter scripts, resemble Arendt's chain of action and reaction in processes of conflict. Counter actions often stem from counter narratives that contest the dominant script. To retain their position of power, authorities must often reinforce their script by 'policing'. As we will see, this is often the start of violent escalations.

The script people use derives from the stories they employ in their effort to make sense

of a situation and to enforce their interpretation of 'self' and 'other'. The script provides insight into the intention of the interaction (its political effect), it determines who are appropriate characters, and it also gives cues regarding appropriate behavior. But the script is also staged. Staging is the organization of the interaction. In a meeting, for example, it refers to the turns in which people are able to speak. The staging draws on existing symbols and determines the relationship between actors, players, and audiences. That staged script does not happen in a vacuum, it happens in a certain place and time, which leads us to the third concept, the setting. The setting refers to the physical situation in which the interaction takes place and can include artefacts that are brought to the situation (Hajer 2009: 66). The setting of the meeting I imagined earlier could be a room in the city hall. Residents may have brought banners to voice their disagreement "no trees, no neighborhood". If the meeting took place in a self-organized community center, the script might be different. Other parties might be staged. Script, stage, and setting provide a way to grasp interactions in power-relations, including efforts to disrupt these relationships by performing counter-scripts, staging, unexpected parties, and unconventional settings. By analyzing the stories that people tell and the performances they undertake I unpack conflict episodes as they unfold through critical moments.

In sum, the quality of the public sphere is dependent on what stories are included in the process of governance. When residents contest the development of a parking lot by chaining themselves to trees, their performance tells a story. If that story is ignored until the protesters get hungry and cold and grow weary, the performance of protest may misfire and citizens would be excluded from meaning making. Grievances might deepen, as the performance did not generate a response. In a similar vein, local authorities might invite the same residents to participate in a public hearing, but if they decide to not show up, the effort to negotiate democracy would fail. Or citizens might show up with axes and chainsaws in their hands and so disrupt the effort to script a rational conversation in which the policy could be debated. Actions and stories of case actors can always disrupt the repertoire of appropriate behavior and so demand a response. Whether the conflict becomes an opportunity depends on the response in these critical moments. Critical moments are thus a central part of social-spatial narratives. In the SSN-framework stories are not only told but also performed. Their dramaturgy moves beyond speech acts and written texts to the street-level interactions that are

staged in critical moments. Analyzing the dramaturgy of the interactions between case actors helps to understand how people seek to disrupt narrative dynamics and how others respond to those disruptions. It provides a way to make sense of disruptions by analyzing *what* people do, and, more important, *how* their actions alter positioning in a given setting. The SSN-framework is an effort to analyze idiosyncratic interactions among case actors in critical moments that shape the process of urban conflict.

The social and the spatial

To analyze how a critical moment can reinforce meaning, the sequence of events, and relationships between case actors, I analyze them in both social and spatial terms. The analysis of these moments then includes both stories and performances. With the 'social' perspective I analyze how relationships change in critical moments as case actors seek to reposition themselves. With a 'spatial' perspective I seek to grasp the meaning of the places and spaces in which people stage their performances and how they use these stages. These two perspectives derive from empirical findings in the case studies where speech acts and spatial practices were the primary ways in which case actors tried to disrupt the ongoing flow of events. The analysis of social and spatial is an analytic device, not a natural distinction. There is no question that social and spatial performances are inter related. In order to unravel the shift in meaning that occur in critical moments I distinguish between the two. This distinction aligns with a distinction narrative scholars draw on to analyze stories: the plot and the scene. In a narrative the plot and the scene work together to produce story. As in my approach to narrative, my analysis of the plot and the scene moves beyond what people say and looks into what they *do*. Let me explain how I analyze critical moments and the way they shape future narrative dynamics among stakeholders. I will first give a short account of how narrative scholars use the plot and then move to my approach to the 'social'.

Plot and the social

The figure below illustrated how a critical moment in which case actors seek to contest a dominant storyline can be analyzed via the 'social'. The parties seek to reposition themselves by performing their story in a contentious act.

Social-Spatial Narrative Framework for analysing the process and opportunity of Urban Conflict

narrattive dynamics in a timeline

storylines
of case
actors

critical moment

social
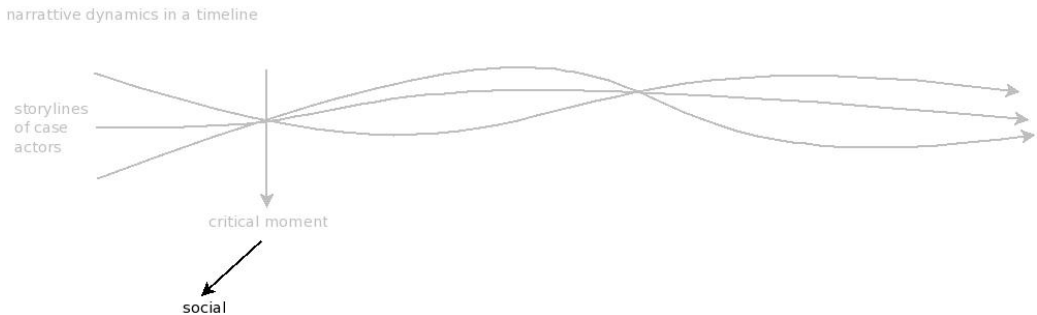
(Figure 3)

In the narrative tradition, scholars have argued that 'a mere listing of past events with no connecting thread does not make a story. We need something more than just temporal sequence, something to give it an intelligible plot' (Finnegan 1998: 10). Thus the plot confers meaning on a chain of events in a story. Ricoeur defines plot as 'the intelligible whole that governs a succession of events in any story' (1980: 171). The narrator develops a plot by 'highlighting and recognizing the contribution that certain events make to the development of the whole' (Polinkhorne 1987: 18). Thus the plot is a temporal structure that relates events to each other. Without a plot there is no story (White 1980; Polinkhorne 1987, 2007; Finnegan 1998). The plot not only connects events, but also gives them meaning. A plot positions characters as the villain, or the perpetrator, or the victim. It makes a story into a triumph or a tragedy. In conflicts, however, there are multiple narrators who create multiple plots. These narrators highlight different events, and treat some as critical and dismiss others as unimportant. A narrative with a singular plot cannot capture a process of conflict. To study conflict, we need a way to capture how different case actors provide contradicting and overlapping plotlines. These plotlines provide the analyst with access to the contradictory ideas about what is at stake. In a neighborhood, we have to analyze these contradicting plots as they get expressed in both formal and street-level interactions. Positioning theory provides a way to analyze the negotiation of plotlines in such interaction.

Positioning
Hajer's analysis of scripting, staging, and setting helps to analyze performances empirically. Positioning theory helps to make sense of the effect these performances

have on the negotiations that go on in critical moments. Positioning theory of positioning derives from behavioral psychology. Harré and Langenhove describe positioning as 'the analysis of fine-grained symbolically mediated interactions between people, both from their own individual standpoints as representatives or even exemplars for groups' (Harré and Langenhove 1999: 1). It broadly fits with 'social constructionist' approaches to analysis that treat personal development as well as group identities and other social constellations, as produced by active and skilled human beings in discursive interaction (Goffman 1959). Agency is a central notion in this approach. Harré and Langenhove called these interactions 'episodes of everyday life that are more than just visible behavior, they also include thoughts, feelings, intentions, and plans of all those who participate' (Harré and Langenhove 1999: 5). Contention and conflict are among these 'episodes of daily life' in which people disagree with policy or the meaning of earlier events and its implication for who has a right to participate in the public sphere. Positioning captures the play among contending roles, ideas, and stories.

Positioning thus captures the quality of relational action (Harré and Langenhove 1999, Davies and Harré 1990; Ben Habib 1992; Mead in Boas 1997). It works via two discursive processes 'positioning' and 'retorical redescription'. When someone positions him or herself, that act reciprocally ascribes a position to the other. Positioning 'constitutes the initiator and the others in certain ways, and at the time it is a resource through which all parties involved can negotiate new positioning' (Harré and Langenhove 1999: 22). To understand positioning and repositioning in critical moments, it is important to distinguish between 'doing positioning' with 'being positioned'. From a narrative perspective, people can be positioned via the deterministic force of the master narrative (Bamberg 2004: 366). When a master narrative excludes a story from having an acceptable plotline, the group that identifies with the counter story gets positioned at the periphery and will have difficulties participating in the negotiation of conflict. Critical moments stem from the contentious acts of case actors who improvise or strategically disrupt that dominant storyline. We thus have to look into performances in critical moments that create an opportunity to disrupt the dominant narrative and thereby renegotiate positioning.

Positioning is a relational act in a sequence of action and reaction. To analyze such sequence Harré and Langenhove differentiate orders of positioning. The first order is the initial way a person or a group locates themselves and others within an ongoing and lived storyline (ibid: 21). In the SSN-framework, first order positioning occurs when storylines of conflict emerge, thus when conflict emerges. Narrative dynamics reveal first order positioning among case actors. Second order positioning occurs when the first order is contradicted, questioned, and negotiated (ibid: 20). In the SSN-framework second order positioning occurs in critical moments when parties seek to renegotiate established relationships and meaning. If a renegotiation of positions occurs outside the initial domain of interaction – as when for example, the media positions parties in a conflict – Harré and Langenhove call this third order positioning. By narrating and performing, case actors secure and challenge positioning in critical moments where meaning is ambiguous. These three orders of positioning allow for an analysis of action and reaction, but do not yet help us to analyze changing relationships.

In order to capture the effect of first, second, and third order positioning on social relationships, we must decipher how positioning works through performance in interaction. The primary lens into the performance of positioning is language in use. Linguistic devices such as 'we', 'they', 'us', and 'them' reveal how parties seek to position themselves and others (ibid: 183). Davies and Harré have showed 'how both the social act performed by the uttering of those words and the effect that action has, is a function of the narratives employed by each speaker as well as the particular positions that each speaker perceives the other speaker to take up' (Davies and Harré 1990: 58). Uttering of words like 'us' and 'them' positions the parties and assigns positions to others.

To analyze the effect of linguistic performances, Harré and Langenhove draw on the theory of Austin (1962) who argued that 'saying something is doing something' (Austin 1962: 12). Austin understood utterances and statements as 'performative sentences', that are dependent upon a series of 'felicities' that make the speech act effective in a given context. He argued 'it is always necessary that the circumstances in which the words are uttered should be in some way, or ways, appropriate, and it is very commonly necessary that either the speaker himself or other persons should also perform certain other actions, whether 'physical' or 'mental' actions or even acts of uttering further words' (Austin

1962: 8). Earlier we have seen how a problem definition proposes an appropriate action repertoire. The theory of speech act shows us how such proposals can 'misfire' if they are not performed in an appropriate way. 'When the utterance is a misfire, the procedure which we purport to invoke is disallowed or is botched: and our act is void or without effect' (ibid: 16). This highlights both the contingency and the power asymmetry of social action. A dominant narrative produces a repertoire of appropriate performances to contest or interact. When a case actor performs citizenship outside the dominant repertoire of interaction, however, the act can easily misfire if it is not recognized as an appropriate and therefore meaningful action. Informal performances of citizenship are risky acts that can easily be excluded from the repertoire of political action and meaning making in contentious episodes. Critical moments provide a lens into the interplay between actors as they position and reposition themselves via language.

Acts that misfire are not always without consequence, however. The act has consequences because the performer *did* something. The consequences may be different from what the performer intended. To understand how this process works in detail, we have to examine how performative utterances develop consequences in interactions. Austin argues that locutionary forces are the conventional understanding of speech like for example 'the cat is on the mat'. They   generate information. This locutionary force can produce effect in two different ways; its consequence gives the act either an illocutionary force that is what is achieved *in* saying something, or a perlocutionary force that is what is achieved *by* saying something. What kind of effect a speech act has is dependent on the context and the performance. Speech acts that have a perlocutionary effect has a direct effect upon feelings, thoughts, or actions of the audience, the speaker, or other persons (ibid: 101). For example *by* shouting 'Look out!', the utterance has a direct effect upon experiences of case actors. The notion of a perlocutionary force also shows that the effect by saying something is not always depending on a response. When a counter story is expressed through a performance, it immediately reveals a story that contradicts the first story. Thus perlocutionary forces can also include unconventional discursive performance – like occupying a building. The symbolic performance needs no speech act to reveal a second order positioning in the negation of conflict. The performance itself communicates a counter narrative *by* performing or saying something. The consequence is real as a counter narrative is voiced in the public sphere.

On the other hand, illocutionary forces are dependent on a response. There is another illocution needed as response to legitimize an illocutionary act. *In* saying something parties reveal their demand for legitimization, if that does not get acknowledged, the illocutionary act misfires. For a speech act to have an illocutionary force it has to be performed within conventional means; hurl a tomato is a conventional illocutionary act that reveals discontent. The meaning of the event demands a crowd and usually a person on a stage that is the target. If one would hurl a tomato in an empty street to a non public figure, the act would not have the same symbolic meaning. One might use conventional acts to bring off a perlocutionary act (ibid: 116), but the illocutionary force is highly depending on the response of another party. In the case studies we will see how the dominant narrative sets the terms on which acts are felicitous, thus what the conventional procedures are for successful locutionary performances. Dominant narrative are implicit proposals defining what for example is understood as a protest and what is understood as a public meeting in which screaming is infelicitous. If performances that seek to have an illocutionary effect do not get performed within such terms, they might not generate a response from authorities and turn into a misfire.

Harré and Slocum argue that 'social interaction, hostile or friendly, are the repertoire of meanings available to actors' (Harré and Scolum 2003: 103). This means that there is a repertoire that suggests conventions of correct behavior. Dominant storylines can constrain the development of that social repertoire – not everyone is entitled to take part in episodes of interaction or is entitled to certain behavior. Harré and Scolum ask themselves whether everyone has 'equal access to the local repertoire of meaningful actions'? (ibid: 103). When parties seek to disrupt the sequence of events and first order positioning in conflict, they demand an illocutionary force or consequence. If that response does not take place, their act misfires and their repertoire to negotiation turns inappropriate. As a result, these groups get excluded from negotiating citizenship in the public sphere. The social-spatial narrative approach to the 'social' analyzes how parties discursively produce a dominant repertoire of interaction by positioning themselves and how others seek to disrupt that first order positioning in critical moments. An analysis of how these locutionary forces play out in street-level actions allows to understand how contentious acts can have an affect on meaning and relationships.

In sum, to analyze the process of conflict I unravel interactions between citizens, street-level professionals, and policy actors in critical moments. I analyze social action as symbolic interactions in which parties are positioned and challenge their position through the illocutionary and perlocutionary force of their action. This approach provides a way to unpack how parties get in- and excluded from participating in the negotiation of conflict. Such analysis helps us grasp how interactions in conflict contribute to the quality of the public sphere, who is in and who is out, what is appropriate, and what can and cannot be said. Language provides a way to understand how case actors reposition themselves, but also symbolic performances can reveal a counter story and produce repositioning. To understand the meaning of symbolic performances, however, it is not sufficient to only study only what people say. We must also look at how doing something is saying something. For that analysis of action, we turn to the spatial.

Scene and the spatial

Here I explain my approach to analyze how *doing something is saying something*. To analyze how performances have an effect like the use of language, we have to understand how the scene in which actions take place is used and gets meaning. In this study, scenes unfold on the street in the neighborhood. Benches, squares, community centers, city councils, all provide settings for the scenes in which conflicts get negotiated. In the narrative tradition the scene helps to grasp the experiential quality of a narrative. 'Scene is where the action occurs, where characters are formed and live out their stories and where culture and social context play constraining and enabling roles' (Connelly and Clandinin 1990: 8). The way case actors make use of the scene creates a lens into actions that often occur spontaneous and at the street-level. By being attentive to scene, we can grasp tacit and intuitive performances that develop outside the conventional repertoire of citizenship.

To analyze the meaning of scenes in urban conflict, however, I view these settings not only as a container in which interactions happen. The setting of interactions also has discursive effects upon the negotiation. To understand an event it is necessary to understand why particular actions took place on a particular site and not elsewhere because each site conveys a limited range of messages (Kuper 1972: 421). Especially in critical moments, when case actors seek to disrupt a sequence of events, the places where people choose to act matter. As in any social situation, what counts as appropriate language and who can use it varies with the setting and the individuals involved.

Stories with low tellability are especially difficult to voice through speech acts. Giving these stories voice in public often demands a stage that adds symbolic meaning to the performance. The SSN-framework addresses this by linking the analysis of positioning via speech acts, to the way people voice stories through the discursive use of spaces and places – figure 4.

Social-Spatial Narrative Framework for analysing the process and opportunity of Urban Conflict

narrattive dynamics in a timeline

storylines
of case
actors

critical moment

social   spatial
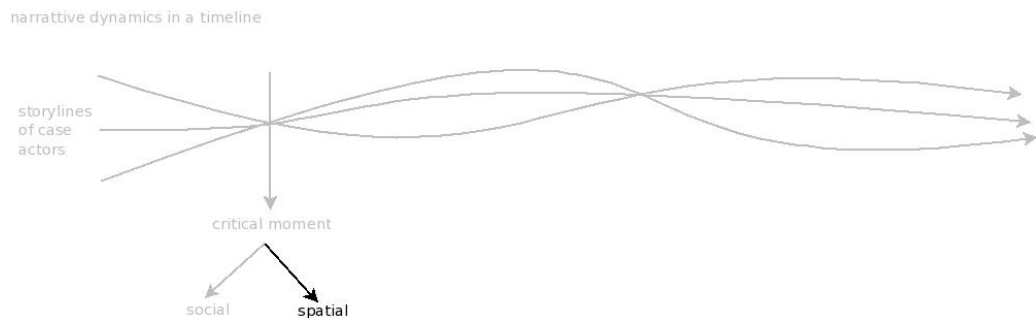
(Figure 4)

Everyday *spaces* in the neighborhood become *places* when practices, routines, and representations add meaning to these sites (Gieryn 2000: 465). Spaces become places through a unique gathering of things, meaning, and values (de Certeau 1988; Harvey 1996). In processes of conflict, this process is often contested. Dominant narratives appropriate the meaning, use, and values of places. One can imagine how the meaning and use of spaces can get contested among groups with different routines. For example when youngsters use a park bench to hang out and elderly ladies cross that same space to walk their dogs; the presence and performance of the youth can trigger contestation. Interestingly, they can also mediate contestation by providing a scene for negotiation. In the SSN-framework I seek to analyze how such processes unfold at the level of the neighborhood and how people develop not only linguistic, but also spatial, practices for negotiating conflict. In citizen's performances, the stages they pick to convey their message are often as important as the message itself.

The spatial has attracted attention in urban studies since the beginning of the 20th century. The tradition of urbanism at the Chicago school developed an 'action oriented' analysis to understand the rapid changes in urban life in Chicago (Gottdiener and Hutchison

2006: 45). Scholars in the Chicago School saw urbanism through a socio-spatial lens that was attentive to both the social relations and the meaning and production of space. Park (1925), for example, included the built environment as the container in which urban life takes place. Wirth ([1928] 1998), who was inspired by Simmel's Bridge and Door ([1909] 1994), took the notion of space further and argued that the spatial environment influenced individual behavior. Others looked at particular areas in the city like the ghetto (Whyte 1943; Suttles 1970). The 'socio analysis' of the city developed as researchers began to look at the construction of identity (Anderson 1923), 'deviant subcultures' like gangs (Thrasher 1927), hobo's (Anderson 1923). These studies provide detailed descriptions of everyday life in areas or subcultures that centered on space and place. Over time many scholars have sought to understand how spaces are the fundamental basis for the exercise of power (Foucault 1986; Castells 1983, 1989; Soja 1989; Harvey 1985, 1990). Cities and their governments are products of negotiations among the contending interests of planners, politicians, and citizen groups (Gottdiener and Hutchison 2006: 80). The built environment is socially constructed through on-going struggles.

From this perspective the definition of 'the neighborhood' and 'the urban community' are not prescribed definitions but based on the empirical details of a distinct case study. I define the neighborhood, the community, minorities, parties in conflict, and also political performances an 'emic' perspective that places the subjective and discursive experiences of people at the heart of understanding what is at stake. It is inevitable that such an approach opens multiple understandings of what conflict, the urban neighborhood, and the community are. Cities are the product of contention among politicians, other authorities, and citizens (Castells 1983). I take a similar stance but move away from the analysis of economic and political struggles that emphasize power structures to focus on performances of power and performances of agency in the interaction.

Spatial practices
Generally, the meaning of space draws on the distinction between the public and the private realm of public space. The geographer Lofland (2007) added a third realm that is important to understand how different places can exist simultaneously in a neighborhood. She argues that between the private and the public, is a space that she calls the 'parochial realm'. The parochial exist in between private spaces that are characterized by 'ties of intimacy among primary groups members who are located in

households or personal networks' (Lofland 2007: 10) and the public that is 'inhabited by persons who are strangers to one another or who 'know' one another only in terms of occupational or other non-personal identity categories' (ibid: 9). The parochial brings together a sense of 'commonality between neighbors who are involved in interpersonal networks that are located in communities' (Lofland 2007: 10). The parochial realm is produced through everyday spatial practices at the street-level and creates a space for negotiation. When a public space becomes parochial the action repertoire that belongs to a public space is disrupted. When the group in Ypenburg occupied the community center, the new action repertoire temporarily produced a parochial realm that excluded professionals. The parochial provides an important insight necessary to understand how everyday practices construct and change the meaning of spaces and places.

The occupation was an action that took place informally and ad hoc. In order to make sense of both formal and informal spatial practices, I use the distinction between strategies and tactics that De Certeau established in his work on the 'practices of everyday life' (1988). Strategies and tactics both refer to practices stakeholders use to (re) establish master and counter narratives, appropriate routines, and the meaning of public space in the neighborhood. Strategies are the 'calculus of force-relationships which become possible when a subject of will and power (a proprietor, an enterprise, a city, a scientific institution) can be isolated from an 'environment''(De Certeau 1988: xix). They are the practices of people in power positions that are established in politics, planning, and governing. They create 'a victory over time and place' (De Certeau et al. 1980: 5) that establishes relations of the 'powerful' and the 'weak'. Tactics, by contrast, are 'a calculus which cannot count on a "proper" (a spatial or institutionalized) location' (De Certeau 1988: xix). In other words, tactics take place in ways that do not fit the conventions of political action. They take place in the sphere of the 'other' because they have no space in society, they must play in the terrain that is imposed upon them (De Certeau et al. 1980: 6). Tactics are counteracts to the powerful and organizing sphere of strategies. They must utilize the gaps and circumstances that open in the sphere of control. They operate blow by blow, and create surprises (ibid: 6). This distinction highlights how tactical and strategic performances have discursive influences on the situation. It helps to grasp why specific tactics are bound to take place in public space where they get structured by strategic rules and regulations. Strategies express dominant narratives and repertoires of interaction, whereas tactics seek to disrupt these structures

by enacting a counter narrative. The practices that De Certeau proposes broaden the focus on speech acts and introduce a spatial repertoire of positioning through both strategic but and tactical spatial acts.

A question remains, however, how do the spatial practices of case actors have an effect upon the relationships among parties in a conflict? To analyze the way spatial practices can alter a sequence of events and redefine relationships, we have to make sense of how these tactics and strategies produce meaning. For that purpose the work of Lefebvre is helpful. Lefebvre ([1974] 1991) argued that spatial practice produce and reproduce particular locations (ibid: 33). The meaning of space is produced in different domains simultaneously. He suggests three types of socially produced spaces; the perceived space, the conceived space, and the lived space. The *perceived space* is the 'tangible form of space that provides a degree of continuity and cohesion to each social formation' (Martin and Miller 2004: 146). This form of spatial production highlights the material experience of space and the production thereof through daily routines and performances that express appropriate social relations. The park bench that I mentioned earlier could be perceived in different ways. Youngsters sit on the banister of the bench, smoke, and litter the area around the bench with beer cans when they leave. Their daily routines leave marks that symbolically occupy the bench. Elderly ladies see the bench and feel threatened when the young people mark it with their routine. Thus the way people use and perceive spaces is influenced by their sense of appropriate behavior.

When they disagree, they might contest the perceived space by altering the routine or by developing a counter routine. These everyday spatial practices reveal how case actors perceive the meaning of particular places, how they value others in those spaces, how they challenge and change routines, and, so give new meaning to these perceived spaces.

The second way the meaning of space gets produced is through 'representations of space'. These are 'tied to the relations of production and to the 'order' which those relations impose, and hence to knowledge, to signs, to codes …' (Lefebvre [1974] 1991: 33). This is the realm of planners, urbanists, and governance that imposes a social order on spaces and produces meaning. The representations of space are dominant expressions of space in any society (ibid: 39). This *conceived space* refers to the production of planned space (Martin and Miller 2004: 146). By describing how spaces

are conceived by planners and governments, I seek to understand how space is produced by ideology and political interests, this allows us to follow how these forms of social control and regulation get contested in episodes of urban conflict. A new community center, for example, becomes a conceived space when behavior is polices by enforcing accountability, professionalism, and rules. The physical structure of squares, streets, and shopping malls also produces conceived space as implicit rules and regulations guide appropriate behavior. By looking at the way policy practitioners make choices to conceive space we can grasp how they appropriate repertoires of behavior at the street-level.

The third way to analyze how spaces effect social relationship is given by the notion of 'representational spaces'. Here the perceived and conceived spaces collide and coexist in the experiences and associations that people produce in the spaces they inhabit. This is Lefebvre called the *lived space* that 'directly lives through its associated images and symbols' (Lefebvre [1974] 1991: 39). It is the space of inhabitants and users. Here spatial practices that origin in the perceived space unfold and, at times, seek to disrupt the conceived space. As case actors perform within the lived space, they occupy buildings, and protest at squares, thereby developing routines to challenge the dominant narrative. When protest in the lived space are 'too successful – that is threatens the state – the public space is often closed, sometimes gated, and policed' (Low 2000: 184).

In sum, I propose that spaces and places play a central role in the way in which people initiate experience and negotiate urban conflict. The understanding of space as a setting helps to understand the dramaturgy of each scene. To understand how spaces discursively produce power relations and how people make use of space in the efforts to disrupt power relations, I analyze spatial practices via Lefebvre's distinction between perceived, conceived, and lived spaces. In the lived space, bottom-up tactical practices produce a parochial realm that engages stakeholders other than the state in the negotiation of conflict. Strategic political repertoires respond to these challenge to re-establish control over public space. Detailed analysis of spatial practices thus provides a way to analyze action and reaction that include spatial actions and language. A spatial approach attunes us to the contentious character of performances and to the relationship between informal repertoires of citizenship and the formal strategic performances of authorities.

Unraveling the opportunity of conflict

The SSN-framework that I have sketched provides a way to zoom into critical moments and analyze the performances – the actions and reactions – of case actors. The framework unravels how case actors express their counter narrative through social and spatial practices in an effort to disrupt the sequence of events and redefine relationships. But what does it mean when such disruption takes place? What opportunity does it open to develop new interpretations of the problem at hand, adopt new meaning, and new narratives? Cobb argued that the critical in critical moments 'refers to both the process outcomes and the relational trajectories, as well as the transformation of identity and the struggle for legitimacy' (Cobb 2006: 149). Thus actions in critical moments can alter relationships, break conventional meanings of places and events, and reframe earlier positioning, historical narratives, and meaning making. Critical moments create a potential to renegotiate relationships, positioning, and new conflict narratives. Critical moments provide an opportunity because actions (temporarily) disrupt the dominant power structure and open up space of renegotiation. I call this 'liminal opportunity'.

Social-Spatial Narrative Framework for analysing the process and opportunity of Urban Conflict
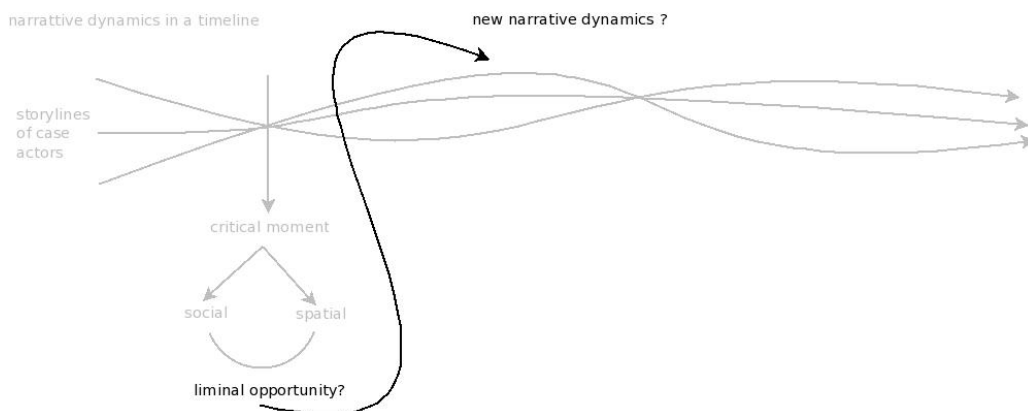
(Figure 5)

In figure 5 we see how the social and spatial analysis of critical moments leads to an insights into liminality. Liminality is a concept developed by anthropology scholars who define the liminal moment as 'betwixt and between the positions assigned and arrayed by law, custom, convention, and ceremonial' (Turner 1969: 95)[7]. Liminality

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[7] Victor Turner uses the work of van Gennep ([1960] 1977) who analyzes 'rites of passage' that individuals go through in becoming a member of a group – adulthood, Christian, etc. A rite of passage consists of three

occurs between two relative stable states, it is the moment of change, the moment where nothing is stable and meaning can get renegotiated. Episodes of conflict in itself are characterized by liminality because they disrupt a relatively stable state[8]. Within the process of conflict, however, we can also recognize liminal moments. The liminal moments that occur throughout the process of conflict are the focus in my analysis of critical moments.

Liminal moments are characterized by uncertainty and ambiguity (Turner [1987] 1992: 103). They resemble what Hajer has described as 'institutional void' where rules and regulations are unable to make sense of or deal with the problem at hand (Hajer 2003). Turner called liminality a social drama and argues that it is often the time and space in which societies deepest values emerge and transform (Turner [1987] 1992). Liminality is not limited to analyzing the transformation of whole societies. It can also help us grasp change in communities of local policy practitioners, welfare professional, and citizens who are stakeholders in an episode of urban conflict. The liminal opportunity develop in the moment of interaction when the actions of stakeholders disrupt power relations, destabilize positioning, reveal a counter narrative, open the possibility to renegotiate the appropriate use of public spaces. The social-spatial narrative is a framework to analyze the process of action and reaction among case actors in episodes of conflict and unravel the liminal opportunities that critical moments can create.

Conclusions

I have argued for a narrative approach to analyze conflict that grasps the distinct experiences of case actors. I approach conflicts as idiographic events that develop through a sequence of action and reaction. The analysis of critical moments highlights the unfolding process, rather than outcomes or ends. In this sense the SSN-framework provides a way to structure analysis of sequences of action and reaction in order to

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stages – one in which a person is separated from society (rite of separation), a liminal stage in which one finds himself no longer belonging to the stable state before and not yet to the state after the rite. Within the liminal, a person is both weak (because he is outside a given group or society) and strong (since he is in sacred realm with respect to the group's members) (Van Gennep [1960] 1977: 26)

[8] Some have used the term liminality to speak about liminal spaces. Turner argues that liminality in public places creates public liminality that is governed by public subjunctivity (Turner [1987] 1992: 102). 'They are liminal, in the sense that they are suspensions of quotidian reality, occupying privileged spaces where people are allowed to think about how they think, about the terms in which they conduct their thinking, or to feel about how they feel in daily life' (ibid:102). In a social-spatial narrative it is evident that liminality can be understood both socially and spatially.

understand the contested quality of the public sphere.

Social-Spatial Narrative Framework for analysing the process and opportunity of Urban Conflict

narrattive dynamics in a timeline   new narrative dynamics ?   new narrative dynamics ?

storylines
of case
actors

critical moment   critical moment

social   spatial   social   spatial

liminal opportunity?   liminal opportunity?   etc.
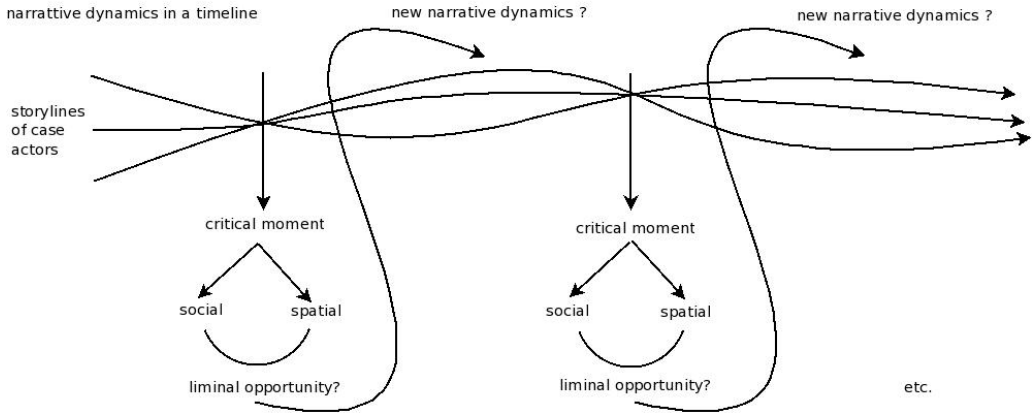
(Figure 6)

In figure 6 we see a SSN representation of the storylines of case actors. Power-relations take shape in the interaction between dominant and counter stories. Simple narratives (thin characters, time, causality, and values) are more easily shared in the public sphere. They have higher tellability and more people will identify with them. They define problems clearly and provide logical solutions. To understand whether and how conflict can be treated as an opportunity for urban democracy, we need a way to analyze the moments people disagree with these dominant stories and contest the positions they impose. The social-spatial narrative framework provides a way to analyze these moments of agency through the way people enact their stories in critical moments.

To unravel critical moments in the process of conflict, I added a performative element to narrative analysis. Thick descriptions of the stage, the setting, and the script provide a way to analyze the dramaturgy of interactions and how they express appropriate and inappropriate repertoires of negotiation. The process of conflict is full of moments in which case actors disagree with the state of affairs. In these critical moments, tensions bubble over and contradictory stories surface. The counter stories and performances become tangible and provide a lens for analyzing the process of conflict. I have argued that these moments provide opportunities by creating a sense of liminality in which earlier events, meaning, and relationships can get renegotiated. The notion of critical

moments is the key to analyze if, when, and how conflicts provide opportunities for negotiation in democratic governance.

In order to include the broad repertoire of citizenship that we can observe in cases of urban conflict, I analyze interaction in critical moments from both a social and a spatial perspective. My approach seeks to broaden our appreciation of the repertoire through which case actors negotiate conflict and include actions that are informal, intuitive, and tactical. I analyze the discursive effect of these performances on events, meaning, and relationships. I look at the way parties position and reposition themselves in linguistic and spatial practices. This provides a way to see the overlapping tactics through which case actors negotiate critical moments, and, potentially, disrupt the dominant plots and the meaning of scenes. These social and spatial performances are efforts to voice dominant and counter narratives in the public sphere. Detailed analysis of action and reaction allows us to rethink how urban conflicts develop the opportunity to (re) negotiate citizenship through interaction at the street-level.

This is not to say, however, that the liminal opportunities critical moments create are always used or even perceived. The opportunity for negotiation largely depends on the case actors' ability to read discursive performances as forms of citizenship. Governments have a range of strategies – social and spatial – to maintain the established order and existing narrative dynamics. Reasserting a dominant narrative can diminish the liminal opportunity that counter plots seek to open and so re-establish the structure of power relations. In this sense, counter narratives can be excluded from the public sphere spatially, by prohibiting protest, and socially, by ignoring counter plots and contentious performances. Therefore, the analysis of a liminal opportunity must be fully grounded in the empirical data of each case study. The SSN-framework developed out of the contingent, idiographic ways in which each case developed. In the next chapter I will describe how I gathered the empirical data and how I validated my analysis of critical moments in a reciprocal relationship with case actors.

Chapter 3
Ethnographic case study research as a practice of 'learning in action'

As I politely tried to shake Tall Harry's hand he grabbed my shoulders, shook them and said, 'I am glad you are here, finally someone who listens to us!' A firm punch on the back commenced my focus group interview in the community center. We set around a table in the middle of a separate room and they poured me coffee. As I shared the pie I brought over little paper plates, I asked them if I could tape the discussion. They gave consent. Then I started to explain my research, 'I am interested in the way people deal with conflicts in urban neighborhoods', I said. 'Conflict?!',they responded, 'We do not have any conflicts here!' (extract of fieldnotes, May 2009)

Introduction

This short extract of my field notes reveals much about the interdependent relationship between a researcher and the people in the field. My statement about conflict had immediate repercussions. First of all for the people who were confronted with an outside opinion about their state of affairs. Second for the relationship between the people I intended to learn from and me as a researcher. I choose the words 'intended to learn from' carefully as I truly believe that doing research is an interdependent endeavor. It is not merely about 'getting data', but about 'learning from strangers' (Weiss 1994). As I framed my research and thereby their everyday lives as 'conflict', I discursively intervened in the field. The interaction highlights the need for conscious responsibility about the way I embedded myself into the neighborhood. The methodological approach I describe in this chapter is a result of these considerations. It also confronted me with a problem. The purpose of my research is twofold: I want to develop a theory to analyze informal contentious performances in urban conflict, but I also seek to improve the capacity of practice to deal with urban conflict. If people do not see themselves as being

in conflict, why should I offer them capacities for dealing with conflict? I had to find a way of working that would allow me to emerge into their subjective experience so that the knowledge I develop is context-dependent and sensitive to the varying processes case actors describe.

To emerge myself into these subjective experiences I used a methodology that is emic and bottom-up in nature: ethnography. Ethnography requires a set of practices on which I will reflect in this chapter. But as I was trying to bridge the gap between theory and practice I added an extra practice to my fieldwork, I organized reflection sessions. These reflection sessions functioned as a validation of my findings and allowed me to deal with ethical questions that require research to be in consent with the people in the field. But more importantly, they offered a moment to reflect on the implications for practice. These interactive workshops allowed me to engage case actors in the production of knowledge and the development of practices in the neighborhood. The combination of ethnography and reflection sessions helped me to approach the field, as a practice of 'learning in action' in which there is a reciprocal relationship between the people I encountered and myself.

To foster that relationship I developed a specific practice of ethnographic case study research. One can generally distinct three steps: 1) I started out from the contradicting storylines of case actors via 'narrative interviews', 2) I participated in everyday routines and contradicting productions of space via participatory and spatial methods, 3) I engaged people from the field in my analysis by organizing reflection sessions that functioned as validity checks but also as a bridge between theory and practice.

Appendix 1 provides an overview of the research I conducted in three ethnographic case studies. In Amsterdam I reconstructed a situation of crisis, in The Hague I emerged myself in a long lasting controversy, and in Utrecht I observed the process of 'latent conflict'. I conducted 61 'narrative interviews' with residents, welfare practitioners, police officers, policy makers, and politicians. The 28 months of participant observations in community centers, at squares, on benches, or during neighborhood festivities allowed me to grasp everyday life. Through go-along days I developed understanding of the ways residents, welfare professionals, police officers, and policy practitioners dealt with conflict in their daily routines. 34 'mental maps' and 'walking whilst talking'

sessions provided a lens into experiences of space and place. And finally I validated my findings through 5 reflection sessions with case actors.

In the remainder of this chapter I will do three things. First, I will reflect on my approach to Grounded Theory. Second, I will go deeper into the ethnographic methodologies: how and why I redeveloped the method of interviewing into 'narrative interviews', how I executed participant observations, and how I grasped the meaning of spaces and places via 'spatial methods'. Third, I will explain the reflection sessions that seek to bridge the gap between theory and practice.

Bridging the gap between theory and practice: grounded theory

The fields of conflict and urban studies are considered interdisciplinary, in loose terms this means that its members come together around a problem – conflict or the city – instead of a field. My study is gathered around a process. The Social-Spatial Narrative framework helps to describe and analyze that process. The framework combines theories from anthropology and public policy but also from narrative studies, geography, planning, and linguistic theories. These theories are not randomly used but developed through an approach of grounded theory. I use theory that allows me to make sense out of empirical details. Glaser and Strauss (1967) originally developed a grounded theory as 'a methodology that initially devoted itself to the task of developing a method that would make it possible to generate theory from the data' (ibid: 541). The social-spatial narrative framework is grounded in the empirical details that I collected about episodes of conflict.

Such approach draws on pragmatist philosophers as John Dewey and George Herbert Mead who proposed that science is not build on an 'a priori logic' nor on 'pre-set categories'. Each social situation should be interpreted in its own terms. For a pragmatist there is no such thing as 'universalism', it is only an agreement between a large number of practice communities and cultures (ibid: 88). This approach to theory and practice allows for looking into the diverse ways in which people construct meaning in urban conflict and how these constructions produce their practice of negotiation. Case actors' tacit productions of meaning and practice were the basis for developing my social-spatial narrative framework that serves as a theory to analyze how, where, and when conflict can generate opportunity and how case actors are included in or excluded from

the process of democratic governance.

There are four reasons why the use of grounded theory is especially relevant for the research of urban conflict. Firstly, it allows for interpreting of empirical data embedded in their local context. There is a reciprocal relationship between data and theory – the data led me to prior theory that would help me make sense of the data and analyze empirical findings. Secondly, that reciprocal relationship is not only between theory and data, but also between theory and practice. A pragmatist approach to conflict and governance demands theory to be grounded in practice. My approach to learning from practice draws on the work of Donald Schön who argued that practice has traditionally been separated from the production of knowledge in science;

> … the hierarchical model of professional knowledge, research is institutionally separate from practice, connected to it by carefully defined relationships of exchange. Researchers are supposed to provide the basic and applied science from which to derive techniques for diagnosing and solving the problem of practice. Practitioners are supposed to furnish researchers with problems for study and with tests of the utility of research results. The researcher's role is distinct from, and usually considered superior to, the role of the practitioner (Schön 1983: 26).

In 'the reflective practitioner' (Schön 1983) he calls for a methodology of knowledge production that allows researchers to learn from practice and vice versa. My research methods reflect this call to bridge the gap between theory and practice. Recently, landscape researchers have called such a take on research 'transdisciplinary', a way to integrate science and practice (Tress, Tress, and Fry 2006). They argued that interdisciplinary science involves different scientific disciplines to collaborate on a common problem, but that it leaves out the people in the practice field and other participants. On the other hand there is participatory science that involves non-academic participants such as stakeholders and practitioners and also scientists, but these projects do usually not have a research or academic purpose (ibid: 15). They define 'transdisciplinary studies as projects that both integrate academic researchers from different unrelated disciplines and non-academic participants, such as land managers and the public, to research a common goal and create new knowledge and

theory. Transdisciplinarity combines interdisciplinarity with a participatory approach' (ibid: 17). Thus a transdisciplinary approach speaks to the idea of 'learning from the people in the field' and fosters a reciprocal relationship between theory and practice. It includes the people who are the 'knowers-in-action' – the people in the field – and has both a practice and an academic purpose. Such an approach has a high integration of participants as well as a high integration of results in practice and is useful for my pursuit to engage case actors in a process of sense making and reflection on conflict. At the end of this chapter I will return to my take on reflection that draws on Schön's reflective practitioners and seeks to engage case actors in 'learning-in-action' to validate my findings for both theory and practice purposes.

The third reason for developing a grounded theory is because in my study I mediate between structure and agency. In grounded theory, structure and agency are on the same level, '"individual voice" is moreover only an aspect of human agency; another aspect is the 'social constructedness of human agency' (Sewell in Bryant & Charmaz [2007] 2010: 557). Grounded theory allows for a situational analysis that includes both the social structure of situations and the agency of people to act within that space (Clarke 2005). I am interested in the way people develop acts of agency as they enact informal contentious actions within a structure of power relations. These stories thus take place on the intersection between agency and structure. I seek to show how some voices tend to be ignored and others tend to become dominant in situations of conflict. The social-spatial narrative framework is a grounded theory that makes looking into the opportunity for agency possible within the bounded structure of power relations.

Thus grounded theory allows me to embed knowledge in the subjective experience of case actors, it integrates theory and practice, and mediates between structure and agency. In order to engage both researchers and practitioners in the analysis of conflict I developed a case study approach to learning-in-action.

Ethnographic case study research

'Good social science is problem driven and not methodology driven in the sense that it employs those methods that for a given problematic, best help answer the research questions at hand' (Flyvbjerg 2006: 242). The problem in my research is to understand how communities and governments can make use of conflict situations as

an opportunity for democracy. This problem oriented policy analysis (Lesswell and Lerner 1951) demands my research to analyze the relationship between governance and informal contentious acts of citizenship, and to develop a practice oriented approach to build capacity for managing conflict constructively, and include diverse voices in the public sphere. Ethnographic case studies allow me to bring these two purposes together because case study research blurs the boundaries between theory and practices as it allows researchers to learn from practice, unravel social situations bounded by space and time, and thereby develop context specific knowledge that is useful for both theory and practice.

Bent Flyvbjerg argued that case studies create a knowledge that is necessary to gain a nuanced view of human behavior (2006). He dismisses the five misunderstandings of case studies, which assume that they are 1) too particular and context dependent, 2) one cannot generalize on the basis of an individual case, 3) cases are only useful for hypothesis testing, 4) they have a tendency to confirm researchers preconceived notions, and 5) one cannot develop general propositions and theories on the basis of case studies (ibid: 221) and argues that case studies provide context-dependent knowledge and experience that are at the very heart of expert activity. 'Such knowledge and expertise also lie at the center of the case study as a research and teaching method or to put it more generally still, as a method of learning' (ibid: 222). Thus case studies offer an opportunity to learn from the practices of actors dealing with conflict and develop context-dependent knowledge that is grounded in street-level experiences so that it can help both scholars and practitioners to make sense of the opportunities of conflict episodes. My aim was always to approach the case actors of each case study as the experts of conflict. Let me first explain why ethnography is the appropriate methodology for such a problem and then how I executed ethnographic case study research in my study of urban conflict.

Why ethnography?
Ethnography is a method that originates in anthropology where it was used to understand to 'think and feel like the natives' (Geertz 1974: 27). Founding fathers and mothers of anthropology like Malinowsky ([1922] 1978), Evans-Pritchard (1940), Mead (1973), and Geertz (1973, 1974, 2005) used ethnographic fieldwork to write monographs about the far away cultures they tried to grasp. My study on urban conflicts does not take place in exotic destinations, but the way these scholars submerge in unknown cultures serves

as an example for me to immerse myself as a stranger in the lives, experiences, and daily routines of different people in Dutch cities. I draw on the urban ethnographic approach of The Chicago School that used to treat the city as a laboratory for understanding the dynamics in social behavior (Park and Burgess 1925). The methods used at the Chicago School challenged researchers to go out into the city to see what happened. They used interviews and participant observations to understand 'deviant subcultures' (Anderson's Hobo's 1923) but also different urban professionals such as policemen (Westley 1951) or public school teachers (Becker 1951). Also in narrative research, ethnography is understood as the main approach (Gubrium and Holstein 2009). Ethnography as my main method allows me to gather a set of empirical details that are embedded in the experiences of case actors and reveals social and spatial stories and performances of people in episodes of conflict.

Ethnography, like Geertz argued, is a way to gain an Experience Near concept of the social world around us (Geertz 1974: 28). Sometimes this is called the 'emic' perspective. Emic is a common term in anthropological fieldwork that opposes an etic perspective that means 'from the outside in'. Emic has been described as 'the natives point of view' (Eriksen [1995] 2001: 36), but it refers to the idea that the researcher seeks to take a look from the inside out. The researcher uses the terminologies people in the field use to describe the self and others, and theorizes from the grassroots up. The emic perspective is important for doing ethnography because it entails an appreciation for the subjective experiences of the people I study. For that same reason it is even more important for the study of conflict, because it enables to include contesting perspectives on the conflict at hand and allows the researcher to approach each story as a valuable insight into the negotiation of conflict.

On the other hand it is important for ethnographers to be able to work with Experience Distant concepts as well (Geertz 1973: 28). These are etic notions that are used to analyze and theorize the behavior of people. Geertz argues that both should be deployed 'to produce an interpretation of the way people live which is neither imprisoned within their mental horizons, an ethnography of witchcraft as written by a witch, nor systematically deaf to the distinctive tonalities of their existence, an ethnography of witchcraft as written by a geometer' (ibid: 29). Thus ethnographers have to be able to both submerge and analyze, the emic versus etic analogy helps to work on the verge of

these two perspectives. The use of ethnography thus allows for an interaction between the two. The experience near perspective on fieldwork allowed me to gather empirical data and understand these data embedded in their context. These empirical details became the basis for grounded theory that developed the framework of a social-spatial narrative. The social-spatial narrative is a means to describe the emic experiences of case actors, and at the same time, generates an etic analysis of the narrative dynamics and liminal opportunities in the process of conflict.

Atkinson and Hammersley provide four insights in the emic data collection of ethnography that can all be applied to the way I did my fieldwork. The first argues that ethnography as a method explores the nature of social phenomena, rather than to set out hypothesis about them (Atkinson and Hammersley 1994: 248). I was depending on my submergence in the field to understand how people dealt with conflict. I did not test a thesis that deductively told me that conflict was an opportunity, but I inductively tried to grasp how parties dealt with conflict and that data let me develop a grounded theory that reveals how and where conflict could become an opportunity for democratic governance. Secondly, ethnography has the tendency to use unstructured data that have not been coded at the point of data collection and do not have a closed set of analytic categories. The grounded theory approach that I took allowed me to use a variety of ethnographic methods to conduct fieldwork and it was on the basis of that wide variety of empirical data that I developed the social-spatial framework to analyze the data. Thirdly, ethnography investigates small numbers of case studies in detail – four years was enough to embed myself in three episodes of urban conflict and build relationships with all the case actors so that I could provide detailed storylines of their perspectives and experiences. Finally, ethnography analyzes the meaning and function of human action – this is one of the reasons why I argue for a performative approach to narrative, because my ethnographic approach moved beyond interviews and therefore includes the performances of residents, policy-practitioners, and welfare professionals in Critical Moments.

My aim to interpret meaning through subjective experiences grounds in the Interpretive Turn (Mead [1934] 2009; Geertz 1973; Blumer 1986) in which scholars started to believe that people construct identities through the stories they tell (Bruner 1990, 2004; Brubaker and Cooper 2000; Eriksen 2001; Sen 2006), interactions between case

actors shape everyday realities (Ben Habib 1992), as well as political realities (Yanow 1996, 2007; Hajer and Wagenaar 2003). Since the interpretive turn, policy analysts also show greater interests in the use of ethnography to interpret government, planning processes, or decision making (Schatz 2009; Bayard de Volo and Schwartz 2004; and Schwartz-Shea 2006; Wedeen 2010). These authors have made the claim that 'if you want to understand why someone behaves the way they do, you need to understand the way they see the world, what they imagine they're doing, what their intentions are' (Glenn in Wedeen 2010: 259). An ethnographic approach helps the political analyst to grasp the experience of people in a social process and allows for a description of the process instead of the outcome. As my aim is to analyze the process of conflict, political ethnography allows me to grasp the way case actors see the world and analyze their practices and interactions in order to reconstruct the process of urban conflict in both a political and an everyday context. Although an ethnographic approach seems the most appropriate method to solve the problem of my study, ethnography remained a small niche in social sciences (van Maanen [1988] 2011: 20) and specifically in political science[1].

Michael Burawoy (1998) reflected on the most important reasons for political analysts to be skeptical of ethnographic methods. He argued that political scientists are often looking for positivist theories that are representative, reliable, and replicable (Burawoy 1998: 10). But if we seek to understand how processes unfold as case actors develop social and political realities and appropriate behavior, we need to shift our focus from outcome-oriented premises and rethink how we can make sense of qualitative detailed empirical data. Such grounded analysis of empirical and qualitative data shifts the focus onto replicability and representativeness and toward a representative description of complex social realities within the words case actors use to produce that reality. We need to move away from theories and look at what practitioners do (Geertz 1973: 5), because these practices reveal a process of development and meaning making. 'An interpretive science suggests that the distinction, relative in any case, that appears in the experimental or observational sciences between '"description" and "explanation" appears here as one …' (Geertz 1973: 27). Thus to make sense of a process in a fashion that remains close to the stakeholders, I observe, describe, and explain practices that formulate distinct processes of urban conflict.

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[1] See Lisa Wedeen (2010) for an interesting discussion on the use of ethnography for political scientists.

An ethnographic research method, however, asks for reflection on the execution of that research. A theory that could be of help in that pursuit is Burawoy's (1998) 'extended case method'. Burawoy argues that the positivist epistemology insulates subject from object – participants in the field from observers or interviewer – whereas reflexive science seeks to elevate a dialogue between them and assumes an intersubjectivity (Burawoy 1998: 14). He proposes that one could think of reflexive science as an intervention into the field that demands the researcher to improvise and execute research as a process. After the period of fieldwork as a process the researcher structures his data – my social-spatial narrative framework – and restructures by reflecting on the integration between theory and findings. I did the latter with a special attention to practice by reflection with practitioners in the field. But reflexive science also requires a reflection on fieldwork, which I provide in Appendix II.

In sum, I use ethnography to engage into the divergent and subjective experiences of case actors in urban conflict. The empirical details seek to reflect emic perspectives that are analyzed by etic reflections and grounded theories. I use interpretive methods to analyze political processes that produce context-dependent knowledge in a case study fashion. Ethnographic data enables me to shift from outcome-oriented data towards an analysis of process. The aim to analyze a social process delineates the quest for 'representation' as its purpose is to reveal the dynamics of a local process, not to make general statements about conflict. Ethnographic case studies allow me to produce problem driven knowledge in an interdependent process of learning-in-action with case actors. In order to validate my findings I reflect on my fieldwork in appendix 1. In the remainder of this chapter I explain how I tried to bridge theory and practice by sustaining a dialogue about my findings with people in the field.

How ethnography?

The considerations I presented so far function as a background to understand my epistemology for doing ethnographic research. In the remainder of this chapter I will reflect on how I practically executed ethnographic methods, and finally will elaborate on how I engaged case actors into reflection on research findings.

Case selection

The case studies of urban conflict that I chose to investigate were selected in interaction with people in the field. As my goal was to add knowledge to the process of governance,

I consulted government practitioners to appoint cases that challenged their practice[2]. These policy practitioners proposed cases that were anchored in their experiences and informed their intuitions that something was going on. In preliminary meetings I asked them to reflect on specific case studies they were dealing with in their current practice. I wanted cases that could function as 'paradigmatic case studies' which are 'cases that highlight more general characteristics of the society – or in my case of the urban conflict – in question (ibid: 232). Flyvbjerg refers to an interview with Hubert Dryfus who argued that the choice of which case study is paradigmatic is an intuitive process 'some you recognize because they shine' (Dryfus in Flyvbjerg 2006: 232). In the choice of case studies I used the tacit knowledge and practical experiences of local practitioners to develop this set of criteria to make a decision. But after initial investigation of several possible cases in each city I made a decision based on my intuition that these cases were 'shining' cases of crisis, controversy, and latent conflict. I applied the following conditions to select cases: 1) the case should be current, 2) the primary setting for action should be a neighborhood or neighborhood cluster, 3) the conflict should cut across boundaries between residents, policy makers, and welfare professionals, 4) the conflict should be complex in the sense that the experience raises, and mixes features of identity and processes of marginalization.

In Amsterdam the council chairman of the Eastern borough suggested the case of 'the bag snatcher'. He was triggered by the media responses of a local tragedy in his neighborhood and wanted to understand how to keep escalations bounded to the local context in the future. I chose to unravel the case because it was an urgent moment of crisis that included a complex set of contextual issues like the earlier crisis around the death of the cineaste Theo van Gogh, polarized public debates about the role of the Moroccan community in the Netherlands, and intuitive responses of protest by the Moroccan community. These ingredients allowed for rethinking of the practice of dealing with crisis in a context that crosscuts local and national levels of politics. In The Hague, a local policy-maker who worked at the city level was responsible for security in the newly built neighborhood Ypenburg. She suggested the case because it was now part of an 'integrated approach' to deal with escalated controversies. The case enabled

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[2] As I undertook my research in the context of the research program "Neighborhoods in tension and conflict" which was in consortium with the city governments of Amsterdam, The Hague, Rotterdam, and Utrecht and the Nicis institute, it was relatively easy to make appointments with civil servants and politicians in these cities.

me to inquire into the relationship between residents, welfare practitioner, and the local administration in a neighborhood where people with different lifestyles tried to build a community. During the process of ethnography I realized that the case does not only offer insights into controversy, but also into an approach on dealing with controversy. Therefore I extended the fieldwork in this case to also provide an ethnographic analysis of the pursuit of negotiation – see chapter 7.

The case of Zwanenvecht Square in Utrecht came out of collaboration with Leeke Reinders[3] of Delft University with whom I visited several neighborhoods before choosing the neighborhood of Zwanenvecht Square. The former neighborhood director of NoordWest was supportive of the decision to study Zwanenvecht Square because he faced problems regarding safety and youth nuisance, and wished to develop more citizen participation. The neighborhood around the square was very diverse in terms of residents as well as different uses of public space. People seemed to live in a quiet and green environment but when one hung out on the streets and in parks, neighbors were eager to share their complaints about the local welfare organizations. Latent tensions became visible from the very beginning of my fieldwork. One day we were doing initial observations at the square and a woman came out of her house demanding an explanation for our presence. She was afraid we were either from a television channel and would report negatively on the neighborhood as had happened in the past, or working for the local housing association to inspect whether people were not abusing or littering the apartment buildings. After an informal talk on the square the woman became one of my prime gatekeepers into the neighborhood. Thus initial investigations allowed me to decide for case studies in collaboration with local policy practitioners. The visits to the neighborhood also laid the groundwork for further ethnographic fieldwork that always started by interviewing case actors.

Narrative interview

The first research method I will discuss is interviewing. Interview was a central method in my fieldwork because it allowed me to elicit the narratives of case actors. The aim to elicit 'stories' and not 'answers' challenged me to develop a particular type of interview:

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[3] I would like to thank Leeke Reinders for our co-operation and our many inspiring discussions on the topic of space and place in anthropology. I am grateful for his input in the preparations for the research in Utrecht. Unfortunately we were not able to do much of our fieldwork together.

the Narrative Interview. A narrative interview is similar to a 'semi-structured' or a 'non-structured' interview because it is not based on a set of pre-developed questions but different because it asks the interviewee to share their subjective story of experience in a chronological sequence of events. As we have seen, a narrative is a story with a beginning, middle, and an end that gets emplotted through the sequence, values, and meaning the narrator applies to events. Asking for a story gives the interviewee space to tell the story in an idiographic fashion with a special attention for critical moments. To allow for a story of subjective experiences, I approached the interviews as a partnership between the researcher and the respondents (Weiss 1994: 65). The interviewer helps the narrator to make events tangible by describing actions, spaces, and other people who were present. The starting question in a narrative interview is important because it needs to be specific enough to tell the story and open enough for the interviewee to starts off with the event of their choosing. I usually started with the simple question, 'tell me your story of the events. When did you first get involved in the case?'. The interviewee has space to provide the order of critical moments, give meaning to other case actors, earlier events, or other places within the subjective story of experience. To help interviewees make the story tangible I would ask questions like 'what did you do?', 'how did they respond?', 'what did you see around you?' and circumvented questions that look for opinions like 'why did you do that?' or 'what do you think about that?'. That way the narrative interview seeks to elicit a story in which events, rhetoric, discourses, and symbols are part of the storyline of case actors and allow for interpretations directly embedded in the experiences of the narrator.

To allow interviewees to express emotional and invested experiences in a story, the prime challenge of a researcher is to build a relationship of trust with the people in the field. Mishler argues that in conventional interviews there is an asymmetry of power between the interviewer and the interviewee (Mishler 1986: 117). Especially in episodes of conflict, where people usually experience distrust among others, it was important to build an equal and caring relationship with people so that they trusted me to not abuse or misinterpret their stories. In order to create a safe space where people could speak freely about their experiences, I tried to disrupt the asymmetry between the interviewees and me. I tried to develop an interview practice that empowered the respondent to voice their story and helped them develop it into a narrative that made tacit practices, emotions, and experiences tangible. This interview practice draws on the insight that research

should be an empowering relationship between the people in the field and the researcher (Hogan in Connelly and Clandinin 1990: 4). Empowering relationships get established over time and through an interactive process of meaning making. My fieldwork is marked by my own capacity to build trust and establish relationships with people who felt ignored and marginalizes throughout the period of conflict, but also with people in power who might be afraid to loose their position. Hogan highlights three important insights in empowering research relationship; 'equality between participants, the caring situation, and the feeling of connectedness' (Hogan in Connelly and Clandinin 1990: 4). I carefully developed relationships with case actors by submerging myself into their distinct processes of grief and struggle. I purposefully positioned the interviewee as the expert, and acknowledged grievances in the process of doing research.

To help the interviewee arrange events in a chronological order, I developed the interview practice of drawing a timeline. As respondents would start telling their story I would draw a time-line that featured critical events in the story that was told. This timeline functioned as a 'marker', a passing reference of the interviewee to an important event or feeling (Weiss 1994: 77). Markers offer the researcher a reminder to pick up or ask the interviewee to elaborate on specific events or emotions. The timeline allowed me to not disrupt the narration during the interview, but to return to certain events at the very end of the interview to elaborate on specific moments and reflect on their meaning. Furthermore, as my aim was to understand the experience of critical moments I needed to be able to ask the interviewee to reflect on experiences in those moments. Part of my role was to bring the conversation back into an 'active tense', this is important to prevent respondents from making general claims and stay at the level of experience and action. Moving over the timeline together with the interviewee offered an opportunity to delve into the experience of moments in an active way. Asking the interviewee to imagine returning to that particular moment allowed the respondent to describe the situation in active terms. The timeline also enabled me to compare timelines during the interview. Often the storyline of one interviewee did not mention moments that were critical in stories of other case actors. On a separate page I kept the timeline with critical moments that were discussed during other interviews. Also after the interview the timeline was useful as we could look back at the timeline together and see if it was complete, valid, and captured what the interviewee considered critical moments. After the fieldwork period, a comparison of different timelines allowed me to analyze

how different moments were of different importance to case actors, which was a first analysis of critical moments.

A narrative interview challenges researchers to allow for silences. I had to resist the urge to fill in silences and comfort the situation, as asking questions could disrupt the story, change the sequence of events, and ascribe topics that do not come from the interviewee but from the researcher. Listening, however, does not imply a passive role for the researcher. My job was to help case actors reconstruct their case history in a narrative of experience. Such an approach demands reflection on the interdependent relationship between researchers and people in the field. Scholars of narrative analysis have argued that interviews are in itself a positioning speech act (Bamberg 2004; Georgakopoulou 2006; Helsig 2010). The way people 'talk' is the very element we should study when analyzing narratives. Because 'in and through talk, speakers establish (i) what the talk is about (aboutness/content), and simultaneously (ii) the particular social interaction in the form of particular social relationships' (Bamberg 2006: 144). If the way people talk allows for narrative analyzes, the way people are silent also provides insights into the experience of case actors. Events that were critical to case actors can get ignored in the story of other case actors. A narrative interview allows for the interviewee to be the agent of what constitutes his or her story. Sometimes I would ask about events that the interviewee did not touch upon at the end of the narrative interview. I would, however, not add them to the timeline because the fact that some events are more or less critical to actors – or even so unimportant that they were not mentioned – is in itself important data.

Besides formal interviews that aimed to elicit storylines of individual case actors, my narrative approach aimed at including informal or small stories of experience. In the previous chapter I argued that a study of conflict should include stories with both high and low tellability. In the context of an interview, tellability gets negotiated between the teller and the listener in a particular context. Thus the interviewer and the interviewee construct the degree of tellability in their interaction. Ochs and Capps argue that when researchers have an orientation towards a story with a high degree of telling (detached and reflective like in an interview) they will be less attentive to the small stories with low tellability that are embedded in the social context (stories that people share in the public sphere) (Ochs and Capps in Norrick 2005: 326). 'Less polished, less coherent narratives

that pervade ordinary social encounters are a hallmark of the human condition' (Ochs and Capps 2001: 57). To understand the opportunity for negotiated democracy I elicited big stories that were told in hindsight in an interview setting that was separated from the context and demanded a form of reflection of the interviewee, but also small stories that people told intuitively in street-level interactions. If my argument is that policy-practitioners must broaden their repertoire to understand improvised forms of political action, the same must count for the inclusion of small stories in my research. Thus small, improvised, and intuitively told stories must be included in the narrative strands of parties so that case actors have equal opportunity to be engaged and acknowledged in the coproduction of a social-spatial narrative. These informal conversations were additions to the official interviews as they enabled me to connect with people in the field and gave many insights into the relationships between storylines of different parties.

I sampled case actors through their participation in the process of conflict. In each case I did narrative interviews with a number of residents of varying backgrounds, street-level professionals, and policy practitioners of the local government. Through my presence in the neighborhood I built a network, and a 'snowball approach' allowed me to reach stakeholders outside of my network. Each interviewee gave me informed consent to record, transcribe, and quote their story. I transcribed all my interviews[4]. And I kept close relationships with each respondent as I sent them the transcript to offer them the opportunity to add additional information or make changes to the text. After each interview I made extensive notes in my diary that elaborated on my own experiences during the meeting and the way the interaction unfolded. My field notes describe features such as the setting of the interview, specific gestures that respondents used, body language, and other less tangible details that helped me recapture the interviews and interactions during my analysis. Together with the transcribed text of the interview, my diary, and the field notes I captured contesting stories of case actors that I brought together with the other data in a social-spatial narrative.

Participant observations
Besides the stories of stakeholders, my research focuses on performances. Of course people could recount their performances in their stories. But in order to unravel how people develop their relationships and position themselves through interactions, I used

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[4] Here I have to thank Mireille Klaverweide who was an amazing help in transcribing many of my interviews.

participant observation to describe performances of people in social situations (Garbett 1970). In order to observe interactions, experience practices, and view the same problem from multiple perspectives I conducted 'participant observation'. Participant observations – being at the place of action and taking part in the routines and practices of the people I studied – is central to developing an emic perspective (Atkinson and Hammersley 1994). Being *present* in the neighborhood is thus a prerequisite for ethnography. That presence, however, poses a problem for the researcher: there is a double nature to the ethnographic activity. On the one hand the ethnographer must be a participant in the everyday experience, and on the other hand the ethnographer must be an observer, an outsider who can describe and account for what happens. Let me explain how I tried to deal with that double nature of doing participant observations.

The main question I have to ask myself is 'am I a participant observer or an observing participant'? (Atkinson and Hammersley 1994) The answer depends on the different social interactions I observed. In many meetings I was an observing participant – emphasizing the act of observing – I was present but not an active player in the interaction. For example in a moment in Utrecht where a local civil servant was in a clash with residents who complained about a future youth hang spot, I observed, but I did not play an active role in the negotiation. Later that day, however, I became a participant observer – emphasizing the participation – as I helped cleaning the square with all the neighbors after a full day summer party they organized themselves. Each situation demanded a different approach to the act of participant observation. Discussions and clashes were interesting social interactions that I wanted to observe without interfering. But in order to build a good relationship and understand the practices of people in my field, I had to participate in community activities. Establishing a trust relationship was the basis for the many invitations to observe informal gatherings with neighbors, but also in formal meetings with professionals from local institutions.

Practicing participant observation or observing participation is a way to observe and analyze Social Situations. Social situations are 'temporally and spatially bounded series of events abstracted by the observer from the on-going flow of social life' (Garbett 1970: 215). But if social interactions can be observed and described as data, how could I decide what the boundaries are of what I needed to describe? 'Which actual events that are external to the situation have to be taken into account in order to understand the

behavior of actors within them?' (ibid: 217). I dealt with that problem by distinguishing between two types of interaction that formed my unit of analysis. I looked at social situations with an individual focus or one could say an actor-oriented approach – how are individuals behaving and interacting with one another in a given time and place? What does this say about their relationship, identity, belief, story, position, intention, etc.? But also with an institutional focus, how do individuals who represent institutions interact with each other and how do their institutions constrain or enforce their behavior, what does this tell us about the institutions?

To analyze the things I observed and participated in, I took an interpretive approach. To interpret means to 'grasp the meaning of actions and interactions in terms of it's own poetics – its metaphors, tropes, and other forms of representation' (Atkinson and Hammersley 1994: 258). Clifford Geertz (1973) developed the notion of participant observation as 'thick descriptions';

> an interpretive science suggests that the distinction, relative in any case, that appears in the experimental or observational sciences between "description" and "explanation" appears here as one, even more relative, between "inscription" ("thick description") and "specification" ("diagnoses") – between setting down the meaning particular social actions have for the actors whose actions are, and stating, as explicitly as we can manage, what the knowledge thus attained demonstrated about the society in which it is found and, beyond that, about social life as such (Geertz 1973: 27).

I made thick descriptions of interactions that give insights into the way people experience conflict, the ways they act in critical moments, and how others responded to these performances. Like after doing interviews, I developed the habit of reflecting on subjectivities by making a distinction between different documents about my fieldwork (DeWalt and DeWalt 2011). I differentiated between fieldnotes (what did I see?), diaries (what were my personal thoughts, and reflections on myself as researcher in the field?), logbook (what did I do, date, time, place?), and methodological notes (which methods did I use and what methodological difficulties did I face?).

A particular form of participant observations that I used to submerge in practice is the Go-along (Kusenbach 2003). Go-along is similar to participant observation because the

researcher participates in an everyday event of a neighbor such as spending a night
at the neighborhood center, 'hang out' with youngsters, or go along on a workday of
a practitioner or policy-maker. Kusenbach (2003) argues that go-alongs are a more
systematic form of 'hanging-out' with informants that ethnographers usually use as
a key strategy (Kusenbach 2003: 463). On the other hand, go along is different from
participant observation because it is more limited and focused than hanging-out. It
requires the researcher to ask questions of why, how, and what is happening. 'What
makes going along unique is that ethnographers are able to observe the informants
spatial practices in situ while accessing their experiences and interpretations at the same
time' (ibid: 463). It may be clear that in this study it were not only the spatial practices
that I seek to observe in situ, but also social discursive performances that revealed
'positioning'.

I used participant observation – thick descriptions of interactions and go-along
in everyday practices – with all parties in conflict. In Amsterdam the participant
observations were less important for the reconstruction of the case as the incident of
crisis had happened four years before my actual research started. Although this social-
spatial narrative is merely based on narrative interviews in hindsight, I did 1 month
of participant observation in the neighborhood, the local council, and the mosque to
observe the relationship between parties at the street-level. I had numerous conversations
with neighbors in the street to understand their memories of the events and I carried
out a media analysis to reconstruct national tensions in that period. In Utrecht on the
other hand, the latent conflict was observable in the daily routines of practitioners and
residents in the neighborhood. Aside from the many interviews, the case is constructed
through participant observations I did in 2011 and 2012. I performed both participant
observations and observing participations in welfare work, social events, decision
making processes, and daily activities in the neighborhood, like a local 'summer party'
and a neighbor's 'dog-walking club'. These interactions provided insights into the role
of daily routines, professional culture, and social events.

The Hague was a special case of participant observations as I was present in the
neighborhood for over a year and a half and often returned after that period to see
how the community activities developed, even after the case study of controversy
ended. I entered the field when there was still an ongoing escalation in 2009 and left

in the summer of 2011 when things settled down. This long period of time gave me an opportunity to do participant observations in the neighborhood during controversy (chapter 5), as well as during a period of resolution (chapter 7). Throughout the fieldwork I participated in social events in and around the community center, hung out with young people on the street, observed welfare practitioners in the youth center, and did observing participation in the volunteer meetings. For the second part of the case study, on a resolution process, I did observing participation in weekly professional meetings where all local professionals would discuss their practice. I observed moments of decision making, I did go-along in the daily work of local police officers in the streets and at the office, and I closely followed the practitioner who was assigned to mediate the controversy between residents and local professionals. In Ypenburg I also carried out a media analysis of the things that happened during, before, and after my presence.

Spatial methods

The social-spatial narrative seeks to not only analyze social relations via interactions but assumes that people also seek to perform citizenship via spatial practices. To engage into the discursive meaning of spaces and places and get insights into the way people experience the streets, parks, squares, community centers, and other places in the neighborhood I used methods that were developed by anthropologists and geographers who have been concerned with space. I wanted to understand how people use places as a stage as well as a symbolic artefact in their performances of contention. I turned to these methods as I came to see that 1) divergent meanings of space and place, like experiences of fear and power, were part of the stories individuals told about conflict; 2) the everyday use of different spaces – like confiscating or avoiding a place – can be understood as discursive acts that demand a response of the government and can evoke critical moments. Two methods have been central to my inquiry into the meaning of space Mental Mapping, and Walking Whilst Talking.

Kevin Lynch (1960) was the first to develop the method of mental mapping. He argued that a city is imaginable through cognitive maps that people can construct in their heads. These maps provide an image of the city and reveal how people experience the physical environment into a simplified map that leaves things out or adds things. Leeke Reinders' study on 'reimagining nieuwland' (in press) proposes a constructionist approach to mental mapping that moves beyond the technical mapping of the physical environment and seeks to study the way places are interpreted, narrated, and represented (Reinders

in press: 9). During mental mapping sessions I asked people to draw a map of their neighborhood, and I asked them to narrate how they use the spaces in the map, what are your favorite places, what places do you circumvent, which streets do you often use, etc. I used the method of mental mapping mostly in the case study of Utrecht because in latent conflict, events are not materialized in a pattern of actions or sequence of events. There are no clear moments of disruption and escalation, but the mapping exercises and walking whilst talking sessions revealed the sites and experiences of tension. The spatial data sets reveal latent tensions because experiences of neighbors, policy-practitioners, and welfare workers become tangible in everyday spatial routines. As there was no story with a beginning, middle, and end about an episode of conflict, I asked people to draw a mental-map instead of a timeline. In these interviews, the mental-map functioned as a marker to understand the meaning different people apply to places and spaces in the neighborhood. Case actors would draw places that were important to them in terms of interaction with others in the neighborhood. Moroccan women would, for example, draw the places where they had lunch with other mothers. Elderly neighbors would draw the routines of walking their dog. These everyday practices had a significant meaning because they disturbed the practices of youngsters who would use these places to hang out. The maps of policy-practitioners revealed their technical knowledge of the neighborhood as their map showed places of high and low criminal rates. Thus the maps of different people revealed their personal experience through their use of places and how that is related to the use of space of other members of the community.

The second 'spatial' method I used was walking whilst talking interviews (Anderson 2004). This method is different from participant observations or go-along because the researcher does not participate in the everyday activities of the case actor. Instead, it is – like mental mapping – a spatial form of interviewing that allows for a co-construction of geographical and storied data. I used this method to interview professionals – welfare workers, police officers, community organizers – who had an immense amount of tacit knowledge about different people and events that took place at certain places. Already early in my research I experienced that the practice of these professionals took place at the street-level. An interview in a separate room felt unnatural and drawing a mental-map did only add to that awkwardness. I decided to ask them 'to take me for a walk and show me the places of their work'. The walk and talk interview allowed them to tell their stories embedded in their working environment and also added to my

understanding of places in the neighborhood. Anderson argued that the walk and talk interview could add to qualitative methods because it is a way to access the relationship between people, place, and time (Anderson 2004: 259). 'The knowledge produced is importantly different: atmospheres, emotions, reflections, and beliefs can be accessed as well as intellects, rationales, and ideologies' (ibid: 260). Walking whilst talking was especially useful to access the tacit knowledge of professionals – police officers knew the routes of youngsters to flee when they were captured doing illegal things and youth workers tacitly walked passed the places where youngsters hung out.

In sum, I used spatial methods like mental mapping and walking whilst talking to extract data about the symbolic use of space, the contradicting experiences of space, and the discursive production of places in the neighborhood. These spatial methods were particularly important to grasp the meaning of latent conflict in the case study in Utrecht. Nevertheless, I also used mapping in reflection sessions with stakeholders.

Focus groups

I used the methodology of a focus group in combination with other methods, sometimes as an interview method, sometimes as a mental mapping session, and I used it during the reflection sessions. In several moments during my fieldwork I experienced that some members of communities found the setting of a 'one on one interview' intimidating. Even if I had established a trust relationship, some case actors felt that an individual interview would not honor their story. As my approach to fieldwork is not methodologically driven, but problem oriented and in interdependency with case actors, I developed the pragmatic habit of being flexible so that the form of conversation would fit the circumstances and facilitated what was necessary to speak freely about experience. Focus group interviews have the advantage of observing participants engaging in interactions that are concentrated in attitudes and experiences that are of interest to the researcher (Morgan and Spanish 1984: 259). In a similar vein Agar and MacDonald argue that focus groups can add to different practices in ethnographic fieldwork because they reveal a conversation that could be the basis for conversational analysis or interpretations of utterances (1995). Likewise, my focus group sessions allowed me to grasp positioning between case actors.

Usually a focus group interview focuses on a topic that the researcher proposes. I asked parties as a group to narrate their story together. Like during the narrative interviews,

my role was to facilitate the conversation of a chronological story and keep the conversation in an 'active tense' so that people would remain at the level of personal experiences and stay close to descriptions of practice or other forms of behavior instead of making general statements. I noticed that since people interacted and responded to one another, they narrated the story as a group. Individual experiences were merged into a shared story and different perspectives on the same situation were weighed, included, or ignored. This experience gave me much insight into the storyline of a conflict party as a whole. In the case study in Utrecht I asked participants in the focus group session to draw a mental-map of their neighborhood with a focus on their favorite places, places where they interacted with other people, and places that they avoided[5]. The focus group session was centered on the individual presentations of the drawings, and a discussion about individual experiences. One such session was held with elderly neighbors who lived around the square, another one with Moroccan mothers who lived around the square. These sessions were received very positively as neighbors enjoyed listening and sharing their experiences with each other, which relates back to the notion of research as an intervention.

In short, my ethnographic approach to case study research consists of multiple methods that I developed through a problem-oriented and pragmatic approach that seeks to engage in the contradicting and subjective experiences of case actors. Narrative interviews elicited the idiographic stories of different actors in the field. I approached interviews as an interdependent endeavor. I developed the practice of a timeline that functioned as a marker to elaborate on important events and define critical moments. The stories of case actors were complemented with spatial methods such as mental mapping and walk whilst talking in order to analyze symbolic uses and production of spaces and places. Focus groups were used to extract an in-group discussion about the shared as well as individual experience of urban conflict. Participant observations added to the data of interviews because it enabled for thick description of interactions and performances. To understand the professional challenges of practitioners and policy-makers I used the go-along into their daily work practice. All these methods were practiced in a non-linear process that allowed me to engage with the people in the field to produce emic knowledge and sometimes to pull back and reflect on my own practices and develop etic analyzes through which I constructed a grounded theory. To make the idea of learning-in-action tangible, I developed a practice to learn together with case actors.

[5] I want to thank Leeke Reinders for his role in one of these sessions.

Building the bridge between theory and practice

At the beginning of this chapter I quoted Donald Schön who argued that the reflective practitioner should move beyond a technical rationality that separates research from practice towards reflection in action. 'Once we put aside the model of Technical Rationality, which leads us to think of intelligent practice as an application of knowledge to instrumental decisions, there is nothing strange about the idea that a kind of knowing is inherent in intelligent action' (Schön 1983: 50). Reflection in action is based on spontaneous, intuitive, and tacit knowing-in-action that each stakeholder is naturally capable of doing because they are already the experts of their own experiences. As my research has the transdisciplinary aim of developing knowledge for theory and practice I wanted to engage parties in a process of learning-in-action. I therefore started to experiment with repertoires to rethink practice.[6]

After my fieldwork and initial analyzes I returned to the field to reflect on the story I reconstructed. I wanted to validate my findings as case actors would reflect on my analysis of critical moments. Ethically I also wanted to acknowledge the interdependent relationship between the people in the field and me by giving them an opportunity to add to my findings. The reflection session helped me create another learning loop in the process of doing research. I facilitated the meetings in which we reflected on the storylines and the critical moments in the social-spatial narrative. I also invited the people in the field to think along with my theoretical analysis. Informants reflected on discursive practices in critical moments and the outcome or opportunities of the process of contestation. Stakeholders would validate my findings or confront me with gaps or misinterpretations in my account.

The critical moments reflections quickly proved to also function as a bridge between theory and practice. Schön argues 'through reflection, practitioners can surface and criticize the tacit understanding and make sense of new situations of uncertainty or uniqueness' (ibid: 62). Thus reflection sessions move theory into the domain of practice as they influence the way case actors make sense of a situation. I proposed a timeline with critical moments to the group and asked them questions like 'what was at stake for

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[6] Within the context of our research project dr. David Laws and I were able to organize a broad range of training activities for the city governments of Amsterdam, Utrecht, The Hague, and Rotterdam. These training sessions would often crosscut the case studies in my PhD research and thereby offered valuable insights to my case studies. These training activities helped me build capacity to train and reflect with practitioners. I have to also thank Ivar Halfman and Maarten Poorter for their input in these trainings.

you?' and 'what do you think was at stake for other parties?' These questions allowed case actors to step into the shoes of another party and engage into the other's perspective during a critical event. That step allowed them to use passed experiences to rethink future practice. These sessions made the bridge between theory and practice tangible because they have had an immediate influence on the way case actors make sense of the situation and rethink future practice. Through the reflection sessions, the case studies turned out to be paradigmatic cases for practitioners to develop situational knowledge.

Thus the reflection had both a scholarly orientation at validating my findings but throughout the process of the meetings also became moments of learning-in-action. Schön argues that practitioners usually reflect on their knowing in relative tranquility and post-mortem, they think back on the project that they were engaged in before (ibid: 61). The same could be said for these sessions as they took place after the period of research. To bridge the gap between theory and practice, however, I wanted these sessions to also help practitioners build capacity to deal with conflict. My aim for these sessions was also to help practitioners develop a capacity to make sense of events when they appear and there is no time for separate reflection, but immediate action is required. Uncertainty and tensions raise the necessity to be responsive to the needs of diverse stakeholders. I wondered how reflections on critical moments, provided practitioners with a repertoire to engage in the perspective of other parties in relation to their own practice. How could these reflection repertoires provide useful tools to rethink future actions of dealing with conflict? Schön argues to base reflection-in-action practices in intuitive performances. 'Much of that reflection hinges on surprise, when intuitive performances yield nothing more than the result we expected from it, we tend not to think about it. But when intuitive performance leads to surprises, pleasing and promising or unwanted, we may respond by reflecting-in-action' (ibid: 56). As cases of conflict depend upon responding to unexpected events, I believe reflection sessions of how different case actors value and enact critical moments, help governments to build capacity for dealing with conflict.

The sessions I organized as reflection on my research findings served as a first inquiry into the use of critical moments as a repertoire for learning-in-action[7].

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[7] During these meetings, practitioners acknowledged my intuition that the reconstruction of critical moments could be a useful training repertoire for a wide variety of practitioners dealing with conflict. Translating the critical moment reflection into a general training practise is something I am currently working on.

As one can imagine, returning to the field with one's analysis is far from easy and a risky pursuit. Burawoy argues that the biggest bombshell of doing research happens when the researcher comes back to the field with his analysis (Burawoy 1998:17). He explains that people do not like to be reified as an object of sociological research, but that the foremost reason is that most fields are riven by conflict so that it is impossible to navigate towards everyone's satisfaction. As my object of study was conflict and opposing stories were at the heart of my research findings, I could not simply return to the field and organize a reflections session for everyone at the same time. The tensions that were present and the chance of creating a new leap into conflict made me adjust my return to the field to every specific context. In mediation processes it is a central practice to facilitate a shared conversation with all the parties, but in these cases my role was not that of a mediator, and sharing all the information parties had given me in confidence in a session with all the parties would not be ethical. Instead I decided to take a different approach to each reflection session that was embedded in each specific situation – see appendix II for reflections on these meetings.

Conclusions

To study conflict, demands a sensitive approach to the subjective experience of case actors who might dismiss that they are part of a 'conflict' in the first place. Through case study research I could make sense of conflict as a process of contentious practices with a beginning, middle, and an end. I took an ethnographic approach to case study research because it helped me to engage in contradicting perspectives and practice routines through the everyday engagement with case actors. Also my theoretical approach remains close to the empirical findings as the framework of a social-spatial narrative is developed as a grounded theory and in the reciprocal relationship with people in the field. The analysis of a process demands for an ethnographic approach that reveals idiographic events of case actors who describe their own practices of agency in the context of power structures.

Participant observations and qualitative interviews helped me unravel the experiences and practices of case actors in urban neighborhoods as they start out from bottom-up and emic experiences. Narratives interviews differ from traditional semi-structured interviews as it facilitates storytelling. The practice of a time-line allowed me to structure the chronology of events and helped to keep the story tangible in experiences.

Participation observations helped me reveal discursive performances by detailed and thick description of social situations. Spatial methods enabled me to explore the changing meaning and contradicting uses of spaces and places. Finally, focus groups provided active discussions about events and responses of case actors exposed positioning. These methods are developed as problem-driven practices that helped me gather subjective and experience near data to unravel the process of urban conflict.

To bridge the gap between theory and practice, I approached my fieldwork as a process of learning-in-action. That transdisciplinary approach demanded an interdependent relationship between people in the field and me as a researcher. Research as learning-in-action processes requires an engagement of case actors throughout the whole process of research. In the reflection sessions I deepened the interdependent relationship I have with the people in the field. I added another layer to the process of research by engaging practitioners in reflection-in-action and thereby disrupted the traditional boundaries between research and practice. It allowed me to validate my interpretations and to co-construct situational knowledge. The interdependent process of fieldwork I described in this chapter amounted to an immense amount of empirical details that were the basis for grounded theory. The following chapters will provide three social-spatial narratives of urban conflict, and one social-spatial narrative of a process of resolution in urban conflict.

Part II
Ethnographic case studies

Chapter 4
Crisis: the bag snatcher
Negotiating a missed opportunity

Introduction

The first case study that I researched is an episode of crisis. I define crisis as a type of conflict that is characterized by a bounded process of quick escalation. Episodes of crisis demand an immediate response from stakeholders. The sequence of action and reaction in response to crisis is relatively short. For this reason, the case of the bag snatcher explores the week directly following a tragic incident that escalated tensions in an Amsterdam neighborhood. Because of the short period in which an episode of crisis unfolds, one could argue that crises are critical moments themselves that disrupts everyday life. To grasp how crises provide a liminal opportunity, however, I focus on the critical moments that emerge within the episode of crisis. The interactions among stakeholders in the period of uncertainty that followed the tragic incident provide insights into the opportunities for renegotiation of meaning and relationships that develop in a crisis. The social-spatial narrative traces a sequence of critical moments in the week following this tragic incident in which policy practitioners, neighbors of different ethnic descent, and national media engaged each other in a pattern of action and reaction over meaning and belonging.

Before diving into this period of crisis, we need to get familiar with the context of this urban tragedy: Amsterdam. The city of Amsterdam has been understood as a 'just city' where civil society is vibrant (Fainstein 2010), levels of segregation are relatively small (Blok et al 2001), and there are ample economic opportunities (Musterd and Salet 2003). The story of urban crisis that follows took place in East Amsterdam (Amsterdam-Oost), a neighborhood that is known as a multi-ethnic part of the city. At the time the crisis developed, in 2005, Amsterdam was divided into administrative boroughs that functioned as administrative entities with their own political mandates. Each borough had an elected district council with its own mayor and civil servants who implemented

policy. At the time, the City of Amsterdam had a specific policy agenda that sought to integrate ethnic minorities by countering discrimination, promoting intercultural dialogue, and supporting minority organizations involvement in local decision making (Uitermark et al 2005: 629). Each district had a mandate to develop specific multicultural policies that incorporated minorities in the local governance structure. In Amsterdam-Oost this was done through the 'BOMO meetings' (*Bestuurlijk Overleg Minderheden Organisaties*, which roughly translates into 'Administrative Consultations Minority Organizations') in which thirteen immigrant organizations discussed local policy and advised the council on decision making. The social network that resulted from these advisory meetings proved valuable to the local council (Wolff, Penninx, van Heelsum 1999).

Two months prior to the events that I focus on in this chapter, the neighborhood was challenged by another tragic event. Theo Van Gogh, a famous Dutch filmmaker and journalist, was murdered on his way to work by an Islamic fundamentalist of Moroccan descent. Van Gogh was famous for his criticism of Islam and the Islamic community in the Netherlands. The assailant shot Van Gogh and pinned a note to his chest with a knife. In the note, the assailant decried a recent film Van Gogh had made that was critical of the treatment of women in Islam and threatened to kill Ayaan Hirsi Ali, a member of the Dutch Parliament who had been Van Gogh's partner in the making of the film. The event on that Tuesday morning, 2 November 2004, had a great impact on the debate about multiculturalism, both in the city of Amsterdam and the country as a whole. It shocked the nation and violent attacks on Muslim schools and mosques ensued over the course of following week. In line with earlier debates on multiculturalism, the murder was quickly linked to the failure of 'soft' integration policies (Hajer & Uitermark 2008; Hajer 2009). Nevertheless, the government of Amsterdam still rejected assimilation policies and kept promoting intercultural dialogues (Uitermark et al 2005: 631).

Mayor Cohen, who was often targeted in critiques of multiculturalism, responded to the violence. He chose an unconventional approach. At his press conference, he announced a 'manifestation of noise'. This manifestation was a reversal of the usual response to acts of senseless violence in the Netherlands where, conventionally, people walk a march of silence to commemorate the victim and protest against senseless violence. The proposed manifestation of noise would invoke this precedent in a protest on Dam

Square. By making noise, demonstrators were to show support for freedom of speech, which many felt was threatened by the murder.

On the evening of 2 November, the day of the murder, 20,000 people gathered at Dam Square to make noise. A podium had been erected quickly and stood tall in the middle of the square. Mayor Cohen and the Minister of Integration, Rita Verdonk – who had earned the nickname Iron Rita for her uncompromising policy towards immigrants – spoke. Hajer and Uitermark argue that the speeches by Cohen and Verdonk accommodated diverging discourses (in Hajer 2009: 82). Cohen avoided any reference to religious or ethnic differences and emphasized the shared core value of the Netherlands and its capital, Amsterdam: freedom of speech. Alternatively, the speech of Verdonk framed the murder in the context of growing insecurities and problems related to ethnic minorities in general. Hajer and Uitermark analyze how the speeches were directed not to those present at Dam square, but to different target groups that were watching the manifestation on television (ibid: 82)[1]. The murder of Theo Van Gogh and the memory of a manifestation of noise strengthened the narrative that integration had failed in the Netherlands and linked one specific community of immigrants – people of Moroccan descent – to the challenges of multiculturalism. The tensions that surrounded the issue of multiculturalism are important if we are to understand the unfolding narratives in the case study of the bag snatcher[2].

The case study is presented a social-spatial narrative that takes us through the critical moments that unfold during an episode of crisis. The parties that negotiate meaning in this case study are policy practitioners of the eastern city district council and members of the Moroccan community[3] in Amsterdam-Oost. Because of the elaborate media attention the case received, I also included a media analysis that reveals how the media portrayed the tragedy in the neighborhood.

[1] For a thorough analysis of the responses of political leaders to the murder on Theo Van Gogh and the tensions that surfaced in Amsterdam and Dutch society as a whole, see Hajer and Uitermark (2008) and Hajer (2009).

[2] Part of this case study is based on research that I did as a research intern at the Amsterdam Center for Conflict Studies at the University of Amsterdam in 2007. I want to thank Nikkie de Zwaan for our collaboration at the time.

[3] I want to highlight that there is no such thing as a homogeneous Moroccan community in the Netherlands or in eastern Amsterdam. For the purpose of this paper, we use this term to describe the group of Moroccan residents that were participants in the events that ensued after the boy's death as well as the people of Moroccan descent that sympathized with this group of residents.

critical moment overview
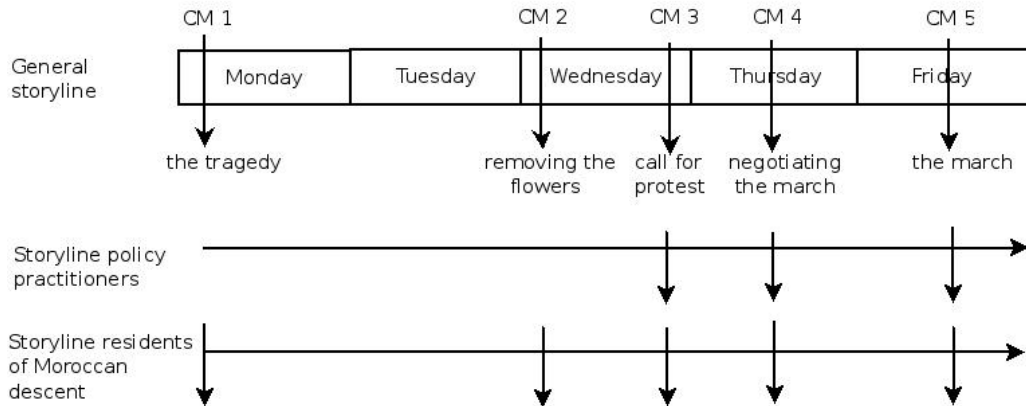
Critical moment 1: the tragedy

At around 7:00 p.m. on Monday 17 January 2005, two young men on a motor scooter snatch a bag from the back seat of a moving car on a street in eastern Amsterdam and drive off. In response, the car owner puts her car in reverse, which results in the two young men and their motor scooter getting trapped between the car and a tree. One of the young men jumps off the motor scooter and runs away. The other dies. This incident unleashes a series of reactions, actions and debates that incorporates a myriad of levels, ranging from the personal tragedy of the family to national debates on youth crime and overall migration in Western Europe. At first, however, there is confusion.

Performance: policy practitioners

The local district council of eastern Amsterdam was, at the time, located one block away from the site of the dramatic incident. The council chairman describes how he encounters the commotion on the street:

> *Around seven I walk out of my office (...) and I see cameramen. And then there was a story that a boy had tried to steal a purse from the back seat of a car. [And] that he and his scooter consequently had been squashed against a tree. Then I thought, this is quite the special story. But at the same time I thought, that boy is a bag snatcher, and I am responsible for security in the neighborhood. I have regular meetings with the security department, and I know of the existence*

> *of a network of youngsters on scooters who could be deemed as mere petty*
> *criminals but are certainly being delinquents. (...) When I found out the boy*
> *had passed away, I had a short conversation with the police officers that were*
> *present, but there was nobody I knew so I went home. (Interview district council*
> *mayor, May 2007)[4]*

The chairman explains that he went home. The storyline of the incident that he
encounters – a Moroccan boy who died while robbing a bag – does not yet suggest a
significant crisis will follow.

A policy practitioner charged with security issues, does not immediately foresee a crisis
either:

> *So in my job as coordinator of public order and security, I am charged with*
> *being in contact with the police, local politicians, the central government body,*
> *and the city mayor. When it comes to the issue of security, I have a central role*
> *so to say. So I read [about the events] on the Internet and text-messaged the*
> *district mayor. Maybe it was unimportant but you never know. The rest of the*
> *day I was in The Hague. I received several calls, because slowly it became*
> *clear what had happened. (...) [T]hat boy passed away after some commotion*
> *or something. And that there was quite some influx of people who were close*
> *to him, friends and family or other neighbors. I think already on the first night.*
> *(Interview local civil servant, May 2007)[5]*

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[4] *En om een uur of zeven liep ik mijn kantoor uit (...) en toen zag ik daar al een cameraploeg staan. En*
toen was het verhaal dat een jongen die een tasje had gesloten van de achterbank van een auto. [En] dat
die vervolgens met scooter en al geplet was tegen een boom. En ik dacht toen nog, dit is wel een bijzonder
verhaal. En tegelijkertijd dacht ik, die jongen is een tasjesdief, en ik ga over veiligheid in de buurt. Heb
ook regelmatig overleg met de veiligheidsdienst, en ik weet van nogal een behoorlijke aanwezigheid van
een netwerk van jongens op scooters die in zekere zin ook kleine criminaliteit maar in elk geval crimineel
bezig zijn. (...) Toen ik wist dat die jongen inmiddels was overleden heb ik nog heel even met de politie
gesproken die op dat moment bezig was, maar dat waren geen bekenden van me dus toen ben ik naar huis
gegaan. (Interview stadsdeelvoorzitter, *May 2007)*

[5]*Dus ik als coördinator openbare orde en veiligheid heb dan contact met de politie en bestuur en centrale*
stad en de burgemeester. Op het gebied van veiligheid heb ik een schakelrol, zeg maar. Dus ik las het op
Internet en ik sms'te eventjes naar de voorzitter, misschien is het niks maar je weet maar nooit. De rest van
de dag zat ik in Den Haag. [Ik] werd regelmatig gebeld omdat langzaam duidelijk werd wat er gebeurd
was. (...) dat die jongen daar omkwam na een opstootje, ofzo. En dat er nogal wat toeloop was van
mensen er omheen, vrienden of kennissen of buurtbewoners. Volgens mij de eerste avond al. (Interview
lokale ambtenaar, *May 2007).*

This civil servant explains the incident as 'a boy who dies after some commotion', emphasizing the fact that it was not an accident. Neither of these policy practitioners initially experiences the death of the young man as a critical moment. The civil servant adds: 'No, people die in traffic more often, that's what you think about'. The incident is understood as a tragedy, but initially does not present itself as a critical moment that demands a response. The policy practitioners are still under the impression that the incident will pass quickly. Thus, they do not feel the need to formulate a story of what had happened just yet.

Performance: residents of Moroccan descent

Soon after the tragic incident, members of the Moroccan community gather around the site. For the boy's family and friends, the death of their beloved one is a critical moment, and not just a personal one. They connect the event to their earlier experiences of exclusion. A storyline emerges as they gather at the site:

> *Imagine your bag gets robbed. Is murder an answer to this? Young boys do all kinds of bad things. Is it worthwhile to kill in response? (Interview representative of the Moroccan Community, May 2007)[6]*

The first storyline that unfolds at the site stems from the immediate responses of the Moroccan community and anchors in the experience of marginalization. The family and friends of the boy question whether the boy's death was the right punishment for robbing a bag. They emphasize violence against a member of their community:

> *Some of the important people in the Moroccan community argued that the boy is killed on purpose, that a Moroccan had died. Mostly friends and others from the Moroccan community said these kinds of things. (Interview local civil servant, June 2007)[7]*

National newspapers whose journalists were present at the site quoted bystanders[8]. One

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[6] *Stel je voor dat je tas wordt gestolen. Is vermoorden dan het antwoord? Jonge jongens halen allerlei soorten rottigheid uit, is dat het waard om voor te doden?! (Interview vertegenwoordiger van de Marokkaanse gemeenschap, May 2007)*

[7] *Sommige belangrijke figuren uit de Marokkaanse gemeenschap beargumenteerden dat de jongen expres was doodgereden, dat er een Marokkaan was doodgereden. Vooral vrienden van de jongen zeiden dat soort dingen. (Interview lokale ambtenaar, June 2007)*

was a young Moroccan who focused on the incident itself. He saw intent in the driver's reaction:

> *This is racism. That woman chased him until she got him, says Omar. 'That woman and her family will burn for this', hisses Mohammed. (Volkskrant, 18 January 2005)[9]*

The emphasis on the violent treatment of a member of the Moroccan community led to a plot that I call 'the storyline of marginalization'. From this perspective, the event was linked to patterns of overall discrimination and growing marginalization of migrant groups in Dutch society.

The response of the Moroccan community was to gather at the site of the incident and commemorate the boy. People laid flowers near the tree, lit candles, and hung a picture of the boy on the trunk of the tree where he had died.

The district mayor explains:

> *The evening after it happened there were already many people. Mostly friends and family members from the neighborhood came to take a look and became very excited when they found out what happened. They were pretty frustrated. And you have to realize it is only two months after the death of Van Gogh in this neighborhood. And that some of the key figures from the neighborhood told me: whatever happened, that boy was killed on purpose. A Moroccan is killed. (Interview district council mayor, May 2007)[10]*

[8] 'The media' could also be understood as a party in this conflict. I chose to, however, focus my research on the performances of parties in a local context. Therefore, an analysis of how the media is intertwined in the events at the site would be outside the realm of this research. Here, the media figures as a source of information about what happened on the local level and how that was portrayed at the national level.

[9] *'Dit is racisme. Die vrouw achtervolgde hem totdat ze hem te pakken had', zegt Omar. 'Die vrouw en haar familie zullen hiervoor branden', sist Mohammed. (Volkskrant, 18 januari 2005)*

[10] *Ja, de avond dat het gebeurde stonden er al veel mensen. Met name de vrienden en kennissen uit de buurt kwamen hier naartoe en die raakten er wel heel erg opgewonden van het gebeuren. Die waren wel gefrustreerd. En je moet je ook realiseren, het was ook pas twee maanden na de moord op Theo van Gogh, dat was ook hier gebeurd. En dat er ook onmiddellijk, van een aantal sleutelfiguren uit de buurt kreeg ik ook te horen van: wat er ook aan de hand is, die jongen is moedwillig doodgereden. En er is een Marokkaan doodgereden. (Interview* stadsdeelvoorzitter*, May 2007)*

The chairman describes the frustration of the youngsters and links the emotional responses to the commotion around the assassination of Theo Van Gogh.

Social-spatial analyses

A tragic incident disrupts everyday life in eastern Amsterdam and causes a situation of uncertainty. When we look at the interaction that unfolds at the street-level, we see how case actors seek to make sense of what happened. Where the local policy makers are still under the impression that this was merely a tragic accident, the interactions at the street-level unfold focusing on the two pieces of information that are available: the young man who had died was of Moroccan descent and he had stolen a bag. The interactions at the site allow stakeholders to use the limited amount of information to construe a coherent constellation of facts that together give meaning to the event. They give meaning to the incident by telling stories that discursively construe the appropriate repertoire of action. Three storylines emerge as facts are brought together.

One storyline makes sense of the incident through the experience of marginalization. The storyline of marginalization provides a plot with a complex structure (Cobb 2003) that combines experiences of discrimination, memories of the public response to the assassination of Van Gogh, and the act of violence towards a member of a minority community in one storyline. Central themes are injustice and marginalization. And the story complicates the meaning of the characters: the boy is both a perpetrator and a victim. The storyline of marginalization emerges as members of one community interact at the site. The performances of mourning fit the repertoire of action that the storyline implies: this is a time for public mourning.

While members of the Moroccan community are mourning, other community members, mostly of Dutch descent, also gather at the site. In their interactions with media journalists, another storyline unfolds. This storyline provides an opposing plotline that focuses on the theft that initiated the tragic sequence. It results in the storyline of 'own fault'. The media that cover the diverse conversations that develop at the site quote a man of Dutch descent who voices his experience and fears:

> *Because of these Moroccan guys on their scooters you walk around with your heart pounding in your throat. Well, then all you have to do is wait for the*

> *moment that someone does not just accept it any longer. (Volkskrant, 18 January 2005)[11]*

The quote of the man expresses the way many residents of the neighborhood frame the incident, placing it in the context of increasingly pervasive petty crime and violence and hinting at the volatility this has been creating in the neighborhood. This storyline constructs a less complex causal relationship (Cobb 2003) between the death of the boy and his act of crime. His sole role as a perpetrator makes his faith his 'own fault' and the dominant theme focuses on his criminal behavior.

These opposing storylines get portrayed in the media but they simultaneously get negotiated on the street-level. The death of the boy disrupts the meaning of the public space. The street of the incident and the site underneath the tree become a liminal space that is 'betwixt and between multiple interpretations' (Turner 1969: 95). The public site simultaneously becomes a place of unjust discrimination, a space where a tragic accident happened, and a place of rightful punishment for accumulating fear and criminal activities. In the first critical moment, one storyline discursively produces a repertoire of action: mourning. Elderly Moroccans bring flowers, young men and women light candles, notes are written, and prayers chanted.

These performances of mourning are very different from the response to the death of Theo Van Gogh. Van Gogh's death is immediately understood as a critical moment by the authorities that immediately organize a protest on a central city square. The public protest at Dam Square transforms the square into a 'conceived space' (Lefebvre [1974] 1991: 33) that is policed by the authorities and imposes a dominant storyline that seeks to 'protect Dutch freedom of speech'. After the death of the bag snatcher, there is no public response that is policed or orchestrated by the local government. The site of the incident hence becomes a liminal space where meaning is contested through different storylines. On the one hand, the storyline of marginalization infers meaning to the practice of mourning as something public: it communicates a message that the community understands as the incident being unjust. On the other hand, the storyline of 'own fault' questions the legitimacy of public mourning and pushes the practice of mourning into the private domain.

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11   *Door die Marokkanen met hun scooters loop je hier rond met je hart in je keel. Nou, dan kan je wachten tot het moment waarop iemand zegt 'nu pik ik het niet langer!'* (Volkskrant, 18 January 2005)

Their practice of mourning by lighting candles and telling stories can be considered as private. But to understand the spatial practice of mourning in the context of this case, it is useful to look through the lens of Lofland's idea of the 'parochial realm' (2007). Lofland argues that the meaning of space depends on the density of relationship types present at the street. Those relationships can be fluid over time (Lofland 2007: 11). The spatial practice of mourning attracts an audience that comes into interaction with the mourners. That interaction – no matter how contested – shifts the meaning of public space into a parochial realm where interpersonal connections surface (Lofland 2007). Thus, the improvised practices of mourning and interactions with other community members create a space where people come together and discuss their experiences.

In this communal sphere, none of the storylines is dominant yet. Each storyline gets expressed, either through the spatial practice of mourning or via storytelling. Also, both storylines are portrayed in the national media:

> *The police call the death of a Moroccan purse snatcher a tragic accident. But the Moroccan community in Amsterdam-Oost speaks of murder. The little thief [*straatrovertje*] was driven straight into death. The driver, who killed the bag snatcher, did so almost certainly by accident, so local residents say. (Telegraaf, 19 January 2005)[12]*

Thus, although stakeholders disagree about the meaning of the incident, this interaction temporarily increases the quality of a public sphere where all stories are being voiced.

Narrative dynamics
Tuesday marks the first meeting between the district council mayor and the civil servants. The many articles on the front page of the national newspapers lead civil servants and the council chairman to believe that they need to respond to the incident. They organize a meeting with policy makers whose professional responsibilities involve them in figuring out how to deal with incidents like these. These include the 'security coordinator', the 'diversity coordinator' who is responsible for inter-ethnic relationships in the borough, and the press spokesman.

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[12] *De politie noemt het een tragisch ongeval maar de Marokkaanse gemeenschap in Amsterdam-Oost spreekt van moord. Het straatrovertje is regelrecht de dood ingejaagd. Ali el B., dode dief of moordslachtoffer? Een buurtbewoner zegt dat de automobiliste het vrijwel zeker per ongeluk deed. (De Telegraaf, 19 January 2005)*

In this meeting, a third storyline emerges that proposes a less politicized plot: 'the storyline of action-reaction'.

> *There was a small group of people surrounding the boy who thought they were treated unfairly. But other people, also people who knew the boy, thought that he was the cause of his death. I mean, action-reaction. (Interview district council mayor, May 2007)*[13]

The mayor refers to people in the Moroccan community who agreed with the storyline of 'action-reaction', hereby revealing that he is conscious of the 'other' storyline, that of marginalization. The 'action-reaction' storyline seeks to develop a plot that is acceptable to both the Moroccan community and the group who believed that it was 'his own fault'. The storyline of 'action-reaction', however, has high tellability (Norrick 2005) as it uses the same causal structure as the storyline of 'own fault': the boy is killed as a consequence of robbing a bag. If he had not robbed the bag, he would still be alive. The boy's character is one of a perpetrator who accidentally becomes a victim. The theme of 'action-reaction' and a 'tragic incident' is less controversial because it does not assign fault or refers directly to the negative reputation of Moroccan youngsters, but the story does not include the theme of marginalization and discrimination. Policy practitioners and politicians primarily go on to use the storyline of action-reaction.

The storyline of 'action-reaction' also discursively leads to a repertoire of action. Now that the incident is understood as a critical moment for local policy practitioners, their first response is to activate a network of 'neighborhood fathers'[14] and representatives of the mosques that they had been building. These local community members keep policy practitioners updated on the development of events and emotions in the neighborhood. Civil servants of the local council were particularly concerned about the underlying

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[13] *Er was een kleine groep in de omgeving van de jongen die vonden dat ze oneerlijk werden behandeld. Maar anderen, ook mensen die de jongen kenden, vonden dat hij zelf de oorzaak van zijn dood was, dat het actie-reactie was. (Interview* stadsdeelvoorzitter, *May 2007)*

[14] 'Buurtvaders' is a local organization of fathers from Moroccan families who seek to cooperate to promote community development. Since 1996, the district council of eastern Amsterdam is actively building on a network of migrant organizations, one of which is the organization of 'buurtvaders'. There is a monthly meeting about the role of migrant organizations in the district. (Wolff, Van Heelsum & Penninx, 1999)

tensions between groups of residents that had surfaced as a result of the murder of Theo Van Gogh and, again, by this incident. The death of the boy was understood in reference to the dramatic murder of Theo Van Gogh. This reference set the stage for the understanding of the current events, by tying them to threats towards overall Dutch society, to a broader debate on failed integration, and to growing problems with Moroccan youth. Thereby, the incident was incorporated into the context of a national debate, rather than that of a local tragedy.

Also, national politicians express their opinion about what had happened. On 21 January, the headline of newspaper De Telegraaf reads: 'Verdonk: we should not speak of murder' (Telegraaf, 21 January 2005). By saying this, Verdonk hunches at the 'own fault' frame that is legitimized by reference to the robbery, indexing the events to threat and failing integration. Verdonk's statement causes commotion within the Moroccan community. But that commotion is silenced by the commentary of Prime Minister Balkenende who agrees with the statement of Rita Verdonk:

> *'Minister Verdonk was trying to temper the atmosphere in the Moroccan community. They were saying: someone was killed. But we shouldn't say these kinds of things so easily.' (Prime Minister Balkenende as quoted in Volkskrant, 22 January 2005)[15]*

In the meantime, the improvised memorial at the site had turned into a ritual of commemoration:

> *And then there [at the site of the accident] was a meeting of youngsters who came to mourn together, citing some Quran texts. Family and maybe some girlfriends of the boy. This attracted a lot of people. (Interview local civil servant security coordination, May 2007)[16]*

The quote of the security coordinator provides an interesting insight into his perspective

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[15] *'Minister Verdonk probeerde juist het klimaat te temperen in de Marokkaanse gemeenschap. Daar werd gezegd: hier is iemand vermoord. Dat kun je niet zomaar zeggen', zei de premier. (Volkskrant, 22 January 2005)*

[16] *En toen was daar [op de plek van het ongeluk] ook een bijeenkomst van jongeren die daar allen op die plek gingen rouwen, beetje Koranteksten citeren, familie en misschien vriendinnen van die jongen, en daar kwamen veel mensen op af. (Interview* lokale ambtenaar*, May 2007).*

on the commemoration. By describing the performance of youngsters as 'citing some Koran texts', he characterizes their commemoration as something informal. His description construes the commemoration as something small, intimate, and remaining in a private domain with 'family and some girlfriends'. The quote shows how little he understands about the importance of this gathering for the Moroccan community.

Critical moment 2: removing the flowers

On Wednesday morning, the flowers, cards and candles that had been left at the site by friends, family and sympathizers are 'cleaned up' by the public works department when they replace the poles that were damaged in the collision.

Performance: policy practitioners

The local public works department regards its decision to remove the symbols of public mourning as the legitimate result of balancing the use of the site as a place of grieving with other considerations:

> *We told them: 'this might be good place for you to use as a memorial, but across the street there are 200 little children playing at a primary school'. That's why we had to balance interest constantly, we had to make decisions constantly. And then I chose to clean things up. This was not to cover up the facts, but there are 200 children at a school who had been dealing with the emotions surrounding the death of Theo Van Gogh just two, three months earlier. This forced us to be very focused. (Interview neighborhood police officer, June 2007)[17]*

The district mayor reflects on this decision as follows:

> *What was painful was that, one morning, all the flowers and candles were removed. Flowers and candles were once more put at the site afterwards, it was important that people were able to put attention to that. This happened on Wednesday, it was an unfortunate moment. The municipal sanitation*

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[17] *Die plek is misschien prachtig voor jullie als een soort monument, maar er zitten daar wel tegenover 200 kleine kindjes op een basisschool. Dus je moet continu belangen afwegen, continu keuzes maken. En dan maak ik die keuze, dan wil ik dat er netjes opgeruimd wordt. Dat is niet om iets te verdoezelen, maar er zitten daar 200 kinderen op een school die nog geen twee, drie maanden daarvoor continu te maken kregen met emoties op de plek van Theo van Gogh. Dat heeft er wel voor gezorgd dat je er heel scherp moest zijn. (Interview* wijkagent*, June 2007)*

department did it, but who gave the order remains unclear. That's something you really want to prevent. Such a ritual is necessary. That is my opinion in short. (Interview district council mayor, May 2007)[18]

These reflections show how ongoing communication problems among the different departments in the district became part of the action-reaction pattern after the crisis. The police department was concerned with security issues and referred to the murder of Theo Van Gogh to legitimize its actions. The council chairman, however, denies that the removal of the flowers represented a formal decision. He refers to the act as 'an unfortunate moment' and emphasizes the importance of the public place of mourning being re-established at the site. He uses the word 'ritual' to describe what took place at the site and argues that such things are 'necessary'.

Neither the street-level professional of the police department nor the politician speaks of this moment as critical in the course of events. The first understands it as a necessary procedure and the second views it as a mistake that can be compensated for by allowing for new flowers and candles to be put at the site afterwards. Neither one acknowledges the meaning this act had for the Moroccan community.

Performance: residents of Moroccan descent
In the eyes of the Moroccan youngsters, these actions provide more evidence as to the nature of the incident and the subsequent response:

It was murder and now the traffic poles are replaced, they cannot prove it anymore. (Volkskrant, 19 January 2005)[19]

By saying this, the boy reveals his underlying experience of marginality. He expects Dutch policy practitioners to remove evidence that would bring justification to the story of the Moroccan community. 'Now that story cannot be proven anymore'. The removal

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[18] *Wat ook wel weer pijnlijk was dat tijdens een bepaalde ochtend alle bloemen en kaarsjes waren opgeruimd. Dat plekje is wel weer teruggekomen, dat daar de aandacht voor mocht zijn. Dat was op woensdag, dat was een ongelukkig moment. Dat is gedaan door de reinigingsdienst, maar wie daar opdracht voor heeft gegeven is nooit helemaal duidelijk geworden. Dat wil je gewoon niet hebben. Zo'n ritueel moet toch gebeuren. Dit is in het kort mijn visie daarop. (Interview* stadsdeelvoorzitter*, May 2007)*

[19] *Het was moord met voorbedachte rade, en nu de paaltjes weg waren kon niemand dat meer bewijzen. (Volkskrant, 19 January 2005)*

of the memorial reinforces their storyline and deepens their framing of the incident as a form of discrimination. In the storyline of marginality, the cleaning of the site is understood as a means to remove evidence.

Social-spatial analyses

Until Wednesday, none of the existing storylines dominate the others. The ability of all parties to practice their own repertoires of dealing with the crisis allows each story to have equal tellability in the interactions at the street-level. The public space allowed for the Moroccan community members to commemorate and tell stories, for policy practitioners to debate a politically correct interpretation, and other community members to discuss their perspectives on the incident at the site. In the media, all perspectives were communicated. When the flowers are removed, however, something important happens that the policy practitioners do not seem to be aware of. Whether it was intentional or not, removing the flowers symbolically expels the performance of commemorating from the public sphere.

In her analysis of Dutch mourning practices, Irene Stengs argues that 'ephemeral memorials may be considered as ritualized sites that not only "are" but at the same time "act" and interact with the social reality through which they are constituted' (Stengs 2009: 9). In other words, memorials are performative practices. The unfolding of memorial practices at the site of the incident give an interesting insight into the way in which these practices interact with the reality through which they are constituted. Storylines are not only constituted at the site of the memorial. Rather, the practices at the memorial--and specifically the act of cleaning the memorial--are fed back into the developing interpretations of the incident. Spatial practices – mourning and removing mourning symbols – discursively deepen the storylines through which the incident is understood. The removal of the flowers reinforces the storyline of the Moroccan community. Their mourning is disrupted by a cruel act of cleaning. They frame the act as taking away the evidence of murder. One could also say that the cleaning obscures the incident and voices a message that public mourning in this case is not allowed. Although the chairman frames the act as unintentional and inconvenient, the consequences are tangible. The interpretations of the incident then go on to deeply polarize the debate in the media. Having started out as a discussion about a local incident, the situation now takes flight and quickly turns into a national debate on failed integration and a threat to Dutch society at large. The frame of the Moroccan community is marginalized as the

frame of 'own fault' merged into a more politically correct frame of 'action-reaction' that is used by politicians on both local and national levels. From the perspective of the Moroccan community, the removal of the flowers leads to an even deeper sense of marginalization that is further reinforced by the limited acknowledgement of its critical meaning.

When we add the reference to the murder of Theo Van Gogh[20], this critical moment becomes all the more painful. Residents directly compare the situation with the situation after the killing of Theo Van Gogh, when a memorial was allowed to linger on a busy street for ten days. Stengs argues that, within this setting of public mourning, 'people generally follow certain scripts from a shared ritual repertoire, which requires no formal influence or instruction. These public commemorative practices therefore develop in accordance to general expectations and within a given framework' (ibid: 9). Thus the practices of mourning in the Netherlands, and probably those of every society, are integrated in social ritual practices with a shared script that does not need any policing. When we look at the practices of the Moroccan community through a performative lens, we see a similar script as compared to the one that was used for the memorial of Van Gogh. The community follows the Dutch script for mourning. They lay flowers, burn candles, and leave little written notes that give voice to emotions like grief and anger and offer political commentaries. There is a difference, however, in the staging of events as the Moroccan community recites Quran texts at the site. That, however, does not turn out to fundamentally alter the script: at the Van Gogh memorial site, people also uttered texts in commemoration.

Paradoxically, these similarities actually point out the 'successful' assimilation of members of the Moroccan community as they demonstrate to have adopted the tacit repertoire of public commemoration that is common in the Netherlands. Paradoxically, the practices of mourning as performed by members of the Moroccan community show that they have developed tacit knowledge about public mourning in Dutch society. Through the use of the public commemoration script, they discursively embody integration into Dutch society. That performance does not get acknowledged. Instead the memorial, and thereby the attempt to be included in public performance, is removed from the public space. Whether this was intentional or not, it deepened the experience

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[20] For an analysis of how public mourning and mediatization were intertwined after the assassination of Theo Van Gogh, see Irene Stengs (2009).

of being treated unequally. The comparison to the death of Theo Van Gogh and the practices of memorial in the days after his death bring to bear the dominant interpretation of this situation: a tragic incident for family and friends to which public mourning is not considered an appropriate response, underpinning the 'action-reaction' storyline.

If the public space is the arena in which citizenship is developed and people are engaged in the public debate, the removal of the flowers excludes one group from taking part in the public sphere. Regardless of the motivation, the act of cleaning the memorial site conveys a message to the Moroccan community: they are no longer to perform their mourning in the public space. From a performative perspective, cleaning of the memorial could be understood as an embodiment of limiting their access to the public sphere. By swiping away the artefacts of commemoration, the storyline of 'marginalization' is excluded from negotiation in the public space.

What could have happened if policy practitioners had considered the storyline of the Moroccan community? Would they have been able to see the value of a commemoration site and the impact of their actions? In an earlier version of this case study (Verloo 2010), John Forester asks:

> *What does it say about the frozen-into-inaction-fear of city officials that they did not personally bring flowers to make amends and ask for forgiveness for the (hasty? Fearful? Callous?) actions of the city workers who 'cleaned up' and erased the signs of grieving and compassion of the community? (Forester in Verloo 2010: 55)*

The removal of the flowers changed the parochial meaning of the public space that had been established through the gatherings and discussions at the site. The clean street became a 'conceived space' (Lefebvre [1974] 1991) that is policed by rules and regulations. By cleaning up the artefacts of public mourning, the storyline of 'marginalization' is evaded from the public sphere. For the Moroccan community, the 'lived experience' of the site now deepens their sense of exclusion. The response they improvised that same afternoon tells us much about that experience.

Critical moment 3: calling for a protest march

The third critical moment emerges out of the second critical moment. Amidst the media attention and turmoil at the site of the memorial, the boy's family and friends decide to organize a protest march. The improvised decision to protest is a response to the removal of the flowers and the feelings of frustration that accompany the course of events. The march is supposed to be held on Friday of that week. The initiators plan a walk that would start at Amsterdam's Central Station, through the city center, to the site of the incident in eastern Amsterdam.

Performance: residents of Moroccan descent

The decision about the march is communicated via informal leaflets and pamphlets that are being passed around the neighborhood. Family and friends distribute the pamphlets to invite people to come and participate in the protest march.

> *They announced a protest march on pamphlets at the local supermarket. I think the girls who work there put them up. (Interview local civil servant, June 2007)[21]*

The protest was a way to voice grievances over the loss of a community member, but it also had another meaning. It was not just a march to commemorate, but also intended to communicate a message to a larger audience:

> *And on the other side, you could say from the Moroccan community, or from foreigners, those people say, 'see, we are not accepted anyway. Whether you are born here or not. You never become a full member of society. Not like full fellow nationals'. That feeling is simply there. You can always see that, that feeling of I don't belong anyway. (Interview representative of the Moroccan community, May 2007)[22]*

The removal of the flowers had deepened the experience of marginality and indexed the death of their beloved one into a broader experience of not belonging.

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[21] *Ze kondigden een protestmars aan op pamfletten in de Albert Heijn. Ik denk dat de meiden die daar werken dat hadden opgehangen. (Interview* lokale ambtenaar*, June 2007)*

[22] *En dan van de andere kant, van de Marokkaanse mensen zeg maar, of van de buitenlanders, die zeggen, 'zie je wel we worden toch niet geaccepteerd. Of je nou hier geboren bent of niet. Je wordt toch niet als volwaardig gezien. Niet als volwaardige landgenoten'. Dat gevoel zit er gewoon. Dat kan je altijd zien, zo van ik hoor er toch niet bij. (Interview* vertegenwoordiger van de Marokkaanse gemeenschap*, May 2007)*

Performance: policy practitioners

The call for a march prompts a critical moment for local policy authorities. It demands an immediate response. From the perspective of policy practitioners, a protest march may be risky in the polarized context, liable to trigger emotions, escalate tensions, and perhaps even boil over into violence:

> *Then people started to become nervous. They thought, who would be attracted to such a march? If half of western Amsterdam, and all those youngsters from eastern Amsterdam and Watergraafsmeer [another neighborhood in eastern Amsterdam] would show up, you have a sort of… before you know it… like with football matches at Leidse Square, a whole lot of people. (Interview local civil servant security coordination, May 2007)[23]*

The civil servant expresses his fear of the violent escalations that could develop as a result of a protest march. He makes sense of the risks such a march poses by placing it in a context of earlier events that caused riots in Amsterdam. These images of the past demand him to act in an attempt to stabilize the situation. The call for a march demands the local policy practitioners to seek a balance between security and looking the perspective of the Moroccan community:

> *Especially amongst the brothers and sisters of Ali [the boy that had died], there was an immediate wish to do something. Some kind of a 'white march' or 'a march of shame', but from press reports we could already presume that most people would interpret this in a different way. Also Job Cohen [then mayor of the city of Amsterdam] said that we should keep in mind what the starting point of this action was: the robbery of the woman's bag, the consequence was that she had said 'I do not take this'. (Interview district council mayor, May 2007)[24]*

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[23] *Toen begonnen mensen nogal nerveus te worden. En de gedachte was, wie komen daar wel niet allemaal op af? Als half Amsterdam-West, al die jongeren en Amsterdam Oost-Watergraafsmeer daarop af komen, voordat je het weet heb je een soort… nou, je ziet het met voetbal op het Leidseplein, dat zijn een heleboel mensen. (Interview* lokale ambtenaar veiligheid coördinator*, May 2007)*

[24] *Zeker bij de broers en de zussen van Ali was er meteen al behoefte om iets op te gaan zetten. Een soort van 'witte tocht' of 'schandetocht' waar je vanuit de perssignalen al over kon opmaken dat dat door een groot deel van het publiek anders geïnterpreteerd zou worden. Dat werd toen door Job Cohen gezegd, ik geloof dat ik dat ook zelf heb gezegd, dat je wel het startpunt van die actie in de gaten moet houden, namelijk de diefstal van die tas van die mevrouw, waarop het slachtoffer, of althans, slachtoffer/dader, reageert met 'ik pik dat niet', zo komt dat over. (Interview* stadsdeelvoorzitter*, May 2007)*

Here we see how the policy practitioners are able to engage in the storyline of the Moroccan community. At the same time, the threat of violent escalations provides authorities with a legitimate reason to reassert their own storyline of 'action-reaction'.

> *What kind of people would this March attract? What if half of the Moroccan youngsters of Amsterdam come to this March? You are thinking of all these different scenarios. What if someone breaks a window? Before you realize what happened, the ME [military police] starts to hit around and this whole thing turns into chaos and fighting. (Interview local civil servant security coordination, May 2007)[25]*

On Wednesday afternoon, a meeting takes place at the district council office. A group of civil servants participates and the city mayor joins in. This is the second negotiation about the incident. This time the meeting is not about the meaning of the incident itself or the relationship with the Moroccan community, but about the implications of the proposed march. As a public official, he is responsible for the public order and security of other citizens in the neighborhood. This role demands him to search for a balance between providing the Moroccan community with a chance to grief but also to secure safety in the neighborhood. What effects could such a march have? The risks of a protest march were realistic and needed to be discussed. The length of the march is a concern. Central Station is a good distance away from the site of the incident. The discussions highlight the way simple events can trigger escalation in such circumstances: a broken window requires the police to intervene, triggering responses that in turn demand responses. These discussion also highlight the risk that the event might be perceived as a provocation by the Moroccan community:

> *We were not really in favor of a protest march or 'Silent March' starting at Central Station. We thought it was a bad plan, especially when considering the media attention it would attract. That it would turn into a provocation from the Moroccan community. (Interview local civil servant security coordination, May 2007)[26]*

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[25]*Wat voor soort mensen zou deze tocht aantrekken? Dan denk je na over verschillende scenario's. Wat als iemand een raam breekt of een bushokje sloopt? Voordat je het weet zit de ME er bovenop en eindigt het in een chaos en nog meer geweld. (Interview* lokale ambtenaar veiligheidscoördinator*, May 2007)*

[26] *Wij waren niet voor een protestmars of 'stille tocht' vanaf centraal station. We dachten dat het een slecht plan was aangezien de spanningen die er op dat moment heersten. Het zou kunnen worden opgevat als*

Thus the risk of violent escalation becomes a central feature in the new storyline of the local government. It provides them with a legitimate basis to prevent the march from happening and circumvents a discussion about the reason for the march. The construction of this storyline has two effects. First, it does not jeopardize the local government's relationship with members of the Moroccan community. And second, it serves as a way for the local government to assert responsibility to safeguard security in the neighborhood.

The established relationships with the 'neighborhood fathers' proves to be vital in the decision to organize a meeting in which policy practitioners will discuss the proposed march with members of the Moroccan community:

> *I quickly started calling people in the neighborhood whom I knew were important key figures, my antennas: what is going on and what do you expect to be the risk? What do you think we can do for you and where do you signal problems? (Interview local civil servant diversity coordination, May 2007)[27]*

A meeting, however, poses problems over representation as the march organizers march are not the representatives of the Moroccan community that the government normally deals with:

> *We did not know who organized the protest march: probably youngsters who lived in the neighborhood, but not an official organization, or the people from the mosque with whom we collaborated. The question was, 'what are we to do with these youngsters?' (Interview local civil servant diversity coordination, May 2007)[28]*

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een provocatie van de Marokkaanse gemeenschap. Het zou dan namelijk gaan om zinloos geweld tegen de jongen in kwestie, en dus om een ontkenning van het feit dat het begon met een tasjesroof. (Interview lokale ambtenaar veiligheidscoördinator, *May 2007)*

[27] *En heel snel ben ik gaan bellen in de wijk naar belangrijke sleutelfiguren, mijn antennes: Wat is het en hoe schatten jullie het risico in dat dit onrust teweeg gaat brengen? Wat vinden jullie wat wij kunnen doen voor jullie en signaleer je knelpunten, zo ja, wat zijn het? (Interview* lokale ambtenaar, diversiteitscoördinator, *May 2007)*

[28] *Het probleem was dat we niet wisten wie die protestmars daadwerkelijk had georganiseerd. Waarschijnlijk jongeren uit de buurt. Maar het was in ieder geval geen officiële organisatie, of de voorzitter van de moskee, waar je als overheid meestal mee samenwerkt. De vraag was, 'hoe moeten we deze jongeren bereiken?' (Interview* lokale ambtenaar, diversiteitscoördinator, *May 2007)*

The local officials finally decide to invite several representatives of the Moroccan community along with members of the family for a meeting on Thursday to discuss the march.

Social-spatial analyses

The third critical moment stems directly from the second when the improvised memorial is removed. With the flowers, the spatial practice of commemoration is removed from the public space. Removing the practice of commemoration temporarily excludes the storyline of the Moroccan community from the public sphere. From the perspective of the family and friends, the removal of their memorial deepens the storyline of 'marginalization'. In response, the community improvises a contentious performance (Tilly 2008) that is immediately critical to everyone.

When they proposed the march, the meaning of what had happened was still being contested. In this stage of uncertainty, meaning and rules can get renegotiated. There is still liminal opportunity because possible repertoires of action are up for discussion and unconventional improvised actions are possible. Youngsters in the Moroccan community made use of that liminal sphere. Within the storyline of the Moroccan community, the call for a protest march is a mere consequence of the earlier sequence of events. They frame the death of the boy as a dramatic incident in a longer pattern of marginalization. The events demand a response, especially as viewed from the perspective of ongoing discrimination that is evoked by the death. As a result, they have to do something public that will voice their experience of marginalization. A protest march seems an appropriate response.

The act of calling for protest is an informal contentious response to the way in which the Moroccan community was positioned by the local government's storyline of 'own fault' or 'action-reaction'. This 'second order positioning (Harré and Langenhove 1999: 20) forcefully creates a space in the public sphere where the story that is being excluded gets voiced again in the public domain. The effect of their call for protest immediately prompts contestation because, from the perspective of 'own fault' and 'action-reaction', a protest march is not considered to be an appropriate repertoire to act. The storyline of the policy practitioners gives meaning to the incident as a tragedy with minor public meaning. Consequently, they question the legitimacy of a public demonstration. This storyline does not include the themes of 'injustice' or 'discrimination' that inspired the

protest march. Moreover, third order positioning in the media introduces a new theme to be added to the local storylines: a protest may be provocative of violent escalations between members of different communities. The theme of 'threat' becomes central to the decision making about the march. In the context of polarized integration debates, the assassination of Van Gogh and the public opinions of national politicians, a local incident becomes a national topic of discussion--and the national discussion in turn reinforces positioning at the local level.

To understand the meaning of what politicians call 'provocation', we must turn to some considerations about protest in public space. Low argues that by using a central public space for protest, the protest takes on 'layers of historic meaning that are retained through the mnemonics of environmental memory' (Low 2000: 184). Thus, in line with Stengs, Low shows that practices of protest do not only act, but also interact with the meaning of the social environment that constitutes them. A protest march changes the meaning of public spaces that interchangeably have taken on resonance of prior events that happened at those sites. 'These meanings, embodied in the space itself, become a subtext for the protest that occurs there, and by placing protest in the symbolic center of the society, it captures national attention' (ibid: 184).

The city center of Amsterdam has many public places where earlier events created such symbolic meaning. A protest march through the city center would attribute meaning to these places and develop new memories that would become subtexts to these places. Hajer and Uitermark (2008) show how important Dam Square proved to be in the performance of the manifestation of noise after the death of Van Gogh. The choice of Dam Square was a way to contribute national relevance to the manifestation of noise, because the choice of place resonated with prior events like the yearly national commemoration of Second World War victims. A protest march from Central Station would move through Dam Square. Thus if we rationalize from the perspective of the policy makers and politicians, the meaning that this protest march would infer to these places would be inappropriate at the least. If we then pay attention to broader tensions in society, we can grasp the symbolic meaning a protest like this could have and understand their fear of escalation.

Low argues that if protest is successful – that is, if it threatens the state – 'the public

space is closed, sometimes gated, and policed' (ibid: 184). Here policy practitioners are aware of the necessity of 'doing something for the Moroccan community' (council chairman). The network of neighborhood fathers informs them about the underlying grievances. Instead of prohibiting the protest march – which was in their power, because they could withhold the permit to hold a demonstration march – they decided to invite people from the Moroccan community and discuss their safety concerns.

In sum, when members of the Moroccan community called for protest, the sequence of events turned critical for everyone. The idea of a protest march originated when the flowers were removed from the site of the incident. This deepened the sense of marginalization that was part of the storyline of the Moroccan community. By calling for a protest march, they forced their storyline back into the negotiations in the public sphere. In the storyline of the policy practitioners, this critical moment was understood as a disproportionate threat to security. Policy practitioners had the responsibility to prevent violence. Moreover, a protest march could infer new meaning to symbolical places in the city center. From the perspective of their 'action-reaction' storyline, a protest march would be an inappropriate response to the accident with the bag snatcher. Policy practitioners did not approve of a march through the city center, a response that positioned them as the dominant party to decide over the use of public space in Amsterdam. By making 'security' a central topic, their response allowed them to engage the Moroccan community in decision making about the march. What should be done in order to avoid violent escalations was decided in a meeting the next day.

Critical moment 4: negotiating the march

The meeting takes place at the district council office on Thursday, 20 February 2005, at 2:00 p.m. in the room of district chairman. The building is a historical building with big windows and high rising ceilings. The chairman's room is in the right corner and there is a big squared table in the middle. Civil servants recollect that positioning around the table was very typical of the power positions: the mayor sat at the head of the table, civil servants occupied one site of the table opposite from the members of the Moroccan community who sat at the other end. The windows of the room offer an overview of the street where Van Gogh had been murdered several months before and one could gaze into the street where the incident with the bag snatcher happened. Outside of the building, a group of youngsters was waiting for the boy's sister to come outside and

give them the good news about the march.

The participants from the government included the mayor of Amsterdam, the mayor of the district council, and the safety coordinator of the district. The safety coordinator of a neighboring district was invited to act as a mediator, because of his contacts in the Moroccan community (from here on he will be referred to as mediator). The boy's sister and two of her friends were present, as well as several representatives of the Moroccan community, including the speaker of the El-Kabeer Mosque and representatives of the Moroccan community organization and the association of 'neighborhood fathers'. Representatives of the police department did not intervene in this decision. In their view, this was an issue for the city council to decide. Their task was to provide as much safety and security as they could once a choice was made.

Performance: policy practitioners

With this meeting, policy practitioners intended to engage representatives of the Moroccan community in decision making that would find a balance between security concerns and the wish to protest. All participants remember that the meeting began with the mayor of Amsterdam offering his condolences to the boy's sister. After sharing in her sadness, he turned to the facts of the case and proposed the storyline of 'action-reaction'. The mayor was quoted in the local newspaper:

> *But people should realize that this all started with a street robbery, I don't hear about that enough in the neighborhood. People who pass by this notion, trivialize this case in a way that I absolutely don't like (...) What happened there has all elements needed for a rapid escalation. (Het Parool, 20 January 2005)[29]*

In the eyes of the safety coordinator, the mayor gave a clear signal and everyone around the table agreed. Some remember the mayor making it very clear that there could be no march from Central Station to the place of the incident:

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[29] *'Men moet wel beseffen dat het begonnen is met een straatroof. Dat hoor ik in die buurt veel te weinig. Mensen die hieraan voorbijgaan, zijn de zaak aan het bagatelliseren op een manier die mij absoluut niet aanstaat'. (Het Parool, 20 January 2005)*

> *He [the mayor] made a very clear statement: 'Guys, it is really sad what happened, I can imagine that you are in a lot of pain, but on the other side, something did happen. He did something that was not right as well.' I believe that he [the mayor] signaled something that was shared by everyone. (Interview local policy practitioner, May 2007)[30]*

Thus the statement of the mayor fixed the 'action-reaction' storyline. After this utterance of the mayor there was no room left to negotiate the meaning of the incident. This authoritative move established positioning in the room. By fixing one storyline, that story becomes the dominant interpretation of what happened, not allowing for a possibility to negotiate another interpretations. From the perspective of 'action-reaction' and the public responsibility of the local council, fixing the storyline was not experienced as a problem. The other storyline was not part of the discussion. The balance that policy practitioners were seeking for, leaned towards securing safety in the neighborhood instead of allowing the Moroccan community representatives to push for their side of the story in the meeting. They felt that everyone present accepted that signal of the mayor:

> *When we aired our concerns about the risks of such a march, the elderly men immediately changed their minds. Thanks to the mediator, we could convince them that such a march was not in their own interest. They understood that it would be too dangerous to have a group of youngsters walk such a controversial march. (Interview local civil servant security coordination, May 2007)[31]*

Now that the storyline of 'action-reaction' was fixed, the repertoire of appropriate action was contained. From the perspective of 'action–reaction', the legitimacy of a march was under attack.

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[30] *Die [burgemeester Cohen] heeft heel duidelijk gezegd: 'Jongens, erg dat dit gebeurd is, want ik kan me voorstellen dat het pijn doet voor zijn naasten, maar, aan de andere kant, er is ook wat gebeurd. Dus hij heeft ook wat gedaan wat niet door de beugel kan'. Ik geloof dat hij [burgemeester Cohen] ook een soort signaal heeft afgegeven dat ook door iedereen gedragen is. (Interview* lokale ambtenaar, veiligheidscoördinator*, May 2007)*

[31] *Toen we onze zorgen uitten over de risico's van een dergelijke tocht, bedachten de oudere mannen zich direct. Dankzij de mediator was het mogelijk hen duidelijk te maken dat een tocht ook niet in hun belang was. Zij begrepen dat het gevaarlijk zou kunnen zijn een groep jongeren zo'n omstreden tocht te laten lopen. (Interview* lokale ambtenaar, veiligheidscoördinator, *May 2007)*

Performance: residents of Moroccan descent

The network of neighborhood fathers shared their concerns about the risks of a march. The representatives of the Moroccan community remember the statement of the mayor in different terms. As one puts it:

> *The mayor said, 'If you really want to have your march, you have the right to go ahead, but I hope we can come to a better and more responsible agreement.' (Interview representative of the Moroccan community, neighborhood father, May 2007)[32]*

According to a governmental participant, there was a clear line between those who were pro-march and those who were against it. A member of the Moroccan community stated that the older Moroccan men who were participating in the meeting had decided upfront that a march from Central Station to the place where the incident happened was not a good plan. They considered it too dangerous and saw the risk of generating negative attention that would not be in the interest of the Moroccan community. Another participant in the meeting felt that the Moroccan men were the bridge in convincing the sister and her friends:

> *When we started to show our concerns about the risks, they started to change their minds. Thanks to the mediator we could put them in the right position, they understood that it would be dangerous if a group of youngsters would organize a march through the city about such a polarized issue. (Interview local civil servant, security coordination, May 2007)[33]*

All participants, however, seem to share the view that the boy's sister, the only member of the family, did not see eye-to-eye with the others. She wanted a march. She continued to try to make them understand that her brother was a good boy. She cried and pleaded that her brother was not the type to rob and threaten. She questioned the story as it

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[32] *De burgemeester zei: "Als je echt je protestmars wil houden, heb je alle recht om dat te doen, maar ik hoop dat we tot een meer verantwoordelijke oplossing komen." (Interview* vertegenwoordiger van de Marokkaanse gemeenschap, buurtvader*, May 2007)*

[33] *Toen we onze zorgen uitten over de risico's van een dergelijke tocht bedachten de oudere mannen zich direct. Dankzij de mediator was het mogelijk hen duidelijk te maken dat een tocht ook niet in hun belang was. Zij begrepen dat het gevaarlijk zou kunnen zijn een groep jongeren zo'n omstreden tocht te laten lopen. (Interview lokale ambtenaar, veiligheidscoördinator, May 2007)*

had been presented in the media and by the police and denied the 'own fault' frame. The sister had, at first, tried to question the cause of her brother's death, but it was not possible to open a discussion about his guilt or innocence.

One representative of the Moroccan community later said that he tried to support the sister because there was no one else on her side:

> *We told the sister that we were not opposed to her ideas. That it would be fine if she really wanted a march and that the mayor also agreed. We had to meet her at a certain point (...) But we made it clear that it was not in the interest of the community, if anything happened again, we wanted to commemorate her brother. (Interview representative of the Moroccan community, neighborhood father, May 2007)[34]*

Thus the neighborhood father was very conscious of the necessity to acknowledge grievances as well as being attentive to the girl's problematic position in the meeting. She was a young girl, alone in a room with older men who had more knowledge and power. While she was still mourning her brother, she had to discuss policy with a group of men. Moreover, outside, at the site of the incident, a group of friends and youngsters were waiting for her news. They wanted to protest and expected the sister to come through with a plan. The storyline that the neighborhood fathers developed allowed them to bring together the sister's grief and the safety concerns. They referred to a broader responsibility of the community. The incident was framed as something that they needed to move past:

> *You have to look at it this way… It is also in the advantage of the Moroccan community that we deal with these kinds of cases in a reasonable way. We shouldn't underestimate that responsibility. (Interview representative of the Moroccan community, neighborhood father, May 2007)[35]*

[34] *We hebben ook gezegd, we zijn niet tegen jou of jouw ideeën. Dat is allemaal prima, en de burgemeester zegt het ook, als je daar op staat dan kan je het ook gewoon proberen. Je moest haar toch het gevoel geven dat we haar tegemoet kwamen. Want aan haar kant was bijna niemand. Op een gegeven moment ben je geneigd om haar te steunen. Dat wilden we ook, maar zodanig dat er geen verdere schade zou komen.* (*Interview* vertegenwoordiger van de Marokkaanse gemeenschap, buurtvader, *May 2007*)

[35] *Je moet het zo bekijken…Het is ook in het voordeel van de Marokkaanse gemeenschap dat er in dit soort dingen redelijkheid wordt betracht om dit soort zaken op te lossen. Je kan niet instaan voor die verantwoordelijkheid. (Interview* vertegenwoordiger van de Marokkaanse gemeenschap, buurtvader, *May 2007)*

The neighborhood father refers to the reputation of the Moroccan community as a whole that would be at risk if the march would turn into violence. Framing the march in terms of that broader responsibility enabled him to convince the sister and her friends.

After everyone had a chance to state their point of view, the discussion shifted to the length and meaning of the march. The different stakeholders still differed in their interpretation of the events. The politicians and civil servants eventually left the sister and several members of the Moroccan community to confer with the mediator about what they should do. In the end, they came to share in the assessment of the risks: a march through the city center would be dangerous.

Social-spatial analyses

The negotiation of the march marks the first moment in which diverse storylines interact in a shared meeting. The choice to invite the representatives of the Moroccan community and some of the youngsters to this building highlights the power imbalance that the meeting starts out with. The space of the room communicates the unequal relationship between the local government who believes it has a responsibility to safeguard the public space and its citizens. When visitors enter the building, they first encounter a reception desk that allows or denies them to enter the area where policy practitioners hold office. To get to these offices, visitors have to identify who they are. Imagine the young Moroccan woman who had just lost her brother. She mentions her name, shows her identity card, and is allowed to enter the area of formal offices of politicians. She walks into the high rising room, looks out of the window and sees all her brother's friends waiting for her and realizes that she has to speak up for them. The room is full of important men and even the mayor is present. She thinks 'this must be important to them'. She decides to sit with the few people she barely knows who occupy one side of the table. Everyone is polite, but what do they want from her? Do they all think her brother is a criminal who deserved to die?

These considerations are based on the descriptions of people who were present at the meeting. They give an insight into the effect of the physical setting on the potential of the negotiation. In a critical moment where rules and relationships are unsettled, there is a liminal potential. But here, the physical environment communicates power relations because it is a regulated 'conceived' space that is representative of authorities rule (Lefebvre [1974] 1991: 33; Martin and Miller 2004: 146). The setting thus establishes

power relations before a liminal potential can occur. Does this choice of space allow for all participants to tell their stories, voice grievances, and construct meaning? What if the meeting would have taken place in the domain of the Moroccan community, for example the local mosque or a neighborhood center? With the choice of the setting, a power relation was communicated.

The power relation that was communicated through the dramaturgy of the setting proposes a script (Hajer 2009: 66). The meeting starts with the mayor who offers his condolences, but in that speech act he also establishes a dominant storyline. The words of the mayor fix the meaning of the incident. All participants recount this as the moment in which the 'action-reaction' storyline is fixed. The language chosen by the mayor limits the opportunity to negotiate other interpretations of the incident. His position of authority makes that the storyline of 'action-reaction' becomes the dominant narrative and limits the space to adhere to a different interpretation that has lower tellability in the interaction in the room. The perlocutionary force (Austin 1962: 101) of this first speech act in the setting of the council building establishes the course of the conversation.

After establishing the meaning of the incident, the appropriate repertoire to respond is up for discussion. The concerns about violent escalation are interpreted from different perspectives: policy practitioners propose it as a threat to security and the neighborhood fathers as a threat to their community's reputation. These two opposing interpretations are not discussed, but they lead to a discussion that focuses on practical considerations regarding the march's execution. The quote of the neighborhood father shows how powerful the practical concerns are in changing the focus of the conversation into concerns that are significant to everyone. The shared concerns offer a way to reinterpret the mayor's words and serve as an opening to discuss the march. The safety concerns seem to create space to find common ground about the practicalities of the march, such as the length and its route through the city. The neighborhood fathers are able to convince the sister of her responsibility towards the community and frames the short march as an opportunity.

Practically speaking, the negotiation results in a shorter march with less public attention. Not only the mayor's comment, but also the focus on security, is a way to fix the dominant narrative of 'action-reaction' because it underpins the inappropriateness

of the march as a demonstration against injustice. The focus on security legitimizes the idea that the march is a provocation by the Moroccan community. By reorienting the negotiation on questions concerning safety, policy makers are able to cover up their fundamental disapproval and fear of a protest march in general and instead focus on something that everyone can identify with.

Positioning through practical concerns is not the only way through which the negotiation missed opportunities. Although the dominant narrative was fixed, the difference between the storylines surfaced again in another crucial part of the negotiation. After establishing the length and route of the march, concerns are aired about the meaning of the march. From the perspective of 'action-reaction' and 'own fault', the meaning of the march as a protest would be out of the question. After all, there was nothing to protest against, the death of the boy was the consequence of his own behavior. The neighborhood fathers who are concerned about the reputation of the Moroccan community understand the controversial meaning of the protest. Instead, they tactically propose another form of marching: a silent march. A silent march is a common Dutch practice of mourning that is used to protest and commemorate acts of senseless violence. The noise manifestation, following the murder of Theo Van Gogh, was a symbolic counter-practice to the commonly used march of silence to underpin the nation's firm belief in freedom of speech. In line with that tradition of demonstration, the neighborhood fathers propose a march of silence to protest against the fact that the boy died unjustly. They feel a proportionate relationship between the 'action' and the 'reaction' is lacking: death is a disproportionate punishment for robbing a bag. From that perspective, a silent march is an appropriate response to this act of senseless violence and would position the Moroccan community – once again – as a community that tacitly performs common Dutch mourning practices.

Policy practitioners, however, question the appropriateness of a silent march. The silent march is a special category reserved to protest acts of senseless violence[36]. A silent march requires an official sanction and so will implicate the government in the interpretation it gives to the incident. It raises questions about categories: does the incident meet the criteria?

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[36] The Netherlands has a long record of silent marches that are usually initiated by sympathizers of victims of what is termed 'senseless violence' (*zinloos geweld*). A silent march is publicly understood as strong statement, a protest against senseless violence.

We thought we needed to do something with that march, shorter or something else. And I realized there was much resentment from the media. But also from other residents. From the whole country… they said, a silent march? How is that possible? He is a criminal? Because that information became available that day. And then people thought a silent march for a criminal? Where is the Netherlands headed? So all kinds of emotions were aired. (Interview local civil servant security coordination, May 2007)[37]

Policy practitioners once again state their rationale of 'action-reaction'. They define the problem by focusing on the robbery:

We should keep in mind what the start of the action was, a robbery of the lady's purse, in response to which she decides 'I can't let him get away with this'. It is an act out of anger in which the victim becomes the offender. (Interview district council mayor, May 2007)[38]

Then one of the local civil servants proposes a solution:

If you want to mourn the loss of your brother, call it a mourning march, not a silent march. Because the link to senseless violence irritates people, they ask themselves: senseless, he was a criminal? But nobody would deny your mourning. (Interview local civil servant safety coordination, May 2007)[39]

A 'march to mourn' would take away the public meaning of a silent march and leave

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[37] *We dachten we moeten iets bedenken met die tocht, korter of anders. En wat je ook heel erg merkte was dat er heel veel verontwaardiging was vanuit de media. Maar ook bij veel bewoners. Door heel Nederland van… een stille tocht? Hoe kan het? Hij is crimineel? Want toen bleek ook nog eens een keer dat hij net vrij was, dat hij eerder een overval had gepleegd met geweld. Toen dacht men… Een stille tocht voor een crimineel? Waarheen gaan we hier in Nederland? Dus allemaal emotie kwam er los. (Interview* lokale ambtenaar, veiligheidscoördinator, *May 2007)*

[38] *We moeten altijd in de gaten houden dat het actie-reactie was, de consequentie van het stelen van een tas, waarop zij besloot, 'dit pik ik niet, ik ga achter mijn tas aan'. Het is een actie die voortkomt uit een woedeaanval waarin het slachtoffer opeens verandert in de dader. (Interview* stadsdeelvoorzitter, *May 2007)*

[39] *Wij zeiden; 'als je wilt rouwen om het verlies van je broer, noem de tocht dan een rouwtocht in plaats van een stille tocht. Want een stille tocht heeft de connotatie van zinloos geweld en dat irriteert mensen, zij vragen zich af: zinloos, hoezo, hij was een crimineel. Maar niemand zou jou het rouwen willen ontnemen'. (Interview* lokale ambtenaar, veiligheiscoördinator, *May 2007)*

the march in the realm of private mourning. Policy practitioners saw that distinct and private meaning as an opportunity to give the Moroccan community a chance to mourn without the connotation of senseless violence.

The neighborhood fathers are disappointed about the way policy practitioners politicize the meaning of the march:

> *The family did not approve a march that would only mean 'to mourn', they did not even approve of a silent march. They wanted a demonstration all the way from Central Station. In the end, we could bring them to the decision for a mid-course, a silent march. But some politicians did not even approve of that. They even wanted to take advantage of it. (Interview representative of the Moroccan community, May 2007)[40]*

Like the neighborhood father says, the family made a big step in moving from a 'protest march' to a 'silent march' that they thought was a middle ground. From their perspective, even that middle ground was problematized during the negotiation. The private meaning of a 'march to mourn' was too far removed from their desire to demonstrate against injustice. Their underlying need was to voice their experience of marginality in Dutch society. The negotiation over the march had surfaced that experience once again. The negotiation did not allow them to voice how a dead body on the street and the responses to that violence had embodied their sense of exclusion. From the perspective of the Moroccan community – murder is not justified for robbing a bag – a connotation to senseless violence was appropriate. But as we have seen, there was no room in the meeting to negotiate meaning and diverse interpretations of the incident. The established positioning created an environment in which the Moroccan community had to be appreciative of the small space they were granted to take any action at all. A march to mourn would have no public meaning and does not convey any message to the broader public than the message of private commemoration. That form of private mourning fits the storyline of local politicians who were solely focused on preventing further escalations. Although the meeting was meant to be a negotiation, the interactions

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[40] *De familie, die was het daar niet mee eens. Die was het er zelfs niet mee eens met het idee van een stille tocht, zij wilden een protestmars vanaf Centraal Station. En dat hebben wij kunnen omzetten in een stille tocht, dat is een middenweg. Maar sommige politici, met alle respect, gaan dat ook politiseren, en dan wordt daar ook weer een slaatje uit geslagen. (Interview* vertegenwoordiger van de Marokkaanse gemeenschap*, May 2007)*

between the representatives of the Moroccan community and the policy practitioners did not leave space for underlying grievances to be voiced, stories to be communicated, and action repertoire to be renegotiated.

To allow for a liminal opportunity in a process of negotiations, it is important to allow a clash of interpretations to be shared. Through such negotiation of meaning, stories with high and low tellability find a voice. In this case the storyline of 'action-reaction' was fixed and thereby received higher tellability in the rest of the conversation. Sharing stories does not mean that everyone has to agree. In fact negotiation theory teaches us that, in order for problems to be solved interactively, meaning has to be up for discussion (Kelman 1996). In the interactions in the room, meaning was fixed through the storyline that became the dominant interpretation of what had happened. That action, maybe unintentionally, closed the opportunity for meaning to be negotiated. The liminal opportunity of the negotiation was lost.

A silent march would have created a space for the Moroccan community to commemorate, but more importantly, to engage in the creation of the public sphere. Like Hannah Arendt argues, democratic governments are responsible for constituting the public sphere as a place where multiple voices can be heard and a diversity of perspectives considered (Arendt [1958] 1998). Here the concern for the public sphere was not weighed against safety and the administrative concern. If we would take a performative perspective, a silent march would have given a marginal group the opportunity to engage in the public sphere through a silent performance of mourning that was a common repertoire of action in Dutch society. That performance would allow the Moroccan community to participate in the construction of a public domain. Undeniably, that meaning would have been a contested, but only through social contestation societies develop and integrate diverse groups. A silent march in this case might have broadened the repertoire of mourning and it would have been a group of 'newcomers' that would have enacted their democratic right to be part of 'public meaning making'. This would have enabled them to voice and counteract their experience of marginality. Now that stake of being a marginal group got lost in the responses to the event and the responses to the responses.

Narrative dynamics

The next day, media coverage endorses the fear of policy practitioners. Newspaper articles quote the reactions of residents who believe that a silent march, as it is known in

Dutch mourning traditions, is inappropriate in the case of a criminal:

> *I regret the death of the boy, he did not deserve it. But a silent march for a criminal goes too far. If this march is allowed, the phenomenon of a silent march belongs to the past. (P. van Dijk in Het Parool, 21 January 2005)[41]*

The media emphasize the choice of a local mourning march and stress the reaction of mayor Cohen who argues that 'he would find it a wrong signal if a convicted criminal would be commemorated in this way' (De Telegraaf, 21 January 2005). The district chairman is invited to explain about the march in a national television show:

> *You try to defend the compromise that you reached as best as you can. You often get framed as the weak one to not just forbid [a march]. (…) That media performance did not go wrong, but it was oriented at, also considering the events that we planned for the next day, having things go as smoothly as possible. (Interview district council mayor, May 2007)[42]*

His performance in the television show and the explanation of mayor Cohen in several newspapers are sufficient to calm the public debate and allow for the march to take place on a local and private scale.

On Thursday, it also becomes clear that the Surinamese driver would be called into court. Reactions to the prosecution of the driver show support for the 'own fault' discourse. On Friday morning, the newspaper headlines feature the 'own fault' framing. An article details the criminal record of the boy.

In preparation of the march, the neighborhood fathers make themselves responsible for preventing violent escalation:

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[41] *Ik betreur de dood van die jongen, dat heeft hij niet verdiend. Maar een stille tocht houden voor een crimineel gaat toch te ver? Als deze tocht wordt toegestaan, behoort het fenomeen stille tocht tot het verleden. (P. van Dijk in het Parool, 21 January 2005)*

[42] *Je probeert dat compromis wat je bereikt hebt dan zo goed mogelijk te verdedigen. Je wordt toch vaak gezien als degene die slap is om het dan niet te verbieden. (…) Dat optreden ging niet slecht, maar dat optreden was er op gericht, ook met het oog op de volgende dag, om de zaak dan ook maar zo goed mogelijk te laten verlopen. (Interview* stadsdeelvoorzitter*, May 2007)*

> *How are we going to show that we do not want such [violence] in our neighborhood, that we distance ourselves from these things? And if it happens, how are we going to respond? (Interview neighborhood father, June 2007)[43]*

They use the same security concern as policy practitioners and apply it to their own storyline. One neighborhood father argues that the march should show that violent escalations are not something the Moroccan community wants to provoke. This turn in the storyline of the Moroccan community enables them to circumvent a discussion about meaning and create a space where people can come together to march.

Critical moment 5: the march

The March took place on 21 March 2005, five days after the fatal collision between the boy and the woman in her car. It attracted around 300 to 400 people who walked from the site of the incident via two long residential streets and crossed a big highway to the Weesperzijde where the El-Kabeer Mosque is located.

Performance: residents of Moroccan descent

The neighborhood fathers organized for everyone to meet at the site of the incident. One father describes how it happened:

> *The march went as follows: we came together at a central spot. We organized and also participated. There were also many other people from the neighborhood, from Dutch descent. They just watched from the other side. But they talked so loudly we could hear them. People talked, looked at the neighborhood, looked at what was happening. I felt that people had their doubts. About the accident, or incident, it was all very dubious. (Interview neighborhood father, May 2007)[44]*

The neighborhood father describes how participants gathered around the site of the

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[43] *Hoe gaan wij nou wel laten zien dat we dus dit soort dingen [geweld] niet willen hebben in onze buurt, dat we ons distantiëren van deze dingen. Als het gebeurt, hoe moeten we daarmee omgaan? (Interview* buurtvader*, June 2007)*

[44] *De tocht ging zo: We hebben ons verzameld ter plekke. We hebben het georganiseerd en meegelopen. En er kwamen ook allemaal mensen voorbij die gewoon buurtbewoners waren, Nederlanders van origine. En die stonden helemaal van een andere te kijken. Die praatte zo luid dat je wel hoorde waar ze het over hadden. Mensen praten, kijken naar de buurt, kijken hoe het allemaal gebeurd. Ik had het idee dat al die mensen hun bedenkingen hadden. Dat ongeluk, of het incident, hoe dat gebeurd is was toch wel erg merkwaardig. (Interview* vertegenwoordiger van de Marokkaanse gemeenschap, buurtvader*, May 2007)*

incident. The majority of participants were of Moroccan descent. He speaks about other residents – of Dutch descent – who stood at the side of the street to watch the march pass by. Also, according to his recollection, policy practitioners were present. They did not participate. They simply stood there and watched. He argues that he felt as if the people who were watching did not approve of the march. He explains his discomfort with way the incident was interpreted by other people.

Keeping the march within the agreed upon bounds demanded active intervention by the neighborhood fathers. The neighborhood fathers proclaimed it their responsibility to keep the march from escalating into riots and violence. For them, the reputation of the Moroccan community was at stake. To make sure the march did not escalate, they improvised a tactic:

> *The boys did not always keep quiet. We walked as controllers, and we were also in danger. We could get beaten. But that's a risk you take. We said, 'that boy died and we want to commemorate him appropriately'. A wish from the family was that the march went quietly, that approach would cause fewer risks. One group could yell something to another and it goes wrong. We had a microphone: 'We are holding a silent march, and that means SILENCE!' (Interview representative of the Moroccan community, May 2007)[45]*

The march thus is performed in silence. And the neighborhood fathers use the storyline of threat to justify that performance of silence. They believe that silence will keep the march from escalating:

> *The march was almost disturbed by youngsters who started shouting. But we said to them: keep quiet, this is not a demonstration, this is a silent march to mourn your friend and brother, talking is not necessary, you should keep your thoughts focused on him. (Interview representative of the Moroccan community,*

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[45] *De jongens zijn niet altijd rustig gebleven. Wij liepen in een ordedienst, en wij liepen ook gevaar. Wij konden ook in elkaar geslagen worden. Die risico's neem je. We zeiden, die jongen is doodgegaan en we willen hem gewoon waardig herdenken. Een wens van de familie is dat het rustig gaat verlopen, die aanpak kan risico's met zich meebrengen. Er hoeft maar één groepje iets te roepen en de ander roept iets terug, en dan heb je het al. We hebben door een microfoon geroepen: 'We houden een stille tocht en dat betekend STIL'. (Interview* vertegenwoordiger van de Marokkaanse gemeenschap*, May 2007)*

May 2007)[46]

Here the neighborhood father describes the march as a silent march to mourn. The performance of silence is to prevent violence, but also to focus on mourning. This tactical performance is necessary because:

> *It was hard to calm people down on the day of the march. The family still found this march was doing wrong to their beloved one. They wanted a demonstration from Central Station to the place of the incident. And then the city council starts talking about a march to mourn, instead of a silent march! But we kept a silent march, really quiet without talking. We thought that was a middle course and a way to keep the emotions under control. But the family was not convinced at all,*
>
> *they did it because it was the least they could do. (Interview representative of Moroccan community, May 2007)[47]*

The neighborhood father thus explains their tactic to keep the march under control – silence – and in doing so he reveals the frustration of the family members about the rejection of a silent march. From the perspective of the boy's family, a march to mourn is not enough. The tactical performance of silence is needed to stay within the parameters that the authorities have established to prevent violent escalations. At the same time, the performance of silence conveys a symbolic message: its reference to senseless violence makes the performance a symbol that communicates the participants' discontent about injustice.

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[46] *De tocht werd bijna verstoord door jongeren die begonnen te schreeuwen en te schelden. Maar toen zeiden wij: 'hou je stil, dit is niet een demonstratie, dit is eens stille tocht voor vrienden en familie om die jongen te herdenken, praten is niet nodig, hou stil en herdenk hem op een waardige manier'. (Interview* vertegenwoordiger van de Marokkaanse gemeenschap*, May 2007)*

[47] *Het was moeilijk om de mensen tijdens de tocht te kalmeren. De familie vond dat deze tocht niet genoeg recht deed aan hun geliefde. Zij wilden een demonstratie van Centraal Station naar de plaats van het incident. En dan begint het stadsdeel over een rouwtocht in plaats van een stille tocht! Hoe dan ook, wij hebben een stille tocht gehouden, heel stil, zonder te praten. We dachten dat dit een middenweg was om de emoties onder controle te kunnen houden. Maar de familie was niet overtuigd, zij hebben dit gedaan omdat dit het minimum was van wat zij konden doen. (Interview* vertegenwoordiger van de Marokkaanse gemeenschap*, May 2007)*

Performance: policy practitioners

Policy practitioners explain how they understood the march:

> *I tolerated the march because I thought it was a way to mourn, not a demonstration against what had been done to the boy, because people could think differently about that. The mayor and I thought the march should not have the wrong connotations. (Interview district council mayor, May 2007)[48]*

The district mayor refers to a higher authority, the city mayor, to ground his storyline in the hierarchic authority of government. Thereby pointing to the fact that he was in a position to prohibit the march. Instead of prohibiting, he explains that they 'tolerated' the march because it was meant as a commemoration, not a demonstration. From that perspective, government officials were not supposed to participate in the march because commemorating is a private affair.

For a local civil servant of Moroccan descent, the general rule of not participating is something that became important to mention:

> *There was rumor that I participated. That was really not the case. I choose not to. I explained why. I was present at the beginning and at the end of the march, but only in a supervising role. (Interview local civil servant diversity coordination, May 2007)[49]*

Another civil servant explains:

> *During the march I was there, but only for observation. I did not walk in the march, I only wanted to see what the reactions of people were and what we as a government could do with that. (Interview local civil servant diversity*

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[48] *Die rouwtocht heb ik uiteindelijk, nou ja, gedoogd, omdat het wel een goede manier is om, nou, een rouwtocht geldt nu ook als een afscheidstocht en niet als een betoging tegen wat die jongen aangedaan is, want daar kun je verschillend over denken. En dat, in mijn ogen en in die van [burgemeester] Cohen, moet je dat dus niet de verkeerde lading geven. (Interview* stadsdeelvoorzitter, *May 2007)*

[49] *Er ontstaat dan toch het gerucht dat ik mee gelopen heb. Wat toch echt niet zo is. Ik heb daar ook nadrukkelijk voor gekozen. Ik heb dat ook uitgelegd waarom ik dat niet zou doen. Ik was aanwezig bij het begin en het einde van de tocht, maar nadrukkelijk in een toezichtrol. (Interview* lokale ambtenaar, diversiteitscoördinator, *May 2007)*

coordination, May 2007)[50]

Thus, the performance of policy practitioners during the march reinforced their interpretation of the march itself – a private mourning – which once again re-established the perceived meaning of the incident as a sequence of 'action-reaction'.

Social-spatial analyses

The public performance of the policy practitioners to not participate in the march re-establishes the dominant narrative. Their reluctance to participate is a logical consequence of their understanding of the sequence of events, but their decision expresses their interpretation of the event to a larger audience in the neighborhood. By overlooking the event from the sidelines, they literally divide the street into two public domains: one of the immigrants and one of the authorities that are entitled to either allow or deny the group to take part in the public sphere. The chairman's recollection of his decision reveals that he understands the outcome of the negotiation as a positive middle ground that speaks to their fear of escalation, but also facilitates the needs of the Moroccan community. The Moroccan community is allowed to use the public sphere for mourning, but the way in which this mourning takes place is being monitored and policed.

The Moroccan community, however, tacitly developed a tactic to be resilient against the proclaimed meaning of the march. Within the boundaries of what was politically possible, they invent a way to communicate their story. Paradoxically, they voice their grief and anger through being silent. The street becomes a lived space (Lefebvre [1974] 1991: 33), a place where a storyline with low tellability can be voiced through performance instead of through speech acts. The act of silence is controversial, because of its symbolic meaning that does not fit the divergent interpretations of the incident. In fact, the city's authorities reject a public silent march. Interestingly, that rejection makes the paradoxical message of silence even stronger and the meaning of space in which the performance takes place even more public.

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[50] *Tijdens de tocht was ik daar, maar uitsluitend ter observatie. Ik liep niet mee met de tocht, ik wilde zien wat de reacties waren en wat wij als overheid met dit soort dingen kunnen doen in het vervolg. (Interview* lokale ambtenaar, diversiteitscoördinator*, May 2007)*

The neighborhood fathers legitimize their practice by using the same theme – the risk of violent escalation – that is used to shorten the march and exclude the silent connotation. Silence is framed as a way to ensure safety. The practical tactic of silence allows the Moroccan community to communicate the protest they had envisioned through a spatial practice of walking in silence. Thus, the storyline the Moroccan community uses to organize their march includes themes that belong to the dominant narrative, and thereby tacitly allow for opportunity to express an opposing storyline and infer meaning to the public space in the neighborhood.

Despite this interesting act of tactical meaning making, the meaning of the march should be regarded as a missed opportunity, according the neighborhood fathers:

> *The segregation in society was very clear. Not one white person walked the march, which is a shame. But it is not about that, we said, the essence is how we go on in the future. (Interview representative of the Moroccan community, neighborhood father, May 2007)[51]*

The neutral stance that the city officials sought to adopt is not interpreted as such by those marching. To some at least, the lack of local government action demonstrates the way in which Moroccans are viewed and treated in the broader community. The absence of the local government widens the gap between the Moroccan community and the established authorities. Being absent is as much an action as being present. By actively 'not participating' the policy makers attempt to keep the march within the private realm. But instead, their absence is experienced as a political statement about the role and meaning of the Moroccan community in the neighborhood and even in the broader context of Dutch society at large:

> *The essence is that the youngsters are highly sensitive because they do not feel accepted within Dutch society. All it takes is one small thing and the situation explodes. We already knew that. That's why we said to the girl: Don't do it. (Interview representative of the Moroccan*

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[51] *De segregatie binnen de samenleving was heel erg duidelijk. Niet één blanke liep mee met de stille tocht, dat is een schande. 'Maar daar gaat het niet om' hebben we gezegd, de essentie van de tocht was om door te gaan op een goeie manier in de toekomst. (Interview* vertegenwoordiger van de Marokkaanse gemeenschap, buurtvader*, May 2007)*

community, neighborhood father, May 2007)[52]

Although the mayor made a statement at the beginning of the negotiation that attempted to create or impose a common storyline, the above shows us how storylines remain separate, even during the march itself. The ambiguous meaning of the march also creates a liminal opportunity: the experience of exclusion could have been transformed into a positive acknowledgement if policy practitioners would have decided to participate. If policy practitioners had been able to engage the storyline that was excluded from the conversation, they would have been able to see the underlying need of the Moroccan community. Because of the way in which the negotiation unfolded, they could not. During the march, the underlying need was performed in public space. If policy practitioners would have had a capacity to read the differences and understand the performance as an invitation, they could have performed recognition and they could have—quite literally—walked their way to a strengthened public sphere where multiple voices find acknowledgment.

Conclusions

The crisis that unfolded after the death of a young man in the street surfaced tensions within Dutch society. The incident created several situations in which these tensions bubbled over and it revealed how different parties position themselves in interactions. This case study teaches us four lessons about moments of crisis. First, crisis functions as a lens to gain insight into underlying tensions. Second, in crisis, critical moments follow one other at a rapid pace. Third, social and spatial performances of parties matter in the way they provoke or cease to provoke a response from the other party. Whether they provoke a response or not, they always communicate something that is intelligible about the subjective storyline of the performer. Finally, these critical moments allow for liminal opportunities in which the rules of negotiation are unsettled and meaning is unstable. Whether parties make use of these liminal opportunities lies in their response to critical moments. This case shows that the context, role, and responsibility of parties shape their response. Here the possibility to engage the Moroccan community in

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[52] *De kern waar het om gaat is dat de jongeren hier extra gevoelig waren, omdat ze denken dat ze niet geaccepteerd worden. Er hoeft maar een heel klein ding te gebeuren en dan explodeert het. En dat is iets wat wij al door hadden, en daarom hebben wij tegen dat meisje gezegd: niet doen. (Interview* vertegenwoordiger van de Marokkaanse gemeenschap, buurtvader*, May 2007)*

decision making was highly influenced by a legitimate fear for escalation. Nevertheless, when we look into the details of critical moments, like the negotiation and the march, we see room for acknowledgement. Allowing space for the counter story in the meeting, or performing recognition by walking along, would have provided acknowledgment without jeopardizing policy makers' security responsibility. The case thus shows that in dealing with moments of crisis, we can ask ourselves: how can we make sense of the details of each critical moment and its liminal capacity while dealing with the volatile tensions in practice?

The death of the young man created a crisis that was critical to the Moroccan community; they immediately felt the need to respond. They made sense of the dead body on the street as a violent act that was an inappropriate response to robbing a bag. For policy practitioners, on the other hand, the dead body was not a crisis. They framed it as a tragedy, an accident that was worthy of private grief, but not public meaning. The causal relationship between 'action-reaction' and 'own-fault' gave these storylines high tellability. Initially news reports also represented the voice of family and friends, who proposed a different and much more complex causality. Their storyline focused on discrimination and, in this context, the perpetrator became the victim. The choice of the policy practitioners to not treat the dead body as a crisis confirmed and extended the Moroccan community's experience of marginality. Especially when considering the constant references to the response to the death of Theo Van Gogh, the 'non-response' of the policy practitioners to the death of the boy was immediately critical to the Moroccan community. It gave meaning to the incident in hindsight. The body on the street became an embodiment of the communities' marginal position in Dutch society. From that moment on, the Moroccan community had no option other than to voice their experience of injustice as an opposing story in the public sphere. The sequence of events reveals how some events turn critical to one party and remain unproblematic to another. This raises the practical question of how groups can learn about moments that are critical to other parties while dealing with escalating tensions and being immersed in their own storyline?

This case study suggests that the answer to this question lies in a better look into the discursive practices of parties in public space. Parties make sense of previous, present, and future events through their experience of critical moments. The case

study shows how three storylines unfold soon after the incident that fuels this episode of crisis. The first critical moment – the incident itself – creates a liminal opportunity because meaning is up for negotiation. This negotiation takes place at the site of the incident, hereby creating a parochial realm where meaning is constructed through the interactions between the communities. Policy practitioners were not involved in this process of meaning making at the local level. Instead, they based their knowledge on messages in the media that proposed a causal storyline that soon became the dominant narrative. Participating in the negotiations at the street-level would have informed the authorities about the counter-narrative of the Moroccan community. By participating in the interactions at the street, they could also have acknowledged the discursive spatial practice of commemoration that was being performed in the same script as a traditional Dutch mourning.

The most provocative turning point in this case study is the moment in which the flowers are removed. The disruption of the commemoration practice not only excludes the Moroccan community's spatial performance from the public space, but also engenders the marginal position of their storyline. What is an unfortunate accident to policy practitioners is a revealing incident that deepens the sense of exclusion for the family and friends of the boy. In response, they improvise an action that has undeniable public meaning: a protest march. It is only in this moment – the third critical moment – that policy practitioners start to treat the situation as critical. When the improvisations of the Moroccan community create a threat to public safety, the local government becomes conscious of its role as an actor in the escalation that is already underway. Instead of acknowledging the critical moments of others, which may have helped to prevent further escalation, policy practitioners become a party in the unfolding crisis.

The negotiation of the march marks the first face-to-face interaction between parties who identify with different storylines. The interaction between the parties during the negotiation offers another liminal opportunity that becomes tangible in the meeting at the local council. Despite the invitation to discuss the march, the meeting becomes a missed opportunity as the speech acts of the mayor and the physical environment construe power relations. The unfolding interaction positions 'action-reaction' as the dominant narrative and, so, fixes the meaning of prior events. Space for renegotiating meaning is limited and the dominant storyline discursively fixes the repertoire of appropriate action.

The risk of violence becomes the focal point in the negotiation over practical issues like the length and route of the march. Another chance to negotiate meaning comes up when the 'silent march' is put on the table. From the storyline of 'action-reaction', this is an inappropriate use of a traditional public ritual that has public connotations. A short and local 'march to mourn' is the end result of the negotiation constituting the meaning of the incident and the meaning of the march through one storyline. These events show how opportunities for renegotiation depend on the willingness of the holders of the dominant narrative to open up space for the discussion of less accepted meanings. Here negotiation is on the agenda, but does not take place. Instead, authorities use their position to formulate a dominant storyline that sets a repertoire of action that the Moroccan community has to adopt in order to take part in private mourning.

The rejection of a silent march deepens the tensions between the parties. In practice, however, the Moroccan community tacitly performs a silent march. The neighborhood fathers legitimize this performance by tactically using the safety frame to legitimize their walk in silence. Their performance of silence in the public sphere is a political act that voices the meaning of protest within the boundaries given by the state. Here, we see the final liminal opportunity as the performance of silently marching discursively creates a chance to engage in common meaning making. Once again, however, the storyline of 'action-reaction' makes participating in the march an inappropriate performance for policy practitioners. Their 'non-participation' is a political act in itself, however. Their performance as observers, instead of participants, reasserts the marginal position of the Moroccan community in the public sphere. The march – although walked in silence – remains in the private sphere and, as a neighborhood father explained, marks a re-enactment of the segregation between the Moroccan community and Dutch society.

By participating, policy practitioners could have made a statement that everyone is important in this neighborhood, this city, or this country. Walking along would have communicated that all communities have access to the public sphere. This would not have legitimized criminal activities. Nor would it jeopardize safety. It would have moved across the divide that the different interpretations created and would have told a story of a city where the mayor takes into account the interests of all its residents, independent of color, race, or background. It would have taken an act of leadership to move against the current and pronounce genuine identification with those who are

troubled, marginalized, and excluded. Unlike the talk of politicians, the performance would have been simple. All it would have required is walking.

To understand the liminal capacity in each critical moment, it is important to take into account the unequal power balance between the different storylines. A renegotiation of meaning can only happen when multiple voices are expressed. This case study shows that a more thorough look into the informal symbolic performances of parties can inform authorities about the opportunities that conflict has to offer. Now the responses of authorities, although unintentional, reasserted the marginal position of the counter-narrative. Policy practitioners did not read the informal performances, they did not use them to inform their actions and decisions, and, thereby, missed out on the liminal opportunities.

This case study reflects on how engagement in the public sphere does not solely develop around grand events, but also through local tragedies. Citizens not only engage in public decision making when invited, but in moments that are inconvenient and full of risk. The story also shows how we might anticipate such inconvenient opportunities. The events around Van Gogh created a climate of heightened awareness, anticipation, and scrutiny in which subsequent events like the bag snatcher were bound to have a public character. In these local dramas, there are always groups that take up marginal positions. From a marginal position, the repertoire available to position oneself in the public sphere is limited. Where authorities often have access to dominant narratives, people who identify with counter-narratives make use of different tactics to voice their stories. When such a group also takes up a minority position, voicing that story is even more important. Consequently, they improvise tacit performances that are embedded in local knowledge. These informal practices communicate the storylines of groups and allow them to capture a space in the public sphere. It is in these unexpected local dramas that authorities have the ability to strengthen the quality of the public sphere. Looking beyond dominant storylines and into the interplay of parties in critical moments allows us to rethink what is initially understood as 'noise' and engage in a negotiation of meaning and belonging.

Chapter 5
Controversy: the cockpit
Rethinking the repertoire of citizenship

Introduction

This is a story of controversy in a newly built neighborhood of the city of The Hague, called Ypenburg. I characterize conflict as a controversy when periods of crisis, dispute, and latent conflict alternate over a long period of time. The controversy in The Hague is a local drama that unfolds in such a pattern. The case study provides a detailed description of how street-level interactions turn violent as reified ideas about the 'self' and the 'other' exclude a group of residents from negotiations over a community center. The social-spatial narrative framework reveals how the story unfolds through critical moments that disrupt the sequence of events. As one storyline becomes marginalized, the performances of one group get excluded from street-level negotiations. The case study challenges us to rethink the repertoire of citizenship as it explores a variety of discursive acts through which a local resident group seeks to regain its role as community organizer. The dramaturgy of interactions among the policy practitioners, the welfare professionals, and this group of active neighbors deepens underlying grievances. The case reveals how governments that face controversy can be challenged as everyday events disrupt periods of tranquility and (re)escalate tensions, surfacing prior grievances in the process. As the case study of the Amsterdam bag snatcher demonstrated, analyzing what happens during critical moments provides us with insights into the interplay between government's attempt to govern and citizen's experience of public engagement. This analysis demonstrates how governments might learn from street-level interactions as they deal with controversy. How can we make sense of everyday interactions in order to explain escalation and violence? What are the scripts that local authorities use to respond to unexpected public action? And what repertoires do citizens develop to voice their story in the public sphere?

The case study begins with a description of narrative dynamics that introduces the case actors and their storylines. This sets the stage for an analysis of four critical moments that dramatize the relationship between case actors and challenge the meaning of citizenship. The story covers a six-year transition in the neighborhood: starting in 2001 when the first residents moved in and concluding in 2007 when the local government hired a professional to try to transform the pattern of controversy by way of mediation (see chapter 7 for a case study on his mediation practice). My ethnographic research took place between 2009 and 2012[1]. Because my research took place during this period of resolution, many of the participant observations will be discussed in chapter 7 in which I describe the intervention in Ypenburg as an exemplary practice for dealing with urban conflict. Nevertheless, informal conversations and everyday interactions that I observed during my presence in the years after the period of controversy reveal much about the tense relationship between professionals and members of the community. Besides participant observations, much of this case study is based on narrative interviews and focus group sessions in which case actors reconstructed their experiences (see appendix I for a full overview of the methods I used). In June 2011 I organized a reflection session in which welfare professionals, policy practitioners, and police officers reflected on my analysis of critical moments.

Before going into the details of this urban controversy, we have to get acquainted with the neighborhood and its residents. Ypenburg is a new town development in the city of The Hague. It was built in the 1990s, an era in which politicians in the Netherlands were preoccupied with the ambition to mix people from different socio-economic backgrounds. This policy strategy remains dominant in the Netherlands in the 21st century despite research that has shown that forced mixing does not necessarily lead to intermingling and often creates new tensions (Kleinhans, Veldboer and Duyvendak 2000; Uitermark 2003). A popular urban development scheme at the time was the Vinex[2] neighborhood. Ypenburg was constructed as part of this policy program that addressed the growing demand for middle class homes outside hectic city centers by helping cities

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[1] I started working on this case study as a junior researcher in the NICIS project 'Buurten, Spanningen, en Conflicten' before I entered my PhD program a year later.

[2] VINEX (*Vierde Nota Ruimtelijke Ordening Extra*, which roughly translates into 'Fourth Memorandum Spatial Planning Extra') is a policy brief by the Dutch Ministry of Housing, Spatial Planning and the Environment released in 1988. The note determines a number of spaces that can be used for the construction of new housing starting in 1993.

build neighborhoods outside established city districts. During its development, Ypenburg remained administratively part of the municipality of Rijswijk, a town bordering The Hague. In 2002, the city of The Hague incorporated Ypenburg as its 8th borough.

Not only the political and social plan, but also the physical design of Ypenburg, expresses an idealized form of urbanism. Frits Palmboom designed the Ypenburg neighborhood. His purpose was to use the contours of the airport that historically occupied the site to develop a street plan in which residents would live together surrounded by gardens in housing blocks designed by different architects (Palmbout – urban landscape architects 1993). The physical design programmed spaces for social services such as a community centers, health centers, kinder gardens, etcetera. These buildings are located in the central area called 'Singels'. To create an urban feel in the neighborhood, the architects combined social services, housing, and shops in the central area (Venema 2000: 70). The Singels area has four square towers with frames around their rooftops. The frames light up in that change according to the time of year. At Christmas they are green and red, in spring yellow and purple, on Queen's Day (a Dutch national holiday) they are bright orange. When one takes a stroll through the streets, the effort to develop an urban space that brings together different people, activities, and facilities is easy to recognize. Apart from the maintenance, aesthetics, and personal tastes in window dressing, it is impossible to differentiate the rentals from the owner occupied houses. The housing blocks stand in straight rows with similar colors and styles in red or grey brick with large windows. The story of controversy starts when Ypenburg was still under construction.

Narrative dynamics

In the late 1990s, a group of people who lived in the famous Schilderswijk neighborhood was invited to consider moving to newer and bigger houses in the new neighborhood of Ypenburg. Schilderswijk –where they had lived for generations – is notorious for its long-standing community traditions. Although the group of residents was reluctant to leave their beloved homes, they realized that their living conditions would improve in the new town. They decided to take the chance and move to Ypenburg. A local police officer explains the difference between the way of life in Schilderswijk and Ypenburg:

> *What they took along is a lifestyle in which the social control is very high,*
> *but the living conditions very different. [In Schilderswijk] there were homes*

> *bordering the street and families three floors high. Their parents had lived under similar conditions. You bring along a history of social control, way of living, how your parents use to speak to you, and so on. And all of that gets replaced to an environment with front yards. At a certain point they hang on to old values, but other factors are changing. You let your child play in the neighborhood; they hang out around the corner in front of some guy's doorstep and nobody knows those children. In the past that child would have been brought home immediately. The whole social control system that surrounded them for maybe one hundred years, because grandmother used to live there [as well], was totally gone. Those are all factors that played a role. (Frank, local police officer, May 2010)[3]*

Frank stresses how community life in Schilderswijk is different from that in Ypenburg. He points out that although the physical environment is different, people try to hold on to the lifestyles they know. He describes how familiarity among parents in Schilderswijk created a situation of social control in which the children would grow up and be able to move around freely in the neighborhood. In Ypenburg, that social control was lost as the community was a mix of people from all over The Hague.

That mix of different people has a specific meaning in The Hague as its residents use a peculiar unwritten, yet traditional, distinction between two types of residents: *Hagenezen* and *Hagenaren*. Historically, *Hagenaar* refers to the people who are better off and live in the richer sandy areas of the city. Alternatively, *Hagenees* is a usually used to refer to someone from working class descent who lives in the parts of the city that were built on clay soils and had a higher risk of flooding (Van Doorn 2002). This distinction is still vital nowadays as the traditional residents of Schilderswijk are usually referred to as *Hagenezen*. The difference between *Hagenaren* and *Hagenezen* is also

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[3] *Wat ze eigenlijk meenemen is een bepaalde manier van leven waarin de sociale controle heel erg hoog was, maar de manier van wonen was anders.[In de Schilderswijk] had je een trottoir met een woning eraan vast en drie hoog gezinnen boven elkaar gestapeld. Hun ouders hadden ook in een vergelijkbare situatie gewoond. Je neemt een historie mee, sociale controle, manier van wonen, hoe moet je door je ouders worden aangesproken, en weet ik nog allemaal. En vervolgens ga je dat verplaatsen naar een andere soort leefomgeving met voortuinen. Op een gegeven manier houden ze wel vast aan de oude waarden maar vooral erom heen veranderen een aantal factoren. (...) Je laat je kind dan los in een wijk. Dan staan ze om de hoek bij die vent voor de deur en niemand kent dat kind. Terwijl in het verleden werd het kind meteen teruggebracht. Dus die hele sociale controle die erom heen zat die al misschien honderd jaar oud is, want oma woonde er vroeger nog, die was er gewoon niet meer. Allemaal factoren die meegespeeld hebben. (Frank,* lokale politieagent, *May 2010)*

noticeable by the accent these groups have (Van den Berg and Van Oostendorp 2012). *Hagenaren* usually speak 'standard Dutch' as they often fulfill jobs as civil servants or politicians who work for the national government that is also established in The Hague. The *Hagenezen* speak with the accent called *Haags* that became notoriously famous because of the nostalgic song that they sing as if it were their anthem: 'Oh Oh The Hague, beautiful city behind the dunes. Schilderswijk, Lange Poten, and the central square... I wouldn't want to trade with anyone, because I would despair if I wouldn't be a *Hagenees*.'[4] Schilderswijk receives a large amount of attention in the song. The city, and in particular Schilderswijk, prompts a great amount of pride to most *Hagenezen*. This was also the case for the group of residents that moved to Ypenburg. The distinction between *Hagenezen* and *Hagenaren* gets dramatized in the unfolding of controversy in Ypenburg.
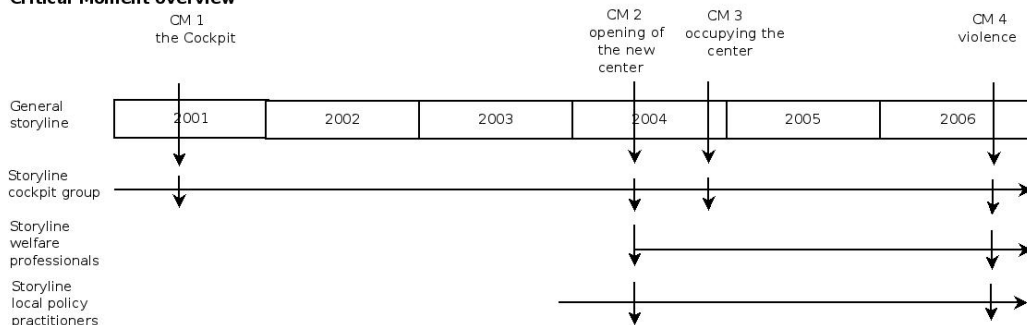
Critical moment 1: the cockpit

When a group of residents from Schilderswijk arrived in Ypenburg to move into their new homes, a big part of the neighborhood was still under construction. The construction site was an attractive playground for children:

> *(…) there was nothing to do. And during the holidays, well, what do youngsters love best? The construction site, of course. Then the police said: 'wait a second.' The local government did not know what to do and they told us: 'could you do something about this?' Yes, of course we can do something! (Lesly, resident,*

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[4] *'Oh Oh Den Haag, mooie stad achter de duinen. De Schilderswijk, Lange Poten, en het Plein. Oh Oh Den Haag, ik zou met niemand willen ruilen. Meteen gaan huilen, als ik geen Hagenees zou zijn.'* Lyrics of the song *'Oh Oh Den Haag'* (Oh Oh The Hague) by Ron Delil (1985).

focus group interview, May 2009)[5]

Performance: residents

The first critical moment in this case study developed out of a spontaneous act of community organizing by one group of active residents. The group from Schilderswijk was used to a bustling community life and they immediately began to organize a neighborhood center that kept the children and youngsters off the street as well as entertained adults with social activities. They organized children's activities, karaoke, bingo for the elderly, and a club where fathers could play cards. The municipal government of Rijswijk provided an old trailer that they could use to house neighborhood activities. The new residents called the trailer 'the cockpit', referencing the former airfield. According to the founders, the cockpit quickly became the central feature of the new neighborhood:

> *And then we said 'Let's make it a club!' It starts very small but then you talk to other neighbors and ask them: 'Guys, what do you want to do?' That way the club came to be. With many different people, everyone wanted to be part of it and help out. (Sjaan, resident, focus group interview, May 2009)*[6]

In the period of the cockpit, the group established itself as community organizers. The identification with the repertoire of community organizing is central to the way the group positioned itself in the new neighborhood. The history of the club lies at the heart of their storyline. The group speaks about the cockpit as utterly unproblematic, all activities were improvised and their role as community organizers evolved naturally:

> *Sjaan: 'We also opened the cockpit up during school vacations, and then we had the children for six weeks, six weeks long.'*

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[5] *(…) er was nog niets te doen. En in de vakantie, ja wat is er mooier voor jongeren? De bouw in natuurlijk. Dus toen zei de politie van; 'ho, wacht even'. De gemeente wist er geen raad mee en die zeiden tegen ons: 'Kunnen jullie er wat aan doen?' Ja natuurlijk kunnen we daar wat aan doen! (Lesly,* bewoner, *focus group interview, May 2009)*

[6] *En toen maakten we daar een clubhuisje van. Dat begint heel klein en dan praat je met de buurt en vraag je ze: 'jongens, wat kunnen we eigenlijk doen?' En zo is het hele clubhuis eigenlijk ontstaan. Er zaten heel veel vrijwilligers, iedereen wilde er aan mee werken. (Sjaan,* bewoner, *focus group interview, May 2009)*

> *Gonnie: 'Not all children have the means to go on holiday. We had to entertain them. Everyone else was away, so in the morning I would fry eggs for the children. (...) And then he [points at Tall Harry] would blow up the jumping cushions.'*
>
> *Tall Harry: 'Everything went naturally.'*
>
> *Gonnie: 'And when it was really hot we would open the water sprinkler and "wham", six weeks long until five in the afternoon. (Residents, focus group interview, May 2009)*[7]

The cockpit group describes how the children needed a place where they could experience a sense of community. In an undefined space, where parks, play grounds, streets, and shopping malls were planned but not yet available, a group of residents gave meaning to a space, and turned it into a place (Gieryn 2000). They designed a logo and made sure there were activities at set hours. Organizing community activities was a repertoire of action they brought in from their former neighborhood. The cockpit was their solution to the empty space they encountered after moving in from lively Schilderswijk. The informal activities engaged new neighbors and created a sense of community. The storyline of the cockpit group starts here, at the moment in which they engage in community activities and experience a sense of ownership of their new living environment.

Performance: policy practitioners

The local policy makers of Rijswijk are eager to support a neighborhood initiative. Besides the trailer, they also decide to support the cockpit with some subsidies to organize activities:

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[7] *Sjaan: 'Je draaide ook vakanties in de cockpit. Dan had je zes weken die jongeren, zes weken lang.'*

Gonnie: 'Niet alle kinderen kunnen op vakantie. Je moet ze bezighouden. Iedereen was lekker weg dus 's morgens vroeg stond ik brood met eieren voor ze te bakken. (...) Dus lekker je boterhammetje mee en dan ging hij [wijst naar Tall Harry] het grote kussen opblazen.'
Tall Harry: 'Dat ging allemaal vanzelf, hoor.'
*(*Bewoners*, focus group interview, May 2009)*

Gonnie: En als het heel warm was, ging de waterkraan aan en dan hups, zes weken lang de kinderen tot vijf uur 's middags. (Bewoners, focus group interview, May 2009)

> *(...) we were dealing with a very strong community. Rijswijk, the former local government, gave them much support so they had the chance to develop a very closed community. And in that closed community they did everything by themselves. With their own club, their own activities, and their own subsidies. It became a very closed community that determined what was happening in the neighborhood. They had their own entertainment and welfare. (Gerard, head local police department, May 2009)[8]*

The police officer remembers the period of the cockpit as it was organized under the municipality of Rijswijk. In his story, he voices concern about the independent character of the club. He frames it as a 'closed society'. Branding the cockpit as a closed society became central in the storyline of the authorities at that time. In this quote, the local police officer describes the club as a private dwelling that is only accessible to a specific group of people. Moreover, he adds that the cockpit allows the group to take up a dominant position in the neighborhood. His remarks attribute a position to the group that directly threatens the position of the authorities. Instead of making a claim about the legitimate position of the authorities, the narrative of police officers and policy practitioners delegitimizes the position of the cockpit group by emphasizing that their club does not have public character:

> *(...) It was a sort of domain of bandits that nobody had anything to do with and where the residents could do whatever they wanted and also their children. (Frank, local police officer, May 2010)[9]*

The police officer strengthens his storyline that gives meaning to the cockpit as a private dwelling by calling the club a 'terrain of bandits' ('*een soort roversterrein*'). The metaphor of a 'terrain of bandits' deepens the sense that the meaning of the cockpit is not public but private – thus not for the public good that is usually a prerequisite for

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[8] *(...) je had wel te maken met een hele sterke buurt. Die vanuit het bestuur, toen Rijswijk, de gelegenheid kreeg om een gesloten gemeenschap te vormen. En in die gesloten gemeenschap ook alles zelf te doen. Met een eigen clubhuis, die ook zelf hun activiteiten mochten ontplooien, ze kregen hun eigen subsidie. Het was een hele gesloten gemeenschap die in die buurt bepaalde wat er ging gebeuren. Ze hadden hun eigen entertainment en hun eigen welzijn. (Gerard,* hoofd politie Ypenburg*, May 2009)*

[9] *(...) dat het een soort roversterrein was waar niemand mee te maken had en bewoners konden doen en laten wat zij willen en hun kinderen daar ook tegenaan hingen. (Frank,* politieagent*, May 2010)*

community activities.

At this point, the storyline of the cockpit as 'a private dwelling' becomes the dominant understanding of what is at stake. The thin narrative (Cobb 2003) that the authorities voice has high tellability as it infers a causal relationship between the cockpit and the experience of uncertainty. The private character of the club logically leads to a threat to local officials who are excluded – positioning the meaning of characters as victims versus perpetrators. This storyline thus produces a dominant narrative that is understood as the start of further tensions:

> *But that period of the cockpit is understood as the time in which all the problems originated. (Gerard, head of local police office, May 2009)*[10]

In response, the local authorities decided that members of the cockpit group should not be charged with controlling public money.

Performance: other neighbors

Soon after the cockpit was established, another group of active residents started a second community organization, a foundation they called *Stichting Buitenplaats Ypenburg* (Foundation for Garden Town Ypenburg). As the local government had already developed doubts about the cockpit and its role in the community, they turned to the new foundation and appointed it to manage the administration of the activities in the trailer:

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[10] *Maar de periode van de cockpit, dat wordt wel gezien als een periode waarin de voedingsbodem werd gelegd voor de problematiek. (Gerard,* hoofd politie Ypenburg*, May 2009)*

DE COCKPIT

Openingstijden

MAANDAG	VAN ... TOT 13.30 UUR
	VAN 19.00 TOT 21.30 UUR
DINSDAG	VAN ... TOT 17.00 UUR
	VAN 18.00 TOT 21.30 UUR
WOENSDAG	VAN 08.30 TOT 10.00 UUR
	VAN 13.30 TOT 16.00 UUR
	KNUTSELMIDDAG KOSTEN F 1,50
	VAN 19.00 TOT 21.30 UUR
DONDERDAG	VAN ... TOT ... UUR
	VAN 19.00 TOT 21.30 UUR
VRIJDAG	VAN 15.00 TOT 17.00 UUR
	VAN 18.00 TOT 21.30 UUR
ZATERDAG	VAN 12.00 TOT 16.00 UUR

WIST U DAT:
ER TIJDENS DE KINDERDISCO EN DE WOENSDAG EN DAT DE CLUB OPEN IS ER NIET GEROOKT WORDT.
Buurthuis de COCKPIT
adres. Laan van Hoornwijck 126
tel: 070 4 154527

The municipality of Rijswijk asked us to monitor. That was our assignment. And then one day ... there was a gambling machine. It was uncontrollable… (Anthonie, resident, May 2011)[11]

The members of the foundation were eager to work together with the cockpit group and launched a monthly journal that informed people about the activities in the neighborhood. The cockpit was mentioned in this booklet and the activities in the cockpit were announced on a special page (see picture above). The social mixing strategy seemed to bring people together, but that proximity quickly caused tensions

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[11] *Wij moesten dat beheer voeren van de gemeente Rijswijk. Die opdracht hadden wij gekregen. En dan kwamen er… opeens stond er een gokkast. Was niet te controleren… (Anthonie,* bewoner*, May 2011)*

that became manifest in everyday interactions in the cockpit:

> *It was a fun club but they were not controllable. They just did what they wanted to do. (…) That was for me as director of our foundation and for Mary as financial manager not workable, we did not know what was going on. We also didn't know where the money went. That is not acceptable. (Anthonie, resident, May 2011)[12]*

The improvisational character of the organization of the cockpit became problematic when activities had to become accountable and meet bureaucratic regulations that were controlled by another group of residents. Within the informal context of the cockpit, accountability was not one of the goals. Its goal was to base activities on local needs and make them available to everyone:

> *[Their goal] was to keep the youth off the streets, for sure, doing as much as possible for the youth. There really was nothing to do for the youth and I have to say that they really did everything to make this happen. And it also really worked out. (Anthonie, resident, May 2011)[13]*

With his last remark, the director of the foundation shows that he is knowledgeable about the way members of the cockpit group voice their storyline. The local council that asked him to monitor the cockpit group had put him in a difficult position. The tensions between the cockpit group and the other residents did not contradict the cockpit group's storyline of 'good community organizing'. In everyday interactions, however, the goal of monitoring the group by setting rules for accountability became dominant. Thus the storyline of local officials who portrayed the cockpit as something illegitimate and private became dominant in interactions at the street-level. This storyline also had repercussions in the rest of the neighborhood. A resident who considers herself a

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[12] *Het was best een leuke club maar ze waren niet in de hand te houden. Zij deden gewoon buiten de stichting om wat zij wilden. (…) Nou dat was voor mij als voorzitter en voor Mary als de penningmeester niet meer te doen, want wij wisten niet wat er omging. Wij wisten ook niet meer wat er aan geld omging. Dat kon niet. (Anthonie,* bewoner*, May 2011)*

[13] *[Hun doel was] de jeugd van de straat houden. Absoluut. Zo veel mogelijk voor de jeugd doen. Er was werkelijk voor de jeugd helemaal niks. En ik moet ook zeggen dat er mensen zijn die zich daar heel erg voor hebben ingezet om dat voor mekaar te krijgen. En dat is ook heel goed gegaan. (Anthonie,* bewoner*, May 2011)*

Hagenaar utters her fear:

> *(…) because I, and then I purely speak as a mother, the way that they talked about things in that time… I did not think my children should be exposed to that. (Mary, resident, May 2011)[14]*

The way the other residents speak about the cockpit establishes a power relation in which one group is marked as 'the other' in the context of the neighborhood. Nevertheless, in this period both groups worked together as community organizers. The interactions between the foundation and the cockpit group create tension, but leave space for multiple storylines to interact and sustain both parties as legitimate actors.

Social-spatial analyses

Urban development plans produce physical spaces that are not yet public domains (Hajer and Reijndorp 2001). They become public domains as residents and other users of the public space start to encounter, exchange and value the place (Hajer en Reijndorp 2001: 11). For a neighborhood to develop into a public domain, residents, local practitioners and policy makers develop memories and experiences that create a sense of ownership of the public space. Also, communities are not constructed as soon as neighbors move in. In Ypenburg, early settlers faced the challenge of inhabiting the street and developing a community by engaging with one another and developing collective memories. The cockpit group tacitly took up that responsibility and turned a space into a place (Gieryn 2000: 465). In the case of Ypenburg, communities and public domains came into being through informal interactions between different groups around the cockpit. In a public space like the cockpit, different interests and contestations manifest itself. These interactions might be conflictual, but they do provide interactions, exchanges and negotiations between community members. They thus informally produce a sense of community that unfolds through interactions in the public domain.

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[14] *(…) omdat ikzelf, en dan praat ik puur als moeder zijnde, op de manier waarop zij dingen toentertijd gezegd hebben… vond ik niet dat mijn kinderen daarmee in aanraking moesten komen. (Mary, bewoner, May 2011)*

The first critical moment demonstrates how the establishment of the cockpit produces contesting storylines and interactions amongst different community members. For the founders of the cockpit, the club is a practical solution to the limited community life in the new town. They manifest their tacit knowledge in organizing a club that fulfills their needs for community. By taking up this role as community organizers they are able to position themselves in the neighborhood. In organizing activities they tacitly celebrate their Schilderswijk background where they had developed their skill to organize community activities:

> *I always say, 'I am proud of my background'. And it is us who were able to organize a club here and that is what we are still fighting for. Let them repeat that! (Gonnie, resident, focus group interview, May 2009)[15]*

The performance of the cockpit group tacitly serves the development of a community by spatially constructing a parochial public space in the neighborhood. The cockpit produces 'commonality between neighbors who are involved in interpersonal networks that are located in communities' (Lofland 2007: 10). The meaning of the cockpit as a parochial realm, however, becomes immediately contested by the storyline of a 'private dwelling'. The language the police officer uses to describe the efforts as a form of 'private welfare' produces an illocutionary force because, in saying these words, the meaning of the club as a public space is directly contradicted (Austin 1962: 101). Furthermore, by using the phrases 'private' and 'welfare' in one utterance, the police officer hints directly to the responsibility of government to facilitate welfare that serves the public good. The meaning of the cockpit as a private space delegitimizes the cockpit as a place for welfare practice, because private spaces are spaces that are characterized by 'ties of intimacy among primary groups members who are located in households or personal networks' (Lofland 2007: 10). Thus, the storyline of the authorities disrupts the meaning of the cockpit as a community center. It does so through the use of language as well the production of the meaning of space. This storyline gets embodied when another group of residents is asked to monitor the cockpit.

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[15] *Maar ik zeg altijd, 'ik ben trots op m'n afkomst'. En we hebben het altijd wel gepresteerd om eerst een clubhuis hier neer te zetten en we zijn er nog steeds met z'n allen voor aan het strijden. Laat ze dat maar eens nadoen! (Gonnie,* bewoner*, focus group interview, May 2009)*

At the same time, this critical moment produces the counter-story of the cockpit group that positions the group as founders of the cockpit. Their account of the story reveals that they are conscious of the dominant storyline:

> *You have to do it all together. (...) Sometimes I feel that they think it is all an anti-social mess here. They're like, 'Oh those people from Schilderswijk', it is always like that. (Sjaan, resident, focus group interview, May 2009)[16]*

They seek to counteract that story by emphasizing the engagement of a wide variety of volunteers who helped organize activities:

> *If you take into account how many people voluntarily helped us in the cockpit, then it has nothing to do with Schilderswijk. (Gonnie, resident, focus group interview, May 2009)[17]*

The counter-story stresses the voluntary help of other neighbors. The theme of the counter-story is one of pride: the group celebrates its capacity to organize. The counter-story seeks to reposition the group as a legitimate party. It does not break the identification with Schilderswijk, but reframes that background into a new meaning: the cockpit group as experienced organizers. That counter-narrative, however, has low tellability (Norrick 2005) in the interaction with authorities whose storyline is more powerful and more broadly shared by other neighbors in the community who become agents of the ideal of accountable community activities. The suggestion of a government-sponsored form of private welfare directly contradicts the legitimacy of the cockpit as a community center. The added meaning of a 'terrain of bandits' strengthens the incentive of local authorities to respond and re-establish their position of authority. When the neighborhood of Ypenburg is included into the city administration of The Hague, the dominant storyline manifests itself institutionally.

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[16] *Je moet het met z'n allen doen. (...) Ik denk soms wel eens dat ze vinden dat het hier een asociale bende is. En dan is het zo 'oh die mensen uit de Schilderswijk', het is altijd toch dat. (Sjaan,* bewoner, *focus group interview, May 2009)*

[17] *Als je na gaat hoeveel verschillende mensen vrijwilliger waren in de cockpit heeft dat dus niks met de Schilderswijk te maken. (Sjaan,* bewoner, *focus group interview, 14 May 2009)*

Narrative dynamics

In 2002, an administrative change reinforced the storylines that were already in place. The neighborhood got incorporated into the city administration of The Hague and became an official district with a separate local government for everyday decision making. The local council, however, immediately encountered a problem:

> *(…) there was a voluntary group who got quite a sum of money from the local government of Rijswijk. They organized all [community] activities. But what we heard was that this was only for a very specific group of people. We heard that from the other neighborhood organization that was present in the neighborhood. We were quite preoccupied with this, because we knew that the new community center would be built. (Brenda, local civil servant, April 2011)[18]*

The existing dominant storyline immediately became part of the story of the local policy practitioners who worked for the district council. These policy makers had to cope with the fact that a new center was under construction. The idea that the cockpit was not for everyone was woven into the narrative of the policy makers. This storyline demanded from them to consider closing the cockpit.

Een nieuwe start met een nieuw gezicht!

Via deze weg wil ik me voorstellen als nieuwe jongerenwerker van Ypenburg (Stichting Ondernemend Welzijn) en plaatsvervanger van Carrie van Broekhuysen. Mijn naam is Patricia van den Bosch. Ik ben vanaf heden het aanspreekpunt en de vraagbaak voor jongeren uit het stadsdeel Ypenburg. Als jongerenwerker streef ik naar effectieve belangenbehartiging op het gebied van sociaal, cultureel en recreatief werk in de wijk. Om dit te kunnen bereiken en/of te bespoedigen heb ik de stem, mening, verwachting etc. van de jeugd nodig. Dus jongens en meiden: kom gauw bij me langs voor een 'babbeltje' en laat horen wat je wensen en doelen zijn. (Denk bijvoorbeeld aan recreatieve en sportieve activiteiten in de wijk). Met samenwerken en samen denken moeten we haast wel komen tot een activiteitenprogramma dat bij jullie past.

Ik ben zowel bij het buurthuis De Cockpit als bij het multicultureel centrum Morgenweide te bereiken. Kom gezellig bij me langs!

De Cockpit
Laan van Hoornwijck 118
Tel. 070- 4154527

Morgenweide
Eksterhof 1
Tel. 015- 2579364

Helaas ben ik nog niet in het bezit van een mobiel telefoontje. In het hierop volgende informatieblad zal ik (eventueel) mijn mobiele telefoonnummer vermelden.

Tot ziens!
Patricia van den Bosch - Sociaal Cultureel Werk Ondernemend Welzijn

Ps. Bij deze wil ik bovendien een beroep doen op de gezellige, creatieve, sportieve en fanatieke ouders die zich vrijwillig willen inzetten bij diverse activiteiten voor de jeugd.

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[18] *(…) er zat een vrijwilligersgroep en die kreeg een behoorlijke som subsidie van de gemeente Rijswijk. En zij regelden alles daar qua [gemeenschaps]activiteiten. Maar wat wij meekregen was dat het wel voor een bepaalde groep was. Dat kregen wij weer mee van de bewonersorganisatie die daar zat. Dus wij zaten daar behoorlijk mee in onze maag want wij wisten dat [het nieuwe centrum] gebouwd werd. (Brenda,* lokale ambtenaar*, April 2011)*

At the street-level, however, this process was implemented incrementally. The first step was the introduction of a professional youth worker called Patricia who introduced herself in the local journal of 8 May 2002. She invites youngsters to come and see her in the cockpit. '(…) please come over and tell me what your ideas and wishes are (think for example of sport and other recreational activities)' (Patricia in local journal, see picture above). This is the first time a professional became involved in the organization of the club. Patricia's introduction marks an important shift in the local journal. From that moment on, the activities in the club are no longer advertised in the journal. The club's phone number remains in the list on the last page, but the name, the self-designed logo, and the activities disappear from the weekly journal. Instead, a list of activities organized by the professional organization invites youngsters to hang out in the club. Despite the involvement of professionals, the resident group does not stop organizing activities in the cockpit.

At that time, the central city government of The Hague decided to implement a policy that required each district to have a professional community facility. These facilities should be managed by welfare professionals who were educated in social welfare and in dealing with youngsters. In the wake of this policy, the local government hired 'Ondernemend Welzijn', a welfare organization that was specialized in managing community centers and facilitating community activities that were targeted specifically at people who were socially challenged, youngsters, and elderly people. A social work organization called 'Boog' was asked to organize community activities outside of the community center and aimed to foster social cohesion. A third organization that was active in the neighborhood was a more conventional social work organization working 'behind the front door' with families that needed assistance.

At this point in time, the cockpit became the central problem for the local government because — although the club did not fit their repertoire of welfare practices — the city government was burdened with a promise the previous local government had made:

> *We wanted a welfare organization in [the new center]. [It] was not yet finished. At a certain point we discovered that the municipality of Rijswijk made a promise that the club could get a space in the basement. We did not envision that happening, also because there were quite some problems with youngsters*

in the neighborhood. (Brenda, local civil servant, April 2009)[19]

The view of the local council was that Ypenburg needed a professional multi-functional center that would organize a wide variety of welfare activities. In this center there was no space for the cockpit. The trailer was no longer appropriate since the neighborhood's construction was almost finished. How were they to deal with the cockpit group?

The uncertainty about what was going to happen with the cockpit remained:

> *I think it was all a lie. (…) first we were to have a space and later not anymore. But because we engaged in much talking and efforts, they could not just ignore us. (Sjaan, resident, focus group interview, May 2009)*[20]

Sjaan articulates how difficult it was for the group to become involved in decision making about the new community center. The uncertainty about the future of the club marked a decline in the trust that existed between the cockpit group and the local government.

At this point in time – winter 2003 – the storyline of other residents who started the foundation ends. They decided to withdraw from the struggle around the neighborhood center. Policy makers used this decision as another way to proof that the cockpit only served a particular group of people in the neighborhood:

> *No no, those [other neighbors] wanted to have nothing to do with that. Because the cockpit group came along to the new center and they were only for a particular group of people and for many they were not. (Brenda, local civil servant, April 2009)*[21]

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[19] *Wij wilden een welzijnsorganisatie in [het nieuwe centrum]. [Het] was nog niet af. We krijgen op een gegeven moment te maken met de toezegging vanuit Rijswijk dat deze club in de kelder zou komen. Dat zagen wij al helemaal niet zitten, want er waren toen ook de nodige problemen in de buurt met de jongeren. (Brenda,* lokale ambtenaar*, April 2011)*

[20] *Ik denk dat er een heel leugenachtig verhaal kwam. (…) Eerst zouden we wel ingedeeld worden en later weer niet. Toch door veel praten en veel doen, konden ze ons toch niet onder het tafelkleed vegen. (Sjaan,* bewoner, *focus group interview, May 2009)*

[21] *Nee. Nee. Die [andere bewoners] wilden er niets mee te maken hebben. Want de cockpitgroep die ging in het [nieuwe] centrum en de cockpitgroep was voor een bepaalde groep en voor een hele grote groep niet. (Brenda,* lokale ambtenaar, 19 *April 2011)*

Thus we see how the storyline of other neighbors gets appropriated by the storyline of the policy practitioners of The Hague. The storyline of the cockpit as a private dwelling legitimizes the decision of policy practitioners to assign a professional welfare organization to take control of neighborhood activities. This storyline becomes the dominant narrative that forms the basis for making decisions about community activities in Ypenburg. The dominant narrative leaves little space for the counter-narrative of the cockpit group. The positive memory of the cockpit seems to get excluded from the decision to move to a new center. The cockpit group, however, does not withdraw from the debate. They continue to develop tactics to influence the decisions and voice their story.

Critical moment 2: start of the professional center

On 28 January 2004, the new multi-functional center opens its doors during a festive opening. The multi-functional center is a light building with fresh painted walls in bright colors. An oval yellow desk oversees who comes through the automatic doors. To the right is a sports hall and on the left two large rooms: one serves as a crafts room and the other as a canteen. In the back is the youth facility that overlooks the central square where the tram to the city stops.

Performance: policy practitioners

This critical moment springs from the decision of the local government to establish a professional community center. The earlier ambiguity about the cockpit came to an end by the decision to open the new center. The district council of The Hague explains the decision as follows:

> *Policy in The Hague assigns welfare organizations to run the welfare accommodations where they also facilitate volunteers to help with activities. Now, this [the cockpit] did not fit our picture at all. We were concerned about this and thought: What shall we do? (Brenda, local policy practitioner, April 2011)[22]*

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[22] *Want het Haagse beleid is dat welzijnsorganisaties de welzijnsaccommodaties runnen maar ook alle vrijwilligers faciliteren om activiteiten uit te voeren. Nou, dit [de cockpit] paste helemaal niet in ons plaatje. Dus daar zaten wij mee in onze maag en dachten: Wat gaan wij ermee doen? (Brenda,* lokale ambtenaar, *April 2011)*

Closing the cockpit marked a new start of professional welfare work in the neighborhood. The local policy practitioners, however, had an intuition that simply closing the cockpit could cast a shadow over the new center:

> *We wanted to get rid of the stigma of the cockpit group. We now had the new center. We did not want it to be related to the cockpit, because it had such a negative image in the neighborhood. People said: 'oh those are the old 'cockpitters', we don't want to have anything to do with them'. The new center was much more positive, so we forgot about the cockpit and called them the volunteers of the new center. (Brenda, local policy practitioner, April 2011)[23]*

Thus, they developed a strategy to shake off the negative stigma that was associated with the old club. Policy practitioners expected that other residents would not appreciate the identification with the Cockpit. In order prevent residents to identify the new center with the cockpit, the local government proposes to neglect the history of the cockpit. This way they sought to balance between the public interest of a professional center and the controversial history of the Cockpit. Also, the language that was used to refer to the group changed. Instead of calling the group the 'cockpitters' they were now to be called 'volunteers of the new center'. Calling residents volunteers is common practice in Dutch community centers that are run by professionals. The language that typifies residents as volunteers has immediate repercussions for their role and position. But it also establishes a position for the professional welfare workers, which was what policy practitioners intended to do:

> *Every volunteer is welcome, but it is the welfare organization that exploits the center and makes the decisions (...). The volunteers have a degree of independence. (Brenda, local policy practitioner, April 2011)[24]*

The residents of cockpit group were no longer 'organizers' but 'volunteers' who could

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[23] *Wij wilden heel erg van die stigma af: cockpitgroep. Wij hadden de Piet Vink, want cockpit was heel negatief. Ook in de buurt: 'Oh, dat zijn die oud cockpitters. Daar moeten wij niets mee te maken hebben.' Terwijl, Piet Vink was iets minder negatief. [Lacht.] En dat geeft een hele andere sfeer aan de naam, zeg maar. Het zijn gewoon de vrijwilligers van Piet Vink. (Brenda,* lokale ambtenaar*, April 2011)*

[24] *Alle vrijwilligers zijn welkom, maar het is de welzijnsorganisatie die het exploiteert en die alles regelt en de vrijwilligers hebben wel een hoge mate van zelfstandigheid. (Brenda,* lokale ambtenaar*, April 2011)*

help the professionals but not manage the center. The storyline of policy makers attributes a high degree of independency to the volunteers, but as we will see is that independence highly depending on everyday interactions between volunteers and welfare professionals (Lipsky 1980).

Performance: street-level professionals

The opening of the new multi-functional center characterizes a shift in the narrative dynamics. A new group of case actors enters the everyday interactions at the street-level. When the center opens, welfare practitioners who manage the center become primary players in the story of controversy. These professionals do not possess the memory of the cockpit. They enter the controversy when decisions about the old club have already been made. They are assigned to set up and run a new community center. For them, the opening is critical, not because they loose something, but because they start with a new job opportunity and have to take responsibility as professional role models.

The welfare practitioners enter the story through a second order positioning: the local government attributes their position as professional organizers to them. They enter the narrative dynamics as actors that are responsible for the management of the center. This attributed position demands legitimacy through action: they immediately have to perform and demonstrate their professionalism.

> *I think as a welfare worker working with youth, we have a pedagogical responsibility. Don't you think? (Stan, former manager of the center, February 2009)*[25]

Stan's comments refers to the storyline that demanded community activities to be 'for everyone', the dominant narrative that was established by the local authorities. He adds another layer to the storyline by establishing his own position as one being associated with 'pedagogical responsibility', a theme that relates to general ideas about Dutch community organizing. These two references help professionals develop a storyline in which their position is legitimate and functions as a starting point for their involvement in community activities in Ypenburg.

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[25] *Ik vind, als jongerenwerker hebben we toch ook een aantal pedagogische doelstellingen, toch ook? (Stan,* voormalig manager van het centrum*, February 2009)*

Although the professionals did not experience the history of the cockpit first-hand, their expressions about professionalism and responsibilities cannot be understood separately from its recent history. Their assignment requires them to take position. Within the context of the local history, welfare practitioners position themselves in opposition to the 'non-professional' history of self-organization. Bas, a youth worker, reveals how the story of the cockpit affects the story of the professionals:

> *But if I look at the relationships (…) and the neighborhood, then we can see that in the past there were neighborhood centers that were managed and ran by parents of the youth. There were rules that they had to follow that were the same as the rules they followed at home. And deals were made with the youngsters, no doubt. For example, they would get a free drink, minimum pay for activities. Now there is a national trend that neighborhood centers are managed by professionals who get paid. That is a clash that is just happening now. (Bas, youth worker, focus group interview, December 2009)[26]*

In this quote the youth worker acknowledges a history of self-organized neighborhood centers, but speaks only in general terms. He never mentions the cockpit by name but suggests that self-organized activities were ran by parents who favored their own children. He refers to national policy trends. That reference also strengthens his position because a higher authority is responsible for the changes in the neighborhood and paves the way to his role as a fair, accountable and professional community organizer.

The divide between the differing storylines deepens as 'pedagogical responsibilities' is added to the analysis of what was lacking before:

> *The welfare facilities in The Hague cover a wide spectrum, that means that you do not simply have a 'cluppie' that organizes Bingo, but there is also help with childcare, social support, and all sorts of important information is made available*

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[26] *Maar als ik dan kijk naar de relatie (…) en de buurt, dan is het zo dat in het verleden er buurthuizen en wijkcentrums waren die werden beheerd en bemand door de ouders van de jongeren. Dan waren er bepaalde regels waar zij zich aan moesten houden, maar dat waren wel dezelfde regels als thuis. En daar zullen jongeren ongetwijfeld gematst zijn in de zin van noem maar op; gratis drankje hier, op het moment dat er kampen werden georganiseerd was er een eigen bijdrage die minimaal was. En nu zijn er natuurlijk landelijk gezien overal welzijnsorganisaties die overal buurtcentra beheren en daar ook gewoon betaalde krachten hebben lopen. Die botsing is er nu gewoon. (Bas,* jeugdwerker, *focus group interview, December 2009)*

to people that need support. (Stan, former manager of the center, February 2009)[27]

The welfare practitioner explains that the responsibility of the welfare organization covers more than organizing social events like Bingo. Changing the activities was the first strategy to develop professional welfare work in the neighborhood. The professional activities that move beyond playing bingo establish a new repertoire for community organizing in the center. In his description of the shift towards new activities, the former manager of the center used the term '*cluppie*', a '*club*' in Dutch is a group of people that celebrates gatherings with a leisure character. Changing *club* into *cluppie* is a diminutive that gives a connotation of a gathering that is small, informal, and without any organizational responsibility. In contradiction to that *cluppie*, he emphasizes the responsibility of the professional welfare institution to offer educational and pedagogical services. She uses informal and diminutive language to describe the practices of 'others' and when she moves to a description of her own responsibilities she changes to formal language. In the use of language, she creates a distance between her and the group of self-organizers, which deepens a sense of authority.

Another strategy for establishing professionalism as the working mode of the new center is setting clear rules. Dennis succinctly explains why setting rules is needed in opposition to what the volunteers wanted:

> *Rules have to be maintained here. We have the control so we also set the rules. (Dennis, youth worker, focus group interview, December 2009)[28]*

Rules that were immediately implemented are a smoking ban, alcohol was not allowed in the canteen, and volunteers could not organize activities without the presence of a professional. The actions of rule setting and changing activities might seem mundane and everyday, but in the interaction among case actors, rule setting strategically establishes a power position for the group who gets to set these rules. At the same time

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[27] *Die welzijnsvoorziening is hier in Den Haag heel breed ingericht, dus dat betekent dat je niet alleen een cluppie hebt (…) waar je een bingo organiseert, daar zit ook opvoedingsondersteuning, maatschappelijk werk, (…) we noemen het ook wel een informatiepunt, om alle bewoners de informatie te geven die ze nodig hebben en hulp te bieden. (Stan,* voormalig manager van centrum*, 20 February 2009)*

[28] *Regels worden gehanteerd hier. Omdat zij [vrijwilligers] menen hier de regie te hebben en willen de regels bepalen. (Marcel,* jeugdwerker*, focus group interview, December 2009)*

– if not involved in decision making – this intuitive and everyday action can deepen the sense of the cockpit group that their efforts for the neighborhood were in vain and their engagement not appreciated.

Performance: Cockpit group

The storyline of the cockpit group characterized the opening of the new center as the loss of their beloved cockpit. Their version of the story emphasizes the ambiguous chance to move the cockpit along to the new center. While professionals were setting rules and changed activities, their story stresses their effort to be involved in decision making in the center:

> *Already from when we started here (…) we have participated in many meetings. And no, that was not accepted. Than we just broke into a meeting and we just sat down and said something like 'hey wait, we also have some points'. Otherwise we were shoved under the table. [They] absolutely did not [listen]. Especially in the beginning. (Gonnie, resident, focus group interview, May 2009)[29]*

Gonnie describes how the group had to break into meetings because they were not invited. These forceful performances were necessary to be heard, but even if they found ways to be present, they experienced that they could not participate. Their efforts to engage in decision making led them to believe that they negotiated for a space in the new center. One of their successes was that they had demanded a key, for emergencies, because they were not allowed inside the building if professionals were not present. A second success was that they were allowed to decorate the canteen. On the wall, they hung a traffic sign that said 'The Cockpit' as a reminder of their former club. This sign symbolically turned the canteen room into their's *club*'s place:

> *After many discussions and many, many meetings, we finally got a space in this club that is actually not meant to be a club. (Lesly, resident, focus group interview, May 2009)[30]*

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[29] *Al vanaf het begin dat we dit opgezet hebben… hebben we verschrikkelijk veel vergaderingen bijgewoond. En nee, dat werd niet geaccepteerd. Dan braken we net zo gemakkelijk een vergadering in en dan gingen we erbij zitten en dan was het van 'he wacht eens, wij hebben ook nog wat punten'. Anders werd je helemaal onder de tafel geschoven. [Er werd] absoluut niet [geluisterd]. In het begin helemaal niet. (Gonnie,* bewoner*, focus group interview, May 2009)*

[30] *Na heel veel vijven en zessen en heel veel vergaderen, hebben ze toen een ruimte hier georganiseerd.*

From the perspective of the cockpit group, the critical moment of opening the new center is framed primarily in relationship to the old club. By hanging their sign on the wall, the group creates a physical and symbolic reference to the old club that includes them in the new center. But instead of emphasizing the physical space in the center, their story evolves around the comparison with activities that they used to organize for the community:

> *… [organizing activities] was possible before, that is not possible anymore, now we have to ask for everything. Is it allowed and how is it allowed? That is the biggest difference. (Tall Harry, resident, focus group interview, May 2009)[31]*

Tall Harry's words reveal that the practice of organizing was salient to him. Also Sjaan expresses her grievances over the lost club in practical terms. She emphasizes how much she wanted to preserve the activities and the lively interactions they established with the neighborhood. Where the professionals speak about abstract responsibilities, she reminisced about very specific and tangible memories:

> *I think it is simply 'gezellig' and we get energy from it because we enjoy eating together and hanging out together. I just aim at 'gezelligheid', and that is what we always created. We just cooked French fries together, or with the children. (Sjaan, resident, focus group interview, 14 May 2009)[32]*

Sjaan explains that her goal is to create a sphere of 'gezelligheid', a Dutch expression that refers to a warm and cozy environment where people feel welcome to engage with one another. The group did not speak about pedagogical achievements. They use practical language in which they describe their activities. Their story celebrates the

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In dit clubhuis, want dit was eigenlijk helemaal niet bedoeld als clubhuis. (Lesly, bewoner*, focus group interview, May 2009)*

[31] *… [activiteiten organiseren] kon toen gewoon, en nu kan dat niet meer, nu moet je alles eerst aanvragen of het wel mag. Mag het en hoe mag het enzo. En dat is het grote verschil. (Tall Harry,* bewoner*, focus group interview, May 2009)*

[32] *Ik vind het gewoon gezellig en je krijgt er energie van, je hebt lekker met elkaar gegeten, gezellig met z'n allen. Waar ik voor streef, voor gezelligheid, dat deden we vroeger ook met de jeugd. Gingen we ook frietjes bakken en dan gingen we ook iets leuks met die kinderen doen, en ook koken met die kinderen. (Sjaan,* bewoner*, focus group interview, 14 May 2009)*

activities they organized for youngsters and reveals mourning over the loss of especially these activities:

> *It has everything to do with the management. Because we used to organize the girls' club with 25 girls. Now no one comes anymore. We had a children disco that was very popular and that also disappeared. (Sjaan, resident, focus group interview, 14 May 2009)[33]*

The language the group uses to express grievances is informal. It shows their emotional engagement not as an abstract intention to educate or help people live better lives, but as an interest in organizing community activities. This storyline becomes marginal in the process in two ways: First, their storyline becomes marginal in practical terms, because the activities they propose do not fit the repertoire of community activities the professionals envision for the center. Secondly, their storyline becomes marginal because the cockpit group story has lower tellability (Norrick 2005) and, therefore, their performance of informal and emotional language has little impact in the interaction with professionals because it does not tap into the dominant storyline of community organizing.

The opposition between the abstract story of professionals and the tangible but informal story of volunteers surfaces even more in the way the resident group speaks about the role of professionals using the Dutch professional term *agoog*. An *agoog* is formal terminology to describe a professional who 'works to improve social behavior of people' (www.woorden.nl, 24 September 2012). Nowadays, the term *agogen* (plural) is mostly used to refer to professionals who work with youngsters. In the everyday interactions at the new center, the term deepened the tensions between professionals and the cockpit group. Professionals demanded for a strict separation between the work of the *agogen* in the youth center and the activities of the adults of the former cockpit group. In the cockpit, activities were often mixed, and would target youngsters and parents simultaneously. Now that they were no longer allowed to organize activities for their own youngsters, the sense that the cockpit was discarded as a failure deepened.

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[33] *Ik denk dat het in het begin veel met het management te maken heeft. Wij hadden de meidenclub, daar zaten we met 25 meiden. En als je nu kijkt is daar niets van over. Het was ineens over. We hadden kinderdisco, dat werd altijd heel druk bezocht en op een gegeven moment was dat ook niet meer. (Sjaan,* bewoner, *focus group interview, 14 May 2009)*

Their response was irony:

> *(…) now everything needs to be done by an 'agoog'. For children there needs to be an 'agoog'. We are not allowed to do those things anymore. (Sjaan, resident, focus group interview, 14 May 2009)[34]*

In this description, the word *agogen* is pronounced in a high tone of voice. Sjaan emphasizes the word in her uttering, which expresses even more irony:

> *If they want 'agogen'?! Then go and sort it out with them! We are not allowed to do it!? We are not good enough?! (Sjaan, resident, focus group interview, May 2009)[35]*

The quote reveals her experience: the separation between the work of *agogen* and their own activities means to the group that 'they are not good enough'. By speaking about *agogen* in such ironic fashion, she marks her ambivalence about the effective performance of the professionals. She challenges the *agogen* to do the work they did by emphasizing the relationship they had with the children who participated in their community activities:

> *We were in a better position with the youngsters because they actually liked us. We could do much more with them. But now in this building [they are not allowed to do anything anymore]. (Gonnie, resident, focus group interview, May 2009)[36]*

The storyline of the cockpit group that unfolds around the opening of the new center, can only be understood in reference to the former club. The meaning that they attribute to the new center is in reference to the activities that they performed in the past.

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[34] *(…) Nu moet overal een … agoog op. Met kinderwerk moet er een agoog op. Wij mogen het niet meer doen. (Sjaan,* bewoner, *focus group interview, May 2009)*

[35] *(…) want ze hebben toch de agogen?! Nou, laat ze dat maar lekker uitzoeken. Waarom, als het eerst niet meer mag, wij mogen toch niet meer, want wij kunnen het toch niet? (Sjaan,* bewoner, *focus group interview, May 2009)*

[36] *Wat bij ons ook het voordeel was, wij mochten de kinderen en de kinderen mochten ons. Dus wij konden veel meer. En bij dit gebouw… [mogen ze niks meer]. (Gonnie,* bewoner, *focus group interview, May 2009)*

The meaning of their role in the new center can only be understood through the memory of their earlier role.

Social-spatial analyses

When we analyze the three storylines that emerge during the critical moment of opening the new center we can unravel how the story of the cockpit is subtly repositioned and eventually excluded from the everyday practices in the new community center. Most obvious is the exclusion as a strategy of the local government in order to attribute new meaning to the center. Here the story is neglected as a practical function. More nuanced are the strategies with which the welfare organization positions itself. They enter the story with a clear responsibility to take up an authoritarian role. Although, they fulfill their assignment, it is interesting to analyze the detailed performances through which they establish their position but also exclude the story of cockpit group from the everyday interactions in the center. Let us analyze the detailed descriptions of this critical moment to unravel the everyday repertoire that the different parties develop in interactions to perform positioning. On the one hand, this happens through practical and spatial performances. On the other hand, positioning happens through a more nuanced and performative approach.

A dramaturgical lens into positioning reveals the use of discursive language. The formal language professionals use to ascribe their responsibilities creates a sense of distance between them and the volunteers. Here we see how saying something is doing something (Austin 1962) as the use of formal language immediately speaks to the dominant plot of professionalism. The words that the professionals utter give an insight into the positions that they are expected to take, but expressions like 'pedagogical responsibility' also fix positioning in the interactions with other case actors at the street-level. Austin would call this an 'illocutionary act', because the use of formal language is a conventional speech act that achieves something: it excludes people who do not speak the language that is associated with the decision making process in the center. It has an effect on the audience (in this case the cockpit group) and is performed in a way that brings out the conventional state of affairs (in this case the performance of formal language legitimizes the authority of professionals and the position of volunteers) (Austin 1962: 115). The storyline of the cockpit group reveals this illocutionary effect as it triggers a response (ibid: 116). They ironically challenge *agogen* to have the successes with youth that they achieved in the past.

The authoritarian position that the use of formal language establishes is not independent from the position of other case actors who take part in the interaction. A detailed look into the language of the cockpit group reveals that the informal language they use has a perlocutionary effect. Perlocutionary utterances are usually less conventional performances in the specific circumstance (ibid: 117). Sjaan, Gonnie, and Tall Harry reminisce about the activities they used to organize. They utter informal language to express emotions related to and memories of the old cockpit. These stories have low tellability in the context of the new center, because they refer to a storyline of community organizing that became contested as the cockpit was depicted as a 'private dwelling' in the first critical moment. When the group uses informal language to talk about their memories, they use an unconventional speech act that does not fit the appropriate repertoire of communication in the new center. This could have had a perlocutionary effect if professionals would have acknowledged these memories, but instead it misfired. The use of informal language and small stories (Bamberg 2006; Freeman 2006; Georgakopoulou 2006a) about personal memories unintentionally deepens the dominant story that characterizes the cockpit group as non-professional. Here we see how the deterministic force of the master narrative reproduces itself in the interaction and becomes tangible as a form of positioning among case actors in the community center (Bamberg 2004: 366).

Also spatially, the performances in the second critical moment discursively produce a sense of positioning. First of all, a new central space shifts the spatial fabric of a neighborhood. We have learned that public spaces shape social and political relations (Lefebvre [1974] 1991; Harvey 1985, 1990; Castells 1983, 1989; Soja 1989). But how does it work during the opening of the center? When the cockpit closes and the story about the cockpit is excluded from the new center, the cockpit group loses the place they identify with. In return they get a space that is owned and governed by others. The intentional use of words like 'volunteers' gives the center the meaning of a public realm, a place that is inhabited by 'strangers' or people who know one another only in terms of occupational (the welfare workers and volunteers) or non-personal identity categories (Lofland 2007: 9). This contradicts the parochial meaning of the former cockpit. The group tries to recapture a parochial realm by comparing the new center to the old cockpit, decorating a room with an artefact that reminds them of their club, and continuous efforts to organize activities. Through these everyday experiences and daily

routines, they perceive the new center as a continuation of their club (Lefebvre 1991; Martin and Miller 2004). But the experience of the perceived space changes through formal strategies that conceive space by professionals who also seek to organize and plan the everyday routines in the new center. A higher authority has assigned the professionals and that second order position demands them to develop a formal repertoire of community organizing. Via rule setting and regulating activities they give meaning to the new space and conceive a place that communicates the dominant story of professional organizing. As suggested by Dennis, rule setting is meant to stay in control over what happens in the new center. In doing so, welfare professionals establish a conceived space that is guided by emancipatory rather than instrumental reason (Lefebvre 1991; Martin and Miller 2004: 146). A spatial environment shapes the possibility for repertoires of performance (De Certeau 1988; Low 2000; Suttles 1970). In the conceived space that the professionals produce they are emancipated in their position to discursively establish a dominant repertoire of performing community organizing that excludes the activities of the cockpit group.

Thus, in the new center, the perceived and conceived spaces become contested through practical routines and discursive performances. The dominant repertoire of community organizing gets negotiated through a series of street-level interactions that finally excludes the cockpit group from participating actively in the center. As a result of the first critical moment, the storyline of the cockpit group was marginalized. Yet, here the story becomes excluded from negotiations about community organizing altogether. While the group seeks to include their memories, their informal repertoire of doing so deepens the exclusion as their stories refer to a marginal plot. In this critical moment, the performance of professionals is dominant and discursively produces relationships between case actors. The cockpit group does not have any resources to counteract its positioning as its storyline does not find its way into the dominant plot. They give meaning to the new center by comparing the new situation to the old one in the cockpit. They associate community development with exactly those activities that the professionals try to disassociate with. In their storyline, the meaning of place is constructed through the association with loss and grievance over the cockpit. That association, however, gets delegitimized as the memory of the cockpit is excluded from the conceived space and the dominant storyline. The professionals create a new center where rules and regulations become the dominant repertoire of interaction. A contested

public space is produced.

Narrative dynamics

What was supposed to be the start of flourishing neighborhood activities turned into contracted controversy that unfolds in and around the neighborhood center. Another neighbor recalls the period in which the cockpit was closed and the new center opened:

> *When the cockpit closed, then things went wrong. At first they would get a space in the new center. (…) Then it was like… well, then things went wrong. (Anthonie, resident, May 2011)[37]*

The new community center and the shopping area were meant to become the center of the neighborhood. On a regular weekday, however, the streets in this area were quiet. Some people did their groceries, but nobody used the terraces that the restaurants had installed. Not many people visited the new center, except for the former cockpit group who kept trying to organize activities. The relationship between the group and the professionals remained tense. Youth worker Bas explains:

> *(…) the adults are also a group that we experience as resistant. They act like: 'we have established this, it is our club and you have to engage us in it'. They want a say. So it is our challenge to somehow engage them: in what we do with the youngsters, with what happens in the neighborhood, and in the activities that we provide. Those youngsters also experience their parents' resistance with regard to us, welfare professionals. Automatically, they are against us. And yes, the rules have to stay strict. (Bas, youth worker, focus group interview, December 2009)[38]*

Thus, in the period after the opening, tensions about who is in charge and who gets

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[37] *Toen die cockpit is dichtgegaan, daar is het echt fout gegaan. En in de eerste instantie zouden zij daar dus die ruimte krijgen. (…) Toen was het gewoon ….Tja, toen ging het mis. (Anthonie,* bewoner, *May 2011)*

[38] *(…) de volwassenengroep is ook een groep waar wij weerstand van ondervinden. Die hebben zoiets van: wij hebben het opgebouwd, het is ons clubhuis en jullie moeten ons erbij betrekken. Zij willen een bepaalde inspraak hebben. Dus het is de kunst aan ons om die oudere groep er ook bij te betrekken: wat wij met die jongeren doen, wat er in de wijk gebeurt, wat er aan activiteiten wordt aangeboden. Die jongeren krijgen van hun ouders ook mee dat zij een soort van weerstand proberen te creëren tegen welzijnswerkers en automatisch zijn die jongeren ook al bevooroordeeld over ons. En ja, de regels zijn nou eenmaal strenger. (Bas,* jeugdwerker, *focus group interview, December 2009)*

to participate in decision making escalated further. Welfare practitioners accused the cockpit group of creating negative sentiments amongst the youngsters. The group was somehow engaged in activities, but was treated as a volunteer group. Within the conventional repertoire of interactions, the group had no resources to counteract the marginal position they experienced. What could they have done to voice their grieve and recapture a public role? What other repertoires of action did they develop to disrupt the sequence of events and take part in public decision making?

Critical moment 3: occupying the center

On a Tuesday morning, Sjaan came early to prepare for the women's club she was facilitating at the center. When she walked in, she noticed that construction workers were changing the locks on the front door. She asked what was going on. The construction worker confirmed her suspicion: he was changing the locks. Sjaan understood that a new lock meant a new key and she consulted the manager of the center. He told her that they changed the lock so that only professionals would have a key. She was shocked. Her response was: 'If they do not want us in, we will not go out'. She called her friends of the former cockpit group and told them the story. Within minutes, they came over to the center.

Performance: residents

The former cockpit group improvised. For them, shutting them out with a new key was a reason to do something. They had no time to develop a strategy. Intuitively, Gonnie jumped on her scooter leaving her children with a neighbor. Five minutes later, Tall Harry came in with mattresses, pillows and blankets. Their tactic was to occupy the center and camp out until they could speak to someone and reclaim their role as community organizers. This tactic disrupted the prevailing narrative, not in words but through a symbolic performance. They occupied the neighborhood center:

> *(...) then they occupied the center. They went in and just stayed altogether, 80 people, they said; 'well, welfare organization, it is better that you leave because this is our club'. (Linda, new manager of the center, February 2009)[39]*

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[39] *(...) en toen hebben ze het centrum bezet. Dus die zijn er met zijn allen in gaan zitten, tachtig man, en die hebben gezegd: 'nou, welzijnsorganisatie Haagsche Hout, we moeten jullie niet en ga maar weg, het is ons centrum.' (Linda,* nieuwe manager centrum*, February 2009)*

The artefact of mattresses, sleeping bags and pillows completed the occupation. The group did what they do best: celebrate their community. Other neighbors supported the initiative:

> *And the whole neighborhood helped us. We slept there and everyone came to bring us food and drinks. I guess they expected: 'that small group never gets help' but we did! (Gonnie, resident, focus group interview, May 2009)* [40]

Gonnie emphasizes the help of other neighbors. The help of other neighbors was important to strengthen the counter-story in opposition to the dominant storyline that framed the cockpit as a private dwelling. The help of other neighbors, especially neighbors they had never seen before, supports the legitimacy of their storyline--the story of the cockpit as a place for community building--and the fact that it should not have been excluded. How many nights they stayed in the club remains disputed. Residents, professionals and policy practitioners tell different stories, varying from one to four nights.

Performance: street-level professionals

When the group took over the center with their mattresses, the welfare organization stopped activities and temporarily 'closed' the center. The board told professionals to move out:

> *At that point, all personnel moved out. (Linda, new manager of the center, February 2009)* [41]

The welfare professionals or other people in the organization did nothing to either fight or acknowledge the occupation, they left the building and professionals were asked to not engage in any deliberation. For the direction of the welfare organization, the occupation was understood as a failure of the professionals who had been charged with starting up the new facility. In the story of professionals there is no record of any

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[40] *En de hele buurt stond toch voor ons klaar. Wij sliepen hier en iedereen kwam eten en drinken brengen, wat zij niet verwacht hadden. Zij dachten: 'dat is dat kleine ploegje, dat zoekt het wel uit'. (...) er stonden mensen voor de deur die wij zelf ook nog nooit gezien hadden. Die kwamen ons wel steunen. Want wij zijn er altijd voor de kinderen. En dat weet de buurt ook. (Gonnie,* bewoner, *focus group interview, May 2009)*

[41] *Toen is al het personeel dat daar werkte er uitgetrokken. (Linda,* nieuwe manager centrum*, February 2009)*

communication with the occupiers while they were camping out in the center.

Performance: policy practitioners

The narrative of local policy makers shows a similar pattern. As soon as the welfare organization informs the local council, they decide to wait and not do anything. None of the policy practitioners mentioned the occupation of the center in their storyline. To them, the improvised act of occupying the new center is by no means a critical moment. In a conversation between policy practitioners, professionals and a police officer, the following analysis was expressed, however succinctly:

> Police officer: 'they wanted to regain the lead, "it is their club" [uses sarcastic intonation]. (The other professionals nod vividly)
> Youth worker: 'precisely!'
> (in reflection session with practitioners, June 2012)[42]

The response of policy practitioners to deal with the occupation was to ignore it. As this moment was not a critical moment to them, they do not recall this moment in their narration of the story. Not acting, however, is also an act. And especially when people's actions seek to provoke a response, not acting is a decision that has repercussions.

Social-spatial analyses

In previous critical moments, the cockpit group attempted to voice their experience as a counter-story to disrupt the dominant narrative. The informal language they used to voice the counter-story was not able to disrupt the sequence of events. In the third critical moment, Sjaan discovers that they will loose their key, which means physical exclusion from the center. In response, the group improvises. They tacitly perform an act outside the usual repertoire of engagement. Instead of talking about their grievances, they counteract by occupying what they feel was taken from them. Their improvisation demands a response from authorities. But that response does not come. The welfare organization tells its employees to leave the building until further notice. The local government ignores the occupation. The storylines of parties provide different accounts of what happened after the occupation: some say the Cockpit group stayed for only one

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[42] *Police officer: 'Zij wilden de leiding weer terugpakken, "het is hun club" [gebruikt sarcastische intonatie]. [Andere professionals knikken hevig]*
Jeugdwerker: 'Precies!'
(Reflection session with practitioners, June 2012)

night, the Cockpit group recalls being there for at least four days. What was clear in all accounts is the fact that at a certain point the group decides to go home. When none of the welfare workers, no police officer, and nobody from the local government visits the center during the occupation to talk with the group, they decide to pack their stuff and go home.

The uncertainty about the length and meaning of the occupation is remarkable for this critical moment. The improvised act could have potentially turned into a disruption, a clash between the group and authorities that opens an opportunity for renegotiation. Unfortunately, critical moment 3 ends with a disappointment. Nevertheless, the moment provides an opportunity to learn. What can this tactical critical moment teach us about the repertoire of political action and public engagement? Not through the talking, writing letters, or applying for subsidies, but rather through occupying the center, the group seeks to voice its story and expresses a willingness to be engaged in negotiations over community activities.

The group improvises a tactic: an act that is embedded in the immediate context and timing, as it is based in 'metis' knowledge to disrupt power relations, and takes place in the space of the 'other' (De Certeau 1980: xix). The success of the tactic, however, depends on the dramaturgy of the performance (Hajer 2009; Burke 1969; Lynch 1991; Benford and Hunt 1992). Professionals, who previously staged formal activities and rules to position themselves, control the appropriate script in the neighborhood center by determining the characters and cues for appropriate behavior (Hajer 2009: 66). The tactical occupation disrupts the dominant script and provides a counter-script. That counter-script embodies the counter-narrative that they have been trying to voice since the closing of their club. Occupying the center does not tell the story in words, but in an embodied symbolic action. The group changes and disrupts the meaning of the setting as they perform their ownership: they stage artefacts by bringing in mattresses and pillows to camp out in the center overnight and they stage other neighbors whose support strengthens the counter-plot. The setting also symbolically adds to the value of the performance because the community center that was used to exclude the group now embodies the counter-script (Kuper 1972: 421). Temporarily, the counter-story finds its way into the contested space of the center. The group performs grievances over losing the cockpit and temporarily regains a position in the new center.

The performance discursively changes the community center into a 'lived space' where the perceived space of experience – a continuation of the cockpit – interacts and clashes with the 'conceived space' – a professional center governed by rules and regulated routines (Lefebvre 1991; Martin and Miller 2004: 39). The shift towards a lived space is important because it allows for a more ambiguous space where multiple stories can be voiced. Now that the center has been occupied by the cockpit group, they temporarily 'appropriate' the public sphere. The group performs a manifest form of protest that temporarily disrupts the meaning of place and expresses unresolved social relations (Low 2000: 184). During the period of occupation, the group creates a temporary cockpit. The group physically creates a temporal liminal space that provides the opportunity to renegotiate meaning and relationships. That liminal moment allows expressing the group's counter-story that identifies them as legitimate community organizers who are supported by the community. Dramaturgically, the message is conveyed in the appropriate setting with a script that is in line with what the group seeks to communicate. Although the performance is a tactic, it conveys a message with a political connotation. This message targets political decision makers. But, like in every protest, there is an interdependency between protesters and authorities that determines whether acts of protest are successful or in vain (Jenkins and Klandermans 1995).

To understand the liminal opportunity that the occupation created, we have to look at the response of the authorities. When protest becomes threatening for policy practitioners and spatial appropriation by one group is too successful, 'the public space is closed, sometimes gated, and policed' (Low 2000: 184). Here, we see a similar response. First by the decision of the welfare organization to temporarily close the building, move out welfare professionals, and cancel all activities. Closing the center is a direct response to the occupation that reestablishes the dominant script. By closing the center, the welfare organization acknowledges the disruptive meaning of the occupation, but regains authority by shutting down the building, thereby removing it from the public space.

Policy practitioners ignore the tumult in the community center. They respond by not acting. This decision leads to an interesting lesson: the decision to not communicate is a form of positioning in itself. Because protest develops in relation to the response of the authorities that it targets, the protest misfires if authorities do not acknowledge it altogether. By strategically ignoring the occupation, professionals and policy

practitioners position themselves as the authority who can decide what actions are acknowledged as invitations to negotiate decision making and what actions do not fit the repertoire of public participation. Ignoring the occupation pushes the performance of the cockpit group into the private realm (Lofland 2007: 10). Consequently, it excludes the performance of the cockpit group from the political repertoire and the occupiers from participating in the public sphere.

One could argue that an improvised repertoire was unknown by policy practitioners who expect people to voice grievances or political claims through formal procedures. In that case, this critical moment poses a challenge to the local government to broaden its repertoire to include unexpected performances of citizen engagement. If we view the occupation from the perspective of policy practitioners, their decision to ignore it could also have been informed by an interest in keeping to status quo. The local government had made decisions that were based on the dominant storyline that valued the Cockpit as a private dwelling. The wide support of other neighbors disrupts that dominant plot. The support of the neighbors suggests that the Cockpit group did serve 'the common good'. This dominant narrative provides the legitimacy of earlier decisions, thus by neglecting the occupation, they can withhold from renegotiating the meaning of their storyline and keep the status quo.

The inability or unwillingness of policy practitioners to understand this performance as a critical moment, created a misfire. 'When the utterance is a misfire, the procedure which we purport to invoke is disallowed or is botched: and our act is void or without effect' (Austin 1962: 16). This interaction shows that the disruption of a critical moment does not only depend on appropriate dramaturgy but also on the willingness of the people in power positions to recognize it as such. The consequence of this 'positioning by ignoring' is that this critical moment did not disrupt the dynamics between storylines. The performance of ignoring reinforced prevailing power relations.

In sum, critical moment 3 – a tacit and improvised performance – disrupted the meaning of place by embodying a counter-story. The former cockpit group tactically created a critical moment that invited local authorities to renegotiate community activities in the neighborhood. In response, local authorities excluded the contentious act by ignoring it. They avoided an interaction at the street-level. However, ignoring turns out to be a strong form of positioning. Consequently, the liminal opportunity misfired. The voice

of the group did not find acknowledgement. That's why the critical moment ironically deepened the exclusion of the counter-story from being voiced in the public sphere. By closing the center and ignoring the discursive performance, authorities pushed the act that had a public meaning into the sphere of private actions and closed the opportunity to renegotiate relationships and meaning.

Narrative dynamics

Despite the opportunity for renegotiation, the critical moment did not change positioning in the conflict dynamic. A new memory, however, is added to the counter-narrative. It's a memory that has two contradicting meanings. On the one hand, the group was temporarily empowered through its use of public space. On the other hand, their act and memory did not find acknowledgment in the dominant narrative and in fact deepened their sense of exclusion. Many weeks later, the welfare organization made a belated decision. The tensions between the cockpit group and the professionals were still running high and they decided to fully change the staff of in the new center:

> *So, the whole group of people who tried to set up the community center in 2004 was taken out by the managing directors. They said: 'well, you know, this is not possible. There is too much fighting going on, we are going to try with new people.' That is when I came in. (Linda, new manager of the center, February 2009)[43]*

Linda's description of the board's choice to bring in new professionals discloses that the board was knowledgeable about the tense situation at the center. The managing board did not want this decision to be understood in relation to the occupation, which is why they waited a few weeks before they made the decision. Their intention was to break the cycle of controversy by assigning new professionals to deal with the group. The first thing these new professionals did was to set clear rules about organizing activities, thereby reasserting the meaning of the conceived space:

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[43] *Dus die hele groep mensen die in 2004 bezig was om dat centrum op poten te krijgen, die is toen door de toenmalige directie er uit gehaald. Die heeft toen gezegd, 'nou, weet je wel, dit is geen haalbare kaart. Ze hebben zoveel ruzie met elkaar, we gaan het met nieuwe mensen proberen. Toen kwam ik. (Linda,* nieuwe manager centrum*, February 2009)*

> *Well, we established that there were some rules: 'you can help organizing some activities, but only in cooperation with us.' (Linda, new manager of the center, February 2009)[44]*

They framed the rule setting as establishing 'cooperation' between professionals and the group of 'volunteers'. The term 'cooperation' was central to the approach that these new professionals took to deal with the cockpit group. They framed the new situation as a 'new chance' for the group to be involved in community organizing:

> *And actually that first year went really well. We were willing to give them a new chance, we really did not want all that hardship. We just wanted to get going. (Linda, new manager of the new center, 20 February 2009)[45]*

The new professionals frame the situation in the center as a new era that offers new opportunities for cooperation. But the members of the cockpit group do not perceive the center as something new. Rather, they have memories of being excluded and their memory of the cockpit is still not acknowledged by the new professionals. The personnel change, therefore, does not significantly change the pattern of controversy for the better, because the cockpit group's narrative and practice is still unacknowledged.

Critical moment 4: violence

On 10 November 2006, the controversial pattern of interactions escalates into a traumatic incident that disrupts the state of affairs between volunteers and professionals in the center. The new manager is the only professional present that day. She is on her way up to her office when she sees one of the volunteers smoke a cigarette inside. Much discussion has taken place as a result of the smoking ban and she immediately tells the smoker 'to get rid of the cigarette'. Her impatience about the subject might have led her to speak up. The incident is short as she quickly turns around and walks away to her

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[44] *Nou hadden we met elkaar afgesproken dat er een aantal regels werden ingevoerd: 'Jullie mogen best een aantal activiteiten organiseren, maar we doen dat wél in samenspraak'. (Linda,* nieuwe manager centrum*, February 2009)*

[45] *En eigenlijk is dat het eerste jaar best wel goed gegaan. Zo van, we willen jullie wel een nieuwe kans geven, we hebben ook helemaal geen zin in al die toestanden en al die ellende. We gaan aan de slag. (Linda,* nieuwe manager centrum*, February 2009)*

office on the first floor.

Performance: residents

Her seemingly unimportant remark with regard to the cigarette leads to a heavy discussion amongst the volunteers. They feel offended by her tone. In the heat of the moment, three men decide to walk up and speak to her. Without notice, they enter the manager's office and walk straight to her desk. The manager describes their mimics and dramaturgy of threat and explains what she felt:

> *Oh Lord, these men came standing next to me. I turned and then one started: 'you know what I feel like?' So I said: 'Well?'… "To just hit you right in the face, you with your smooth talking, and nice sentences. I really feel like giving you some good punches!" And then he came with his fist very close to my face, this close! [while showing the distance to her face] And I started shaking, I realized that he'd gone too far, this came into my private sphere; very intimidating and threatening. (Linda, new manager of the center, February 2009)[46]*

This contentious act of three members of the cockpit group disrupts the previous sequence of action and reaction as it changes the tenor of controversy into violence. The group, however, simply frames this moment as action-reaction. They do not specifically describe the violent incident with the manager. Instead, they use a more general story that explains their actions as a result of ongoing frustration and lack of acknowledgement:

> *It is very frustrating, if you talk about something each month and they never allow you. After talking for four years we were still at the same point. Then things reach a boiling point and people start screaming to get what they want. And then those guys are afraid and say, 'we feel threatened', and they wouldn't dare to enter the center altogether. (Lesly, resident, focus group interview, May*

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[46] *Nah, toen kwamen die mannen naast me staan. Dus ik draai me om en die begonnen toen: 'weet je waar ik nou zin in heb.' Dus ik zeg: 'nou?'… "Om jou zó op je bek te slaan, jij met je mooie woorden, met je mooie zinnen. Ik heb zo'n zin, zo'n zin om jou zo op je bek te slaan." Toen kwam hij met zijn hand, met zijn vuist echt zo vlak voor mijn neus, op zo'n stukje. [geeft aan hoe dichtbij] Nah, toen ging ik trillen, ja nou vind ik het dus niet leuk meer, dit vind ik niet fijn. Dit kwam echt heel erg in mijn privé-zone; heel erg intimiderend en bedreigend. (Linda, nieuwe manager centrum, February 2009)*

2009)[47]

Lesly describes how the history of talking and negotiating about small things without any improvement in the way they are treated resulted in frustrations that led to violent interactions. His description and his heavy use of hand gestures while uttering these words reveals his experience of frustration. The everyday incident with the new manager escalated their ongoing frustrations in a reaction that voices their emotions through the expression of violence. Tall Harry and Lesly explain how raising their voices became the last resource to voice the experience of being excluded as legitimate stakeholders in the center:

> *Tall Harry: 'Yes, they got scared'*
> *Lesly: 'Because we started raising our voices after all that talking without a purpose. We would never really slap anyone, but we are allowed to get mad. I get mad. If they promise me things and I take the time to seriously talk about it, I expect to be taken seriously. (…) I would never slap anyone, but I do go into discussions and those discussions can eventually escalate'. (Tall Harry and Lesly, residents, focus group interview, May 2009)*[48]

Thus, Tall Harry and Lesly acknowledge the experience of 'threat', but frame the encounter in terms of the escalating pattern of being excluded when they experience that promises are not kept and the group is not taken seriously. Lesly frames the moment as a discussion, whereas the involved professional experienced it as violent and threatening.

Performance: street-level professionals and policy practitioners

As was the case in earlier critical moments, the response of the authorities is important to make sense of the disruption that takes place in a critical moment. In the storyline

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[47] *Gefrustreerd wordt je er van, als je daar elke maand over praat en je krijgt het niet. En na vier jaar praten heb je het nog niet. Dan loopt het tot hier [gebaart naar zijn nek] en dan krijg je een hoop geschreeuw en geblèr. En dan worden die mensen bang en zeggen ze 'we worden bedreigd' (…) Dan durfden ze het centrum niet meer in te komen. (Lesly,* bewoner, *focus group interview, May 2009)*

[48] *Tall Harry: Ja, die werden bang.*
Lesly: Omdat wij na veel vijven en zessen begonnen met stem verheffen. We hebben nog nooit iemand een klap gegeven, maar we mogen wel kwaad worden. Ik word kwaad. Als dingen mij beloofd worden en ik praat er serieus over, dan denk ik ook dat ik serieus genomen word. (…) Ik zal niet iemand een klap geven, maar ik ga wel in discussie en die discussie kan wel eens uit de hand lopen. (Tall Harry and Lesly, bewoners, *focus group interview, May 2009)*

of the professionals, the threatening of the manager is the first critical moment since the opening of the new center. After the men leave her office, the manager remembers running outside and calling her superior. The organization decides to inform the mayor of The Hague. This incident was so critical to the welfare organization that they needed to engage a higher authority to prevent further escalation. As soon as the city government is notified, the controversy in the neighborhood intensifies. Media attention heightens and adds to the demand for a quick response. The welfare organization and local policy practitioners align and decide to respond to the violence by closing the center and prohibit activities to continue. The policy practitioner explains that they had to set a boundary: 'This goes too far!'

Closing the center is a powerful performance that immediately reaffirms the existing power relations between parties. But to communicate their decision vigorously, the welfare organization decides to use a formal procedure. An official meeting is organized in which the director of the welfare organization informs the group about the closure. A policy practitioner is present at the meeting and her description of the scene exposes the controversial dramaturgy of interaction between the group and the organization:

> *No, no, no, that was a drama! That director… what was her name?... Barbara. And she wore a red jacket! Bright and shining red! And there was Anja [another professional] who was also not so popular. Not such a great talent for welfare work. And then at the other side of the table all the volunteers were sitting with their high rising emotions. And I was there as a representative of the local government. It was a very emotional argument the volunteers made. They just did not understand why we would close the place, they believed nothing really happened. They acknowledged that [the men] should not have done this, they admitted. (…) They were so emotional in their gestures and their ways of expressing. Some had tears running down their cheeks. That director just did not know how to deal with that. (Brenda, local civil servant, April 2011)[49]*

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[49] *Nee, nee. Nee, dat was een drama. Die directeur was.. Hoe heette zij ook weer? Barbara. En die had een rood jasje aan. Knal- en knalrood. En daar zat Anja [een andere welzijnswerker], meen ik. En die was dan manager. Maar dat was geen... eh, dat ging ook met ons niet lekker, zeg maar. Niet zo een geweldige manager en dan al die vrijwilligers om de tafel en dan al hun emotie. (…) En ik zat daar ook namens de gemeente. En het was een heel emotioneel betoog van die vrijwilligers. Zij snapten niet waarom überhaupt de tent gesloten was, want er was toch niets gebeurd, hé? Uiteindelijk kwamen zij ermee met: 'Dat hadden [die mannen] niet zo moeten doen. Dat geven wij toe.' (…) Daar waren zij zo emotioneel in. In hun gebaren en hun doen. Maar echt, ook hun tranen stroomden over hun wangen,*

The policy practitioner provides a description of the emotional performance of residents who seemed unaware of the critical character of this moment. The response of the welfare organization's manager who brought the message reveals an interesting discrepancy between the emotions of the group and the performance of power:

> *And her red jacket... Look, if you are going to have an aggravating conversation, you must be very careful with how you look. How are you addressing the matter? Maybe first let them say something and then give your own story? (...) Well, [she just told them directly] why they would close the center and what was about to change. She wanted to set new rules. (Brenda, local civil servant, April 2011)[50]*

Brenda's description of the meeting explains much about the importance of the dramaturgy of meetings. She literally argues that a professional should be conscious of the script and the stage in a meeting when something important is going to be discussed. Brenda explains how citizens showed their emotions through body gestures and how tears were running down their cheeks. The director lacks a repertoire for dealing with the exposure of such emotions. Her script excludes emotions from the interaction and does not leave space for the story of residents. She presents the sequence of interactions as the sole trigger for the welfare organization to decide to close the center. In staging the interaction that way, she communicates a top-down decision that is not to be discussed. Brenda refers to the red jacket, an artefact in the script, indirectly suggesting that it invigorated the negative message she conveyed. Through the dramaturgy of this performance the director closed any space for negotiation.

Social-spatial analyses

Like in earlier critical moments, the actions of residents and welfare professionals stem from contradicting experiences and storylines. The storyline of the cockpit group shows growing frustration and heightened tensions because the welfare organization continues in its former repertoire of rule setting and regulated activities. In this last critical

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ook bij een paar. En die directeur kon er gewoon niet mee omgaan. (*Brenda*, lokale ambtenaar, *April 2011*)

[50] *En ze had dus ook een rood jasje. Kijk, je gaat een heel vervelend gesprek aan. Je moet wel heel goed uitkijken: Hoe zit je erbij? Hoe ga je het gesprek aan? Laat je hun eerst spuien en ga je het dan vertellen? (...) Nou, [zij vertelde gewoon direct] de reden waarom het dicht was en wat er ging veranderen. Want zij wilde regels op gaan stellen. (Brenda*, lokale ambtenaar, *19 april 2011*)

moment, the controversy escalates into violence. The cockpit group gives meaning to the incident with the cigarette through the ongoing experience of being excluded and marginalized. From the perspective of welfare practitioners, the incident with the cigarette is just another unimportant event in the effort to run the center professionally. Their storyline is not as dramatized because they ignore earlier contentious actions as critical moments. The manager's assignment in the center demands her to speak up when rules are violated. The event with the cigarette is therefore not critical. The response to the event, however, reveals how everyday and seemingly mundane interactions at the street-level can escalate into violence when underlying grievances of one party are excluded from dealing with controversy.

The moment of violence temporarily shifts positioning as it places residents in a short but intense power position. Violence therefore demands a direct response from government bodies. In response, policy practitioners and professionals perform authority by engaging a higher body of authority. From their perspective, this is a logical next step as the legitimacy of the state is embedded in a monopoly of violence. Within the storyline of the local authorities, the center is a space for community organizing, a public space for which the state is responsible. The use of violence legitimizes the storyline of the authorities as it deepens the notion that the group is an illegitimate group to take up a public role. The only appropriate response is thus to dismiss the act of violence, regain control over the public space, and discipline the perpetrator. From this perspective, the decision to close the center is the only appropriate response.

Viewing the same performance from the storyline of the cockpit group suggests a different meaning to the notion of violence. As the sequence of events continuously marginalizes and delegitimizes their storyline and none of the tactics the group performed have led to a shift in the narrative dynamics, the moment with the cigarette leaves them no choice but to stand up and voice their story through a forceful performance that has immediate locutionary effect. They use threat to express grieve. From this perspective, the performance of violence can be understood as another contentious performance, an improvised tactic that tells a counter-story and demands a political response. Independent from the consequences, the enactment of violence could be understood as an escalated search for political recognition and acknowledgement of grieve and loss.

Interestingly, closing the center had happened before. What characterizes this last critical moment is that the local authorities do not assert power by ignoring the act, but through a discursive performance of power in interaction with members of the cockpit group. The interaction with the director of the welfare organization reveals again how the discrepancy between the emotional small stories of the cockpit group and formal professional performances of welfare professionals deepen controversy through interactions at the street-level. In previous critical moments, emotions were continuously being excluded from the repertoire of street-level interactions. The exclusion of this small story frustrates members of the group as it limits their capacity to communicate with professionals. At the same time, the emotions the group expresses limits the professionals' ability to engage with the group:

> *That is their way of talking. So I make sure not to incite. I just say what is allowed and what is not according to the rules. But this is how we communicate. (Dennis, youth worker, focus group interview, December 2009)[51]*

Dennis describes how staying calm was his counter-response to heightened emotions and referring to the rules is his strategy of communication. To him, 'their way of talking' does not convey a message but instead gives the professionals a sense of threat:

> *You have to constantly watch your step, what are they going to do now, they always try to do things that are not normal to normal people. (Bas, youth worker, focus group interview, December 2009)[52]*

One can see the tension in the group's repertoire of emotional communication that unintentionally deepens the professional's struggle to stay calm and keep to the rules. Ironically, in these street-level interactions, both performances misfire as neither one of the efforts finds recognition. But although none of the performances find acknowledgement, the performance of professionals does have a direct perlocutionary

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[51] *Dat is hun manier van praten. Dus ik ben dan ook niet opgefokt. Ik zeg wat wel kan en wat niet kan volgens de regels. Maar dat is wel hoe je met elkaar omgaat. (Marcel,* jeugdwerker*, focus group interview, December 2009)*

[52] *Je moet gewoon constant op je hoede zijn wat er nou precies gebeurt en zij proberen constant dingen uit te halen die zeg maar voor normale mensen niet normaal zijn. (Bas,* jeugdwerker*, focus group interview, December 2009)*

effect on their positioning. They reassert their power position *by* saying something – by the way they perform their ideas as calm and collected professionalism their performance has a perlocutionary force (Austin 1962: 101). At the same time, they use conventional speech like formal language to express their ideas – thereby performing authority *in* saying something and producing an illocutionary force (Austin 1962: 115). The lack of emotions and the use of formal language in their speech act expresses the dominant narrative of community organizing. In that way, the tacit dramaturgy of everyday interactions at the street-level contributes to a pattern of exclusion.

In short, the fourth critical moment unravels how conflict dynamics have a way of turning violent when one group gets continuously excluded from participating in the construction of the dominant narrative. That exclusion can happen physically through closing the space for negotiation, but also through more discursive repertoires of power in street-level interactions. When a process of escalation turns into violence there is no space to reframe and rethink meaning or positioning. Although the act of violence might spring from earlier grievances and express a story that requires recognition, from the storyline of public administration, the performance of violence appropriates the repertoire of authority.

After this last escalation the local government decided to intervene. They assigned a consultant to start an approach that changes the overall spirit in the community center and rearranges community organizing in the neighborhood. Chapter 7 provides detailed analyses of his practice.

Conclusions

The story of controversy in a newly built neighborhood in The Hague unravels the process of controversy between 2001, when the cockpit was established, and late 2006 when violence pushed the local government to intervene in the escalating controversy. The story starts out with genuine intentions to make a new urban space flourish through community organizing. The case actors soon find themselves in an escalating pattern of conflict, however, that tacitly excludes one group from taking part in negotiations over policy in the public sphere. As with most controversies, the case is characterized by recurrent periods of escalation spread over a long period of time. The case reveals how controversies unfold through interactions at the street-level. The social-spatial

narrative of controversy unravels this pattern of escalation through an analysis of critical moments. Local identity constructions were reified when the group from Schilderswijk was deemed inappropriate to manage community organizing. Abstract notions like policy, community, and identity became tangible memories through interactions on the street. These interactions had direct consequences for whether groups were included in or excluded from negotiations in the public domain. A detailed analysis of the process of exclusion provides three insights into the opportunities that controversies offer for advancing inclusive governance.

First, like in the case of crisis, this case study shows how the acknowledgement of critical moments is central to understanding and dealing with conflict. It shows how parties attribute different meaning to critical moments as they include or exclude the memory of the cockpit from their storyline of community organizing. The case study shows how the exclusion of a storyline has a direct effect on escalation as storylines become tangible in interactions between case actors. The way parties perform in these street-level interactions is informed by their storylines and directly related to the way they experience critical events. The storyline that celebrates the cockpit informs the group's tacit practices of community organizing. The storyline of the welfare practitioners starts later in time and therefore neglects the critical moment of the cockpit. As welfare practitioners are appointed by the local government their storyline emphasizes their professional responsibilities. That storyline becomes dominant as it is informed by an earlier story of the cockpit as 'a private dwelling.' This combination strengthens the perceived need to professionalize and refers to national policy trends that demand professional community organizing 'for everyone'. When the new center opens and the cockpit closes – the second critical moment – the dominant storyline becomes manifest at the street-level. The storyline of policy and welfare practitioners stresses the opening of the new center, which, for them, is the first critical moment in the budding narrative of controversy.

A second insight the case has to offer is the way contrasting understandings of critical moments get performed at the street-level. The storylines describe interactions during critical moments that teach us much about the performance of power and contestation. The linguistic performance of professionals has an illocutionary effect, positioning the cockpit group as volunteers in the new center. This creates a gap between formal and

informal repertoires of communication that deepens the group of residents' sense of exclusion and, in turn, strengthens the power position of the welfare practitioners. The small story (Bamberg 2006; Freeman 2006; Georgakopoulou 2006a) of residents that commemorates their role as organizers of the cockpit does not get acknowledged in the interactions between residents and professionals in the new center. Although the professionals intend to engage with the group, their attempts escalate the existing tensions as both sides' efforts to engage misfire. This failure plays out in the dramaturgy of street-level interaction, revealing its central role in efforts to engage citizens in local processes of participation.

Third, the contentious performance of occupation deepens our understanding of the meaning of spaces and places in urban conflicts. To understand this improvised act as an attempt to voice a political demand, one must understand how the meaning of space is appropriated and changed by this tacit performance of protest. The dramaturgical analysis of this moment clarifies the performance as a political effort to embody inclusion in place of the exclusion that has marked the group's experience of the center. The neighbors' support contributes to this staging and helps reinvigorate the counter-narrative. The setting proves to be central in this performance as the occupation makes use of the symbolic character of the public space. This reveals how informal acts of protest open negotiations in the public sphere by temporarily appropriating public spaces and, thereby, disrupting established positioning. This creates a clash between the conceived and perceived spaces that provides an opportunity to enact a story in the lived space. The case also reveals that such actions are depending on the recognition by authorities, however. Their response can relegate an effort to perform a public act into the private realm by ignoring it and excluding the informal protest from the repertoire of public deliberation. In this case, local authorities were unable or unwilling to acknowledge the informal act of protest as a political action. Their strategy was to ignore the group camping in the center until the group would move out. 'Ignoring' proved to be a strong act of positioning as it excluded the performance of the group from the repertoire of political negotiations.

The case provides an analysis of how storylines unfold through everyday street-level interactions that can escalate the pattern of controversy to the point of violence. The story thus demands that we rethink the repertoire of public negotiation. The critical

moments in this case study all took shape through a negotiation of meaning at the street-level. All parties expressed their stories tacitly in their performances. The escalation toward a moment of violence developed through the parties' inability to include each other's performances in their own narrative of community organizing. This raises a series of questions. Could the storyline of the cockpit group have been braided into the dominant narrative? What would the effect have been if the story of the cockpit group had been acknowledged, if they had been able to share their sense of loss and their grievances over the loss of the old club with the creation of the new center? Don't we all need to mourn the old before we start with the new? Not allowing for local history to be part of the discussions at the new center turned the center into a contested place from the outset. Knowledge about, and recognition of, the local history could have helped the professionals establish a negotiation over their role, and the role of the cockpit group in community activities.

Not only the inclusion of stories, but also the inclusion of a broader repertoire of action, would have helped the parties open and pursue such negotiations. The case study shows how the exclusion of informal repertoires of actions deepened the controversy. By excluding emotions from street-level interactions, welfare practitioners strategically positioned themselves as responsible professionals, which is a logical thing to do in their situation. It could have helped them, however, to be more aware of how this strategy tacitly excluded the Cockpit group from negotiations in the new center. Now the unintended result of their strategy was an escalating pattern of tensions that counter productively jeopardized their professional role. In a similar vein the local government excluding the occupation from the repertoire of political action. The strategy to ignore the occupation is in line with the attempt to not place one group over other citizens in the neighborhood. The result, however, is that this group of residents is tacitly excluded from negotiating community in the public sphere. As a result, none of the parties received recognition for their efforts to negotiate. The lack of acknowledgement for informal repertoires of negotiation led some members of the cockpit group to violence as the last resort in their effort to voice their story and forcefully claim recognition. Ironically, their violent act had the opposite effect, as it forced the local government to exercise its authority and responsibility even more, further limiting the repertoire available to engage active citizens in community organizing. The irony of this case has implications for reflective practitioners. It suggests that reflective practice needs the

capacity to include the other's critical moments and to be open to the seeking after acknowledgment that may be part of informal contentious performances that disrupt power relations. This case study proves that the social-spatial narrative framework offers a working perspective that street-level bureaucrats can use to make sense of what is salient and meaningful to different parties. Insights into the critical moments of different case actors can allow practitioners to acknowledge important events and experiences. This, in turn, would allow them to proactively shift the sequence of events and turn what often becomes a missed opportunity into a chance for negotiated democracy.

Chapter 6

Latent conflict: the everyday square
A mismatch between the formal and the informal city

Introduction

In the previous chapters, conflict was analyzed through the disruptive opportunities that critical moments offer. We saw how the performances of case actors can disrupt the dynamics among stakeholders and provide opportunities to renegotiate meaning. Discursive acts created moments in which underlying tensions surfaced: a protest march was organized to counteract the narrative of 'own fault' and a community center was occupied in an attempt to reengage with community organizing. These moments reveal the narratives of groups that are positioned at the margins of society and that demand a response by the authorities. They demonstrate that stakeholder performances are intelligently dramatized through the use of setting, stage and script. Critical moments function as focal points in understanding the process of conflict.

In this third case study I discuss a very different kind of conflict: latent conflict. Latent conflicts are characterized by a lack of critical moments. Where I defined 'crisis' as a short period of rapidly escalating critical moments and 'controversy' as a longer period of reoccurring critical moments, in 'latent conflict' there are no moments where tensions bubble over and storylines unfold separately. As a result, tensions remain under the surface and are not discussed amongst case actors.

One could ask why I call these latent tensions a type of conflict in the first place. The lives of residents, the work of welfare professionals, and the plans of policy practitioners seem to exist in separate realms in the neighborhood. This separation does not imply, however, that there is nothing wrong. One can sense latent conflicts through the complaints of neighbors, empty streets, the worries of policy practitioners, and the growing number of welfare professionals who are expected to build a (presumably missing) community life. People describe a constant experience of tension. Yet, they

engage the community through informal practices of negotiation that fall outside the more formal means of communication through which policy officials usually interact with residents. Many of the intangible tensions associated with latent conflict stem from the ways in which different parties formulate the local problems they encounter. The local government formulates the problem in the neighborhood in terms of security and participation. Welfare organizations experiment with youth and community activities. Groups of residents deal with these problems in their own way and feel as though they are not taken seriously by professionals and local government officials. These contradictory storylines get communicated via interactions at the street-level. This is why street-level interactions provide a window into latent tensions.

If storylines do not get acknowledged in interactions with other stakeholders, these stories get excluded from the negotiations that are taking place in the public sphere. Because latent conflict is characterized by a lack of interaction, a situation of latent conflict might be the worst-case scenario for the quality of the public sphere. If we want to understand how and where latent conflict can become an opportunity for urban governance, we have to dive into the moments in which storylines interact. A public square offers a laboratory for this effort. Diverse groups enact formal and informal practices on the square that discursively define everyday urban life. Storylines become tangible in these interactions and in the performance of everyday routines. I analyze two interactions – act 1 and act 2 – and show how they have the potential to develop into critical moments that would allow for the kind of renegotiation that strengthens the public sphere. I will analyze how these interactions failed to do so, what insights this provides for the process of latent conflict, and how the mismatch between formal and informal practices could inform governments in their efforts to create safer and more engaging communities.

Because latent conflicts do not develop through critical moments, the social-spatial narrative in this chapter will be formulated differently. As with the other social-spatial narratives, I provide three distinct storylines of parties who live or work around the square: the local government officials, the street-level professionals, and the residents. These storylines unfold around the topics of 'security' and 'participation' and reveal how different perspectives and experiences give contradicting meanings to these topics. In each case study I use spatial and narrative approaches to grasp experiences

of conflict. Here the lack of critical moments demands that more attention be paid to everyday spatial routines. As latent tensions develop and get communicated through street-level interactions, the use and meaning of space and place provide a window into the experience of tension. I therefore rely on the method of mental mapping. These maps reveal how people develop contradicting routines in the public spaces of the neighborhood and how varying meaning is applied to spaces.

After talking to several district officials and paying visits to a variety of neighborhoods in the city of Utrecht, I selected Zwanenvecht Square (Zwanenvechtplein) in the Zuilen neighborhood as the site for an interesting case study of latent conflict[1]. From a government perspective, Zwanenvecht Square area was challenging, as it was designated as a *krachtwijk* in the Vogelaar Policy in 2007. This national policy branded the square as a 'problem area' and demanded that the local administration develop a 'neighborhood action plan' that included welfare organizations, the public housing cooperation, and the local police. A strategy was presented that conveyed the motto of 'chances for everyone' with a particular focus on integration, security, living conditions, and work (Wijkbureau Noordwest, 2007).

From the perspective of the local residents, tensions evolved quickly. In one of my earlier visits to the square, a lady in her mid-thirties came running from her home. She wanted to know what I was doing and was worried that I was a journalist in search of another negative story about the neighborhood. The media had publicized stories about Zwanenvecht Square several times over the previous years. In 2007, a national television station covered the neighborhood's high number of Moroccan youngsters, who were portrayed as 'terrorizing' a traditional working class neighborhood. The show's host depicted the neighborhood as 'unsafe and tumultuous that could be seen as a showcase into the multicultural society' (KRO Profiel, 11 April 2007). Two years later, a national news show covered the neighborhood because of an incident in which youngsters had harassed a gay couple to the extent that they had decided to move out of the neighborhood. As a result, a group of neighbors had self-organized under the title of

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[1] I want to thank Leeke Reinders at Delft University of Technology with whom I worked together in the development of this case study. Unfortunately, our paths separated as I continued my fieldwork. I also wish to thank professor Arnold Reijndorp at the University of Amsterdam for sharing his ideas and knowledge, for offering suggestions about this case study, and for sharing the beautiful stories about his youth in Zuilen.

'Neighbors for Neighbors' to put an end to the negative branding of their community. When I explained my purpose, she invited me in for coffee and told me all about the hardships they faced when organizing the community in this highly regulated space in which cameras and limits on 'loitering' were expected to make the public space safer and more engaging. She invited me to follow Neighbors for Neighbors in its activities, which is how I got acquainted to many neighbors around the Zwanenvecht Square[2].

Introducing the neighborhood

Zuilen, Zuilen	*Zuilen, Zuilen*
Dorpje aan de schone Vecht.	*Village on the beautiful Vecht River*
Zuilen, Zuilen	*Zuilen, Zuilen*
'k ben aan je gehecht.	*I am so attached to you*
fier en sterk, vol levensmoed,	*proud and strong, full of life*
vrij en frank en vroom en vroed	*free and frank and devout and strive*
is het dorp vol durf en moed!!!	*is the village of daring and thrive!!!*
Is Zuilen.	*Is Zuilen*

(Song of 'meester Krombeen' in Van Scharenburg, 2002, curator of the Museum of Zuilen)

In the museum of Zuilen, one can take a journey in time and space. It brings the visitor back in time when industrial works like 'Werkspoor' and 'Demka' provided the neighborhood with ample employment opportunities for its working class inhabitants. In the museum, the owner – a resident with the ambition to commemorate the history of the old town – reminisces about loyal factory laborers and socially conscious factory owners who would always help employees in need. The museum shows Zuilen in the first half of the twentieth century: a working class neighborhood where laborers had a good life in social housing projects of famous architects like Berlage. As a result of the steel crisis, the Demka factory, a producer of steam engines, had to shrink its workforce. Werkspoor – a producer of railways and trains – closed in 1989. Since then, Zuilen has faced high unemployment rates and many laborers moved away.

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[2] I decided to focus on the story of residents who live around the square and are actively involved in dealing with local problems such as security and community organizing. The problem definition and strategies of local authorities focus on youth nuisance and crime rates. Instead of focusing on the behavior of youth itself, I wanted to understand how other residents dealt with these youngsters. I thus looked at the youngsters through the eyes of other residents. I also talked with the boys who hang around the square. Their story, however, did not add much to the analysis of tensions around security and participation and the mismatch between formal and informal practices at the street-level.

The museum curator speaks of how the empty working class apartments became inhabited by families whose fathers came to the Netherlands as 'guest workers' from Turkey and Morocco and were now reunited with their families. He calls these new inhabitants *Zuilenaren,* who should not be confused with *Zuilenezen*. The museum curator himself belongs to the latter group. He has been living in Zuilen since it was part of the scenic village a few miles west of the city of Utrecht. 'A *Zuilenaar* is everyone else who currently lives in the neighborhood' (interview with community worker, February 2011). As the neighborhood of Zuilen is located along the Vecht River in between the old village and the city of Utrecht, it was strategically incorporated into the city of Utrecht in 1954. That annexation was widely contested amongst *Zuilenezen* who strongly identified with the old village. According to the curator, the users of public transport are still punished for living in Zuilen as their tickets are an extra zone and thus cost an extra euro.

Today the neighborhood of Zuilen faces problems that contrast with the peaceful community that the museum portrays. Local policy documents describe Zuilen in terms of its diverse and multi-ethnic population that shares a limited amount of space. They emphasize the decay of public housing facilities, rising crime rates, and decreasing security figures. The city of Utrecht consists of ten boroughs. Zuilen is part of the northwestern borough. Since 1990, the city administration of the northwestern borough has developed several reconstruction projects to increase the living conditions and the quality of social housing under the header of the 'neighborhood development plan' (Wijkontwikkelingsplan 1990 in Starink 2011). In this plan, the city administration works in close cooperation with social housing cooperation Mitros, real estate developer BAM, and ERA builders. The plan aims to increase the quality of housing based on the concept of 'demolishing, building, and mixing', which is inspired by the assumption that better housing will attract a more diverse population, which will in turn increase the quality of public life in the neighborhood (Wijkontwikkelingsplan 1990 in Starink 2011).

In 2003, the local government evaluated the plan and came to the conclusion that physical reconstruction was not enough to overcome the problems that were now framed as 'socio-economic challenges'. The local government established a new plan – the 'neighborhood development plan second phase' – in which they incorporated welfare

organization Portes and social housing corporation Portaal to contribute to resolving problems of youth nuisance, school drop-out, and poverty (Wijkbureau Noordwest, 2003). In 2007, this plan was transformed into the 'neighborhood action plan' that was a result of the Vogelaar Policy described earlier. This last plan focused on the area around Zwanenvecht Square that is the décor of this case study.

The square, bordering the Vecht River, is a multi-ethnic area where several parties participate in everyday interactions. Local policy makers who work at the local district office are not often seen at the site. They do, however, participate in everyday interactions as their strategies to police the square influence everyday routines of residents and street-level professionals. The storyline of the residents is formed by people who live around the square and are diverse in age, background and occupation but engage actively in community life. The storyline of the professionals is more complex as welfare professionals tend to have more diverse responsibilities.[3]

In the case of Zwanenvecht Square, we can empirically distinguish three different types of street-level professionals working in and around the square. First of all, there are police officers of which the neighborhood officers are the most visible. As we will see, they take on the responsibility to interact with youngsters and other residents and have much tacit knowledge about the routines of local youth. Second, there are the welfare professionals. In Zuilen, they work for an organization called 'Portes'. One can distinguish between three types of welfare professionals: those who organize activities at the street-level and help residents organize themselves; I will refer to them as 'social workers'. Second, there are welfare professionals who help families with personal issues 'behind the front door' or at the school; I will refer to them as 'social assistants'. Third, there are welfare professionals who organize youth sports activities in the public space; I will refer to them as 'youth workers'. The third group of street-level professionals is made up by employees of social housing corporation 'Mitros'. Since the policies of minister Vogelaar, housing corporations had to also take up 'social' responsibilities. At Zwanenvecht Square, this was put into practice by assigning a 'social living consultant' who visits the apartment blocks on a weekly basis and is in charge of keeping the

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[3] These groups are by no means homogenous and include many different voices. Despite the differences between them, I reconstructed three common storylines nevertheless because they, as I noticed, do share similar problem definitions, attitudes, and positioning with their neighbors, policy practitioners, and street-level professionals who work in and around the square.

staircases 'liveable' and mediating between rivaling families.

The social-spatial narrative will offer a different insight into the neighborhood around the square. A local blogger who questions whether Zuilen is a problem neighborhood or the opposite, an exemplary neighborhood, argues: 'the aggression forms one piece of décor in the neighborhood, motivated residents who do everything to make something of their neighborhood form another' (IdolMind 2010: 13). Let us turn to the scenes, stories and sites of Zwanenvecht Square to see how formal and informal practices interact and produce a process of latent urban conflict.

Three stories on security

I will first demonstrate how the three storylines on security are constructed, legitimized, and how they lead to practice. I will then go on to describe a street-level interaction in which the three storylines clash in an interaction in the public space. I will analyzes this clash and speculate about how this interaction could have facilitated a liminal moment of opportunity, but ceased to do so.

Story of policy practitioners

The story of policy practitioners of the local council management centers emphasizes growing concerns about security. Their understanding of being secure is defined by neighborhood crime rates and via a survey that the local council executed on experiences of 'insecurity' among residents. These figures formulate a problem definition that emphasizes the role of youngsters who threaten the security in the living environment. The neighborhood action plan states:

> *Very defining for the question of whether people can live comfortably in Zuilen is the social living environment (see chapter on security). There is much room for improvement here. Think for example of youth nuisance and the improvement of social interaction among neighbors. (Neighborhood action plan, September 2007, page 6)[4]*

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[4] *Erg bepalend voor de vraag of men prettig kan wonen in Zuilen is ook het sociale leefklimaat (zie bij het hoofdstuk Veiligheid). Hier is nog veel ruimte voor verbetering. Denk bijvoorbeeld aan het tegengaan van jongerenoverlast en het verbeteren van sociale contacten tussen verschillende buurtgenoten. (Wijkactieplan, gemeente Utrecht, September 2007: 6)*

Policing youth nuisance became the marker of improving the living environment around the square. The neighborhood manager explains:

> *The youth nuisance is really the primary motive that influences security in the neighborhood. (Interview neighborhood manager, June 2010)[5]*

Thus, the story of policy practitioners produces a problem definition about security that emphasizes the theme of threat and regards the public space of the neighborhood as the most important realm that is being threatened. The narrative appoints a clear 'victimizer' in the form of the youngsters, as they are understood to be the biggest threat to security in the public space. The story of local policy practitioners directly links youth nuisance to the way in which a physical environment is organized:

> *[…] it also is a 'krachtwijk' [a problem area in the national policy of minister Vogelaar] where you must bring together the social and physical approach, otherwise they [the youth] search for another spot. (…) You have to [know] what those boys do and also think of something social or anti-criminal. (Interview former director neighborhood development plan, April 2011).*

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[5] *Die jongerenoverlast is voor ons wel de hoofdmoot die de veiligheid in de wijk bepaalt. (Interview* wijkmanager*, June 2010)*
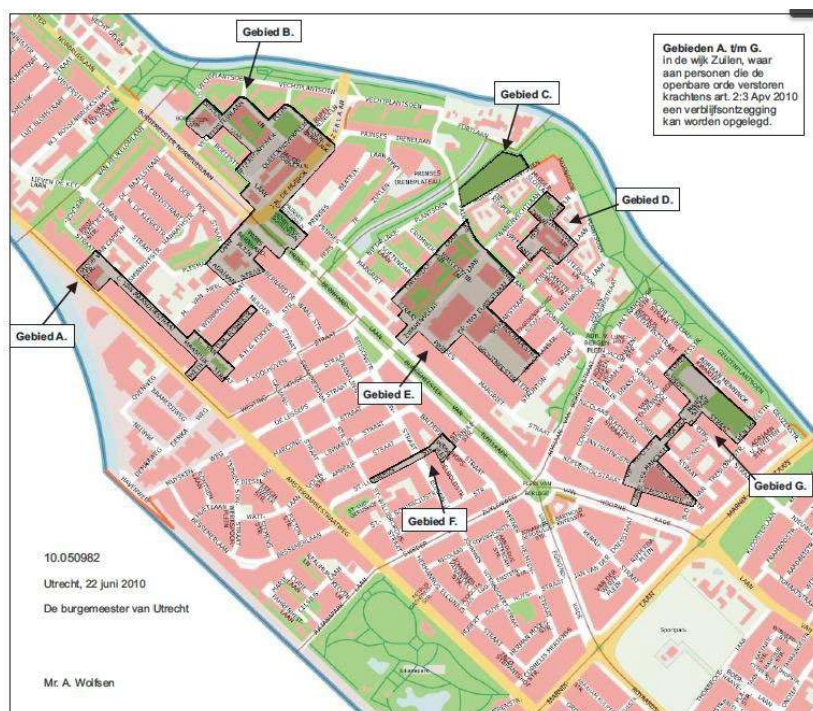
(Figure 1)

As is the case in both Amsterdam and The Hague, local policies in Utrecht are particularly focused on dealing with youth who use the public space to hang out together in their leisure time. As this youth is the focal point in the problem definition, policy plans formulate a response that points to physical interventions that seek to change the routines of what they call *hangjongeren* or 'loitering youth'. They develop a map that appoints the most problematic spaces in the neighborhood (see Figure 1)[6]. Area D marks Zwanenvecht Square neighborhood. As early as 2006, the neighborhood came to be understood as an 'urgency area' where extra attention was paid to both repressive and oppressive security measures such as cameras and special policies for troubled youth who performed petty criminal activities. In the areas that are marked on the map, special measures to police the youth became allowed:

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[6] When a civil servant of the neighborhood council was asked to draw a map to explain the neighborhood, he stood up and said: "A map? I don't have to *draw* a map, I have a map!", and he pulled out an officially printed map.

> *There are cameras in the public space. And there are gathering restraints. We drew in other youth workers, more direct welfare, and there is a group approach [imprisonment of some youngsters]. Parents are engaged in that and other youngsters receive extra attention. There is a variety of measures. (Interview security manager, June 2011)[7]*

Another approach is focused directly on forty-three infamous youngsters in particular. A local civil servant whose responsibility is to 'manage security' explains this 'group approach':

> *There is a group of 43 youngsters that can be quite annoying. And if they strike, the number [of the security index] decreases. But well, the police and welfare and everyone else focuses on that group. That is how bizarre reality is, that such a "club" [Dutch reference to a group of friends] can have such a great impact on the overall atmosphere. (Interview area manager, June 2010)[8]*

The two approaches are a result of the way in which policy practitioners construct their story on security. That story produces a 'thin narrative' with a singular theme: threat. The declining security measures and rising crime rates foster feelings of 'insecurity' around Zwanenvecht Square. The story provides a convincing definition of the problem that is backed by statistics. It points in the direction of a singular problem – being 'youth nuisance' – which in turn leads to a solution that follows logically from this problem definition. Like we have learned from negotiation theory, any problem definition directly implies certain solutions (Fisher and Ury [1981] 2011; Kelman 1998; Neale and Bazerman 1991; Pruitt 1981). Here we see how the storyline of policy practitioners adheres to a causal logic: their storyline results in a problem definition that restricts the repertoire of solutions to formal strategies to police the public space in the neighborhood

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[7] *In de openbare ruimte zijn er alleen camera's met blokken ervoor neergezet. En er is een samenscholingsverbod, er is ander jongerenwerk ingevlogen, er is meer ambulante hulpverlening, er is de groepsaanpak [gevangen zetten], de ouders worden meer betrokken en jongere jongens krijgen meer aandacht. (…) Er is een heel palet aan maatregelen. (Interview* veiligheid manager, *June 2011)*

[8] *Maar er zit een groep van 43 jongeren die af en toe knap vervelend kunnen doen. En als die weer een keer toegeslagen hebben, dan dondert dat getal [de veiligheid index] weer naar beneden. Maar goed, de politie en welzijn en de hele rimram zit op die groep jongeren. Dat is het bizarre van de realiteit, dat zo een club zo heel erg bepalend kan zijn voor het sfeerbeeld. (Interview* gebiedsmanager stadsontwikkeling, *June 2010)*

by using cameras and gathering restraints. The causal relationship between the problem definition and perceived solution naturally appoints the youth as the perpetrator and the community as the victim. Therefore, the solution is oriented at the perpetrators in two ways: by way of repression (through the use of camera's, gathering restraints, and monitoring the 43 defined 'problematic youngsters') as well as prevention (through the involvement of youth workers and welfare workers). The repressive measures have a spatial or physical connotation; specific areas are controlled by cameras or are defined as 'urgency areas' where youngsters are not allowed to hang out in the public space. On the other hand, preventive measures – or what local officials call 'social interventions' – are interventions that assign welfare workers to help youngsters stay on the right track and prevent them from undertaking criminal activities. The latter assigns an important role to street-level professionals working in the neighborhood.

Story of street-level professionals

The success of the interventions that policy practitioners develop is particularly dependent on the ability of the neighborhood police officer responsible for executing the new policies at the street-level. This police officer is assigned to Zwanenvecht Square and its surroundings. He explains: 'a neighborhood officer usually has the kind of background that helps him to understand social relationships between groups in society, otherwise you would not get this role' (Interview neighborhood officer, December 2010). His story starts out with a more ambiguous insight into the experience of youth nuisance. He explains nuisance as something that gets loaded with meaning by the interactions between people who live in the neighborhood:

> *[Nuisance is] very diverse. The act of 'loitering', 'hanging' – for some that is already nuisance. But mainly scooter crossing. Yelling. Littering. Smoking pot. Noise until late at night. Cars that come and go. That's also nuisance, I think. Especially if you are older, and your frame of reference originates more in the past, so to say. Then you surely experience that as nuisance. (Interview neighborhood police officer, December 2010)[9]*

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[9] *[Overlast is] heel divers. Het 'hangen'. Sommigen vinden dat al overlast. Maar met name het scheuren op scooters. Het schreeuwen. Afval maken. Het roken van jointjes. Herrie tot diep in de nacht. Auto's af en aan. Dat is ook overlast denk ik. Helemaal als je wat ouder bent en je bent toch met je referentiekader zeg maar toch wel wat meer van vroeger. En dan ervaar je dat zeker als overlast. (Interview* wijkagent*, December 2010)*
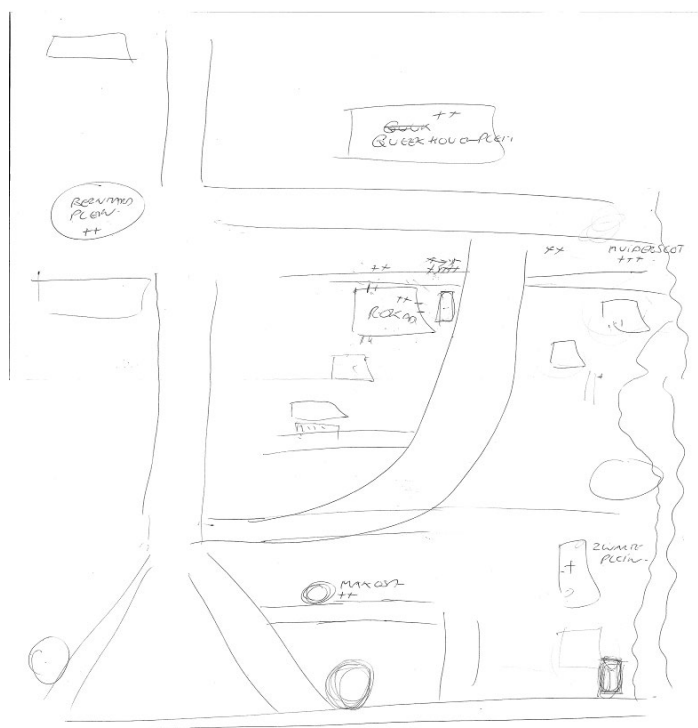
(Figure 2)

The neighborhood police officer describes a more complex story about youth nuisance. He explains that the meaning of loitering is relative to the frame of reference of the one that's experiencing the nuisance. For some residents, these youngsters do not formulate a threat. In his story, the theme of threat is relative to the circumstances.

His ability to make the experience of nuisance relative to the context is an interesting perspective as it implies an ability to take on different perspectives and engage with the stories of multiple actors. Interestingly, the map the neighborhood police officer draws during the interview (see Figure 2) shows resemblance with the formal map (see Figure 1) the policy practitioners use to explain the neighborhood. He places a 'plus' for problem areas and multiple 'plusses' for the areas that face 'multi-problems'. The areas he marks with plusses are the same areas the official marks as 'urgency areas'. Hence, he makes use of the storyline of the policy practitioners to discuss his practice. But when we look at his everyday street-level practice, we see how he incorporates the dominant narrative in more complex tacit knowledge.

While drawing the map, he explains that the cameras also pose a new problem. The youngsters seek to circumvent the gaze of the cameras. Consequently, the cameras reshape the way in which youngsters move around the neighborhood:

> *And we have a number of cameras hanging here. You probably saw that. At the shopping center [near the square] there is one [camera] and there is one at the square. Here [he draws a circle], the 'centralist' is located who oversees what is happening and then they run to the other side into a living area and there they hide at the entrance to a building. (Interview neighborhood police officer, December 2010)[10]*

The officer knows how youngsters consciously move around to avoid gaze of the camera. He circles the camera and points to the route that youngsters take to circumvent it. However, the camera is not able to register what happens beyond the square, in staircases and small streets between apartment buildings. The neighborhood police officer continues:

> *And then again it becomes apparent how important it is to know the area because those apartment blocks all have a large courtyard inside, on the outside it looks very closed off, but there are a few gates where you can enter. (...) Yes, those gates are often, well I don't want to say defected, but they are not locked. So those boys then have escape routes. What they do? They go in the staircases and run out on the other side, or they jump over the banister. Or simply through the fire escape. And they stay there, out of the police's sight. (Interview neighborhood police officer, December 2010)[11]*

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[10] *En wij hebben hier een aantal camera's hangen. Dat heb je ook wel gezien. Bij Rokade staat er één en bij Zwanenvechtplein staat er één. Hier [hij tekent een cirkel] ziet de centralist het gebeuren en dan rennen ze naar de overkant naar een woongebied en daar vluchten ze zeg maar een portiek in. (Interview* wijkagent*, December 2010)*

[11] *En dan krijg je weer te zien hoe belangrijk het is dat je dat gebied kent, want die flats die hebben allemaal aan de binnenkant een groot binnenterrein, aan de buitenkant lijkt het heel gesloten hé, met een aantal poorten waar je in kan. (...) Ja, en die poorten zijn vaak, nou ja, ik wil niet zeggen onklaar gemaakt, maar die zitten vaak niet op slot. Dus die jongens hebben dan vluchtwegen. Wat doen zij? Ze gaan dan binnen in het portiek en zij gaan dan aan de achterkant er weer uit of over de balustrade heen. Of gewoon beneden langs via de brandtrap. Dan blijven zij een beetje achter hangen uit het zicht van de politie. (Interview* wijkagent*, December 2010)*

The officer's story reveals that the cameras shape a new problem as youngsters take to using spaces that are only semi-public – the courtyards of apartment blocks become the semi-public spaces as the locks are broken and the youngsters use them as escape routes beyond the camera gaze. As these courtyards and staircases belong to the social housing corporation and the apartment tenants, police officers are officially not allowed to trespass. In order to police the youngsters, the officer needs to know the spatial routines youngsters develop. Besides his spatial tacit knowledge, the neighborhood police officer also emphasizes the need for 'personal knowledge':

> *They take me more seriously than someone that they don't have a [social] relationship with. If I walk up to those boys after nuisance has been reported (…) and if there is a colleague with me whom they do not know, they'll run away. If they see me they stay, so then I can register more names and more signals and you simply get to hear more. (…) [W]hat they are up to, where they are going. (Interview neighborhood police officer, December 2010)[12]*

A personal relationship with the youngsters is important for the neighborhood police officer to do his job. He describes how this relationship allows him as an individual to communicate with them. He uses the informal conversations to gather information. His practice centers on policing the youngsters so that they do not convey a threat to other residents when they gather. The gathering restraint and the cameras help him to make sure that youngsters do not gather at certain places in and around the square. The same strategies, however, cause the youngsters to move to other places in the neighborhood. In order for the neighborhood police officer to meet his goals, he is thus equally dependent on formal as informal practices.

The storyline of the street-level professional is more complex than the story of policy makers. It includes elements of the dominant narrative to define the problem, but when translated into practice, elements of tacit knowledge are added. The neighborhood police officer breaks the causal relationship between problem definition and solution as he points to the need for tacit knowledge to engage with the youngsters. His definition

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[12] *Ze luisteren beter dan dat je die [sociale] relatie niet hebt. Als ik naar de jongens kom en er is overlast geweest (…) en als er een collega is die ze niet kennen dan gaan ze rennen. Als ze mij zien dan zullen ze blijven staan dus dan kan ik wat meer namen noteren en signaleren en je krijgt gewoon dingen te horen. (…) [W]aar ze mee bezig zijn, waar ze heen gaan. (Interview* wijkagent*, December 2010)*

of youth nuisance allows the youngsters to fulfill a variety of roles in the neighborhood: they are not only perpetrators, but also smart users of the public space. Residents can be perceived as victims, but also as people who happen to complain more quickly than others. Let us move to the third story about security to see how neighbors experience security and how they relate to the stories of policy practitioners and street-level professionals.

Story of residents

Contrary to the formal story of crime rates and youth nuisance, the story of residents tends to center on personal experiences related to dealing with 'insecurity'. The formal security strategies made the youngsters move to the park to the left of the square. This unintended move is the starting point of the residents' storyline, because it has changed the way in which they experience security in their daily routines.

The residents' problem definition does not focus on the youngsters exclusively but, rather, acknowledges their inability to live side by side in their neighborhood. Demet, a Turkish woman who has lived in the Netherlands since she was six years old, develops the character of 'youth' in much more complex terms, thereby suggesting a more complex narrative (Cobb 2003). She understands their presence in the street through the problems they face at home:

> *Those children have a home, but they also don't. They do not have the space to be themselves at home. They do not have a room, have to share almost everything with their brothers and sisters. Have no clothes, they don't get them, all second-hand; they have to wear each other's clothes. They often feel ashamed of that. They get beaten; they also feel ashamed about that. But they cannot express it. They are nobodies, they are "between the shore and the ship", they belong nowhere, they have no identity, they don't. (Demet in focus group interview, June 2011)[13]*

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[13] *(…) die kinderen hebben wel een huis, maar ook niet. Ze hebben de ruimte niet om thuis zichzelf te zijn. Ze hebben geen kamer, moeten ze met veel broers/zussen delen. Hebben geen kleren, krijgen ze niet, die zijn allemaal tweedehands, ze moeten ze van elkaar dragen. Zij schamen zich er heel vaak voor. Ze worden geslagen, ook dan schamen ze zich daarvoor. Maar ze kunnen zich niet uiten. Ze zijn niemand, ze zijn tussen wal en schip, ze horen nergens, ze hebben geen eigen identiteit, dat hebben ze niet. (Demet in focus group interview, June 2011)*

She emphasizes the difficult position of youngsters with a migrant background. They are stuck between two cultures and do not get recognition on either side. Also, the situation at home is problematic as their education at school differs from what their parents teach them. Therefore, they do not have a space to prosper.
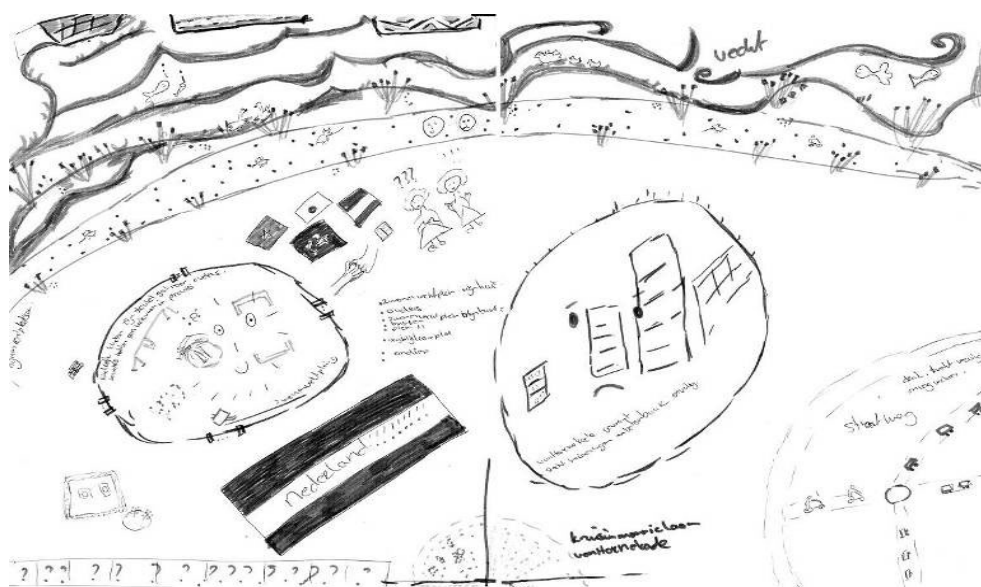
(Figure 3)

Also, her drawing (see Figure 3) offers an interesting insight into the meaning she attaches to the square. She infers a very different meaning to youngsters 'hanging' at the square. She emphasizes the youngsters' unique ability to contribute to social cohesion in the neighborhood: '[this] is my neighborhood and that of my children, and the children are the key to engagement with other neighbors' (Interview drawing session, June 2011). The circle on the left-hand side is her representation of Zwanenvecht Square. From her perspective, the street and all activities that are undertaken in it offer an important opportunity for community building. Youngsters and children who use the street have a function in growing familiarity and coexistence between neighbors at the square. Demet explains how the street is the only place where youngsters can experience the agency to negotiate between their multiple identities. At the street, they are in charge of the rules and they can develop behavior in negotiation with one another.

That negotiation of identity, however, is not circumscribed to youngsters alone. In the drawing, she depicts different national flags to show that all neighbors take part in the negotiation of identity. Thus, in this storyline, the living environment is characterized by themes like community, development, progress, and agency. The character of youngsters in this narrative is not one-dimensional: they are both perpetrators and victims. As youth does not have a particular space in this drawing, they become an everyday part of the neighborhood. The storyline of residents frames youngsters not simply as a nuisance, but as part of the everyday challenges they face by living in a multi-ethnic neighborhood.

One of the practices neighbors develop to deal with the challenge of varying usage of public space is through informal routines. The dog walking club is an informal initiative of a few ladies who share the same problem: they feel unsafe when they walk their dogs at night. One of the ladies describes a specific experience that has shaped the route of the dog walking club. Ms. De Wit marks the site of her memory with an A in her map (see drawing below). This is the place where the ladies never walk alone. The site is a street near the little harbor where Ms. De Wit was threatened by a youngster: 'this is a miserable place for me. I was threatened to death while I walked there with a baby' (Ms. De Wit, focus group session, June 2011). The experience has a central place in her drawing and her narrative of the neighborhood. She depicts the park and the route she walks with her dog with a D. She explains:

> *So that is just an unpleasant spot. Nevertheless, I enjoy walking with my dog along the river. But okay, it doesn't really matter, I mean, it is just something you experience and it does not go away. (Ms. De Wit in focus group interview, June 2011)[14]*

The storyline about youth nuisance thus centers on a personal experience of one of the ladies. That 'small story' of personal experience enforces negative meaning onto the place where she drew an A. Her drawing assigns positive meaning to the path along the river (D). But, 'the park next to their square is the only place where our dogs can run free', one of the ladies explains. Since cameras expel youngsters from the square,

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[14] *Dus dat is gewoon even een nare plek, maar ondanks alles loop ik toch met mijn hondje graag langs die Vecht. Maar goed, dat maakt allemaal niet uit gewoon, ik bedoel ja, dat is gewoon iets wat je meemaakt en dat gaat gewoonweg niet weg. (Ms. De Wit in focus group interview, June 2011, p. 51)*

however, they now use a small bench to hang out at night. Thus, in order to have the dogs run free, the ladies have to pass the unpleasant spot and – south from where Ms. De Wit drew an A – the youngsters on their bench (see Figure 4).
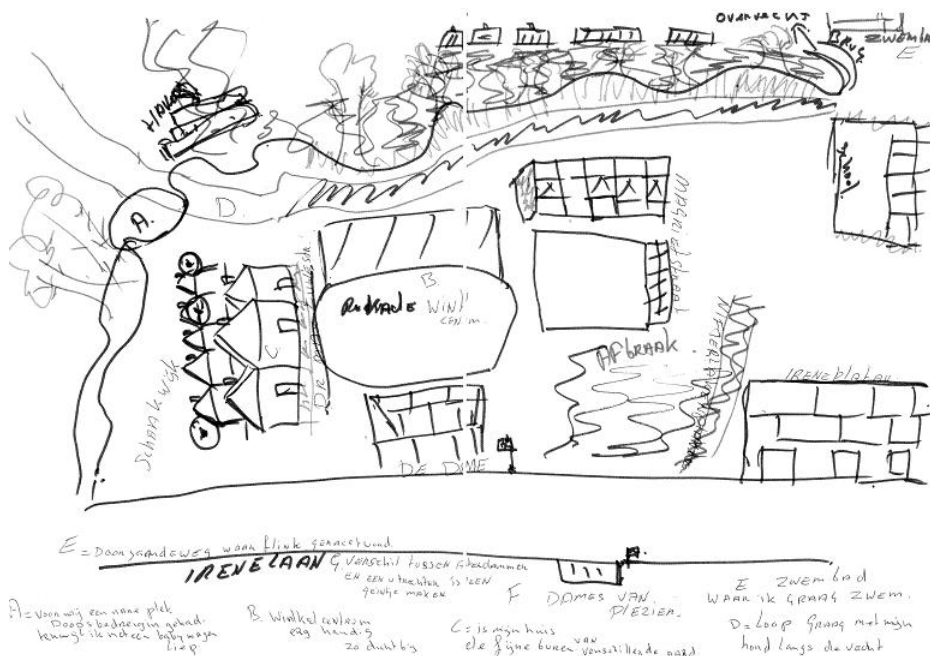
(Figure 4)

In response to the presence of these youngsters, the ladies tacitly developed a coping mechanism in the form of 'the dog walking club'. The dog walking routine allows them to walk their dogs in coexistence with the youngsters. The route crosses the square, passes over the path besides the river, and continues past point A into the park. Each night, they will leave at eleven, and everyone can join the trail directly from their own house. The route allows them to feel comfortable walking their dogs in the dark at night as they walk all together. They explain:

> *(V3) Well, we basically leave the house at the same time and we all get there at the same time. I actually always walk in the reverse direction a little, because I want my dog to walk a bit further, but I always bump into someone there.*
> *(V5) … and then we walk together …*
> *(V5) because that is cozy*

> *(V2) No, but the dogs think it is cozy!*
> *(V3) And the dog owners as well!*
> *(Ms. De Wit, Mr. Lavender, Mrs. Lavender, focus group interview, June 2011)[15]*

The conversation between the ladies reveals how they experience the informal tactic of a dog walking club as 'uproblematic'. Instead, they frame it as *gezellig* ('cozy'). The route of the dog walking club came into being on the basis of street knowledge as they know when the youngsters reside where. The dog walking routines also differ depending on the time of day, 'in the day time we go into the park alone' (focus group session, June 2011). The routine is an informal practice that mediates between policing practices that change the youngsters' routines, the needs of other residents, and the presence of youngsters.

Thus, the residents' storyline centers on personal experiences that assign meaning to certain spaces and places. Their narrative is complex as it assigns dual roles to youngsters who can be both perpetrators of threat as well as victims of their own personal problems. Also, the residents who are marked as the victims in the storyline of policy practitioners are people with a capacity for agency in the story of the residents. The residents focus on their informal practice of the dog walking club and the pleasure they derive from walking together when they speak about the issue of security. Their narrative works in a non-linear logic where personal experiences, dual identities and informal practices constitute the story of security.

Act one: negotiating the *hangplek*

The three stories about security develop in different realms of the neighborhood: in the formal domain of politics, in the domain that moves between formal politics and the street-level, and at the street-level itself. The stories seem to remain separate understandings of what is at stake. But as they get translated into the strategies and

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[15] *(V3) Nou, we gaan eigenlijk allemaal op een bepaalde tijd van huis en we zijn ook op een bepaalde tijd daar. Ik loop eigenlijk altijd nog een stukje terug, want ik wil dat mijn hond een stukje meer loopt, daar kom ik al iemand tegen…*
 (V5) …en dan lopen we samen verder naar…
(V5) Omdat het gezelliger is.
(V2) Nee, maar die honden vinden dat gezellig!
(V3) En meteen de baasjes ook.
(Mevrouw de Wit, Meneer Lavender, Mevrouw Lavender, focus group interview, June 29, 2011)

tactics that are executed at the street-level, they become tangible. Therefore, to understand how latent tensions around Zwanenvecht Square unfold, we must dive into a moment at which the different storylines interact. What happens when the storylines clash at the street-level?

One afternoon in the spring of 2011, a rumor is going around the neighborhood. The ladies of the dog walking club have heard that the local government is about to install an official *hangplek* for youngsters right on the path where they let their dogs run free. *Hangplek* is a Dutch term that refers to a meeting place for youngsters in the public space. A *hangplek* may look like a bus stand, underneath which neighborhood youngsters can hang out and stay dry. The new *hangplek* is supposed to prevent youngsters from loitering in the staircases and wandering around the neighborhood. On a Sunday during my participant observations at a community event organized by Neighbors for Neighbors, the security manger of the district council visits the square in person. The neighbors of the dog walking club take her visit as an opportunity to speak with her. They ask the civil servant to walk with them to the spot where the local government has decided to build the *hangplek*. The security manager stages (Hajer 2009) Mohammed—a Moroccan neighbor who has good connections with the youngsters and helps organize the building of the *hangplek*—to come along.

As the neighbors, the security manager, Mohammed, and I leave the square, we take the route of the dog walking club and the ladies explain their routine. They want to show the security manager how they walk and where they can let their dogs run free. The security manager does not respond to the complaints the women utter about the limited space for their dogs. As we cross the park, we take the path on which the *hangplek* is to be placed. The setting (Hajer 2009) speaks to the complaint of the neighbors: the bench that the youngsters use as their informal *hangplek* is empty but the site is scattered with tinfoil. Mr. Lavender argues: 'when we were young we did not get a roof over our heads to hang around under, we had to sit at home and do our homework'. Mrs. Lavender adds, pointing at the pollution at the site: 'and what is all that tinfoil? Why should we reward this behavior?' The statement triggers Mohammed to explain that the tinfoil is used to package the apple tobacco that is used to smoke the water pipe, an old Moroccan tradition: 'nothing to do with drugs!' The discussion creates ambiguity about the identity of the youngsters. Mohammed's story allows the youngsters to be 'loitering'

as this does not necessarily imply that they are doing something 'wrong'.

This ambiguity is quickly replaced by the story of 'threat' as the security manager utters her story. Her story is one of security measures. She explains that the local government has made a big effort to provide the youngsters with their *hangplek* and that this should take the nuisance away from the neighborhood. The professional script (Hajer 2009) she uses tells her to express the formal storyline. This story has higher tellability as it provides a causal relationship between problem definition and solutions. Her story refers to the dominant problem definition that assigns youth nuisance as the problem. The policy practitioner is not able to leave space for local knowledge or ambiguity about the identity of youth. The ladies of the dog walking club disagree with her formal story. Their script limits them to voicing 'Small Stories' (Bamberg 2006; Freeman 2006; Georgakopoulou 2006a). They explain that this is their only route along the field where they can let their dogs run free and that an official *hangplek* with a roof would attract even more youngsters. Ms. De Wit clears her throat as she tries to voice her story about the threat she once faced. She starts, 'one time I was walking here and I got threatened'. 'Okay', the policy practitioner responds, 'but, a *hangplek* keeps the youth away from the rest of the neighborhood'. Ms. De Wit swallows her emotions and steps back. She does not try to explain how her experience of threat relates to their dog walking practice. Ms. Lavender takes over and once again tries to explain how the ladies walk their dogs. The security manager asserts her point again: 'a *hangplek* will make the neighborhood safer'. But the ladies don't listen anymore. They shrug their shoulders, quietly walk back to the square, and mingle into the festivities.[16]

Social-spatial analyses

What do these stories about security tell us about latent conflict? The three stories reveal how stakeholders develop different narratives about the neighborhood. A shared topic like 'security' unfolds into three different stories that originate in different definitions of the problem. For policy practitioners, the security index ascribes a problem definition of security that understands the youth as a singular character, 'the perpetrator', and the living environment within a singular theme, 'threat'. The story of the street-level

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[16] This story is based on participant observations I undertook in the neighborhood. I was present during this interaction and made extensive notes that formed the basis of this narrative. As I was standing in the midst of this interaction I was surprised that nobody talked to me. Only when we returned to the festivities the women of the club asked for my opinion. I expressed that I felt disappointed that they were unable to share their story, but tried to remain as impartial as possible.

professional uses a similar problem definition, but when translated into practice, he makes the role of youngsters and residents more ambiguous and breaks the linear logic as his practice includes tacit knowledge that is needed for him to function at the street-level. The residents' story, again, is very different as it originates in personal experiences. As a result, it appoints far more complex dual identities to the parties involved. It regards the youngsters as both victims and perpetrators. And it views residents as victims of threat, but capable of agency.

The maps provide a lens into the stories as they make spatial practices tangible in the routines of everyday life. When the maps that are used by policy makers and street-level professionals provide a top-down view of the neighborhood, the maps the residents create offer us a street-level perspective. The latter includes memories, whereas the "official" map merely determines spaces where youngsters gather and spatial interventions are executed. The differences between the two types of maps offer an interesting insight into the experience of space. The maps also function as a tool to speak about everyday routines, such as the dog walking club. When we look at the three stories, they seem to unfold separately, in isolation from each other. But when they get translated into street-level practice, they clash during interactions.

The description of a street-level interaction provides a lens into the process of latent conflict. In the interaction at the site of the future *hangplek*, two storylines clash. The neighbors of the dog walking club, the civil servant and Mohammed are confronted with each other's storylines. This moment creates an opportunity for residents to learn about the extensive security interventions that the local government is developing. Additionally, the civil servant is offered the opportunity to enrich her story about security with real-life experiences and 'tacit' knowledge. The moment of interaction could therefore have been an opportunity to renegotiate the meaning of 'security' in the neighborhood. The interaction, however, unfolded in a different direction.

The response of the civil servant should be understood in the broader context of responsibilities that she carries out for other residents in the neighborhood. That context shaped the storyline that in turn produced a script in which she tried to convince the ladies of the dog walking club that the *hangplek* was a legitimate strategy to improve security. In the interaction, however, this story became dominant as it had higher

tellability. The story of the civil servant was a 'thin narrative' because she proposed a causal relationship between problem definition and solution, assigned threat to the one-dimensional character of the youngsters, and she positioned the residents as victims and herself as an authority. She does all of that in a script that is shaped by her role and appealed to the public good. In contrast, the ladies use a different script. They voice personal experiences. In their interaction with Mohammed, they provided a more complex perception of the youngsters in which their identity was more ambiguous. Their story of the dog walking tactic assigned both victimhood and agency to themselves as residents, as dog walking helps them to cope with their sense of insecurity. The more complex story had lower tellability in the interaction as the response of the civil servant reveals that she is committed to a script that excludes individual stories and focuses on stories that represent the level of the group. In interaction with the civil servant, the story of personal experiences and informal practices was cast aside. Through this street-level interaction, a story was excluded from the negotiation of 'security'.

Although we cannot say that the civil servant was intentionally excluding the small story (Bamberg 2006; Freeman 2006; Georgakopoulou 2006a) of residents from the interaction in the public sphere, the details of the interaction reveal how these processes happen tacitly. The policy practitioner's script excludes the small stories of the residents from the interaction as she 'responds' by repeating her formal narrative. The small and personal stories seem to have too little tellability in response to the dominant narrative about security. As the civil servant repeats her story, she recalls that '[the solution proposed by the local government] is better for the whole neighborhood'. This adds to the dominance of her narrative as she refers to the public good. As we get confronted with tense situations, we stick to our stories to make sense of a situation. Our discomfort tells us to also stick to the script that we know. Here, the script of the security manager does not allow her to recognize Small Stories as an expression of citizenship. But what happens if the street-level professionals and policy practitioners would be able to improvise and change their scripts in interaction?

If we acknowledge that conflicts deepen through these seemingly mundane street-level interactions, we can also use these moments to change the tenor of conflict. The moments in which storylines get expressed in interactions provide an opportunity to renegotiate what security means for different actors in the neighborhood. The moments

of confrontation with 'other' stories create ambiguity, because they reveal different understandings of the situation in the neighborhood. This ambiguity could be understood as a liminal opportunity. How could case actors make use of that liminal opportunity? To answer that question we need to look into the limits of the dramaturgy of street-level interactions. We should ask ourselves, what kept the civil servant from including the residents' story?

The description of the interaction suggests that the civil servant was not able to include the informal practices of citizens as a form of citizenship. Her formal repertoire of interventions shows a mismatch with the informal practices of residents. The mismatch between formal strategies and informal tactics demands us to rethink our repertoire of citizenship. What would have happened if the civil servant could have recognized small and informal tactics as a form of citizenship? Instead of the usual repertoires of citizenship engagement, the dog walking club could be seen as an interesting practice for policy makers to deal with security. A broader repertoire of citizenship would have allowed the civil servant to engage with the story of 'dog walking'. She might not have changed her position about the *hangplek*, but she could have included the story of the residents into the dominant narrative of security. This would have acknowledged their informal practice and would have created a space for tacit knowledge of residents to be of value in policy decision making. Now one story was excluded from being voiced in the interaction between residents and a local official. The description of Act 1 unravels how the quality of the public sphere can be diminished in a street-level interaction. The interaction could instead have facilitated and strengthened the public sphere at the everyday level of the neighborhood. Such acknowledgement would have transformed latent tensions into an opportunity for participation.

Three stories about participation

The focus on security leads to another central topic in the policy strategies of the local council: citizen participation. In pursuit of it, welfare practitioners have been assigned as the central vehicle to facilitate activities at the street-level. Also, the story of residents develops around their efforts to engage in community activities. Three separate stories of participation are the result. Also, these stories get negotiated through an interaction at the street-level.

Story of policy practitioners

The storyline of security leads directly to another strategy, to engage citizens to participate. This pursuit assumes that citizen participation leads to more integrated communities with less crime and nuisance and more responsible citizens:

> *And this policy is becoming more important now: we are no longer pampering, but we look for ways to engage people and make them partly responsible so that the public space gets better uses and gets a function that you want together. The public space has to become a place to play, a place to meet, where people feel comfortable. (Interview program manager neighborhood action plan, spring 2010)[17]*

Thus citizens are expected to engage in communitarian practices like organizing community activities and maintaining public spaces in the neighborhood. The program manager speaks about public spaces and the idea that people should feel responsible for the way these places are used. She continues that it is important that 'they [residents] start to address each other when things happen' (program manager neighborhood action plan, spring 2010). The story of the policy maker reveals what she expects of citizens:

> *(…) the participation story is difficult: people are preoccupied with getting bread on the table, what do you mean participation? They are not ready at all. (Interview program manager neighborhood action plan, spring 2010)[18]*

The storyline of the policy practitioners thus assumes that citizen participation is something that is not happening yet. Citizens in this story are characterized as 'not ready' and as having been 'pampered'. The way the policy practitioner speaks about the future shows what she assumes about the engagement of people today:

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[17] *Dat is wel beleid dat nu steeds meer gaat spelen: we gaan niet meer pamperen, maar vooral kijken van hoe gaan we ze betrekken en medeverantwoordelijk maken zodat een openbare ruimte goed benut wordt en die functie krijgt die je met elkaar wil dat het heeft. Openbare ruimte moet vooral speelplek zijn, ontmoetingsplek zijn, waar mensen zich prettig voelen. (Interview* programma manager wijkactieplan*, spring 2010)*

[18] *(…) Het participatieverhaal is moeilijk: mensen zijn er vooral mee bezig of er brood op de plank is, hoezo participeren? Daar zijn ze helemaal niet aan toe. (Interview* programma manager wijkactieplan*, spring 2010)*

> *You try to do something about that [social cohesion] by having people organize*
> *neighborhood parties, homework classes, we have a women consulting hour on*
> *Wednesday morning. That was initially for Moroccan mothers, but now it starts*
> *to be attractive for other cultures. Those contacts do not develop automatically,*
> *that stays behind. (Interview neighborhood manager, June 2010)[19]*

The forms of participation that the policy practitioner describes are thus focused on organizing activities across cultural groups. Her assumption is that these activities are 'staying behind' so far. From this perspective, participation and security are interrelated. Participation has a positive impact on social cohesion. The story provides a causal relationship between 'active citizens' who address and change 'inappropriate behavior' that leads to 'social cohesion'. This should make the area safer and security will cause more people to engage in community life. Therefore, the policy strategy assigns an important role to welfare professionals to facilitate citizen participation. How does this assignment find expression in practice? And what is the experience of residents concerning their engagement in the neighborhood?

Story of street-level professionals
The storyline of social workers presents a similar description of the past and the present:

> *(…) the time has changed. This is not the time to say: I show up with a problem*
> *and you solve it. (…) Since two years the policy is: do not organize for people*
> *but teach them how to organize. (Interview social worker, January 2011)[20]*

The welfare professional uses terminology that is similar to that of the policy practitioners – 'no organization for people, but teach them how to organize' – with which he emphasizes that citizens should take up responsibility. He frames the responsibility

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[19] *Daar [sociale samenhang] probeer je in de buurtaanpak natuurlijk wel allemaal dingen aan te doen, door mensen samen buurtfeesten te laten organiseren, huiswerklessen te laten organiseren, we hebben een vrouwenspreekuur op de woensdagochtend. Dat was in eerste instantie een Marokkaans vrouwenspreekuur, maar nu komt er ook een toenadering tot de andere culturen. Die contacten tussen de groepen gaan niet automatisch, dat blijft achter. (Interview* wijkmanager*, June 2010)*

[20] *(…) de tijd is veranderd. Het beleid is veranderd. Er zijn veel bezuinigingen. Het is niet een tijd van: Ik kom met mijn probleem en jij lost het op. (…) Het beleid sinds de laatste twee jaar is: ga niet voor de bewoners activiteiten organiseren maar leer de bewoners zelf activiteiten te organiseren. (Interview* opbouwwerker*, January 2011)*

of his organization as one that is facilitating instead of organizing:

> *And residents are not up-to-date on the changes, 'you get paid so you have to organize for us. We want a neighborhood party so you have to make sure the party will be there'. (Interview social worker, January 2011)[21]*

According to the social worker, residents are not yet accustomed to the idea that they have to organize activities themselves. He assumes that people expect him to do all the organization, because he gets paid to do so. His story, like the story of policy practitioners, is one of change. Their problem definition lies in the lack of citizen engagement in the community.

The story of some welfare professionals reflects how they approach citizens in their everyday practice. Barbara, an experienced social worker, explains how complex her role is:

> *The most important thing I do for people is that I take them seriously. Not: 'there she is again with her complaints. There he is with his whining.' That is what people do quickly. (…) That is how people get treated. Also by police and local government. (…) [I]f you take someone seriously, half of the emotion already found a place. Then the problem is immediately manageable. Then it becomes workable. (Interview social assistant, December 2010)[22]*

Barbara broadens the character of residents who come to welfare professionals with their complaints. Her practice experiences complicate her role and the role of the client. Many professionals have difficulties listening to everyday complaints – small stories – of residents. She believes that when professionals find ways to really listen to a story, half of the problem is solved. Her practice assumes that the inclusion of small

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[21] *En de bewoners zijn ook niet op de hoogte van de veranderingen. 'Jij wordt ervoor betaald en jij moet het voor ons organiseren. Wij willen een buurtfeest hebben, ga maar zorgen dat er een buurtfeest komt.'* (Interview opbouwwerker*, January 2011)*

[22] *Het belangrijkste dat ik voor die mensen doe is dat ik ze serieus neem. Niet: 'Daar heb je haar weer met haar gezeur. Dan heb je hem weer met zijn gemekker.' Dat is wat mensen snel doen. 'Ik kan er niets aan doen, dat gezeur en gemekker.' Maar zo wordt er met veel mensen omgegaan. Ook door de politie. Ook door een wijkbureau. (…) En als je iemand serieus neemt dan heeft de helft van de emotie al een plek gehad. Dan is het probleem meteen al een stuk makkelijker hanteerbaar. Dan wordt het werkbaar.* (Interview maatschappelijk werker*, December 2010)*

stories allows a situation to become workable. But like Barbara stresses, there are other organizations in the neighborhood who take a very different approach to 'taking people seriously'.

An example is an intervention of the local social housing cooperation. They tried to increase citizen participation via what they called the 'staircase approach' (*portiekaanpak*). The staircase approach practically entails a special consultant visiting every household in the social housing complex. His aim was to become familiarized with the families and their living circumstances:

> *The 'staircase approach' is focused on the idea that we visit all residents to ask them about different subjects: nuisance, how they experience the space around them, the activities in the neighborhood, their engagement, and to measure their participation. (Interview social living consultant, December 2010)[23]*

The consultant explains that his 'informal' approach allows him to get acquainted with the families and build trust. He can then ask if people have any desires for the neighborhood. The practitioner speaks about measuring people's willingness to participate, but he continues with a seemingly contradicting purpose:

> *Alternatively, once you are inside [their homes] you notice things. So you can also immediately signal things that are not on your checklist and pick up on them. For example, when people litter, or when they never open their front door. (...) You can pinpoint the addresses where people are never home, that one is always drunk, that one is littering. And you can upscale that to institutions that can do something about it. (Interview social living consultant, December 2010)[24]*

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[23] *De portiekaanpak is erop gericht dat wij langs alle bewoners gaan om ze te vragen over verschillende onderwerpen: overlast, de ruimte om hun heen hoe zij dat ervaren, de voorzieningen om hun heen, de activiteiten in de buurt, de betrokkenheid van de bewoners en de participatie kunnen meten. (Interview* sociaal woonconsulent Mitros*, December 2010)*

[24] *Aan de andere kant ben je natuurlijk binnen en signaleer je dingen. Dus kun je ook gelijk andere dingen die je signaleert en die niet in je vragenlijst zitten oppakken. Bijvoorbeeld mensen die vervuilen, mensen die nooit opendoen. (...) Je kan precies die adressen aanwijzen van die is er nooit, die is altijd dronken, die is vervuild. En dat schaal je weer op naar de instanties die er wat mee kunnen. (Interview* sociaal woonconsulent Mitros*, December 2010)*

Thus, a large part of the strategy is a means to monitor what are considered appropriate ways of living. The practitioner acknowledges that he checks up on people's households and attracts other welfare agents if he encounters littered households or people who are never home. That strategy paradoxically brings together policing and empowerment goals.

The storyline of welfare practitioners is thus characterized by the assumed lack of citizenship engagement. Welfare practitioners with different roles use the same language as the policy practitioners. Although welfare professionals seem conscious of their role as 'facilitators of empowerment', they seem to find it difficult to include small stories into their practice. The welfare practitioners who do seek to develop an approach to engage informally tend to enter the private sphere of the household with an approach that combines empowerment with policing. The performances with which they encounter citizens reveal a hidden agenda to monitor appropriate lifestyles in the community. Like the story of policy practitioners, this story has a linear logic that moves from 'a lack of citizen engagement' to interventions to 'facilitate citizen engagement'. Although the citizens in this story are expected to organize themselves, their capacity to organize needs to be facilitated by professionals. The professionals thus remain in a position of authority.

Story of residents

The storyline of residents unfolds around a very different problem definition. Like the citizens' story of security, their story of participation is embedded in their own informal experiences. When welfare professionals and policy practitioners define the problem of participation as a professional goal that they seek to accomplish, the story of residents unfolds around everyday experiences that construe the relationships between residents and professionals. Two stories of residents show how everyday tactics of participation exist simultaneously but separate from the strategies of policy and street-level professionals. When executed at the street-level, the stories clash during an interaction at the square.

The playground

The first memory that characterizes their story of participation takes place when neighbors Demet and Jeanette had just moved into the neighborhood with their young children. Jeanette explains that the square was an empty space: 'There was only a slide

and a rose bush' (Jeanette in focus group interview, June 2011). Demet adds:

> *That was because it was not a playground, so what did the children do, they started vandalizing: trash cans, cars, out of boredom, because there was basically nothing at the square. And then we started to [organize]. (Demet in focus group interview, June 2011)[25]*

The ladies expected that a playground would allow the children in the neighborhood to play instead of vandalizing the square. They decided to organize the building of a playground themselves. But they immediately encountered problems. Jeanette explains:

> *(…) we had to invest so much. We had to apply for a 'liveability budget', eh, then we had to collect autographs, then all the autographs (…) they lost them. Then we had to start over again. So that had cost so much time, and frustration, and irritation, and energy, and everything, but we continued, we continued, because we wanted a playground on this square. (Jeanette in focus group interview, June 2011)[26]*

The two neighbors express how their emotions turned negative as they tried to meet the formal criteria of organizing but did not find recognition for their efforts as the list of autographs they created got lost. Policy practitioners framed the loss of the list of autographs as a misfortune. But in the narrative of neighbors, such misfortune means a moment that frustrated their efforts to organize. They explain the loss of the autographs as a moment in which the authorities did not take them seriously. In the focus group conversation, the misfortune triggers comments:

> *But isn't it because of the number of foreigners living here, huh, as if it [the neighborhood] is some sort of peak, like we are in the drain (…) where it is much more difficult to get things done compared to somewhere else. (Male*

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[25] *Dat was het en eigenlijk omdat dat geen speeltuin was, wat deden de kinderen, gingen vernielen. Prullenbakken, de auto's, uit verveling, omdat er gewoon op het plein niks was en toen zijn wij eigenlijk [gaan organiseren]. (Demet in focus group drawing session, June 2011)*

[26] *(…) wij moesten dus zoveel moeite doen. Wij moesten dus een leefbaarheidsbudget aanvragen, eh, toen moesten we alle handtekeningen, toen hebben ze onze handtekeningen (…) die zijn ze kwijtgeraakt. Toen moesten we het weer allemaal opnieuw doen. Dus hoeveel tijd dat het gekost, en frustratie en irritatie en energie en alles, maar we gingen door, we gingen door, want wij wilden per se dat er hier iets kwam op dit plein. (Jeanette in focus group drawing session, June 2011, p. 12)*

neighbor in focus group interview, June 2011)[27]
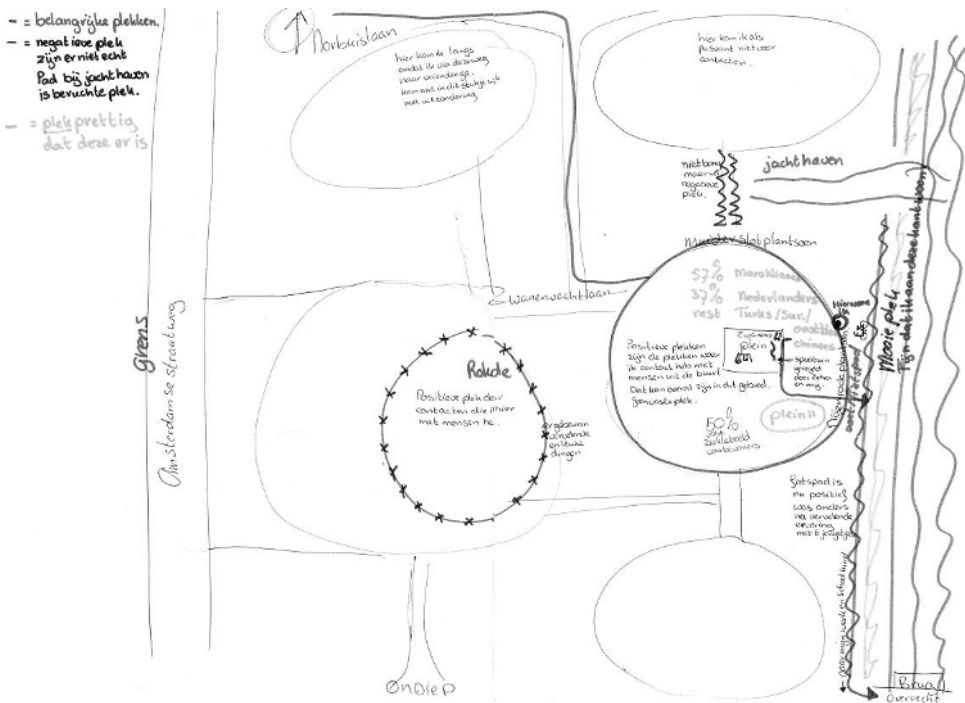
(Figure 5)

Here we see how another neighbor picks up on the loss of autographs and explains the story of misfortune as a result of the marginalized position of the neighborhood. The neighborhood's multi-ethnic status gets linked to the lack of opportunity to organize. Jeanette's drawing (see Figure 5) also portrays this connection. But her story stresses the local experience over the high number of foreigners. As she draws out the numbers her story points to the positive meaning the public space of the square has had in terms of meeting people and self-organizing for a playground. It is through interactions with other neighbors at the square that a sense of 'public familiarity' (Blondeel 2006) is created and the multi-ethnic composition of the neighborhood is experienced by Jeanette as something valuable. She thus complicates the causal relationship between participation and cohesion by stating that cohesion is also established via everyday street-level interactions.

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[27] *Maar komt het niet door het aantal allochtonen dat hier woont, hè, alsof het een soort van piek is, wat een afvoerputje is (...) waar het veel moeilijker is om dingen voor elkaar te krijgen als elders (Male neighbor in focus group drawing session, June 2011).*

Despite the misfortune with the autographs, positive experiences encouraged the neighbors to continue. One day, Demet and Jeanette thought of a way to engage children and youth in the planning of the playground. They wanted to organize a drawing match at the square where children could draw their fantasy playground. The ladies bought little gifts for everyone who participated and sat down at the square:

> *(…) at a certain point there was a group of youngsters standing on the side, a bunch of, well, boys of around 13-14 years of age who were watching the scene, trying to play cool. We asked if they also wanted to make a drawing. They went into their homes and made [emphasizes] perfect drawings, in detail. But they did not bring the drawings down, so we asked: 'did you make a drawing or not?' So they went back up and brought the drawings down and in the end the things that they drew were actually incorporated into the playground. (Jeanette in focus group interview, June 2011)[28]*

Jeanette was able to engage the youngsters in the physical planning of the square. She speaks proudly of her intuitive act of engaging the youngsters in the drawing game. The ladies were successful because more people got involved. At a certain point, local welfare professionals offered to help. 'But then', Jeanette argues, 'the local welfare organization came, and they just wanted to get involved in everything we did. They took over completely!' (Focus group interview, June 2011).

The story represents the first memory the neighbors speak about when they are asked to talk about participation. It shows how bureaucratic regulations make it hard to organize something that is separate from formal budgets. As the neighbors want to change the physical environment of the public space, they rely on a responsive government. Both the local government as well as the local welfare organization disappoints them. The former looses the autographs and the latter 'takes over'. This 'small story' characterizes the memories that construe the experience of participation. The residents do not use

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[28] *(…) toen op geen gegeven moment stonden er aan de zijkant een heel stel van, nou ja, jongens van een jaar of 13-14 en die stonden toe te kijken, en een beetje lacherig te doen, en toen heb ik gevraagd of zij ook tekeningen wilden maken. Die zijn hun huis in gegaan en die hebben thuis een [klemtoon] perfecte tekening gemaakt, in detail. En toen kwamen ze later naar beneden, zonder tekening, en toen zeiden wij zo van, eh: 'Goh, heb je nou wat getekend of niet?' En toen zijn ze weer naar huis gegaan en hebben ze de tekening gehaald en uiteindelijk zijn dingen die zij getekend hebben, zijn voor mekaar gekomen. (Jeanette in focus group interview, June 2011)*

terminology like 'participation', but speak about 'getting to know neighbors on the square'. That definition, but also the negative experiences with local authorities, affects the nature of further activities.

The homework club
The second story of participation highlights how memories travel across experiences and reproduce negative emotions as they get confirmed in the interaction with local welfare professionals. On a sunny Monday afternoon, Demet was helping her son with his homework in the front yard that borders the square:

> *I am doing homework with my son in the front yard of my home, we are studying, a boy passes by. 'That is what I have to do as well, but there is no one who can help me, can I join you?' I tell him: 'Well, if you have to [do the same], sit down'. Two weeks later, I had four boys. (Demet in focus group interview, June 2011)[29]*

Within a week, Demet was doing a homework class with a group of children who all lived around the square. She recalls how the mothers of these children, all immigrants from Morocco and Turkey, would peek out of the windows and wave to their sons in her front yard. Usually, they would be reluctant to have their children visit others in the neighborhood. But the small and close setting with their neighbor seemed safe enough to allow their sons to get help with the Dutch language. The informal familiarity between the mothers and Demet was the basis for the homework club that she tacitly developed. It worked:

> *So we studied topography, provinces, rivers, roads. I tell them: 'you have to question him, and you question him, and finally I'll question all of you'. When we were halfway through, I would serve them lemonade. I only tell them: 'I want to see your grades'. So I could reward them if they came back with good grades. (Demet in focus group interview, June 2011)[30]*

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[29] *Ik ben met mijn zoon voor de deur aan het huiswerk maken, aan het leren, komt er een jongen. 'Ja, dat moet ik ook doen, maar d'r is niemand die mij kan helpen, mag ik mee leren?' Ik zeg: 'Nou, als jij hetzelfde [moet doen], ga zitten.' Twee weken daarna had ik vier van die jongens. (Demet in focus group interview, June 2011, p. 36)*

[30] *Dus we gingen topografie leren, provincies, de rivieren, de wegen. Ik zeg: ' jij moet hem overhoren, ga*

After a while, the local welfare organization learned about the homework class. They offered Demet help. She would be allowed to use 'square 11' – an empty apartment at the square that was used as a community home – to do the homework class. 'Square 11' was close enough, so Demet moved her class. 'But then', Demet explains, 'they thought it was necessary to "professionalize" it' (Focus group interview June 2011). The welfare organization decided that the homework class could take place in the new professional multifunctional building further up in the neighborhood. 'But, nobody goes all the way to that building!', Demet argues. 'The children are not allowed to go that far. And it is unsafe, parents cannot watch them and there is a busy street to cross.' (Focus group interview, June 2011). The welfare organization had a solution to this problem. They proposed that they could hire a professional homework teacher and that Demet could function as a crossing patrol to help the children cross the busy street to get to the homework club.

Demet recalls her astonishment as she speaks. She did not understand: 'why do they want a professional, am I not good enough?' She knew that this would be the end of her homework class and that the children who needed it the most would not be able to participate. She knew why: the mothers do not want to send their children far away to strangers. But she could not share this tacit knowledge with the professionals who believed that they helped her professionalize her initiative. During the focus group session, another lady responded to this story:

> But in the mean time they say: 'you Dutch people should take initiative. You have to apply for the (...) liveability budget. You have to do this and that.' Then we thought: 'We must do nothing, because you are going to take the credit for it, you will take over'. (Neighbor in focus group interview, June 2011)[31]

Demet characterized the story as one of 'taking over' or literally 'taking away'. Here again, a well-intended strategy of welfare workers crosscuts a tacit and informal activity

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jij hem dan doen en daarna overhoor ik jullie'. Halverwege kregen ze limonade te drinken. Ik zeg alleen: 'Ik wil wel jullie cijfers zien.' Dus ik ging ze belonen als ze met goede cijfers kwamen. (Demet in focus group interview, June 2011, p. 36)

[31] *Maar wel ondertussen zeggen van: 'Maar jullie Nederlanders moeten wel initiatieven nemen. Je moet een (...) leefbaarheidsbudget aanvragen. Je moet dit en dat.' Toen dachten wij: 'wij moeten niks, want jullie gaan met de eer strijken, jullie nemen het allemaal over'. (Neighbor in focus group interview, June 2011, p. 37)*

of a neighbor. Demet's story starts out as a narrative with multiple values: community, development, and opportunity. Through the interaction with the local welfare organization, the story becomes 'thin' as the value is reduced to 'failure' and 'loss' and the role of the welfare professional gets characterized a 'taking over'. The stories reveal how a good intention – fostering participation – can misfire as different actors employ different understandings of what it means to 'participate'.

The following interaction describes a moment of opportunity for residents and street-level professionals to renegotiate the story of participation at the street-level.

Act two: negotiating activities at the square

During my participant observation, I spent a day at the square with a group of welfare professionals who were assigned to facilitate 'playing at the square'. I observed that I had never seen the square this empty. I asked the professionals and they responded that this was the 'normal' amount of children at the square. I had seen something different before. In order to understand what was going on, I took to the residents and talked to them about the square.

According to some of the more active residents, informal efforts to organize the public space around the square had become an important vehicle to get acquainted with other residents:

> (...) And then we started to greet each other on the street, they asked how I was doing, how we were doing, how well we did and so on. People started to become interested. One came, then two, and at a certain point three, four, and then we did it. (Jeanette in focus group interview, June 2011)[32]

The informal activities that residents organized created a script of everyday interaction that welcomed many different members of the community. Demet and Jeanette were able to attract a diverse group of residents to participate in their activities at the square. Many of them were fellow mothers. Engaging them had great value:

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[32] *(...) En toen op straat groeten, vragen hoe het met mij gaat, hoe het met ons gaat, hoe ver we zijn, enzo. Toen was er belangstelling. Toen kwam er een, toen twee en op een gegeven moment drie, vier, toen hadden we het. (Jeanette in focus group interview, June 2011)*

> *Yes, then we were able to work with the mothers. Mothers came out of their houses, they did not watch from behind their curtains or from their balconies. No, they came to the square with their children. (Jeanette in focus group interview, June 2011)³³*

The square became the focal point of citizenship performances as informal interactions caused a sense of public familiarity. At the same time, however, another practice unfolded at the square. The increased attention to a participation agenda led the local government to assign more welfare workers to organize activities at the square. The repertoire of action of these welfare workers was different. Their strategy was to appoint certain days in the week to organize for bikes, balls, and other toys to be made available to children that were playing at the square. These 'play sessions', however, were regulated by two professionals who would oversee the children. These professionals used a different script and staged themselves as professionals: they would wear t-shirts and jackets with the logo of the organization at their back. This 'professionalization' had immediate effects:

> *We accomplished a lot. Now she [the Moroccan mother behind the window] looks down at the square and sees people of 'Portes' [local welfare organization] with jackets with the organization's logo printed on it. They don't come [the mothers], no really, they don't. (Jeanette in focus group interview, June 2011)³⁴*

According to Jeanette, the presence of professionals was disrupting the activities at the square because mothers would now stay inside their homes again. The faces of the welfare practitioners were lacking public familiarity. When the other mothers were safe companions, these welfare workers were strangers. The strangeness of these professionals lies in nuanced details of the way activities were staged. The logos distinguished professionals from residents. The mothers lacked a script to interact with the professionals and, as a result, did no longer participate in activities at the street-level.

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³³ *Ja, toen pakten, toen konden we moeders aanpakken. Moeders die kwamen de deur, huis uit, die keken niet meer achter de gordijn of vanuit het balkon. Nee, die kwamen met hun kinderen op de plein. (Jeanette in focus group interview, June 2011)*

³⁴ *We hadden al heel veel bereikt. Nu kijkt ze [de Marokkaanse moeder achter het raam] op het plein en ziet zij mensen van "Portes" [lokale welzijnsorganisatie] met jackjes met de naam er op. Komen ze niet [de moeders], nee, echt niet. (Jeanette in focus group interview, June 2011)*

Where informal activities created a parochial space for community, the script of formal activities and the staging of professionals symbolized the welfare state and thereby transformed the public space into a regulated and conceived space where authorities police the setting.

Also the number and diversity of different types of welfare professionals deepened the strangeness of professionals and turned the parochial back into a public square. Interestingly, welfare professionals were conscious of their effect on the community:

> *Every week there are at least 16 professionals on the street. It feels as if we are here to 'observe the monkeys'. Those are things I heard from people. (Interview welfare worker II, January 2011)[35]*

Many neighbors expressed that they do not know the difference between a social worker, a social housing cooperation consultant, a policy maker, a security manager, a youth worker, and sometimes even a police officer. A person in a suit seems to express the welfare strategy of monitoring. As we have seen in the storyline of welfare workers, this expectation is an uncomfortable truth in the practice of many of the welfare programs. Here again, a local interaction between stories at the street-level reveals how a policy strategy to increase the number of welfare professionals results counter-productively in a decrease of citizenship engagement. What can we learn from such interaction? And how can we analyze the effects these unfortunate interactions have on the process of latent conflict?

Social-spatial analyses

The stories of policy practitioners and street-level professionals seem to directly contradict the stories of residents. Where professionals characterize residents as 'needy' and themselves as 'facilitators of empowerment', residents characterize themselves as 'self-organizing' and professionals as 'taking over'. These two stories are both quite 'thin' and do not leave much space for multiple identities. The story of local authorities is developed in a linear logic: from policy to participation to cohesion. Alternatively, the story of residents starts out by informal street-level interactions that provide a basis

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[35] *Er lopen hier per week in elk geval zestien professionals buiten op straat rond. Het voelt als een soort aapjes kijken. Dit zijn de geluiden die ik heb gehoord van mensen. (Interview* sociaal werker II*, January 2011)*

to get to know other neighbors and develop a sense of community. In their story, the practices to formalize these informal interactions disrupt the public familiarity that neighbors construct through everyday routines. Community is constructed through the 'nitty gritty' interactions at the street-level and has to do with the quantity of interactions and not so much with the quality of the conversations. The interactions that develop community are characterized by small stories where familiarity turns the public space into a parochial realm that strengthens community (Lofland 1998). The description of the street-level interactions reveals that street-level bureaucrats unintentionally disrupt that parochial meaning of place. What does the dramaturgy of these interactions tell us?

The stories of the playground, the homework club, and the observed interaction at the square all show us that professionals were unable to include informal practices in their practice of participation. As informal practices are being regulated, professionals position themselves in a dominant position. They change the informal script into a formal one. Also, the way they stage themselves on the street symbolizes professionalism. The dramaturgy of the interaction leaves little room for small stories and highlights the formal scripts of professional organizing as professional welfare workers are staged through regulated activities and symbolic artefacts like the official logo on the professional's outfit. Despite their good intentions, these street-level performances change the fabric of street-level interactions as they disrupt interactions between neighbors. Less interaction among neighbors stagnates the development of public familiarity. The new script becomes dominant and conceives the meaning of the public space as one of professional community organizing. The dramaturgy of women behind their curtains watching over the square that is occupied by welfare workers gives a sense of the positioning that deepens the experience of marginality.

Like before, the challenge of street-level bureaucrats is to translate small and informal stories that have little tellability into stories of authorities that have higher tellability that fit the regulated and strategic practices and storylines of policy. Translating the informal 'small story' into a 'big story', however, seems to get caught in a 'catch-22' pattern. First of all, the story of policy practitioners implies strategies for self-organization in which welfare professionals only facilitate. Yet, at the same time, self-organization is expected to adhere to bureaucratic regulations that make residents dependent on welfare workers to explain these bureaucracies. Secondly, as welfare workers enter the

neighborhood, they seek to acknowledge the small and informal practices of citizens. Yet, formal regulations demand them to translate informal practices into regulated activities and formal welfare strategies that disrupt the very informal character of citizen engagement. Residents experience this as a moment where self-organization is 'taken over' by professionals. As these seemingly mundane memories travel into future efforts to organize, the help of welfare workers decreases citizenship engagement. The vicious circle continues because the policies then demand welfare practitioners to encourage organizing, which moves away from facilitation and back into organizing participation--which they rejected when they started out participation strategies. In other words, in order to embed a shared topic like 'participation' in the everyday realm of the community, local authorities should become knowledgeable about and acknowledging of the informal practices and small stories so that their efforts will not directly crosscut or, even worse, disrupt the very thing they seek to foster: engaged citizenship.

Conclusions

The urban square in Zuilen offered a laboratory in which to unravel the dynamics of latent conflict. As latent tensions unfolded despite a lack of critical moments, I embedded myself in the storylines and everyday practices of case actors to make sense of how tensions were being performed on the street. I observed how the storylines of case actors unfolded around two defining topics: their perception and experience of 'security' and 'participation'. Actors developed different problem definitions that shaped their experiences and proposed solutions. The case reveals that latent conflicts can deepen in non-interactive (non-critical) moments when storylines become tangible at the street-level, but do not get negotiated in the public sphere. As storylines were translated into street-level practices, they caused interactions among case actors that provided a window into the process of latent conflict.

To understand how storylines construe street-level practices that deepen tensions, I looked into the details of two interactions: one between residents and a policy practitioner and the other between residents and street-level professionals. Street-level interactions functioned as a window into the mismatch between formal and informal practices. Both interactions show how the practices of policy practitioners and street-level professionals are characterized by formal strategies that logically follow from a storyline that has higher tellability. These storylines then provide the basis for interaction with residents

who respond by voicing personal experiences. The interactions show that the script of policy practitioners, as well as street-level professionals, encourages them to speak in favor of the public good rather than to include personal stories. The policy practitioner excludes the story of the dog-walking club from the interaction at the site and thereby fails to make use of the opportunity to include tacit knowledge, to acknowledge an informal practice of citizenship, and to renegotiate the meaning of 'security'. Instead, he interaction deepens the tensions between the residents and the local government. The interaction at the square shows a similar pattern. The professionals' practice speaks to 'the public' by professionalizing the playground, thereby excluding the local knowledge that could have helped them anticipate consequences this new script would have. As a result, the process of public familiarity gets disrupted and the efforts to informally build community stagnate. The memories of these interactions deepen the sense of exclusion. As both case actors ignored each other's stories, opportunities for renegotiation were lost. The dramaturgy of the interaction created a missed opportunity. What can we learn from this outcome?

Although seemingly mundane, small stories and everyday interactions shape the way residents experience of government and what they expect from policy making. The uncanny social and spatial performances of residents were not understood as citizenship by the policy practitioners or by other street-level professionals. The capacity for dealing with latent tensions thus requires a strategy that can overcome the mismatch between dominant policy stories and the informal tactics of residents. Small informal practices like the dog walking club do not fit with the dominant narrative about security and are therefore excluded from the conversation about strategies for neighborhood regeneration. Tacit knowledge about the community enables residents to 'know how to engage local youngsters in the drawing match', to know 'what familiarity is needed to engage migrant mothers', and to understand 'why children come to one homework club and not another.' The dominant script of 'professionalization' disrupts this knowledge, however. The case study demands that policy professionals and scholars rethink how small stories with low tellability can inform dominant storylines of governance and provide the tacit knowledge that is essential for the engagement of stakeholders in the public sphere.

At the same time, however, the case demands a subtle awareness of the 'catch-22' patterns that can develop when informal practices are acknowledged and then translated into formal strategies, thereby loosing their informal quality. The professionals' efforts to acknowledge tacit knowledge concluded in a 'take over' that yielded mistrust and deepened the latent tensions. This analysis suggests that, when we touch informality with the logic of dominant and formal stories, we can easily disrupt the informal and thereby loose it. How can we deal with this contradiction?

This question suggests a need to be present at the street-level in order to grasp how policy strategies are experienced. For a researcher, but also a policy or welfare professional, to understand latent conflict, it would help to dive into the street-level routines of case actors in the neighborhood. By looking into the social and spatial tactics that unfold through the interaction between formal strategies and residents' daily routines, we get an insight into how latent tensions come to be. The method of mental mapping proved successful in this pursuit. Mental maps and storylines reveal that, although policy strategies seem to cater to the same end goal as residents' efforts (in this case security and participation), they can, due to a lack of tacit knowledge, disrupt important informal coping mechanisms. How could street-level bureaucrats learn from street-level interactions and avoid such missteps?

The case study suggests that dealing with latent conflict demands that participants learn from street-level interaction. Merely being present in these interactions, can contribute to the recognition and acknowledgement of these latent storylines. Street-level situations create the opportunity for observing, participating, and listening as forms of 'learning in action'. Such moments of interaction could allow welfare practitioners to observe, not the end result of citizen engagement, but the process of building public familiarity. In turn, residents could become more knowledgeable about the existing structures and opportunities to support community activities. In the future, this may prevent tacit and strategic knowledge from getting lost due to a lack of interaction between divided storylines. Finally, everyday routines are important vignettes in which to engage the tacit knowledge production that can be useful for both scholars and professionals. Professionals can become part of the public and familiar fabric at a square but, as this case reveals, such developments require presence.

Part III
Conclusions

Chapter 7

Dealing with urban conflict:
a case of narrative practice

Introduction

The last three chapters provided social-spatial analyses of urban conflicts characterized by crisis, by controversy, or by latent tensions. Often, the responses of local government--although aiming at resolution and the engagement of residents--escalated tensions at the street-level. The social-spatial analyses showed the important role that stories play in the way case actors make sense of the problem at hand and the way this informs how they perform their repertoire of action. We saw how the informal and everyday realm of the neighborhood offers an interesting stage for citizens to develop tactics that counteract authoritative positioning on the part of government. These tactics were often ignored by local authorities and thereby excluded from negotiations about what is at stake in the neighborhood. These cases together raise the question of whether there is a way to include unexpected repertoires of action in unconventional settings? Is it possible to include the small stories of citizens in the performed story of policy making? In other words, how can we develop a capacity to make use of the opportunities that conflict, controversy, and latent tensions present?

This final case study explores an approach to dealing with urban conflict through what I call 'narrative practice' (Verloo in Gualini: forthcoming). The idea of narrative practice builds on the previous chapters and the pivotal role of stories that bridge the gap between theory and practice. Stories demand a process of 'learning-in-action' (Schön 1983). This case study of practice is based on lengthy fieldwork and participant observation in the Ypenburg neighborhood between 2009 and 2012. I believe, that the findings and approach are not limited to social scientists, however, Practitioners who encounter conflict in their work can also take on the role of analysts in the setting of conflict. They are embedded in the situation, which might cloud their view and make it difficult to step back and observe the situation, but also provides a kind of engagement that they can

draw on. The preceding case studies showed that in moments of heightened tensions, street-level professionals suffered because they did not have the capacity to respond in a meaningful way. It was difficult for them to step outside of the usual repertoire of policing and read the situation beyond the growing threat. Nevertheless, it is in this moment of interaction in which conflicts have the potential to escalate, that the potential for negotiation and resolution also arises. This is I have emphasized the capacity to improve governance that lies in the interaction between professionals and citizens. If we seek to improve the quality of governance in moments of conflict, we have to build capacity to learn in moments of interaction in which risks and threats also have a strong presence.

In this view, learning in interaction requires listening and seeing beyond dominant stories. For example, when a practitioner encounters an emotional outburst, he or she may experience a threat. The intuitive response may be to reposition in an effort to reestablish authority. But such emotions also tell a story that goes beyond the anger that is being expressed. Emotions demand a response that moves beyond our reflex to deescalate. Emotions can also invite us to engage the roots of what is visible on the surface or the so-called 'front stage' (Goffman 1959). Narrative practice allows for such move by seeking to engage the stories that lie behind the visible performances of anger, fear, sadness, etcetera. This helps case actors – professional or citizen – to encounter the story of the 'other,' which exposes the need to learn about the story of the 'other' on the spot. From this perspective, street-level interactions formulate the critical moments of opportunity in which urban conflicts can be transformed into communities of decision making.

This chapter provides an account of narrative practice in the city of The Hague. The case starts where the case study about controversy in Chapter 5 left off. After the cockpit group threatened the community worker, the local government decided to bring in a professional named Tonie to manage the controversy in and around the center. Tonie was assigned to mediate between the cockpit group, welfare organizations, the police, and local civil servants. I observed Tonie's practice as he improvised an approach that sought to engage the parties in the resolution process. Tonie began by organizing two coordinated interactions: one with residents and the other with street-level professionals. The meetings with these two groups offer insights into the way interactions can contribute

to learning in action, how stories with high and low tellability can be included in the overall story of a conflict, and how storytelling can heal communities as marginalized groups find acknowledgement. After reconstructing the stories of case actors, Tonie was able to steer in the direction of an unconventional, but critical, decision that engaged all parties in an interdependent process that ultimately transformed the community. The account of his narrative practice thus offers an insight into the way practitioners can weave stories into what we may call a 'narrative braid' (Cobb 2013) and develop action repertoires that embed this knowledge. Narrative practice starts from the assumption that to develop stories is to develop communities.

Narrative dynamics

The Hague is famous for its New Year's Eve fires. In Schilderswijk and other traditional folk neighborhoods, New Year's Eve is characterized by competing for the highest and fiercest fire of the city. People reminisce about how they would gather as many Christmas trees as possible in the week between Christmas and January 1st, how they would hide them in their basements, attics, or even in parts of the sewer system. They would add wood, tires, and all sorts of other things that burn well once the fire was burning. Groups of neighbors would be the unofficial organizers of the neighborhood fire and they would prepare for months in advance. An important part of the tradition was to nick the Christmas trees of neighboring communities, *kerstbomen rausen* as they call it. People would try to nick or demolish the pile of trees in the neighboring community. That's why the toughest man would guard and protect their beloved pile for days until the notorious night. To make a stable pile of Christmas trees requires a tactical and prestigious technique. At midnight, the piles would be set on fire, but the community would not enjoy their fire for long, as tradition demanded them to fight the other neighborhood soon after twelve. Riots would dominate the streets of neighborhoods like Schilderswijk, Transvaal, and Laak. When the riot police was getting ready to intervene, the neighboring enemies would end their quarrel and merge together into a fight with the police.

On your average New Year's Eve, the folk neighborhoods of The Hague would look like a war zone in the high days of this tradition. The fires would damage streets and infrastructure. The city government of The Hague experimented for years with different strategies to stop the fires, but had limited success. The tradition and the love for a quarrel always inspired the neighbors to come up with tactics to secretly organize it

anyway. The New Year's Eve fires became the embodiment of the identity of people from Schilderswijk and other folk neighborhoods in The Hague. When they spoke about their youth memories of 'tree nicking' and 'street fighting', their eyes started tearing up and shining, their voices were louder, and their movements turned fiercer.

As the new neighborhood of Ypenburg was the result of social mixing policies that brought many of the old 'Schilderswijkers' to the new town, the tradition of New Year's Eve fires was quickly integrated in the community. In the first years after the neighborhood was built, the tradition of the fire was organized and celebrated by members of the cockpit group. But since the controversy with the group and the escalated pattern of violence in the community, the tradition became contested. When Tonie started his assignment in December 2006, he had to deal with a group of angry residents who were disappointed in the past. The figure below provides an overview of all the events that happened during the course of the case study. The picture is divided into three periods: the narrative of the cockpit, the narrative of the transformation to the professional center (as described in chapter 5), and the narrative of Tonie's narrative practice that is the focus of this chapter. The critical moments are depicted in grey.
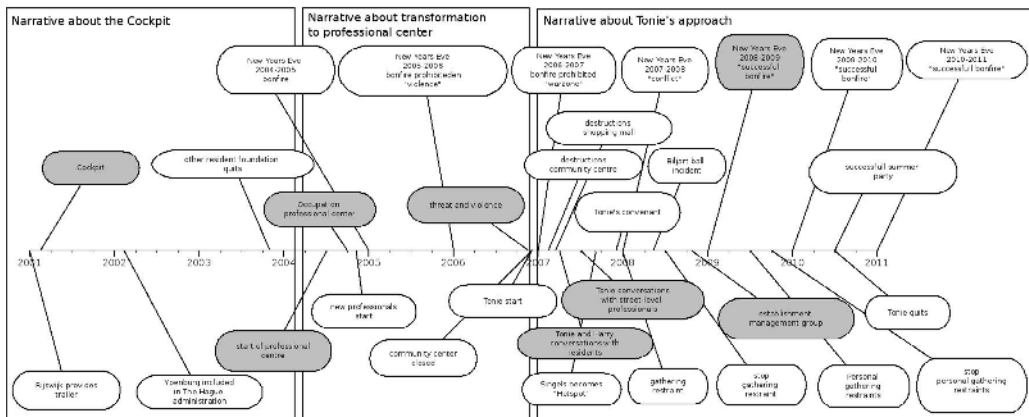
When the New Year's Eve fire is banned altogether, the residents' disappointment turned into anger. At this point, around New Year's Eve 2006-2007, tensions came to a boil. The center was closed because of the threat against the welfare worker. The controversies in the community center spilled over to another group: the local youth. As youngsters were raging, parents and adults of the group felt neglected. Military police was constantly

present and active in the neighborhood. The fire-less New Year's Eve escalated all the tension into a night in which a supposedly quiet and civilized neighborhood transformed into a temporary warzone:

> *Well, the same group, the residents of Singels, Olieslagerlaan, Lindelaan lost control, over themselves and over their youngsters. That's why it became an uprooted disaster. That led to a situation where the police had to intervene harshly. For example in 2006-2007, when the fire was banned, we had to intervene harshly with the riot police (Head of local police department, 13 May 2009)[1]*

The violent escalation was directly linked to the cockpit group whose members lived in the Olieslagerlaan. People in the cockpit group were related to most of the youngsters, which strengthened the bad reputation of the group. A few days after New Year's Eve, youngsters drove into the shopping center with their scooters:

> *When New Year's Eve was over, they went into the shopping center. There is a new HEMA store, they broke all the windows. They…[silence]… the Intertoys store was totally destroyed. They drove their scooters into the drugstore. The audience was terrorized, threatened. (Local welfare practitioner, February 2009)[2]*

The tensions no longer only surfaced at the street-level. The youngsters, who were increasingly causing trouble in the street and at the community center, also faced suspension at school and started to get criminal records because of their misbehavior. Some of them were dealing with troubled home situations and parents who could barely make ends meet. As the Netherlands has a well-organized social security system, a large

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[1] *Tja, zelfde groep, het zijn de bewoners van de Singels, Olieslagerlaan, Lindelaan. Die verloor eigenlijk de grip op zichzelf, op die jongeren, waardoor het eigenlijk toch een losgeslagen bende werd. Nou en goed, dat heeft er toe geleid dat we als politie een aantal keren hard hebben moeten ingrijpen. Onder andere, zo was het in 2006 en 2007, met het weghalen van het vreugdevuur, toen zijn we toch vrij hard er in gegaan met de ME. (*Hoofd lokale politie*, 13 May 2009)*

[2] *Nou, toen was Oud en Nieuw voorbij, en toen zijn ze het winkelcentrum gaan verbouwen. Daar was net een nieuwe HEMA, daar hebben ze alle ramen van ingegooid. Ze zijn met … [stilte]… de Intertoys hebben ze verbouwd, de bibliotheek hebben ze verbouwd. Ze zijn met scooters de Etos binnen gegaan, winkelcentrumpubliek werd geterroriseerd, het publiek werd bedreigd. (*Lokale welzijnswerker*, February 2009)*

variety of welfare organizations is active both at the street-level as well as 'behind the front door' of the families involved. Due to the tensions in the neighborhood, these professionals had a hard time communicating with each other and the local government. In other words, when Tonie came in, the neighborhood, both at the street-level and at the organizational level of governance and welfare, was in a state of crisis.

Critical moment 1: conversations with residents

Tonie started his practice with an unconventional decision. He had the intuition that if he wanted residents, street-level professionals and local policy practitioners to work together, he had to start out by collecting their stories. Furthermore, he realized that he was 'just another professional in a series of welfare practitioners who have tried to mediate between the conflicting parties'. Therefore, he decided to shift 'business as usual' and first engage with the residents who were associated with the cockpit. He started out by organizing an interaction with them to collect their stories, build trust, and gain a deeper understanding of their perspective of the situation.

Performance: practitioner

Tonie explained 'that from the very start he realized he had to put an emphasis on the residents' (interview February 2010). Starting out by facilitating an interaction with the residents, he created space for them to share their experiences. He chose to organize the meetings in the community center that is the focal point of controversy. To allow for a space where people can speak freely, he made sure that none of the professionals entered the room while they were in their meeting. Throughout the meetings, he intuitively developed a routine through which he would meet with the group on a bi-weekly basis:

> *When I met the people after a few weeks, I asked them to have meetings every two weeks—[these were] the neighborhood people, the parents, the volunteers, the people from that particular area. I asked them if they would like that, and for me it would be [so I could] understand them really well, and for the first six months we met, I think, maybe ten or twelve times, every two weeks. (Practitioner profile Tonie, April 2009)[3]*

[3] These quotes are extracted from a 'practitioner profile' that John Forester and I made of Tonie's practice. This practitioner profile was done in English and is based on a long, open-ended interview in which the practitioner tells his story of practice. We workd on Tonie's practitioner profile in April 2009 and wrote it in English. It will also appear in 'Conflict, Improvisation and Governance: Street-level Practices for Urban Democracy' (Forester and Laws: forthcoming).

Tonie decided to structure the conversations with the group into a routine that allowed him to reconstruct the story of the group and engage with their experiences. He found a partner in welfare worker Harry. Their intention was to get a thorough insight into the group's perspective. Tonie consciously used the word 'story' because he wanted to enable the members of the group to share their experiences. In order to move beyond stories of opinion, he developed a repertoire that allowed him to engage in the personal experiences of residents:

> *For the first five or six meetings, I think, I was only repeating what they told me—as far as possible in their own words, and I wrote it down on paper: '[Am] I really understanding correctly that the policeman said this, that the youth worker is not that…?' Always with these kinds of things I repeated [what I heard] and I wrote it down on paper. (Practitioner profile Tonie, April 2009)*

The repetition of words that residents used to voice their story speaks to the need to include their 'small stories' of personal experience. By repeating the words of case actors, informal words and personal experiences find a way into the reconstructed narrative of conflict. This practice of receiving and repeating also allowed Tonie to communicate that he understood the story without judging it:

> *And I told them, 'I'm not giving you now, on these evenings, my own opinion, but I promise you I'll try, [after another several meetings,] later on, I will honestly tell you what my opinion is about the whole situation. [But] when I repeat your words, don't misunderstand me, don't think that I agree with you.' I told them that, I think, thirty times: 'Don't make that mistake. When I repeat your words exactly, I'm only trying to understand the situation.' (Practitioner profile Tonie, April 2009)*

Harry remembered how valuable the meetings were to express grievances and share emotions after a long period of conflict:

> *I was Tonie's sidekick, he was the leader of it all. We had conversations with them, that was very important. He asked them questions very quietly, and encouraged them to express their emotions. They were very surprised about*

> *that. That he did not judge them, but that what they said was just written down. 'What I think about it', he said, 'does not matter, because this is your question'. That was a very beautiful moment. (Harry, social worker, March 2009)[4]*

In the practice Tonie developed, the opportunity to share emotions is quintessential:

> *[In the first] three, four, five meetings, it was very emotional. They were so angry about the way they [had been] treated by the [the welfare organization], by the management, and they were angry about the way that their children [had been] treated by the police. (Practitioner profile Tonie, April 2009)*

In the case studies, we saw how difficult it is for professionals to be responsive to emotions of residents. Tonie breaks with the idea that professionals should keep emotions at a distance:

> *It is a big mistake [that professionalism is to put away all the emotions]. The most important thing (…) of the professional attitudes of people all over the world is [to not be] afraid of your own emotions. If you are not afraid of your emotions, for example anger, then you can listen very well to the emotion of the other person. If someone is very angry or emotional, and you [as a professional] are afraid of your own emotions, then you can't hear it. (Practitioner profile Tonie, April 2009)*

The anger people display in the meetings is not to be ignored. As Tonie approached the conversations as a practice of learning in action, he realized that emotions are not only to be expressed but also acknowledged. He developed a way to deal with them that takes into account his own goal of gaining understanding and offering acknowledgement:

> *Another thing is, you can't do it only with repeating literally what they are saying, you also have to receive their emotions. When you repeat what they're*

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[4] *Ik was zijn* sidekick*, hij [Tonie] was de leider van het geheel. Toen hebben we wat gesprekken gehad, dat was echt heel erg goed. Hij stelde rustig vragen aan de mensen, hij liet hen hun emoties uiten. Daar stonden ze echt van te kijken, dat er naar hen geluisterd werd. Dat er geen oordeel werd uitgesproken, maar dat wat ze zeiden gewoon werd opgeschreven. 'En wat ik er van vind', zei hij, 'dat doet er even niet toe, want dit is wat jullie vraag is'. Dat was echt een heel mooi moment. (Harry,* opbouwwerker*, March 2009)*

saying, you have not only to give back their exact words, but you also give back
their emotions, the [weight,] the tension of what they're saying. If you can do
that, then they have the feeling that you really understand them. It's also, [as]
you say the words, you say then [to them] that you're also [getting] all the
emotions they're trying to explain to you, and you give that in an emotional
way back [to them]. (Practitioner profile Tonie, April 2009)

Thus, the practice Tonie developed includes emotions as he integrated them into the
case actor's narratives. Emotions are central to the way in which a practitioner is able to
understand different case actors' stories, but also to his capacity to respond to the stories
in a sensitive way. He provided a valuable insight into narrative practice as he argued
that the listener should not only receive emotions, but also 'give back their emotions'
in the way they repeat words. The capacity to integrate emotions in the communication
with residents provides the experience of being understood and acknowledged:

What happened then was that people—[and some of them] liked me too— really
got the idea that someone was listening to them. [They thought] 'He's really
[making] an effort to understand completely.' That was the effect. (Practitioner
profile Tonie, April 2009)

Social-spatial analyses

Where the cases of urban conflict show how conflicts escalate in interaction with
professionals, Tonie's practice creates an interaction that first and foremost seeks
to acknowledge the story of the party that is experiencing exclusion. His practice
exemplifies how an excluded story can be invited back into the negotiation of conflict.
Tonie's goal is not to speak *for* people, or for a counter-narrative, but to speak *with* the
people who have been experiencing exclusion. Like in the case studies, to understand
narrative practice we have to dive into the interaction between citizens and professionals.
When we take a closer look at the interactions between Tonie and the residents, four
interesting insights present themselves that demonstrate how narrative practice can
include a marginal story with low tellability.

The first insight suggests the creation of a safe space for interaction. The safe space that
Tonie created allowes for an interaction with the residents that facilitates Tonie's need

to dive into their story. Tonie organizes the meetings at a familiar place and in a familiar routine: every other week the group comes together in the same room in the community center. The routine cultivates a degree of trust because Tonie keeps coming back to the cockpit's storyline until he feels he understands it. His decision to have the meetings at the community center is an interesting one, as the center is a contested space. To create a safe space, Tonie has to ensure a sense of privacy in the room. The routine of meetings at the same place and the same time change the meaning of the community center into a lived space (Lefebvre 1991; Martin and Miller 2004) where citizens use the space in the way planners had intended it. When the community center used to be a space for conflict, it now starts to become the space for resolution.

Second, the inclusion of small stories with low tellability proves essential to grasp the story of citizens. In other cases we saw how stories of personal experience were excluded from negotiations as policy practitioners or street-level professionals would repeat their formal storyline. The story of personal experience had too little tellability in the interaction as it did not speak to 'the public good' and provided a complex account of the problem definition, multiple stakeholders with a variety of roles, and contradicting themes and values. In the interaction between Tonie and the residents of the cockpit group, however, Tonie develops a systematic practice to include personal stories. He improvises to repeat the exact words people use to utter their experience. By repetition, informal utterances and personal stories become part of the story Tonie reconstructs. The practice of repeating exact words allows the future story of controversy to become a 'better-formed story' as it includes multiple experiences and themes, it complicates characters, and allows for a future narrative of transformation (Sluzki 1992; Cobb 2003).

A third important insight is the inclusion of emotions. Emotions can be seen as typically having low tellability in the interaction with professionals. When emotions are uttered in these interactions they change the 'thin narrative' as they change the position of characters (perpetrators become victims), complicate time (past events are part of current situations), and change themes (story of protest becomes story of suffering and frustration). When citizens show emotions in the interaction with professionals, they confront professionals with their different experience of the story. We have seen how professionals were not able to respond sensitively to these emotions and how their repetition of the formal story would trigger escalation as it excluded residents

from the negotiation. Tonie's practice, however, is sensitive to this problem and views emotions as an insight into the stories of people. He acknowledges that emotions shape communication (Hoch 2006) and that planning should include feelings, emotions and contention to construct the future story of a neighborhood (Forester 1999; Throgmorton 1996; Mandelbaum 1991; Sandercock 2003). Emotions provide an analytic tool to understand interests and judgments (Nussbaum 2003). Emotions thus can be used as a lens into the deeper stories of experience that lie behind the observable. Tonie allows emotions into the conversation and, by repeating exact words he allows emotions to become part of his narrative. But besides using emotions as a lens into the story of residents, Tonie uses emotions for something equally important: acknowledgement.

And fourth, only including emotions would not provide the kind of acknowledgement that Tonie anticipates. He suggests to not only be responsive to emotions, but also to engage and embody them. His practice teaches us that a capacity to receive emotions is as important as the ability to include emotions into the narrative of conflict. Receiving emotions demands a capacity to give those emotions back to the speaker. Tonie does so by making emotions of others part of his own experience. His effort shows that he seeks to move away from an authoritarian positioning that demands him to be responsive to and evaluative of emotions, and moves to a position in which his own emotional experience is also part of the interaction. By allowing his own emotions in the interaction, his position changes and he becomes part of the network of stories that all together form the story of the future neighborhood. In that sense, Tonie's practice does not develop persuasive stories about the future (Throgmorton 1996), nor stories that are solely responsive to emotions. Instead, narrative practice includes the story of others and acknowledges emotions as they are weaved into the story of professionals.

In short, acknowledgement becomes the key element of narrative practice as four practices deepen a sense of recognition to a story that was excluded from the public sphere. Firstly, Tonie creates a safe space for interaction between residents and himself where personal experiences and small stories can be expressed and shared. Second, he includes these stories into the narrative of conflict as he engages them in their own words. Third, he includes emotional utterances in the construction of the narrative of conflict. Fourth, he acknowledges emotions as he makes them part of his own experience of practice. Through facilitated interactions, the first step of narrative

practice is thus to create a space for reflection on the story of case actors who experience a marginal position. As that counter-narrative finds recognition, and the emotions of the group become part of a future story of the neighborhood, Tonie establishes a reciprocal relationship between him and the group. With his meetings, his listening, his repetition, and his engagement in emotions, he develops interdependency between him and the group of residents: he needs them as much as they need him to start a process of resolution.

Narrative dynamics

In the months after the so-called 'worst New Year's Eve in the history of Ypenburg' and Tonie's efforts to establish trust between him and the residents, tensions between youngsters and local authorities remain high. The youngsters left a trail of destruction in the neighborhood. As a response, a wide variety of welfare workers, youth workers, social workers, police officers, and professional community developers are attracted to deal with the rioting youngsters, their families, and the community center. Despite the circus of welfare professionals who were active in the neighborhood, school drop-out, vandalism and nuisance remain daily challenges that did not improve significantly. In order to prevent new escalations, the city government came up with a new strategy: they turned the area around the community center into a so-called 'hotspot'.

Making a place into a hotspot meant that there was a lowered boundary to intervene when things go wrong: gathering restraints can be handed out to individuals, there is more police force on the street, and military police is quickly present if things turn grim. Thus the military police was now allowed to intervene as soon as youngsters would gather in a group and start to harass other people. The city government also assigned a 'nuisance manager' that was responsible for the area and that was superior to the district council in terms of making decisions in cooperation with the triangle of mayor, police and aldermen. The 'hotspot policy' branded the neighborhood in a negative way, which caused turmoil amongst residents. Some pointed to the cockpit group blaming them for the neighborhood's bad reputation. Also, Tonie was not happy with this label. The decision was made without his consent while he was trying to set up an approach that engaged residents:

> *Then a very unclear situation was established. I did not really know what a*
> *'hotspot' meant. It really took two months to find out that the local government*

no longer had the power to make decisions, but that the central governing body called 'Public Order and Safety' [OOV] was responsible. Between OOV and the local government, it was also unclear who did what. Who can make decisions? And OOV did not know we already established an integrated approach, which was still under development, but they really did not know about this. Often it was just embarrassing. (Tonie, February 2010)[5]

Thus the top-down label of a hotspot made it unclear who had decision making responsibility, both for local professionals as well as for the district council. Tonie speaks about embarrassing situations where the district council made decisions – like assigning Tonie to start mediating – without informing the central city council body (OOV). It was unclear who had responsibility and how far Tonie's mandate stretched in relation to the higher authorities in the city government. The result is that the relationships between parties in the neighborhood became even more obscure:

It was unclear whether [OOV] saw the integrated approach as useful. It was unclear whether the police could operate in the integrated approach or whether they could only be governed by the city council. (Tonie, February 2010)[6]

The local police department, who was central in Tonie's integrated approach, was now responsible for guarding the hotspot. The head of the police department explained the problems they face:

(…) the backlash is that the police is the only organization that is present in the neighborhood 24 hours per day, 7 days a week. And it is also the police department that receives all the complaints and other shit from the neighborhood. It is thus characteristic of police officers that they want to act

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[5] *Vanaf dat moment ontstond er een hele onduidelijke situatie. Ik wist niet wat een* hotspot *nou precies betekende. Het duurde mij echt twee maanden denk ik voordat ik echt helemaal in de gaten had dat vanaf dat moment de regie niet meer bij het stadsdeel lag, die ook mijn opdrachtgever was, maar bij de bestuurdienst van OOV,[Openbare Orde en Veiligheid]. Tussen de bestuursdienst en het stadsdeelkantoor was het van wie doet nou eigenlijk wat? Wie heeft het hier voor het zeggen? En wat OOV niet wist is dat wij allang een integrale aanpak hadden, die in Ypenburg weliswaar in ontwikkeling was maar zij wisten het gewoon niet. Het was zo nu en dan echt gênant. (Tonie, February 2010)*

[6] *Onduidelijk was in hoeverre [OOV] de integrale aanpak als zinvol zag. Onduidelijk was ook in hoeverre de politie ook nog in die integrale aanpak kon opereren of in hoeverre ze in feite echt door de driehoek werden aangestuurd. (Tonie, February 2010)*

> *fast. That 'fast action' is very different from the approach of the people who work at the soft side of welfare. (Head local police department, May 2009)[7]*

The hotspot allowed police officers to react more quickly and fiercely in moments of escalation. This disrupts Tonie's efforts, as the actions of the police are usually oppressive as they act to de-escalate. Tonie's approach, however, had a more preventive intention. The head of the local police department called it the 'soft side'. In the long run, Tonie wanted to engage neighbors in bottom-up community development, but only in cooperation with street-level professionals. He believed that this would ultimately lead to resolution instead of de-escalation. But before that could happen, he had to engage with street-level professionals to develop capacity for cooperation between them. Tonie had to develop a strategy to engage all the street-level professionals in a process of deliberation.

Critical moment 2: conversations with professionals

The second critical moment also centered on a space for interaction, but now the interaction was amongst street-level professionals. Tonie invited welfare organizations, social workers, youth workers, truancy officers, and police officers to participate in a series of conversations that should improve communication between these organizations and prevent new tensions.

Performance: practitioner

The routine brought street-level professionals together in meetings on a monthly basis. Tonie distinguished between two types of meetings: the *leefomgevingsoverleg* (meetings about the living environment in the neighborhood) and the *gedragsoverleg* (meetings that focus on the youngsters' behavior in the neighborhood). In the *leefomgevingsoverleg*, practitioners focused on sharing information about the neighborhood and things that happened in the public space – the streets, squares, and neighborhood center – that month. It was important for police officers, for example, to know which youngsters were expelled from the youth center so that they could keep an eye on them on the street. In this meeting, all professionals in the neighborhood were welcome to participate and

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[7] *(…) het nadeel van de politie is natuurlijk dat het de enige organisatie is die 24 uur per dag 7 dagen in de week in zo'n wijk zit. En het is ook de politie die al de klachten en alle shit over zich heen krijgt vanuit de buurt. Maar het is een beetje politie eigen natuurlijk dat je snel wilt handelen. En de handelingssnelheid is een hele andere dan vanuit mensen die meer aan de zachte kant zitten van de welzijnsaanpak. (*Hoofd lokale politie*, May 2009)*

share their knowledge. The *gedragsoverleg* focused on youngsters and their behavior in the neighborhood. Youngsters who were known to be dealing with multiple problems like notorious forms of nuisance, school drop-out, family abuse, criminal activities, etcetera, were discussed here. Only professionals who were engaged in the specific cases – each youngster would 'be' a case – could attend this meeting. Welfare workers, police officers, sometimes truancy officers, and youth workers were present to share all the steps they were making to support each youngster. Through this meeting, Tonie provided a space where street-level professionals of different organizations could share their stories and experiences.

The approach that he calls the 'integrated approach' challenged street-level professionals to learn about each other's organizations and build trust. The history of conflict and discontent made it difficult for professionals to trust each other. Tonie soon realized that professionals lack knowledge of each other's practice. So the meetings start out with in-depth conversations that allow professionals to understand the way of working in each organization:

> *They think they know each other well enough but, for example, the youth worker really does not have a [good] idea of the position of the policeman, who has to be very friendly to not frustrate his contacts with the younger people or the neighborhood people. But when things go wrong in the neighborhood, the policeman is also in the position that he has to make [tough decisions] to solve the problems—in the end, sometimes, with [force]. It's a very important difference between the position of the youth worker and the policeman—and to talk about that is important to really realize that the difference is there. They didn't [really] understand that before, the youth workers [didn't have this] insight into the position of the policeman. (Practitioner profile Tonie, April 2009)*

Also, the head of the local police department stressed the importance of understanding each other's role:

> *Still today it is the case that you don't have full 100% insight into each other's roles. The way each organization looks at problems is with another conviction.*

> *A community worker looks at problems differently than a police officer. And that is still a tension in the integrated approach. (Head local police office, May 2009)[8]*

Again, Tonie was facilitating an interaction in which stories of experiences were shared, but now these stories were those of professionals. Because he wanted to develop a routine for communication, he regulated the meetings as follows: each meeting started with a round of remarks that people wanted to make. After that initial round, Tonie introduced the agenda topics and invited everyone to respond or add something to the agenda. After a discussion in which everyone is invited to participate, Tonie closed each agenda point by summarizing the discussion. A minute taker included the summary and action points in the minutes. Each meeting is closed by another round of remarks.

To analyze how the structure of meetings adds to a narrative practice that engages stories of case actors we have to dive into the interactions between street-level professionals. Two descriptions of interactions will allow us to make sense of narrative practice in action. The first observation explores the role of rumor in one of the living environment meetings (*leefomgevingsoverleg*).

Street-level interaction: rumor has it[9]

Professionals engage one another as they enter the room. They shake hands and exchange jokes. They soon sit down around a square table with coffee and biscuits that looks out over the square. Everyone is present, except for one youth worker, Bas. Tonie, in his role as chairman, opens the meeting as usual. He welcomes everyone and asks each person present to give a small description of how he or she has experienced the neighborhood in the past month. One of the social workers, Harry, seems eager to start. He is seated at the end of the table and has been jumping up and down in his chair since the meeting began. When he sees an opportunity to speak, he grabs it. He begins in a loud voice: 'In the neighborhood the rumor goes around that Bas is fired! I didn't know about this, so that made me look stupid to my clients. I want

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[8] *Tot op de dag van vandaag is het [dat je] niet voor de volle 100% inzicht hebt in elkaars rollen.*

[9] *De manier waarop je naar problemen kijkt is toch vanuit elke instantie vanuit een ander oordeel. Een opbouwwerker kijkt anders naar problematiek dan een politieman doet. En dat is nog steeds wat een spanningsveld is binnen die integrale samenwerking. (*Hoofd lokale politie*, May 2009)*

you [the youth worker who is present] to be faster in informing your partners in the neighborhood! Where is Bas now, anyway?' Harry's performance raises two painful features of the experience shared by the professionals in the room. First, they depend on good communication with each other. Partners who do not inform the group jeopardize its members' reliability for residents. Second, rumors move around the neighborhood quickly and, in doing so, influence their ability to function and even the content of the meeting.

Larry, who is representing the youth work organization responds: 'We could not inform you because we are still in the middle of the process with Bas. What we can say right now is that he will be leaving us.' Harry does not accept this answer. He wants to know why. '[I]n order to stop the gossip and stop people talking badly about us, we must give them a reason why Bas is leaving!' He raises his voice. He is visibly angry with the youth worker for failing to understand this point. The youth worker responds: 'Bas is leaving us because he is not functioning well in our team. But we do not want to say that to the youngsters, volunteers in the center and residents, because then they will have another reason to pick on him. What we want to tell the outside world is that Bas leaves us because he has found a job in another youth center.' Harry seems satisfied with this response: 'Why didn't you tell us that before? That way we know how to respond to residents.' The conversation seems to be finished. The chairman picks it up again and repeats what professionals will tell residents. They continue with the meeting.

Harry has brought a rumor into the meeting and Larry feels the need to respond. He responds honestly, in line with the intention and goal of the meeting. But his honesty creates new food for dispute. Two days later, the meeting minutes are exchanged. I – the minute keeper – transcribed Harry and Larry's conversation. In the minutes I wrote that Bas was fired because he did not function in the team, but that professionals would tell the outside world that he found a new job in another neighborhood. These minutes trigger a cascade of emails from furious youth workers who 'could not understand that this was included in the minutes'. A youth worker who was not at the meeting, but is a partner in the integrated approach, writes: 'I find it shows of no respect to write that 'we will tell residents that…' I think this is very suggestive and it does not honor the good work that Bas has done. In the notes it would be enough to say that Bas has a new job' (Email 11 May 2010). Another colleague of Bas replies: 'I totally agree with

the last email. Please include in the notes: 'Bas found a new job. And nothing more!" (Email 11 May 2010). Larry writes: 'I feel cheated for my honesty! This information should not have been included in the notes' (Email 11 May 2010).*

The encounter reveals the difficulties of integrating informal information such as rumors or gossip in the practice of street-level professionals. As rumors often travel faster than official information, professionals seek a way to mediate between formal and informal information. A second encounter in one of the behavioral meetings provides insights in the restraints to exchange informal information in the formal setting of the meeting and an improvisation by street-level professionals that allows them to include the 'gossip' into their repertoire of action.

Street-level interaction: gossip has it

At another meeting in June 2010, a new person joins. Aisha is a truancy officer who works with many youngsters in the neighborhood. She is a young Moroccan woman who wears a colored headscarf. She seems a little timid and introduces herself with a gentle, soft voice. The meeting takes place in the same room as the prior meeting and everyone is present. The situation in the neighborhood is quiet. Only two families are considered problematic. These families are placed high on the agenda that day.

Tonie, in his role as chairman, introduces the Jansen family and summarizes the action points that have been discussed in an earlier meeting. Their son, Johnny, has been expelled from school because he was truant for over three months. Aisha responds with surprise, because she has not been informed by the responsible social organization or the school that Johnny has not been attending school. If this were the case, then his parents would have received a penalty. The boy is under sixteen years old and has to attend school. The chairmen gives the floor to the social assistant who works with the Jansen family, named Ben. He addresses the issue with some restraint. He explains that he is working with them to tackle this issue, 'but this is much more complicated than one would expect.' His reserved remarks cause other professionals to start asking questions. The chairman makes sure everyone gets an opportunity to share their concerns and pose some questions to Ben. Ben seems to get a little nervous. His shoulders start to slump and he slows his talking. He seems to retreat from the open discussion. The conversation turns back to Aisha, who expresses her sense of responsibility. She thinks

that the boy should go to school again. In the open discussion that follows, we find out that the boy is not welcome anymore at the school that he previously attended. Aisha needs to make charges to the parents. 'But', another professional speaks up, 'it is Ben's responsibility to help Johnny find a new school!' Aisha jumps in and states: 'I will visit the family this week'. Aisha and Ben exchange a meaningful look. The chairman takes over the conversation and summarizes the action points for the visit. The minutes state: Aisha visits family, Ben helps to find a new school.

This encounter shows that the social assistant who works very closely with the family feels constrained in his ability to share extra information with the whole group of professionals. The conversation leads to the summary of action points and, in doing so, the speech act is completed. After the formal meeting concludes, something interesting happens:

When the official part of the meeting is finished, when the tape is turned off, and everybody stands up to leave the room, Ben walks up to Aisha. He takes her to a corner of the room and together they turn their backs to the table. They speak in a very low tone of voice, it is clear that they have something to discuss in private. Their shoulders are hunched forward and they stand close to each other. Ben starts to explain the family situation. The boy does not want to go to school because he is afraid of what his father will do to his mother when he is not there. Johnny wants to protect his mother from a beating or worse. Because of this, Ben does not want the truancy officer to interfere. When he found out that Aisha was attending the meeting he decided to speak to her in private. He feels bad that he did not follow the official procedure in this case, but he could not take the risk of Johnny also getting beat up by his father. Aisha responds by saying she understands, but now that she knows she will have to start a trial. Ben bends forward a little more and tells her that there is another reason it would be unsafe for her to visit the family: Johnny's father sympathizes with the PVV[9]. She stands up straight and sighs. Ben promises to try to make the child go to another school. Aisha and Ben informally agree to leave this case as it is for the moment. She seems relieved, shakes Ben's hand and leaves the room. In the next meeting, it turns out that the boy

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[9] The *Partij Voor de Vrijheid* (Freedom Party) is a Dutch nationalist political party that is concerned about the growing number of Muslim migrants in the Netherlands. In the past decade, the party has openly spoken about its fear of a 'tsunami of Muslims' and has tried to introduce what it has termed a 'headscarf tax'.

has a job at the local supermarket and has arranged with Ben and Aisha that this will be his way to learn and work. The manager of the supermarket agrees to inform both Aisha and Ben if the boy's attendance lapses or something else goes wrong.

This encounter shows how difficult it is for professionals to share private information within the context of the formal meeting. Ben feels as if he can not share his information freely, because he has decided not follow the official rules by which institutions have to deal with these types of cases. He feels the need to tell Aisha, because he is afraid of the consequences. They separate after the meeting and informally discuss his concerns. Aisha is open to this informal communication, as she implicitly understood the sign Ben had sent her during the meeting. She decides to finish the formal part of the conversation by stating that she will visit the family because she tacitly knows that she will get the 'real' story afterwards. After the meeting, Ben and Aisha manage to reconnect immediately.

Social-spatial analyses

The descriptions of the interactions that took place during two meetings that characterize Tonie's practice reveal much about the challenges of narrative practice. Tonie's practice seeks to share stories so that street-level professionals of different organizations are enabled to coordinate and cooperate in the neighborhood. The stories that professionals share tend to be formal exchanges of information. The interactions, however, suggest that gossip or rumor offer vital pieces of information in the interaction between professionals in a neighborhood. They offer the crucial bit of information that helps street-level bureaucrats whose challenge is to negotiate between the world of bureaucracy and the world of the street (Lipsky 1980). That negotiation requires a degree of tacit knowledge. The interactions show two moments where street-level professionals try to include an informal story in the context of a formal meeting. From a performative perspective, we see how the formal meetings complicate the exchange of informal information. The mismatch between a formal context and informal information hints at the challenge of including small stories with little tellability (Norrick 2005; Georgakopoulou 2006; Ochs and Capps 2001). To understand how professionals negotiate between the 'formal' and 'informal' we can analyze the way speech acts unfold in interaction. How does a mismatch between formal and informal speech acts develop in interaction?

The conventions of speech acts in meetings that are deemed 'professional' tend to exclude the exchange of informal information. Austin (1962) teaches us that in order for a speech act to be 'felicitous', three things are necessary: first, the match between the particular persons and circumstances must be appropriate. In the case of the Ypenburg meetings, only professionals who are engaged in activities in the neighborhood can participate and they must be invited by the chairman. The circumstances must be 'appropriate for the invocation of the particular procedure invoked' (Austin 1962: 15). In the case of the Ypenburg meetings, they take place in a private room in the multi-functional center, which is an appropriate and safe space for professionals to share information. The privacy of the space where the meeting takes place is important because the professionals discuss sensitive issues, like the personal dramas of multi-problem families. Second, for a speech act to be felicitous, all participants must execute the procedure correctly. Here, the procedure of discussion of each agenda point started was felicitous when the chairman summarized what was said and repeated the action points out loud. The speech act only works with the closure that is provided by the explicit restating of the practical implications that directly follow from the discussion. Nevertheless, as we saw in the meeting with the truancy officer, the complex cases under discussion often make explicit statements of informal information difficult. Austin's third doctrine of 'infelicities' is exposed by the performance of ritual speech acts such as marriage. For these acts to succeed—that is, for them to be felicitous—the persons involved must have the appropriate thoughts and feelings. For example, a bride must be thinking bride-like thoughts when she says 'I do'. It goes without saying that the interactions in the Ypenburg meetings are far less ritualized, but Austin's third rule remains relevant. The meeting is organized based on the premise that the participants share an intention to help the community develop. This is what makes the rounds of messages that open and close the meetings sensible. The chairman asks people not only what they know, but also how they feel about the neighborhood and their cooperation in the 'integrated approach'. This is a vital part of the procedure at the start and end of the meetings in which people who do not conduct themselves appropriately will subsequently be encouraged to either start doing so or leave.

Thus, the participants must enact the procedure completely and appropriately, both in terms of adhering to the procedure and having the right intention in order to make their shared speech act felicitous. When one speaks although it is not his turn, when one does

not obey the privacy rule, or when one says something that is not a message, but gossip or rumor, the participation of this person will be undermined, it will not be fully accounted for, and the shared performance will be jeopardized. In the extracts of two meetings we see such jeopardizing of the procedure of the meeting. One convention at work in this meeting is that the speech acts are confidential. Only participants know what is being said. Harry repeats a rumor he heard in the neighborhood and links it to a concern about professional relationships. His forceful performance creates a situation in which it is necessary for Larry to speak candidly. In the context of gossip and rumor, such informal information carries with it the expectation to be excluded from the record (gossip is not written down) even when it is of interest to those participating in the setting (Handelman 1973). The meeting also draws on public conventions. People speak to each other as representatives of different organizations. Minutes are taken for circulation. Speech acts in the meeting take place within a 'grey zone' between procedures and conventions that are, to some degree, up for negotiation. As a minute keeper, I was not embedded enough to make these local rules work. Shared expectations of confidentiality mean that a rumor can be included in the formal part of the meeting, but there is an unspoken rule that makes sure that it is not included in the notes. Larry's reaction in the email shows that he does not expect to be held accountable for the transmission of this piece of informal information. He feels cheated for his honesty.

Performing gossip in the formal part of the meeting invokes a different set of felicities, procedures, and conventions. Now the speech act is performed as if it was a formal part of the meeting. The exchange is even summarized by the chairmen, completing the formal speech act. The misfire develops out of the mismatch between the formal convention of the meeting and the informal conventions that shape the interpretation of gossip. This causes a misinvocation as 'the procedure in question cannot be made to apply in the way attempted' (Austin 1962: 17). In other words, by including the gossip into the formal procedure, Tonie tries to give way to informal information--the small stories. But there is no procedure for the transmission of informal information in the meeting. There is a need for another procedure that makes clear that this is a transmission of rumors for which people cannot be held accountable, that remains in the grey zone between formal and informal, and that the story has too little tellabillity to be included in the notes.

In the second meeting, Ben and Aisha seek a way out of the formal procedure because they want to share informal information that is too sensitive and arguably too tacit to share in the formal part of the meeting. The performative speech act in the meeting was well executed. Both took their turn when they were invited to do so. They shared their knowledge, albeit with restraint. Tonie completed the act by summarizing and stating practical issues. This speech act, however, was not valuable for the professionals. They needed another performance to transmit the more valuable bit of informal information. This informal interaction is in line with how people expect gossip to be transmitted. Faris (1966) describes the act of gossip that is transmitted privately instead of publicly and that this transmission usually happens in a bounded social setting, such as a bar or shop, and not in the street (Faris 1966: 238). Both professionals decide to not share the additional information within the context of the formal discussion. They decide to keep it to themselves until they can discuss in private, after the meeting and in lower tone of voice, yet inside the room that still provides them with the safety of a bounded setting. Thus, although the speech act during the meeting was well executed in a setting with appropriate persons and circumstances, the speech act did not accommodate the goal of the meeting to create space for professionals to share local knowledge and to link up to each other's practices. Moreover, the appropriate persons and circumstances limited the information flow and caused the professionals to be caught in a performative contradiction. The demands of performance contradict with the overall goal of community development. In order to deal with this contradiction, the professionals choose for the more informal speech act of 'gossiping' in a corner of the room, with not more than one witness and no recordings.

The accounts of these meetings teach us that the negotiation between formal organizational practices and informal street-level knowledge depend upon the procedures of speech acts in interaction. Tonie's creation of a space for interaction allows professionals to share experiences of street-level practices in a context where both formal and informal stories are needed. The two descriptions of meetings, however, reveal that the intention to include stories with high and low tellability into the discussion is challenging. Nevertheless, the necessity of informal exchange becomes clear as professionals are depending on each other's tacit knowledge. As the meetings continue, it is through interactions that street-level professionals build trust and develop a sense of interdependency that increases the capacity to govern in the grey zone

between formal and informal, bureaucracy and the street-level.

Narrative dynamics

Despite Tonie's efforts to mediate between the cockpit group, the youngsters associated with it and the professionals in the community center, the cockpit group still did not have a role in organizing community activities. The meetings with the residents improved the relationship between Tonie and the cockpit group. Also the communication between professionals was much better since the start of the monthly meetings. Now Tonie faced the challenge of bringing these worlds together in an approach that would de-escalate the tensions between professionals and residents, especially since the neighborhood experienced small escalations with youngsters on a daily basis.

In the spring of 2008, on an otherwise uneventful evening in the middle of the week, youngsters were playing billiard in the youth center. Omar, one of the youth workers, had his shift that night. He explains that the situation in the club was tense. Because of the many things that had happened, the youth workers were very cautious. Dennis, another youth worker, explains:

> *At a certain moment you feel something like: hey, something is wrong here. And nine out of ten times you can't put your finger on what it is, but you know there is something in the atmosphere. There is a tension that you can almost touch. (Dennis, youth worker, December 2009)[10]*

They explain that youngsters were very agitated. They would run around, shout at each other, and romp around. When the club was about to close, some youngsters gathered. Suddenly they switched the light off and back on, they sang 'kutmarokkaan!', which is a Dutch swearword directed at people from Moroccan descent, clearly addressing Omar [who is of Moroccan descent]. Then they reached towards the billiard balls and started to throw around the heavy balls. Omar remembers the event vividly:

> *The 17th of April is a night I will never forget. It was really hard. We were*

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[10] *Op een gegeven moment dan voel je en dat is echt een gevoel van: Joh, er klopt op dit moment hier iets niet. En negen van de tien keer kan je je vinger er niet meteen achter leggen maar je hebt wel zoiets van er heerst hier iets. Er heerst een spanning die bijna tastbaar is af en toe. (Marcel, jeugdwerker, December 2009)*

powerless. Scared. Frightened. And I am not easy to scare but that night I was scared. I was afraid because I thought: 'A billiard ball will hit my head'. It was dark. The atmosphere was heavy… you might think they were on drugs or something. They lost themselves. (Omar, youth worker, December 2009)[11]

Omar hid under a table. One of the boys got hit by a billiard ball and had to go to hospital. The police became involved, but the boys would not tell who started and who had thrown the balls. They all kept each other clear from conviction. The incident caused a new tension between two professional partners in the neighborhood. As the police had growing concerns about how the youth workers lost control over the youngsters, they argued that problems in the community center always ended up in a controversy between the neighborhood and the police:

> *[It] becomes an issue of the police and the neighborhood. Because youth workers are in some sort of crisis in which they cannot keep control over that group. And they can also not work on their outreach, where they take to the street and engage with youngsters. Consequently, you see that youth workers are not able to manage that group. (Head of local police department, May 2009)[12]*

Youth workers on the other hand noticed that police officers and military police did things that provoked the youngsters to start nagging them and play a cat-and-mouse game:

> *Bas: That way, there are constantly youngsters inside, because outside there is police. And then they provoke the police who provokes the youngsters.*

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[11] *Zeventien april. Dat is een avond die ik nooit zal vergeten van mijn leven. Het is echt iets moeilijks geweest. Wij waren gewoon echt machteloos. Bang. Angstig. En ik ben niet bang aangelegd maar die avond was ik bang. Ik was bang want ik denk, 'ik krijg een bal tegen mijn hoofd', het was donker. De sfeer was zwaar… je zou denken dat ze drugs hebben gebruikt, ofzo. Ze waren echt door het lint. (Omar,* jeugdwerker*, December 2009)*

[12] *[Het] wordt weer een zaak tussen politie en de buurt, want ook het jongerenwerk zit voor zichzelf in een bepaalde crisis waarbij men niet voldoende grip op die club kan krijgen en ook niet outreachend jongerenwerk kan verrichten, de straat op kan gaan met die jongeren. Vervolgens zie je dan dat jongerenwerk niet in staat is om die groep te handhaven. (*Hoofd lokale politie*, May 2009)*

> *Omar: Look, those police officers also make mistakes. You cannot arrest three boys when there are fifty guys present. That's just asking for problems. It was often three officers against fifty youngsters. (Focus group interview youth workers, December 2008)[13]*

A police officer describes:

> *The youth totally wrecked the youth center. They used billiard balls to break the windows. Youth workers were being threatened. The military police was present. All in all, a war situation might be over the top, but it was a very tense atmosphere. (Eric, local police officer, May 2010)[14]*

These incidents surface the tense relationship between professional partners in the neighborhood, as well as the continuing tension between the cockpit group, the youngsters associated with it, and the welfare organization in the community center. The incidents deepen the stigma about the cockpit group. Because many of the youngsters who were responsible for the violent actions were never punished, other residents in the neighborhood were angry with the youngsters, their parents, and the local authorities.

Despite of the incidents that unfolded in the first half of 2008, the 'hotspot' policy and thereby the gathering restraints ceased in the summer of 2008. Tonie's integrated approach was expected to mediate between residents and professionals and bring about lasting solutions. The conversations offered him two perspectives into the situation. The narrative practice he was executing allowed him to embed himself in contradicting storylines that offered contradicting opportunities for action. The story of residents revealed a wish for regaining their role as community organizers. They attributed the lasting controversy between the youngsters and the local welfare organization to a lack

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[13] *Bas: Maar dan heb je dus constant veel jongeren binnen want buiten staat de politie. En dan het uitdagen van de politie die de jongeren weer uitdagen.*
Omar: Kijk, die politie maakt ook fouten hé. Je kan niet drie gasten aanhouden waar vijftig man zijn. Dan zoek je een probleem. Het waren echt drie agenten tegen vijftig jongeren. (Focus group interview jongerenwerkers, *December 2008)*

[14] *Het jongerencentrum was door de jeugd helemaal afgebroken, met biljartballen ruiten ingegooid. Jongerenwerkers bedreigd. De ME had hier met paraat peloton gestaan. Kortom oorlogssituaties is overdreven, maar het was wel een hele gespannen sfeer. (Frank,* lokale politieagent, *May 2010)*

of activities that would engage the youth. On the other hand, Tonie was looking for a strategy to have the welfare organization work together with the police. In the midst of these tensions and contradicting storylines, Tonie noticed a controversial opportunity. He picked the most challenging period of the year, with the highest risk of escalation, and decided to organize an event that would demand cooperation from all parties.

Critical moment 3: self-organization

Through structured interactions with residents and professionals, Tonie developed a 'better-formed story' of the controversy in Ypenburg (Sluzki 1991, 1994; Cobb 2003). This story is complex as it assigns multiple roles to case actors. Residents are no longer merely the perpetrators, but also agents with the capacity to organize community activities. While street-level professionals identify themselves as victims, Tonie starts to transform their identity into that of agents who took an active part in the process of escalation. Now that all case actors have become agents in the story of controversy, they can also become agents in the story of resolution. As the parties experience interdependence amongst themselves, Tonie wants to increase a sense of interdependence amongst each other. The better-formed story allows him to identify a moment of opportunity for cooperation in the very thing that was being contested before: the organization of a New Year's Eve fire.

Performance: practitioner

As we have seen, the celebration of New Year's Eve salient for the people in The Hague. New Year's Eve was the focus of many discussions from September onwards. For the former Schilderswijk residents, it was their moment to celebrate a long-standing tradition. For professionals, the tensions around the New Year's Eve fire heightened their anxiety as they feared for incidents. For other residents, the period around New Year's Eve was filled with memories of riots and police actions. Since 2006, the traditional fire was prohibited in the neighborhood. This year, in 2008, the mayor of The Hague, who was responsible for regulating the fires in each district, decided that fires are allowed in designated areas in the city. Tonie wanted Ypenburg to be one of these specific areas. To organize a New Year's Eve fire could create a critical moment that would engage all parties in participation.

But before he could request permission for a fire at the mayor's department, Tonie had

to convince the district council and the police. His story was one that emphasized the interdependent relationship between residents and professionals. The support of the cockpit group in the organization of the fire would not only attract many people in the neighborhood, they would also keep the youngsters under control during the New Year's Eve festivities. This required cooperation between all parties in the neighborhood:

> *[What's missing was] a period of working together with each other in a normal way. (...) We organized a big New Year's Eve fire with the people, and the policemen, and the new management [of the welfare organization]. I wasn't organizing the New Year's Eve event by myself. That was done by the neighborhood. I was [the director] of a team of different partners. (Practitioner profile Tonie, February 2009)*

At first, the professional parties in the neighborhood were hesitant:

> *And then the idea [about a bonfire] came about, that immediately caused resistance from the police, from the fire fighters, from youth work. In fact, I don't remember anybody being positive about this initiative. Nobody had faith in that it would work out, despite the fact that it was quiet since five or six months. But there was little trust in the idea that the group would be able to organize [the fire] successfully. (Angelique, safety coordinator OOV, June 2009)[15]*

Tonie, however, used a more complex story. He proposed the counter-story of the cockpit group and explained how they lost their role of organizing social events. He foresaw that, if they would get this role back, the problems in the neighborhood would decline. The district council chairman understood the importance of a New Year's Eve fire:

> *The bonfire is important, right. It is fun, right. It starts to tingle. Whoa! New Year's is coming. Whoa. Fire. All the youngsters are crazy about fire. For them*

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[15] *En toen kwam dat [idee van een vreugdevuur] ter sprake, en dat stuitte direct op verzet van de politie, van de brandweer, van het jongerenwerk. Eigenlijk niemand die ik me kan herinneren was positief over dat initiatief. Niemand had er vertrouwen in dat dat goed zou gaan, ondanks dat de situatie al een maand of vijf, zes behoorlijk rustig was. Maar er was nog te weinig vertrouwen in het gegeven dat de groep dat rustig zou kunnen organiseren. (Angelique, veiligheidsmanager OOV, June 2009)*

it is about, 'my parents, my grandfathers and my dad went kerstbomen rausen
with New Year's Eve'. (Brenda, local district council member, April 2009)[16]

She decided to make a case for the New Year's Eve fire. Gradually also other parties
became more positive. A local police officer explained how he saw the story of the
police department change and how it started to include the story of residents:

*(...) they did not have that here, a fire with New Year's Eve. And why not? They
did no longer deserve that. If they find that fire that important, then we should
also make it important. And then we have to really work together in order to
make that fire realistic including all restrictions and everything that comes with
it. (Eric, local police officer, May 2010)[17]*

Thus Tonie's intuition seemed to work: the controversial idea of a fire created an incentive
for all parties to cooperate. Everyone had their own role: street-level organizations
negotiated over restrictions and developed a plan based on the condition that all
organizations must participate. The role of citizens was to organize a management group
that was responsible for organizing the fire itself and keep control over the youngsters.
Tonie's role was to mediate between the professionals and the cockpit group.

There were also clear restraints from outside the neighborhood. Certain limits had been
imposed to the height and width of the fire and it was not allowed to light it before
midnight on New Year's Eve. A local newspaper wrote:

*Mayor Van Aartsen calls the bonfire in Ypenburg neighborhood an experiment:
'we agreed with residents that they would be responsible for building and
lighting the fire. If there are any irregularities, if things will be thrown in the
fire that we did not agree upon, we can always cancel the whole thing.' (AD*

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[16] *Het vreugdevuur is een belangrijk ding, hé. Het is leuk, hé. Het begint te kriebelen. Hoehoe. Oud en
Nieuw komt eraan. Aaaah. Vuur. Vuur. Alle jongens zijn gek op vuur. Waar het om gaat is, mijn ouders,
mijn opa's en mijn vader die gingen* kerstbomen rausen *met Oud en Nieuw. (Brenda,* lokale ambtenaar,
April 2011)

[17] *(...) dat hadden zij hier niet, een vuur met Oud en Nieuw. En waarom niet? Dat hadden zij niet meer
verdiend. Als zij het vuur nou heel erg belangrijk vinden, dan moeten wij dat ook heel erg belangrijk
vinden. En dan moeten wij met zijn allen, echt alles aan gaan doen dat er wel een vuur komt met alle
restricties en alle dingen die eromheen horen. (Frank,* lokale politieagent, *May 2010)*

Haagse Courant, 23 December 2008)[18]

The management group formed the central vehicle that organized the event. The management group consisted of five members of the former cockpit group that would organize, manage, and communicate with the local council and police. They would also collect the wood for the fire, build the fire in the week before New Year's Eve, and guard the pile of wood in that week so that none of it would be 'nicked' or lit it in advance of the festivities. The management group was also responsible for the youngsters' behavior and had to prevent escalations and nuisance.

New Year's Eve 2008-2009 became a great success. Many people from the neighborhood came to celebrate New Year's Eve around the fire. The group managed to keep the youngsters under control. Two of the youngsters participated in the management group and played a vital role in engaging the rest of the youth so that they would join in the celebration around the fire. The group also managed to prevent the huge pile of Christmas trees to be lit before the designated time. The men patrolled every night in the week running up to the special evening. Unfortunately, the welfare organization decided at the last moment not to engage in the New Year's Eve celebration and the community center was closed the whole night. Tonie celebrated New Year's Eve around the fire, too. Also, several police officers and local district council member Brenda were present for a while.

Social-spatial analyses

Tonie's ability to embed himself in the narrative of each party allowed him to see an opportunity in a moment where tensions were acute and high. The contradicting storylines that he has embodied during the meetings allow him to unravel interdependency between case actors. Organizing a New Year's Eve fire makes that interdependence tangible in a process of cooperation. The idea to organize a fire acknowledges the story of each case actor: residents are acknowledged in their wish to organize, police officers are acknowledged in their capacity to keep the neighborhood safe, welfare professionals are acknowledged in their capacity to facilitate community activities, and the local council

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[18] *Van Aartsen noemt het vreugdevuur in de wijk Ypenburg een experiment: 'We hebben met bewoners afgesproken dat zij toezicht houden op de opbouw en het ontsteken van het vuur. Als er onregelmatigheden zijn, als er dingen op het vuur worden gegooid die we niet hebben afgesproken, kunnen we het vuur te allen tijde afblazen.' (AD Haagsche Courant, 23 December 2008)*

finds recognition in its wish to develop a community. Because Tonie is embedded in the storylines of all these parties, he is able to identify this moment of opportunity and weave the stories together in an action plan.

From a spatial perspective, the New Year's Eve fire also created an interesting transformation. After loosing the cockpit, the group lacked a space over which they felt ownership. By allowing the management group to take control over the event and the physical pile of wood, Tonie, unconsciously or tacitly, created a space of ownership. Their responsibility over the site positioned the group as an equal partner in the organization of a community event. Their ownership over the site created a perceived space that was acknowledged by the presence of local professionals and other community members. The notorious ritual was celebrated together with different people in the neighborhood, a spatial practice that offers a symbolic acknowledgement of the marginalized identity of the cockpit group and their Schilderswijk background.

Thus, the experience of celebration and success embodied all the storylines. The cockpit group's counter-narrative that said that they were 'good community organizers' found expression in their effort to organize a safe and successful New Year's Eve fire. The dominant narrative of professionals of fear and threat was embodied in the strategic restrictions that allowed the professionals to keep a sense of control. Now that the community experienced this moment of interdependent cooperation, they actively created a new memory that included the role and identity of each party on their own terms.

Conclusions

The account of practice in this chapter explores a repertoire for dealing with urban conflict that is embedded in the subjective narratives of the different parties. The account of Tonie's practice provides insight into what I call 'narrative practice'. To make sense of Tonie's practice, we looked into two forms of interaction: an interaction with residents and an interaction between professionals. Together, these interactions allowed Tonie to engage in and reconstruct the stories of the different case actors. Stories provide the basis for narrative practice. They reveal the character and significance of prior experiences. They nourish our understanding of conflict and thereby discursively formulate the action repertoires that ultimately shape action. The exclusion of a story from the negotiation of conflict simultaneously excludes a group from participating.

Transforming conflict thus requires the inclusion of all stories into what we could call a 'better-formed story' (Sluzki 1992; Cobb 2003) in which characters have multiple identities and roles, in which the historic account and problem definitions are complex, and in which themes are characterized by opportunity, inclusion and acknowledgment. The account of Tonie's practice includes three critical moments in which we can learn much about the practice of constructing such 'better-formed stories'. In the first critical moment, Tonie's intuition about the importance of talking with residents provides four insights into effective narrative practice. First, constructive interactions require a safe space. Second, small stories characterized by low tellability can be included into the narrative of conflict by repeating the exact words of case actors. Third, emotions should be engaged instead of feared, as they function as a lens into the experience of residents. Finally emotions also provide an opportunity for acknowledgement. The account of this first critical moment tells us much about the practice of reconstructing the story of a marginal group seeking acknowledgement.

Acknowledgement becomes a central vehicle in the transformation of conflict through narrative practice. A capacity to respond to emotions and also to engage in emotions in the course of interactions is crucial if a narrative practitioner seeks to recognize marginalized experiences. As we have seen in the case studies in earlier chapters, it is often the lack of emotional engagement with residents that escalates conflicts in critical moments. Emotions are intuitive and intangible and thereby difficult to engage in a process of change. Narrative practice provides a way to engage diverse emotions by preserving them in the words and the stories of case actors. By repeating words and providing an emotional response, narrative practitioners establish a reciprocal relationship between themselves and parties that pushes for recognition of interdependence. Such recognition involves an acknowledgement that every party, including the community of practitioners, needs to understand the story of the 'other' to move forward in the process of change.

In the second critical moment Tonie also facilitates the recognition of interdependence. In the conversations between professional partners in the neighborhood, Tonie works to develops insights among the practicipants into the interdependence that exists between the organizations that they represent. The meetings offer a place in which street-level professionals can understand one another's distinct mandates, ways of working,

interests, and goals. The accounts of the meetings reveal, however, that successful cooperation among street-level professionals depends on their ability to include informal, as well as formal knowledge in the negotiation. The street-level professionals are challenged by the need to mediate between their formal knowledge and the tacit knowledge that they often acquired via gossip and rumor. The latter provides a way to become embedded in the community; the former poses the demands to act appropriately vis-a-vis their professional repertoire. The setting of a formal meeting initially creates a mismatch between formal and informal speech acts because it sets a stage and an action repertoire that fosters formal communication. Interestingly, as the meetings develop under Tonie's leadership, they provide a bounded sphere to understand the challenge and the usefulness of informal information with low tellability.

Finally, Tonie's embeddedness in the stories of the different case actors allows him to recognize an opportunity in a highly contested moment. The New Year's Eve fire had produced violence and controversy for many years. It was also exactly in this critical moment that people were intrinsically engaged. Tonie's recognition of the opportunity that existed together with the risk led to the effort to organize a bonfire. It was in this effort that he was able to bring the different stories together in a narrative braid that acknowledged each storyline, interest, identity, and role. The success of the fire made the interdependence tangible as it embodied the residents' counter-narrative of themselves as organizers and also the police and youth workers' role as authorities. A group that felt marginalized regained a place of ownership as its members were able to celebrate a long-standing tradition. The neighborhood celebration around the fire embodied the presence of both dominant and counter-narratives. It expressed the interdependence between the conflicting parties and celebrated a story of community building.

Conclusions

Conflict as opportunity for urban democracy

The urban conflicts that are the focus of this study crosscut the social, the political, and the personal. Large sociological questions like the consequences of globalization, migration, discrimination, policy-making, planning, and urbanization become tangible in the street-level interactions that constitute urban conflicts. Conflicts engage citizens in public issues on the basis of their intrinsic interests. As actors become entangled in a pattern of action and reaction, they intuitively organize their in- and out-group, develop tactics and strategies, and seek access to decision making processes. Conflicts can therefore serve as opportunities for urban democracies that seek to engage citizens in the practice of governance. Dewey's pragmatic perspective suggests how situations of community conflict might fulfill democratic ambitions (Dewey 1927). Efforts to address community problems can function as a vehicle to foster democratic governance. I developed the social-spatial narrative framework to analyze how the responses, stories, and spatial routines of diverse stakeholders develop as democratic opportunities at the street-level and also how these opportunities often misfire in interactions between citizens and local authorities.

The social-spatial narrative framework provides a way to analyze how interests, meaning, and belonging get negotiated among citizens, street-level professionals, and policy practitioners. These social and spatial analyses develop our eye for the informal practices of citizenship that mark precisely the kind of disciplined expressions of meaning and voice that local officials doubt will occur. Negotiating conflict as an opportunity for democratic governance largely depends on our capacity to recognize these informal practices as attempts to engage in public life. These practices, however seemingly mundane, fill the public sphere with a variety of stories, emotions, and repertoires of action that challenge urban governments to rethink their practice of dealing with urban conflicts.

The analysis of critical moments in the case studies provides three important insights into the opportunities of urban conflict. First, democratic opportunities develop through *street-level interactions* between authorities and citizens. Second, democratic opportunities are highly contingent on the capacity of authorities to include informal contentious performances as *public instead of private actions*. Third, democratic opportunities are highly dependent on the capacity for *meaningful recognition*. Before turning to these conclusions, I will provide an overview of my theoretical argument. Finally I will sum up what my study implies for both research and practice.

Negotiated citizenship

As cities become more complex and urbanization challenges diverse groups to share limited space, local governments face increasing demands to deal with urban conflicts. A common response to the crisis of governance is the effort to cultivate 'citizenship'. Citizenship is framed as a vehicle to share responsibility with citizens, to manage the constraints created by limited resources, and to strengthen democratic decision making (Sandel 1982; Heater 1990; Dagger 1997; Kymlicka 2002; Hurenkamp, Tonkens en Duyvendak 2012). In chapter one, I showed how Dutch governance practices seek to engage citizens through formal participation processes of control and rule or through collaborative practices of interactive policy making. In the informal realm of everyday life, citizens are engaged but primarily policed through welfare practices. These practices keep government in the position to decide what is included and what is excluded from the repertoire of citizenship.

If we want to make sense of the opportunities posed by urban conflict, we have to look beyond conventional repertoires for creating citizenship and look into the contentious acts of citizens at the neighborhood level. I proposed an understanding of citizenship that stems from Arendt's notion of human action as inherently political ([1958] 1998). Democracies depend on their ability to constitute a public sphere that includes diverse repertoires of political action, stories, and voices. These repertoires of citizenship are not only performed in city halls or public meetings. Political action also takes shape in the everyday realm of city streets, parks, squares, and neighborhoods. I treated the urban environment as a scene, informal contentious acts as performances, and street-level interactions between citizens and authorities as scripts in order to make sense of dramas of urban conflict. If we take Arendt's notion of the public sphere seriously and

seek ways to foster democracy at the level of the street, we must broaden the repertoire
and reach of citizenship.

Stories

In order to understand the experience of conflict I engaged the stories of case actors.
People make sense of their identity, experiences, their social relationships via stories
they tell about the 'self' and the 'other' (MacIntyre 1990; Bruner 1990, 2004; Mishler
1995; Czarniawska 2010). As I engaged these stories of urban conflict, I observed
how they construe the sequence of events. People behave according to their storylines
because their understanding of what happened in the past discursively produces
repertoires of appropriate action. For example, in the crisis around the bag snatcher,
one storyline made sense of the tragic death of the young man as a pattern of 'action –
reaction' and valued the incident as a regrettable tragedy in which he played a key role.
On the other hand, the Moroccan community interpreted the incident as a moment of
discrimination. From this perspective, a march to protest injustice was an appropriate
response, whereas, from the storyline of 'action – reaction' it was inappropriate. In the
case of controversy, the storyline of the residents who celebrated the memory of 'the
Cockpit' construed the development of a new and professional community center as a
loss of community and autonomy. This storyline provided them with a legitimate reason
to fight for participation in the new center. A similar pattern is visible in Zuilen where
the formal storyline of security led to policies of policing, whereas everyday experiences
of threat and community led to informal practices that linked security and participation.
Thus experiences of conflict become tangible in the stories that stakeholders tell,
simultaneously these storylines shape appropriate action repertoires for dealing with
conflict.

The case studies revealed that conflicts escalate when a storyline becomes the dominant
understanding of what is at stake and other storylines take up marginal positions as
counter plots (Talbot et al 1996; Bamberg 2004). When storylines become dominant,
case actors who identify with that storyline also pursue a more dominant position. As
a result, their action repertoire will be more powerful then the repertoire of parties
who identify with the counter story. This process of reaffirming and/or readjusting
power relations through discursive organization became visible in all case studies. In
Amsterdam, the storyline of 'action-reaction' dominated the decision to prohibit the
protest march. In The Hague, the local authority's storyline that portrayed the Cockpit

as a 'private dwelling that did not serve the public good' dominated the decision to close the self-organized club and open a professional community center in which the Cockpit group became 'volunteers' instead of 'organizers'. In Utrecht, the authority's storyline dominated the decision to build a *hangplek* for loitering youth, a decision that disrupted the informal practice of residents who organized a dog walking routine to secure a sense of safety. The social-spatial narrative framework revealed how some stories became dominant and others marginal in the process of conflict and how this made certain action repertoires appropriate and excluded others from the negotiation of what was at stake.

Critical moments

When case actors disagreed with the way the process unfolded, they developed actions to disrupt the sequence of events, redefine relationships, and contest the meaning of the dominant storyline. I called these *critical moments* (cf. Leary 2004; Wheeler and Green 2004; Cobb 2006). Common features of conflict processes are that tensions surface and escalate through these critical moments. Critical moments are thus windows into understanding the escalation process of conflict. Critical moments always create liminal opportunities (Turner [1987] 1992: 103) in which uncertainty and ambiguity allow case actors to renegotiate relationships and meaning. That is why studying critical moments is such a powerful approach to analyzing challenges of existing power relations.

In distinguishing crisis, controversy, and latent tensions critical moments characterized the sequence of events. In a crisis, critical moments follow each other in a rapid sequence that is limited in time and immediately engages all case actors. In a controversy, the sequence of critical moments is spread over a longer period of time. In The Hague, the first moment that was critical to citizens was ignored throughout the unfolding sequence of events that eventually escalated into violence. In latent conflict, there are no critical moments because tensions do not escalate. These tensions that remain under the surface led in the case of Zuilen to a situation where storylines around the same issues unfolded separately and practices ironically contradicted each other. The cases show how authorities were often unable to recognize moments that were critical to other parties, but also how the process of conflict escalated as these moments were ignored.

To make sense of the opportunity that critical moments provide I argued for adding a performative perspective to the narrative approach. From a performative perspective a conflict is an unfolding pattern of actions and reactions. This dramaturgical approach

(Hajer 2009) allows researchers and practitioners to make sense of what people *do* when they disagree with the current state of affairs. The social-spatial narrative framework provides a way to analyze the discursive performances in the critical moments that define the process of conflict. Critical moments are the focal point of the social-spatial narrative framework because they mark moments of agency in which parties decide to act in response to earlier events. I argued that the opportunity of conflict lies in these liminal moments where meaning and belonging can be renegotiated. A perspective that looks beyond stories and includes the formal and informal performances of case actors who seek to disrupt a sequence of events broadens the notion of citizenship as a *negotiated citizenship*. Let me turn to three general conclusions that reveal how critical moments proved to be important to understand what is salient for case actors, but also when, how, and where contentious forms of citizenship emerge and how governments responded.

Democracy through street-level interactions

Whether the process of conflict was characterized as crisis, controversy or latent tensions, street-level interactions marked the shifts in the sequence of events. All case studies show that the opportunity of conflict is highly contingent on these street-level interactions among citizens, street-level professionals, and policy practitioners. In these street-level interactions – like the negotiation over the march, the occupation of the center, and the negotiation about the *hangplek* – the meaning of the critical moments was negotiated. The social-spatial narrative framework helped to make sense of these negotiations by analyzing the 'social' – how people position themselves via the use of language – and the 'spatial' – how people voice their story via the use of space.

Social

Performances in critical moments offered insights into the way people position the 'self' and thereby the 'other' (Harré and Langenhove 1999; Davies and Harré 1990; Ben Habib 1992; Mead in Boas 1997; Mishler 1999). In interactions, people position themselves via the use of language; people *do something by saying something* (Austin 1962). Often the storyline of policy practitioners and welfare professionals became dominant, which had immediate repercussions in street-level interactions. These stories had higher tellability (Norrick 2005) because the narrative had a causal sequence, characters were either victims or perpetrators, and themes were not debated (Cobb 2003). In the details

of the interaction, the dominant story set the terms on what performances were felicitous thereby limiting the repertoire of communication. When the welfare professionals in The Hague needed to establish their role and responsibility in the new community center, they used formal language to position themselves as having the authority to manage community organizing. The professionals' story had higher tellability because it referenced the dominant storyline that treated the Cockpit as a 'private dwelling' and emphasized the need for professional organizing that would serve 'the public good'. The high tellability of this dominant storyline used formal language to define activities in terms of 'goals' and 'pedagogical deliveries.' The informal language of the Cockpit group, by contrast, described community activities in terms of 'cozy memories'. The informal stories of the group misfired because they did not fit the conventions for an illocutionary effect set by the professionals (Austin 1962: 116). The formal interactions did not leave any space for Cockpit group to reminisce about their beloved Cockpit or to mourn its loss. Reciprocally, the members of the Cockpit group lost their position and role as organizers of community activities. In the controversy over the community center, the use of language became an important vehicle for escalation and exclusion in the process of contestation.

In the other cases the interactions also laid bare misfires (Austin 1962) that developed when case actors uttered their stories and attempted to achieve results. In Zuilen, Ms. de Wit was unable to voice her memory of threat in interaction with a policy practitioner who defended a policy decision to build a *hangplek* on the route of the dog walking club. The small story (Bamberg 2006; Freeman 2006; Georgakopoulou 2006a) of personal experience had too little tellability to be taken into account in the bigger story of policy making. In the case of the bag snatcher, policy-practitioners intended to discuss the protest march with the representatives of the Moroccan community. Their performances in the negotiation revealed how the dominant storyline was fixed as the most appropriate interpretation of the incident. The counter story of the Moroccan community had lower tellability in the meeting as it formulated a complex story of underlying grievances. The interaction between members of the Moroccan community and local policy practitioners closed the space in which meaning might have been renegotiated. The result of this interaction fit with the dominant narrative. The community could walk 'a march to mourn' but without a formal connection to senseless violence. This decision allowed the Moroccan community to commemorate their beloved one, but unintentionally deepened

their experience of marginalization. In each of these cases a genuine effort to engage citizens in decision making misfired in the dramaturgy of the interaction.

In each of the case studies, street-level interactions unintentionally escalated the conflict and deepened the experience of marginality and of being misunderstood. This was not only a problem for residents, but also for governments trying to engage citizens in an interaction. Their use of language provided a lens to understand how their performances allowed or excluded the opportunity for renegotiation in critical moments. Interestingly, the cases reveal that the use of language would be a limited lens to understand the way people negotiate meaning and relationships in critical moments and thus require also a spatial analysis.

Spatial

Case actors who used informal, repertoires to voice their stories were unable to alter the sequence of events via the use of language. They turned to another contentious performance: the symbolic use public space. Often the use of public space was a tactic embedded in the specific context of neighborhood (De Certeau 1988). To include such informal tactics in my analysis I also looked at how people *say something by doing something*. This is what I called 'the spatial' in the social-spatial narrative framework.

The practices of people who march, occupy, walk, commemorate, and hang in the public space, reveal a story through performance. These practices produce and shift the meaning of public space (Lefebvre's ([1974] 1991). Spatial practices were often key in critical moments that disrupted the process and shifted positioning. For example, when the Cockpit group occupied the center, their physical presence with mattresses and food symbolically embodied their storyline about community organizing. For a few days, their story was represented and voiced in the public sphere. In Amsterdam, the meaning of the march remained contested throughout the crisis. During what the policy practitioners had called a 'march to mourn', the Moroccan community tactically performed a silent march. The performance of silence expressed their story in the public sphere; not by talking, but by walking in silence. Their silent walk evoked a protest against 'senseless violence', tacitly producing a public sphere in which the dominant and the counter story were both present on the streets of Eastern Amsterdam. Spatial practices thus provide a way to examine tacit and informal performances of citizenship. The cases show that spatial practices often have the contentious character that disrupts

dominant narratives and demands a response of authorities.

That contentious character was absent in Zuilen. In the latent conflict entails tensions did not escalate and underlying grievances did not surface in critical moments. The spatial performances were not characterized by contention, but by everyday routines. Spatial methods like 'mental maps' and 'walk and talk interviews' provided a way to analyze the underlying tensions. By participating in the everyday spatial routines of citizens, street-level professionals, and policy practitioners, I discovered how latent tensions were grounded in the clash between spatial routines. Tactical practices like walking the dogs in a club, chasing youngsters around courtyards, organizing informal homework classes and activities at the square showed how residents, and also public officials, developed informal tactics to deal with experiences of threat and create public familiarity. These spatial routines revealed how in the lived space of everyday life, the conceived space of authorities and the perceived space of residents contradicted each other (Lefebvre's ([1974] 1991). Here the spatial strategies that the government used to conceive security and active citizenship – like a *hangplek* and official activities at the square – paradoxically disrupted the informal tactics of residents. Participant observations in these spatial routines provided a window into different productions of space and uncovered the latent tensions in the neighborhood.

The episodes in the cases show that when linguistic repertoires fall short in interactions with authorities, citizens turn to different repertoires to convey their message and disrupt the sequence of events. The spatial analysis of critical moments in the process of conflict thus broadens our understanding of contentious performances (Tilly 2008). People voice their stories not only through linguistic communication, but also through the way they symbolically make use of the public space. Democratic opportunities emerge in these street-level interactions between citizens, street-level professionals, and policy practitioners. But whether governments are able to make use of these opportunities is highly dependent on their ability to read informal contentious performances as forms of citizenship.

Democracy through the public and the private

Thus in order to fulfill the democratic attempt to engage diverse actors in deliberation, governments and also scholars would do well to find ways to translate informal contentious performances and counter stories into opportunities for citizenship. The interactions in the case studies show, however, that governments tend to do the opposite. The cases provide an insight into the interdependence between contentious citizens and the state (Jenkins and Klandermans 1995; Tilly and Tarrow 2006). When citizens tried to engage in negotiations by making public claims, governments tended to push their claim back into the private sphere.

This process was most obvious in the bag snatcher case where a public march to protest against injustice was not only prohibited by local authorities, but also a 'silent march'. A silent march would have had a connotation of senseless violence, which was inappropriate from the perspective of policy practitioners who had made sense of the incident in a pattern of 'action-reaction'. The Moroccan community that organized the process was unable to voice their interpretation of the incident during the meeting at the neighborhood council. They improvised and used the public space of the city to convey the message that they were being treated unfairly. But their attempt to act in the public sphere was pushed into the sphere of the private as a march to mourn that would only have meaning to the family and friends who wanted to draw attention to the senseless violence that was part of their experience. The private character of the march was strengthened as policy practitioners performed their story by 'not participating'. The episode reveals how the opposing performances applied contradictory meanings to the march. The silence performed by the Moroccan community embodied a public meaning and the performed 'non-participation' embodied a private meaning. I see this episode as a missed opportunity not to 'talk the talk,' but to 'walk the walk' of inclusion.

In the cockpit case, the meaning of public and private actions was also a pivotal in the negotiation. The cockpit was closed because of the private character it had in the eyes of professionals. The members of cockpit group fought hard to challenge the dominant idea that their club was only for their own interests, but failed to do so. The occupation of the community center disrupted the dominant narrative temporarily. The neighbors' support suggested that the activities organized by the group had a public meaning in the community. The local authorities responded by treating the acts as misbehavior, pushing

the meaning of the occupation into the private sphere. By not giving attention to the occupation, they ignored its public value. When the decision was made to do nothing until the group moved out, the occupation misfired as an invitation to renegotiate the role of residents in community organizing. Tonie changed this dynamic by pushing small stories from the private sphere into the public domain. His narrative practice translated stories of residents and stories of professionals into a coordinated effort to work together that took shape in the organization of the New Years Eve fire.

The street-level interactions in Zuilen reveal a similar pattern. The stories of neighbors who sought to develop community through their spatial routines and informal activities at the square were ignored in interactions with policy practitioners and welfare professionals. They were rendered as private experiences that did not speak to the public good. In this way, the small stories through which residents expressed their grievances could not inform local policy. Consequently, local policies disrupted the fabric of community in the neighborhood instead of strengthening it.

Thus informal contentious performances can misfire when authorities neglect them. As policy practitioners were unable to recognize the informal actions, they treated them as a form of political unconsciousness (McAfee 2008) and relegated them to the sphere of the private. In the first chapter I argued that the public sphere is as much constituted by what cannot be said or shown as by what is included (McAfee 2008; Butler 2004). Thus as long as people keep acting in the public sphere they discursively construct the world surrounding them. The cases of urban conflict, however, reveal that the quality of the public sphere depends as much on the performances of citizens as on the response of authorities. When governments push counter stories and performances into the private sphere, they exclude them from the public sphere and thus decrease its quality. The opportunities to increase the quality of the public sphere thus emerge in the interdependency between citizens and authorities and the ability of authorities to include small stories and informal performances into their repertoire of governance.

Democracy through recognition

The analysis of democracy through street-level interactions and of democracy through the public and the private leads to the final – and arguably most important – insight about conflict as an opportunity. When, how, and where is there a need for recognition.

Negotiation theories taught us that recognition can be generated by the party's ability to move beyond positions and look at interests (Fisher and Ury [1981] 2011). Planning theories highlighted the potential to provide recognition to stakeholders through storytelling (Throgmorton 1996; Sandercock 2003; Forester 1999, 2006), everyday talk (Mansbridge 1999), and emotions (Hoch 2006). The social-spatial narrative framework, however, allowed for a more specific understanding of recognition. The framework helped to unravel the interactions in which recognition misfired.

Based on these insights, I propose a theory of meaningful recognition in episodes of conflict: recognition at the right moment (critical moments), recognition in the right way (through embedding the response in experience), and recognition in the right place (spaces with symbolic value). This theory of meaningful recognition in street level interaction adds to but should be distinguished from the established constitutional discourse on democracy and recognition (Taylor *et al.* 1994). Knowledge about critical moments in street-level interaction proved to be a central vehicle to understand *when* recognition was needed and *what* is salient for people. The cases escalated when moments that were critical to one group were ignored by another group of case actors. When the flowers were removed, the Moroccan community called for a protest march because the removal revealed that the local authorities did not consider the death of the boy to be a critical moment. Only then, when there was a threat for escalation, did the local government acknowledge that the death of the boy had sparked a crisis that pushed them to engage in public negotiations. If they had better knowledge of the meaning of critical moments before the call for protests, local authorities might have understood the value of the informal memorial and acknowledged the legitimacy of this commemorative site to the Moroccan community.

Similarly, in the case of Ypenburg we saw how the history of the Cockpit was not acknowledged in the storylines of local decision makers and welfare professionals. The exclusion of the memory of the Cockpit (critical moment 1) became manifest when the new center opened. Unfolding events prompted the group to improvise another critical moment, when that was also ignored by authorities, the sequence of events continued to escalate, this time to violence. The moment of violence was finally treated as a critical moment by everyone – triggering the decision to engage Tonie (chapter 7) to mediate between the Cockpit group and street-level professionals. Tonie made progress by

addressing this gap and embedding himself in the stories of all parties, which enabled him to acknowledge both the history of the Cockpit *and* the grievances of professionals. The critical moments that Tonie developed throughout his practice were inclusive; they included the storylines of all parties. Eventually this knowledge allowed him to develop an unconventional approach and involve all stakeholders in the organization of the New Years Eve bonfire.

In the case study of latent conflict in Zuilen, it was the lack of critical moments that made it difficult for parties to develop knowledge about the story of the 'other'. The lack of critical moments is exactly why the tensions in latent conflict are so dangerous for communities: tensions linger under the surface but deepen experiences of difference and exclusion. Through critical moments, parties can learn something about what is salient for the so-called 'other'. When local governments are seeking to engage diverse stakeholders in decision making, the capacity to understand the story of the 'other' is especially crucial. The case studies show that when a critical moment is neglected experiences of exclusion deepen and the sequence of events escalates. Critical moments play an important role in understanding *when* a group is in need of recognition.

At the same time these critical moments imply *how* recognition is demanded from local authorities. Take the case of Zuilen, for example. When the policy practitioner walked with the neighbors to discuss the *hangplek,* she intended to acknowledge their voice in making the decision about youngsters in the neighborhood. The interaction has the opposite effect. The policy practitioner was unable to recognize the small story of residents. This small story, however, could have informed a meaningful performance of recognition and so allowed a personal experience and a tactic to become part of the policy story. In a similar way, because of its low tellability, the counter-story of the Moroccan community did not get acknowledged in the negotiation. That story, if heard, could have informed local policy makers that their participation in the march would be a meaningful performance of recognition. Similarly, in Ypenburg a moment to commemorate the loss of the Cockpit in the new center could have been a meaningful performance of acknowledgement that might have allowed the Cockpit group to move on and cooperate on the next phase of community activities with professionals. Tonie was able to change the tenor of this interaction because his practice found a way to include the small stories of residents and professionals. This tacit knowledge

also provided a stepping stone that allowed him to understand how he could extend this practice acknowledgement in a meaningful way: not via talking but through the celebration of a local ritual.

This leads us to the last insight on recognition that the social-spatial narrative analysis provided. *Where* recognition is performed also matters. The case studies show that recognition depends on the symbolic value of the space and places in which it is performed. The Moroccan community compared their local march to the manifestation of noise that took place on the Dam square after the murder of Theo van Gogh. This comparison emphasized the imbalance in the way two regrettable deaths were treated. The public meaning of the march was not only less important, it was not to be allowed. Although the mayor acknowledged the grievances of the sister during the negotiation over the march, public recognition at the site of the incident or during the march would have been much more meaningful. We can observe a similar need in Ypenburg. When the Cockpit group occupied the new center, they symbolically demanded recognition at the site. A visit from local policy practitioners to the occupied center would have acknowledged their story in a meaningful way because it would embody the interaction they sought to accomplish.

A good understanding of where recognition is needed is even more important in cases of latent conflict. In Zuilen, latent tensions unintentionally deepened through unhandy strategies of policy practitioners and welfare organizations that were unaware of spatial routines of citizens. The lack of knowledge about the meaning of spaces and places ironically disrupted the very thing policy makers sought to create: a sense of security and the engagement of citizens. Thus my study helps to make sense of the symbolic meaning of spaces, that meaning demands acknowledgement.

This analysis of recognition is strongly related to the question of citizenship. As residents experienced that their efforts to take part in the negotiation of conflict were in vain, their experience of exclusion deepened. In other words, by excluding their tacit and informal expressions of citizenship, their voices were excluded from the public sphere. Only through meaningful recognition can these voices be included. The social-spatial narrative provides a way to identify these critical moments and to analyze how the liminal opportunities they provide are contingent on street-level interactions. Social

and spatial analyses of critical moments provide a framework to broaden the notion of citizenship and include both formal and informal performances. And finally the framework provides a way to unpack when, what, how, and where recognition of these forms of citizenship will be meaningful and so open the chance to transform conflict into an opportunity for urban democracies.

Implications for research and practice

This study has operationalized a piece of practical wisdom shared by public officials who argue to 'never waste a good crisis'. Conflict as unit of analysis blurs the boundary between theory and practice. My study tried to bring theory and practice together as it framed research as a practice of 'learning-in-action' (Schön 1983). The case studies reveal how citizens directly experience government through these street-level interactions with practitioners (Lipsky 1980), but also how and where these interactions escalated tensions and – despite the intention to engage citizens – government actors missed opportunities to engage citizens in democratic decision making. The case studies serve as a lens into theoretical and practical implications of studying conflict and dealing with conflict as an opportunity for democratic governance.

My performative approach challenges researchers to step down from their etic perspective and dive into an emic experience of the neighborhood. This implies a political ethnography with qualitative methods that allow scholars to both emerge into the stories of conflict as well as in the practices of conflict. A combination of narrative interviews, focus groups, participant observations, observing participation of social interactions and spatial practices has allowed me to describe and analyze urban conflict from the perspective of different actors. Storylines developed by drawing comparisons between different narrative interviews. Performances were described on the basis of thick descriptions (Geertz 1974) and observations of interactions among parties at the street-level. I tried to legitimize these inherently subjective research methods by reflecting on my own role as a researcher in relation to the field. I also validated my findings through sessions with actors in the field who were willing to reflect on my findings in interactive reflection sessions. These research practices made up for a transdisciplinairy approach to research that brought scholarly research and practice together in the study of urban conflict. Both scholars and practitioners who seek to make sense of conflict and to engage stakeholders in resolution need to embed themselves in

the experience of urban life in order to develop their understanding of conflicts through the multiple perspectives and storylines that constitute them.

Both researchers and practitioners face obstacles in this pursuit, however. They hesitate about stepping into the everyday negotiations at the street-level. The public officials in The Hague refused to visit the occupied center or to ask why the group was holding this 'hostage'. The youngsters in Utrecht complained that they had never been asked what they wanted by a policy practitioner. What could have been a better gesture than to have the district mayor light a candle at the site of the incident in Amsterdam? Yet he kept to his office. Not only the repertoire of citizenship, but also the general repertoire of public policy seems to fall short when it comes to everyday interaction with citizens at the street-level. By failing to step down into the fuzzy everyday improvisations of social life, policy practitioners work without a sense of the meaning urban conflicts have for the people in the neighborhood who are involved.

I have proposed to deal with urban conflict through what I have called 'narrative practice'. The exemplary case presented in chapter 7 suggests three important capacities for both scholars and practitioners who seek to 'learn-in-action'. The first relates to what I argued above, the ability to engage in discussions that do not speak *for* but *with* actors. A similar approach was taken by the practitioner who argued to not be afraid of emotions – something that is at odds with conventional understandings of what it means to be professional. If I reflect on my own fieldwork, this insight is also applicable to my own practice as a researcher. Where I succeeded, it was largely because I was able to build trustworthy and reciprocal relationships with the people in the field. I joined groups of youngsters for a week, and had to build trust so that two weeks later, I could participate with police officers with whom I found myself chasing the same youth into inner courtyards and community centers. Allowing emotions into my practice of doing research was a key ingredient in building such relationships and actually allowed case actors to trust my integrity. Many narrative interviews turned into 'therapeutic sessions' and I consciously tried to not be afraid of that role as I realized that the quality of personal stories would improve as I fostered an interdependent relationship with people in the field. This interdependence was what allowed me to subsequently validate my findings in reflection sessions in which case actors reflected on my findings and the picture they provided of these actors role in the conflict.

The second capacity to learn-in-action was formulated as the ability to improvise. Improvisations are not just loose actions, they actually demand a framework in which people can interact – like jazz musicians whose improvisations unfold in a common framework of chords and rhythms. The narrative practice that the practitioner developed allowed a space for improvisation as informal communication like rumor and gossip turned out to be helpful 'small stories' that offered valuable information for street-level bureaucrats. Getting access to these insights depended, however, on the practitioner having the flexibility to create space for such interaction within the context of formal meetings. When Tonie was able to embed himself in the stakeholders' stories, he could oversee interests and emotional engagements. This allowed him to get citizens to engage according to their own capacities and, eventually, to propose a solution in the tradition that was contested: a New Years Eve fire. The cooperation among the Cockpit group, welfare professionals, police officers, and policy practitioners marked the first memory of success and in which all stakeholders were included in negotiating a community activity. The capacity to improvise thus highly depends on the capacity to learn from diverse stories and act in street-level interactions.

Finally, I want to reflect on the contested meaning of 'self-organization'. All the case studies exhibited an element of self-organization that was disrupted by attempts to organize in a 'top-down' manner. The paradoxical practice in which authorities sought to engage citizens limited these citizens' participation to the repertoire set by administrative bureaucracies and professional standards. This contradiction proved to be the biggest trigger for urban conflicts. As residents self-organized they became conscious of their capacities, they got engaged, and they developed a public role. Disrupting this role and the self-awareness as a citizen that it generated had irretrievable consequences for people's experience of the state. So we see that when people organize, they develop a sense of ownership, which is exactly what the state seeks to encourage. Urban conflicts catalyze these kinds of ownership in citizen's lived environment, over their social role, and around their capacity to build community. Disrupting this sense of ownership creates a situation in which citizens' trust in the state declines, in which their experience of marginalization deepens, and, interestingly, in which citizens' need to contest also strengthens. For those involved in urban government this poses a direct challenge. My study suggests that broadening the repertoire of citizenship would strengthen capacity to engage the diverse practices through which citizens perform their

stories, take ownership of their neighborhoods, and develop community as they contest public policy.

Social-spatial narratives of the kind presented here challenge governments and scholars to see conflict as an opportunity to learn-in-action. The urban streets offer a beautiful living theatre in which it is possible to observe, to grasp, and to intervene in conflicts and through such actions to create moments of opportunity. But those attempts can only be successful if we build capacity to acknowledge and include the uncanny, informal, and often tacit performances of local groups as public actions. My study provides a method for understanding how governments could improve the quality of the public sphere. These performances by contentious citizens each tell a story of experience, they each show an effort to take part in public decision making, and they each reveal what democratic citizenship looks like in practice.

Appendices

Appendix I

Fieldwork overview

Cases/ Methods	Ethnographic research	Narrative Interviews	Participant observations	Spatial Methods	Media analysis	Reflection Session
Crisis	2009	15	1 month: Street observations	None	Yes	With local council
Controversy (part I & II)	2009 – 2011	25	18 months: Weekly participation in the community center Weekly participation in professional meetings 'go-along' with police officers, welfare workers, and residents	4 mental maps with professionals 5 sessions of walking while talking with neighbors, welfare workers, police officers, and police practitioner	Yes (of minor significance)	With residents With the welfare professionals and local council together
Latent Conflict	2011 – 2012	21	9 months: Participation in neighborhood activities, police officer, welfare practices, street-observations 'go-along' police officer, welfare workers, residents	12 mental maps with neighbors 5 mental maps with welfare professionals 3 sessions of walking while talking 5 mental maps with policy practitioners	Yes (of minor significance)	With residents With local council
Total		61 narrative interviews	28 months Participant observations	34 spatial data sets	3 media analyses	5 reflection sessions

Appendix II

Reflections on fieldwork

This appendix provides a reflexive account of my fieldwork. I organize my reflection by using the four premises of the 'extended case method' (Burawoy 1998) that frame research is an intervention, process, structuration, and restructuration. The aim of this reflection is to rethink and hopefully legitimize my approach to reflexive and intersubjective data collection and the representativeness of my findings. During my fieldwork I developed a habit of keeping a diary. The accounts described here are only a small proportion of the reflections I made. Nevertheless the incidents and considerations described serve as an insight in my process of knowledge production.

Intervention

The first premise Burawoy proposes is that doing research is an *intervention* in which the researcher 'extracts the interviewee from their own time and space' (Burawoy 1998: 14). He argues that the intervention of research creates a pressure on the situation at hand, and it is through the way people respond to that pressure that the social order reveals itself (ibid: 77). I certainly see research as an intervention, the meaning of that intervention has become clear to me in four ways. Like the diary extract at the beginning of this chapter reveals, coming into a situation of conflict in the first place confronts case actors with the idea that their everyday lives are conflictuous. The idea that they were actors in conflict was often denied, and even if people acknowledged they were in a situation of conflict it would not benefit my fieldwork, as my presence would pressure them to prove their innocence. I had to reframe the way I explained my intervention. I took the problem of conflict as a given fact and decided to turn it around; I came into the field with a focus on my genuine curiosity about people's dreams and worries for the neighborhood. I stated that my research was 'about finding out how people are engaged in changes in their neighborhood'. Everyone could relate to the fact that there were a variety of ideas about changes in their neighborhood and that they could contest one another. This frame allowed diverse groups who identified with the developments in the neighborhood to become a stakeholder in my research. This was the starting point to build trust relationships that I developed by being present in the practices and everyday

routines of different case actors. Second, I noticed that in every intervention there was the tricky moment in which I had to move from one party to another party with opposing ideas. I had to be very clear on my ambition to talk to all case actors. Sometimes that honesty caused a problem because people found it difficult to trust me if I also trusted their opponents. If that was the case, I invested more time in building a relationship in which they trusted I would represent their story in a good way. At other times the trust I gave to parties was a direct intervention because my action allowed for trust to grow amongst case actors, 'if she trusts them they cannot be that bad', some stated.

Third as much as I intervened in the everyday lives and practices of people, I allowed them to intervene in my everyday practice of research. I tried to do justice to each of their stories by allowing case actors to give me feedback at any time. The trust relationship that I developed through these activities resulted directly in the fourth way the notion of an intervention became prominent to me. My presence and interactions are also an intervention because through my presence neighbors got more acquainted with one another. Especially in the focus group sessions I saw how people who felt uncomfortable with doing a one on one interview – Moroccan mothers, the cockpit group, youngsters, and elder neighbors – were building relationship while sharing their stories with one another. Interestingly, these are precisely the groups who have more difficulty voicing their story in decision making processes and expressed experiences of exclusion. As individuals responded to each other, their responses revealed a lot about people's own experience and thereby strengthened relationships in the group.

At one moment the intervening character of my research became crystalized. As I was one of the few who had good relationships with everyone in the neighborhood, I was asked to mediate and help resolve the conflict in The Hague. I refused that offer because my direct involvement in the case would change my role as a researcher. I had to draw a boundary to my intervention. Instead, I decided to stay and do participant observations in the process that was led by Tonie, the consulted practitioner whose practice is described in chapter 7. I want to reflect, then, on one particular event that happened while I was doing participant observation in the professionals meetings in The Hague. This incident deepened my understanding of research as an intervention. While I was present, taping the meetings, and making notes, the practitioner who organized the meetings asked me if I could make notes about the meeting in turn for unlimited access. My position

shifted from 'observing participant' to 'participating observer' in that process. I had to manage my integrity as a researcher but I also wanted to strengthen my relationships with these professionals in the field, so I decided to take up the note keeping. We agreed that I would send my notes to Tonie and that he would send them around. He informed participants in the meeting about my double role and stressed that he kept the final responsibility over the notes. But as we have seen in chapter 7 an incident with the note taker disrupts the resolution process. One of the notes was too explicit about a decision of welfare workers and caused anger among practitioners in the meeting. As that note keeper was I, I unintentionally intervened in the field that I tried to observe. Tonie handled the angry emails and changed the notes. The incident shortly threatened my relationship with people in the field, but because of the action of the practitioner and the promise that he would oversee the notes in the future, I remained the note keeper and observer for many more months. The disruption, however, revealed much about the necessity of 'tacit knowledge' (see chapter 7 for my analysis of this moment).

Process

The second premise Burawoy argues that the researcher should understand her research in terms of a 'process'. This notion allows for my research to be embedded in experiences that change over time. Burawoy claims that in participant observations no standardized questions can be answered as the respondent always responds to her or his own interpretation of the questions (ibid: 17). As we will see in my approach to narrative interviews, the questions I asked were aiming at a co-construction of a narrative together with case actors. The notion of fieldwork as a process also allowed me to use different methods based on what the interactions demanded from me. That flexibility was for example useful when I once walked into the community center in The Hague where I expected to interview one woman. She, however, was nervous and asked her neighbor to come along. We met in the canteen of the center amongst all her fellow volunteers. I saw her face turn grim when I asked her if we could sit in a quiet room. At that moment I decided to change necessity into virtue and invited all the volunteers around the table. The interview turned into a focus group session. This intuitive change demanded me to shift quickly and change my initial interview question in a topic for a focus group, which I was only able to do because I was engaged in the details of the problem in the neighborhood. The sessions resulted in an embedded experience that produced an immense amount of 'situational knowledge' (ibid: 14). Furthermore this conversation around the table in the canteen was very important for

the relationship between the group of residents and me. Afterwards they told me no one ever came to visit them in their center and sit around a table to listen to them for a whole afternoon long. This afternoon was the start of many invitations to the center and much participation in 'women cooking club' and 'men card club' evenings. Participating in these activities in the center was important for my understanding of the everyday routines of the group of resident, they made me understand the value of these small scale activities for the volunteer group, but also the ways in which welfare workers related to the volunteers. If we view research as a process, we must engage in the local processes we seek to study. The stories of case actors and their subjective experiences shine through these experiences and allow the researcher to built enough situational knowledge to be flexible in doing fieldwork and represent a nuanced version of the social reality.

Structuration

Thirdly, Burawoy suggests for research 'structuration'. The moment of structuration enables the researcher to externalize between what is observed and the structural forces that shape the field. According to Burawoy these social forces lie mostly outside of the realm of investigation when we do qualitative studies in local contexts (ibid: 15). He argues that positivist science can be used, to understand the social forces that influence the locale. In interpretive studies, however, the researcher has to include an interpretation of both agency and structure. The framework of a Social-Spatial Narrative seeks to interpret the reciprocal relationship between structural forces and local agency. The description of storylines in a social-spatial narrative starts out with an analysis of power relationships between case actors. The analysis of counter stories and performances during critical moments provides an analysis of the meaning of agency. The social-spatial narrative framework thus enables structure of empirical findings in the context of social forces.

Moreover the social-spatial narrative framework allows for the fourth and final premise that Burawoy suggests. He argues that 'theory is essential to each dimension of the extended case method. It guides interventions, it constitutes situational knowledge into social processes, and it locates those social processes in theory wider context of determination. Moreover theory is not something stored up in the academy but itself becomes an intervention into the world it seeks to comprehend' (ibid: 21).

Restructure

The fourth premise of interpretive science is thus to *restructure* research findings by creating a reciprocal relationship between theory and empirical details. Situational knowledge has to be distilled into a description of social process. Burawoy argues that 'fieldwork is a sequence of experiences until one's theory is in sync with the world one studies' (ibid: 17). The situational experiences of fieldwork have to be reduced to an analysis of the social process of conflict that is analyzed by the use of prior theory. Therefore I used grounded theory because it allows for reciprocity between theory and fieldwork. I started out by doing ethnographic fieldwork and gathered empirical details, certain theories allowed me to make sense of these findings. I analyzed events and developed a theoretical framework to describe and make sense of empirical details. Finally I went back to the field to validate these findings in reflection with case actors. My theoretical considerations were, thus, a dialogue with the people in the field (ibid: 16). Reflection sessions helped me 'triangulate' my research findings in the sense that they validated my analysis of critical moments, positioning, and symbolic actions.

In The Hague the reflection session took place in June 2011 in the new neighborhood center. Professionals from the municipality, welfare organization, police, and youth workers focused around a set of critical moments that I identified. I used the mental mapping method to add a spatial element to the reflection and asked participants to draw a map of the neighborhood during each critical moment. Like always I asked them to rethink critical moments from different perspectives. The first critical moment in my analysis was the construction of the self-organized neighborhood center. This caused immediate discussion of whether this moment was critical to them. The professionals realized that they knew very little about the self-organized center of the cockpit group. In drawing the map they were confronted with the fact that they had no idea what the neighborhood looked like at that time. That influenced the way they viewed the later stages of the conflict, each time they drew new maps of the neighborhood and their own practices, they realized that they were missing out of one story, the counter story neighbors would tell. This made them rethink the way they organized community activities in the past, the present, and the future. Their responses informed my analysis of the relationship between them and the cockpit group.

In Amsterdam the reflection session took place in the room of the borough council chairman. He and the civil servants who had a role in dealing with the Moroccan community had read the case study in advance and responded to some of the conclusions. They subscribed my analysis of critical moments, but wanted to reflect on the uncertainty they were dealing with at the time. That discussion proved especially valuable for deepening my understanding of their attempt to prevent escalated violence in a highly tense context that received extensive media attention.

In Utrecht it was very difficult to get practitioners of the borough council together in a session that would reflect on a conflict that was latent. The latent character of conflict in the neighborhood made tensions very intangible for practitioners. Their practice was informed by former policy documents that stressed criminal rates and citizen participation activities, but they were insecure about defining the tensions at play between themselves and residents. Instead of solely talking about the case around the square, they demanded a broader training session that helped them build capacity for dealing with problematic youth and unresponsive citizens. In a training session I had them pick two cases from their own practice experience and asked them to draw a timeline of the events in that case. Each critical moment was discussed extensively in terms of interests and performances of themselves and those of the youngsters or other citizens. The response of the practitioners revealed how little they knew about the perception of these groups, which enhanced my intuition that these reflection sessions are direct interventions into the practice of case actors.

Burawoy argued that ethnographers are also annoying and interfering outsiders who demands time of people who just live their lives and are not interested in becoming the object of research. I experienced that residents expressed their interest to participate in research through their frustration of not being heard. Residents explained that they had an interest in my research because it provided them with an opportunity to voice their story, and more importantly to make more people aware of the story. The cases have showed how difficult it was for people to express their stories in public and find recognition for their story from local authorities. Although I would never make the promise that my research would change their situation, people found it meaningful to share their stories with someone who listened carefully to their experiences. Once I came into the field, they saw me as an opportunity to voice their story. In reflection sessions with practitioners, my research did have an influence on the relationships

between government officials, welfare professionals, and citizens because in these sessions policy practitioners experienced the perspective of the 'others' via reflections that I facilitated.

Where practitioners get paid to rethink their practice and have an interest in my outcomes in order to build capacity for conflict management, residents who do not have a professional interest are difficult to engage in learning-in-action. My personal relationships would grant me some favors, but not to a point that they wanted to read long pieces of text. This did not mean that they were not interested in my findings, but in order to reflect in interaction with them I had to rethink my repertoire of reflection.

I decided to approach the reflections with residents informally. The most important part of my validation pursuit was to reflect on critical moments. I engaged residents in reflections on critical moments throughout the fieldwork, during focus group sessions, and via the use of a timeline in the narrative interviews. I also approached my returns to field in an informal way; I returned during events that allowed me to talk to residents individually. In The Hague I returned to the field during a social event. I was invited for a summer festival that was organized by the cockpit group. In Utrecht I returned to the field on a sunny afternoon after the summer holiday and sat at the square when school came out. In Amsterdam I made an appointment to drink tea with one of the Moroccan neighborhood fathers. This man knew the family of the deceased youngster and urged me to not confront them with this painful memory, which I didn't. The informal conversations I had with people deepened my sense of the tension and frustration they encountered. These conversations helped me tweak my analysis, legitimize my findings, and continue with my writing with a feeling of comfort and self-consciousness.

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Nederlandse samenvatting

Inleiding

Dit proefschrift gaat over conflicten in de stad. Tijdens lokale conflicten tussen groepen bewoners, lokale overheden, politie agenten, welzijnswerkers, en andere mensen in de wijk worden processen van in- en uitsluiting, multiculturalisme en participatie tastbaar (Piven and Cloward 1977: 20-21). In deze momenten staat er iets op het spel, er is een risico, onzekerheid. Tegelijkertijd raken mensen betrokken op basis van wat zij belangrijk vinden. Sociale conflicten aggregeren een proces wat kan worden begrepen als een creatief moment, een moment waarop er wordt geïnnoveerd, wat mensen mobiliseert en collectieve acties teweegbrengt. Sociale conflicten kunnen leiden tot processen waarin mensen zich organiseren tegen ongelijke machtsrelaties (Coser 1956, 1957, 1961; Oberschall 1978). Ik onderzocht of, wanneer, hoe en waar conflict juist een kans zou kunnen zijn voor het versterken van stedelijke democratie.

Om de betekenis van conflictprocessen te duiden ben ik gaan kijken op de plek waar conflict plaatsvindt, de publieke ruimte in stadswijken. Ik bekijk de stad als een theater van sociale interactie (Mumford in LeGates en Stout [1996] 2011: 91). Als we de stad vanuit een dramaturgische blik bekijken, worden de straten, speelplekken, bankjes, en overheidsgebouwen levende laboratoria waar verschillende actoren onderhandelen over de toekomst van hun buurt. Als we uitgaan van het idee dat mensen hun identiteit vorm geven in concrete situaties, vervullen alledaagse interacties tussen bewoners welzijnsprofessionals, politici, en ambtenaren een belangrijke functie in onze democratie. Hoe kunnen we die interacties duiden? Wat is de betekenis van deze alledaagse ontmoetingen binnen ons democratische bestel? En wat is de rol van conflict?

De studie is een resultaat van vier jaar etnografisch onderzoek in Amsterdam, Utrecht, en Den Haag. Tijdens dit veldwerk heb ik me verdiept in de ervaringen van mensen die in deze stedelijke wijken wonen, werken, en hen besturen. Ik heb hen geobserveerd, geparticipeerd in hun acties, er met hen over gesproken, en achteraf met hen op mijn analyses gereflecteerd. Ik zag hoe bewoners zich organiseerden tegen overheidsbesluiten, hoe welzijnswerkers gemeenschappen probeerden te creëren, hoe agenten met jongeren omgaan en bestuurders een participatie samenleving nastreven.

De drama's die ontstonden als deze werelden met elkaar in conflict kwamen heb ik opgetekend en geanalyseerd. Het resultaat slaat een brug tussen theorie en praktijk door 1) te onderzoeken of, wanneer, hoe en waar conflicten een kans kunnen zijn voor democratische besluitvorming, 2) een analyse model (Social-Spatial Narrative) aan te dragen waarmee de studies van conflict als kans wordt geoperationaliseerd, en 3) een alternatieve praktijk te beschrijven. Drie etnografische casussen geven inzicht in de het proces van crisis, controverse, en latent conflict.

Ik definieer *crisis* als een conflict waarin de spanningen ineens ontstaan en acties en reacties zich in razend tempo opvolgen. De casus rondom de Tasjesdief verteld het verhaal van de week nadat een Marokkaanse jongen overleed in zijn poging een tasje te stelen in Amsterdam Oost. De reacties op straat en in de media zorgde dat de Marokkaanse gemeenschap zich direct organiseerde en een plek in de publieke sfeer probeerde op te eisen. Hun acties deden een beroep op lokale beleidsmakers en zorgde voor een week waarin de betekenis van de multiculturele samenleving werd onderhandeld op straat.

De tweede casus over een buurtcentrum in de Haagse Vinex wijk Ypenburg beschrijft het proces van *controverse*. Dit langdurige proces van spanningen kent zowel momenten van rust als van escalatie, nieuwe groepen raken betrokken en oude groepen vallen weg. In Den Haag start de controverse rondom de sluiting van een zelf georganiseerd buurtcentrum 'de Cockpit'. De bewoners die oorspronkelijk uit de Schilderswijk kwamen wilden graag hun rol als organisatoren van buurtactiviteiten behouden, maar werden gedwongen als vrijwilligers deel te nemen aan het nieuwe professionele buurtcentrum. De casus vertelt hun jarenlange strijd om zelforganisatie, de interactie met welzijnsprofessionals en pogingen van lokale beleidsmakers om tussen deze groepen te mediëren.

De derde casus is het verhaal over een alledaags plein in het Utrechtse Zuilen. Hier is een *latent* conflict constant voelbaar, maar escaleert niet. Spanningen vormen zich rondom de thema's veiligheid en participatie. Volwassen bewoners, jongeren, welzijnswerkers, beleidsmakers en agenten hebben hele verschillende ideeën over hoe veiligheid en participatie te organiseren in de wijk. Hun interacties op straat geven inzicht in de complexe relatie tussen *top-down* formeel beleid en *bottom-up* informele vormen van

burgerschap.

Doormiddel van participerende observatie kon ik de interacties tussen groepen beschrijven. Door *narrative interviews* kreeg ik inzicht in de subjectieve verhalen, ervaringen en intenties van betrokkenen. Door *mental mapping* kreeg ik inzicht in de tegengestelde routines op straat. Ik zag dat wanneer mensen zich ergens tegen afzetten, als ze boos worden of ontevreden zijn met wat er in hun buurt gebeurd, zij zich organiseren. Tegelijkertijd observeerde ik dat de manier waarop bewoners hun stem lieten horen vaak geïmproviseerd was. De gemeenschap was betrokken, maar de acties waren kleinschalig, informeel en vonden plaats op de straten, pleinen, en in de buurtcentra van de wijk. Ze waren gericht op lokale beleidsmakers of welzijnsorganisaties, maar regelmatig kwamen ze daar niet aan of werden genegeerd. Deze momenten waarop bewoners niet gehoord werden waren vaak de momenten waarop het conflict nog verder escaleerde. De interacties tussen bewoners en publieke professionals vertellen ons veel over wat participatie daadwerkelijk betekend. Ik vroeg mij af of we informele, geïmproviseerde, en kleinschalige acties in de publieke ruimte ook kunnen begrijpen als burgerschap en deze geïmproviseerde politieke handelingen besluitvorming kunnen informeren?

Burgerschap en democratie

Om kleinschalige en informele acties te begrijpen als politieke handelingen, gebruik ik Arendt's definitie van politiek. Arendt ([1958] 1998: viii) beargumenteert dat een mens politiek actief wordt door zijn handelingen in de publieke sfeer. De publieke sfeer is de ruimte tussen individuen, hier worden mensen met elkaar verbonden maar ontstaat ook onderscheidt (ibid: 52). Voor Arendt is 'politiek' het proces waarmee mensen zich manifesteren in de publieke sfeer, wanneer zij door hun woorden, verhalen, of handelingen met elkaar in contact komen (ibid: 198). Dit begrip van politiek stelt de handelingen centraal waarmee mensen trachten mee te praten en te beslissen. Iedereen die handelt en daarmee een stem opeist in de publieke sfeer wordt begrepen als een politieke actor. Voor Arendt is het grootste gevaar voor democratie wanneer politieke handelingen worden genegeerd of groepen worden buitengesloten van deelname aan de publieke sfeer (ibid 9). Deze definitie van politiek handelen geeft aanleiding om te kijken naar het gehele proces van actie en reactie in conflict episodes. Zowel formele als informele acties kunnen worden begrepen als pogingen om deel te nemen aan de

constructie van de publieke sfeer. Ik bekijk die politieke handelingen in periodes van lokale conflicten in de buurt, de wijk, de directe leefomgeving van betrokkenen.

Het bestuderen van democratie op het niveau van de gemeenschap is niets nieuws. Om te begrijpen waar een overheid zijn legitimiteit aan ontleent moet er volgens pragmatist Dewey niet alleen gekeken worden naar instituties, maar naar de manier waarop 'publieken' ontstaan door menselijk handelen in het dagelijks leven ([1927] 2012: 225). Deze invalshoek op democratie waarin de notie van een 'publiek' centraal staat is het startpunt van mijn studie naar lokale conflicten. Democratie kan begrepen worden door te kijken naar de manier waarop handelingen in de publieke sfeer met elkaar in conflict komen, want juist in die *contentious performances* (Tilly 2008; Tilly en Tarrow 2006) worden Dewey's 'publieken' en Arendt's 'publieke sfeer' geconstrueerd.

In een samenleving waar complexiteit, pluraliteit, en diversiteit toenemen wordt het steeds belangrijker voor overheden om naar nieuwe vormen van representatie te zoeken (Ranciere 1995, 2004; Mansbridge 2003; Castiglione and Warren 2006; Norval 2009). Overheden zoeken naar manieren om burgers te betrekken bij besluitvorming en zo hun legitimiteit te vergroten. Hiervoor hebben zij vele strategieën ontwikkeld die zich afspelen in zowel het formele domein – dicht bij de staat, in het stadhuis of het stemhokje – als het informele domein – ver van de staat, in de wijk en op straat. Om te begrijpen hoe 'conflict als democratische strategie' zich verhoudt tot andere bestuurlijke strategieën maak ik onderscheidt tussen verschillende vormen van democratische besluitvormingsprocessen (zie tabel 1).

Ten eerste beschrijf ik een controlerende en regulerende vorm van *governance*. In een representatieve democratie is stemmen de meest conventionele manier om representatie te garanderen. De burger kiest in het stemhokje door wie hij of zij wil worden gerepresenteerd in het parlement. Politici krijgen hiermee het recht om het land te besturen. Het bestuur doormiddel van controle en regulering houdt de beslissingen dicht bij de staat. Democratische theorieën krijgen door beleid handen en voeten in de praktijk. Een controlerende overheid doet dit in het formele domein door reguliere inspraakprocessen te organiseren. Inspraakavonden zijn een voorbeeld van zo'n geïnstitutionaliseerde manier de burgers te laten participeren in besluitvorming. In Nederland werd controle ook uitgevoerd doormiddel van regulerende planningsprocessen

die een buurt of wijk trachtten te verbeteren. Beleid rondom de Vogelaarwijken is daar een mooi voorbeeld van.

Vormen van governance		Controle en regulering	Collaboratief	Conflicterend
Theoretisch				
	Politieke theorie	Representatieve democratie Liberale notie van burgerschap	Deliberatieve democratie (Neo) Republikeinse notie van burgerschap	Radicale democratie (Neo) republikeinse notie van burgerschap
Praktisch				
Formele publieke sfeer	Praktijk georiënteerde theorie	Bureaucratie Participatie ladder	'Negotiation' theorie 'Deliberative planning' theorie	Sociale bewegingen theorie
	Praktijk	Stemmen Inspraak Vogelaarwijken sinds 2007	Deliberatieve ruimtelijke planning Interactief beleid Referenda	Burgers tegen beleid Burgers op 'standby' Kraakbeweging in Amsterdam
Informele publieke sfeer	Praktijk georiënteerde theorie	'Street-level bureaucracy' 'Front-line workers'	Actief burgerschap studies 'The everyday maker'	?????
	Praktijk	Geschiedenis van het welzijnswerk	Burgerschap initiatieven Doe democratie	('Community organizing' in de VS) **Nederlandse praktijk???**

← Constant   Ad hoc →

(Tabel 1)

Ook in het informele domein zijn er verschillende voorbeelden waarop de Nederlandse staat op een controlerende manier bestuurt. De geschiedenis van welzijnspraktijken speelt zich voornamelijk af in de buurt of wijk. Tot vandaag de dag kent Nederland een breed repertoire aan professionals die ten doel hebben burgers van lagere sociaal-economische klasse te helpen groeien op de sociale ladder (van Doorn in Tonkens 2009: 115). Deze *street-level bureaucrats* (Lipsky 1980) brengen de bureaucratie in praktijk op het niveau van de straat. Zij zijn een belangrijke schakel tussen beleid en de burger door hun discretionaire ruimte. In de wijk en op straat hebben zij speelruimte om beslissingen te nemen naar gelang de omstandigheden. Maar de doeleinden

worden bepaald en gereguleerd door lokale overheden en de staat. Hiermee kan de welzijnspraktijk worden gezien als een vehicle waarmee de staat zijn intrede maakt in het informele domein en kan bepalen welke vormen van participatie wel of niet worden gezien als goed burgerschap.

De tweede vorm van *governance* kan worden gekenmerkt door het doel te collaboreren. De deliberatieve democratie (Dryzek 2000; Young 2000; Goodin 2000; Goodin and Dryzek 2006) zoekt representatie in het betrekken van groepen met verschillende belangen en zoekt naar manieren om met alle partijen te onderhandelen. Democratie werd een instrument voor deliberatie, en goed burgerschap werd de burger die meedeed aan het deliberatieve proces. In de Nederlandse geschiedenis van het polderen werd dit snel opgepakt als 'interactief beleid' waardoor er nieuwe kanalen ontstonden voor burgers om mee te praten (Akkerman, Hajer, Grin 2004). Besluitvormingsprocessen kwamen dichter bij de samenleving. Desondanks bleef de staat in de positie om het besluitvormingsproces vorm te geven, het repertoire van collaboratie aan te dragen, en de gewenste partijen uit te nodigen op momenten die zij nodig achtte.

De verschuiving naar een deliberatieve democratie vond ook zijn weerslag in het informele domein van de samenleving. Het begrip van burgerschap veranderde, de burger moest geactiveerd worden (Lenos, Sturm en Vis 2006). Beleid werd gericht op het zelfregulerend vermogen van de burger. De 'doe democratie' waarin burgers activiteiten voor hun eigen leefomgeving organiseren werd een invloedrijke praktijk (Van der Wijdeven and Hendriks 2010; Van der Wijdeven 2012). Beleid om actief burgerschap te stimuleren was vooral gericht op het organiseren van activiteiten voor de gemeenschap, en minder het organiseren van een weerwoord tegen besluitvorming. De notie van een collaboratieve democratie brengt besluitvorming dichter bij de burger. Maar ondanks deze nieuwe kijk op burgerschap blijft de Nederlandse overheid in de positie deliberatie op gang te brengen. Zowel in het formele als informele domein blijft de staat centraal in het bepalen wanneer, hoe, en met wie er wordt gedelibereerd. Het repertoire waarin politiek handelen wordt begrepen blijft dus beperkt tot strategieën die van bovenaf zijn ontwikkeld.

Om te begrijpen hoe conflicten kunnen leiden tot participatie moeten we een derde vorm van *governance* onder de loep nemen, de conflicterende overheid. Mouffe heeft deze

vorm de 'radicale democratie' genoemd (2000). Zij pleit voor een democratie waarin niet procedures centraal staan, maar individuele subjectiviteit. Deze subjectieve normen kunnen conflicteren, maar juist dit conflict waarborgt representativiteit. Burgerschap in de radicale democratie kijkt dus zoals Arendt naar de acties en reacties van mensen in de publiek sfeer. Deze definitie van burgerschap staat los van machtsrelaties, taal en cultuur, en bevat het hele repertoire van handelingen die het mogelijk maken om een actieve agent te zijn in de samenleving (ibid: 95). Hoe, waarom, wanneer, en met wie participatie plaatsvindt wordt bepaald door mensen die zich zorgen maken over het onderwerp.

In het formele domein herkennen we dit begrip van democratisch burgerschap in studies over sociale bewegingen (Castells 1983; Lefebvre [1970] 2003; Harvey 2003). Sociale bewegingen, zoals de krakersbeweging in Amsterdam, laten zien dat tegenspraak in de informele sfeer kan beginnen, maar invloed kan uitoefenen in het formele domein van politiek (Uitermark 2004a; Pruijt 2003). Boze burgers worden steeds vaker gehoord in hun acties tegen overheidsbeleid (Verhoeven 2009) en burgers blijken zelfs een 'standby' functie te kunnen vervullen in hun organisatie tegen plannen van gemeentes (Hajer 2003). Deze mooie voorbeelden van burgerschap in de radicale democratie vinden echter allemaal plaats in het formele domein van politiek. De tegenacties zijn georkestreerd door ervaren demonstranten die in grote getalen of via formele routes invloed proberen uit te oefenen.

De conflicten die ik onderzoek in dit proefschrift vinden plaats in het informele domein (de kolom rechts onderin tabel 1). Op de straten en pleinen van buurten, dichtbij de ervaring van het alledaagse leven. Hier handelen mensen op basis van wat zij belangrijk vinden, maar ontwikkelen hun acties binnen het repertoire van hun eigen leefomgeving. Hoe organiseren zij zich? Hoe reageren beleidsmakers en professionals op de alledaagse verhalen van bewoners? Worden deze verhalen onderdeel van een politieke discussie of blijven ze in het privédomein? Als we de betekenis van lokale conflicten willen begrijpen, moeten we kijken naar de alledaagse interacties tussen bewoners, beleidsmakers, en *street-level* professionals. Deze interacties vinden plaats in de publieke ruimte van onze wijken en buurten, en daarmee vormen zij de publieke sfeer waar de representativiteit van onze democratie wordt geconstrueerd, ervaren, en onderhandeld.

Social-Spatial Narrative

Conflicten ontstaan door tegenstrijdige belangen, de ene groep wil iets anders dan een andere. Als belangen niet worden behartigd organiseren mensen zich. Op hun acties reageert de andere groep met een tegenactie. Om het proces van conflict te begrijpen en te kunnen herkennen hoe conflicten ontstaan, ontwikkelen, escaleren en veranderen moeten we dus kijken naar het proces van actie en reactie tussen partijen. Op basis van mijn empirische materiaal (*grounded theory*) ontwikkelde ik een analytisch kader wat het proces van actie en reactie plaatst op een tijdslijn. Dit model noem ik een 'Social-Spatial Narrative' (SSN). De SSN analyse methode helpt om het empirische materiaal te structureren en de relatie tussen gebeurtenissen op een tijdslijn te analyseren. De veranderende dynamiek tussen partijen wordt geanalyseerd door een narratieve methode.

Verhalen

Een narratieve methode is er op gericht om de subjectieve ervaringen van partijen in een conflict te begrijpen. Verhalen zijn een lens in subjectieve ervaringen (MacIntyre 1990; Bruner 1990, 2004; Czarniawksa 2010; Georgakopoulou 2006). Mensen vertellen verhalen om emoties, ervaringen, en posities uit te drukken. Deze verhalen zijn een middel om te begrijpen hoe mensen het 'zelf' en daarmee ook de 'ander' construeren (Mishler 1995: 199). Mijn analyse methode begint bij narratieven van alle betrokken partijen om zo de overeenkomst en verschillen in de ervaring van het conflictproces vanuit de ogen van alle betrokkenen te begrijpen. Ik analyseer hoe sommige verhalen dominant worden en andere verhalen een marginale positie innemen. Dominante verhalen kunnen de betekenis van gebeurtenissen vastleggen en worden vaak gezien als de 'waarheid' of de 'realiteit'. Daarmee beïnvloeden zij mogelijke oplossingen en handelingen in de toekomst beïnvloeden (Bamberg 2004: 360). Verhalen die minder breed worden gedragen – 'counter narratieven', zijn vaak minder geaccepteerde interpretaties van gebeurtenissen, en worden door vaak door mensen die een marginale positie in de samenleving innemen verteld (Talbot et al 1996; Bamberg 2004). De analyse van dominante en marginale verhalen vormen de context waarin gebeurtenissen in een conflictproces worden geanalyseerd.

Zo ontstonden er tijdens de crisis in Amsterdam Oost drie verhaallijnen die de tragische geschiedenis van de tasjesdief op verschillende manieren interpreteerden. Het eerste verhaal beargumenteerde dat het zijn 'eigen schuld' was, had hij het tasje maar niet

moeten stelen. Rondom de plek van het incident rouwde de Marokkaanse gemeenschap. Zij interpreteerde de gebeurtenis in het licht van discriminatie en hun marginale positie in Nederland. Was de dood een legitieme reactie op het roven van een tasje? Al snel kwamen de verhalen, zowel op straat als in de media, lijnrecht tegenover elkaar te staan. Beleidsmakers gebruikten een derde verhaal, het gebeurde was een tragedie maar wel een die is ontstaan door 'actie-reactie'. Door dit verhaal bevestigde beleidsmakers de focus op de tasjesroof. Hierin was weinig ruimte om erkenning te geven aan een ervaring van discriminatie, het was immers actie-reactie. Personen die een machtspositie innamen bevestigden de focus op de tasjesroof, het actie-reactie verhaal werd dominant en legde de betekenis van het incident vast. De daaropvolgende week laat zien hoe de Marokkaanse gemeenschap tracht hun marginale verhaal een plek te geven in de publieke sfeer.

Kritieke momenten

Dus verhalen vormen de basis om te begrijpen hoe verschillende partijen een conflictproces ervaren. Maar om te begrijpen hoe interacties tussen partijen betekenis geven aan een lokaal conflict moet er verder worden gekeken dan de verhalen die mensen vertellen. Mensen doen immers vaak iets anders dan wat zij zeggen. Om dit proces van actie en reactie te begrijpen analyseer ik kritieke momenten (Wheeler en Green 2004; Cobb 2006; Leary 2004). Momenten waarop er iets gebeurd wat verandering teweeg brengt. Handelingen die de machtsrelatie tussen dominante en marginale verhalen verstoren. Handelingen waarmee een groep hun plek opeist in de publieke sfeer. Zo werd in Amsterdam twee dagen na het incident de geïmproviseerde gedenkplek per ongeluk opgeruimd door de reinigingsdienst. Lokale bestuurders vertelden dat dit niet de bedoeling was, voor hen was dit moment niet kritiek. Voor de Marokkaanse gemeenschap was dit moment echter heel kritiek, het verdiepte het gevoel van discriminatie en gaf de Marokkaanse gemeenschap een aanleiding om een protestactie te organiseren. Doormiddel van kritieke momenten kunnen we dus analyseren hoe conflictprocessen veranderen en escaleren. Maar niet ieder moment is kritiek voor alle partijen. Juist dit gebrek aan kennis over kritieke momenten voor de 'ander' kan leiden tot grotere escalatie.

Om die escalatie of verandering tijdens kritieke momenten te duiden kijk ik naar handelingen van partijen. Ik gebruik een 'performatieve benadering' (Burke1969; Lynch 1991; Benford & Hunt 1992) waarin ik zowel het sociale aspect als het ruimtelijke aspect

van dit handelen analyseer. Ik analyseer wat mensen 'doen door iets te zeggen' (Austin 1962) maar ook 'wat zij zeggen door iets te doen'. In Den Haag werd 'doen door iets te zeggen' heel erg duidelijk in de interactie tussen welzijnswerkers en de Cockpitgroep. De welzijnswerkers waren aangewezen het buurtcentrum te professionaliseren en spraken in deze rol over 'agogen' en 'pedagogische activiteiten'. Hierin werd er geen woord gerept over de geschiedenis van de Cockpit, die geschiedenis was niet kritiek voor de welzijnswerkers die naar de toekomst keken. Daartegenover was het verlies van de club voor de bewoners wel kritiek. Zij gebruikten informele taal en kleine verhalen om de Cockpit te herinneren. De wisselwerking tussen formele taal over de toekomst en informele taal over het verleden versterkte de gespannen relatie tussen de Cockpitgroep en de professionals. De formele taal werd door de Cockpitgroep opgevat als een bevestiging dat bewoners niet langer welkom waren activiteiten te organiseren. De kleine en individuele verhalen bevestigden aan de professionals dat Cockpit niet voor de hele buurt was maar alleen voor een kleine gemeenschap. Taal bepaald dus hoe interacties tussen bewoners en professional verlopen. Wat voor de een kritiek is, kan voor de ander onbelangrijk zijn.

Als we willen begrijpen hoe bijvoorbeeld een Cockpitgroep een kritiek moment kan veroorzaken, is het echter tegenstrijdig alleen naar taal te kijken. Het repertoire van burgers is veel breder dan taal alleen, en juist groepen die de taal minder machtig zijn zullen naar andere middelen grijpen. Mijn performatieve benadering kijkt dus ook naar ruimtelijke acties. Het weghalen van de gedenkplek in Amsterdam was een ruimtelijke actie van de lokale overheid wat een kritiek moment veroorzaakte en een tegenreactie opriep. In Den Haag improviseerde de Cockpitgroep een ruimtelijke actie toen bewoners niet langer het professionele centrum op eigen houtje mochten betreden. Zij improviseerden een bezettingsactie. Hun *script* (Hajer 2009: 66) was informeel, de groep kwam naar het centrum met alledaagse *artefacts* zoals matrassen en slaapzakken. In afwachting op een reactie van de welzijnsorganisatie of de lokale overheid confisqueerde zij het centrum gedurende een aantal dagen. Anderen uit de buurt brachten hen te eten. Deze *staging* van steun versterkte het verhaal van de groep dat hun rol publieke waarde had. De *setting* had een symbolische betekenis, door de bezetting hadden zij het centrum tijdelijk toegeëigend. De plek, het gemeenschapshuis, wat strategisch was ontwikkeld door beleidsmakers en professionals veranderde tijdelijk van betekenis. Door een geïmproviseerde en tactische zet (De Certeau 1988) trachtte de

Cockpitgroep zich te herpositioneren en uit te dragen dat ook zij eigenaar van deze publieke plek zijn.

Dus kritieke momenten zijn een lens om politiek handelen in conflictprocessen te begrijpen. Maar hoe kunnen we dan latente conflicten analyseren die niet escaleren en dus geen kritieke momenten kennen? In Utrecht waren de verhalen van bewoners, professionals, en beleidsmakers erg ver van elkaar verwijderd. Desondanks voelde iedereen een spanning op straat. In de publieke ruimte werd die spanning tastbaar. Ik nam een ruimtelijke invalshoek door mensen *mental maps* te laten tekenen van hun buurt. In deze kaarten tekenden zij hun routines in favoriete en minst favoriete plekken, zij vertelden verhalen bij deze locaties. De kaarten, verhalen, en participerende observaties lieten zien hoe bewoners door kleine alledaagse handelingen tactisch met veiligheid en participatie omgingen – door bepaalde routes te lopen, buren te kennen, samen dingen te organiseren. Aan de andere kant zag ik dat beleidsmakers en professionals formele strategieën ontwikkelden om met deze thema's om te gaan – camera's, samenscholingsverbod, jongerenwerk. Op verschillende momenten observeerde ik hoe mensen op straat probeerden te onderhandelen over de toekomst van hun wijk.

In deze interacties kwam het informele verhaal van bewoners in contact met het formele verhaal van professionals. Een van die interacties vertelt het verhaal van een groepje dames die hun hondje uitlaten langs een bepaalde route op een bepaald tijdstip. Door samen deze route te lopen ontwikkelden zij een tactiek om zich veilig te voelen en hangjongeren ook een plek te geven in de wijk. Zij kwamen er tot hun schrik achter dat er een 'hangspot' werd geplaats op de donkerste plek op route. Dit zou hun routine doorbreken. Tijdens een ontmoeting op straat delen zij hun persoonlijke ervaringen met een beleidsmaker. De beleidsmaker had de intentie om te luisteren, maar haar *script* bracht haar ertoe te zoeken naar verhalen met een publieke waarde. De dames krijgen als reactie dat het beter is voor de hele buurt als de jongeren hier hangen en niet in de portieken. Vanuit het perspectief van de beleidsmaker een legitieme reactie, maar het verhaal van de bewoners vindt geen erkenning en wordt direct in het privé domein geschoven. De dramaturgische beschrijving van deze en andere interacties laten zien hoe moeilijk het is om informele en kleine verhalen onderdeel te maken van beleidsstrategieën. Onbedoeld werden de kleine informele verhalen niet gehoord. De straatinteracties en kaarten laten zien hoe latente spanningen ontstaan in de

mismatch tussen informele tactieken van bewoners en formele strategieën van publieke professionals.

'Of' conflict een kans is voor democratie?

Dus door op een sociale en ruimtelijke manier naar kritieke momenten te kijken, kan er worden geanalyseerd hoe een conflictproces zich ontwikkeld, hoe partijen hun positie innemen, invloed proberen uit te oefenen, iets proberen te veranderen, maar ook hoe anderen daarop reageren, en wat het effect of juist gebrek aan effect is van deze onderhandelingen. Uit onderhandelingstheorie hebben we geleerd dat kritieke momenten een verandering in een sociaal proces teweeg kunnen brengen (Wheeler en Green 2004; Cobb 2006; Leary 2004). In Amsterdam volgen kritieke momenten elkaar snel op en zien we hoe zij directe gevolgen hebben. De actie van de opruimdienst in Amsterdam laat goed zien hoe een kritiek moment leidt tot tegenreactie. De improvisatie om op te roepen tot een protestmars had direct effect want beleidsmakers waren terecht bang voor escalatie. Een dag later zaten mensen van de Marokkaanse gemeenschap op het stadsdeelkantoor om over de protestplannen te discussiëren. In Den Haag zien we echter iets heel anders. Daar bleef de reactie van hogerhand uit. Na een aantal dagen op hun matrasjes te wachten moest de groep het opgeven. Negeren leek een goede oplossing, maar het effect was een groeiend gevoel van miskenning. Het volgende kritieke moment, een aantal weken later, laat zien hoe de controverse escaleert in geweld.

Het effect van kritieke momenten is dus grotendeels afhankelijk van de interactie tussen partijen, maar de reactie van partijen die machtsposities innemen is cruciaal. Het antwoord op de vraag 'of er momenten van kans zijn in conflict' is dus tweeledig. Er zijn zeker kansen, maar die zijn afhankelijk van de interactie tussen partijen en de capaciteit van mensen in machtsposities om de informele en tactische handelingen van anderen te zien als politieke handelingen waarmee zij hun plek in de publieke sfeer opeisen.

'Wanneer' conflict een kans is voor democratie?

De vraag 'wanneer er een kans is in een conflictproces' wordt tastbaar door de analyse van kritieke momenten. Kritieke momenten kunnen worden gezien als een limineel moment waarin onzekerheid de boventoon voert (Turner 1992 [1987]:103). Tijdens dit moment is er een kans om posities, relaties, betekenis, en identiteit te heroverwegen.

In latente conflicten is deze liminele ruimte zeer gering, maar als verhaallijnen met elkaar in contact komen op straat ontstaat er de mogelijkheid om over die verhalen te onderhandelen. In Den Haag werd er geen gebruik gemaakt van de liminele ruimte die de Cockpitgroep had gecreëerd door het pand te bezetten. En in Amsterdam zorgde de oproep tot protest wel degelijk voor een onderhandeling. Tijdens deze bijeenkomst was er een kans om de verhaallijn van de Marokkaanse gemeenschap te horen en te begrijpen waarom zij wilde protesteren.

De casuïstiek laat echter zien dat het heel erg moeilijk is om gebruik te maken van die liminele capaciteit. De bestuurders zagen een gegrond risico voor escalatie. In het gesprek stelde een bestuurder dat het 'actie-reactie' was en dat het niet legitiem zou zijn om hiervoor te protesteren. Hiermee werd de ruimte om het verhaal van discriminatie te delen gesloten, het vaststaande verhaal van actie-reactie bepaalde wat wel of niet als een legitiem actierepertoire werd gezien. De conclusie van de bijeenkomst was dat de gemeenschap een korte rouwtocht mocht houden. Een rouwtocht, want dat bleef in de privésfeer en had geen connotatie van zinloos geweld. Voor bestuurders was dit een gulde middenweg. Zij dienen het publieke belang, en worden daardoor gedwongen niet alleen het belang van een bepaalde groep bovenaan te plaatsen. Maar voor de gemeenschap was dit wederom een bevestiging dat zij niet het recht hebben op een publieke vorm van rouwen, ironisch genoeg versterkte dit kritieke moment de ervaring en het narratief van discriminatie.

Als bestuurders conflicten willen aangrijpen als kansen om andere partijen te betrekken bij besluitvorming is het dus cruciaal om kennis te nemen van kritieke momenten. Tijdens deze momenten word zichtbaar wat mensen willen, waarom, en op welke manier. Doordat verhaallijnen met elkaar in contact komen tijdens interacties worden ze tastbaar – denk aan de straatinteracties in Utrecht, de bezetting in Den Haag, de onderhandeling over een protestmars in Amsterdam. Als we stellen dat democratie afhankelijk is van de mogelijkheid verschillende verhalen te delen in de publieke sfeer, is democratie dus afhankelijk van de capaciteit van bestuurders en *street-level* professionals om deze verhalen te horen, te erkennen, en een plek te geven. Mijn studie biedt drie inzichten om deze capaciteit verder te ontwikkelen.

'Hoe en waar' conflict een kans is voor democratie?

De sociale en ruimtelijke analyse van kritieke momenten geeft inzicht in de betekenis

van handelingen waarmee partijen invloed proberen uit te oefenen en de status quo te doorbreken. Uit deze analyse is gebleken dat straatinteracties tussen bewoners, professionals, beleidsmakers en bestuurders een cruciale rol innemen in de ervaring van burgerschap. Tijdens deze alledaagse interacties ervaren mensen dat ze wel of niet 'gehoord worden'. De conflictcasussen laten het verschil zien tussen kleine informele verhalen van bewoners en grote formele verhalen van beleidsmakers en professionals. In dezelfde lijn laten de kritieke momenten zien dat bewoners vaak geïmproviseerde en tactische handelingen verrichten om hun verhaal in de publieke sfeer te delen. Deze tactische handelingen in het informele domein van de straat werden zelden herkend als politieke handelingen. Het repertoire waarin burgerschap wordt begrepen leek te smal om geïmproviseerde acties op straat te herkennen als politiek. Hier liepen bestuurders en professionals de kans mis deze groepen te betrekken in besluitvorming.

Met het contrast tussen formele en informele verhalen en handelingen is op zichzelf niets mis. Het hoort ook bij de rolverdeling tussen burger en bestuur. Maar als de twee met elkaar in contact komen wordt de ene vaak dominante en de ander onbelangrijk. Het blijkt lastig om de kleine verhalen en informele handelingen te herkennen als behorend in het publieke domein. De reacties van beleidsmakers duwde kleine verhalen en geïmproviseerde handelingen terug in de privésfeer terwijl de uitvoerders wel degelijk een publieke betekenis wilde uitdragen – 'wij horen ook in Nederlands', 'wij willen ook meedoen aan het organiseren voor de buurt', 'kijk eens naar onze eigen manier om met hangjongeren om te gaan'. Met andere woorden, in het private domein worden publieke verhalen tastbaar.

Het hoe en waar van conflict als kans voor democratie zit hem dus grotendeels in het herkennen van politiek handelen. Door vanuit dit perspectief naar kritieke momenten te kijken zien we ineens veel meer achter de rommelige wereld van alledag. Maar wat dan? Hoe kunnen deze informele verhalen en handelingen ons beleid informeren? Hoe maken we ze onderdeel van besluitvorming? Mijn antwoord zit hem in iets wat ogenschijnlijk heel simpel lijkt: erkenning.

Erkenning: suggesties voor de praktijk
Erkenning is veel moeilijker dan het lijkt. Waar geef je eigenlijk precies erkenning aan? Hoe doe je dat? Wanneer en waar? Het SSN model zou beleidsmakers kunnen

helpen om in het midden van alle actie en tumult even stil te staan en te reflecteren op wat er nu precies is gebeurd. 'Leren in actie' zou je dit kunnen noemen (Schön 1983), door te reflecteren op kritieke momenten en tijdens kritieke momenten bewust op zoek te gaan naar de verhalen van anderen. De verhalen van anderen geven aan waar zij erkenning in behoeven. De casuïstiek laat zien dat miskenning optreedt als er erkenning wordt gegeven aan zaken die minder belangrijk zijn voor de ander – zoals bijvoorbeeld wel privé mogen rouwen op straat maar zonder publieke betekenis. Door verhalen te begrijpen en politieke handelingen te herkennen kunnen we erkenning geven aan wat belangrijk is voor de ander.

Daarnaast is het moment waarop erkenning wordt gegeven veel betekenend voor de ervaring 'erbij te horen'. De welzijnsinstelling nam een aantal weken na de bezetting de beslissing om ander personeel in het buurtcentrum te plaatsen. Een weloverwogen beslissing met goede intenties. Voor de Cockpitgroep was dit te laat, hun actie werd niet serieus genomen op het voor hen kritieke moment. Door inzicht te krijgen in welke momenten kritiek zijn voor anderen, ook als ze niet kritiek zijn voor onszelf, kunnen we erkenning geven op het moment dat het ertoe doet. Dan kunnen we ook gebruik maken van de liminele kansen die dit soort momenten met zich meebrengen.

Ook de *performance* van erkenning is belangrijk, de taal, manier waarop, en plek bepalen hoe erkenning overkomt. De routines waarmee mensen betekenis geven aan plekken – veiliger of onveiliger, privé of publiek – geven bepaalde plekken een symbolische betekenis. Deze betekenis vereist erkenning, maar kan alleen worden begrepen als beleidsmakers deze plekken en de routines van mensen begrijpen. Erkenning voor de Cockpitgroep en de dames met hun hondje zou minder symbolische waarde hebben als het werd gegeven in een vergadering op het stadhuis. Deze verhalen suggereren dat wanneer beleidsmakers hun kantoren verlaten, de buurt intrekken, daar in een kwetsbare positie hun verhaal doen, en erkenning geven aan alledaagse vormen van burgerschap, deze erkenning grote betekenis kan hebben en wellicht het proces van spanningen en conflicten ten goede kan veranderen. Bewoners kunnen dan het belang van de verhalen en strategieën van beleidsmakers en professionals begrijpen in hun dagelijkse omgeving. De 'interafhankelijkheid' tussen *top-down* en *bottom-up* wordt gebalanceerd. Daarvoor is durf nodig. De verhalen in dit proefschrift laten zien dat die durf aan beide kanten aanwezig is, maar in de praktijk moeilijk te verwezenlijken. Door

te leren in actie en kritieke momenten te herkennen, vaker af te dalen naar de wereld van alledag, informele praktijken te herkennen als politiek, kunnen alle partijen die zich organiseren in momenten van conflict elkaar beter begrijpen. Doormiddel van deze kennis kunnen zij elkaar de erkenning geven die nodig is en zouden lokale conflicten kunnen worden gebruikt als een kans zijn om de publieke sfeer en stedelijke democratie te versterken.