

# **Stories of Pasts and Futures in Planning**

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*To my sweet Naná*



## **a b s t r a c t**

Societies are constantly changing, facing new challenges and possibilities generated by innovative technologies, sociospatial re-structuring, mobilities, migration and virtual networks. This has been associated with new forms of regional competitiveness, institutional networks and constellations of power in the global economy. For example, several European programmes and policy documents have been interpreted into national and local policy documents in the different EU member states. At the same time, global migration and integration have challenged nation states to remain open and interact in other markets whilst retaining control over their own identities. Consequently, struggles over values, identities, legitimacies and powers are growing in several societies, and nation states face the dilemma of whether to enhance the democratic representations of their diverse social groups and their plural pasts or to sustain the highly selective political project of nation and national identity (Germundsson, 2005).

While challenges such as for example the focus on economic performance at the expense of social inclusion and the unequal distribution of resources are well known, they are often overlooked. Many scholars have suggested that planning practices have been promoting stories of increasing competitiveness, which has polarised rather than balanced the development, supporting growth in the most competitive regions (Racco, 2007). Others have blamed planning practices for silencing the voices of minorities (Sandercock, 1998) and/or enforcing stories that reinforce the interests of elites (Swyngedouw, 2007). Others have spelt out the apathy or post political condition in politics mirrored in planning practices (Allmendinger & Haughton, 2012). This apathy in politics derives from consensual ideas that are rooted in the homogenisation of societal values.

This research approaches these challenges by exploring the role that stories about pasts, presents and futures play in planning. It sees stories as interlinked spaces of struggle over meanings, legitimacies and powers through which “our” valuable pasts and “our” desirable futures become re-constructed, framed and projected. It argues that powerful stories might consciously or unconsciously become institutionalised in policy discourses and documents, foregrounding our spatial realities and affecting our living spaces. These arguments and assumptions are investigated in relation to three cases. First, the Regional-Pasts case concerns the uses of stories about the pasts in the regional planning of the Mälardalen Region, Sweden, as a means to sustain the binary between ‘progress and tradition’, disregarding intrinsic conflicts between the objectives of regional authorities of ‘developing’ against those of the heritage authorities of ‘preserving’. Second, the SeGI-Futures case uses scenarios to explore the different futures of Services of General Interests in Europe 2030 and the associated tensions between the political legacies of the EU member states and the EU political frame for unification. Third, the ICT-Futures case discloses struggles involved in combining ICT efficiency while sustaining natural resources, especially because efficiency does not

necessarily mean reduction, but could instead lead to the increased depletion of natural resources.

The interlinked stories about the pasts, presents and futures surrounding these cases are investigated in this research with the aim of initiating critical discussions on how stories about pasts and futures can inform, but also be sustained by, planning processes. While studies of these cases are presented in separate papers, these studies are brought together in an introductory essay and reconstructed in response to these research questions: How do regional futures become informed by the pasts? (Papers one & two); How do particular stories about the pasts become selected, framed and projected as envisioned futures? (Papers one, two & three); What messages are conveyed to the pasts and the presents through envisioned futures? (Papers four & five); and How can stories of the past be referred and re-employed in planning to build more inclusive futures? (Papers three, four & five). To engage with the complexity and multidisciplinary of these questions, they have been investigated through dialogues between three main fields of inquiry: heritage studies, futures studies and planning. The discussions have challenged the conventional divides between pasts, presents and futures, emphasised their plural nature and uncovered how the discursive power of stories play a significant role when interpreting the past and envision the futures in planning practices. This research therefore advocates the need for new ways of engagement with pasts, presents and futures in order to plan for more inclusive futures.

*Keywords: Stories, pasts, futures, planning, power*

# s a m m a n f a t t n i n g

Samhällen är under konstant förändring. De möter nya utmaningar och förändringar som skapas av nya innovativa teknologier, socio-spatial omstrukturering, rörlighet och virtuella nätverk. Detta har förknippats med nya former av regional konkurrenskraft, institutionella nätverk och maktfaktorer i den globala ekonomin. Till exempel så har flera europeiska program och policydokument överförts till nationella och lokala policydokument i EUs olika medlemsländer. Samtidigt har global migration och integration utmanat nationalstaterna att fortsatt vara öppna och interagera på andra marknader. Men att samtidigt ha kontroll över de egna identiteterna. Följaktligen ökar kampen om värderingar, identiteter, legitimitet och makt i flera samhällen och nationalstaterna är i dilemmat hur vida de skall öka den demokratiska representationen för deras olika sociala grupper med deras vitt skilda förflutna. Eller om de skall upprätthålla de mycket selektiva politiska projekten nationen och nationell identitet (Germundsson, 2005)

Dessa utmaningar är välkända men ofta förbisedda: som fokus på ekonomiska faktorer till priset av social integration, ojämn fördelning av resurser, bara för att nämna några få exempel. Många forskare har föreslagit att planeringsmetoder främst har främjat berättelser om ökad konkurrenskraft, som har polariserat i stället för att balansera utvecklingen, som ökar tillväxten i de mest konkurrenskraftiga regionerna (Racco, 2007). Andra har anklagat planeringspraktiker för att tysta ned minoriteters röster (Sandercock, 1998) och/eller genomdriva berättelser som stärker eliternas intressen (Swyngedouw, 2007) Andra har pekat ut apati post-politiska tillståndet som inom politiken återspeglas i planeringspraktiken (Allmendinger & Haughton, 2012). Denna apati inom politiken härrör från gemensamma idéer som är rotade i homogeniseringen av samhällets värderingar.

Denna studie närmar sig dessa utmaningar genom att utforska den roll berättelser om dåtider, nutider och framtider spelar i planering. Den ser berättelser som sammanlänkade delar av kampen om betydelse, legitimitet och makt, genom vilka "våra" värdefulla dåtider och "våra" önskade framtider blir rekonstruerade, inramade och projicerade. Den hävdar att kraftfulla berättelser medvetet eller omedvetet kan bli institutionaliserade i policydiskurser och dokument och ställa våra rumsliga förhållanden i förgrunden och påverkar våra livsmiljöer. Dessa argument och antaganden undersöks i förhållande till tre fall. Första fallet "Regional-Pasts" (Regionala-dåtider) använder berättelser om det förflutna i den regionala planeringen av Mälardalen, Sverige, som ett sätt att upprätthålla det binära mellan framsteg och tradition, med avseende på inre konflikter mellan målen för regionala utvecklingsmyndigheter och kulturbevarande myndigheter. Det andra fallet "SeGI-Futures" (SeGI-framtider) använder scenarier för att utforska de olika framtider för tjänster i allmänhetens intresse i Europa 2030 och tillhörande spänningar mellan de politiska arven från medlemsstaterna och EU:s politiska ramverk för enande. Det tredje fallet "ICT-Futures" (IKT-framtider) beskriver kampen för att kombinera IKT effektivitet och samtidigt bevara naturresurser,

särskilt eftersom effektivitet inte nödvändigtvis betyder minskande av utan att det tvärtom kan generera ökande användning av naturresurser.

De sammanlänkade berättelserna om dåtiderna, nutiderna och framtiderna kring dessa fall undersöks i denna studie i syfte att öppna kritiska diskussioner om hur berättelser om dåtider och framtider kan informera, men även upprätthållas av planeringsprocesser. Även studier av dessa fall presenteras i separata artiklar, dessa studier samlas i en inledande essä om forskningen och rekonstrueras i svar på dessa frågeställningar: Hur regionala framtider blir informerade av dåtiderna? (artiklar ett och två); Hur särskilda berättelser om dåtiderna blir utvalda, inramade och projicerade som framtidsvisioner (artiklar ett, två och tre); Vilka meddelanden förmedlas till dåtider och nutider genom framtidsvisioner? (artiklar fyra och fem); och Hur kan berättelser från det förflutna refereras till och återanvändas i planeringen för att bygga mer inkluderande framtider? (artiklar tre, fyra och fem). För att visa på dessa frågors komplexitet och tvärvetenskapliga omfattning har de undersökts genom dialoger mellan tre huvudsakliga frågeställningar: studier av kulturellt arv, framtidsstudier och planering. Diskussionerna har utmanat de konventionella klyftorna mellan dåtider, nutider och framtider och betonar sin plurala karaktär och avslöjar hur den diskursiva makten i berättelser spelar en viktig roll i tolkandet av det förflutna och skapandet av framtider för planeringspraktiker. Denna studie förespråkar nya sätt att arbeta med dåtider, nutider och framtider i syfte att planera för mer inkluderande framtider.

*Nyckelord: Berättelser, Förflutna, Framtider, Planering, Makt*



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# illustrations

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## papers

- Paper 1     Borges, L. A. and Adolphson, M. (2016): The Role of Official Heritage in Regional Spaces. *Urban Research and Practice* doi:10.1080/17535069.2015.1133696
- Paper 2     Borges, L. A. (forthcoming): Using the Past to Construct Territorial Identities in Regional Planning: The Case of Mälardalen, Sweden. Paper submitted to *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* (under review)
- Paper 3     Borges, L. A.; Hummer, A. and Smith, C. (2015): Europe's Possible SGI Futures: Territorial Settings and Potential Policy Paths. Chapter 5 in Fassmann H.; Rauhut, D.; da Costa E. M., E.; Humer, A. (eds.) "Services of General of Interest and Territorial Cohesion– European Perspectives and National Insights". V&R Vienna: Vienna University Press.
- Paper 4     Gunnarsson-Östling, U., Pargman, D., Höjer, M., Borges, L. A. (forthcoming): Pluralising the Future Information Society. Paper submitted to *Technological Forecasting and Social Change*. (under review)
- Paper 5     Borges, L. A. (2015): Education and Health in ICT-futures: Scenarios and Sustainability Impacts of ICT-societies. *Advances in Computer Science Research*. Ict4s-env-15. doi: 10.2991/ict4s-env-15.2015.25

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## **abbreviations**

AHD	Authorized Heritage Discourses
CFS	Critical Futures Studies
CHS	Critical Heritage Studies
DA	Discourse Analysis
ESDP	European Spatial Development Planning
ESPON	European Observation Network for Territorial Development and Cohesion
EU	European Union
ICT	Information Communication Technologies
MS	Member States
OECD	Organisation for Economic and Co-operation and Development
SeGI	Project 'Indicators and Perspectives for Services of General Interest in Territorial Cohesion and Development'
SIGI	Services of General Interests
UN	United Nations
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organizations
VINNOVA	The Swedish Innovation Agency

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Stockholm, May 2016  
Luciane Aguiar Borges

## **Opening words**

*My hometown Pelotas, where I grew up and studied architecture, is well known for its eclectic architecture with buildings that merge neoclassical art nouveau styles. The export of the dried meats (charque) produced there to many other parts of Brazil financed luxurious architecture for the small town in the far south of Brazil. These buildings played an important role in shaping the social identity of a society that emerged from the combination of the rusticity and toughness of the countryside lifestyle with the refinement and elegance brought by the sons of wealthy aristocrats, who had been sent to study in France, and who also brought with them the European trends in architecture, fashion and behaviour. Many people acknowledge the physical remnants of this period as a source of cultural identity. At the end of 1980s, incoherence between conservation laws and urban development guidelines caused the urban landscape to change dramatically. Downtown Pelotas, where most of the buildings of historical interest are located, was designated by the local development plan as the most valuable land with the highest potentiality for construction. Within a few months many buildings were demolished or – at best – architectonic features were removed from façades so that properties would not be listed and conserved as part of the town's official heritage: for private owners, heritage conservation implied loss of economic value of their properties. The quick process of erasing the past from the urban landscape uncovered the controversial nature of heritage: why would an architecture that was enabled by economic growth and prosperity, years later be destroyed for the same?*

*A proper look at this question was put on hold for few years. My research interests turned to understanding the dynamic of cities. I was puzzled by the thought that we live in the city of yesterday and plan the city of tomorrow, but we actually do not know much about the city of today. In 1997, I wrote a Master's thesis in which I explored some of the relations between urban morphology, consumption and mobility. Using modelling, I analysed how the spatial configuration of the city (streets, buildings, activities) could explain and generate travel between different parts of the city. My thesis was part of a project carried out by The Federal University of Rio Grande do Sul in cooperation with a local municipality – Bento Gonçalves – located in southern Brazil. This project aimed at finding alternative ways to manage urban spaces. Instead of using 'zoning' as a means to establish laws for urban development, we attempted to create instruments that could assess/measure urban performance. Within this logic, new buildings and activities were allowed anywhere on the condition that they would not bring undesirable impacts on the existing urban environment. Compared with the laws that guided urban development at that time, this was an innovative approach providing flexibility to planning and decision-making.*

*In 2007, motivated by a better understanding about the future spatial configuration of cities and regions, I wrote another Master's thesis, in which I used 'what-if' scenarios to explore possible futures of the spatial development of the Northern*

*part of Stockholm Region. In 2010, when I began my PhD studies, I was initially motivated by the contemporary debate about the changing roles of the regions in the global economy – specifically about how new geographies and political spaces are affecting the power of nation states and challenging institutions and organisations, but also how these multiple governance levels actually affect the everyday life of people. My interests in regional planning expanded to include heritage in the project 'Regionala Staden: reproduktion and transformation av lokala platser', in which I investigated how new regional mobilities have changed the meanings and values of cultural heritage in Mariefred. With this work, I realised the relevance of opening up a dialogue between heritage issues and regional planning, especially due to the permanent nature of heritage with the dynamics development of regional spaces.*

*Parallel to my work with heritage issues, I also have been involved in projects that deal with futures studies. My participation in creating explorative scenarios to evaluate possibilities of and obstacles for the provision of services in Europe in 2030, considering diverse territorial characteristics (2011-2013) and the creative and inspiring task of making ICT futures for Sweden in 2060 within the project Scenarios and Impacts (2013-2015) was sufficient to raise my interests about the interrelations between pasts and futures in planning. Looking back on my journey, it feels like I have finally touched upon many planning issues that I have been contemplating for a long time.*

*15<sup>th</sup> November 2010, Stockholm (Monday, 5:10 pm)*

*'Mats is going "home" after a long day at work. Mats travels daily on the regional train between Stockholm – where he works – and Mariefred – where he lives – using the time as an opportunity to read his students' papers and plan for the following day at work. He has been commuting between the two cities for almost 7 years. Mats still remembers when he and his wife visited Mariefred for the first time. Both fell in love with Mariefred and Gripsholm Castle, inspired by the stories told by the tour guide on the history of the king and how the castle today plays an important role in the Swedish history and identity'.*





# 1 introduction

## 1.1 Research problem and background

Society is constantly changing and new challenges are increasingly emerging. New accessibilities, mobilities and virtual networks are influencing the way people relate to their physical environments, leading to the emergence of new values. Important sectors of society have been quickly transformed with the fast pace of development and the implementation of technological innovations that change the way people perform activities. The reconfiguration of territories in the global economy gave rise to new institutional networks and constellations of power. For example, the European Programmes have been integrated into the national policies of the EU member states and policies made at the transnational level reverberate across regional and local levels, affecting peoples' everyday lives. At the same time, global migration and integration have challenged nation states to remain open and interact in other markets, but on the other hand encourage them to hold on firmly to their own identities.

In an open, interconnected, hypermobile and multicultural society, struggles over values, identities, legitimacies and powers are likely to become amplified. Nation states are faced with the dilemma of whether to enhance the democratic representation of their diverse social groups and their plural pasts or to sustain the highly selective political project of nation and national identity (Germundsson, 2005). Despite their apparent novelty, these challenges refer to well-known problems that have been overlooked for a long time, such as focus on economic performance at the expense of social inclusion and the unequal distribution of resources, to name just a few examples. Many scholars have suggested that planning practices have been promoting stories of increasing competitiveness, which has polarised development rather than balancing it, supporting growth in the most competitive regions (Raco, 2007). Others have blamed planning practices for silencing the voices of minorities (Sandercock, 1998) and/or enforcing stories that reinforce the interests of elites (Swyngedouw, 2007). Others have spelled out the

apathy or post-political condition in politics that is mirrored in planning practices (Allmendinger & Haughton, 2012). This apathy in politics is derived from consensual ideas rooted in the homogenisation of societal values and has been influenced by the uncontested domination of liberalism and predominance of western values (Mouffe, 2005).

These old challenges are presently escalating, making it a matter of urgency to look for answers to a few questions: how to plan for a society that is becoming increasingly more mobile, multicultural and pluralistic? How can planning tell more inclusive stories that sustain development towards more equal and tolerant societies?

Despite the lack of straightforward answers to these questions, in this research I argue that planning can help to transform society in this respect. I see planning as an arena in which multiple stories struggle to become heard and get attention, or to silence others. When some of these stories become chosen or self-projected; i.e. when they become institutionalised in planning practices, they become powerful, because they favour and give legitimacy to the reproduction of particular ideas rather than others. In this sense, planning is about power and authority formation, and as such it can be seen as a means for social transformation.

The selection of particular ideas instead of others has been undermined by historical processes and by the power/knowledge of dominant discourses that settle normality and abnormality of behaviours, norms and values (Foucault, 1980). This historical knowledge has been projected into our future through planning practices.

Based on this premise, I argue that despite their apparent disparity, pasts and futures have a lot in common, and are often overlooked in planning. The work developed within the field of Critical Heritage Studies (CHS), specifically with the contributions of Laurajane Smith, David C. Harvey, Rodney Harrison, and Cornelius Holtorf to name just a few; and Critical Futures Studies (CFS) with the contributions of Sohail Inayatullah, Ziauddin Sardar, Ashis Nandy and Eleonora Masini, has provided evidence that both fields have parallel debates and address similar concerns in their research.

Critical Heritage Studies offers rich reviews of the inevitable dissonant heritage (Tunbridge & Ashworth, 1996) and how that is related to issues of identities, representation, justice, conflict and war. Recurrent issues on these debates focus on whose heritage to preserve (Tunbridge, 1984), as well as the dual and often conflicting roles of heritage such as: official/non-official, global/local, public/private, and tangible/intangible. The assimilative process of heritage as a concept and discourse began in the nineteenth century, and is seen by Smith (2006) as an Authorized Heritage Discourse (AHD). This discourse defines what heritage is and which narratives and relics from the past should be preserved, and in doing so, excludes particular social groups from actively using heritage (Smith, 2006).

Similarly, Critical Future Studies CFS discuss at length the work of Sardar (1993), among others, to go beyond the predominance of Western values in the

configuration of futures studies as a discipline. Several scholars have investigated the ways in which particular community groups become excluded from our futures based on the critical questions of gender, culture, ethnicity, religion, class, etc. Futures studies have thus contributed to the homogenisation of values, helping to build consensus about what is desirable for all. Inayatullah (1990) pinpoints that future studies have created a class of experts (planners) who have the ability of forecasting and, thus, domesticating time. In doing so, planners keep reproducing the power of politics of the present instead of opening new alternative possibilities of futures.

Despite the common belief that the past is gone, certain and irreversible, I argue that pasts and futures are plural, uncertain and interlinked. It means that pasts and futures are conceived as continuously changing processes and are thus conditioned by each other's webs of connections and relations that extend through geographies and societies. As Holtorf and Högberg (2015, p. 515) put it, '*Pasts and futures are constantly changing to suit the present they are imagined [sic].*'

Along this line of thought, this research adapts a critical perspective to planning in order to investigate the ways stories of pasts and futures become selected, assembled and utilised. This investigation seeks to explore the ways planning practices make use of past events and historical narratives in the present and shape the way we think about the future. To do so, this research adapts an interdisciplinary approach to the past, present and future that links three main fields of inquiry: planning, future studies and heritage studies. Generating dialogues between these fields will help open critical debates between the different studies that are reported in this research, and thereby contribute with new theoretical and practical insights into planning for a more inclusive future of the fast pace of changing society.

## **1.2 Aim**

Pasts, presents and futures are approached in this research as interlinked spaces of struggles over meanings, legitimacies and powers. Actors, institutions, discourses and practices are engaged in these struggles, through which stories about "our" valuable pasts and "our" desirable futures become re-constructed, framed and projected. In effect, powerful stories might consciously or unconsciously become institutionalised in policy discourses and documents, foregrounding our spatial realities and affecting our living spaces. These arguments and assumptions are investigated in relation to the cases – Regional-Pasts, SeGI-Futures ICT-Futures (explained in sub-section 1.3) – using stories as a research strategy as well as a theoretical framework. Based on this, the aim of this research is to investigate these spaces of struggles within planning and thereby open critical discussions on how stories about pasts and futures can inform, but also be sustained by, planning processes. To achieve this, this research investigates the following questions:

- How do regional futures become informed by their pasts? (Papers 1 & 2)
- How do particular stories about pasts become selected, framed and projected as envisioned futures? (Papers 1, 2 & 3)
- What messages are conveyed to the pasts and the presents through envisioned futures? (Papers 4 & 5)
- How can stories of the past be referred and re-employed in planning to build more inclusive futures? (Papers 3, 4 & 5)

### **1.3 Multiple case studies**

This research builds on three case studies. Each case represents specific sociopolitical contexts and includes a specific research problem related to the reconstruction and representation of stories of pasts and futures in planning.

Case one is focused on the Mälardalen Region, Sweden, and defined in this research as ‘Regional-Pasts’. This region represents a new political space that has been to a great extent shaped according to the international understandings of a ‘good’ spatial arrangement (European Commission, 1999) to enhance competitiveness and cohesion. The implementation of high-speed train lines (Mälardalsbanan and Svealandbanan) in the 1990s has enabled good commuting opportunities throughout the Stockholm-Mälardalen Region, enhancing everyday interactions, mobility, daily travel and migration. Improvements in regional accessibility have also enlarged the housing and labour markets of the Stockholm Region, enhancing Stockholm’s potential to compete internationally as an attractive location for companies and enterprises. Stockholm and its neighbouring municipalities have experienced a significant population increase, which has changed the sociospatial organisations of some towns in the region (Fröidh, 2003). Although Mälardalen is not officially recognised as a region – it is a pool of 50 municipalities – the idea of making it a formal region has been pushed forward; the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development, OECD has acknowledged its status by addressing it as a region in several studies (OECD, 2006; 2010). If this territory becomes formally institutionalised as a region, it will correspond to one third of the members of the parliament in Sweden, exacerbating power imbalances in the Swedish national landscape (Westholm, 2008, p. 11). Looking at cultural heritage in a sociopolitical context such as this has uncovered many conflicts at different levels.

Case two concerns the provision of services in the European political-economic union, and is referred to in this research as SeGI-Futures. This study is one of the outcomes of the project ‘Indicators and Perspectives for Services of General Interest in Territorial Cohesion and Development – SeGI’. This project was financed by ESPON – EU (European Observation Network for Territorial Development and Cohesion, European Union) and carried out by a group of academics and practitioners from 11 European countries. The general goal of the

project was ‘to address the identified need for support for policy formulation, at all levels of governance and respect of all types of territories, for the effective delivery of Services of General Interest (SGI) throughout Europe’. The project was developed between 2010 and 2013. In this case, future scenarios that explored different alternatives for the provision of services were constructed for Europe in the year 2030 (medium-term) with the aim of evaluating their efficiency and suitability in relation to different types of territories and socioeconomic and political regimes.

Case three is framed around the long-term futures for Sweden in 2060, referred to in this research as ICT-Futures. The future images are one of the main outcomes of the project ‘Scenarios and sustainability impacts of ICT-societies’, which was financed by VINNOVA (the Swedish Innovation Agency). This project was developed between 2013 and 2015 and carried out by KTH in cooperation with public and private actors (City of Stockholm, Stockholm County Council, Interactive Swedish ICT, Ericsson, and TeliaSonera). The futures images were constructed as a means to help respond to the question: “How can sustainable societies be supported by ICT; i.e. reduce negative environmental impacts and promote socioeconomic development?” This debate about the future of ICT societies is quite relevant, especially considering that most OECD countries and partner economies have established a national digital strategy (OECD, 2015, p. 23). The Swedish digital strategy states that Sweden will be ‘the best in the world at exploiting the opportunities offered by digitalization’ (Ministry of Enterprise, Energy and Communications, 2011).

Table 1 explains the three cases, the different studies derived from them and some of their characteristics in relation to the scale and time perspective in which the planning objectives were settled.

Table 1: Summary of the cases

Cases	Papers	Place/space	Scale	Time-frame
Regional-Pasts	One	Mariefred	Regional/local	Short-term
	Two	Counties	Regional	Short-term
SeGI-Futures	Three	Europe	Supranational	Medium-term
ICT-Futures	Four	Sweden	National	Long-term
	Five			

## 1.4 Thesis organisation

This thesis consists of a cover essay and five papers. The cover essay is structured in six chapters where theoretical and empirical analyses are developed based on the studies reported in the five papers. Chapter 1 presents the research context, rationale, problem, aim, and the cases that are part of the study and clarifies the thesis organisation, providing an overview of the different studies. Chapter 2

presents some of the theoretical perspectives that form the basis for the discussion of the papers in Chapter 5. It begins with a description of stories as a background to introduce a discussion about planning, storytelling and power. It is followed by a discussion of how plural stories could be written in planning. There is a subsequent discussion about temporalities that lays the foundation for explaining the relationship between pasts, futures and social meaning. This chapter concludes with the introduction of a section called 'Archaeologies of the future', in which the main concepts with which the papers in this research will be further discussed are presented. Chapter 3 explains the methodology and includes the research strategy, the interrelation between the phenomena presented by the three cases and the methods and materials used to explore these cases. Chapter 4 comprises the summary of the papers and presents their aims, arguments, methods and contributions. This summary provides the base for the discussion in Chapter 5, in which the papers are discussed in the light of the research aim, research questions, theories and in relation to the findings of the five studies. Chapter 6 discusses the contribution for planning and decision-making for promoting a dialogue between heritage studies and futures studies.

The cover essay is followed by the presentation of the five papers. Each study tells specific stories about the past and futures in relation to regional planning and development (Papers 1 and 2), to transnational planning and development (Paper 3) and to envisioned futures for Sweden (Papers 4 and 5). The study reported in Paper 1 (Borges & Adolphson, 2016) combines Mariefred residents' regional commuting/consumption patterns with their everyday relation to local heritage. By including heritage issues in the contemporary landscape of regional mobility, the study uncovers a number of conflicts. Particular attention is placed on new heritage meanings that arose with the new regional mobilities in the Mälardalen Region.

The study reported in Paper 2 (Borges, forthcoming) discusses how the strategies for regional development of the five counties which are part of the Mälardalen Region utilises (and rejects) particular pasts in projects of territorial identities. As part of this political project, particular pasts are selected and used with dual and conflicting goals of enhancing attractiveness, whilst at the same time counteracting uncertainties that open, competitive regions might be exposed to.

The study informed by Paper 3 (Borges, et al., 2015) uses scenarios to explore alternative futures for the provision of Services of General Interests (SGIs) in different political and territorial settings. This study highlights tensions between a 'single future', pursued through EU cohesion objectives, and 'multiple pasts and futures' of Member States.

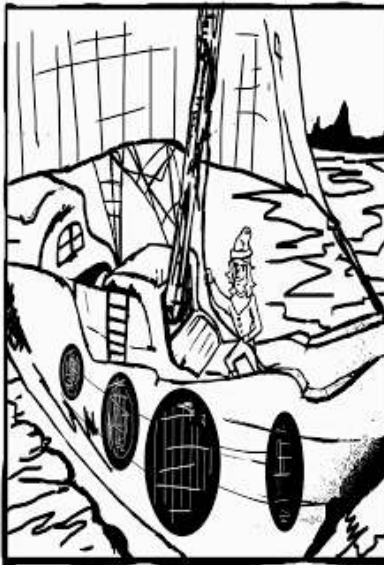
The study reported in Paper 4 (Gunnarsson-Östling, et al., forthcoming) shows that there are alternative ways of making futures than forecasting and presents five ICT-futures for Sweden in 2060. This study discusses the use of these ICT-futures in different planning contexts.

The study reported in Paper 5 (Borges, 2015) stimulates discussion about how sociocultural and political aspects of different ICT-futures (presented in Paper 4) could interact in the education and health sectors. This study allows the exploration of options for how current values might change in the future.

Past and futures are intertwined in the studies. Studies dealing explicitly with cultural heritage are taken as a starting point for discussing and making sense of which messages are carried out to the future, and studies dealing with images of the future are seen as a starting point for the discussion of which past and current social constructs persist in these futures. In both cases, inquiries are founded in the present, making a dialectic movement backward and forward. In most studies, discursive analysis and qualitative methods such as interviews, workshops, and surveys were used. Futures studies were used in Papers 3, 4 and 5.

*15<sup>th</sup> November 1428, Stockholm. (Monday, 6:00 am)*

*Arnbj and his crew sailed in the Baltic Sea along the Lübeck-Stockholm route and stopped in Gdąnsk and Visby before arriving to Stockholm. The route was busy with ships from different Kingdoms and Orders. The weather was terrible, but Arnbj and his crew were used to the route and could therefore keep the ship on course. While in Stockholm, Arnbj will sell the woolen and linen fabrics he brought from London and buy furs and rye from Stockholm to sell in other markets.*





## chapter two

# 2 theory

This chapter presents the theoretical framework that has been developed from the theoretical and empirical findings reported in the five papers. It consists of four main sections. Section one presents conceptual analyses of stories, storylines and discourses. Section two discusses the role of storytelling in planning, the ways stories are intimately interlinked to power, and how they give meaning and justify particular practices while de-signifying others. Section three presents some theoretical underpinnings about stories of pasts and futures in planning. Section four discusses the relations between pasts and futures as temporalities, explaining the conceptual lines of the main arguments of this research. These lines and arguments are developed in the fifth section, framing the conceptual framework ‘Archaeologies of Pasts, Presents and Futures’ which has been used to engage with the three cases of this research in Chapter 5.

### 2.1 Stories

Stories can mean different things and play various roles. They can be understood as a description of what happens to actors in a particular setting (Chatman, 1978) or a sequence of events temporally aligned along a continuum from a beginning, through a middle towards an end (Jackson, 2002, p. 31), or as ‘*verbal expressions that narrate the unfolding of events over some passage of time and in some particular location*’ (Eckstein, 2003, p. 14).

A common issue in these definitions is that stories knit time-space relations in a coherent articulation of events that occur at a particular place and time. Stories are made of narratives by means of emplotment; i.e. when the events/actions are logically and meaningfully connected in a particular setting. Stories are about making sense of where we are, what happens there, and even who we are, since we most probably position ourselves in relation to a given story. Stories provoke

feelings of identification and/or dissociation, and thus they may gather people, but also divide them. Thereby they can create spaces for communications, negotiations and contestations. As Jackson (2002) argues, stories mediate the encounter between individualities and intersubjectivity; between private and public, and thus involve the struggle to negotiate, reconcile and balance oneself and otherness (*ibid.*). However, the way that stories are told and for what purpose can convey specific messages and create situations of consensus or conflicts.

Jackson (2002) explains the sociopolitical processes of telling stories as storytelling. For him, storytelling can be a means of sharing norms and values, developing trust and commitment, generating emotional connection and facilitating learning, and stories are thus a powerful means for shaping opinions and steering meanings (*ibid.*). When stories create a common ground between particular groups, or when they are adopted and shared in institutional settings, they might become storylines (Hammami, 2012). Storylines enable different actors – who, despite holding different positions – to be connected through alliances, even if they never have met. In his analysis of the protective story of the well-preserved medieval town of Ystad in southern Sweden, Hammami (2015) describes how actors from different sectors (private, public and civil society) were articulated in a homogenised form of knowledge that stood for innovative modes of heritage management and encouraged economic development. He explored two main storylines through which different actors were able to communicate and defend their interests despite their competing ambitions. Storylines thus act as group narratives and can shape responses to new challenges.

Following these theoretical discussions, stories are used to understand the ways stories about pasts and futures affect – and are affected by – planning practices. In this research, stories emerge from and are situated within different sociospatial and geographical contexts. They are also constructed through manifold layers of relationships of power on different spatial scales. In this sense, stories and storytelling are not confined to actors and institutions, but they are also constructed and reconstructed within discursive fields (Hammami, 2012). The employment of these conceptual analyses of the different voices and sources (interviews with members of the public, experts, analysis of institutionalised documents, and spatial realities and practices, etc.) that inform a story unfolded the various struggles over meanings, legitimacies and powers in regional planning and development.

## **2.2 Storytelling and power in planning**

Having argued that stories play a role in planning in the previous section, this section explains how stories can be utilised as a source of information for planning and as a means to make sense and frame the processes of planning.

Throgmorton (2003) argues that stories are the heart of planning. When shared, stories form common knowledge and can be used as a means of communication, allowing different actors – including planners, experts, architects and communities

– to make sense of their roles and possibilities for action. Planners and politicians use stories not only as a means to communicate future plans and developments. Myers and Kitsuse (2000) argue that stories also help planners create images of the past, present and future, and thus persuade public consent. They also claim that planners transform empirical information such as forecasts, surveys and models into stories as a means to translate plans and ideas to the public. They suggest that stories are used in planning as a means of domesticating data and ordering the world.

As part of community participation processes, people also tell stories about their communities, and by doing so they are able to pinpoint strengths and weaknesses, in turn helping to identify challenges and setting priorities (Sandercock, 2003). True though this may be, examples of how stories get into planning practices are quite controversial. Looking at sustainable community plans, Raco (2007) has proven that in practices of the British Planning System, voices from central geographies (e.g. city centres and important cities) seem to be more readily heard than voices from peripheral areas. Similarly, Sandercock (1998) has argued that official planning often fails to distribute resources fairly and sometimes marginalises vulnerable groups by excluding their stories and narratives from the planning processes.

In this sense, planning can be viewed as an arena where multiple stories come into play. Different actors can agree or have diverging opinions about priorities, needs and desires in relation to a particular stake. Competing stories emerge from the encounter between different perspectives, generating struggles over meanings and values. Power relations are played out in the constitutive nature of stories. As Throgmorton (2003) puts it, the way planners talk and write about a particular neighbourhood helps shape the character and identity of the people who live there. This sheds light on the role storytelling plays in planning. It can create and re-create communities, but also undermine them; when a neighbourhood is stigmatised as socially and economically problematic, planners, businesses, and other community groups can cluster around this “storyline”, justifying any renewal project in the area and thereby the displacement of the locals. As Van Hulst (2012) explains, the use of language in stories defines right and wrong, and what needs to be fixed or emphasised. Stories thus possess great discursive power.

These examples show that when stories become institutionalised in planning practices, their discursive power might allow things to happen, but also to ‘not happen’. By means of emplotment, they contribute to creating, re-creating or disturbing structures that give meaning to life in society. Stories need to be accepted and validated by others and must therefore be legible, conveying contents (causal relations) that make sense to the public. To become meaningful, appealing and validated, they should be in tune with common understandings. The common understanding or social order refers to ‘rules’ and ‘codes’ that are adopted in society and are expected to be acknowledged and preferably followed and reproduced by all, or at least by the majority (Haugaard, 2003). Ultimately, the

social order on which stories should be transposed exercises power over how the stories should be told. This reasoning does not include only stories that reinforce the current social order, but also competing stories. The latter also have a role in reaffirming the present order of things. Maintaining and validating power structures presumes that competing stories are demoralised and deemed wrong. (Haugaard, 2003). Thereby ‘converging to’ or ‘divergent from’ the current social order, stories are constrained by them. The social order constitutes what Haugaard (2003) identifies as the first level of power in society.

Foucault (1980) discusses how knowledge can be used to reinforce particular structures. Knowledge validates certain stories at the expense of others. However, the circumstances in which ‘knowledge’ was produced and the claims of authority they make are not always clear. Foucault asserts that institutionalisation has been producing knowledge to support its own existence, as well as to organise people’s conduct in society. The institutionalised power/knowledge becomes difficult to contest since it is bred within social structures that limit conduct. One example is how experts and elites since the 19<sup>th</sup> century have been dictating how cultures should be valued and conserved for the enjoyment of future generations (Smith, 2006). Eckstein highlights the importance of identifying the tellers of stories to assess the basis of their claims to authority; to understand their place in systems of power (Eckstein, 2003, p. 18). She outlines the importance of exploring the question ‘*What public connotations and principles authorize the teller of a story?*’, as well as the significance of establishing trust based on shared public concerns instead of on private individual similarities (*ibid*).

Planning is about making stories for the future. Depending on planning objectives and priorities, past events are used to evoke continuity or ruptures with the wished future. When stories about the past of a particular place sanction and validate the current planning objectives, they usually become part of strategies for development. In this case, the past is an ally of development and thus used to certify successful outcomes in the future. On the other hand, when the past conveys shameful stories, it becomes an enemy and a new story must be written. Stories of past events are powerful for reinforcing and re-constructing identities. As Liu and Hilton (2005) argue, interpretations of stories of the past in particular political contexts are a way of defining roles, justifying means and legitimising actions. Crouch and Parker (2003) also argue that different perspectives on pasts steer how things are conducted in the present, as well as perceptions and desires about stories of futures.

Using verbal and written expression of our practical life, stories might enhance awareness of aspects of our everyday lives (structures that are taken for granted) that one might have been difficult to reflect on without discursive means. By putting intangible aspects of everyday life into words, stories might provide an opportunity for the recognition of patterns or modes of thought that have been internalised in practices of everyday life (Haugaard, 2003). Stories can also propose unconventional ways of framing and solving problems, and they thus challenge dominant views by offering alternatives (Eckstein, 2003; Sandercock, 1998).

Eckstein (2003) refers to this as ‘disruptive storytelling’ which ‘defamiliarizes the everyday encouraging the public to rethink their humanity and their place in society’ (Eckstein, 2003, p. 24). These stories disturb and undress the status quo and by doing so they might be transformative, an opening for radical changes and the disorder of habits and boundaries.

Pluralising stories means expanding the conditions of possibility of social order. Several decades ago, women did not have the right to vote. Stories have to be written, and re-written again. Despite being contested, persistent effort was required before a kind of understanding was reached. Plural stories require time to be heard and to enter agendas and offer alternative ways of seeing and doing things. As Haugaard (2003, p. 96) puts it, ‘*what is established and taken for granted today is the result of successful, but hard fought, organizational outflanking in the past*’.

At this point, I reinforce how urgent it is to embrace the plurality of stories that exist and have been overlooked in planning practices. I argue that particular well established discourses have been ‘speaking loudly’ to planning shaping our spatial and social realities. Acknowledging plural stories means recognising marginal pasts and creating futures that could give expression to other social groups in planning practices.

### **2.3 Writing plural stories in planning**

Having asserted that many stories in planning are influenced by well established discourses, this section discusses how plural stories could be written to engage different groups in conversations about the future.

If plural stories are opportunities of giving a voice to social groups that have been overlooked in planning, it is relevant to discuss the point of departure for stories. As Inayatullah (1990, p. 116) explains, ‘*every planning effort involves an epistemological assumption of the real*’. These assumptions within the planning process are critical because they describe the way one understands and orders the real (social order) which, in interaction with particular goals and objectives, is likely to effect dramatically the planning process (*ibid.*).

Sustaining the argument that planning (and futures studies) are about ordering the world (concealing its complexity), providing belief (not distrust), certainty (not uncertainty) and safety (not fear), Inayatullah (1990) critically reflects upon how futures are constructed to assist planning and how they relate to current power structures. He argues that futures resulting from predictions are singular, because they are seen as a continuation of the past. In this respect, futures do not challenge current power configurations, but rather domesticate time and make predicted events fit into current institutions; they thereby recreate pasts and present structures and identities.

Alternative futures, on the other hand, allow the creation of a variety of images that convey different expectations of future developments and thus open space to

analyse and challenge current structures. Drifting away from business as usual, these futures allow relativisation: the future becomes negotiable, open and unpredictable. Although alternative futures acknowledge the present as a temporary condition rather than an enduring state, Inayatullah (1990) argues that these futures still remain influenced and steered by dominant discourses.

Arguing that futures based on predictions are about reproduction instead of liberation and that alternative futures are likely to adjust to dominant structures/discourses, Inayatullah (1990) asserts that neither one nor other approach actually pluralises futures. Rather than focus on futures, one should focus on the present, uncovering power structures that underline our understandings about what is real. He understands that the coming about of particular present indicates that other presents have been silenced. This approach, as he argues, is about making the present remarkable, by inquiring why planning uses particular constructs instead of others (e.g. population, not people) or frames problems in a particular way. Within this perspective there is no opportunity for the possible future (the realm of choices), nor for the probable (the data) or for the preferable (a value orientation) as suggested by Amara (1981), because they co-exist within a particular regime of truth that has taken place at the expense of other truths (Inayatullah, 1990).

Having seen that stories about futures are not abstract or empty (transcendental) constructions, but rather a social construction that relies on the choices one makes to frame or deconstruct the present, the following section discusses temporalities (i.e. the interrelations between pasts, presents and futures) to highlight the importance of time in the construction of meanings (stories) at individual and intersubjective levels.

## 2.4 Relations between pasts, presents and futures

The continuous idea of a *past* that precedes a *present*, which is followed by a *future* does not make sense if one considers instantaneity. The present does not exist as pertaining to a particular instant per se, but rather it is a mere moment, occurring in the of a twinkling of an eye from the past into the future.

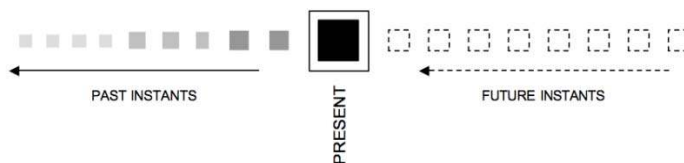


Figure 1: Timeline as a series of instants  
Source: Groves (2005)

As shown in Figure 1, the present – seen as an instant – jumps ceaselessly to the past and very quickly becomes future. As Groves (2005) suggests, the present is conceived in relation to the future, because in the following instant the future makes the present past.

However, to make sense (meaning) of the present, one requires a fairly malleable concept of the present, *presentness* or *spacious present* (Groves, 2005). Presentness or spacious present is made of elements of the past that are selected and combined according to people's expectations of the future. Presentness gives meaning to the present because it is the 'space' where practices, knowledge and feelings are re-created again based on past experiences and future expectations.

As a matter of fact, Heidegger (1998) argued that human existence is related to the way people see their own stories in time (e.g. temporal self-projection), in which past, present and future are understood in terms of each other. The interdependence between pasts and futures presumes an idea of future not solely as an abstract image, but as already real and alive. Not only do people relate to their past to project their futures, but also, as Heidegger (1998) argues, the way people experience the world depends on how the world is disclosed to them. This 'disclosure' influences people's expectations (possibilities and limits) about what they might be able to accomplish. Thereby, people's understanding of the present presumes a vision of their future possibilities. However, the world people see is the world they have been taught to see, and it is disclosed already laden with the interpretations and meanings of others. As Groves (2005) argues, the meaning of what people encounter in the world is continually intertwined with what is revealed to them of its past and what they understand of its probable future. Thereby '*the different ways we become informed to the past of something alters the state of mind through which we become attuned to it and how the world matters to us*' (Groves, 2005, p. 8).

This reasoning suggests that people are grounded in subjective time (or lived time, since people have their personal experiences, perceptions of the past and expectations of the future that influence their actions in the present) whilst at the same time being embedded in the intersubjective reality of common sense (or time of the world) (Adam, 2004). Here, the way that pasts, presents and futures are acknowledged by collectivities becomes relevant. Shared meanings and understandings of specific facts in particular temporalities (common ideas about past, present and future) become powerful stories that are likely to steer the way the world is disclosed to others. In heritage studies for example, the term presentness means that in the temporal period of a present, one could frame an imagined past that can serve certain groups now/in the present and select it for an imagined future. This is part of the theorisation of heritage industry, as well as the theorisation of nineteenth century uses of the past for nation building. For Tunbridge & Ashworth (1996, p. 6) for instance, presentness entails that '*the present selects an inheritance from an imagined past for current use and decides what should be passed on to an imagined future*'.

Looking at predictions of futures, David (1970) highlights the implications of defining the past components of futures, or the initial state from which futures depart. He claims that it is dependent on historical constructions and social behaviours that underpin the work of the researcher, which includes perspectives, images and assignments of meaning, as well as 'hard' data created by others (David, 1970, p. 228). Seeing futures with this perspective, David acknowledges that futures are created differently depending on the subjective choices that the researcher makes, including the selection of variables and the relationships between them.

Acknowledging that futures can take different forms depending on the selected past, List (2004) defines the lens model in which multiple pasts converge to presents and where plural futures diverge.

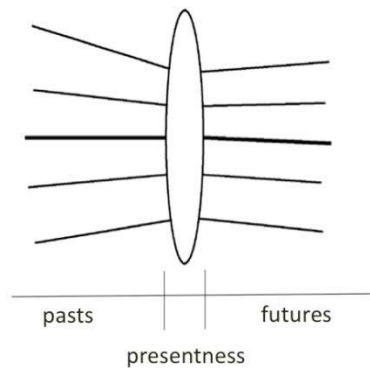


Figure 2: Lens Model  
Source: Adapted from List (2004)

As Figure 2 demonstrates, the present is a thick space which could be seen as *presentness* or *spacious present*, where the selection of past events is combined with expectations of the future. Also acknowledging a plurality of pasts and futures, Holtorf and Högberg (2014) suggest connecting stories of pasts and futures through the use of narratives of past and assumptions of the future. Going beyond List's model, they include suffixes such as possible, plausible, probable and preferred to both pasts and futures.



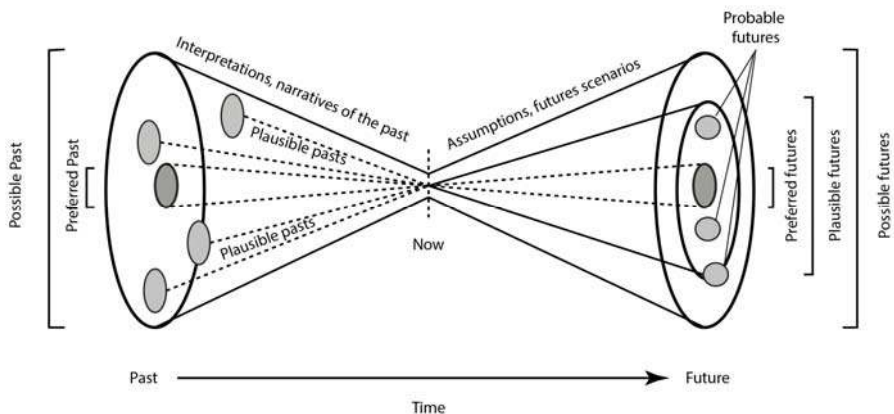


Figure 3: Pasts, present and futures  
Source: Högberg in Holtorf and Högberg (2014)

As Figure 3 suggests, possible futures relates to what might happen and thus includes a myriad of possibilities. Plausible futures describe what is fairly certain to happen, and the perspective of possibilities is thus smaller. Probable futures refers to what will likely happen; they are multiple, but various people and social groups could still agree on them. The preferred futures depend on what different actors and stakeholders would like to happen in the future; preferred futures are therefore manifold and frequently the subject of disputes among different people and social groups. Futures, then, are plural because they are dependent on interests, preferences and agendas. Nevertheless, the futures are also historical, since every future has its own past. Sustaining a preferred future implies the selection of particular and preferred pasts in the present. There are thus multiple preferred pasts that aid in sustaining the path towards particular futures, which are in turn dependent on who is in the position to select and convey the stories told about particular preferred pasts into futures.

The present is happening and becoming past. With the movement from the present to the future, the 'sight cones' would remain the same, but influenced by changes in society, the spectrum of possible, plausible and probable pasts and futures and the choice of the preferred pasts and futures would change.

Despite acknowledging pasts and futures as plural and interconnected, Holtorf and Högberg (2014) refer to the present as singular. The present is the needle's eye through which interpretations of the past are transformed into assumptions of the future. (Holtorf & Högberg, 2014). It is a point at which a person, institution or social group processes (selects and interprets) the plural pasts and transforms them into various assumptions about the future. Bringing here Inayatullah's (1990) argument that the coming about of a particular present signifies the silencing of other presents, I suggest that rather than conceiving the present as the eye of a needle, multiple presents should be accounted for. In planning practice, this would

mean that a myriad of ‘hourglasses’ (as shown in Figure 3) would be considered, each of them accounting for a particular story. As Adam (2004, p. 69) says regarding the encounter between subjectivities and intersubjectivities on pasts, presents and futures, ‘*confronts us with the contextual, constructive, experiential and relative world of processes where past and future change with each new present and each present is defined with reference to a particular event, system, biography or person*’. In the context of this research, this is recognised as ‘stories’.

Having accounted for several perspectives for looking at pasts, presents and futures, I argue for an approach in which pasts, presents and futures are seen as interlinked processes of interactions among plural stories and webs of connections. In this research, they are seen as uncertain and intertwined spaces in which struggles over meaning and power emerge depending on how different actors, institutions, discourses and practices make use of them. It implies that pasts, presents and futures are as not much about linear and path-dependent temporalities as they are about the perspectives of different actors, power relations and agendas at play in certain planning contexts. These ideas are expanded in the following section.

## **2.5 Archaeologies of pasts, presents and futures**

Using archaeology metaphorically, I explain how pasts, presents and futures are plural, uncertain, and intertwined. Many scholars (Collingwood, 1993; Ricoeur, 1985; Carr, 1986) argue that the historical knowledge we claim to have over the past is based on the postulated ‘possession’ of the traces of the past (documents, tangible heritage, etc.), but the ‘*the past, in a natural process is a past superseded and dead*’ (Ricoeur, 1985, p. 146’.

Pasts and futures do not exist as experiential spaces because the past has already gone and the future has yet to come. Both are based on present interpretations of the remains and assumptions of pasts as well as futures. As Dahlbom (1997, p. 86) argues, ‘*...if there is something to be known about the past, the future ought to be equally accessible*’. For him, ‘*The artefacts that we bring back from the future are really no less, or more, reliable than those we dig out of our past*’ (Dahlbom, 2002, p. 35).

The interesting issue in Dahlbom’s metaphorical use of archaeology to deal with future lies in the way he expands the scope, challenging the conventional and scientific meaning of archaeology. By reorienting archaeology from the reconstruction of the past (and present) to the exploration of futures, he opens up an opportunity to think about the future similarly as we think about the past – as well as the other way around. It could mean that archaeological remains are not only to be found as historical traces in the earth, but they may also exist in the future as traces of historic futures. Likewise, the multiple layers of futures could tell stories about the different periods of the pasts (presents).

As mentioned previously, people see their own stories in relation to time, where past, present and future are understood in relation to each other (Heidegger, 1998).

The interdependence between pasts and futures presupposes an idea of future not merely as an abstract image, but as already real and alive. Therefore, not only pasts are influential in the construction of identities – the expectations people have about their futures are also significant. Digging into pasts is as important as exploring futures.

Dahlbom also asserts that pasts and futures are uncertain. Their relativisation, as well as their plurality, rests on who is decoding them, when, and within what sociopolitical context. As Haugaard (2003, p. 97) argued, *‘Meaning does not exist “out there in the world” but it is reproduced by actors for whom the meanings are consonant with their interpretative horizon – the way in which they make sense of the world’*. Meanings are dependent on the ‘spirit of the times’. While the social practice of revitalising pasts may have been considered beneficial in a particular period, the same practice could have been interpreted as harmful or as embracing no meaning in another period. Changes in perspectives do influence ideals about ‘preferable pasts’ and ‘desirable futures’; however, the continuous societal demands and restructuring of power also play an important role.

Crouch and Parker (2003, p. 397) pinpointed the increasing and explicit use of history and heritage in the late 1990s as a political resource in order to perform institutions and other public establishments in attempts to reorient the future. For Holtorf and Högberg (2015), the preservation of cultural heritage is detached from the role that heritage might have in the future. They suggest that the heritage preserved today reflects the heritage of the official authorities who have ascribed meanings and values about what is likely to be important for future generations regardless of how society could develop in the future. Whether the past-futures relationships are connected, as suggested by Crouch and Parker (2003), or detached, as suggested by Holtorf and Högberg (2015), the historical testimonies that have been left for us and our knowledge about pasts are likely to be intrinsically linked to projections of futures, and as such also to issues of power.

How the inevitably diverse interpretations of the past and futures are communicated and contested remains a re-current question. As Harrison (2013, p. 4) argues, heritage is not a *‘passive process but an active assembling of a series of objects, places and practices that we have chosen to hold up as a mirror to the present, associated with a particular set of values that we wish to take with us into the future [...]’*.

The plea that particular artefacts, traditions and social practices must be preserved for enjoyment by future generations becomes odd if one realises the abundance of pasts that surrounds us. For example, the representations of our plural pasts in heritage happen all the time and everywhere. They are expressed in – and shape – our bodies and built environments, including buildings, streets, landscapes, monuments, knowledge, habits, memory, etc. So there always will be pasts left behind for future generations’ appreciation. The need to preserve seems to suggest that some values and meanings might be under threat; it is therefore relevant to ask whose values are preserved and projected as part of the futures.

Likewise, one could argue that current generations might also need (and seem to express interest in) the enjoyment of the future, just as future generations are expected to enjoy the past. So, like pasts, futures have also a social role to play. As Inayatullah (1990) pointed out, one must pay attention to the historical constructs from which the assemblage of futures departs. The choice of a particular (and reduced) dimensions of the past to define features of the present or initial state of the futures *'implies that other dimensions of the past are overlooked, repressed or avoided as being irrelevant or unimportantly related to the research task'* (David, 1970, p. 228). Beyond suggesting that the future is a genuine subject of study in relation to the past, David (1970) and Inayatullah (1990) suggest that the task of making futures is not limited to speculation about the unknown, but rather to unveiling power structures that are at play in the present.

Thus, the analyses of pasts and futures cannot depart from a simple understanding of them as independent, but rather from a perspective in which both are intertwined and understood as reciprocal. This reasoning drives the analysis of the studies that are part of this research, in the sense that studies dealing explicitly with pasts are also analysed through a future perspective, and the studies dealing with futures are also analysed through an historical perspective.



*15th November 2068, Stockholm. (Monday, 4:36 pm)*

*Steffie just stepped out of the 'Exoplanet Swedish Bureau', a governmental space agency for space colonisation. Despite the hot weather she wants to walk. She just made the biggest decision of her 50 years of life: she signed up to take part in a project to 'colonise' Mars. From now on, the core group of the project 'Vikings in Space' will monitor her everyday life, 24/7. She still feels a bit of pain in her chest where the chip was inserted.*



## 3 design & methods

This chapter presents the research strategy of this study. It begins by clarifying the research approach. Afterwards, it describes the employed methods and materials used as a source for input, including some examples of how the field research was carried out. The concluding section explains how Discourse Analysis (DA) was employed in the analysis of the empirical data.

### 3.1 Research approach and strategy

This research has followed an open and explorative approach to the topic and fields of research and it is based on multiple study cases. The approach has also been explorative in terms of placing together studies belonging to different fields – such as heritage and futures –with the aim of gaining familiarity with the interrelations between pasts and futures in planning.

Three cases with different contexts were used in this research: ‘Regional-Pasts’ (2010-2016); ‘SeGI-Futures’ (2011-2013); and ‘ICT-Futures’ (2013-2015). Each case is situated *at and/or in* and *between* different sociopolitical and -spatial scales, which provided the overall direction, including the process according to which the research was conducted. The cases’ different time spans came into play during the development of this research, and the different methods applied to planning, heritage, and futures studies led to the adoption of a progressive approach to framing a research strategy based on ‘testing and learning’ (Hammami, 2012). This means that although the cases were not selected as a set from the beginning, learning from each case could inform the research strategy; findings and methodological experiences could be compared, so that the cases could build on each other.

With exception of the case ‘Regional-Pasts’, the other cases were not chosen since the beginning of this research, but their inclusion in this study has, in fact, shaped the investigation of the critical and under-researched questions of how pasts and futures have been intertwined and negotiated in planning.

The different sociopolitical contexts of the cases, the research environments of the studies, and the interdisciplinary nature of this research demanded a flexible research design. The flexibility in the research process was informed by different approaches from the fields of planning, heritage studies and futures studies. The challenges posed by the particularities of the multiple cases and the distinctions between both fields of inquiry – heritage and futures studies – influenced the choice of methods, the selection of literature and the formulation of the research questions. Coping with this diversity, the studies are understood as examples that play out stories of pasts and futures and as such, unveil conflicts on different sociospatial and -political scales.

The studies developed under the ‘Regional-Pasts’ and ‘ICT-Futures’ cases have mutually nourished one other. For example, informed by findings presented in Borges and Adolphson (2016), the concept of ‘cultural heritage’ assumed a broader perspective in the study Borges (forthcoming), and together with terms such as culture, emotions and history, it was addressed as ‘uses of the past’. The study reported in Borges (2015) is one of many methodological steps developed to build up the comprehensive ICT-futures reported in the study Gunnarson et al. (forthcoming). Another strategy adopted in the ‘Regional-Pasts’ case was the incorporation of pilot studies (pilot interviews) as preparation for wider fieldwork.

In the ‘Regional-Pasts’ case, in spite of having departed from a solid theoretical background, the material collected in the interviews was equally influential in the ‘course’ that the studies took. This resulted in a dialogue between theory and empirical material in which the latter was informed by and contributed to the development of theoretical standpoints along the process of analysis (Alvesson & Kärreman, 2011).

The strategy of looking at the studies as stories, despite not being chosen from the beginning of the research, was suitable for placing the different cases in a joint context. It allowed a red thread to be drawn through the different studies of this research, as well as enabling the utilisation of their plurality and findings to underline the main contribution of this thesis. Each study tells a story from the field of heritage (Borges & Adolphson, 2016; Borges, forthcoming) and futures studies (Borges, et al., 2015; Gunnarsson-Östling, et al., forthcoming; Borges, 2015) as informed by different voices and sources (interviews with members of the public and experts, analysis of institutionalised documents, etc.). From the findings of different studies, I understood how different actors have communicated around one storyline. Thereby, another strategy that was not initially planned, but instead emerged at later stages of development of the research was the observation of storylines across the studies. It was an important aspect that has added value to the research, since it allowed me to make sense of struggles between spaces of pasts,



presents and futures. Figure 4 illustrates the role of stories and storyline in the design of this research.

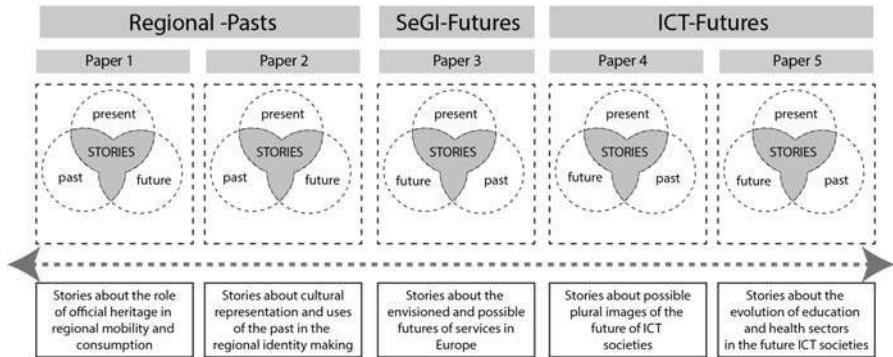


Figure 4: Stories and storylines as a research strategy  
Source: Author

### 3.2 Methods and materials

The methods employed in this research included interviews (face-to-face, telephone), questionnaires/surveys, workshops and analysis of written texts. The methods are detailed in Table 2.

Table 2: Summary of the methods applied in the different studies

	Paper 1	Paper 2	Paper 3	Paper 4	Paper 5
<b>Interview</b>					
face-to-face with members of the public	3				
face-to-face with experts	1	6		4	1
telephone interview with experts			9		
<b>Questionnaires</b>					
members of the public	70				
experts			45		
<b>Workshop</b>					
experts			2	9	1
students				2	
<b>Document analysis</b>					
official documents	x	x			
media	x	x			

## *Interviews*

Interviews were used as the main source of information in the studies. They were conducted with different actors and played different roles in the studies according to the purpose of each study. In the 'Regional-Pasts' case, face-to-face, in-depth interviews were used to generate interactive discussions with the respondents, and to understand some of the facts that underpinned the respondent's answers (reasons, feelings, opinions and beliefs) (Bryman, 2012; Kvale, 1996). While in Borges and Adolphson (2016), in-depth interviews were the primary means of uncovering Mariefred residents' perceptions of the town's official heritage and unveiling the particularities of where, how and why they performed different activities in the Mälardalen region, in Borges (forthcoming), the in-depth interviews with planners generated dialogues regarding the ideologies, concepts and motives for specific regional development plans that are often not expressed in policy documents. These conversations allowed me to probe deeper into the interviewees' narratives and thus determine linkages between their social and spatial practices and thereby reveal their perceptions of heritage and the past.

In the studies reported in Borges and Adolphson (2016) and Borges (forthcoming), the interviewees were contacted by email and the interview's subject was clarified beforehand. However, in the interest of collecting spontaneous verbal and non-verbal responses and cues (e.g. emotions and behaviours), the questions were not revealed before the interview. Most of interviews were conducted in English, and only one was held in Swedish. This particular interview was quite challenging due to my difficulty speaking the Swedish language, and in comparison with the other interviews, it accentuated my 'otherness'. All of the face-to-face interviews were recorded and transcribed. The audio and text files were then sent to the interviewees for evaluation; i.e. their approval /rejection of the use of the information.

Four face-to-face, in-depth interviews with representatives from the project partners were also undertaken in the study reported by Gunnarson et al. (forthcoming). These interviews aimed at gathering specific comments and feedback on the scenarios developed in the ICT-futures case. For example, an interview with a private actor shed light on the social implications of different technological systems. However, I did not participate in this process.

In the study reported by Borges (2015), a face-to-face, in-depth interview was conducted with the vice dean of a secondary school in Stockholm. This interview shed light on how ICT has been applied in educational practice, and it allowed me to identify gaps between policy goals and practice.

In Borges et al. (2015), structured interviews were used to evaluate the provision of SGI in relation to the different SeGI-futures. This type of interviews provides the same questioning context, in which all interviewees receive similar stimulus, and thus allows for the aggregation of data (Bryman, 2012). SeGI partners came from nine European countries to represent different territorial settings. All were interviewed via telephone. Although the interviewees had received instructions and

the interview questions by email beforehand, additional questions were asked during the telephone conversation. Issues related to the complexity of the assessment of the different SeGI-futures in relation to their particular socioeconomic and political contexts were recurrent; therefore in my role as an interviewer it was important to negotiate meanings. During the telephone interviews the respondents filled out the survey and sent it by email at the end of the conversation. As new challenges and perspectives arose while the interviews were conducted with the different partners, many follow-up interviews were required for clarification.

### *Questionnaire surveys*

This research used two types of questionnaire surveys: one conducted by the researcher and one submitted by the respondents via post.

Self-completion questionnaires were utilised in the study reported by Borges and Adolphson (2016). This method is quite similar to structured interviews, with the obvious difference that the researcher does not mediate the interpretation of questions for the respondent (Bryman, 2012). We formulated closed-ended questions, questions using Likert scales, rate from a list and multiple choice questions to gather information about Mariefred residents' mobility, consumption patterns throughout the region, and residents' motivations for living in the town. This survey aimed to corroborate the information gathered in the interviews conducted with some actors. It was carried out early in the morning on four train trips between Mariefred and Stockholm. The questionnaires were handed out to the commuters at Strängnäs train station and collected by the researchers at Stockholm Central Station – see (Borges & Adolphson, 2016) for further details. The analysis of the quantitative data followed the steps (1) coding and grouping, (2) describe frequencies and distributions and (3) test for associations and differences as suggested by Descombre (2007).

A post-questionnaire survey was also employed in the study reported by Borges et al. (2015). Forty-five specialists, decision-makers and experts who deal with SGI on daily basis across Europe provided opinions about the main drivers of SGI and also about the challenges that the sector could face in the future, among other issues. This survey was under the responsibility of other SeGI project partners. However, I took the opportunity to explore the perceptions and opinions about the future of SGI in a broader audience – see Borges et al. (2015, pp. 126-127) for further discussion.

### *Workshops*

Workshops are important arenas for the exploration of stories. They create a framework for dialogue, knowledge exchange and experiences from which plural meanings are likely to emerge, but also where the negotiation of meanings might take place. They were employed in this research to generate discussions about challenging issues and/or assumptions in the writing of scenarios (e.g. coupling between high-tech society and individualism, relation with policy documents), and

to strengthen stakeholder's networks through exchange of information and experience.

In both cases, SeGI-Futures and ICT-Futures workshops were performed during different stages of the process of constructing futures. The workshops were participatory, activity-based and exploratory.

Two workshops were very important in the process of writing the SeGI-futures. During the first workshop, the participants were asked to identify the main SGI that would empower achievement of the objectives stated in Europe 2020 (European Commission, 2010) and to indicate which SGI would best counteract the challenges faced and endorse the priorities declared in the Territorial Agenda 2020. (European Commission, 2011). During the second workshop, the participants were asked to identify the measures required in order to realise the goal 'SGI to everyone, everywhere' (European Commission, 2004); to identify the actors needed to make the change happen and to identify how, and by whom, these actors could be stimulated to take action. Both workshops aimed to tighten the design of the scenarios to encompass policy objectives, and they were helpful for detecting how different partners perceived the challenges and opportunities of their countries and regions in relation to the goals of the documents. These workshops also enhanced the exchange of experiences from different contexts, deepening understanding about several issues, such as why and how the provision of particular services was more problematic in one context than in another.

A series of workshops were held during the different stages of writing the ICT-futures. Researchers and project partners from companies as well as public administration participated in the first workshop, which aimed to discuss the leading ideas that would shape the ICT-futures. As a source of inspiration to explore what kind of scenarios the partners would like to develop in the project, prior to the workshop we sent the participants a summary of two scenarios developed in other studies (Forum for the Future, 2008; Blackman, et al., 2010). The interaction between actors from private and public sectors enabled a rich and constructive discussion about which ideas would be important to highlight in the different futures. This workshop was also an important platform to clarify different methodologies of constructing futures scenarios to non-academic actors.

Many workshops were also undertaken after having produced short descriptions of the ICT-scenarios, also called scenario skeletons. The scenario skeletons were tested and discussed with different audiences: project partners, KTH master students from Media Technology and Urban Planning & Design, and with lay people/science fiction fans at the science fiction convention Fantastika in Stockholm. I was involved in the process of preparing and conducting the workshops, except those carried out with the Master students. These workshops were very important for exposing some of the assumptions about the different images of the ICT-futures. Testing the scenario ideas with heterogeneous groups of people in regards to age and background was a very important step in terms of

whether to consider and/or include different perspectives. It was also useful to widen our own perceptions about the scenarios.

After developing the scenario skeletons into comprehensive descriptions of the five scenarios, another set of workshops were undertaken with participants from different partner organisations. We conducted workshops at the Stockholm County Council, at Kista Science City, at the City of Stockholm, and at KTH. Together with other colleagues, I helped prepare and conduct some of these workshops. The perceptions of, input from, and discussion with different stakeholders facilitated reflection on how particular issues were addressed in the comprehensive descriptions of the scenarios. For example, the role of ICT was extensively described in some futures, while described poorly in others. These workshops also revealed the hesitation of some participants to connect a high-tech future with unsustainable or individualistic behaviour.

As part of the process of writing the scenarios elements presented in Borges (2015), a workshop was held with the participation of academics, experts from the ICT sector and practitioners. Before the workshop, they received a written report with the analysis and discussion about the prospect futures of diverse sectors/activities (e.g. education, health, governance, financing, media, household, transportation, etc.) in relation to short descriptions of the ICT-futures. The discussions generated around the reports were insightful, reflecting on how ICT could drastically change the way particular activities are performed today and how it could influence current values.

### ***Document analysis***

#### *Official documents*

Government documents are useful sources of data. The context in which the documents were written (e.g. by heritage authorities, regional or local planners) and the scale of comprehensiveness that they encompassed (e.g. local, regional, national) were influential in the choice of the strategy for their analysis. For example, answering questions such as ‘who says what, to whom, how and with what effect?’ might be easier when the contents of the documents are more specific (e.g. aimed at particular groups or written for particular purposes) (Frankfort-Nachmias & Nachmias, 1996).

In the study reported by Borges & Adolphson (2016), the analysis aimed at combining information about the understandings of heritage by different authorities (regional planners, local planners and heritage managers). The examination of these documents revealed that heritage is perceived differently by different authorities, and as such is used as a resource that fulfils different purposes in planning. The reading of official documents in relation to the other methods applied in this study (e.g. in-depth interviews, questionnaire surveys) was relevant for identifying convergent/divergent perspectives between the documents and the members of the public.

The systematic procedure of reviewing the strategies for regional development of the five counties that are part of the Mälardalen Region in Borges (forthcoming) was useful for gaining understanding about their similarities and differences (comparison) in regards to objectives and priorities; for generating questions for the interviews conducted with planners, and for tracking changes regarding concepts such as identity through the comparison of previous and current versions of the documents. The texts of the regional strategies were initially analysed looking at the recurrence of particular terms such as heritage, culture, collective memory, and tradition. Afterwards, attention was placed on the context in which these terms were applied. Using this approach, I was able to identify, among other issues, how the regional strategies prioritised particular localities over others. Several patterns emerged from the systematic analysis of the different documents, such as the use of heritage for economic benefit, such as in tourism.

Official documents were also used in the studies that dealt with futures (Borges, 2015; Borges, et al., 2015; Gunnarsson-Östling, et al., forthcoming). Nevertheless, in these studies the documents were not an object of analysis, but rather input to settle goals and/or targets, for example as they were used in the workshops to develop SeGI-futures.

### *Media*

Media material was used as a source of information in Borges and Adolphson (2016). Brochures advertising housing developments in Mariefred and websites of hotels and restaurants that make use of historical buildings in the Mälardalen Region were used as resources. These materials helped to uncover how private developers and entrepreneurs address heritage. The content of advertisements often reveals meanings and messages of social significance (Jensen, 2007). Attempts to persuade people to consume usually convey messages that amuse and inform, but also misinform and cause worry. Focusing on how private actors addressed heritage was deemed important not only for comparison with public authorities' way of doing the same, but also to exemplify how the binary 'progress/development & tradition/rootedness' is presented to the public as non-problematic.

### *Scenario approach*

Börjeson et al. (2006) distinguish three different types of scenarios: predictive, explorative and normative. These scenarios deal with the following questions, respectively: 'What will happen?' 'What could happen?' and 'How can a specific target be reached in the future?' Predictive scenarios derive from the present – or at best from understandings about what the present is – to predict the future. Explorative scenarios deal with several possible external developments. They encompass long-term futures and can thereby address drastic changes (*ibid*). In normative scenarios, a goal or target to be reached in the future provides the basis for designing strategies and policies backwards in time (Börjeson, et al., 2006). They are also called backcasting. They are long-term horizons to allow deep changes to

take place and can be either preservative- or transformative normative. In the first case, the target can be reached through the prevalence of on-going trends, whilst in the other, the achievement of the goal demand changes in the patterns of development (Dreborg, 2004).

In the SeGI-Futures case, three explorative scenarios were constructed to provide a common framework to evaluate SGI with regard to both the wide range of services encompassed by the definition and to the differing socioeconomic contexts of the various European Member States (MS). In the ICT-Futures case, four explorative and one transformative normative scenario were developed with the aim of building a basis for discussions both on how ICT can shape society and how ICT can be used more directly to fulfil environmental targets.

In the case of both SeGI- and ICT-Futures, the scenarios were structured according to leading ideas. While the SeGI futures Competitive, Social and Green Europe departed from the delivery of services by different providers (market, state and civic society), the ICT futures were based on ideas and issues deemed of high importance today (economic decline, segregation, life online, convenience and valued environment). In both cases, each scenario was granted characteristics to make them attractive to different groups (e.g. countries, territorial settings, and people). No attempt has been made to create scenarios that are unequivocally good or bad, but rather efforts were put into creating interesting and distinctly different futures that highlight different possible – although not necessarily probable – development paths.

### **3.3 Analysing the cases**

Having described the methods used to conduct the field research, I shall now discuss my use of Discourse Analysis (DA) as a method to help connect the different cases. DA allowed me to interpret how different actors actively tell different stories about the past suggesting a particular future in the ‘Regional-Pasts’ case. When looking at the scenario narratives from the SeGI and ICT-cases, DA was also an inspiration and assisted in uncovering the underlying assumptions about present/futures from which the imagined futures were derived.

In the ‘Regional-Pasts’ case, the analysis of the empirical data (interviews and documents) was inspired by the work of Hajer and Versteeg (2005). Rather than applying a classical approach of discourse analysis, this research attempted to explore the thematic constructions that influence the conception of past, present and future and how these constructions become part of planning policy documents and discourses. Following Hajer and Versteeg, language was not seen as a neutral medium that reflects reality; but rather as a medium that shapes world views because it is related to the particular social and spatial practices in which it is employed (Hajer & Versteeg, 2005, p. 176). Analysing the way language was used revealed how different actors actively influence the definition of a problem by imposing a particular frame or narrative and thus intervening in peoples’ social and

spatial practices (Hajer & Versteeg, 2005; Bacchi, 2010). Applying DA on the material from the interviews and documents in the 'Regional-Pasts' case allowed the understanding of how different actors/institutions interpret and make use of the past; by doing so, these actors/institutions select certain words and meanings while rejecting others. The 'chosen construction' has an effect, influencing ideas, generating responses and so on (Alverson & Sköldberg, 2009).

In this study, it is also important to differentiate how the different categories of language are related to each other and how they escalate in power; i.e. depending on how ideas and interpretations are shared by few or many people. Hammami (2012) draws links between narratives, stories, and storylines. Narratives are smaller entities within stories (Jensen, 2007). While narratives explain the sequence of events/actions chronologically (Czarniawska, 2004), stories emerge from narratives by means of emplotment; i.e. when the event/actions are logically and meaningfully connected in a particular setting. If they are not connected, they represent only lists or chronicles Hammami (2012). When stories create a common ground between particular groups, or when they are adopted and shared in institutional settings, they might become storylines (Hammami, 2012). Stories might also form discourses by dictating what should be understood as valid or legitimate knowledge in a particular context.

In the 'Regional-Pasts' case, the narratives of members of the public and planners when referring to heritage or to 'the past' revealed how established institutions contribute to regulating self-consciousness and the actions of individuals. To some extent, the disciplinary behaviour of people and planners with regard to particular pasts creates and reproduces power knowledge, as suggested by Foucault (1980). Power knowledge is not about the power *of* knowledge, but rather about the power *in* knowledge (Deetz, 1992), which is constructed around practices that settles normality/acceptance if one behaves as expected, but also abnormality/disapproval if one behaves in an unexpected way (Foucault, 1980).

Both studies focused on the use of metaphors by public and private actors through catchphrases or slogans for branding regions (Musolff, 2012). Slogans and visions are popular strategies for politicians who intend to remake the identity of their region in response to some external or internal crisis that threatens productivity and development (Glass, 2014, p. 215), and as such they also inform how planning stories attempt to 'convince' people and companies to invest in certain regions instead of others. Both metaphors and slogans have facilitated understanding of the operational power involved in their use. As Howard (2014) puts it, '*Metaphors are important because they structure not only how we see the world, but also how we are able to see it, and thus how we are able to remake it*'. The use of possessive pronouns such as *our* or *their* was also of interest, since their employment unveils languages of integration and difference, allowing inferences to be made about inclusion/exclusion.

When looking at the narratives of the different interviewees in both studies of the 'Regional-Pasts' case, ruptures, contradictions and mixed feelings were also of



interest. They helped to build the basis for many of the arguments presented in both studies, such as for example the maintenance by regional authorities of the non-conflicting relationship between heritage and development (Borges & Adolphson, 2016).

In line with some of the principles of conducting Discourse Analysis (Potter & Wetherel, 1987), the strategy of using few in-depth interviews rather than a larger number that would account for statistical representativeness has helped to unveil particularities and nuances of the phenomena analysed (e.g. presenting information about how and why the phenomena occur) (Flyvberg, 2004; Johansson, 2002).

DA was not applied in the studies conducted for the SeGI-Futures case (Borges, et al., 2015), nor in the ICT-Futures case (Gunnarsson-Östling, et al., forthcoming; Borges, 2015). Nevertheless, within the context of this research, (introductory essay) attention was also given to the narratives of the future images proposed in both cases. When looking at the scenarios, I was inspired by the critical approach proposed by Inayatullah (1990), who asserts that rather than focus on predicting or creating alternative futures, the importance is focusing on powers at play in the present. His perspective suggests a critical inquiry into the social and historical constructions put forth when futures are created.

2010 - 2016, Stockholm.



## 4 summary of the papers

### 4.1 Summary of the papers

This chapter describes the specific aims, theoretical positions, methods and contribution of the papers presented in this study. The summary of the papers paves the ground for the discussion on Chapter 5.

*Paper 1: The Role of Official Heritage in Regional Spaces.*

Borges, L. A. and Adolphson, M. (2016)

The aim of this paper is to investigate the role of official heritage in regional development in Mariefred, Sweden. It is argued that growing socioeconomic change at the regional level – fuelled by increasing mobility and leading to ever-more dispersed consumption patterns – has altered the conception of habit in the sense that economic and social activities are no longer limited to, nor solely occur in, geographically defined areas, but rather in regional spaces, which are shaped and facilitated by networks of communication and transportation. Departing from the conception of heritage as processes, practices and relationships that individuals maintain and value when interacting with their environments, individuals' everyday routines in the contemporary landscape of regional mobility and their perceptions about the official heritage in Mariefred are used to uncover conflicts that erupt between current official heritage practices and contemporary everyday demands.

Study findings revealed that the values, as defined by the authorities, are generally accepted and legitimised by the interviewees. Nevertheless, within the new landscape of regional mobilities, the ways in which these values are recognised are new. Heritage seems to be understood by individuals as well as by heritage authorities as 'resistance' to the on-going relations of production and consumption that occur within multiple geographic spaces, especially because heritage reinforces cultural associations and nurtures particular cultural imaginations. On the other

hand, heritage increases the competitive advantages of some places and is used by planning authorities to legitimise political strategies and frame those political initiatives and policy programmes that promise to reconcile opposing principles such as progress/development and tradition/conservation, erroneously sustaining the idea that regional planning and heritage management have similar goals and work at similar paces.

*My contribution to the paper:* This paper was co-authored with Dr Adolphson. I wrote the entire paper. Dr Adolphson supported the field research (the conducting of interviews and surveys) and participated in the process of revising the manuscript for publication.

***Paper 2: Using the Past to Construct Territorial Identities in Regional Planning: The Case of Mälardalen, Sweden.***  
Borges, L. A., (forthcoming)

The aim of this paper is to examine how ‘the past’ is used in the construction of regional identity narratives in policy discourses and documents. It looks at regional strategies and interviews with planners from five counties, which are part of the Mälardalen Region in Sweden. This region is understood as a (new) ‘political space’ that has been promoted by public and private actors to foster the competitiveness of Stockholm Region. It is argued that the geopolitical struggles over regional identity within an increasingly globalised market have resulted in a dilemma between regional openness, multiculturalism and the establishment of regional identity. Culture, history, heritage and collective memory have been used and mobilised in this struggle; however, they have been downgraded to an institutionalised practice that uses them as an asset, overlooking the embodied heterogeneous sociocultural experiences of regional people.

The findings suggested that in spite of the economic objectives behind the involvement of cultural heritage in regional development, these strategies overlook cultural heritage as a process assembled in the present and in the light of socioeconomic developments. The interpretation of cultural heritage in regional politics is static and bound, and thus it is regarded as an anchor that suggests the integrity, authenticity and coherence of places. Consequently, in these strategies the links between regional identity and the past through cultural heritage are mediated by a political project that appears to divorce economy from culture.

***Paper 3: Europe’s Possible SGI Futures: Territorial Settings and Potential Policy Paths***  
Borges, L. A.; Humer, A. and Smith, C. (2015)

The aim of this paper is to outline the consequences for different types of territory of three distinct scenarios that portray possible future development of Services of General Interests (SGI) in Europe. SGI is generally seen as a means to achieve the EU’s broader territorial cohesion goals. In an economic sense, the provision of basic soft and hard infrastructure services is a prerequisite for ensuring full

participation in the European single market, while in a social sense it is a prerequisite for the creation of more equitable living conditions across Europe's regions. Nevertheless, fair access to affordable and high-quality SGI across the EU territories is difficult to achieve due to the complex multi-level setting of responsibilities and the diversity of Europe with regard to economic development, culture, social conditions, history and the particular endowment of welfare-related institutions, as well as with regard to the need to address the specific regional conditions across different types of territory. With the aid of three SeGI futures – named Competitive, Social and Green Europe – a survey to evaluate the conflicts between goals settled at transnational level and possibilities and/or hindrances faced by member states and regions to achieve these goals was carried out on a group of national and regional experts from nine European countries, drawn from a number of different territorial settings.

The paper concludes that the potential future provision patterns, in regard to SGI, are likely to require the adoption of different location-specific solutions and are thus unlikely to be amenable to a generic 'one-size-fits-all' approach. Instead, a compromise focusing on a mix of Europe-wide principles and regionally specific targets is recommended.

*My contribution to the paper:* This paper was co-authored with Dr Humer and Smith. I wrote the following sections of this paper: Section 2 ('*Looking into the Future: The Research Process*'). I also contributed to writing parts of the following: Section 1 ('*Introduction: Territorial Cohesion, SGI and Uncertain Futures*') Section 3.1 ('*Provision of SGI at the National Level, NUTS0*'); Section 3.2 ('*Provision of SGI at the Regional Level, NUTS2*'); Section 3.3 ('*SGI Provision for Different Types of Territory under Different Socio-economic Policy Regimes*') and Section 4 ('*Final Considerations*').

**Paper 4: *Pluralising the Future Information Society.***

Gunnarsson-Östling, U., Höjer, M., Pargman, D., Borges, L. A.,  
(forthcoming)

The aim of this paper is to show that there are alternatives to contemporary forecasted futures and to show how ICT can be used in those futures. The incongruity between the high pace of ICT development, the rapid dissemination of new ICT infrastructure and devices and their unpredictable effects on socioeconomic structures form the main argument for creating possible and plural futures. It is argued that these futures facilitate the exploration of present and future developments, facilitate the process of identifying possible benefits and drawbacks of technological development and situate current decisions in a longer time frame. The process of designing five images of the future of Sweden in 2060 is then presented, and some of the benefits of using these images for different purposes (e.g. policy-making, creating knowledge, assessing environmental impacts, etc.) are discussed.

Among the concluding reflections about the value of future scenarios for dealing with uncertainty, we highlight that exploring the benefits and drawbacks of different possible futures can empower actors who currently play a role in shaping and implementing ICT strategies and policies, as well as actors in other fields and sectors getting to see the opportunities and risks associated with ICT for their fields. Issues related to the use of these images in engaging with the public, democratising planning and improving the robustness of decision-making are also discussed.

*My contribution to the paper:* This paper was co-authored with Dr Gunnarsson-Östling; Dr Höjer and Dr Pargman. I contributed to the overall structure of the paper and wrote the 'Abstract' and parts of the following sections: 'Introduction', 'Generation of Scenarios', 'To Assess Sustainability' and 'Final Considerations'.

***Paper 5: Education and Health in ICT-futures: Scenarios and Sustainability Impacts of ICT-societies.***

Borges, L. A. (2015)

The aim of this paper is to stimulate discussion about how sociocultural and political aspects of different ICT futures would interact in the education and health sectors. Short descriptions of leading ideas corresponding to current trends and uncertainties about the influence of ICT in society, together with existing scenarios that looked at the consequences of ICT technologies in the futures of both sectors, were the basis on which scenario elements for education and health were constructed. These scenario elements were some of many subjects that were studied to support the development of comprehensive descriptions of five ICT-futures for Sweden in 2060. Using the argument that the accessibility, affordability, quality and efficiency of these sectors influence the creation and maintenance of essential collective values such as democracy and justice, the creation of these scenario elements were placed within a sustainability perspective.

The findings suggested that the scenario elements provided different perspectives on how society, economy, culture and politics could evolve, and as such, they mediate discussions about the relationship between people and ICT in different futures in relation to education and health. Nevertheless, a critical reflection on the sustainability debate indicated the need to discuss changes in the meanings of democracy and justice in the different futures rather than focus on issues related to the accessibility, affordability and quality of education and health as a means to create and maintain these values.

Table 3: Interpretation of the papers within the argument of the research

Argument	Method	Theory	Studies contribution
<p>pasts and futures as interlinked space of struggles</p> <p><i>Insert heritage issues within mobility debates</i></p>	<p>Discourse analysis</p> <p>Interviews, questionnaire/ survey, document analysis</p>	<p>Social production of space</p> <p>Heritage</p>	<p>How the stories about pasts and futures</p> <p>Inform planning</p> <p>Are sustained by planning</p> <p>Functional regional mobility</p> <p>Official perspectives on heritage</p>
<b>Paper 1</b>	<p>With the new regional mobilities and networks of consumption, conflicts increasingly erupt between current official heritage practices and contemporary everyday demands</p>	<p>Heritage</p>	<p>Heritage derived from individuals' activities in time and space</p> <p>Conflicting planning and heritage management goals</p>
<b>Paper 2</b>	<p><i>Investigate uses of the past in new political spaces</i></p> <p>Uses of the past in the struggles over regional identity within an increasingly globalised market have resulted in a dilemma between regional openness, multiculturalism and establishment of regional identity.</p>	<p>Territorial identities</p> <p>Heritage</p>	<p>Pasts are downgraded to an institutionalised practice</p> <p>A-historical inheritance in planning: EU</p>
<b>Paper 3</b>	<p><i>Explore the futures of SGI in Europe</i></p> <p>The use of explorative scenarios that describe different future development of SGI reveals tensions between political legacies of member states and the EU political frame of unification</p>	<p>Policy making</p>	<p>Tensions between single futures and multiple pasts</p> <p>Pasts in the EU multi-level governance</p> <p>A-historical inheritance in planning: EU</p>
<b>Paper 3</b>	<p>Futures studies: scenarios</p> <p>Interviews, workshops, questionnaire/ survey</p>	<p>Policy making</p>	<p>Tensions between single futures and multiple pasts</p> <p>Pasts in the EU multi-level governance</p> <p>A-historical inheritance in planning: EU</p>

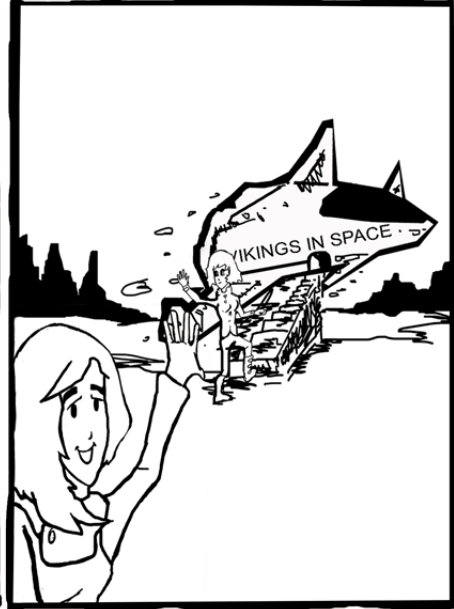
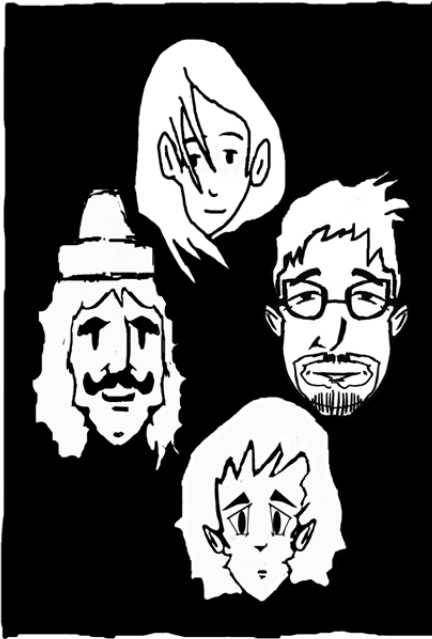
Table 3: Interpretation of the papers within the argument of the research

<p><b>Paper 4</b></p> <p><i>Explore future information society</i></p> <p>Struggles related to combining ICT efficiency while sustaining natural resources, especially because efficiency does not necessarily mean reduction but could instead generate increased depletion of resources due to rebound effects of using ICT</p>	<p>Futures studies: scenarios Interviews, workshops</p>	<p>Planning Sustainability</p>	<p>Opens up multiple futures, helping to think about the present and past</p>	<p>Sustainability</p>
<p><b>Paper 5</b></p> <p><i>Explore futures of education and health</i></p> <p>Fast pace with which technological innovations transform important sectors of society is likely to lead to unexpected consequences</p>	<p>Futures studies: scenarios Interview, workshop</p>	<p>Sustainability</p>	<p>Supports reflections about changes in meanings of values in the future</p>	<p>Sustainability</p>





2010 - 2016, Stockholm.



## 5 discussion

This chapter generates discussion of the main findings reported in the papers and based on the theoretical analysis presented in Chapter 2 of this cover essay. Section one of this chapter explains how the different cases analysed in the papers are understood as stories about pasts and futures, and how these stories shape – and themselves are shaped through – planning processes. It also presents the storylines that emerged from the empirical findings of the five papers. Section two explains how powerful discourses give shape to particular ideas and interpretations of the past and how these ideas inform planning. In section three, the argument that pasts and futures are plural, uncertain and interlinked is developed to explain how pasts can be partially fictitious and how futures can be partially historical. These arguments form a basis on which to introduce the concepts ‘new pasts’ and ‘ageing futures’, which are employed to help interpret the findings reported in the studies. This chapter concludes with reflections on how stories about pasts and futures and their role in planning could be rethought to build better futures.

### 5.1 Reconstructing the cases as stories about the pasts and futures

Each study in this research unfolds stories about the pasts and futures of each case as told by the different actors interviewed – including heritage experts, site managers, planners, and researchers – as well as evidenced in the different official and non-official documents consulted. The narratives of these stories are influenced by the preferred impacts the actors wished to have on the present and future. In this sense, each story is not only told by multiple voices, but also constructed through manifold layers of power relations within their different sociospatial and geographical contexts. Different temporalities and scales of each case were unfolded by re-constructing the cases as stories approached both from the future towards the present and the past, and from the past to the present and the future, and

light was shed on a number of overlooked planning issues that will be considered in the end of this chapter.

The stories told in the 'Regional-Past' case exemplify how politicians and planners tell particular stories about the past as unconscious professional practices, as well as deliberate efforts to achieve a certain outcome in the future. As reported in Borges and Adolphson (2016), the narratives of public and private actors about the official heritage in Mariefred reveal the dominant role such forms of heritage have in framing the desired future for the demographic development and the attractiveness and competitiveness of Mariefred. Similarly, as shown in Borges (forthcoming), the interviews with planners and the analysis of the documents demonstrate how stories about the past are supersized and downgraded in order to fit into a desirable future. These findings and the discussions presented in Holtorf and Högberg (2014) foreground the argument that particular pasts are selected and discursively addressed in the narratives of different actors and in the strategies for development as a means of 'sustaining' projects of 'a regional future' that essentially strive for economic growth. The authoritative heritage discourse that advocates the conservation of a selected valuable past and its transmission to future generations has been utilised in regional politics as a political instrument to promote economic development.

In the SeGI-Futures case, experts from nine countries and regions across Europe – each representing a different type of territory – evaluate different stories about the delivery of SGI in Europe in 2030. The outcome of their assessment suggested that history is more important than geography. Here, history refers to the distinct institutional framework of each member state, which is constructed and embedded within long-term development. The diverse institutional settings of the member states struggle to fit with the new institutional and political frame of unification proposed by the EU. As shown in Borges et al (2015), choices between the best alternative futures vary depending on the member states' (MS) sociopolitical and cultural contexts. For example, the UK expert indicates the Competitive Europe scenario as the most favourable, while the Norwegian expert maintains that the Social Europe scenario is the best option. (Borges, et al., 2015, p. 141)

In the ICT-Futures case, five alternative stories about futures for Sweden in 2060 are presented. While four of these futures explore developments that are steered by contemporary ideas (e.g. economic decline, segregation, life online, convenience, environmental sustainability), the fifth alternative future is target oriented and describes a society in which the Swedish Environment Objectives have been achieved. These futures provide discursive expressions about how technology, society, culture and politics could evolve in the future. In line with Haugaard (2003), who argues that discursive means might unveil modes of thought that have been suppressed in everyday practices, Gunnarsson et al (forthcoming, p. 14), pointed out that city planners were horrified to discover that in some ways, they were unwittingly planning for a segregated future similar the one described in

‘Communities and Distrust’. It could thus be argued that alternative futures enable people to critically reflect on their performance in the present.

Despite holding different perspectives and interests, the actors from the different cases of this research connect and cluster along storylines. As shown in Borges & Adolphson (2016) and Borges (forthcoming), conflicting objectives of preservation and development are overlooked within policies for city branding and competitiveness. Regional development is embedded by discursive themes such as openness, competitiveness and attractiveness. These themes or ideas are reproduced in regional planning in Sweden and are also nested within a larger discourse of European integration. Under the rationale of competitiveness, regional and heritage authorities and private actors form alliances to communicate and reproduce ideas that connect ‘the past’ to economy, creativity and innovation (Hammami, 2015).

A storyline of ‘suppressing diversity for unification’ seems to emerge from the findings in Borges (forthcoming) and Borges et al (2015). Objectives settled at the supranational level are carried over and disseminated across complex and multi-level networks that involve a multitude of actors. Nevertheless, rather than being a resource, ‘the multiple pasts’ of the MS undermine EU policy in relation to the provision of services and become an obstacle to the EU assimilative agendas (Borges, et al., 2015). Borges (forthcoming, p. 20) showed that European ideas are ingrained in regional planning in Sweden and are unconsciously reproduced by planners because these ideas represent *how things are done*. In light of Haugaard’s (2003) arguments on power, it means that overlooking EU directives in regional planning would not sustain how the existing social order is reproduced in politics.

As suggested in Gunnarsson et al (forthcoming) and Borges (2015), there are different actors actively working on a storyline of ICT and sustainability. Academics, private and public actors discuss and speculate on different ways society and technology could evolve in the future. One of the main struggles relies on combining ICT efficiency while sustaining natural resources, especially because efficiency does not necessarily mean reduction, but could instead generate increased depletion of resources due to the rebound effects of using ICT. This dilemma raises several questions about how ICT could mediate the relationship between society and environment, and as such it connects many actors from diverse sectors, as well as members of the public who likely hold quite different perspectives.

The above discussion on the storylines that emerged from the different cases sheds light on how stories are reproduced, transformed and challenged by actors from different sociospatial contexts. They also suggested that stories are not simply reproduced; they are also transformed. Depending on their different perspectives and interests, different actors tell similar stories differently, exaggerating some aspects while downplaying others.

## **5.2 Mobilising discourses in planning: shaping planning practices and shaping stories about pasts and futures**

The plural, uncertain and interwoven nature of pasts and futures is often contested, assimilated, negotiated and homogenised in planning practices. Particular concepts and ideas become – consciously and unconsciously – mobilised and authorised, affected by institutionalised stories about pasts and futures.

The recurrence of particular ideas in planning is quite common, especially because planning is a public activity that requires legitimacy. Such legitimacy is often achieved through the discursive power of stories. As Haugaard (2003) argues, for stories to become valid they should be attuned to common understandings. Over time, the clustering of powerful stories might develop into dominant discourses that have the power to inform, politicise and challenge planning practices. At the same time, these discourses often help make sense of planning practices by providing ground where different actors meet and discuss their roles, setting rules for their interaction. They can also steer planning practices, creating a sense of dependency (Hammami, 2015) and locking planning into particular ways of ‘doing’ (Haugaard, 2003). A central issue in these discourses are the ways in which they facilitate the institutionalisation of particular forms of knowledge, thereby resulting in sociospatial realities on the ground. In this way, such knowledge and spatial practices form a basis for the assemblages of particular futures.

A story about the aspiration for a peaceful Europe after World War II is often acknowledged as the seed from which the discourse of a single and united Europe germinated and flourished. Since the 1990’s in particular, the European discourse of unification has been the basis for the legitimatisation of several policy agendas within the national and local politics of the member states. Common agendas have included social cohesion, polycentricity, frictionless mobilities, creative industry, cross-border collaboration, etc. This ‘policy transfer’ has been associated with new administrative arrangements and institutions, commonly expressed despite the members’ different spatial, socioeconomic and cultural contexts (Paasi & Zimmerbauer, 2015). This has also been advocated with hegemonic planning practices and territorial governance through which new power dynamics have emerged for the control over territories, obscuring issues related to democracy and deliberation (Schmidt, 2013).

Borges and Adolphson (2016) illustrated how the past has been used to give shape to the models and drivers that sustain and strengthen this discourse. This includes the European spatial model of functional regions, which is a key concept for enhancing the polycentric spatial development of Europe. Focusing on individuals’ consumption patterns throughout the Mälardalen region and their perceptions of the past, this study shows conflicting meanings of the underlined idea of the uses of the past to promote local and regional development. With regard to increasing regional mobility, heritage signifies regional attractiveness and branding, while conversely conceived as an obstacle for regional development. The bewildering message is carried across that conservation goes well with development, erroneously sustaining

the idea that regional planning and heritage management share similar goals and work at similar paces.

Over time, this European discourse has created an institutional culture that is passed down within regional planning practices in Sweden despite its recent emergence. The findings in Borges (forthcoming) reveal that the regional strategies of the different counties are quite similar in regards to objectives, goals, priorities and strategies. Some planners have highlighted the mimetism in making regional planning strategies, since they must be formulated in accordance with overarching policies conceived at a transnational level, which however – according to the planner from Sörmlands County – seem abstract and difficult to translate and apply at regional and local levels. (Borges, forthcoming, s. 18). Borges et al. (2015) uncover tensions between the political legacy of the Nation States and the EU political frame. The multiple pasts of the member states are suppressed, giving rise to struggles over identity, authority and territoriality due to the discursive conflicts between the single-Europe discourse and the specific planning practices of each member state. The assessment of alternative futures undertaken in this study revealed the importance of different political traditions and different types of territories in regards to common objectives pursued by the EU.

These studies show that the European discourse is increasingly suffused in planning practices across the EU region through the dissemination of stories that give rise to a sense of urgency to prioritise certain issues over others. As the analysis of regional strategies for regional development of the different counties suggests, economic growth and competitiveness are highlighted over other objectives (Borges, forthcoming).

The Authorized Heritage Discourse (AHD) (Smith, 2006) is another example of how particular concepts and ideas become more present in planning. The processes of ‘heritagisation’ (Harvey, 2001) and AHD explain how the stories of the ruling and upper middle classes in the nineteenth century became guiding principles for heritage management – and thereby in the planning systems – of several European and non-European countries. These stories later defined the Outstanding Universal Values that UN organisations like UNESCO seek to protect through its World Heritage Convention (Hammami, 2012). While doing this, these values and organisations frame our futures and define which heritage is valuable for our future generations. An example of this is the official story that UNESCO uses to justify the presence of World Heritage as an institution and practice. They claim that without the international community and collaborative efforts to protect heritage, the world would have lost heritage sites such as Venice in Italy and the Abu Simpel Temple in Egypt (van der Aa, 2005). These stories defend the presence of – and challenge any criticism against – the World Heritage Convention, despite its exclusionary or Western-centric nature.

As demonstrated in Borges and Adolphson (2016), the AHD not only permeates regional strategies and policies, but also reaches peoples’ everyday lives and influences their perception of heritage. The physical expressions of the medieval

past in the contemporary regional landscape and mobility help Mariefred become more attractive and economically successful than other places within the same region. The AHD ideas are also ingrained in individuals' perceptions of heritage which, according to some of the interviewees, 'it is wrong to contest, good to reproduce and an alibi for the displacement of public activities' (Borges & Adolphson, 2016, s. 18).

Sustainable Development is the last case taken to show the character of how discourses have been shaping planning practices. A number of stories, including the book *Silent Spring*, written by Rachel Carson in 1962, have sown the idea of sustainability that has gained a stronger institutional voice since the 1990s. Since then, sustainable development discourses have given shape to the priorities and ambitions within planning practices in Sweden and worldwide. This discourse is significantly informed by the degradation of environmental resources that we have witnessed in recent years. It acknowledges our debt to our environment and poses a fundamental question between socioeconomic models of development and their relation with the preservation of the environment for future generations. In addition, social inclusion and participatory planning agendas have become part of planning practices as the ideal models for reaching sustainability goals. Over time, sustainable development discourse has enabled many actors to connect and collaborate despite their diverging interests and different interpretations of what sustainable development is. The discursive troops of sustainability allowed them to expand their own understanding and discursive competences beyond their expertise and competition.

As explained in Borges et al (2015), sustainability is engendered within the European discourse (European Commission, 1999). Nevertheless, sustainable development becomes a buzzword, especially if related to a geographical area as large as Europe. Philosophical and political consensus concerning sustainable development has also been used as a conciliation principle for opposing views and interests. This has allowed a broad range of interpretations, which often leads to the trivialisation of meaning and negligence of implications (Hugé, Waas, Dahdouh-Guebas, Koedam, & Block, 2013).

The futures created in Gunnarsson et al (forthcoming) and Borges (2015) aimed to assist answering the question of how a sustainable society could be achieved with the use of ICT in Sweden in 2060. A linkage with the discourse of ecological modernisation (Lundqvist, 2004) might then be drawn, since it unveils the underlined assumption that ICT might be able to minimise environmental damage and lead to more sustainable futures. The scenarios explore the socioeconomic consequences of the use of ICT, addressing the relationship between environment and society under the perspectives of limits and change (Hugé, Waas, Dahdouh-Guebas, Koedam, & Block, 2013). The '*Valued Environment*' scenario for example defines development in relation to the Earth's carrying capacity, in which human activity should be seen within the dynamic limits of the ecosystems.



The discussions above illustrate how stories of pasts and futures could be steered by stabilised discourses (European Discourse of Unification, Authorized Heritage Discourse and the Sustainability Discourse) and how they have been suffusing planning practices at different scales and contexts.

### **5.3 Fiction and history in stories**

Following the argument that pasts and futures are plural, uncertain and interwoven, the ways we conceive ‘our valuable pasts’ and how these conceptions shape ‘our desirable futures’ within planning processes are often informed by history and fiction. While fiction is often associated with future and history associated with the past, this research makes the argument that planning practices are often embodied by unconscious discursive constructions of “fictitious pasts” and “historic futures”.

#### **Fictitious pasts: new pasts**

Ricoeur (1985) claims that fictional narratives are used in history to enable individuation; i.e. to situate the individual in relation to the universal. Provoking feelings of magnificence or fear, fictional narrative helps build up memory and as a consequence, fiction works as a link between lived time and the time of the world, or between subjectivities and intersubjectivities (Ricoeur, 1985).

Fictional narrative is understood here in a broad sense, meaning what is invented, or created by imagination. This can be a highly politicised process tied to specific times and interests of people. As explained by Harvey (2001), the pasts bend to adjust to the needs of the present. Pasts are always interacting with the current social and economic changes. The heritage industry, for example, has emerged as a consequence of changes in travel patterns, tourism and leisure (Rojek & Urry, 1997). Hetherington (2008) shows that heritage is increasingly used as a resource for place marketing and city competitiveness.

Seen from this perspective, one could argue that pasts are attuned to and/or are used as a resource in the present by using fictional narratives. This may entail inventing traditions that – despite being related to processes that persist in time (e.g. inheritance of social practices) – were enforced and reproduced repetitively over short periods of time with the aim of instilling certain morals and rules (Hobsbawm, 2013).

Based on findings in Borges and Adolphson (2016) and Borges (forthcoming), I argue that regional planning and heritage authorities in Sweden use fictional narratives to make representations of the past for regional development. Findings in Borges and Adolphson (2016) suggest that different planning authorities tell stories of the past differently. For regional planners, heritage in Mariefred is used as a resource for attractiveness, whilst for heritage authorities it is the subject of preservation. The institutionalised power/knowledge of heritage authorities corroborates the value of particular pasts and pledges for their conservation in the future. These pasts gain respect because they are validated and will endure through

time, and they are thus used as a reliable resource for enhancing other objectives in regional politics.

As Borges and Adolphson show (2016), private and public stakeholders are gathered and the binary ‘progress and tradition’ is sustained through the fictitious narratives of the past (or fictitious pasts), claiming the existence of a happy union between heritage and regional development and instilling a sense of ‘order’, certainty and continuity between past and future. As shown in Borges & Adolphson (2016), threats to the conservation of heritage or the holding back of development at the local level are swept under the proverbial rug, revealing the dilemma of tradition/conservation and progress/development. The same study also showed that the governor of Gripsholm Castle sustains a fictitious narrative about the castle, which he views as an individual object divorced from the town but representative of national interest and important historical significance (Borges & Adolphson, 2016, s. 16).

Borges (forthcoming) demonstrates how regional identity has been linked with issues of the past; this has however been done by separating regional economies from their contextual settings and cultures. While economic development is dynamic and vital for the survival of regions, cultural heritage is sometimes conceived – especially within the neoliberal regional strategies – as something passive and perennial and, as such, it is viewed as ballast. The fictitious pasts re-interpreted in the light of economic development however seem to clash with the perspective of heritage as a cultural and political resource (Lowenthal, 1985; Graham, 2002), which reinforces the idea of continuity and linearity by situating individuals within the *‘familiarity and guidance, enrichment and escape – but also, and more potently, validation or legitimation’ of their environments* (Graham, 2002, s. 1008).

In light of these discussions, the reinterpretation of pasts in the present as suggested in Borges and Adolphson (2016) facilitates the construction of new pasts. The ‘new pasts’ are ‘results’ of the interaction of pasts with the current socioeconomic context. They are the new values that individuals, social groups and institutions construct in the present, emerging through the fictional narrative that reinterpret the pasts as resource in the present.

One of the examples offered in Borges and Adolphson (2016) concerns the present conception of heritage in Mariefred within the new regional mobilities, which suggests that “‘just the view’ of Gripsholm Castle is enough to support consumption within the town, to provoke strong emotions in residents and to regard the castle as the most important ‘object’ in the region’ (Borges & Adolphson, 2016, s. 18). This finding unveils new relationships that people have established with the past, which is re-interpreted in light of the expectations of the future of the Swedish regional planning and politics. Therefore, it is not the same past; it is a new past.

Peoples’ relationships with pasts are constantly changing, giving birth to new pasts. In Sweden, people visit Västergötland to reenact the stories they have read about

the fictional character Arn Magnusson (Västergötlands Museum, u.d.). Similarly, tourists from many European countries visit the medieval town of Ystad to walk in the footsteps of the Swedish fictional crime character Kurt Wallander (Hammami, 2015). These examples illustrate how history uses fiction for branding purposes and modern tourism. In these examples, the past has been challenged and reproduced in images that never existed.

### **Historic futures: ageing futures**

Usually people disassociate future from the past, but here I argue that futures are influenced by the past and futures are likely to become history quite easily, and by doing so they can inform planning.

The construction of futures is driven by people's beliefs and expectations, and those are informed by past experience. Futures are also constrained by lock-ins; they are therefore not empty. Even radical futures that break with the current social order have been consciously or unconsciously assembled in relation to the past. The simple decision of breaking with the past is per se based on past events; thus, futures are historical. The term historical futures has a broad meaning here; it is not directly related to history as such, but rather includes subjective and intersubjective past experiences.

Ricoeur (1985) asserts that fictional and historical narratives imitate one another. He proposes the 'quasi-historical' nature of fiction, arguing that if the purpose of fiction is to emancipate from history, looking backward at a fiction story, one could recognise the events that did not occur in the past. These events or possibilities mirror/reflect the quasi-historical character of fiction. The quasi-past of fiction is the radar of possibilities suppressed in the past. It refers to '*what 'might have been' including both the potentialities of the real past and the unreal possibilities of pure fiction* (Ricoeur, 1985, s. 192)'.

Borrowing Ricoeur's argument, one could say that the historical constructs underpinning images of futures help identify and reflect upon current and past ideas projected forward as part of future. For example, Borges et al (2015) present the SeGI-futures as consequential of each other. In general, the Competitive Europe future, in which the market is the main provider of services, reflects the business-as-usual scenario in which neo-liberal solutions drive the management of services. The Social Europe future is constructed as a reaction to the individualism enhanced in Competitive Europe. In this case, the state delivers services with the aim of promoting social and territorial cohesion. This future suggests a return to the past in which the state could hold control of its borders and affairs in a context where globalisation was not as intense as it is today. The Green Europe future emerges as a failure of the previous futures in dealing with environmental issues, which has arrived at a critical state. The zero-growth policy denotes the impotence of the state and market to manage services in the face of an environmental crisis. In this context, society has to take care of the services. The underlined assumption in these

futures corroborates with the current coupling between economic growth and environmental depletion.

Another example is the ‘Valued Environment’ scenario in the ICT-futures case (Gunnarsson-Östling, et al., forthcoming). In this future, the fulfilment of the Swedish environment objectives is achieved with the help of an economic mechanism (environrights). This ‘currency’ is the means to regulate the relation between society and environment, unveiling a future that is still based on the link drawn between economic developments and harm to the environment. Both examples unveil the inability to envisage radical futures, since the ‘possibilities’ that they describe are in some extent anchored in current logic that steers how the relationship between economy, society and environment might take place in the future. In other words, they are undermined or conditioned by the historical constructs.

Futures are not static constructions; they may in fact become past quite easily, and in doing so they become ageing futures. Ageing futures emerge from the encounter between the present and the envisioned future. As suggested in the hourglass figure (Chapter 2), in Holtorf and Högberg (2014) the present is happening, moving forward and becoming past, while new facts, events and narratives quickly reshape and very often disable the ‘becoming’ of or the passing over envisioned futures. For example, the realisation of any of the ICT-futures implies that particular paths of development will be taken in the countless *presents* that precede 2060. In this sense, a future with economic decline excludes the possibility of a high-tech society as proposed in the future ‘Controlled Convenience’ (see Gunnarsson et al (forthcoming)). Taking the framework of plural pasts and futures from Holtorf and Högberg (2014), one could say that the movement of the present towards the future reshapes the selection of preferred pasts and the expectations of desirable futures. Therefore, during the course of the ‘*following presents*’, unknown events will probably disable (discharge) the ‘becoming’ of these images in the future and as these images will have become part of the past before the target future takes place.

Ageing futures resembles the argument made by Myers and Kitsuse (2000, p. 226) about the multiple temporal processes that operate at different timelines and which include temporal relations (chronological historical conditions) and life cycles. The latter corresponds to what dies and emerges within the sequential historical conditions and thus prevents or facilitates the coming about of a particular future. Their reasoning seems to highlight temporalities in relation to power, which are often overlooked in planning, and instead relies heavily on static conceptions of the past, institutionalised forms of knowledge and routines.

‘Ageing futures’ are valuable resources for planning. Studies of utopias such as the ‘Garden City’ of Ebenezer Howard or the ‘Industrial City’ by Tony Garnier, or Le Corbusier’s Ville Radieuse and Ville Contemporaine have instrumented, mediated discussions and enlightened many assumptions about how space could be designed to adjust societal changes. As Borges (2015) suggests, social values will possibly acquire new meanings and thus be perceived and evaluated differently in the future.

For example, one of the contemporary ways to measure democracy is by evaluating the willingness of people to participate in public decisions such as elections and referendums. In the 'Controlled Convenience' future, countless sensors positioned in public spaces would monitor and register people's everyday practices such as travelling and shopping. In this future, people's choices and behaviours would be taken into consideration on an everyday basis, and perhaps it could be a future in which everyone participates. Thereby 'ageing futures' seem to provide a platform for informing the political dimension of planning, opening up a space for discussion about the present.

#### **5.4 Rethinking stories of pasts and futures in planning**

Reconstructing the cases of this research as stories informed by different actors and discursive arenas has unfolded some storylines: regional competitiveness; suppressing diversity for unification and ICT and sustainability. These storylines have played a significant role in regional politics and steered ideas of the past in the present (fictitious past) and also shaped ideas of the future (historical futures). They have helped create new pasts whilst at the same time contributing to ageing futures.

Understanding pasts as fiction means acknowledging them as alive, uncertain and ceaselessly interacting with economic processes. In relation to the 'Regional-Pasts' case (Borges & Adolphson, 2016; Borges, forthcoming), this perspective challenges regional planning and heritage management because instead of organising, it relativises stories of the past, also unveiling how they might be used to project particular futures instead of others. Both studies have shown that increased mobility, multiculturalism and rapid changes in societal values are some of the current trends that reinforce the need to deepen knowledge about how pasts can be rethought in order to decrease social inequalities and enhance representation of different social groups in the future. But overall, these studies also showed the power of inventing traditions and expanding markets for the past.

Seeing pasts and futures as origin and consequence of one another highlights the importance of exploring how values might change in the future (new pasts) instead of simply assuming that peoples' values will remain the same values as they are today. In the words of Harrison (2013, ss. 228-229), *'Thinking of heritage as a creative engagement with the past in the present focuses our attention on our ability to take an active and informed role in the production of our own future.'* Using alternative futures could help with the exploration of what could be valued as cultural heritage in the future and addressing alternatives for its management. This would be relevant not only to promote a dialogue about what cultural heritage could be, but also to enhance a future of heritage that is more open, diverse, inclusive, representative and creative.

Exploring alternative futures that consider changes in the public sector and growing participation can contribute to a progressive approach to cultural heritage in regional development and local planning policy. The use of alternative futures

might disclose new competences that could be needed to cope with the increasing cross-sectorial work that is currently part of the management of heritage issues, and it is likely to become more complex, considering growing globalisation, mobility and therefore increased interconnectedness between different cultures.

Understanding futures as history implies identification and analysis of the historical constructs that are embedded in images of futures. It triggers connections between futures, presents and pasts and might enable us to come to understand the preconditions that shape the present. SeGI- and ICT-Futures cases have uncovered two storylines, 'suppressing diversity for unification' and 'ICT and sustainability', uncovering issues that are of importance for planning and policy-making today.

The alternative futures created in Gunnarsson et al (forthcoming) and Borges (2015) contributed to pluralising and relativising planning. These futures however can be conceived as historical, because they were created to address current challenges that have emerged through past processes and were conceived within a 'particular' social order (Haugaard, 2003).

The 'movement' between future-present as suggested in the backcasting models of future studies can also take place in relation to the past of the futures and could provide an important perspective on the long-term historical study of social relations. In the same way that backcasting could facilitate the exploration of the gaps between a particular image of the future and the present (Wangel, 2012), looking at the historical constructs on which futures rely may allow deconstruction, thus shedding light on why things are as they are.

Ageing futures could also provide a basis for policy-making and planning. Looking at the failure of future images to becoming 'present' may help the identification of the possible causes that prevented that future from happening, and the understanding of divergences between the envisioned future and the current development. It could also become a platform for discussion and for the identification of stakeholders that might have prevented an envisioned future from becoming reality; the ageing future could help us to identify today what has not become, why and who might have prevented the change towards that future.



2016, Stockholm





## 6 conclusions

This research showed how pasts, presents and futures are intertwined spaces of struggles between a multitude of actors, discourses, institutions and practices, and it has also opened critical discussions on how stories about pasts, presents and futures can inform, but also become sustained by, planning processes. The use of stories as a research strategy and as a theoretical framework helped compare the different studies of this research and project its contribution within its three main fields of inquiry: heritage studies, futures studies and planning.

The discursive approach to the cases and reconstructing by going forward – as well as backward – through the pasts-present-futures has given shape to new concepts that are addressed in this thesis as “*fictitious pasts*”, referring to new pasts; and “*historical futures*”, referring to ageing futures. While ‘*new pasts*’ are seen as the new values that have risen from the use of fiction narratives that describe the encounter between pasts and present, ‘*ageing futures*’ are understood as the futures that became past as a result of the encounter between the present and the envisioned future. These concepts brought new insights to the current debates on just futures within planning theory and practices. Both ‘new pasts’ and ‘ageing futures’ come to inform planning practices since they support an understanding of pasts and futures as alive and continuously ‘rewritten’ in the present. They are advocated for in this thesis based on the idea that neither pasts nor futures are static or empty constructions, but rather resources that could be utilised to construct inclusive futures.

Seen in this perspective, this research attempted to unfold the complexity of planning processes, with a specific focus on the ways competing stories about pasts and futures become re-constructed and re-projected within policy discourses and documents and how they are expressed in our spatial realities and reach our everyday life choices. Power issues were thus exposed not only in relation to how

these stories are told, but also by understanding them as embedded in – and thus also constrained by – assumptions about what the present is. These discussions challenged any assimilation of our plural pasts, presents and futures, and opened new debates concerning “our valuable pasts” and “our desirable futures”. This has raised important questions regarding the representations of these pasts and futures and made a direct contribution to a growing debate on the different typologies of futures, the possible, the probable, and the preferable.

Inserted into current debates of heritage, the dialogue between pasts and futures could for example strive for a conservation of pasts that is not rooted in today's evaluation about what is worth preserving, but instead based on how societies could look in the future. In this respect, alternative futures could facilitate the widening of perspectives about what might be valuable in the future. Seeing pasts and futures as interlinked, plural and uncertain opens a space for a more transparent, inclusive and democratic discussion in which the preservation of pasts becomes relativized and fed by expectations of plural futures. This adds a new perspective to the recurrent question in heritage studies: “Whose past should be preserved?”

The relativization of pasts, presents and futures as advocated in this thesis helps reconstruct the democratic and inclusive representation in planning practices following a critical engagement with the (discursive) struggles that surround the cases in their different sociospatial contexts and multiple spatial scales.

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