6 Narrative Path Dependencies

From Scenario Building in Literary Texts to the Narratology and Rhetoric of Pragmatic Texts

This chapter further seeks to conceptualise the transition from texts as ‘models *of*’ the city to texts as ‘models *for*’ the city. More precisely, it develops a theoretical framework for the side-by-side analysis of the real-world functions of literary texts, for instance in scenario building, and of the literary strategies in and functions of pragmatic texts such as planning documents. In doing so, it draws on a number of fields and builds on selected concepts from narratology, the theory of metaphor as developed in the interplay between literary studies and the theory of historiography, research on cognitive models in cognitive linguistics and cognitive anthropology, the history of ideas as well as approaches to text–context relations and *Funktionsgeschichte*.¹ Though I do not wish to add to the wealth of material on text–context relations directly (for a compelling approach, cf. Baßler), a few considerations on the relationship of literature and context are in order. Finally, developing further recent narratological research on planning texts in literary urban studies,² the chapter proposes the notion of what I call “narrative path dependencies” in planning texts.

A Caveat: Ambiguity as Blessing or Curse?

If the field of literary urban studies is genuinely interested in a productive exchange with planning studies, as I think it must be, a potential challenge emerges from the very different valuation of ambiguity in both fields: While ambiguity has generally been regarded as a central characteristic of literary texts and has been highly valorised in literary studies, which thrive on ambiguities, it has generally been regarded as a problem in much planning research.³

Even though the Latin root “*ambi-*” strictly speaking suggests exactly two meanings, ambiguity may be defined as the phenomenon of a term, an utterance, a text, an image or a concept having several meanings or potential interpretations. The first definition in the *OED* is telling, because it suggests both a neutral to positive as well as a clearly negative evaluation: “Originally and chiefly with reference to language: the fact or quality of having different possible meanings; capacity for being interpreted in more than one way; (also) lack of specificity or exactness” (*OED*, 1a). At the simplest level, many common words in everyday language are ambiguous, words like ‘set’, ‘put’ or ‘bank’ (both as nouns and as verbs) being obvious examples. Visually, the

Figure 6.1 The ‘Necker cube’ as an example of visual ambiguity.

Source: Daniel Bläser, www.dbgrafik.de.

‘Necker cube’ is a well-known example of ambiguity: It is unclear whether we are looking at the cube from above or from below (cf. Figure 6.1).

Ambiguity may arise at several levels and may have several causes: We might distinguish – at least – between verbal, syntactic and semantic or conceptual ambiguity. Moreover, ambiguity needs to be distinguished from related terms such as ambivalence or contradiction, which, although frequently treated as overlapping or even as synonymous, should be regarded as different categories from diverse fields of intellectual inquiry (for this cf. Berndt/Kammer; Gurr 2017). While ‘ambivalence’ is originally a psychological or cognitive concept designating a state of indecision, undecidability or unclear evaluation, and ‘contradiction’ is a notion from logic designating two or more irreconcilable propositions, ‘ambiguity’ is originally a rhetorical concept (cf. Berndt/Kammer). Thus, ambiguity in a text may be the *result* of attitudinal ambivalence, which manifests itself in unresolved contradictions in the text: For instance, conflicting interests in a planning process may manifest themselves in irreconcilable requirements, which may be understood as the result of attitudinal ambivalence on the part of the authors. In any longer document, ambiguity may also be the result of a sequence of propositions which, each in themselves, are unambiguous but irreconcilable with one another. Thus, even if any individual passage is perfectly clear, the unharmonised concatenation of contradictory passages, as its cumulative effect, may still create an ambiguity of the text as a whole (cf. Gurr 2017 for a detailed discussion of a specific literary example). This sequential type of ambiguity may be the result of ambivalent attitudes on the part of one author, but it is frequently the result of an unsuccessful attempt at harmonising or combining conflicting interests. In a more positive sense, however, ambiguity does not have to be seen as the *result* of, say, an imprecise use of language. Rather, language, and especially literary language, often allows for the resolution, suspension or sublation – one might more critically also speak of the ‘glossing over’ – of contradictions in a type of deliberate ambiguity (cf. Gurr 2017 for a more detailed discussion).

While most societal fields will generally seek to eliminate or at least to minimise ambiguity – law, medicine or technology come to mind, but the same can be said of the field of planning – scholars of narrative have argued that ambiguity may also foster social cohesion: By allowing more diverse groups of stakeholders to find points of identification, narratives with a certain fuzziness and indeterminacy, those which leave room for interpretation and negotiation, are *more* rather than *less* socially binding than precise narratives, and

thus *more* conducive to generating social cohesion and to canvassing public support (cf. Koschorke 349–352 *et passim*). A classic case in point would be programmes of political parties, which, if too specific, could hardly generate broad support across different societal groups and coalitions of interest.

While one will hardly want to suggest that planning documents – let alone legal texts or contracts – should deliberately be ambiguous, it may be helpful to bear in mind this social function of ambiguity. Thus, not only is the tolerance of ambiguity a central ability for individuals to function in complex, highly differentiated social environments. Ambiguous documents – or those which allow different stakeholders complementary, possibly even contradictory means of identification – may even productively function as ‘boundary objects’ enabling communication and exchange across academic cultures as well as between professionals and laypeople.⁴ It seems, however, that contentious issues are here frequently ‘postponed’ rather than resolved.⁵

Scenarios, Symbolic Action, Emplotment and Cognition: Concepts for the Contextual Reading of Literary and Planning Texts

One of the central functions of literature, according to one understanding, is that it serves as a form of symbolic action, as a social experiment free from the constraints of everyday life – literature as ‘de-pragmatised behaviour in rehearsal’, which makes it possible symbolically to try out in fiction different scenarios or potential solutions for key societal issues.⁶ This is the view formulated, among others, by Kenneth Burke, Dieter Wellershoff, Wolfgang Iser or somewhat more recently in an impressive volume edited by Stefan Glomb and Stefan Horlacher. One classic formulation is Wellershoff’s, who spoke of literature as providing “spaces of simulation for alternative behaviour in rehearsal at reduced risk”⁷ (57; my translation; cf. also Glomb/Horlacher *passim*). Kenneth Burke’s notion of “Literature as Equipment for Living” is a related concept, according to which any work of literature has the social function of being an attempt at naming a situation and coming to terms with it. In this sense, literature can be seen as an assembly of case studies in naming situations and in solving problems, an arsenal of strategies for dealing with situations that is developed in fiction but can lay claim to real-world applicability (cf. Burke; for a convenient summary of his position, cf. the essay “Literature as Equipment for Living” in that volume, 293–304).

What is also helpful to an understanding of texts as models *for* urban developments are the views of Jürgen Link, Winfried Fluck or Hubert Zapf on functions of literature in the system of culture in the sense of a ‘history of its functions’ (*Funktionsgeschichte*; for an overview cf. Gymnich/Nünning; for one influential account, cf. Fluck). Thus, following Zapf’s suggestive terminology in his “triadic model of functions” (2002, 63ff.), literature can function as a form of critical cultural diagnosis (“critical meta-discourse”), or as a “reintegrating inter-discourse”, which re-integrates into the cultural whole what is otherwise marginalised or repressed. Finally, it is also an “imaginative counter-discourse”, which develops alternatives to dominant discourses and

processes and which can thus assume a utopian potential (Zapf 2001; cf. also Zapf 2002; and several contributions in Zapf 2008).

It is especially this last function that productively relates to Wellershoff's notion of literature as a 'de-pragmatised rehearsal' (57). But these considerations relate more specifically to the strand of research connected to the 'story turn in planning', which has made central fields of knowledge in literary and cultural studies productive to interdisciplinary urban research. Thus, planning research has for some 20 years now recognised the centrality of narratives to urban planning and urban development (cf. for instance Ameal 2021; Sandercock 2010; Throgmorton 1996, 2003; van Hulst). While in Zapf's suggestive terminology literature functions as an "imaginative counter-discourse", Sandercock in an essay on the "story turn in planning" has in remarkably similar ways stressed the role of narratives in developing and fostering alternative scenarios: "Stories and storytelling can be powerful agents or aids in the service of change, as shapers of a new imagination of alternatives" (Sandercock 2010, 25; cf. also van Hulst 303 *et passim*).

In this vein, storytelling is frequently deployed in ambitious, large-scale urban development projects such as the reuse of former industrial or port areas in order, for instance, to project a *genius loci* or to conjure up a specific type of urbanity. Thus, it is hardly surprising that large-scale urban projects have even specifically commissioned literary texts in order to develop and foster scenarios for future developments of these areas.⁸

More specifically, however, narratives (together with suggestive visualisations) are often used in scenario depictions, which, originally in the field of futures studies (for an overview, cf. Bell), but also in the field of urban development, are frequently used as descriptions of a potential future development (merely sketched or fully fleshed out), usually presented in the form of several alternative possible developments. A high-profile example of four global scenarios for 2050 – including suggestive narratives, visualisation and personalisation through allegedly representative individuals and their lives in 2050 – is provided by consultancy ARUP's 2019 foresight report *Scenarios 2050: Four Plausible Scenarios* (cf. ARUP). More specifically, research on the future of urban mobility frequently works with different scenarios, alternative versions of the future. Project NEMO (New Emscher Mobility; my translation) at the University of Duisburg-Essen, for instance, a project on future mobilities in the Emscher region, works with five scenarios in which (1) rapid technological innovation will have led to largely automated mobility systems ('smart mobility'), (2) a concern with human health and well-being will have led to an emphasis on walkability, bikeability and electrically-powered public transport with an inner-city ban on fossil-fuel vehicles ('healthy city'), (3) inhospitable living conditions in cities will have led to deurbanisation, or (4) the present-day situation continues as it is (commonly referred to as 'business as usual'). Finally, there is also a scenario that combines elements of the other scenarios (5). A frequently formulated scenario not visualised here is one in which drastic environmental degradation will have led to the enforced imposition of radical

Figure 6.2 Visualisation of five scenarios for future urban mobility and settlement patterns.

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measures ('eco-dictatorship'). Each of these scenarios may be outlined in a short text accompanied by suggestive visualisations (cf. Figure 6.2).

Scenario techniques are usually said to have originated in military strategies during the Cold War, with Herman Kahn of the RAND Corporation combining game theory and fictional stories to devise possible strategies in the face of nuclear threats (cf. Ghamari-Tabrizi). An awareness of possible future developments and their impacts on a given system (a city, a region, the nation-state, the planet as a whole) is clearly crucial to any responsible and circum-spect planning and strategy development.

If we regard ‘scenario building’ and the testing of alternative parameter settings in their impact on a given system as a crucial function of urban systems modelling, an important parallel between literature and planning emerges, and the uses of literature and literary studies for planning purposes become apparent: If literature is regarded as a “space of simulation for alternative behaviour in rehearsal at reduced risk” (Wellershoff 57; my translation; cf. above), literary texts become models *for* the city in a manner that corresponds in interesting ways with planning and decision models.

In the practice of planning, most plans – whether they are master plans for an entire district or plans for an individual building – do not explicitly present alternatives. However, in order to do justice to the fact that planning in democratic societies should never pretend to be without alternatives, but also in order to give stakeholders a genuine sense of involvement, planning might benefit from explicitly formulating alternatives. Thus, planning might work with a limited number of scenarios fleshed out in brief narrative descriptions and suggestive visualisations. These ideally come with considerations of anticipated costs, benefits, impact assessments and other relevant discussions of opportunities and threats.⁹

In addition to their function in allowing for more informed decision-making, scenarios also have a purpose in the context of planning in and for situations of uncertainty. Climate research, for instance, has long realised the need to think in terms of scenarios rather than pretending that developments can be predicted with a high degree of certainty. Thus, different scenarios – whether for demographic developments, climate change and environmental degradation or different technological developments – might also help urban planners to decide what would be meaningful choices (‘What would we be doing anyway?/What would be helpful under any circumstances?’). Thus, thinking in terms of scenarios might help planners to become aware of path dependencies and to remain aware that the closure (potentially) provided by one plan may be the origin of a new planning problem. Scenario techniques can thus aid in developing open-ended, potentially reversible planning solutions in and for conditions of uncertainty.

In order further to conceptualise text–context relations in literary urban studies, I here want to use the notion of ‘emplotment’, the turning into narrative of concepts, events, oppositions. This is what Paul Ricœur calls “mise en intrigue” (1983, *passim*). According to Ricœur, it is the telling of stories that allows the expression of human experience, of history and of human identity.¹⁰ Narrative, in other words, is an anthropological necessity; we need narrative as a form of making sense of the world: “I see in the plots we invent the privileged means by which we re-configure our confused, unformed, and at the limit mute temporal experience” (Ricœur 1984, I, xi).¹¹ Literature thus becomes a prime form of appropriation and refiguration of the world and ultimately a form of sense-making. This notion of literature as necessarily a culturally embedded form centrally concerned with human experience might be formulated in terms of what Iser calls “the return of lived reality in the text” (21; my translation).¹²

However fictitious a text is, it cannot help being in some sense mimetic. This connection between text and 'reality' can also be conceptualised in terms of what Stierle calls "connecting worlds in literature" which extend the real world into the realm of the imaginary (176; my translation).¹³

In trying to understand the way in which experience is turned into narrative, I use Hayden White's notion of 'emplotment' (for the following, cf. mainly White 1–42). As one of the most important theorists of narrative, mainly in historiography, but also of fiction, virtually all of White's work can be seen as an attempt to come to terms with the way in which narrative is used to structure and order the representation of experience. In producing such narrative, White argues, there are only four basic plots available: comedy, tragedy, romance and satire. The choice of a plot structure, moreover, also implies the choice of a figure of speech and thought – he analogises them with the established tropes of metaphor, metonymy, synecdoche and irony – and carries an implicit ideology, a way of seeing the world. Drawing on Frye, Pepper and Mannheim, White thus comes up with an extremely complex and sometimes quite schematic, though highly suggestive, combination of these basic plots, of key figures of speech and of ideological implications.

What becomes crucial to me here is the research carried out in cognitive linguistics since the 1980s by George Lakoff, Mark Johnson, Mark Turner, Gilles Fauconnier, Zoltan Kövecses and others.¹⁴ This research has revealed the close connection between figures of speech, figures of thought, human experience and the way in which cognitive patterns shape our understanding of the world. Metaphors and other figures of speech, according to this research *are* figures of thought:

Metaphors [...] are conceptual in nature. They are among our principle vehicles for understanding. And they play a central role in the construction of social and political reality [...] New metaphors have the power to create a new reality. This can begin to happen when we start to comprehend our experience in terms of a metaphor, and it becomes a deeper reality when we begin to act in terms of it [...] Much cultural change arises from the introduction of new metaphorical concepts and the loss of old ones.

(Lakoff/Johnson 1980, 159, 145)

We construct reality through conceptual metaphors. This research has become far more rigorously and empirically cognitive in recent years (for an excellent overview, cf. Geeraerts/Cuyckens, especially part I, 3–418), and according to an increasingly prevalent view, these figures of speech and thought are often based on human experience and virtually become 'embodied' in the sense that they become hard-wired patterns in the brain.

A related field of research at the intersection of cognitive linguistics and cognitive anthropology is concerned with cognitive or cultural models. These are established concepts of perception and cognition that also shape thought

and behaviour. Quinn and Holland in a classic account define cultural models as follows:

[Culture is understood as] shared knowledge – not a people’s customs and artefacts and oral traditions, but what they must know in order to act as they do, make the things they make, and interpret their experience in the distinctive way they do [...] *Cultural models* are presupposed, taken-for-granted models of the world that are widely shared [...] by the members of a society and that play an enormous role in their understanding of that world and their behaviour in it.

(4; italics original; cf. also Kronenfeld 2018, 83–100)

It is one of the central insights of this branch of research that these forms of conceptualising the world are made up of a very limited number of small and comparatively simple building blocks. The “prototypical scenarios” encoded in these simplified models of reality and the applicability of these models to a wide range of situations can help to account for how we acquire knowledge about the world, how we are able appropriately to act in it, and how we can share this knowledge by means of communication (cf. Quinn/Holland 35).

As might be expected – and as Zoltan Kövecses has shown in his excellent 2005 study *Metaphor in Culture* – a number of these metaphorical ways of conceptualising the world are specific to certain cultures, while others are virtually universal and appear in all cultures. This may be indicative of just *how* fundamental these models are. Although strictly speaking, Kövecses is only concerned with metaphorical concepts, these are frequently elaborate and far-reaching enough to qualify as cultural models in the sense I have just outlined.

Even if we eschew the simplistic version of linguistic determinism now largely refuted as being untenable, what all this ultimately means is that patterns of conceptualising the world are deeply rooted and inescapably shape thinking – and writing, for that matter. In a sense, culturally embedded beings that we are, we cannot help sharing a – surprisingly limited – number of figures of thought, cognitive models and plot patterns available to us in negotiating and making sense of reality. Thus, in synthesising these concepts and approaches, I suggest that – by leveraging both the close textual awareness of ‘literary studies’ and the contextual awareness of ‘cultural studies’ – the specific form in which a text emplots an issue, in a limited number of basic patterns available, can be used to ascribe certain functions to a text in a given cultural situation. If I thus propose to discuss literary texts and their functions in the system of culture, it is clear that there can be no mechanist scheme in the sense of a one-to-one mapping of one plot pattern or one trope and one ideological view. But White’s notion of a correspondence or “elective affinity” between certain figures of thought, “modes of emplotment, and ideological implication” (29 *et passim*), if not used too schematically, can be very illuminating.¹⁵ This is where Ricœur, White, cognitive linguistics and ‘*Funktionsgeschichte*’ can fruitfully be brought together in an attempt to use the narrative patterns and central tropes a text makes use of as a tool in ‘cultural diagnosis’ or at least in

order to ascribe certain functions to a text in a given cultural context. Without wishing to be too apologetic, I do believe that this might be one way of continuing to show that close engagements with individual texts as well as “distant reading” (in Moretti’s sense) or “wide reading” (cf. Hallet 2002, 2010) can be fruitfully combined – and that a text-oriented literary studies approach can simultaneously be fruitful in the ‘real-world’-oriented field of literary urban studies. Finally, an awareness of the extent to which cognitive models and their emplotment open up or foreclose, suggest or deter from different possible developments may be conducive to more sensitive or circumspect planning and planning communication.

A Key Application: Narrative Path Dependencies

After decades of almost exclusively analysing literary representations of the city – in the sense of primarily descriptive models of the city (for a typology of central literary strategies, cf. Chapter 2) – the emerging field of literary urban studies has begun to shift perspectives and to leave the comfort zone: It has begun to engage more centrally with plot patterns, tropes and other – broadly speaking – ‘literary’ characteristics of planning documents and other pragmatic texts as well as with the comparative reading of literary and pragmatic texts.

Here, both the pragmatic functions and affordances of literary texts *and* the ‘literary’ strategies, patterns and mechanisms of planning texts are of interest.¹⁶ So far, there is a predominance of studies from planning research and planning theory, which frequently use the concept of ‘narrative’ and other narratological terms and concepts in inflationary and fuzzy ways. There is as yet no substantial narratology of planning documents, though recent work by Lieven Ameel or Bart Keunen and Sofie Verraest and others point in this direction (cf. also Buchenau/ Gurr 2016, 2018; Sattler). Such work has been able to highlight how productive analyses of planning texts informed by narratology, the theory of metaphors or rhetoric generally can be: Which *dénouements*, path dependencies, inclusions and exclusions are suggested or even imposed by the plot patterns associated with different genres or by established patterns of narrative sense-making?

Read in this light, planning texts can frequently be shown to function in profoundly ‘literary’ ways (for a more detailed discussion, cf. Chapters 7 and 8), calling up epic, comic, tragic or melodramatic plot patterns and narrative conventions. In this vein (but without exploring their generic implications), Throgmorton (2003, 142f.) speaks of “at least five broad narratives [that] are commonly told about urban areas in America” and mentions:

1. “the city as a site of opportunity and excitement”;
2. “the city as a nightmare”;
3. “the city as a site of injustice, oppression, and exclusion (but also hope)”;
4. “the environmentalists’ interpretation. According to it, the city is a site of activities that are rapidly eroding the ecological base upon which those activities are founded”;

5. “the city of ghosts. This offers a narrative of memory, of loss, of small towns drying up and blowing away [...] of neighborhoods being destroyed by urban renewal [or] being eviscerated by deindustrialization”.

Though this inventory of narratives is hardly complete, it is clear that each of these patterns suggests different outcomes, inclusions and exclusions.

For this type of analysis, a concept I propose to call “narrative path dependency” may be fruitful: While ‘path dependency’ is a common concept in planning, it is conceptually surprisingly close to the analysis of plot patterns in literary studies, where the choice of specific plot patterns suggests or even predetermines certain outcomes. In planning, path dependencies are defined as developments in which a situation or decision to a large extent predetermines the future development of a system, so that decisions at one point in time might severely limit the range of options for future decision-makers. In this vein, David Harvey provides the well-known example of the building of a nuclear power station, which creates a legacy not only of dangerous nuclear waste that will need to be safely stored for thousands of years; it also predetermines social processes and power relations: The management of a nuclear power station in critical condition, for reasons of urgency and expertise, obviously cannot be subject to democratic decision-making processes but requires rapid expert intervention (cf. Harvey 229). The decision to build a nuclear power station can thus be said to create multiple – technological, environmental, social and political – path dependencies.

If one assumes that the built environment shapes social processes just as social processes shape the built environment (cf. Harvey), it is clear that planning decisions – especially if they are decisions which either create long-term structures or which generate technological lock-ins – have long-term consequences for the living conditions in cities. Thus – just as decisions for technological standards in markets with a need for a systemic fit of different components create technological lock-ins (think DOS vs. Mac or the printer market) – planning decisions can create path dependencies which impose on future generations the consequences of blind spots or short-sightedness at the time of making the decision. A case in point may be the decision in many post-war European cities as well as in much twentieth-century planning in North American cities, to plan cities around individual automotive mobility at a time when environmental degradation, climate change or geopolitical considerations with regard to fossil fuel dependencies were not an issue. This created path dependencies in terms of functional zoning, the use of space, (dis-)incentives for living in the city or in suburbs, environmental developments, urban public health and many other fields. The million-dollar question for contemporary planning is thus the question of what future generations will recognise as present-day blind spots, limitations or unquestioned preoccupations and which path dependencies they will have led to.

Insights into the limitations of planning in recent decades have further highlighted the need to consider path dependencies in urban planning: this is true both for insights into the role of emergence – spontaneous, unplanned

(and unplannable) processes in urban development – as well as for the more general insight into the limits of planning and into the constraints of planning in and for conditions of uncertainty.

More generally, insights into the role of path dependencies for planning and insights into the limits of planning have led to what might be referred to as a ‘new modesty in planning’ after the perceived failure of many high-flying plans in twentieth-century planning (cf., for instance, much large-scale modernist planning in the wake of Le Corbusier). This more modest type of planning seeks to limit path dependencies by allowing for reversible planning decisions. The city of Portland, Oregon, has often been credited with pioneering such planning principles in the early 2000s (cf. Jain).

In literary studies, where path dependency is not a common concept, the choice of narrative patterns, genres and modes of emplotment can be seen as creating the literary equivalent of path dependencies: Specific modes of emplotment – for instance comedy, tragedy, satire or romance (cf. White “Introduction”) – with their generic implications as well as central tropes and references to established patterns of narrative sense-making – can be said to create narrative path dependencies by suggesting or even determining specific outcomes, inclusions and exclusions. Thus, if urban development narratives are formulated in terms of ‘growth’, ‘agency’, ‘identity formation’, ‘the finding of a proper voice’ or ‘attainment of potential’, then these are the generic terms of the *Bildungsroman* especially of the late eighteenth and the nineteenth centuries as the narrative of emergent self-confidence, self-realisation and agency. These, however, clash with the more recent generic development of the *Bildungsroman*, which frequently no longer follows such optimistic patterns, but rather stages abortive attempts at rising from poverty or tells stories of racism and glass ceilings preventing the attainment of agency (for the *Bildungsroman* in urban planning, cf. also Ameel 2016).

Another case in point for the need for literary studies analyses of planning documents and urban development discourses is the common – often uncritical – designation of certain groups (often artists, students or members of the LGBTQ community) as ‘pioneers of urban change’ or, even more incisively, ‘pioneers on the frontier of urban revitalisation’ (often in gentrification contexts). This can be shown – often unintentionally – to actualise the implications of the frontier trope by raising the question who the ‘hostile native Americans’ implied in the frontier pattern might be, thus suggesting potentially divisive and agonistic patterns in urban development as well as patterns of inclusion and exclusion (for this, cf. Smith; for the implications of other key metaphors and tropes, cf., e.g., Cresswell; Keunen/Verraest; cf. also my discussion of the conceptual and ideological implications of plot patterns, tropes and metaphors earlier in this chapter). Certain tropes can thus – often unintentionally or even against the ‘intended’ logic of a planning text – suggest narrative patterns, again with associated outcomes, inclusions and exclusions, and reproduce or reinforce them. This type of research relies on developments in cognitive science and their repercussions in literary and cultural studies, which have foregrounded the power of figurative thought and the way in which

cognitive models guiding thought and behaviour rely on figures of speech and thought. In attempts at securing socially integrative planning, attention to the implications of the chosen metaphor or narrative patterns and their suggested path dependencies can thus be vital to detecting and avoiding unintended or counter-intuitive suggestions.

Notes

- 1 A more detailed discussion of this approach is to be found in Gurr 2013.
- 2 For a compelling and detailed discussion of narratives in planning, cf. Ameel 2021.
- 3 While there is a substantial discussion about issues of ‘complexity’ in planning theory, this is hardly the case with ‘ambiguity’. In the few contributions there are, ‘ambiguity’ generally appears as a problem to be solved (cf. for instance Adhikari/Li). For a more differentiated discussion, in which ambiguity nonetheless clearly seems problematic, cf. Forester 89 *et passim*. For a discussion of ambiguity in the definition of planning problems, cf. the classic account in Rittel/Webber. I am grateful to Patsy Healey for bringing to my attention the fact that ‘certainty’, ‘flexibility’ and ‘fuzziness’ rather than ‘ambiguity’ are the relevant terms used in different planning debates. In each case, it seems, there are conflicts of interest with regard to the openness as opposed to determinacy of planning policies, regulations and individual plans. While the notion of ‘boundary objects’ suggests itself here, there appears still to be a tendency to regard ambiguity as ultimately problematic. For a discussion of ambiguity as related to ambivalence and contradiction, cf. Gurr 2017.
- 4 For the notion of ‘boundary objects’, cf. the classic account in Star/Griesemer.
- 5 For the ambivalent effects of ambiguity in strategic planning from a management perspective, cf. Abdallah/Langley.
- 6 However, literary texts frequently do not attempt to solve a problem by imposing an answer – and even if they do, they are often less interesting for the answer they propose than for having asked the question and raised the problem.
- 7 The German original reads: “Simulationsräume für ein alternatives Probehandeln mit herabgesetztem Risiko” (Wellershoff 57).
- 8 In an excellent essay, Lieven Ameel has explored the case of Finnish novelist Hannu Mäkelä, who, in 2009, published a novel expressly commissioned to accompany and foster the development of Helsinki’s former port area Jätkäsaari into a gentrification-prone waterfront residential area (cf. Ameel 2016).
- 9 One specific type of working with scenarios at the intersection between planning studies and literary/cultural studies has recently received more attention, namely research on the potential role of science fiction for planning. In this vein, the German Federal Institute for Building, Urban and Spatial Research (BBSR) in 2015 issued a study entitled *Learning from Science Fiction Cities: Scenarios for Urban Planning* (my translation; cf. BBSR). Moreover, as increasingly frequent collaboration between planning experts and science fiction writers shows, literary texts as models of and models for urban realities also have a crucial role to play in developing scenarios.
- 10 For this, cf. also Mandelbrote: “[M]emory and the telling of stories about oneself, allow the expression not only of the human experience of time, and of history, but also of human identity. We are who we are because of the stories which we remember and repeat about ourselves” (339).

- 11 The French original reads: “Je vois dans les intrigues que nous inventons le moyen privilégié par lequel nous re-configurons notre expérience temporelle confuse, informe et, à la limite, muette” (Ricœur 1983, I, 13).
- 12 The German original reads: “die Wiederkehr lebensweltlicher Realität im Text” (Iser 21).
- 13 The German original reads: “literarische Anschlusswelten [...] die unsere Welt in je spezifischer Weise ins Imaginäre fortführen, doch so, dass die Übergänglichkeit selbst erkennbar ist” (Stierle 176).
- 14 For the classic studies cf. Fauconnier; Fauconnier/Turner; Johnson; Kövecses; Lakoff/Johnson 1980, 1999; Lakoff/Turner; Turner; cf. also Geeraerts/Cuyckens.
- 15 For a balanced if unorthodox discussion of White and an attempt (based not least on White, Ricœur and cognitive approaches) at exploring the interplay between metaphor, narrative, and emotion, cf. Snævarr.
- 16 For this, cf. for instance Ameel 2016, 2017, 2019, 2021; Buchenau/Gurr 2016, 2018; Childs; Cohen; Eckstein/Throgmorton; Filep/Thompson-Fawcett/Rae; Healey; Ivory; Kaplan; Keunen/Verraest; Mandelbaum; Sandercock 2003, 2010; Tewdwr-Jones; Throgmorton 1996, 2003; van Hulst.

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