

**Dutch Estates Landscapes**  
**Method for describing the spatial essence**

Verschuure-Stuip, Gerdy

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# DUTCH ESTATES LANDSCAPES – METHOD FOR DESCRIBING THE SPATIAL ESSENCE

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**Gerdy Verschuure-Stuip**

TU Delft

Between the 16th and 19th century, rich merchants and nobility constructed their (landed) estates outside the wealthy cities of Holland as part of the emancipation of the upcoming civilian life. The words of Cosimo di Medici's companion describe the essence of these estates in the Netherlands: 'many beautiful, small estates in Dutch style'(1). These estates were firmly connected to the city, city life and recreation as well as to the subsoils, the surrounding landscape in combination to agriculture and land reclamation (2). On a higher scale, these civilian estates were positioned next to each other, forming estates landscapes as part of larger landscape structures. These estates landscapes can be seen as part of the (pre) urbanization of Holland. Estates landscapes formed a coherent, but dynamic landscape structure, that was constructed in the past and changed overtime, because of fashion, financial situation, natural disaster and destruction of war and so on.

In times without national legislation to preserve the countryside, it's crucial to define the spatial (historical) essence of urban landscapes to maintain historic continuity and social sustainability. Therefore, we need to define new methods for transformation and renewal of large scale development in which we balance the great resilience to adapt changes and maintain the collective memory and the narrative of the area. In new methods heritage landscapes can be defined by both physical structures, objects in relation to the ground as well as collective and personal histories, memories, atmosphere, function and narrative. How can we connected these elements in current landscape analysis to describe the essence of a urban cultural landscape?

This paper wants to define the estates landscape as a method to define a heritage landscapes, which addresses the most important tangible and intangible foundation or corner stones of this landscape on different scales. A method to be used in other large scale heritage landscapes (f.e. New Dutch Waterline).

- (1) Hogerwerff, G.J. De twee reizen van Cosimo de Medici, Prins van Toscane, door de Nederlanden 1667-1667, Amsterdam 1919, p.40
- (2) Verschuure-Stuip, G.A., H. Renes, Hollandse buitenplaatsenlandschappen, buitenplaatsen en hun relatie met het landschap (1609-1672) in: Y. Kuiper, B. Olde Meierink, Buitenplaatsen in de Gouden Eeuw. De rijkdom van het buitenleven in de Republiek, Verloren: Hilversum 2015, pp. 40-65.
- (3) Janssen, J., E. Luiten, H. Renes, J. Rouwendal, O. Faber, C. Pen, E. Stegmeijer, Karakterschetsen, Kennisagenda Erfgoed en Ruimte, nationale onderzoeksagenda Erfgoed en Ruimte, dl 1- Kennisagenda, Amersfoort 2013, pp. 11-18.

## **Keywords**

estate, estates landscape, urban landscape, city, resilience, abolishment of preservation of landscape laws