Urban Europe
Fifty Tales of the City

EDITED BY

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Contents

Part 3 Creative cities

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Virginie Mamadouh
Anne van Wageningen
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1. Urban Europe and the European Union

An introduction

Virginie Mamadouh and Anne van Wageningen

On 24 June 2016 the Council of Ministers of the European Union met in Brussels and discussed the result of the Brexit referendum the day before. Amidst the astonishment about the choice of the British voters, and the soul searching exercises about the future of the EU, the ministers also had to take care of the scheduled business, although most of their decisions that day went unnoticed. One of these decisions was the adoption of an Urban Agenda for the European Union with the formal endorsement of the Pact of Amsterdam. The Pact had been agreed at the Informal Meeting of EU ministers responsible for Urban Matters on 30 May in Amsterdam, during the Dutch presidency. Since then, the European Union has officially had an Urban Agenda.

This was the occasion to ask both Amsterdam academics and practitioners to share their views of the city and to compile this collection of essays to reflect the complexity of the roles, functions and problems of cities to address in the urban agenda. The aim of the volume is to contribute to the much needed public debate about the future of European cities. After decades of discussion, the role of cities in European politics has been formally acknowledged, but it is certainly not the conclusion of urban politics but on the contrary a stimulus for further deliberations. The sharing of knowledge and research insights about what makes cities what they are and how they function (and sometimes not) is in this context a fundamental step towards better cities.

Europe: A continent of cities

A large majority of Europe's citizens live in an urban area – 70% if we include cities, towns and suburbs – and this share continues to grow. Europe is a continent of cities, and is one of the most urbanised areas in the world. Cities are the engines of economy and social innovation and play an important role in many of the most pressing social and environmental challenges Europe faces: unemployment, social exclusion, integration, energy transition etc.

Cities have now been given a formal say in EU decision making and will work together with the Member states, the Directorate-Generals of the Commission and other European stakeholders in 12 partnerships to make EU policies urban proof, to ease communication between EU institutions and municipalities, to enhance cities' access to EU programmes and moneys and to improve the circulation of expertise and knowledge about urban issues.

This new formal position for cities in the EU is part of a general trend rooted in the awareness of the fact that a growing proportion of the (world and European) population live in cities but also in changing relations between the states and their cities. Many cities have developed their external relations to distinguish themselves in the world economy. More and more is expected of local authorities. Through decentralisation reforms, many European states have delegated policies to their municipalities, partly to dismantle an uncompetitive national welfare state, partly to bring policy making closer to the citizens and to acknowledge for local differences in needs and opportunities. Moreover, mayors and local governments are often expected to be better equipped than states and national governments to deal with the daily concerns of their citizens. As the American political scientist Benjamin Barber argues, many social and environmental problems would be more effectively dealt with, if mayors ruled the world. The United Nations has also acknowledged this trend and is working on the New Urban

Agenda, a global urban agenda to be adopted at the *Habitat III World cities at crossroads* Conference in Quito in October 2016 to 'guide the efforts around urbanisation of a wide range of actors – nation states, city and regional leaders, international development funders, United Nations programmes and civil society – for the next 20 years'. The draft document available in September 2016 lists paradoxically much more ambitious and detailed goals than the Pact of Amsterdam, but remains of course more performative where the Urban Agenda for the EU entails a change in the constitutional architecture of the EU – even if it went unnoticed in the light of the Brexit and the reform needed to address the many crises the EU has to face.

An Urban Agenda for the European Union

It took twenty years to get Member States to agree on this urban agenda, which was a priority of three successive Dutch presidency (in 1997, 2004 and 2016). Member states widely diverge in terms of (non-)existence of their urban policies, the competencies of their local authorities and the relations between municipalities and other state levels.

The Urban Agenda is the outcome of twenty years of discussions. In the 1990s the European Commission proposed to adopt an Urban Agenda to tackle urban problems more efficiently. At the time urban problems (unemployment and economic restructuring, social exclusion, housing shortage, etc.) were dealt with only marginally in the EU15 because they were not Community competence (and they still aren't). They were covered to some extent but not systematically by the policies for territorial cohesion and by the structural funds.

In the course of time, it became clear that the Member States – especially in the post 2004 enlarged European Union – differ widely in this regard. Some like the Netherlands, Germany, France and the UK were pleading for a EU urban policy (although different ones) while other were opposed to

that. Some have extensive national urban policies, other don't. Moreover their cities, their strengths and their weaknesses are completely different. As a result they fell to reach an agreement about what a common urban agenda could be, but statements regarding cities were regularly adopted by the Council during successive presidencies, stressing themes that were dear to them.

A new élan came from the European Commission, with a report *Cities of Tomorrow: Challenges, Visions, Ways Forward* in 2011 and in 2014 a formal initiative of the Commission, followed by a wide Public Consultation. With the wide support of other EU institutions (the Parliament, the Committee of the Regions, the Economic and Social Committee), the Council of European Municipalities and Regions and the input of influential city networks such as EUROCITIES and the Mayors of EU Capital Cities, the Urban Agenda under construction became more and more a programme *with* cities than for cities, and with local authorities as the local states (called urban authorities in the Pact of Amsterdam), rather than only with the larger cities – hence the use of the term 'urban areas' rather than cities in the document.

The Public Consultation revealed huge divergence about what cities were (large cities, towns, suburbs, urban areas, etc.) and the importance of the relations of cities with their hinterland, as well as some consensus on the fact that the urban agenda should not be a new EU policy competence, not a new programme or budget line. Instead the attention was put on better regulation, better funding and better knowledge through an integrated approach both vertically (between levels of governance from the EU to the local) and horizontally (between policy domains). More specifically it enhances the urban proofing (or the urban mainstreaming) of EU policies, which means taking early on in the decision making process the impact of the shaping policy on local authorities and to the direct engagement of Commissioners and EU civil servants with cities.

Whether the 12 partnerships between representatives of the Commission, the Member States, cities and stakeholders

– which have been established for three years to launch this urban mainstreaming exercise for domains ranging from urban poverty to circular economy through asylum seekers and digital transition – will be successful falls out of the scope of this volume. Instead it seizes the opportunity to draw the attention to the multidimensional character of European urban life and the many challenges it currently faces.

Stories about European cities

To mark the Dutch presidency and the preparation of the Pact of Amsterdam, academics and practitioners working in and from Amsterdam were asked to share their expertise in short pieces to illustrate the diversity of approaches to the city as socio-spatial reality. This volume thus brings together fifty essays on European cities for the sake of Europeans and others wishing to enhance their knowledge of these cities. These essays offer tales of European cities, Amsterdam and others, from a wide range of perspectives. The authors often present a concrete case, but the processes they discuss are at work in similar ways in other cities just as well. Local specificities need to be acknowledged to capture the very diversity of European cities, but the aim of this volume is to stress the diversity of perspectives to study them. Most contributors are trained and/or work in the social sciences (geography, sociology, anthropology, political science, urban studies, migration studies, urban and regional planning) and the humanities (history, law, media studies). These multiple disciplinary perspectives offer different clues to read the city and investigate its many facets. The essays have been grouped in six sections dealing with key urban questions: citizenship, nodes and connections, creativity, (social) sustainability, representation and identity, and governance networks. This reflects the diversity and the complexity of the roles, functions and problems of cities to be addressed in the Urban Agenda.

The authors

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Further reading

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Part 1
Citizenship

The first theme, citizenship, is about the city and its inhabitants. Jan Willem Duyvendak and Fenneke Wekker get straight to the point: how do we feel at home in the city? They make a case for amicability as a common foundation that allows a diverse group of people to feel at home in the city and to share the city with each other without immediately resembling one another. The tolerance that goes with this and that characterises the big city, and Amsterdam in particular, is analysed by Thijl Sunier. Using the example of places of worship for new religions, he shows how newcomers to the city have had to fight for their place. Another facet of Amsterdam's legendary degree of tolerance – sex – is critically scrutinised by Gert Hekma.

In each of the chapters in this section, the city is seen as an integration machine with the mandate and the capacity to involve new groups in society. Jeanine Klaver and Arend Odé show that this integration is difficult, even for highly educated EU citizens from Central and East Europe, while Blanca Garcés-Mascareñas and Sébastien Chauvin identify exclusion and inclusion mechanisms for migrants without valid residence permits. International migration has steadily made the city more diverse. Virginie Mamadouh and Nesrin El Ayadi argue that linguistic diversity has become a fundamental feature of the city: multilingualism is now commonplace. However, as Orhan Agirdag shows in his contribution about schools' language policy, not every language is treated equally. Urban children have a life also after school, but these city dwellers are often overlooked. This is something that Lia Karsten is trying to change. Another group that tends to be invisible are the city dwellers who come under pressure as the city changes rapidly – for example, the residents of those working-class neighbourhoods that are becoming increasingly attractive for gentrifiers. Fenne Pinkster gives the inhabitants of such a place a voice, some of whom feel like exiles in their own neighbourhood. In the final chapter, Guido Snel, Sepp Eckenhaussen and Fien de Ruiter look at Amsterdam through the eyes of foreign exiles. Once again, the city's dynamism plays a central role here: as home base and passageway, fixed and fluid.

2.   At home in the city?

The difference between friendship and
amicability

Jan Willem Duyvendak and Fenneke Wekker

The home is all the rage. We see it in the media, where Ikea
commercials and romantic movies remind us that there is no
place quite like home; we come across it in the pamphlets of
political parties that argue that 'everyone should feel at home in
the Netherlands'; and we see it all around us: everyone is trying to
make themselves at home – in their house, in the neighbourhood,
in the city, and in the nation. State policy is supporting citizens
in this. Policy interventions and welfare projects ensure that
citizens integrate, meet each other, begin to feel connected with
one another, and identify themselves with the neighbourhood,
the city and the country. In so doing, politics seeks to promote
active citizenship and to encourage people to become involved
in their neighbourhood, city and country – as if it were their
own home.

These policies and social projects show that there is nothing
noncommittal about feeling at home. Feeling at home is necessary
and compulsory. There is, of course, the political hope that the
quality of life in so-called 'disadvantaged neighbourhoods' will
improve by increasing a sense of home among their inhabitants.
Feeling at home and experiencing a sense of interconnectedness
are seen as preconditions for a 'good' and livable neighbourhood
and city. And successful neighbourhoods – characterised by
sustainable, local networks of residents – are considered to be
the building blocks of a sense of belonging at the national level.

More and more policymakers believe that the nation, the city
and certainly the neighbourhood should feel like home to its
residents. On the basis of this idea, politicians – in collabora-
tion with welfare workers and local organisations – are calling

upon residents to become actively involved in their 'collective house' by jointly countering deviant behaviour, by serving in neighbourhood committees, by participating in neighbourhood activities and by taking care of neighbours in need of help. The increased social control and social cohesion are meant to lead to a greater sense of security, more trust among residents and a livable environment that everyone can justifiably call their 'home'.

A livable Netherlands is a country in which everyone feels at home – this is what is written in countless policy documents produced by rural and local politics and also in the ambitious plans of welfare institutions and neighbourhood organisations. But is that even possible? Paradoxically, the will and the drive to make a neighbourhood a safe and peaceful 'home' all too often lead to open conflicts between residents over what that 'public home' should look like and especially who should be able to determine what it looks like: conflicts between renters and buyers, between established residents and newcomers, between young and old, between 'antisocial' people and the 'well-adjusted' are the order of the day in urban areas and city streets. As soon as one group of residents appropriates too much of the common or public space, the feeling of security and familiarity of the other residents melts away like snow. Accordingly, the balance between the point at which a sense of belonging begins for one person and ceases for the other is extremely precarious.

The preoccupation with home – shared by citizens, policy-makers and welfare workers alike – is understandable. Wanting to feel at home is a basic human need that every citizen, community social worker and politician recognises. But is the (ultimate) aim to make everyone in the public space feel at home and feel connected with everybody not an overambitious ideal? Is it appropriate to stimulate a sense of feeling at home – and with it a strong degree of appropriation of the public space – if that brings about more conflicts and if it drives some people to withdraw from that space? Would it not be more desirable for

people to maintain a certain social distance from each other and to refrain from bonding strongly with their (social and physical) environment outside the home? In other words, is it possible to create an 'open house' out of public space? Doesn't the attempt to define the city or city district as 'home' simply create a breeding ground for social conflicts in a society as diverse as the Netherlands?

Limits to feeling at home

A sense of home is a very widely shared and deeply felt emotion that is almost impossible to describe. There is, however, one thing that researchers emphasise without exception: a profound sense of home can only be experienced in a small circle of people. It turns out that we feel at home only with certain people and under certain circumstances. The depth of the emotion thus appears to lie in its selectivity: we are capable of feeling at ease with quite a few people and in many situations, but can we really feel at home with them? When 'certain people in certain places' are present, this can spoil our sense of home, our trust and our sense of security. It is precisely such encounters with these 'other people' that can undermine those feelings of belonging and social interconnectedness so sought after by community social workers. Perhaps a reasonably 'good sense of home' in an urban setting requires relationships that are 'lighter' and more aloof than the long-term, chummy relationships that policymakers would like city dwellers to cultivate.

Within a heterogeneous setting of renters and buyers, of different cultures and lifestyles, the only real option appears to be to relativise the ultimate aim – i.e. a sense of home in the city. Physical proximity can then be combined with keeping one's social distance, which in effect means that the ideal of the home is primarily 'localised' in one's own house. One lives in a neighbourhood with 'others', but precisely because the 'others' may be very different, social proximity is not always appreciated.

In order to coexist in spite of this, what should be sought is not a common 'home' but rather 'public familiarity'.

Talja Blokland and Julia Nast posit that public familiarity is sufficient for urbanites. They argue that at most what is needed is the ability to navigate public space in order to feel that you are safe and that you have a certain amount of control. This navigating occurs en route – on your way from home to the rest of your life. You move through your neighbourhood, you stop in a shop, you stand at a bus stop, and all the while you run into people you know by sight or because you sometimes chat with them at the school playground or the park where you walk your dog, or because you know them from your work or school and they live in the same neighbourhood as you. Blokland and Nast claim that it would be overambitious to strive to get to know one another on a more than superficial basis purely on the basis of the coincidence that you live in the same neighbourhood. People generally do not expand their networks by adding friends from the neighbourhood; they find friends elsewhere. Government interventions that insinuate that you really should be friends with your neighbours in fact generate the wrong expectations. After all, true friendship requires like-mindedness and a certain degree of homogeneity, which is by definition rare in an urban setting.

Towards a 'light' form of a sense of home – the importance of amicability

In our view, Blokland and Nast are right in arguing that public familiarity – which they identify in terms of safety and being familiar with 'strangers' – is key to living in a city. But many people in a neighbourhood, district or street seek something more than merely living together: they want, in fact, to feel at home. And for that, public familiarity is a necessary precondition but is insufficient – at least in the way that Blokland and Nast define it. We believe their definition of the term familiarity is

too parsimonious, for familiarity not only refers to something that one is accustomed to, it also signifies amicability. This latter aspect of familiarity denotes a friendly interaction – the way friends treat each other – without the depth and emotional weight of True Friendship. When people treat each other kindly, they treat each other *as if* they are friends and assume that they can trust each other. They presume that they have things in common, and they treat each other in a way that exudes trust and ease. There is trust in such a relationship unless proven otherwise, instead of the opposite, distrustful variant in which people view each other with suspicion until 'common ground' is found.

Research has shown that amicability does not mean that you have to be 'the same' in terms of a shared lifestyle, cultural background or socio-economic position: the common denominator can be that you both have a child or a dog, that you both love to swim, that you visit the same church or always put the trash out on a Wednesday or take the same bus to the city centre. Amicability is more about what you do (together) than who you are: it is much more about activity than identity. This makes it also an 'attainable' ideal for people living in heterogeneous neighbourhoods. Such people probably do not have much in common in terms of 'identities' – ethnic, religious, cultural – but this does not mean that they have no activities in common with each other. Many successful social interventions are therefore focused on activities that residents undertake together: they create a form of commonality that form a basis for amicability.

To deal with someone amicably is somewhere between 'amiable' and 'chummy': it is more than simply being friendly, but it is not based on – nor is its aim – true friendship. It is this 'mild form of friendship', this amicability, that can fulfil the various needs of people to feel at home in a public space.

Our conception of familiarity goes beyond the narrow conception of public familiarity in which everything appears to revolve around being able to survive in the urban 'jungle'. While Joke van

der Zwaard advocates a limited definition of public familiarity, focused on feelings of security among 'familiar strangers', we would adopt a broader definition that includes amicability. Amicability adds something that allows people to feel at home while simultaneously giving others space to also feel at home. A person who treats you amicably is giving you space and the recognition that you belong there. And often it is a very familiar pattern: a friendly relationship develops over the course of time. It is like a dance on the sidewalk that becomes so familiar that you immediately notice if something or someone is missing. Certain people simply belong, not because you are so emotionally connected to them, not because you recognise them as someone who is 'just like you', but because they actively make the neighbourhood what it is – a neighbourhood that everyone can call their own to some extent.

There is a 'mild' form of a sense of home in many boroughs and neighbourhoods, even in those that are mixed. Instead of striving for the deepest variant of this sense of home in which *friendships* are formed between residents, it would be more effective to encourage *friendly* relations. Such relations are not created from one day to the next; they require time. If a neighbourhood experiences a rapid change in character, such amicable relations will temporarily be put under pressure, but over time they will develop again. Striving for amicable relations appears to be a realistic option for residents, policymakers and social workers: we can learn to treat each other amicably, especially if we know that as a result we will feel more at home in our neighbourhood. Being friendly with strangers on our street and in our neighbourhood is an effective way to appropriate (to a certain extent) an area that we always share with others. By doing so, we actively create a place in which we can feel quite at home. In our opinion, this is the best that politics and social policy can and should stimulate. To hope for more and to arouse lofty expectations could lead to unmanageable conflicts between residents and to the exclusion of certain population groups. A public home is a place to which one should never be too emotionally wedded, as it is a place that by definition also belongs to 'others'.

The authors

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3.   A tolerant social climate?

Questioning the validity of an overly positive self-image

Thijl Sunier

> Over the last few centuries, Amsterdam's tolerant social climate has enabled it to develop into a multicultural city. Amsterdam currently has approximately 800,000 inhabitants who come from over 180 different countries.

This is what is written on the website of the Municipality of Amsterdam. Tolerance is often considered a hallmark of this cosmopolitan trading city. Tolerance – the willingness to accept and incorporate people from very different religious or cultural backgrounds – has acquired an almost mythical status. There is good reason, however, to question the validity of this image of Amsterdam as a tolerant city, particularly if we look at the way in which houses of worship have been established in this city in the past 350 years. Temples, churches, mosques and synagogues are all visible signs of the permanent presence of people with a certain religious belief. Precisely because these houses of worship are in the public domain and give shape to it, their status is a good indicator of the social standing of religious minorities. The construction and use of such places of worship are subject to laws and regulations, but more importantly, houses of worship have great symbolic significance. Places of worship are often targets of hatred and intolerance, as we are now witnessing once again. At the same time, the external features of houses of worship say something about the way in which religious groups would like to manifest themselves. The establishment of houses of worship in Amsterdam did not proceed without a struggle, for in general, tolerance towards religious minorities was lacking.

Amsterdam as a safe haven

In the Golden Age, the Dutch Republic was one of the richest countries in the world and a place where many immigrants wanted to try their luck. It was also a refuge for people who were persecuted elsewhere in Europe on the basis of their religious background. In the Union of Utrecht – the treaty between the different provinces drawn up in 1579 and considered to be the founding document of the Republic of the United Netherlands – freedom of religion was quite explicitly mentioned as one of the new polity's pillars. In the 16th century, thousands fled to the northern provinces of the Spanish kingdom, and it was among these refugees and dissidents that the uprising against the Spanish oppression began. In the late 16th century, Jewish refugees from Spain and Portugal also settled in Amsterdam. Almost one hundred years later, the Jews from East Europe came, having escaped pogroms. By the end of the 18th century, there were approximately 30,000 Jews in the Republic, most of whom lived in Amsterdam. When in 1685 the French king Louis XIV revoked the Edict of Nantes – which had stipulated that non-Catholics could practice their religion in the (Catholic) kingdom of France – the Dutch Republic became a place of refuge for the Huguenots, the French Protestants. Most of them fled to Amsterdam where they found work in the trade and crafts industries.

In the second half of the 20th century, this image of Amsterdam as the standard-bearer of a tolerant Dutch political culture and an open attitude towards religious newcomers became more widespread and common. The city became known as a place of refuge for anyone with a deviant lifestyle. The attitude towards Muslims who came to the Netherlands in the 1960s and 1970s was also in line with this picture. When Theo van Gogh was murdered in 2004 by a radical Muslim, the mayor of Amsterdam at the time – Job Cohen – also referred to this image of the city, stating that in his view, the murderer had violated this principle of tolerance.

Houses of worship as litmus test

Although Amsterdam is undeniably a tolerant city, I would place caveats to the special position that Amsterdam has ascribed to itself compared to other European cities. To begin with, it is difficult to describe a city's attitude towards religious minorities over the centuries using a single term. The arrangements that Amsterdam made with specific religious minorities were the result of political and economic motives, and these motives differed over the centuries. Just as the policy of the Amsterdam regents in the 17th century cannot be directly compared with the policies of the 21st-century city government, we cannot put the same label on them. The policy pursued over the centuries was above all a pragmatic one. 'Tolerance' was indeed tolerance in the strict sense of the word: it meant a willingness to tolerate people of different religious backgrounds as long as the status quo was not affected. Religious newcomers were often seen as a Trojan horse. The central thread throughout history is not so much tolerance but rather concern about the possible impact of religious newcomers on society and politics.

The Republic of the United Netherlands came into existence as a result of the revolt against Spanish (i.e. Catholic) rule. From the middle of the 17th century, Protestantism was the dominant religion in the Republic. The public domain was regarded as a Protestant space. Among other things, this meant that the visible manifestations of any religion other than the official Protestantism were forbidden. There was freedom of conscience but no freedom of religion. The so-called clandestine churches in the capital city date from this time. Such churches made it impossible to see from the outside that there was a house of worship inside. The presence of people of other religious beliefs was condoned because it was economically advantageous to let them live in the city – and not because there was any understanding for their way of life. This is not to say that the other religions were always 'invisible'. In some cases there was a deviation from the norm, mostly as a result of negotiation. One such case was the construction of the Portuguese synagogue.

New freedom of religion...

After the Batavian Revolution in 1795, there came an end to the domination of Protestantism, and freedom of belief was 'formally' introduced. Catholics and other religious minorities were allowed to establish their own seminaries and institutions. The inauguration in 1796 of the first visible Catholic church – *De Duif* on the Prinsengracht – was therefore symbolically very significant. It was only with the new Constitution of 1848 that this freedom of belief was enshrined in law. Nonetheless, the construction of Catholic churches continued to be marked by inter-religious tensions and endless legal battles over property rights into the 20th century.

Catholics had the reputation of being a fifth column as a result of the 1830 secession of Belgium, which was predominantly Catholic; the reintroduction in 1853 of the so-called episcopal hierarchy which made the Netherlands an ecclesiastical province once again; and more generally the loyalty expressed by Catholics to the pope in the Vatican, a foreign power. This in turn called into question the Catholics' loyalty to the Dutch nation. The status of Jews, who by the turn of the century had been in the Netherlands already for hundreds of years, also became a matter of heated debate. For a significant part of the Dutch population, it was far from self-evident that Jews should be allowed to become members of Parliament, for example.

...but also obstacles

One hundred years later, we see that the social position of Muslims is also being put to the test. There are some noteworthy similarities between Catholics and Jews at the end of the 19th century and Muslims at the beginning of the 21st century, despite significant differences. Muslims, who began coming to the city from the 1960s, encountered quite a few problems in finding spaces for prayer. Attempts to create such spaces were often

rejected on formal grounds, and churches were often unwilling to make their space available to Muslims, despite the fact that fewer people were attending church services. In 1977, Turkish Muslims managed to open a mosque in a former church in the centre of Amsterdam. The negotiations went relatively smoothly because, as one official put it, the mosque was not really 'in plain sight'.

In the 1980s, it was primarily social workers who opposed the establishment of mosques. Muslims were accused of having ties with far-right groups from their own country. Mosques were thought to be conducting espionage for regimes in their countries of origin. People also believed – and still believe – that the establishment of Islam stood in the way of the integration process of immigrants and that religious leaders were trying to expand their influence on Muslims. In the last fifteen years, the argument that mosques were breeding grounds for radicalisation became a reason to approach Muslim initiatives with suspicion. The process of establishing the Islamic religion is, moreover, still in full swing. While the process initially focused on improvised accommodation, this is now making way for the construction of new buildings, which has not been without its difficulties. Some projects were realised only after many years, while other initiatives never got off the ground due to widespread resistance.

Tolerance, at least the way in which the term is used, suggests a positive fundamental attitude towards religious and other forms of diversity. The historical overview I have given here shows that it is far from obvious what the position of religious minorities is and that religious diversity was not automatically considered something positive. Religious newcomers did not obtain their place in society just like that but have always had to fight for it. Their standing in society is far from self-evident; it is the result of a political struggle and it has little to do with tolerance as a kind of transhistorical quality of Amsterdammers.

The author

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Further reading

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4.   Sex and the city

Room for sexual citizenship

Gert Hekma

Sex is everywhere and nowhere. Statistics show that masturbation and coital sex vie for a first place in terms of which is most prevalent. When it comes to cities, however, the media give the impression that sex work and homosexual intercourse are most prevalent and that non-commercial heterosex and masturbation seldom occur. 'Ordinary' heterosexuality remains invisible precisely because it sets the standard, also in cities. It is still seen as natural behaviour and a private matter, and this is the most important reason that the other forms appear more in public as 'deviations' and are discriminated against. Because sex is considered private and natural, politics rarely has anything clear to say about it.

Urban citizenship has many faces: it is about culture, sports, economics, politics, gender and also sexuality. The facts refute the idea that eroticism is not a public matter. Sexuality is in many ways a matter of citizenship – the most important ways in which this is the case are briefly summarised in the first part of this essay. The second part of this article is about the consequences that sexual citizenship has for cities and the policy of 'city branding', such as presenting the city as gay-friendly in order to attract creative companies and 'pink money'.

Public life

To begin with, there are official institutions that make or break sexual citizenship. Among such institutions are the sex laws which until the end of the 19th century were few and included legal articles on rape, indecent exposure and the promotion of

debauchery of minors (then 21 years old was the age threshold). In 1886, the Dutch law was beefed up with an age limit of 16 years and an article against pornography; in 1911, the age limit for homosexual contacts was raised to 21 years and articles on prostitution, abortion and contraceptives were introduced. The sexual revolution led to the abolition or loosening of the sex laws from 1970 onwards, but since 1990 the focus throughout the world has once again been directed at strengthening legislation on such crimes as 'extreme' and digital pornography, sex between and with young people, sex work and bestiality. In addition to legislation, there are regulations at the level of municipalities and institutions – such as the ban in the past on the wearing of clothing of the other sex and the rules now in place in many institutions against intimacy between men and women or between adults and children. Institutions create their own rules for 'decent' behaviour that mainly have to do with what kind of eroticism is not allowed. Institutions sometimes intervene under the guise of 'decency' without there being clear norms. There are rarely positive ways to facilitate discussions on the sexual rights of citizens (such as disabled people's right to visit prostitutes); at most they are negative such as the discussions on erotic imagery. At one point, people proposed to abolish the sex laws given that there is no separate chapter in the penal code on families or households and that other crimes can be brought under ordinary crimes such as violence or abuse of power. Coercion is not very different in sex work than in the horticultural industry, and rape is essentially not very different than other types of violence.

One of the main institutions of sexuality is marriage, which for a long time was strictly heterosexual and was focused above all on regulating reproductive relations. In 2001, the institution of marriage was opened up to same-sex couples. Marital status has a number of consequences for offspring, housing, taxes, social security and so on that nowadays apply not only to married couples but also increasingly to registered partners and people living together. Marriage is about couples and not about relations in which more than two partners are involved. Although

monogamy is ingrained in our culture, there is no longer a ban on adultery. Nonetheless, for most people, sex, love and pairing belong together, even though decoupling may often be a good idea. But overstepping the social norm of monogamy is for most people simply unthinkable. This has all sorts of consequences regarding divorce, living and sleeping arrangements, child rearing, etc.

Courtship is another public institution with many faces. Sex is considered to be a private matter, and we are no longer familiar with public forms of sexual initiation. Methods of communicating about sexuality in a pleasant way have scarcely been developed – there is no *ars erotica* and no places to learn it. Lessons on sexuality hardly suffice because they are about biology and reproduction, the dangers of sex or opinions about sexual diversity, and not about seduction or erotic initiation, nor forms of erotic pleasure. Schools do not offer space for sexual lessons of life.

Traditional housing is almost entirely aimed at families with two parents and children (albeit less than before) and not at single people or broader relationships with more than two adults. The bedroom is the place to have sex. Urban development in suburbs is geared towards families that are increasingly engaged solely with themselves and less with other families, neighbours or other people in the vicinity. The idea is that schools or associations bring social cohesion through sports and games but steer clear of intimate relationships that may well be better suited for cohesion. Urban plans do not incorporate places for erotic and sexual encounters. The public spaces currently available in cities are either too primitive for such encounters (hangouts, red-light districts, quiet corners in parks) or too commercial (bars, festivals, internet); the prevailing gender or sexual norms in such spaces are moreover not the most pleasant, and openness and freedom of action are not always guaranteed. Lovers' lanes apparently need to come into being spontaneously: in the architecture of homes and cities, sexual citizenship remains an underrepresented aspect. Sexuality plays a role in many

institutions: in the police force and the judiciary, in health care, education, the media, factories and offices, in the hospitality industry and in relations between colleagues and with clients. How much sexual privacy do patients in hospitals get or prisoners in their cells? How intimate can relationships be at home, at school or at the office? How much gender and sexual diversity is possible? How much physical and psychological space does sexual citizenship get? Are skirts too short or pants too tight? Are there limits to the eroticisation of health care, sports or the school playground? Are certain advertisements, forms of art or pornographic images too explicit for women, children or religious believers? Are physical intimacies lawful, beneficial or actually detrimental? These are all questions to which institutions have given meagre answers at best and they have rarely thought about spatial and citizenship aspects.

Urban sexual potencies

A city such as Amsterdam endeavours to be a gay capital but has become less so because the choices for homosexual city trips have increased and because search behaviour has moved from the street and the sauna to the smartphone. Amsterdam does not strive to be a sex capital in addition to being a gay capital, even though the city does have that reputation with its Red Light District as a major attraction. But the Dutch capital would rather shed this reputation than market it. And there is every reason for this, given the varied sexual morality of its inhabitants: homos, hipsters, whoremongers, headscarf beareres and all the other people who in their minds, hearts and actions have difficulty with enjoying or discovering erotic pleasure.

Promoting sex is good for the city itself: in the first place, intimate encounters could help to cultivate social cohesion, because all the differences that the city commends itself for stimulate desires that could bring people closer together but that now still tend to create divisions between them. In the second

place, it can stimulate tourism. In addition to the freedom to use drugs, eroticism can tempt tourists to visit Amsterdam. The city is less able to distinguish itself from other European cities with the other features it tends to promote itself for (such as monuments, museums or art), as tourists can just as easily go to Paris or Rome for this. Sex can offer a city such as Amsterdam a unique appeal.

The American urban studies theorist Richard Florida argues that sexual freedom is good for cities: it attracts members of a creative class and promotes economic opportunities. In this respect, the Netherlands and Amsterdam have an advantage over other countries and cities, since most Dutch people believe that they are sexually free and tolerant. Whether this opinion is consistent with reality is questionable as long as Dutch people remain convinced of heterosexual, monogamous norms and of how men and women should behave (men: sexually active, versus women: passive). There is much that needs to be done with the inhabitants themselves and at the level of institutions that are responsible for sexual matters. This would enable a city such as Amsterdam to get much more out of its sexual possibilities, not only economically (as Richard Florida puts forth) or in terms of city branding but by creating mental and physical space for erotic pleasure and intimate citizenship.

In 2007, a panel debate took place with Job Cohen, the then mayor of Amsterdam, about 'Sex in the City'. He spoke about sexuality mainly in terms of public order and policing. This kind of negative attitude is widespread: churches have drummed into their parishioners a dismissive attitude towards sex; sciences such as psychology, and politics with its regulation of brothels and sex, have not been silent on this issue; and in society, an atmosphere of secrecy or gossip prevails. Sexual education mainly deals with 'negative' matters such as unwanted pregnancies, disease, abuse, girls who must learn to say 'no' to importuning, and boys who must accept such rejections. The basic attitude towards sexuality can be more positive: rather than a scourge, sex should be a matter of pleasure.

As has happened with 'Pride' groups around LGBT+ themes (lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender), institutions should devote more invigorating and serious attention to sexual issues or to eroticism at the workplace and in one's free time. This also holds true in the hospitality industry, in hospitals, prisons, businesses, shops, museums and the art world. I have demonstrated above how institutions play an important role in this. Their contribution is essential for the quality of urban sexual life. Gradually, the social sciences are beginning to discover that not only gender but also sex is a core theme in society. Politics can move away from its basic negative attitude of treating sex as if it was a question of public order and of forbidding and punishing. Political parties could add a broad section on sex to their political programmes. The government can play an initiating role, just as with LGBTs. Sexual citizenship makes erotic practices a political issue that deserves recognition across the board and not only in terms of city branding or gays.

Sex is more often heaven than hell (and usually nothing special). For a city such as Amsterdam, it is more a goldmine than a matter of public order. Tourists flock en masse to Amsterdam because of its sexual reputation. Due to the politics of discouragement of recent decades such as with its policy on prostitution, this flow of visitors is most likely steadily decreasing. This is regrettable not only due to the money that could have been earned but also because Amsterdam can disseminate a positive message about sex, as it does with the Canal Parade: one of pleasure and human rights. The city prides itself on its many nationalities; let it for once track how much sexual diversity there is – and not only the approved alphabet soup of LGBT or LGBTTIQQ2SA (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, transsexual, intersexual, queer, questioning, two-spirited, asexual) but also for other sexual interests such as sex work, BDSM (bondage & discipline; dominance & submission; sadism & masochism), fetishism, pornophilia, public sex or the growing love for internet sex with Grindr and Tinder. To paraphrase the Marquis de Sade, eroticism deserves to be given a significant boost in order to

make a city such as Amsterdam a truly liberal, free and tolerant metropolis. The city can develop itself into a sexual sanctuary for residents, visitors and asylum seekers – into a capital not only for gay people but also for sexual democracy and sexual knowledge.

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5.   The city as integration mechanism?

Active, integrated migrants require an active government

Jeanine Klaver and Arend Odé

Cities have traditionally been important for the integration of migrants, for this is where migrants can find the most opportunities for schooling, employment and encounters with the society in which they have settled.

This important role played by cities in the newcomer's acquisition of social standing is specified as the escalator effect: migrants arrive, work their way up and leave the place they first arrived once they have climbed a few steps up the social ladder.

According to this conception, migrants take advantage of the many opportunities the city has to offer and as a result are able to go about integrating themselves successfully into society. In practice, however, the integration process is trying. The experiences of Turkish and Moroccan labour migrants show that many of these migrants have remained stuck at the bottom end of the social ladder and that they were never able to embark on a successful process of social and economic integration. As a result, many of them never left the place in which they first arrived.

New EU migrants

The current inflow of Polish migrants to the Netherlands is already larger than the annual number of migrants from Turkey, Morocco and Suriname put together. These new EU migrants' average duration of stay is lengthening, and more and more women and children from Central and Eastern Europe

are coming to the Netherlands. Initially, these migrant groups were seen as temporary transients – commonly referred to in EU jargon as mobile citizens rather than migrants – who return to their country of origin after a period of work, but this appears to be changing. The relevant question for us is whether migrants from Central and Eastern Europe can and will benefit from the urban escalator effect. This question will become all the more relevant as migration from this region increases in importance.

At first glance, there appears to be no need for concern with regard to these migrants' ability to integrate. There is a strong work ethic among these newcomes, and the share of employed people especially within the Polish migrant community is very high. In addition, the share of those eligible for welfare among migrants from Central and Eastern Europe is very low – much lower than among non-Western migrants in the Netherlands. And migrants from the new EU Member States are generally highly educated. Many of them have an academic degree, which of course leads to far more opportunities in the Dutch labour market than the low-skilled guest workers of several decades ago.

However, the relatively favourable labour market position of these migrants does not always lead to a successful integration in social terms. Migrants from Central and Eastern Europe keep to themselves and do not get involved in what is happening in their local community. This lack of ambition to integrate is clear from their reluctance to register with the population register (even among those newcomers who remain in the Netherlands for a longer period), from their minimal use of local facilities, and from their low degree of organisation. There is also a persistent problem with the Dutch language. For example, four out of five Polish people have difficulty speaking Dutch even several years after having settled in the Netherlands.

Their interaction with Dutch society is also a sore point. Research has shown that, over time, the contact that Central and East European migrants have with native Dutch people tends to decline and that they feel less and less accepted by the Dutch. Half of the Poles and two-thirds of the Bulgarians who have

settled in the Netherlands in recent years say that their ethnic group often experiences discrimination. And the longer they remain in the Netherlands, the less welcoming they consider the Dutch to be. The frequent reports of fraud and nuisance caused by certain Central and East European migrants – who seem to be dictating this group's image – is clearly partly responsible for this attitude.

The conclusion we can draw is that these groups benefit insufficiently from the urban escalator effect to be able to upgrade their status within society. In general, then, these migrants often find themselves living on the margins of urban society: often invisible or only noticed when acute problems arise. Moreover, these migrants are also economically vulnerable. Their relatively high level of education has not prevented many from losing their jobs in the recent economic crisis. As a result, dependence on unemployment benefits among Central and East European migrants has increased sharply in recent years.

An active local government

Local governments in particular should work actively to promote the integration of these migrants, as there are a number of urgent integration problems at the local level. Most cities in the Netherlands, however, pay little attention to this particular group. The Platform Integration and Society recently concluded that the vast majority of municipalities in the Netherlands do not conduct any kind of targeted policy for EU migrants, nor do they feel the need to have any formalised contact with these newcomers. Most municipalities do indicate that they are experiencing bottlenecks with respect to this group, but this generally does not seem to have led to any real policy. Only a few large municipalities in this country – especially the three main cities – are more active in this regard. They gather relevant information, carry out policies on different issues, and organise activities so that they come into contact with this target group.

There are a number of arguments for encouraging other large cities to take a more active approach. Such an approach would allow the widely heralded axiom of full and active citizenship to also apply to these migrants. This is especially true for newcomers from Central and East Europe who tend to quietly find their way around Dutch cities – so quietly, in fact, that municipalities hardly notice them. Below, we put forward three arguments in favour of a more active integration policy at the local level.

First, by engaging these newcomers, large cities will be more able to utilise their economic potential. There are many ways in which metropolises seek out promising inhabitants, but newcomers from Central and East Europe generally tend to be overlooked. The reason for this is not clear. As mentioned above, migrants in this group tend to be highly educated and very much geared towards the labour market – such as students from East Europe or well-qualified professionals in the health care industry or in business-related services. Nevertheless, very few of these migrants are involved in what is going on in their immediate vicinity. This can be changed by increasing the visibility of the local government, which would in turn prevent these newcomers from leaving the city.

Second, a more active policy would prevent large cities from losing their grip on this population group. The invisibility of these newcomers means that their various rights and obligations as city dwellers remain unknown to them. For cities, this means that they do not receive their share of municipal revenues from this group. It also means that municipalities belatedly hear about cases such as overcrowding and the illegal rental of rooms. Given that these newcomers are showing more signs of being (semi-) permanent residents and no longer mobile citizens, it is crucial that these migrants participate as fully fledged citizens. It is in the cities' own interest to become more involved with this group – to begin with by actively encouraging them to register in the local population register.

And finally, cities can facilitate these migrants' participation in society. Many migrants from Central and Eastern Europe are

struggling with a number of concrete issues to which government support can be the solution – for example, knowledge of the local labour market, insight into various local initiatives, knowledge of laws and regulations, and information on opportunities for education and language courses. The fact that these migrants are searching for an answer to these questions demonstrates that they do indeed long to be integrated into Dutch society. Local governments can support this by providing relevant information or by referring them to the proper organisation. After all, active citizenship thrives on a supportive government, not on a hands-off government.

Over the past year, the national government has initiated a pilot project – the Participation Statement – to encourage newcomers to become more involved with their local surroundings. Migrants from Central and Eastern Europe were explicitly a part of this pilot project. What is striking about reports surrounding this pilot is how important it is for migrants to be welcomed in a concrete context: this makes the environment in which they are supposed to integrate more tangible, and they understand what the municipality's intentions are with them. Instead of a comprehensive policy directed at target groups, this pilot simply coordinates the transfer and exchange of information in which both migrants and local governments as well as various organisations play a part. In the light of the above-mentioned threats and opportunities, such an initiative on the part of the larger cities is a promising investment.

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6.   Undocumented immigrants

Between exclusion and inclusion

Blanca Garcés-Mascareñas and Sébastien Chauvin

Irregular immigration rates high on Europe's political agenda. Southern and Eastern European countries have intensified controls at the external European borders. This means higher and more sophisticated fences, more border patrols and more detentions and repatriations at the border. Border control has also been intensified at European seaports and airports. In this case more border control implies distinguishing tourists from potential immigrants before departure, making airlines and travel agencies responsible for checking passengers' identities, and identifying foreigners by new technological means and a European network of immigration databases. The awareness that borders alone do not halt irregular migration has led to increased internal controls too. This includes more surveillance by the police, the increasing incarceration and deportation of irregular immigrants and their gradual exclusion from the labour and housing markets as well as from public services. Exclusion is meant to frustrate the living to such a degree that irregular immigrants who could not be stopped at the border or detained and deported afterwards will be forced to leave anyway.

Despite the serious securitisation of Europe's borders, there are approximately 2-4 million irregular migrants in Europe. They may be detained and deported at any moment, they are not allowed to work, they may face serious difficulties to find housing and they may have restricted access to health care. At the same time most irregular immigrants do work, are entitled to some basic social services and may take part in a myriad of institutions such as schools, churches, ethnic community groups and political associations. More generally, undocumented migrants live, work, shop, walk and drive among the rest of the population.

The incorporation of irregular immigrants takes mostly place at the local level: it's precisely there where they merge and interact with the rest of the population; it's also there where the practices of street-level bureaucrats, the support of non-governmental organisations and the development and implementation of particular local policies counteract the exclusionary effects of immigration policies.

The local incorporation of irregular immigrants

Research has shown that the local incorporation of irregular immigrants is often a consequence of the humanitarian and professional concerns of street-level bureaucrats, from school teachers and doctors to city council workers and local police. When immigration laws exclude irregular immigrants from accessing particular social services, professionals may adapt the rules. In a study of implementation practices in the Netherlands, Joanne van der Leun (2006) showed that the higher the level of professionalism, the higher the tendency to include irregular immigrants despite immigration laws. Conversely, the lower the level of professionalism, the greater the tendency to comply more rigorously with the law. In comparison with health care professionals and teachers, workers in the domains of social assistance and housing seem to display a much more legalistic attitude, thus accepting the exclusion of irregular immigrants. This seems to suggest that humanitarian concerns are only activated when professionalism is also present.

Social and migrant organisations are also key in the local incorporation of irregular immigrants. They often provide legal assistance, access to medical care and housing and language and vocational courses. This is particularly clear in Eastern and Southern European cities where NGOs and, in particular, Catholic organisations working in the field of social assistance started to accommodate newly arrived immigrants (many of them undocumented) much before the first local policies

were put in place. Most European cities also subsidise NGOs to provide those elementary services to undocumented immigrants when the city itself is not allowed to provide them. For instance, in the recent policy programme for 2014-18 the City of Amsterdam stated that it would make a budget reservation to fulfil their obligation to care for asylum seekers who receive a final negative decision, e.g. introducing a 'bed, bath and bread' arrangement. By financing these programmes, municipalities seek to give response to the need to 'assist' those residing in the city without opposing national laws directly and without bringing it to people's attention or giving rise to political concerns.

But the inclusion of irregular immigrants also results from explicit and formalised local policies. Sometimes these policies are in direct opposition to laws and programmes defined at the national level. In the Netherlands, when in February 2004 the Dutch Parliament accepted the Minister of Immigration and Integration's proposal to expel up to 26,000 rejected asylum seekers over the following three years, several big cities opposed this policy, pointing to their settlement and integration in Dutch society. In France in the mid-2000s, local city councils marked their opposition to the Sarkozy government's repression of undocumented immigrants by organising '*parrainages républicains*' in which an individual French citizen would become the official sponsor of an undocumented migrant from their local community.

Sometimes local policies are more inclusive than national policies but without necessarily opposing them directly. For instance, Barcelona turned the municipal census (called *el padrón*) into the basis of what was defined as *resident citizenship*. The basic idea is that any person registered in the city should be considered a legitimate citizen regardless of his/her legal status. In practice this means that registration in the municipal census, apart from giving right to health care and education (as stated in the law), also gives access to certain municipal services (such as use of public libraries, sports centres, schools and child-care

centres) and social benefits (such as grants funding food in public schools) and turn any foreigner into a target of integration policies. This is not without contradictions: for example, inclusion of undocumented immigrants in employment opportunity courses is difficult to reconcile with the fact that they do not have a work permit, which is the responsibility of the national government, and therefore cannot work legally.

Why cities are more inclusive

Often in contrast to restrictive immigration policies and highly symbolic debates at the national level, local policies have been characterised by a rather bottom-up place-sensitive approach and a pragmatic logic of problem solving. Whereas this may lead to inclusion in some instances and exclusion in other, several scholars argue that local policies are more likely to provide immigrants with equitable opportunities, accommodate ethnic diversity and work with immigrant organisations, which in turn would facilitate a greater degree of immigrant political participation. In the case of irregular immigration, the inclusive character of local policies results not only from humanitarian concerns but also from placing other policy imperatives beforehand.

In the field of health care, the tension between the national and local levels is also palpable. While several national governments have gradually excluded irregular immigrants from health care services, local authorities tend to be more concerned with the implications that such exclusion could have in public health. This has led many European cities to introduce particular measures to cover irregular immigrants or 'uninsured people' in general. For instance, Düsseldorf and Frankfurt offer anonymous consultation hours to facilitate undocumented immigrants' use of their services. In contrast to other Dutch cities, Rotterdam facilitates the vaccination of children whose parents are not registered by accepting them on referral by midwives, general practitioners or schools.

Manon Pluymen (2008) argues that, in comparison to the national government, local authorities in the Netherlands tend to feel a higher need to provide a safety net for destitute migrants. This is justified by local authorities on the basis of three arguments. The first one is *humanitarian*: moral arguments on the inclusion of those residing in the municipality prevail over national regulations aimed at exclusion. The second argument is in terms of *public health, public order and safety*. In this case, imperatives to prevent the spread of particular diseases, overcrowded housing or urban decay may be of higher priority for local authorities than those related to immigration control. The third argument is *in response to national policies*: feeling burdened with the practical implications of the shortcomings of national migration policy, local authorities protest and try to persuade the government to reverse certain aspects of its migration policy.

Although local actions evoke a picture of protest, Pluymen argues that on closer consideration they show much resemblance and partial compliance to national rules. The reason is simple: municipal measures of inclusion have their limitations too. So as to curtail the number of destitute immigrants, whose numbers increase as national regulations become more exclusionary, municipalities have tended to limit their initiatives to particular target groups. Two main trends can be identified here. On the one hand, cities in countries such as the Netherlands, Belgium, Austria and Germany seem to give priority to (rejected) asylum seekers upon more general undocumented migrants. On the other hand, NGOs in countries such as Italy and Spain do not seem to discriminate between different groups of undocumented migrants: priority is given on the basis of individual vulnerability.

Exclusion at the local level

Municipalities tend to be more concerned with knowing who resides in the city, incorporating any person into the health care

system or avoiding irregular housing. This has often led to a policy gap between national policies and their implementation locally, or to more direct clashes between formal policies at the national and local levels. However, it would be too simplistic to conclude that national policies exclude while local policies include. National law or national-level court decisions also aim at preventing the exclusion of minors from primary and secondary educational institutions and other provisions guarantee access to some form of health services, and in most European countries labour law protects all workers irrespectively of their legal status. At the same time exclusionary practices have also been identified at the local level. For instance, in Spain several local authorities have jeopardised migrants' legal access to health care and education by refusing registration of irregular immigrants in the municipal census. In Italy some municipalities have excluded foreigners (with a residence permit) from subsidised rent or public housing. Moreover, the growth of anti-immigrant political parties and their presence in numerous municipalities around Europe is increasingly counteracting the alleged inclusive character of local policies.

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7. From Mokum to Damsko and back again?

Deep language diversity and the new urbanity

Virginie Mamadouh and Nesrin El Ayadi

Language diversity is a major challenge in contemporary Europe, but all too often the issue is reduced to the 24 official languages of the European Union and the difficult multilingual arrangements in EU institutions. A larger issue, however, is the language diversity in European cities, the languages that are spoken daily by their inhabitants and visitors. How many there are we do not know for certain, but certainly more than the 24 official languages of EU Member States. In many cities, like in Amsterdam, the authorities do not keep statistics on language knowledge and language use, but we do know that nationals of almost all states in the world are represented among Amsterdam residents. This multilingualism is overwhelming but nonetheless carelessly overlooked. In contrast to the government's policy on the Dutch language, there is as yet no targeted government policy on multilingualism. Dealing with this language diversity is difficult – perhaps not as explosive as dealing with religious or sexual diversity but just as controversial. While some fear that language diversity leads to fragmentation, segregation and conflict, and that it therefore forms a threat to social cohesion, others celebrate this diversity as the foundation of urbanity and a symbol of the richness of metropolitan culture. By mixing and exchanging, new language forms are created. City dwellers borrow words from each other, and many residents of Amsterdam have adopted the foreign names for their city without necessarily speaking the language from which the name originates. Yiddish is rarely spoken in Amsterdam anymore but Mokum (after Mokum Aleph what means 'safe city A' in Yiddish) is still the

city's nickname, and not everyone who refers to Amsterdam as Damsko speaks Sranan, the Creole language of Suriname.

Territorial integration and cities

Cities are by definition a meeting place for people with different cultural, socio-economic and geographical backgrounds who come to the city for various reasons. Urbanity is therefore multilingual, but this multilingualism is structured by power relations. The linguistic landscape of a city is determined by dominant representations of languages and by the correct and appropriate use of language. Not all languages, language variants, dialects and sociolects are equal, and they are also not considered suitable to be spoken by everyone, at every moment of the day, in every part of the city and on every occasion. One language or language variant – the dialect of a certain region, city or neighbourhood; the sociolect of a particular class, profession or age group – is associated with more power and prestige than the others: those speaking it (and those entitled to speak it) have more power than those who have not mastered it. Speaking such a language is equivalent to exercising power.

In the past, it was not unusual for different professional groups (such as peasants, noblemen, merchants, soldiers and clergymen) in the same region to speak different languages. But in the modernisation process that took place in Europe with the Enlightenment in the 18th century, the industrial revolution and urbanisation in the 19th century and nationalism in the 20th century, the existing political entities evolved into modern territorial states. A distinctive part of that process was the forming of a national language. A single idiom was elevated above the others and became the language for the activities of the state: the city council and city administration, the police, the army, the judiciary and later education and sometimes also the national church. The formalisation of the chosen language (the creation of a grammar and the spread of strong normative beliefs

in the national educational system about correct language usage) and the harmonisation and homogenisation of language usage within the territory of the state led to monolingualism in most states: one language for the collective. In some cases, the national language pushed down the other languages present in the community – sometimes violently but usually by persuasion: those who wanted to get ahead in life had to speak the language, which gave them access to knowledge, jobs, relationships and friends, money and prestige. They in turn encouraged their children to do the same. In other cases, certain groups that spoke a different language demanded political autonomy in the region where they were in the majority. Some states formalised several languages (Switzerland, Finland) or several language variants (Norway), but these remained exceptions. Still others (Austro-Hungarian Empire) tried to do this but failed to become multilingual countries and were pulled apart after the First World War to form smaller nation-states with one dominant national language.

Over time, in this context of ideological monolingualism, multilingualism came to be distrusted – both individually and collectively. People with a knowledge of other languages were suspected of having ties with the communities that spoke this language; as a result, they were considered less loyal than monolinguals. These people often lived in peripheral areas that were poorly integrated into the nation-state or in cities where they came into contact with foreigners and where diplomats, merchants and other foreigners lived. As a result of globalisation, international migration has increased in the last 50 years, which has dramatically augmented the diversity in cities. New information and communications technologies have made it easier for migrants to maintain contact with people elsewhere in the world and to keep alive one's foreign language skills. European integration and the mobility stimulated within the EU also contribute to this: think of the Erasmus exchange students, labour migrants, tourists, retired people and others embracing the freedom of movement that gives EU citizens the right to pursue happiness in any other Member State of the Union.

Multilingualism in contemporary European cities

This enhanced mobility highlights the fact that languages fulfil different social functions and that not all functions need not be served by one and the same language. One can use a different language at work than on the street, online than in the pub, at home than in the shop, in a house of worship than in a hospital. At a more abstract level, we can also distinguish between the two social functions of language. On the one hand, language is a means of communication that makes it possible to interact with others; on the other hand it can be used to strengthen relationships within a group that shares the same language and thereby to intensify that group's segregation from others. More language diversity in a city could mean more communication problems when its inhabitants do not always – or do not immediately – share a common language. This could lead to the emergence of linguistic islands in which others can quickly feel excluded if they do not know the language. But language diversity can also be a collective resource and can be used to make contact with people elsewhere in the world, and everyone can enrich his or her intellectual life through culture in all kinds of languages without having to travel across the city or country or having to spend the night in a different bed.

The benefits of language diversity are taken for granted. Some kind of policy would be most welcome though, to further develop language skills (for even if you speak Chinese, Russian, Turkish or Portuguese at home, that does not automatically make you a professional interpreter-translator) and to encourage the enjoyment and exploration of other cultures. The disadvantages of language diversity, by contrast, are widely discussed, as many are concerned that it could lead to the breakdown of social cohesion and to identity crises. There are different estimations given to different languages and language variants: some languages are considered well-placed to be a (global) means of communication because they have a large and powerful social base that gives them prestige, while other languages are associated with

small and/or marginal groups. Mastering and speaking the first kind of language is applauded as tolerant and open-minded, but mastering and speaking the others is framed as narrow-minded and a denial of modernity. The distinction is sometimes arbitrary, and some 'major' languages are deemed to be insignificant out of pure ignorance. One example is Portuguese, which is worldwide a much larger language community than German. But considering certain languages and language variants as obsolete and dispensable due to the small number of people who speak them, is missing the other social functions of language, namely its roles to identify and give meaning to the world or to express an identity or strengthen relationships within small groups of people.

Deep language diversity and connections

Global cities, but other European cities just as well, are characterised by deep language diversity and thus have to contend with three major challenges that deserve the attention of cultural and political organisations, including the government. It might be uneasy and inconvenient to have to deal with these challenges, but we can develop an ethic that would allow everyone to be accepted for who they are while at the same time limiting communication problems.

The first challenge concerns connections within the city. How can we provide a welcoming and inclusive public space where everyone can feel at home? The national language can be a binding factor if it is a shared language. But if there is a constant influx of newcomers and guests, or if there are people who do not (yet) know the national language or do not learn it because they are visiting (as tourists, exchange students or expats who are sent to the country for a short period), then this is not sufficient and measures must be taken to reach out to as many people as possible. This is often by default the language of globalisation: international English. In the Netherlands,

the hospitality industry provides English menus, shops have English-speaking assistants, and businesses and universities use English as the common language in the workplace. Public utility companies, public transport and the government often do not systematically relent to this norm – they even do that less than they used to in the 1980s when folders in the language of the new migrants were customary, but their employees switch to English informally when needed. English as a second language has become natural. While tourists used to be considered polite if they first asked if someone could speak English before they struck up a conversation, they now get an offended look in return if they ask. This shadow function of English is more dangerous in the long term for the stature of the Dutch language in our daily life than all the other languages put together. English-speaking migrants (not necessarily people for whom English is the first language) often complain that they are not given the opportunity to learn and practise Dutch because everyone immediately switches to (Dutchified) English. As a result, they feel foreign and excluded in the Netherlands. It is for that matter important not to allow language diversity to grow wildly at the expense of the local sound of a city. If that happens, then diversity is no longer the sound of the city but begins to sound like exclusion: native city dwellers no longer identify with their city because too often they cannot understand conversations they overhear between their neighbours or among passers-by.

The second challenge relates to connections with other cities in the world. Here, too, English is too often and wrongly perceived as a panacea. As inheritors of a trading nation, the Dutch should realise that it is important to speak the language of your customer. It is therefore crucial from an economic point of view to be proficient in German and French. Chinese, Russian, Turkish and Portuguese are also becoming more and more important. Bilinguals (who are not necessarily people whose roots lie abroad) are also important cultural and political links. Discussions about politics and society are increasingly being

fuelled by American and British debates, while knowledge from other language areas, societies and cities could be more inspiring. How different would our perceptions of contemporary problems be – for example the refugee crisis, the euro crisis or climate change – if we were better able to follow the debates occurring in the affected areas?

Finally, the connections between cities and the surrounding countryside are a point of concern. There seems to be a widening gap between multilingual and multi-ethnic cities and the rest of the country with its monolingual and mono-ethnic society in which fellow citizens do not feel welcome: the gap between, say, North Amsterdam (the very diverse northern district of the city) and Volendam (the former fishing harbour located further North known for being closed to national and foreign newcomers). Are the two worlds drifting further and further apart – culturally, but also politically? And what impact could this have? Will Europe become an archipelago of multilingual cities – islands in a hostile sea of conservative national communities that close their doors to those who speak another language? That is not an inviting prospect! Or is it inevitable that diversity can only be tolerated in metropolitan areas and that the best we can hope for is that Amsterdam tries to live up to its Yiddish name?

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http://www.mime-project.org

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8.   Schools in the multilingual city

Not every language is equal

Orhan Agirdag

European cities are becoming more and more diverse in terms of language. Multilingualism is also increasingly evident in the classroom in the Netherlands, as more and more students speak another language than Dutch at home. Moreover, the mass media and the internet have familiarised many young people with English already before they receive any formal instruction in that language.

While linguistic diversity enriches society and the education system, it also poses new challenges. On the one hand, multilingualism is promoted by the EU as a crucial catalyst for citizenship, education and the economy. But this policy is only *partially* incorporated at the national and municipal level. While languages such as English, and to a lesser extent French and German, are increasingly valued in education, immigrant languages are seen as the ultimate obstacle to integration. This essay is about the paradox of multilingualism.

EU and Member States in favour of multilingualism

According to the EU, multilingualism is something fundamentally good that should be encouraged. EU policymakers cite four reasons why they promote multilingualism. Multilingualism is supposed to boost intercultural dialogue, stimulate citizens of the Member States to cultivate EU citizenship, offer new possibilities to citizens to study and work abroad, and open up new markets for EU companies that want to do business outside of the EU. In other words, multilingualism is seen as a stimulus to the EU economy, to educational mobility and to civic education.

For these reasons, the EU is trying to protect linguistic diversity and to encourage its citizens' knowledge of languages. The goal is for all Europeans to learn at least two other languages besides their mother tongue, preferably from a very young age. The objective of 'mother tongue plus two languages' (1+2) was laid down by government leaders at the summit of Barcelona in March 2002. It should be noted that the EU itself does not have authority in the area of education, but it does promote language education, multilingual education and exchanges between different educational systems in different languages through a number of programmes.

The endeavour to promote multilingualism is also gaining acceptance within various Member States. To date, most Member States' educational systems have been monolingual. This does not mean that no other languages are taught in these schools as a separate subject but rather that the instruction of regular subjects is typically given in one language. Even in bilingual regions (such as Brussels), parents must choose whether to send their children to a monolingual Dutch or French school. EU Member States are nonetheless trying to introduce multilingual education as a result of the European directive of 1+2 languages. Although still a recent phenomenon, in 2015 around 130 schools in the Netherlands offered multilingual education. This means that about half of the lessons at such schools – including regular subjects such as maths and geography – are given in English. In other words, not only is English (as a subject) taught at school, the students are also taught *in* English (language of instruction). Since 2014, multilingual education is no longer only possible in Dutch secondary education: various primary schools have launched bilingual education at the initiative of the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science. According to State Secretary Sander Dekker, all primary schools should be given the opportunity to use English, French or German as the language of instruction for up to 15% of their teaching time. In the future, Dutch children will earn a living in a world in which it is more important than ever that they speak English well, in addition to

Dutch. It is therefore crucial for students to begin learning the language at the earliest possible age.

More recently, Minister Lodewijk Asscher of Social Affairs and Employment said that he wants to make multilingual after-school care available for children from ages 0 to 6 in English, French and German. In a letter to the Lower House, he argued that multilingualism is an advantage for young children because they become aware of language comprehension and learn to deal with differences already from an early age. In short, the Dutch government is clearly of the opinion that multilingualism (English, French, German) offers cognitive, economic and social added value.

Why multilingualism at school?

The positive view of multilingualism and multilingual education is based on important scientific evidence. A majority of linguists argue that concepts and skills that are developed in one language are transferred to a second language through a so-called 'common underlying proficiency'. Multilingual education would therefore not hinder but actually stimulate the learning of the Dutch language.

From a neurological perspective, bilingual children are said to develop cognitive mechanisms with which they constantly control which language they speak. This cognitive controlling takes place in the brain. The earlier a child begins with the training of this cognitive controlling mechanism, the better its brain will develop. The brains of bilingual children are therefore better trained than those of monolingual children. This difference is even measurable when people grow old: bilingual people are on average affected by Alzheimer's disease much later in life.

Also from a sociological perspective, multilingualism is a plus. This is the case for all students but particularly for minorities. For them, the knowledge and the preservation of their mother tongue can function as 'multicultural capital', for their native

language plays a crucial role in the development of communicative and emotional ties with their families and the community. Due to such social relations, cultural and economic resources within the community are deployed in order to improve the educational performance of the children. One example is the homework assistance that is being organised by many associations of ethnic-cultural minorities.

There are also many (international) studies that have examined the effectiveness of multilingual education. The results are summarised in various metastudies, and without exception they demonstrate that multilingual instruction has beneficial effects on the educational achievements of foreign-language-speaking students, although the magnitude of the effects is modest.

One type of multilingualism is not like the other

Although the positive effects of multilingualism and multilingual education are not in dispute, not all multilingual repertoires are valued in the same way. For example, in 2013 a student at the Metis Montessori Lyceum (then known as the Cosmicus Montessori Lyceum) in Amsterdam was suspended because he had repeatedly been 'caught' speaking Turkish at school. The student brought the issue to court, but the judge ruled that the school was justified in suspending the student. The judge also concluded that the school's rules of conduct requiring the use of Dutch as the working language both within and outside the classroom was not in conflict with the principle of non-discrimination. According to the judge, the ban on speaking one's mother tongue was justified because the school in this way minimised the formation of groups according to ethnic background.

In this verdict, the added value of multilingualism is not only forgotten but actively devalued. Multilingualism is seen as something that leads to the formation of groups – something that impedes civic education. How the judge can reconcile the ban on speaking one's mother tongue with Article 30 of the Convention

on the Rights of the Child (CRC) is a big question, because the CRC states that: 'In those States in which ethnic, religious or linguistic minorities or persons of indigenous origin exist, a child belonging to such a minority or who is indigenous shall not be denied the right, in community with other members of his or her group, to enjoy his or her own culture, to profess and practise his or her own religion, or to use his or her own language'.

This is not an isolated incident; it is consistent with the current zeitgeist. From the beginning of the 21st century there has been a clear anti-immigrant attitude discernible in the Netherlands. In many Dutch schools, it is implicitly or explicitly forbidden to speak immigrant languages; nor would they be included in the curriculum as is the case with English, French and German. In 2004, an end was even put to two important initiatives for immigrant children: Education in One's Own Language and Culture (*Onderwijs in Eigen Taal en Cultuur, OETC*) and Education of Immigrant Living Languages (*Onderwijs van Allochtone Levende Talen, OALT*). Since then, the government has not taken a single structural initiative to enhance the value of immigrant languages such as Turkish or Arabic in the education system.

On the contrary, when referring to the multilingualism of non-Western population groups, people often speak in terms of a handicap. Students from these groups are seldom spoken about in terms of multilingualism but rather in terms of their deficiency in the language of their adopted country. It almost seems as if these students have *less* rather than *more* cultural baggage due to the fact that they speak an extra language. But how is it that the discussion has suddenly changed from 'good' to 'bad' multilingualism when it comes to immigrant languages?

It's not the economy, stupid!

One could argue that the paradox of multilingualism can be understood from an economic perspective, for is it not logical for languages that have economic value to be given more attention?

This argument rests on the assumption that immigrant languages have no economic value, but this assumption is incorrect.

Research indicates that immigrant languages do indeed have economic value. Immigrants who master their mother tongue earn more than those who forget their mother tongue. Anyone walking through the streets of Amsterdam Southeast or New West would understand perfectly why this is so, for the thriving ethnic micro-economies revolve to a large extent around these languages. Even outside these ethnic enclaves, immigrant languages have economic value. Almost every month I receive an email from a colleague looking for a foreign-language pollster, data encoder or translator.

Immigrant languages are also relevant for the international economy. Trade between the Netherlands and Turkey has tripled in the past decade. The Netherlands is one of the most important investors in Turkey. Numerous Dutch companies have a branch in Turkey, primarily in the food, energy and technology sectors. Within these sectors, knowledge of the Turkish language is invaluable. And yet according to the Court, a school may suspend you if you speak this language in the classroom.

White and black languages and institutional racism

The social and political estimation of a language clearly does not correspond with the economic added value of that language. The ethnic association we attach to these languages – the 'colour' of these languages – offers a better explanation for the apparent paradox of multilingualism. There is in effect a distinction we can make between white and black languages. White languages are languages of white population groups (English, French or German), while black languages are those of coloured population groups – languages such as Turkish, Kurdish and Sranan. And to paraphrase Pierre Bourdieu, a language can only be worth as much as the speakers of the language are worth in the political and social space.

In other words, the fact that black languages are less valued – and even actively devalued – can be understood as an expression of *institutional racism*. Institutional racism should not be confused with individual racism. This is not, after all, about individuals who (consciously) discriminate, nor is it about the intentions of individuals. The exclusion of black languages often occurs with the best of intentions – for example, in the hope of counteracting delays in the learning of Dutch among immigrant children and of preventing the formation of ethnically based cliques. But if colonialism has taught us anything, it is that the good intentions of a civilising offensive do not make up for the negative consequences of our actions.

What is institutional racism, then? It has something to do about the rules of the game played by institutions such as the education system and politics. Institutional racism occurs when the rules of institutions are systematically to the disadvantage of coloured population groups. One example of this is the way in which the Dutch education system valorises the linguistic repertoires of Dutch, English and even Frisian students but takes no positive action on the language of Turkish students.

Conclusion

Before we can speak about citizenship and civic education, we must first ensure that we as citizens are equal. By excluding the linguistic and cultural repertoires of a specific ethnic minority, we implicitly give these fellow citizens the message that they are second-class citizens. One way in which we can move beyond institutional racism is to reinterpret Europe's policy of a mother tongue plus two languages (1+2). When people refer to a mother tongue in relation to the EU, they tend to think of the national language of the Member State. But in cities such as Amsterdam, many children have a non-European mother tongue. In other words, one's mother tongue can also refer to black languages such as Turkish, Sranan, Kurdish or Arabic. The European city

of tomorrow will most certainly be multi-coloured and multi-lingual. If we want to fully exploit the potential of linguistic diversity, we must ensure that all the colours of multilingualism are valorised in our schools, and not only the white languages.

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9.   City kids and citizenship

Lia Karsten

Children and citizenship

From a political point of view, children are not citizens: they have no voting rights. However, there are laws and treaties that deal with the rights and duties of children. In the Netherlands, for example, school attendance is compulsory and children are prohibited from working. At the international level, the citizenship of children is enshrined in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, a UN treaty that has also been signed by the Netherlands.

There are differing views on the relationship between children and citizenship. One school of thought says that children are not yet adults and that childhood is simply preparation for citizenship at a later date. In this view, citizenship is a status that is attained. Children must learn how to behave as democratic citizens and should be taught this at school. A second school of thought sees the citizenship of children as a social practice. Those who adhere to this school do not make any fundamental distinction between children and adults: both age categories continually put citizenship into practice. The emphasis on social practice presumes a dynamic and relational process that is referred to as doing or practising citizenship. Putting citizenship into practice presumes at the least a visible presence in the public domain and involves the practices of dealing with 'the other' and the processes of inclusion and exclusion. Who is left out and who is allowed to join in? Who determines the rules and who can change them? This article will follow this second notion of citizenship, with an emphasis on urban public spaces as a representation and practice space. In what ways are children present in these spaces? What kind of children are they? And how much leeway do they have for their behaviour? But first we will examine the demographic position of urban children.

The demographics of children in the city

Children have always lived in the city, but they began to disappear starting from the 1960s due to mass suburbanisation, as it was especially families with children that left the city and moved to the suburban areas surrounding the large cities. The city became the domain of young, childless households. The image of the city as an unsuitable living environment for children persisted for a long time. But more recently, new groups of families have come to live in the city. First came the migrant families that quickly filled up the deserted neighbourhoods in the city (which were uninhabited as a result of suburbanisation). Thereafter, from around 2000, new, middle-class households arrived that remained in the city even after having children instead of moving to suburban areas. Both groups have contributed to the growing share of children in the city today. This is a development that we are seeing in more cities in Europe: the city is once again popular as a place for families. And with the growing popularity of the city for families, the urban citizenship of children is once again on the agenda.

Children and urban outdoor public spaces

Urban public space is important for children for two reasons: to be able to play outside and to be able to move from one place to another. When children play outside, they are competing for space with other citizens – especially adults – but also with other functions, mainly vehicle traffic and parking. The space in front of the door is the place where this competition is most visible. While playing outside was something that used to be largely taken for granted by children in the decades after World War II, today this is no longer the case. Many children have become 'inside children', playing mostly indoors. 'Outside children', who can still be found outdoors practically every day, have become a minority.

In terms of children's movement through public space, there has been a sharp decline in the autonomous freedom of movement of city kids. While almost all children used to walk (or, less frequently, bike) independently to school or to the football club, this has now become the exception, certainly for children under 10 years of age. Children are now continually brought to school and picked up from school: the backseat generation has become a widespread phenomenon. In large cities, children often take the bike or walk when they go out but almost always in the company of one of their parents. The idea that you cannot let your child go somewhere alone has become part of a discussion about responsible parenting. While this discussion was at first largely a middle-class matter, now we are seeing this cultural heritage penetrating the lower socio-economic class. In practice, this means that escorting and transporting children through urban public space requires a significant investment of time on the part of the parents and that children are rarely allowed to make their own way independently.

Both developments – the decline in the number of children playing outdoors and the reduced autonomous freedom of movement – mean that children have become less visible as small citizens on the street and in outdoor urban spaces in general. This could lead to a situation in which the citizenship of children is undermined. After all, citizenship in the sense of practising citizenship is all about the ability and the right to explore the space outdoors. If children remain indoors or are kept inside the house, they cannot practise the skill of interacting with one another and with 'other' neighbourhood children or fellow townsmen.

Children and the new urban consumption sites

The above-mentioned increase in the number of children in the city has meant that children are receiving more attention as consumers. The recent rise in middle-class families in the city

in particular has not gone unnoticed by commercial interests. The presence of families that can afford to live in the expensive city has all sorts of consequences for the way in which the city develops. The new rich urban families have become a significant market factor.

While children play outside less often than was the case in the past, they now have a much fuller schedule. Children today have on average more after-school activities than in the past: they are more often members of a club and also at after-school childcare facilities. But there is another activity that has gained quite some significance: the family outing. Families consume the city, just as many adults without children do. Urban consumption sites such as museums, restaurants and festivals are frequented by families as well. We are talking here about activities in which parent escort and adult supervision are an integral part. This new development of families that consume the city is not a general phenomenon but one that is prevalent mainly among the (upper) middle class.

What does the growing importance of the family outing mean for children and citizenship? On the one hand, it demonstrates that children nowadays are present everywhere, not only in their own neighbourhood but also in restaurants with an urban reputation or in coffee shops in the centre of the city. Children have become visible as citizens in places where they were formerly rarely seen. On the other hand, it is clear that we are talking about a specific group of children and that they are merely guests at these new places: the activities, the supervision and the rules are organised by adults. The children are given only limited space to bring their citizenship into practice.

To conclude: The city as a meeting place

What is the significance of the developments we have described for the urban citizenship of children? In the first place, it has become clear that youth experiences are extremely varied.

Children's lives differ, and the class position of one's parents makes a distinctive difference. Here we focus on three groups: to begin with, the small group of children who still do play outside, who explore the neighbourhood on their own and are streetwise. These children no longer encounter outdoors the diversity of other children that used to be quite common. This has consequences for the extent to which they can learn to interact with 'the other'. Moreover, these outdoor children are frequently mentioned as a source of public nuisance. Children who play outdoors make lots of noise, occasionally shoot a ball through a window or play pranks on the local shopkeepers. They are not always granted the right to use the outdoor urban space – or only under the conditions prescribed by the new middle class. The second group consists of the indoor children who play mainly at home – alone or with a brother or sister or friend. This is the group that no one considers problematic and who are consequently overlooked. But this group also has a limited amount of interaction with 'other' children. And finally, there are the children of the backseat generation who pop up in many places in the city but always under the watchful eye of adults and often in the company of like-minded (read: same social class) children.

All three groups of children thus have little experience with urban public space as a practice space for citizenship. Playing, biking or just being outside with many different types of children, without any parental guidance or adult supervision, has been marginalised. All three groups have limited opportunities to build up what is referred to as *bridging social capital* – the skills needed to establish relations outside of one's own group. Urban policymakers need to devote more attention to the everyday citizenship of children. Unfortunately, a formal document such as that of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child can only be of limited assistance in this. It is difficult to make the practising of citizenship legally binding, but it can be facilitated by more child-friendly spatial planning. Initiatives involving child-friendly cities (the European Child Friendly

City Network, or CFC) must be seen in this light. In the Dutch context, CFC policy should not only focus on specific provisions for children but mainly on keeping urban public spaces accessible for children. Children are generally well taken care of in the Netherlands, but there is increasing segregation in the large cities. This is the case not only at schools but also on the streets and in extracurricular clubs, even though one of the great qualities of the city is that it is home to so many different groups. The city should be a meeting place for children where differences can be bridged and where even children can build up *bridging social capital*. An example of this would be giving priority to broad sidewalks as meeting places for *all* children in the neighbourhood (and adult neighbours) and the creation of safe traffic routes along facilities that are often used by children. In countries such as Sweden and Germany, many more children move around autonomously than in the Netherlands. More European research could identify why this is the case. And we should also ask the children themselves what they think a child-friendly city should look like, as this also cultivates citizenship. In the Netherlands, child participation in urban planning is still not widely applied, but in Norway, municipalities are required by law to appoint an official responsible for involving children in urban planning issues. With the help of interactive digital maps, children are invited to think about new urban projects to be developed. European countries could learn much from each other. Stimulating European cooperation and information exchange in the area of child studies and child participation deserves to be supported more (also financially).

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10.   Those who feel left behind

Fenne M. Pinkster

European Cities are changing. Newspapers write extensively about the creative class working on their laptops in hipster cafés and about middle-class families returning from the suburbs and exchanging their cars for cargo bikes to transport their children around the city. This reassessment of the city – as the playground of a new urban middle class – is clearly visible than in Amsterdam, which perhaps more than any other Dutch city resembles the success story envisioned by the Dutch government in their newest urban agenda *Celebrate the City* (2015). Gentrification, active citizenship and do-it-yourself urbanism are celebrated as core values of this new, postmodern city. But not everyone is celebrating and some people feel left behind.

Working-class neighbourhoods

This sentiment is felt particularly in the working-class districts of yesteryear such as Higher Blackley in Manchester, the 8th arrondissement in Lyon, and Marzahn-Hellersdorf in Berlin. These neighbourhoods are the domain of an urban working class who chose to remain in the city in the 1960s and 1970s – during the peak of suburbanisation. A well-known Dutch example is the neighbourhood of Betondorp (literally translated as *Concrete Village*, from now on the Village), which is known for its exceptional architecture – it was the first neighbourhood in the Netherlands where concrete was used to construct social housing – and for its famous former residents: football player Johan Cruijff and writer Gerard Reve. The neighbourhood was designed as a garden city following the principles laid out by the English urban planner Ebenezer Howard, who felt that workers in the city had a right to a green and village-like setting. It was built in the early 1920s by

housing associations affiliated to different labour unions and to this day Betondorp is described by its residents as a working-class district with a strong sense of community. More than 90% of the housing stock consists of social housing, the average income of residents is relatively low, and a relatively high number of elderly live in the neighbourhood. Interviews with residents and with urban professionals (such as professionals working for the municipality, housing associations, welfare organisations and the police) provide a picture of a residential area composed of an 'old guard of true Amsterdammers'. This group of Villagers speak with much affection about their neighbourhood as it used to be, but at the same time perceive a process of creeping change, which they experience as a process of decline.

Neighbourhood decline

Long-time residents see the decline of their neighbourhood in the closure of the community centre, the departure of neighbourhood managers of two housing associations, the relocation of the local police officer to a district office elsewhere and the disappearance of shops on the village square. This loss of local services and facilities is attributed to 'the government' – an umbrella term used to refer to different institutions working in the neighbourhood. Dissatisfaction over the alleged abandonment of the neighbourhood by urban managers and policymakers – who used to be very much present in the neighbourhood – is expressed via service desks, hotlines, the local television station AT5 and in city council meetings. Many urban professionals, however, regard the claims of these residents on government services as anachronistic, no longer befitting this day and age. In today's participation society, they argue, some degree of self-organisation and active citizenship should be demonstrated. In this respect, residents not only experience a growing physical but also a psychological distance between themselves and the professionals who are in charge of 'their' neighbourhood.

In addition, these Villagers observe signs of decay in the gardens, which are not as well maintained as they used to be, and in the physical dilapidation of streets and parks due to litter and dog mess. Here too the finger is pointed at the government, which according to residents should guard the maintenance of public spaces more strictly. The Villagers also trace the dilapidation of the gardens to the influx of 'other' tenants in the social housing. In the past, most of the dwellings were allocated to those born in the Village, but this changed when local housing associations were absorbed into city-wide associations in the 1990s and the housing allocation system was regionalised in 2001. As a result, now anyone could move to the neighbourhood. Moreover, housing associations made a relatively large number of houses available to priority candidates, such as people with health disabilities, histories of addiction or those with psychological problems. Tenants 'with a blemish' is how some residents euphemistically describe them. The village-like character of the neighbourhood and the close-knit local community were thought to offer such people a safe environment. But given that the houses are noisy and people live very close to each other, differences in lifestyles are quickly noticed and magnified. New tenants, with different lifestyles, therefore easily become a nuisance. In addition, long-time Villagers interpret the arrival of these 'other' tenants as a symbol of the declining status of the neighbourhood within the Amsterdam housing market. In this respect, they show a clear awareness of the socio-spatial dynamic in the city in recent decades and of the fact that the revaluation of the centrally located neighbourhoods has contributed to the relative degradation of others.

The arrival of gentrifiers

In the meantime, the strong upgrading wave experienced in Amsterdam as a whole appears to have now reached the Village. A new group of highly educated people is starting to move into formerly social housing units which were either sold or rented out

to market prices. These changes in the neighbourhood housing stock reflect a broader process of privatisation and deregulation of the Amsterdam housing market. According to long-time Villagers, the resulting influx of 'yuppies' has eroded the community spirit and this sometimes leads to tensions between the two groups. As one resident says of his new neighbour:

> 'Such an antisocial, individualistic type. The first thing he told me was that they were changing the fence between our gardens. He just told me, he didn't ask my opinion. Well, to me the message is loud and clear: he want nothing to do with me, I want nothing to do with him.'

While the back garden had previously served as a public domain where neighbours kept each other informed of the goings-on in the neighbourhood, it was now effectively privatised. And yet some of the older residents are hopeful about the arrival of young families, believing that they will bring new life to the neighbourhood. Most of the houses are, however, too small for families and are more suited to the young urban professionals who are celebrated by public policy: the highly educated first-time buyers in the housing market for whom the city is a playground and the neighbourhood of little importance.

Estrangement

The result of these social, material and institutional changes in the neighbourhood is that the members of 'the old guard' in Betondorp are experiencing a growing sense of alienation and estrangement in their everyday environment. It is becoming increasingly difficult for them to use their neighbourhood in the way they were used to. What is striking in their stories about neighbourhood change is that, above all, they associate internal changes with processes that are shaping up outside of the neighbourhood, in particular due to actions of 'the government'. As a result, their loss

of belonging in the neighbourhood itself translates into feelings of dissatisfaction and neglect that go far beyond its boundaries. This may also explain the high share in the neighbourhood of both non-voters and voters for the Socialist Party and the Party for Freedom, both of which promote a strong government. Precisely because long-time residents identify so strongly with their neighbourhood, they see their loss of control over 'their' neighbourhood as symbolic of their own marginalisation within society.

At home in the city

Betondorp is not an isolated case. Similar processes can also be observed in other working-class neighbourhoods in European cities. Feelings of dissatisfaction about urban change are expressed by working class residents who very consciously chose to stay in the city at a time when virtually no one did. Now they see their familiar environment changing due to processes of post-industrialisation, neoliberalisation and rescaling, and new styles of urban governance. While in many other European cities, processes of gentrification lead to the direct displacement of long-time residents, in the Netherlands it is often assumed that there is little to worry about given regulations about tenant protection and rent control. And yet older city dwellers do experience a sense of political and cultural displacement. Their loss of 'home' not only leads to disagreements and sometimes overt tensions amongst different types of residents within the neighbourhood, but is also scaled upwards to the level of the city and the wider society. The danger is that changes in the everyday environment translate into a sense of estrangement and alienation from society as a whole, which may ultimately threaten the social sustainability of the city. It is therefore worrying that some politicians and urban professionals appear to write off these residents' experiences as anachronisms and as a nostalgic longing for the city of the 1960s and 1970s. Most Villagers will admit that the city is now in much better shape

than it was then. However, it is no longer *their* city. This raises the question of how the celebrated city can reserve space for other forms of 'feeling at home' than those of the new urban middle class. The challenge for urban governance is then to stimulate the economic potential of the city and attract the new urban middle class without marginalising other groups of city residents.

The author

Fenne Pinkster is urban geographer and assistant professor at the University of Amsterdam. A central theme in her research is the significance of the neighbourhood in the daily lives of the residents.

Further reading

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11. Exiles in the city: A triptych

Guido Snel, Sepp Eckenhaussen and Fien de Ruiter

The best way to see Amsterdam is through the eyes of an exile
Guido Snel

In the middle of what has come to be known as the 'refugee crisis' in the summer and autumn of 2015, a seemingly simple twist took place in the public discourse over the figure of the refugee as a result of one photo – a boy washed up on a beach. Until that point, the response to the eternal ambivalence towards the 'newcomer', the 'migrant', the 'immigrant' – what Georg Simmel suggestively characterised around 1900 as 'the one who comes today and stays tomorrow' – had degenerated into blunt rejection. Those who risked their lives on the Mediterranean Sea in order to reach the EU – preferably Germany or the United Kingdom – were at best economic refugees but in most cases simply fortune-hunters. But now national TV evenings for the refugees are organised and the entire nation sympathises with the train of refugees, as it did before with the starving people in Ethiopia or in other misery-ridden countries.

Traditionally, the counterargument to xenophobia is that migrants are good for society, that they expand the ways of life of a city or a country, that a wider variety of food becomes available in supermarkets, that we would all be less inward-looking and become more cosmopolitan. It is an argument that has proven to be vulnerable since 11 September 2001 and the ensuing debate on Islam. Not all residents of Amsterdam believe they have thrived as a result of the globalisation that has transformed the city since the 1990s into one of the cultural and business centres of Europe. In a certain sense, Amsterdam is indeed a segregated city. Districts and schools are monochrome (sometimes ethnically, always socially) and there is no equal opportunity for

everyone, whatever politics claims. The University of Amsterdam also engages in segregation. The Faculty of Humanities attracts the vast majority of its students from that part of the population that does not have its origins in the waves of immigration of the 20th century. The great migration to Western Europe – which began some fifty years ago with the wave of labour migrants and that was preceded and later intensified by post-colonial migrants – can be considered the most significant social development of the last half century in our part of the continent and demonstrates that the university is no longer firmly rooted in society. In short, the claim that migration is good for our city is not only vulnerable; such a claim may very well be the social privilege of liberal, cosmopolitan intellectuals such as myself. We need – and it may even be a basic need – a diverse society. We stand on the productive side of social diversity; we reap the rewards.

The privilege of the exile

And yet, we who speak about migration from our privileged position do so not (or not only) ex cathedra. Inspired by personal experiences with exiles, I decided to develop a course of study around them. In the 2014-15 academic year, Bachelor students (in music, philosophy, European studies, literature, history and the Dutch language) examined their own city, Amsterdam, from a surprisingly large number of disciplines.

My studies in Serbo-Croatian at the University of Amsterdam were not only instructive because of my teachers and the courses but because at the time I was placed in the cultural infusion of Yugoslavian (Bosnian, Croatian, Serbian) immigration as a result of the language. I learned to speak the language fluently in a few months. I learned to listen to peers who just like me were building up their lives but unlike me and my fellow students had had to overcome unimaginable hurdles. I penetrated the circle of immigrants and came to know people in their 30s and 40s

who had had a life in their country of origin (often an impressive career, because unlike the refugee the exile is privileged) and who, once in Amsterdam, had seemingly effortlessly picked up from where they had left off in Sarajevo or elsewhere. From among these people, I would like to put one in the spotlight here because he, the exile, showed me – born and bred in neighbouring Amstelveen – the true potential of Amsterdam like no other person could.

Dragan Klaić arrived in August or September of 1991. He became director of the Dutch Theatre Institute on the Herengracht in Amsterdam. The job interested him only partially. He was a writer and a scientist and above all a theatre maker. He accepted the job because he knew that he had to escape Yugoslavia with his family, and the position in Amsterdam had presented itself to him. Later he wrote that he had been 'practising' his exile for years before coming to Amsterdam by moving with his family to London and then on to Yale, thereby casting out his social network further and further. But perhaps this is a romanticised version. Exiles tend to romanticise their choices and dilemmas like no other, in a reality that is bleak and stark. In any event, his exile was exemplary. He was crazy about Amsterdam, but most probably he considered Dutch culture – including the theatre – covertly provincial. He had simply seen too much of the rest of the world. This alone taught me to put my own city in perspective. And then there were the famous dinners at his house. He was a good cook (in London he had worked in a French restaurant when he was a student, learning both fluent English and the basic techniques of the famous French chef Escoffier). On a weekly basis, the most diverse groups of people joined him for dinner: fellow exiles passing through, colleagues from foreign universities, but mainly Amsterdammers, *bien étonnés de se retrouver ensemble*. Because although Amsterdammers may have the reputation of being hospitable, in practice they will defend their own social sphere with tooth and nail. At Dragan's place, you got to know half the people in the Amsterdam cultural community within a year. In the meantime he travelled a lot, worked

very hard and slept so little that he regularly closed his eyes when at the head of his table, without any sense of embarrassment.

If I had to summarise what his friendship meant to me, then it would be learning to look at things in perspective – the perspective of an outsider. For while a true urbanite may be proud of his city, city chauvinism is not for him. The true urbanite knows that other cities have more of the same and always to a greater degree. The true quality of a city is its complexity which exists in the endless links that the city – as an organism of steel and stone – maintains with other metropolitans elsewhere, beyond the country's borders. And in that unbelievably complex organism, one is always in more than one place at the same time. An exhibition, a film, a new novel, the political issues of the day – things that cause people to feel that distinctive, fleeting excitement in their own city – everything that one experiences goes through the prism of the urban experience, which always makes everyone somewhat of an outsider. In exile, this experience is condensed (sometimes leading to unbearable pressure).

The exile's part

The pain is often for the exile, while the satisfaction of curing is for the receiving city. And the city has a selective memory. It honours the memory of famous exiles – the Spinozas – but all the other hundreds and thousands are forgotten or at least not remembered. And yet they contribute to the texture of the city.

This is why I gave the students the following assignment: search for exiles in archives, via the internet, everywhere, and see who you come across. This not only led to the creation of an inventory (which was partly based on coincidence), it also mapped out the most obvious structures in which exiles are remembered. The output was prodigious. Research was conducted on famous exiles in Amsterdam such as Yuri Egorov, the pianist who escaped the Soviet Union at the end of the 1970s, and his compatriot Andrei Amalrik, who received shelter from the writer Karel

van het Reve. These were well-documented exiles: in Egorov's case there were concert recordings, a documentary and a novel based on his life. And the research on Amalrik even uncovered questions about him that came up in a parliamentary session. But also the less well-known cases came into view. A number of students looked into the lives of Indonesian intellectuals and artists who fled Suharto's regime. Basuki Resobowo – painter, writer and communist – chose to waste away in self-imposed misery in a basement near Oosterpark. The exiles' university, it was discovered, was an important refuge for them, for example for Sorin Alexandrescu in literature and Dubravka Ugrešić in Slavic studies (she testified to this in a roman à clef). Chilean writer Ariel Dorfman taught at the University of Amsterdam in the 1960s, and two students reconstructed his network with great precision. They found out that the university had kept no records of the content of the lectures that Dorfman had given there.

And the networks of the students themselves? The ex-cathedra approach was quickly disavowed. Dorfman turned out to have lived in the same street as one of the students who researched him, and her family members turned out to know people in Dorfman's network. One student, who taught Dutch as a volunteer to so-called illegals, made a convincing plea to also include one of her students – hereafter referred to under the pseudonym Ahlam – with her own definition of exile. Ahlam is one of the refugees who, having been refused asylum, has been wandering the streets of Amsterdam since 2012. The acuteness of her case was cause for despondence, but her combativeness gave hope. The course I was teaching had suddenly been hurled into current events, similar to when I ended up, albeit via a language, in the heart of Amsterdam as cosmopolitan city in the 1990s. The two essays below are about the exiles Basuki Resobowo and Ahlam. They show that exile is no guarantee for cosmopolitan citizenship. The one exile, suffocating in bitterness or hubris, led an invisible life; the other is fighting for her own rights and those of her compatriots and is thereby strengthening the city. But both of them hold up a mirror to Amsterdam for those who want to see it.

A man without a country and without a city
Sepp Eckenhaussen

It must have been when he was seventeen that Basuki Resobowo, the son of a shoemaker, born in 1916 in Sumatra, decided not to tread the beaten path. He dropped his training to become a primary school teacher and enrolled instead in the art academy in Bandung. He became friends with famous contemporaries such as Soedjojono. With their expressionistic painting, they put Indonesia on the world map as a culturally developed country. Armed with drawings and paintings, these nationalistic world revolutionaries travelled throughout the country during Indonesia's fight for independence (1945-49) to support the cause.

After the war of independence, Resobowo became active in national politics. He became well-known at the national level. He stood for election for the Communist Party of Indonesia (PKI) but never made it into parliament. He was, however, appointed 'head of the department for fine arts' of the LEKRIS, a left-oriented institute affiliated with the PKI that focused on the cultural development of the people. In addition, Resobowo worked in the (communist) film industry as an actor and a painter of decors. Because almost all Indonesian-spoken films just after the war were Chinese productions, Resobowo often travelled back and forth between the two countries.

The road to Amsterdam

On 30 September 1965, the notorious Indonesian coup took place in which six generals were killed in one night. In the chaotic power vacuum that followed, a surviving general, Suharto, grasped the reins of power. Suharto put the blame for the six murders on the PKI and unleashed a communist witch hunt that cost the lives of half a million people. At the time of the coup, Resobowo was in China supervising filming and decided to bide his time there. He was quickly stripped of his citizenship. From

one day to the next, Resobowo went from having a vibrant social, political and cultural life in the centre of power to being thrown back into the margins of society.

The artist-cum-politician was forced to settle in a refugee camp for PKI members in China. Frustrated by his own situation, Resobowo became irritated by the other inhabitants of the camp. Later he wrote that the leaders of the PKI in exile were guilty of 'self-satisfaction, lack of discipline and ideological superficiality'. This resulted in a total absence of a 'framework for the continuation of the [political] struggle'. What especially irritated Resobowo about daily life in the camp was the narrow-minded sexual morality. To make matters worse, Resobowo was 'forbidden to leave China (by the foreign PKI leaders) because there was a suspicion that the PKI was planning to move to Eastern Europe. If this happened, it could damage relations between the host (the Communist Party of China) and the PKI because there were strong differences of opinion between Moscow and Peking.'

After seven years in the PKI camp, Resobowo's luck changed for the better: in 1972, relations between the Communist Party of China and the PKI deteriorated to such an extent that members of the PKI were no longer welcome in China. Resobowo seized this opportunity to travel to Europa. Through Germany, he arrived in the Netherlands. After receiving political asylum, Resobowo settled in a one-room apartment facing Oosterpark in Amsterdam. According to eye witnesses, his house was shabbily furnished and was like 'a cave smelling of excrement'. However, Resobowo was not dissatisfied with his hometown because 'Holland [was] known for its generosity towards the Indonesian people (...) [and] mastering the language [eased] his life and undertakings in his new domicile.'

Adjacent to Oosterpark

In China, Resobowo's creative activities had been put on the back burner, but in Amsterdam they began to blossom again.

In his basement adjacent to Oosterpark, canvases and pots of paint (partly filled with cigarette butts) took up most of the space. Various young, unknown artists of Indonesian descent visited Resobowo's house. Nothing is known about his social life in Amsterdam. The only academic literature in which Basuki Resobowo is mentioned is a description of the Indonesian film industry before 1965. In Dutch newspaper archives, the artist is nowhere to be found. None of Resobowo's paintings are found in any famous Dutch collections, let alone in a museum. The house adjacent to Oosterpark, where Resobowo lived for more than a quarter of his life, was demolished long ago.

And yet Resobowo did leave some traces of himself. After having lived in the Netherlands for more than a decade, he began to write. Between 1986 and 1991, he wrote three books which included a three-part autobiography and a discourse on art theory. These works are kept in the archives of the International Institute for Social History (Internationaal Instituut voor Sociale Geschiedenis, IISG) in Amsterdam and are accessible to everyone. Resobowo published all his books on his own, which makes the 'books' appear at first glance to be thin periodicals or pamphlets. But once opened, their richness immediately comes across. In addition to the text, they are filled with reproductions of Resobowo's pen drawings and caricatures. It is clear from these publications that in 1991 Resobowo had in no way shaken off his idealistic plumage. In *Tentang seni-lukis Indonesia*, there is a picture with the following caption: 'What is the difference between Sukarno and Suharto? Both stand on top of a pile of bodies of the people.' In the same chapter he hits out at his fellow exiles – former PKI members who had withdrawn to a 'safe and tranquil stage' – the PKI's government in exile, and 'medieval' Indonesian society. One by one, Resobowo alienated himself from his former allies and carried on as a 'single fighter', as he described himself.

Both the caricatures and the written text are in Bahasa Indonesian. The only traces that Resobowo left in the Netherlands are thus very poorly accessible without knowledge of Bahasa Indonesian. Because Resobowo spoke Dutch well by his own

account, he must have consciously chosen not to target a Dutch audience. Resobowo's involvement was, even after all those years, still completely reserved for Indonesia. His use of the term 'single fighter' reflects his resignation to or even embrace of his (ideological) isolation in the Netherlands. It is in fact not so surprising that there are so few traces of Resobowo.

Successive events in 1998 brought an end to this status quo. In May of that year, Suharto's reign came to an end. Soon thereafter Resobowo travelled to Indonesia to set foot on native soil for the first time in 33 years. It was as if he had put off his death in order to experience that moment. On 5 January 1999, Basuki Resobowo died, 83 years old, in Amsterdam.

In the 33 years of Resobowo's absence, Indonesia had undergone many changes. Resobowo's idealism turned out to be focused on a homeland of bygone days. Coming back to his homeland no longer felt to him as coming home. Most probably this is what 'exile' effectively means: to find oneself in an 'intermediate country'. Since 1972, Resobowo's identity had been based neither on the Netherlands nor on the 'actual' Indonesia. Yet it was precisely this 'being in between' that offered him a new self-image as a single fighter. From this identity he actively reflected on his situation and shaped it creatively: 'Luckily I was able to paint and now I try the best I can to write. I try with all my heart with my art and my writing, even if it is perhaps meaningless, and I can set myself a good objective to fight for.' It is clear that Resobowo had made the identity of the isolated single fighter so much his own that he no longer felt connected to the actual Indonesia after returning. The intermediate country had become his homeland.

Excluded in the middle of the city
Fien de Ruiter

A woman with an ochre-yellow headscarf wrapped around her head is on her bed speaking on the phone in Somali. On the other side of the room, a woman hidden under a mountain

of clothes is staring out of the window. Everywhere there are pieces of fabric hanging to demarcate areas and to keep the room somewhat warm. There is a heater in the middle of the room. Against the wall there are eight beds, all strewn with pillows and blankets. On the floor is a Dutch secondary-school mathematics book. African music is playing in the background. Ahlam sits cross-legged in the middle of the room, looking at an old TV that is showing the livestream of a parliamentary debate on the Dutch government's integration policy. Whenever she doesn't understand a particular word, she looks it up on her telephone.

Shelter

At the end of May 2015, the 'Vluchtgebouw' (the 'refuge building') on the Jan Tooropstraat in Amsterdam was evacuated. The three women that were in the room described above were forced to move out and find lodging elsewhere, together with approximately seventy other residents. Their new residence became the former district office of New West Amsterdam, which had been empty for some time. As has often happened when refugees ended up on the street, a group of squatters had helped them find a new building. This was not likely to be the last building the refugees were to settle in. The group of residents are all part of the organisation called *We Are Here*. This group was formed in 2012 when a number of asylum seekers whose requests for asylum had been rejected came together and chose to unite in a tent camp in Osdorp. The tent camp was evacuated but the group moved on. They settled in the Vluchtkerk (refuge church), the Vluchtflat (refuge flat), the Vluchtpark (refuge park), the Vluchtkantoor (refuge office), the Vluchthaven (refuge port), the Vluchtgarage (refuge garage) and the Vluchtgebouw (refuge building). They recently moved again, after having been kicked out of the twentieth building they had squatted In the meantime the group has expanded to include more than one

hundred refugees with rejected asylum requests, spread out over Amsterdam. The constant wandering about for a new shelter is wearing the refugees out.

Via protests and lectures in Amsterdam, the escape group wants to generate more publicity for their problems. On the *We Are Here* website, there is a bank account number where donations can be made. But most of the help comes from local residents who bring food. It is not much food, but most of the days they have enough to survive on. If it is really too little, they appeal for help on Facebook or ask for help in other ways. They also find many useful things along the side of the road. In the Vluchtgebouw, one strip of flowery wallpaper was hung up that a resident had found on the street.

In this way, Ahlam and the others have been able to create their own micro-community, despite the fact that it has been made exceedingly difficult for them to participate in the society in which they live. In the lodgings there are different rooms, usually divided by nationality so that the residents can communicate with each other. Ahlam sleeps in a room with some fifteen other women, all of Somali descent. They usually cook and eat together. When someone comes to visit, such as a police officer monitoring the building's fire safety, they are always willing to offer him or her a cup of tea or a plate of couscous. Ahlam almost always has a smile on her face. Despite all the setbacks she has experienced, she remains positive.

Besides her warm personality and her perseverance, there is something else that stands out about Ahlam: her overwhelming need for knowledge. After coming to the Netherlands when she was 25 years old, she tried to learn the Dutch language as quickly as possible. Because she was not allowed to work or study, she spent her days in the library surrounded by Dutch books. After five years, a shaky start with numerous moves and language lessons given by volunteers, she now speaks decent Dutch. She can make herself understood and have a conversation about difficult topics such as the procedures of the policy towards asylum seekers in the Netherlands. In this way she is able to

translate important information for people who can only speak Arabic, Somali or English. Ahlam often goes to the city hall with those living in the same squatters' building in order to help them with paperwork. She is also very active within the *We Are Here* organisation. One of the important tasks she has there is to address the media.

Constantly roaming

Ahlam came to the Netherlands in November 2009. She was born in Saudi Arabia, the country to which her parents had fled from Somalia. She went to primary and secondary school there. She had a happy childhood. When the authorities found out that the family no longer had a valid residence permit, they threatened to send them back to Somalia, a country that was still torn by civil war. So the family fled to Yemen. Even though they were living illegally in Yemen, her father did everything possible to give Ahlam a good education. The result was that Ahlam graduated cum laude with a degree in medical studies. Medicine is her great passion. She often talks about it and cannot wait until she can work in a hospital and continue learning. In Yemen, she was only able to work as a doctor for a short period of time because circumstances forced her to flee the country in haste, leaving her mother and brothers behind. Her father had already passed away by then.

What is certain is that it is not going well for Ahlam in the Netherlands. After more than five years of living in this country, she has yet to procure a residence permit and has ended up on the streets after her request for asylum was rejected. In the meantime, the refugee situation in the Netherlands has changed drastically, in particular as a result of the influx of refugees from Syria. This has, however, no direct effect on the situation of the refugees of the *We Are Here* group. They are all still here, illegally, in the squatters' buildings in Amsterdam.

Under current regulations, a refugee whose request for asylum has been rejected must return to his/her country of origin. Because Ahlam's parents come from Somalia and because they resided illegally in Yemen and Saudi Arabia, Ahlam is officially considered Somalian. This means that Ahlam would not be sent back to Yemen or Saudi Arabia but to Somalia, a country she has never been to.

Ahlam has filed a new request for asylum and is waiting for a decision by the Immigration and Naturalisation Service. She often dreams of what she would do if she finally receives a residence permit. She would go back to university as soon as possible so that she can work in Amsterdam as a heart surgeon. When she tells me that she wants to come home to a house where a husband and two children wait for her, a smile appears on her face: 'And then he would of course already have dinner ready!'

The authors

Guido Snel is assistant professor teaching in the department of European Studies at the University of Amsterdam. He researches contemporary European literature, in particular literature from Central and Eastern Europe and the Balkans. He is also a writer of fiction http://www.singeluitgeverijen.nl/de-arbeiderspers/auteur/guido-snel/

Sepp Eckenhaussen is a student of Art Studies at the University of Amsterdam. He conducted research on Resobowo as part of a class on exiles in Amsterdam.

Fien de Ruiter has finished her philosophy degree and is currently studying law at the University of Amsterdam. She took the class on exiles in Amsterdam and got to know Ahlam whilst teaching Dutch to refugees.

Further reading

http://amsterdam-in-exile.nl/

The quotes in the section on Resobowo in this essay are from *Bercermin dimuka kaca: seniman, seni dan masyarakat*, or *Mirror images: artist, art and society* (1986) and were translated from Indonesian by Sepp Eckenhaussen.

For more of Resobowo's story and other stories about exile in Amsterdam, see the website www. amsterdam-in-exile.nl/ basuki-resobowo-schrijver/.

Websites of 'Wij Zijn Hier' ('We Are Here'): http://wijzijnhier.org/ and http:// vluchtverhalen.nl/.

Part 2
Urban nodes

The second theme of this volume, urban nodes, is about both nodes in the city and the city as a node in urban networks. Núria Arbonés Aran makes a plea for a new urban node: she would like to swap competition for cooperation, and she shows how cooperation can offset the negative effects of our current system of economic competition. Arie van Steensel looks back at the urban networks that existed in medieval Europe and Zef Hemel advocates a new metropolitan network as the answer to the anti-urban sentiment that has traditionally characterised Europe and an alternative to the megacities emerging in other parts of the world.

But even within cities, some places are more central than others. Urban nodes act as concentrates of urbanity. Jan Rath and Wietze Gelmers explore the role of trendy coffee shops where everyone wants to be seen. Guy Geltner shows us the evolving position of prisons – nodes in the (criminal) city where no one wants to be seen and that no one wants to see.

The other contributions in this section address interventions in the city. Tim Verlaan explains how Amsterdammers rose up in opposition to the sell-out of their inner city when they put a stop to the plans of real estate developers to revamp the Klein-Gartmanplantsoen square. Stan Majoor predicts the end of large-scale urban projects (such as the Zuidas project in Amsterdam) and discusses the preconditions for better small-scale urban projects. Finally, Marco Bontje argues that it is misguided to consider creative cities and shrinking cities as opposites, and that they should be seen in relation to each other as parts of urban networks with different roles.

12.   Hub Cities 2.0 for the 21st century

Núria Arbonés Aran

In recent years, cities such as Amsterdam have used the term *hub city* to define themselves in a global context. Hub cities are cities that play – or aspire to – a crucial role in the international and globalising economy. As such they form a hub, a 'node' of relevant traffic. What exactly is meant by this is open to different interpretations.

Port City 2.0

In the beginning, the term hub city appeared to be primarily intended to indicate an upgrade of old international port cities with their booming open economies. The main difference was that today's hub not only referred to the *physical* connections with other important hubs but also the *virtual* ones. Tangible signs of this shift were the old commercial areas and industrial zones in Western cities that had been largely rehabilitated as legacies and serviceable for more high-quality manufacturing industries and services in accordance with the digital age. These places received names with symbols such as @ or # as a reference to their upgrade to new urban economies. Hub cities can also be recognised by their metropolitan character: they are cities with an important, appealing and advanced spatial and functional infrastructure; an international look and feel; a certain grandeur; and a concentration of a cosmopolitan populace and culture.

Competition

To be able to compete, hub cities must have a differentiated and communicable identity as its brand. Many cities in the Western

world have presented this identity with symbols related to ports of which the hallmarks are openness, prosperity, tolerance, hospitality, a melting pot of cultures, inventiveness, freedom and safety, and a port of connectivity. This also fits perfectly the classic definition of port cities as prosperous commercial enclaves whose success was mainly due to their ability to transform primary goods and ideas into commercial value. Port cities were seen as places where needs and trends could be identified more quickly, where diversity was a guarantee for plenty of ideas, and where commerce yielded an inexhaustible source of industriousness and prosperity. Since the 1970s, Amsterdam has often used this image to define an important part of its character as a progressive city. This allowed Amsterdam to recover its image of openness, entrepreneurship and tolerance that had characterised the city, not only because of its tradition of trade but also due to the ideas of philosophers such as Spinoza.

The allegories of port cities such as Amsterdam are that they were a welcoming environment because the city's commercial tradition had an egalitarian effect on society. This can be explained using what Jane Jacobs calls the morality of commerce – a morality characterised by tolerance, integrity, resourcefulness, optimism and trust. In contrast to the morality of guards who had to defend the borders of territories, this morality was not designed to fight or mislead others but rather to engage in honest transactions and interactions: weigh merchandise carefully, sell no defective material, take part in untainted competition, offer a fair price for honest food and drink, etc. Based on this morality, port cities became open, tolerant and safe for innovation and differences in opinion. Well-known city experts such as Max Weber, Jane Jacobs and Saskia Sassen have shown that such things as science and critical art have been able to thrive as a result of this climate.

At first, the hub city appeared to be an upgrade of the tolerant and commercial allegory of the port city in the context of the 21st century. But it soon became clear that with this upgrade, the significance and legitimisation of the port city had shifted. Somehow the hub was given carte blanche to bid in the contest

for the best place in a globalising world. A certain kind of rhetoric has become common practice in this contest, and it is a rhetoric that resembles the monopolistic doctrine of strategic management striving for total market conquest. In this contest, anything goes. This is also the so-called 'business-as-war strategy', full of militant language inspired by quotes from Attila the Hun, Machiavelli and General Patton.

The business-as-war theories can be described as pessimistic because they assume that man is by nature bad. Their reference point is that it is permissible to grab anything that can be grabbed before anyone else does. The idea is also that goods in the world are scarce, just as talent is, and that it is therefore one's duty to conduct oneself in a combative manner in the world and to enter into strategic alliances. Business-as-war theories also hold that it is perfectly legitimate to mislead the competition in order to reach the higher goal: victory.

In these competitive business-as-war theories, the strategic forces of the city become like dependent units with the purpose of acquiring scarce resources. This simplifies the ultimate function of the hub city to its most basic level: to swiftly amass enough incomes, investors and the targeted populace – the right students, the specific talent in each sector, the proper tourists. Eat in order not to be eaten and grab whatever you can grab before it's too late. This has resulted in a kind of militant language in which immoderate self-praise is seen as a virtue.

It would be laughable if it were not for the fact that such strategies have been used for a long time as if they were synonymous with commercial and economic thought. While it may not be implemented wholeheartedly, it is widely accepted as an unavoidable human evil. This is a shame because it has gone so far that even educational institutions have begun calling their students 'clients' that ensure liquidity. This is why the focus on international talent is seen as a lucrative tool and a necessary instrument to be able to survive in times like these. In this line of thought, it is no longer a contradiction to extol certain target groups as very welcome even as they are mainly seen as sources of income.

Discomfort

This discrepancy might explain why the language that hub cities have come to use feels increasingly discomforting. Evidently in major cases such as the globalising city, it is difficult to find the right balance between on the one hand pure informative language and on the other hand propaganda. Hub cities have apparently felt compelled to go along with a somewhat crazy, self-flattering declaration of their character. When one repeatedly hears that Amsterdam is in its very DNA a hospitable, open and tolerant city with well-educated citizens who are open-minded and know many foreign languages, one recognises this as the making of 'hub city' propaganda. For the record, it is not that Amsterdam is not a nice city with nice people – on the contrary – but the self-evident manner in which such virtues are claimed is striking.

Values such as these are not innate and they are certainly not exclusive to specific peoples. The teachings of Spinoza, tolerance, international orientation – these things are not something you can inject into genes and they are also not magically inherited. Those with a capacity for foreign languages have learned and practised these languages themselves and the same goes for tolerance and openness. That is simply the way it is. This is also the reason the reputation of places is not a fact that is fixed for eternity. A credible, self-proclaimed, positive reputation can only be distilled from genuine substance that is continually moulded with great care. A good reputation is something that one must continuously live up to.

Hub City 2.0

It turns out in the long run that hub cities that base their legitimacy and strategy on business-as-war theories can prove that they are by definition diverse, open and tolerant. But in fact, these strategies encourage the troops to fight for a future in which competitors are eliminated and in which prosperity is

preserved for their own city and tribe. Openness and honesty towards the other – the competitor – are by definition ruled out.

In recent years, a number of city marketing experts and practitioners have begun to doubt the legitimacy of these competitive strategies. The international academic literature on the subject has also been critical about the substance and usefulness of interpretations that rank cities and regions into winners and losers on the basis of a number of confusing criteria. The time is ripe for us to investigate the effect of economic scripts such as these and to write new ones. It appears that the moment has come for us to reconsider serious elementary issues with regard to so-called hub cities.

For what if, as the mayor of Paris said a few years ago, the city dares to recognise its mistakes and decides to blur the physical boundaries of the city with its *banlieues*, purely for the sake of all its inhabitants? What if a hub city follows not the theories of competitive strategists such as Michael Porter but instead philosophers such as Baruch Spinoza? What if a hub city embraces the allegories of a genuine metropolis in the original sense of the word – a 'mother city'? The city as a loving mother, a refuge, who loves her children with all their talents but also all their imperfections, fears and nightmares. What if a hub city is not driven by the amassing and hoarding of money needed to finance a hypothetical future as an all-dominating city but instead is the place where all sorts of people can earn their money in the here and now, trading freely and safely on the basis of a commercial morality? What if hub cities start working together for the sake of humane laws and the interconnection of commerce, science, friendship and love? Wouldn't hub cities and their inhabitants stand a much better chance if they were genuinely modest of being more prepared for the 21st century – our century?

The author

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Applied Sciences. Through her research on image formation of places and people, she hopes to contribute to a more nuanced and realistic urban governance and opaque city marketing.

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13. Competing cities and urban networks in medieval Europa

Arie van Steensel

City branding today goes beyond merely a slogan. Cities present themselves as a brand in order to attract people, investors and companies. It is crucial for a city to distinguish itself from other cities through its architecture, social policies, public facilities or fiscal arrangements. Intercity competition is, however, something that goes back further in time: the earliest cities tried to create an attractive environment for migrants and merchants to settle in, which in turn contributed to the development of durable urban networks.

Cities and urban networks

Approximately one thousand years ago, the European continent entered a new phase in urbanisation. A complex interplay of demographic, economic and political factors led to the emergence of new cities that gradually grew in size and developed into regional and international nodes for flows of people, goods and information. The centre of gravity of these networks lay first in the middle and northern part of the Italian peninsula, where maritime cities such as Amalfi, Genoa, Pisa and Venice were the first to profit from the revival of trade contacts in the Mediterranean world in the 11th century, after which cities such as Milan and Florence blossomed into important commercial and industrial centres. A second centre of gravity emerged in the 12th century in Northern France and the southern Netherlands, where trade flows from the Rhine, the Mediterranean, the North Sea and the Baltic Sea came together. Itinerant merchants initially met each other at annual fairs that were always held

in the same order, but from the end of the 13th century, Bruges emerged as a trade metropolis where foreign merchants settled more permanently, after which Antwerp took over this role some two hundred years later.

During the Middle Ages, polycentric networks of larger cities and smaller urban centres emerged in certain regions that performed regional and local administrative, economic and service-related functions. This was the case in Flanders for example, where in addition to the three large cities of Bruges, Ghent and Ypres, dozens of smaller towns gave shape to the urban network. This network reinforced the economic integration and geographical interdependence of the smaller units, as a result of which cities became increasingly connected to each other and to their hinterland. The dominance of the major cities did not result in a distinctly hierarchical urban system in Flanders, in contrast to Tuscany where the city of Florence gradually brought the surrounding smaller cities and rural communities under its authority and regularly waged war against other city states over the control of ports, markets and production areas. In England, London – which was in effect the capital of the kingdom by the end of the Middle Ages – acquired a very dominant place in the urban network. Around 1500, the city had effectively become the gateway of England, the port city through which the most important import and export flows went. The demographic balance between the English cities reflected this shift from various regional urban networks to one network dominated by the capital. At the beginning of the 16th century, London already had almost five times as many inhabitants as Norwich, the second largest city of England.

Urban prosperity and urban decay

The urbanisation process in medieval Europe appeals to the imagination because the cities that arose then still shape the landscape. For example, old city centres are popular tourist

attractions, and many city halls have their origins in medieval times. Moreover, new forms of political participation, economic cooperation and social cohesion emerged in medieval urban communities. Cities have since been the drivers of socio-political changes, economic innovation and cultural creativity. In comparison with the degree of urbanisation in today's Europe, at the end of the Middle Ages the continent was in general still primarily an agricultural society. Around 1500, the average degree of urbanisation is estimated to have been around 10 percent – only in certain regions in Italy, on the Iberian peninsula and in the Netherlands was this percentage higher. In the province of Holland, for example, around half of the inhabitants lived in cities and towns in the 15th century, much more than in the rural eastern Netherlands.

Few European cities experienced permanent demographic growth and economic prosperity in the period between 1000 and 1500. From the second quarter of the 14th century, the growth of most cities stagnated; socio-economic inequality and political polarisation had already increased significantly in urban society. The Black Death – the plague that swept through Europe between 1346 and 1351, taking the lives of an estimated one-third to one-half of the population – was an unprecedented blow for many cities, which took them one and a half centuries to recover from. The adaptability of cities was further put to the test by the changing political and economic circumstances of the 14th and 15th centuries.

For medieval city councillors, it was not easy to respond effectively to the consequences of these external factors. There were also noticeable differences among the cities: one city was more resilient in absorbing the demographic and socio-economic shocks than the other. It is difficult to determine in retrospect what exactly made for a successful recipe for urban recovery and how the urban network was of influence. One comparison that can be made here is with the European industrial cities that fell into a state of decay in the second half of the 20th century. The attempts by politicians and government officials to give

these cities a boost were rarely successful. Even today, a standard recipe for urban renewal simply does not exist because policy and investment must be tailored to local circumstances and cities must at the same time adapt to external factors such as global economic developments or national political circumstances.

Medieval councillors had just as difficult a task in safeguarding the prosperity of the urban community (the *bonum commune*) in times of economic downturn or increasing competition from other cities, but recent historical research shows that they tried to strengthen the competitiveness of their cities in various ways. Competing against each other, cities in late-medieval England developed aggressive strategies to attract merchants and workers. And cities such as London, York and Norwich invested in administrative and economic institutions and public facilities in order to build up their reputations as reliable marketplaces and attractive business locations.

Another option was to seek the support of the monarch. This was what cities in the Netherlands did, such as when Bruges welcomed the emperor-to-be Charles V in 1515 with elaborate ceremonial displays. Business in Bruges had been poor for some decades already, the city having rebelled against Charles' grandfather and experiencing much competition from Antwerp. Using tableaux vivants (living paintings), the city's past prosperity and the acute crisis it was undergoing was brought to the new monarch's attention in the hope that he would give the city a boost in his capacity as ruler of a global empire. The foreign merchants from the Hanseatic cities, Italy and Spain who were present at the festivities also subsidised the cost of the spectacle. Nonetheless, Charles V failed in turning the tide for Bruges.

International trade moved to Antwerp in the last decade of the 15th century after the city had received the monarch's political support to offer traders attractive trade and business conditions. For international merchants, access to markets was essential; they moved their operations easily from one port and marketplace to the other within the urban network of the Netherlands. To maintain their position within this network, cities competed

with each other by adapting their institutions to the require-ments of the merchants. The importance of good political and economic governance is illustrated by the example of two cities in Zeeland. In the 14th century, Zierikzee was a flourishing port acting as a hub for Flanders, Brabant and Holland, but in the 15th century Middelburg took over this position. The latter enjoyed political stability and economic growth in this period and at-tracted migrants from not only the surrounding countryside but also more distant cities and countries. In contrast, Zierikzee fell into conflict with the monarch in the second half of the 15th century, as a result of which it lost its privileges for an extended period of time; the impoverished city endured depopulation and rising vacancy rates and also suffered disastrous fires and floods. The core of the problem, however, lay in the fact that the councillors and inhabitants of Zierikzee failed to adequately react to economic and political changes.

Institutional diversity

Shrinking cities in the Middle Ages did not always succeed in turning the tide, but usually the consequences of this were limited to demographic and economic shifts within the urban network. Urban networks were more robust, and their resilience was based largely on the institutional diversity between cities. This allowed cities to compete with each other, and the urban network was as a whole less vulnerable to the effects of structural changes. Moreover, these networks had a polycentric character – cities benefited from being close to each other and filled various economic, social and cultural functions within the same region. Networks between cities could be of a political, economic or cultural nature without necessarily being complementary or tied to specific territorial boundaries.

Needless to say, these historical insights do not easily translate into the complex 21st-century context in which cities have in-creasingly become part of 'global assemblages'. From a long-term

perspective, however, institutional diversity, functional complementarity and polycentric networks should definitely be included in an urban agenda that aims to further the interlinking of European cities.

The author

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14.   Beyond anti-urban sentiments

Towards a new metropolitan European family

Zef Hemel

Unlike in continents such as Asia, America or Africa where large cities are normal and accepted phenomena, in Europe anti-urban sentiment is still very dominant. This sentiment has had a long history. Whenever cities became too large or powerful, European rulers yielded to the temptation to destroy them or to establish new cities in order to undermine the power of existing cities. The French historian Fernand Braudel describes how the latter was a tried and tested means of maintaining the precarious balance of power especially in Middle Francia, which after the death of Charlemagne was sandwiched between France and Germany and also included the Low Countries. Cities in Europe are consequently on the small side.

Anti-urban sentiment

This European state practice of curtailing and splitting up cities took on a whole new meaning during the industrialisation period. In many parts of Europe, the early stage of industrialisation coincided with rapid urban development as an impoverished population was drawn *en masse* to the city. This mass movement alarmed the powers that be who feared that it could lead to revolutions, anarchy and socialism. In the beginning, this unprecedented process of urbanisation was countered with utopian ideas of garden cities, especially in the nation-states of France, Germany and England. The idea was that the people had to return to the countryside. The first examples of garden cities were soon followed up with notions of regional decentralised urban designs that were interconnected by a thick web of railway

infrastructure and harmoniously interwoven with nature and the untouched landscape of villages and farmland. According to the utopians and the elite, London and Paris in particular had to take the lead because these metropolises were seen as inhumane monsters that had to be tamed using all means possible given their size. But also in the coalfields of Wallonia, Silesia, the Ruhr region and the Midlands, the spreading urbanisation was viewed with great suspicion. At the end of the 19th century, this modern planning project culminated in the acclaimed regional plan of Ebenezer Howard, who enjoyed great success from 1913 with his foundation, the International Federation for Housing and Planning, which focused on spatial decentralisation. In the 20th century – and certainly after the Second World War – the core focus of spatial planning in many European countries was determined (largely by the winners) to be controlling the size of cities by the state. Every effort was made to limit the size and scale of existing settlements and to prevent the coalescence of towns and cities. Europe became a champion in designating and maintaining buffer zones, building new towns, stimulating well-ordered processes of suburbanisation, designating new growth centres, promoting urban networks and containing and confining the metropolis.

From Europe, this anti-urban sentiment initially spread to North America, where it was articulated in a unique way by the hugely popular philosopher Henry David Thoreau in his book *Walden*. However, due to the dominant ideology of civil liberty – an ideology Thoreau also adhered to – as well as the weak tradition of state planning in the New World, this sentiment never gained a foothold other than through unrestrained suburbanisation. As a result, Europe stands alone in its aim to contain urban growth. Within most European states, urban networks are still primarily regarded as a means to divert urban growth to less urbanised regions and not as a growth strategy for existing metropolises. Recently, the French artist Yona Friedman (b. 1923) expressed just this point in *Métropole Europe* (2008, but based on his *Continent-City Europe* from the 1960s). By building

a high-speed rail network, he argues, the cities of Europe would be transformed into one huge decentralised metropolis of 40 million inhabitants. He concludes: 'Un "Grand Paris" ou un "Grand Londres" n'est pas la solution pour l'avenir' (A "Great Paris" or a "Great London" are no solution for the future). Friedman once again touched a sensitive chord. His *anti-mégalopole* corresponded to the old European way of thinking that prefers to keep cities small. But it also did justice to the existing spatial configuration of cities in Europe that is indeed unique in a certain sense. It is thanks to Europe's topography and history but above all the prevailing view of proper spatial planning that no other continent has such a rich and spread-out urban structure.

Restricting the growth of cities certainly has its advantages. Usually the advantages mentioned include quality of life, preservation of rural areas, balanced growth and a just society. But it would be wrong to attribute these and other qualities entirely to cities whose sizes have been restricted. Much relates to one's convictions. It is simply inherent in everything that has become a key component of one's own culture and is no longer called into question. And yet there is still room for discussion. Moreover, the drawbacks, which certainly exist, are too often trivialised by the dominant culture. Indeed, the policy of containing urban growth is often justified by listing the disadvantages of unrestrained growth. These disadvantages are then greatly exaggerated, while the advantages are explained away and the protagonists of growth discredited. The arguments for metropolitanism are the economic strength, diversity, sustainability and dynamism that increase almost without exception together with the size of cities. Globalisation, moreover, is increasingly confronting Europe with new urbanisation patterns in which mega-regions and megacities dominate. Take China, where metropolises of 100-150 million people are developing and partly being planned in the deltas of the Yangtze and the Pearl River but also in the more northern areas, around Beijing (named Jing Jin Ji). In Asia, it is understood that the formation of metropolises is necessary in order to ensure long-term economic growth. European cities are

at risk of becoming Lilliputians, even compared with metropolises that are growing uncontrollably: Istanbul (moving towards 23 million inhabitants), Moscow (20 million) and Cairo (already 20 million). To continue asserting that the European pattern of many relatively small cities is preferable in terms of quality of life can in these circumstances turn out to be mistaken, peculiar or even unwise.

Towards new forms of metropolitanism

The good news is that also within Europe a new pattern of considerably large cities is forming. As far as is known at present, this future metropolitan pattern appears to be partly the result of economic processes that thrive in so-called post-industrial 'creative cities' and partly related to changing demographics – one of a future decline in population as Japan is now experiencing. Young people are once again being drawn to the big cities, and immigrants are joining them. A few already large cities will thus once again grow considerably, beginning with the largest, most internationally oriented cities: London and Paris. Other, mostly industrial cities will, on the contrary, stagnate or shrink. The circumstances for urban expansion appear to be the most favourable in the centre of the continent – in Switzerland, Austria and southern Germany (Vienna, Zurich, Munich, Basel, Geneva). Cities with important airports are also doing well. Intellectual centres with renowned universities have outstanding credentials. But young talent can be demanding and they make their choices deliberately. The largest and most diverse cities with a hub function, an international climate and good universities are in any case on the winning side. Within the nebulous urban fields that Europe currently comprises, new urban centres of gravity are forming into dense spaces of unprecedented human activity, benefiting from enormous advantages of agglomeration. As a network, these cities could even develop into a new family of cities that could bring the European project further, more so

than the current struggling nation-states can. But there are no guarantees. In the current process of globalisation, Europe must not get in the way of this selective growth. Europe would be well advised to subdue – this time from Brussels – the anti-urban sentiment that keeps rearing its head and instead to give the major, vital cities plenty of space to flourish. A strong alliance between the European Union and the major cities could give a positive twist to the crisis in which Europe currently finds itself.

The author

Zef Hemel is Professor of Urban Studies (Wibaut Chair) at the University of Amsterdam. In addition, he works for the Amsterdam Economic Board. Against the extensive planning pretentions of the past, he puts forward a more modest planning that is focused on the core: economy, ecology, democracy and creativity.

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15. Trendy coffee shops and urban sociability

Jan Rath and Wietze Gelmers

The number of coffee shops in Amsterdam is growing explosively. Does this mean that Amsterdammers have suddenly come to love coffee more? The fact is that the rapid spread of what are known as *specialty coffee bars* is by no means restricted to Amsterdam. In many cities around the world, such coffee shops are springing up like mushrooms, whether it be Vancouver, Istanbul, Moscow or Kunming. This is partly the result of the emergence of creative economies, the corresponding concentration of highly educated individuals with a lifestyle focused on consumption, and the development of new forms of modern urbanity. But what exactly goes on in these coffee shops?

A plain cup of coffee

The older ones among us know the typical 'brown coffee shops' of Amsterdam where it was allegedly always convivial and where the coffee was in a hot container waiting patiently to be consumed avidly. 'Due to its great success, coffee is being served again today,' quipped a mischievous owner of a popular canteen. There was even a separate category of 'coffee houses' back in this period, most of which were simply furnished establishments, where alcohol was taboo but coffee, tea or milk were served, and where the hungry client could also order a fried egg on toast or a salted meat sandwich. For those who ordered a cup of coffee, it was natural that they would sit at a table to enjoy their shot of caffeine. The assortment was limited: there was black coffee and there was coffee with milk, both with or without sugar. For such an order, very little expertise was needed.

Café gourmet

How different it is today. It is almost impossible to find percolated coffee anymore because the coffee is freshly brewed practically everywhere you go – sometimes with a modern, designer machine made of chrome; at other times with a cheaper machine, but always made to individual order. The introduction of this newfangled machinery has been accompanied by a genuine improvement of quality, or at least the pretention thereof, and an unprecedented fragmentation of tastes and preferences. Those who order the 'brown gold' begin an extended conversation with numerous implicit and explicit choices, usually conducted using Italian- or American-sounding idioms. Is the coffee *for here* or *to go*? Because coffee is no longer something you can only drink while sitting at a table. And how much coffee would you like? Should it be a *tall*, *grande* or *venti* – or a *small*, *medium* or *large* – with or without an extra shot? Would you like milk with it? And if so, whole milk, semi-skim milk, skim milk or perhaps soy milk? Would you like primarily milk or just the froth or a bit of both? A nice accessory is that the waiter – excuse us, the *barista* – feels the unsolicited urge to unleash his/her creativity in the form of *cappuccino art* or *latte art*. Ordering a plain cup of coffee has thus become an exciting artistic exercise. Those with a sweet tooth can dilute their coffee with a vanilla, hazelnut or orange-flavoured syrup. The real coffee lovers would, of course, turn their noses up at such flavours and deliberately choose an exquisite *doppio* based on the distinctive beans of the Zambia Peaberry Terranova Estate, Organic Ethiopia Sidamo or the Blue Mountain Triage. The coffee corner thus provides us not only with a view of a hitherto unknown world but also a podium to showcase one's in-depth knowledge and refined and developed taste.

Many coffee shops and coffee houses now provide *customised coffee*, but often this results in an indifferently served weak brew with washed out foam. Much more interesting – and tastier – are the numerous specialty coffee bars that are appearing

everywhere in the city. Some are a bit hidden, for example in a shop with designer clothing or in the back of a barbershop.

On the one hand, there are the coffee bars that are part of larger national or international chains such as Starbucks, Coffee Company, Bagels & Beans and so on. They each represent their own brand and exude a high degree of exclusivity but ultimately provide just a pricey cup of confection coffee. On the other hand, there are the *one-off operations*, the independent coffee bars often owned by hipster entrepreneurs with beards and tattoos, usually with very modern furnishings such as walls where the stucco work has been carefully chipped; tables made of raw scaffolding wood; shelves filled with difficult books and funky glossies; and, of course, on the counter an array of muffins, gluten-free brownies and organic soy milk. These are relatively approachable places for certain types of people: students, urban professionals and trendy, creative types that are constantly online via Wi-Fi, communicating with the rest of the world.

Aloofness or sociability

But how do people behave in public spaces such as these specialty coffee bars? In his 1963 book *Behavior in Public Places*, the famous sociologist Erving Goffman emphasised the importance of structural circumstances such as anonymity and frenzy. Most people, he argues, would like to freely abide in a public space without others noticing them or interfering with them. Everyone is, of course, aware of the presence of others but chooses to give them their space. No eye contact is sought – certainly no staring – conversations are avoided, and so on. Goffman (1972) introduced the concept of *civil inattention* to explain this polite, civilised and superficial but very recognisable behaviour. If Goffman is right, in coffee bars we would tend to see individuals enjoying their coffee alongside each other but independent of one another.

But this is not entirely self-evident. For years, Starbucks has been advertising itself as a 'place for conversation and a sense of community. A *third place* between work and home'. The coffee multinational took the concept of third place from the American sociologist Ray Oldenburg who in his classic book *The Great Good Place* introduced the third place as a general term for an abundance of public spaces – not being home (*first place*) or the workplace (*second place*) – where individuals regularly, voluntarily, informally and happily get together. Such spaces are fundamentally open and exist without respect to visitors' social class, age, gender, etc. The main activity is conversing and experiencing camaraderie. If Oldenburg – and not Goffman – was right, Starbucks and all the other coffee houses would be bastions of sociability in an otherwise cold, anonymous urban world.

Participatory observation

To find out which sociologist was right, we visited dozens of coffee shops with our students and spent hundreds of hours observing. Contrary to what Starbucks claims in its optimistic and somewhat nostalgic marketing, Oldenburg's ideas about the third place were not entirely applicable. Numerous customers talked with each other, but such conversations were usually limited to friends, colleagues, fellow students and business partners who had explicitly chosen to visit the coffee bar together. The conversations that took place were among fixed groups of people who already knew each other. But even within these groups we noticed that they repeatedly withdrew from the social world to dive into another world: the digital world. Mobile telephones and tablets were always within easy reach and were used intensively. Indeed, fidgeting with electronic devices, checking email, writing text, sending tweets, tracking social media and keeping in touch with what is happening outside the world of the coffee bar appeared to be common practice. Whether or not it was because

all these devices took up so much of their time, customers did not interfere with strangers whatsoever, even if they were very much aware of each other's presence. In this sense, civil inattention was the order of the day.

Do we then need to throw away the concept of the third place into the dustbin of urban sociology? This seems to us a little premature, if only because some bars and coffee shops can certainly be distinguished as third places. But what is more interesting for us was to see that many customers were still in close contact with others, albeit not physically and not on site. To be able to describe and elucidate this specific and apparently non-place-related form of sociability, we actually need a new vocabulary. We could perhaps call this a *fourth place*, in reference to the sociability of social media.

Fourth place

To research our hypothesis of a possible fourth place, we conducted fieldwork in a number of coffee houses in Amsterdam and Vancouver. It turns out that today's specialty coffee bars are characterised by a complex duality of social interaction, one that alternates between the actual and virtual domains. There is a hypersensitive, continuously changing social atmosphere that is formed by interactions that take place in real life as well as online. Although it is often as quiet as a mouse in coffee houses, visitors are extremely busy exchanging information – first with a few other partners in conversation, then with larger groups, or sometimes even with anyone who wants to see or read the information. The use of laptops, tablets and smartphones enables people to function alternatively in the private, public and parochial domains. On their own, they practice civil inattention towards those who are around them in the coffee house, and at the same time they maintain intensive contact with acquaintances and strangers who are not present. This mix of various interactions with people who are present in different domains

means that the social atmosphere in public spaces such as coffee houses presents itself in a new and alternative form. To suggest that online interaction itself undermines the social atmosphere is an oversimplification: it would appear that it is more likely to result in a modification and possibly even an enrichment of the social atmosphere. An example is the conversation we overheard between two women in one of the coffee bars which was the result of a WhatsApp conversation held at that time with an acquaintance who was not present.

Conclusion

Now that online interaction has become an undeniable part of human behaviour in urban public spaces, our conceptualisation of 'social interaction' and 'social atmosphere' may need to be revised. Our research shows that an explanation of this kind of sociability in simple terms such as civil inattention or third place no longer covers the social reality. Rather, one could speak of a fourth place, even if that raises questions about the word 'place' when referring to interactions that occur in virtual, abstract domains. In any case, our research has shown that today's coffee houses are clearly prodigious social spaces – even though the contrary appears to be the case – and thus have an important social function. And finally, we must not forget to mention that in many of these coffee houses they also serve delicious coffee. And that is perhaps just as important.

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16. A quiet transfer

The disappearing urban prison, Amsterdam and beyond

G. Geltner

Golden Age Amsterdam played a key role in the history of Western punishment. For centuries beforehand, penal incarceration and purpose-built prisons were already integrated into European penal practices and common constituents of the European cityscape. Yet Amsterdam's elders in the 16th century founded a new type of institution, a workhouse designed to retrain convicts and help them become productive members of society. The men's *Rasphuis* and the women's *Spinhuis*, established in 1596 and 1597, respectively, were built on former convent grounds within the city and operated as small factories that disciplined both their inmates and the population at large, in ways reminiscent of the era's hospitals, almshouses and mental asylums. Political, religious, social and economic forces certainly took their toll on the founders' lofty ideals, but the institutions they set up continued to run for centuries, inspiring later reforms in and beyond the continent.

Premodernity

In the Western imaginary, *Rasphuis* and *Spinhuis* inmates are transitional figures, partaking in experiences that are both quintessentially medieval and recognisably modern. For, on the one hand, they were subject to significant physical hardships, including corporal punishment; and on the other, their strict routines and harsh conditions were also meant to be normalizing and rehabilitative rather than merely retributive or deterrent. Further, and perhaps more importantly in the context of this

volume, their punishment took place at the physical heart of a bustling city, indeed a world capital at the time. Thanks to their prominence and central location, Amsterdam's workhouse prisons served the moral and political needs of the community around them effectively, not least by announcing a formidable presence of municipal institutions with strong claims on maintaining urban order. For better or worse, prisons, like law courts, reified local justice systems for centuries to come.

Present-day urban dwellers, however, would probably find the vicinity of prisons troubling rather than comforting. In part this has to do with prisons' national rather than municipal administration since the late 18th century, when central governments took over criminal justice duties that previously fell under the remit of cities. Since then, neither inmates nor the crimes for which they serve sentences are by default local or even provincial. Prisons' situation within the urban social fabric was thus no longer obvious, let alone politically desirable. That, along with pressures on municipalities to broaden their tax base, promoted the so-called amicable divorce of cities and punishment in late modernity. The process allowed urban centres to keep the courts and tasked suburbia or more preferably the countryside with hosting prisons.

The departure of prisons from cities is a lamentable development. Lamentable in the first place because it succumbs to a Nimbyism that hides its chief concerns regarding property value under the rhetorical guise of public health and safety; and because it serves neoliberal agendas of decreasing the state's visibility, but not necessarily the prison system's size, brutality, costs or complicity in private-sector profiteering from what is effectively becoming the warehousing of an urban underclass. Beyond its hypocritical underpinnings, moreover, the process is dangerous since it reduces urban populations' tolerance to social diversity and promotes ignorance about criminality's sources and consequences. Last but not least, the process further victimises prison inmates and their families by severing them from the urban environment they mostly came from and to

which they will most likely return. However we choose to exile or camouflage our prisons, we accelerate inmates' social death rather than take active responsibility for their fates. In doing so, we weaken ourselves as a society and drain the remaining meaning from a democratic system of justice.

The quiet transfer in Amsterdam

Amsterdam is a case in point. At the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries the city housed one major detention centre (*Huis van Bewaring;* founded 1850) and one prison (1890); the first just off the Weteringschans, the second on the Havenstraat. A third facility, carved during the early Nazi occupation out of the Lloyd Hotel, near the Entrepothaven, signalled an initial move of such spaces away from densely populated areas as well as a new desire to render them less conspicuous. A pronounced suburbanisation began in 1978, when the first two facilities mentioned above were replaced by a new one, built in a new south eastern neighbourhood just within the city's ring road. Seeking to humanize inmates, calm local residents, or both, architects of the *Bijlmerbajes* ('the Bijlmer slammer'), as the site came to be known, excluded window bars from the buildings' original design. But even this facility was comparatively short-lived. In 2016 the quiet transfer of Amsterdam's prisons will be complete, with the opening of the PI Zaanstad, a massive new facility with a capacity to hold up to 1000 inmates, located in an industrial park across the IJ and towards the North Sea.

The city's recent history of complicity in government efforts to move prisons away from the centre or disguising them within it undermines its reputation as a tolerant and inclusive place. Indeed, it highlights how much Amsterdam has become *un*original and *un*creative about dealing with deviance and diversity. Still worse, Amsterdam is typical of the country as a whole: many prison facilities in the Netherlands are either already situated in sparsely populated areas or are fast en route to the countryside.

Most of those that are not (or not yet) can only generously be described as suburban, a remarkable fact in one of Europe's most urbanised countries. The process is slow but steady, and without understanding what is socially and politically at stake in allowing it to run its course, myopic politicians and opportunistic urban planners will likely continue to boast their efforts to make urban environments safer (read: less diverse ethnically and socio-economically), or at least wealthier.

Beyond Amsterdam

From a cultural-historical perspective there is something forced if not outright disingenuous about such claims. In the United States, where incarceration is a veritable epidemic, prisons evoke a combination of shame and fear. Shame about a broken penal system and fear of its products scaling the prison walls to become a menace in our midst. US prisons moreover are historically more rural institutions (and, as such, large employers of economically depressed communities), which means that Nimby support is all but guaranteed when it comes to ruralizing prisons or battling plans that would bring such facilities near any but the poorest urban neighbourhoods. In Europe, by contrast, municipal prisons have a far stronger civic tradition, associated with city liberties (hard-earned from popes, bishops, counts and kings) often dating back to the continent's first major wave of urbanisation in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. In subsequent eras prisons' urban location in or near major government compounds rendered them focal points of social and political protest and helped crystalize their image as local and national *lieux de mémoire*. Europeans' relations with urban prisons are thus historically more ambiguous, given that the latter were welcome administrative burdens and their edifices served as an accoutrement of state apparatuses.

Yet even in Europe active prisons are now viewed with increasing unease as a blemish on an otherwise attractive urban

landscape, an obstacle on the road to gentrification. True, older penitentiaries are sometimes saved from demolition, even celebrated, but usually with the proviso that they must be decommissioned, at which point the sky is truly the limit: shopping malls, boutique hotels, museums, schools, galleries, ateliers... Social progress and economic development appear to be epitomised in the transformation of such sites, and it is ironically often the most effective way to preserve prisons' memory and physical fabric. (Of course, few bother to ask how the relocation actually impacts inmates; presumably, progress benefits everyone equally.) But when a detention centre is still active, who would regale their guests with a tour of the local prison to show them how *we* deal with criminals and how important it is for us to impress our social values upon those built environments? But what if we were actually comfortable with the penal system in ways that are at least comparable to our basic faith in our justice system? Considering they are one and the same, the very dichotomy seems odd.

One explanation for late-modern urbanites' aversion to prisons is that they are usually exposed to them through the mediating lenses of blockbuster movies and TV drama. Designed for popular consumption with at best a dash of social critique, series like *Oz*, *Prison Escape*, and, most recently, *Orange is the New Black*, emphasise inmates' (and guards') sexuality, corruption and violence, often at the expense of other human vulnerabilities, social structures and disabling political agendas that could collectively bridge between rather than separate detainees and the world at large. Without critical, first-hand knowledge, however, our generation sees prisons as an ultra-violent world unto itself and likely finds socially affirmative institutions such as Philadelphia's Walnut Street Jail (founded 1773) and the Mettray Penal Colony (founded 1840), let alone the *Rasphuis* and the *Spinhuis*, difficult to fathom. Faith in social deviants' ability to act differently given the right environment and incentives and a conviction that they should be allowed to acquire the necessary skills to reintegrate are rare commodities today, at least outside

Scandinavia. And even among our northern neighbours, rehabilitation usually takes place in a rural and fairly secluded context, despite the overwhelming urban profile of Scandinavian society.

Stopping the silent transfer of prisons from cities, let alone reversing the trend, is a hard sell. It is expensive and it may not reduce crime or recidivism rates in the short term. Yet there is much to gain socially and politically from prisons' reintroduction and integration into cities in creative ways that do not put residents at unnecessary risk. At the very least, it will raise awareness about social deviancy, its diverse origins, and the complexities of dealing with it in an open, democratic society. The alternative is to allow civic apathy to continue operating by default against the same communities that are already marginalised by officialdom, a process that over time will constrict and constrain our capacity for empathy and inclusivity. Whatever our positions on dealing with crime may be, we cannot afford to be too complacent about our legal experts' capacity to make crucial and sometimes irreversible decisions about what is best for our society. Before we know it, our justice system will cease to be ours. Or was that, too, an illusion?

The author

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17. Build something different for a change!

How the people of Amsterdam resisted the sell-out of their city centre

Tim Verlaan

The last few years have seen an undermining of the liveability of European inner cities. Residents and small businesses are rapidly being replaced by international mass tourism. With the rise of low-cost airlines, the worldwide growth of the middle class and the irrepressible home-sharing economy, an end to the growing tourism flows is still not in sight.

Amsterdam too has lost its balance. Since the turn of the century, tourists have been taking possession of the city's canal belt and hotels are springing up like mushrooms. Policymakers are encouraging the tourism flows ever further, or at best are responding with a half-hearted ban on hotels. The functional and socially diverse city centre is making way for a tourist reservation with unaffordable rental and hospitality prices. Local residents often feel powerless. Amsterdam citizens complain bitterly about the increasing pressure, but at the same time rent out their flats via popular websites such as Airbnb.

It seems as if Amsterdam has forgotten that a hard battle was once fought to defend its beloved inner city against the urban planners of the 1960s. At that time the threat came from modernist office and hotel complexes, shopping centres and motorways. In the 1970s critical citizens turned against the goals and methods of large-scale urban renewal, which formed the foundation for such developments. Assisted by a shaky economy and the changing wishes and demands of residents, in the 1980s willing politicians and critical citizens were able to transform the inner city into an affordable place to live, work and enjoy leisure time.

If this unique character of the Amsterdam inner city is to be preserved, the city needs to regain the ability to defend itself as it did during the 1970s. If history repeats itself, as historians often claim, then we must also be able to learn from it. And so this article examines how the people of Amsterdam over the 1970s succeeded in resisting the city's hotel and business sector.

The end of Paradiso

The current hotel boom has its origins in the urban crisis of the 1960s and 1970s, when tens of thousands of residents and hundreds of businesses left Amsterdam for the surrounding region. In a spiral of impoverishment and decay, the slowly increasing tourism trade was one of the few glimmers of hope for the city's economic future. Municipal politicians were thus major advocates of more hotel accommodation in the inner city. With the growing number of hotels and catering establishments, from the start of the 1970s onward central areas slowly but surely shifted from production environments to consumer environments. Social encounters and hotel stays became increasingly associated with culture and entertainment.

As a result, investors and property developers grew interested in the development of hotel accommodation. During the 1960s and 1970s the most high-profile plans were put forward by the hospitality entrepreneur Nicolaas Bouwes, who hoped to build a huge hotel complex on the Leidseplein. This would involve demolition of the buildings known today as Paradiso and De Balie. After years of unsuccessful negotiations and rejected designs, in 1974 Bouwes presented a plan with a floor area of 49,000 square metres consisting of a 300-room hotel, a car park, shops and catering establishments. The complex, grouped in several blocks measuring 25 metres in height, was linked to shops in the P.C. Hooft district via a pedestrian bridge.

The city council felt little enthusiasm for the form and function of this project. Council members described it as a 'piece

'An unrealised plan by Bouwes, involving preservation of Paradiso (1965)' Source: Amsterdam image archive

of Manhattan', developed in order to earn as much as possible using the minimum of space, and accused the architect of an infinite lack of imagination. A council majority felt that the central location on the Leidseplein necessitated a wider discussion about whether Amsterdam needed Bouwes' mass luxury tourism. The press was fiercely critical as well. *De Groene Amsterdammer* described it mockingly as 'a piece of Hoog Catharijne' (a large brutalist shopping centre in Utrecht) in Amsterdam; *Het Parool* spoke of the danger of the inner city's diversity being replaced by a single type of architecture with a single type of atmosphere.

The PvdA alderman for Urban Development, Han Lammers, defended the project bitterly. He compared the decision-making process of the day to a moving train which council members should jump onto: 'It is advisable not to remain on the rear observation deck, but to walk through to the driver's cabin without

pulling the emergency brake on the way.' According to Lammers, what was good for Bouwes was good for the city: He would clear up a piece of dismal architecture and prevent the Leidseplein from decaying into a desolate, rotting site.

The purport of Lammers' reaction as a politician is something often heard since then: Tourism is important to the city's economy and a shortage of hotel rooms is deadly for local business. It is an argument that gives little consideration to the liveability of the inner city and the sensitivities of residents.

A democratic-cultural alternative

Although Bouwes modified the design and ultimately spared Paradiso, the scale of the complex was the least of the problems for opponents of the project. It was the undemocratic and elitist nature of his plan that led to resistance. Protectors of monuments, architects and neighbourhood action groups said that their city should not be sacrificed to the self-aggrandising project of a property developer. In early 1975 the opponents united in an action group called *Bouw-es-wat-anders*, a play on the name Bouwes roughly meaning 'Build something different for a change'. The group was generally known by its abbreviation: BEWA. More important than the counter-arguments provided by BEWA was its democratic planning alternative, which envisaged the most extensive public participation process in the history of Amsterdam. If the Bouwes plan went ahead, the soul of the Leidseplein would be lost, or as the action group described the square's highly diverse nightlife crowd:

> It's the artists and their art bums, the voyeurs and their exhibitionists, the rowdies and their sociologists, the free-loaders and their rich patrons, the silent drinkers and the screaming drug users, the beautiful crazies, the silly poofs, the deadly serious gays, the film fans, the night owls and the daydreamers.

Bewa aimed to capture this diversity in a counterplan that would give space to flats for young people and the elderly, small-scale catering and shopping facilities, workplaces and a cultural centre. Buoyed by these alternatives, the Leidseplein would remain the city's multifaceted and convivial living room, furnished by a wide range of citizens, architects and investors. According to BEWA, Bouwes had put the future of this inner-city living room at risk. Despite encouragements by the Municipal Executive, Bouwes refused to take the alternatives seriously. A mixing of his intended public and the visitors to Paradiso was unthinkable, triggering him to state this central location deserved better:

> Does public housing really need to be provided in this exact part of Amsterdam? I don't mean that in a derogatory way, you know, but then you'll see the washing hanging out on Monday, and so on (...). If this plan doesn't get realised it'll be a disaster for Amsterdam.

The resignation of Lammers as alderman in summer 1975 deprived the property developer of his most important ally. Lammers' replacement Cees de Cloe ultimately ditched the plan. It was not market dynamics, business consultation or information monopolies, but instead the primacy of the political body that determinen the future of Amsterdam's inner city, on the Leidseplein and elsewhere. On 27 April 1977 the city council forced the Municipal Executive to draw up a new package of wishes and requirements for the building plot, giving due attention to public housing and cultural facilities. Consequentially, Bouwes threw in the towel and left the redevelopment to BEWA and its partners.

The right to the city

The discussion about the future of the Leidseplein demonstrates that inner cities have always been crystallisation points for societal developments. Political ideas about the future, the influence

of market players and social unrest always show themselves most strongly in the heart of our cities. What can administrators and citizens learn from the 1970s? Although today's Max Euweplein is a dubious result of the negotiation process between both parties, the activities of BEWA show that market forces in the centre of Amsterdam need not present a fait accompli. The compromise that we now see on the Leidseplein, with retention of Paradiso and De Balie, is certainly a more accessible and pleasant place than the hotel colossus Bouwes wanted to build. BEWA showed through its actions that citizens can claim their right to their city by making themselves seen and heard in both political and spatial terms.

There is little use in looking back on such actions with a sense of nostalgia. Veteran activists tend to accuse younger generations of inner-city inhabitants of political apathy and laziness. But they forget that carrying out political action has become an unaffordable luxury, exemplified by current rental prices and study debt legislation. Moreover, Amsterdam's current hotel boom is less visible than the wholesale redevelopment efforts of the 1960s and 1970s. Repurposing of historical buildings now involves restoration and refurbishment instead of demolition, meaning Amsterdam residents experience the process of inner-city transformation less consciously.

Politicians should be sensitive to the events and feelings in their city. Disturbances caused by tourism are not just a question of perception. Amsterdam will not become a second Venice, or so today's council members reassure, not wishing to return to the 'empty' and 'poor' inner city of the 1970s. Seen from the perspective of the crisis in which the city found itself then, plans such as those of Bouwes were at least understandable. However, nowadays the city would have no difficulty whatsoever in surviving without a total abandonment to mass tourism, as might be proven by growing population figures and a diverse economy.

What's more, other European cities show how things can be done differently. Bruges has applied a strict hotel moratorium for years; in summer 2015 Berlin announced a rental cap in response

to the growing tourism. In Barcelona, a city struggling with increasing visitor numbers as well, the tourist limit introduced by the new Mayor proves that political engagement can still be the key to citizen's right to their city. Only if citizens organise themselves and city administrators protect them against the volatile dictates of the market, can something of the socio-culturally mixed inner city be retained. In fact, Amsterdam citizens owe it to BEWA, and to the countless other action groups that fought for this ideal in the 1970s, to make a stand now.

The author

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18.　Big is beautiful?

Small-scale urban projects for a new century

Stan Majoor

All over Europe in the past three decades, the trend has been towards large-scale urban projects. The aim of these systematic interventions, developed in close collaboration between governments and large private investors, has been to strongly direct spatial, economic and social developments in specific sections of cities. Major construction programmes have been implemented around strategic locations in former port areas and at (new) transport nodes, especially those of the growing European high-speed train network. These programmes have involved a combination of offices, hotels, housing, retail, culture, entertainment and new public spaces. Notable projects in the Netherlands have included the Zuidas and the southern bank of the river IJ in Amsterdam and Kop van Zuid in Rotterdam. Comparable goals are being aimed for in projects such as HafenCity in Hamburg, Rive Gauche in Paris, Docklands in London and Donau City in Vienna. A discourse of globalisation and competition has naturally played a major role among the politicians and economic elites who initiated such transformations. They have emphasised the need for positioning cities better as a good place to live for new (and wealthy) residents and for accommodating high-value economic and cultural functions that would otherwise go elsewhere. In short, they have pointed to the importance of strengthening the nodal function of cities, especially in the service economy.

Have these large-scale spatial transformations in the recent past been successful? This is an important question, but in view of the large number and diversity of the projects, one that is not easy to answer. Moreover, one is always faced with the tricky methodological and political question of how success can be

measured. Generally speaking these projects have delivered what could be expected in view of their goals. The transformed city districts have indeed been enriched with high-quality residential and office space, facilities for consumers and (sometimes) culture. They have become vehicles for large-scale property investments, and some cities have been able to improve their position in economic networks – obviously at the expense of losses for others. In terms of urban planning, architecture and programme they have often reflected a fairly elitist view of the city. Many of these projects have not been fine examples of democratic participation in the development of their concepts and decision-making. Closed processes that depoliticised projects have been more typical. After all, according to their proponents the usefulness and necessity of the projects were beyond any doubt. But precisely this point is open to criticism. The profits have often gone to private developers, investors and owners, while the government authorities were the parties who made major preliminary investments and took risks.

Changing conditions and crisis effects

Bearing this in mind, it is interesting to see what the future value of such 'urbanisation solutions' is in the light of changing conditions and evolving societal values. Many large-scale projects in the recent past have strongly emphasised the creation of colossal (and speculative) office complexes in expensive market segments. However, a wide range of technical and societal developments are causing these traditional workplaces of the service economy to rapidly lose importance. There is a comparable degree of uncertainty about the future of large shopping centres. On the other hand, many areas still have a shortage of 'urban living' for a wide range of target groups. The city is currently popular as a place to live and work among business starters and (small) families, while older people too can find the amenities they need here, as well as something to do. These groups are seeking mixed

neighbourhoods with amenities and space for small-scale business activities. In accordance with this idea, modern cities should realign towards a more finely meshed structure of economic functions and an accessible housing market.

Besides this changing demand we are also seeing a development in thinking about how major urban transformations come about. The global financial and economic crisis of 2007-2009 once again showed that real-estate markets are growing ever more interlinked with international financial systems and have thus become more volatile. Due to their speculative and growth-oriented nature, major urban projects have contributed strongly to real-estate bubbles. The large property developers and financiers behind these projects have become more vulnerable and thus also more cautious. Another problem is that they often offer standard solutions that consumers experience as oppressive. The crisis, together with the partial stagnation of the traditional development model in many cities, has fuelled a shift towards a more participatory model of urban development that has slowly but surely been growing for some time. Residents and entrepreneurs are seeking control over their own (spatial) environment and are creating opportunities through innovative forms of spatial use and reuse or at locations where traditional developers and financiers see no potential.

Towards new urbanisation solutions

Urban transformation through such smaller-scale initiatives, closer to the end users, is an attractive perspective in a situation that involves, on the one hand, uncertainty and criticism of the one-sided results of many projects and, on the other, a need for more ownership – in a broad interpretation of the term – of urban space. The economic crisis has created opportunities for this. On many (temporarily) disused sites, possibilities are being granted to collectives of private persons for temporary functions. Projects commissioned on a private (collective) basis

in the housing market give groups of residents more control over the development of future living environments.

How can European cities of the 21st century enable such initiatives to grow into full-fledged elements that can replace the mostly large-scale, systematic projects of recent decades? One important challenge is to link the principles of small-scale approach and private initiative to larger societal, spatial and ecological transitions that are now facing cities. These transitions are wide-ranging, such as issues of inclusivity of neighbourhoods for all levels of society. How can we live and work together while retaining our diversity? How can we achieve high or higher density without a loss of quality? And what about the necessary energy and mobility transitions, in which cities must play an important role? The challenge is to enable small-scale approaches and private initiatives to also achieve collective goals, without becoming trapped in large-scale, systematic project planning.

Facilitating the small-scale approach

Government authorities in particular will need to change their approach. While in the recent past they have focused on collaboration with major financial institutions in designing cities, now a new role is required. Facilitating small-scale private initiatives feels counter-intuitive for many ambitious spatial planners who base their work on traditional control models. The origin of contemporary urban planning – both its ideas and its implementation in various planning guidelines and legislation – lies chiefly in government intervention in and regulation of 'spontaneous' development by individual owners and users. This is of course accompanied by all kinds of noble intentions for more fairness, more efficiency and more democratic control. Can spatial planning develop in a direction that remains in line with (or renews) these goals while offering more space for private initiatives? Can a new balance be found in the city between private initiative and controlling conditions?

For government authorities this will mean not determining everything themselves but instead trusting the creativity of the city and its players to take on responsibility. At the same time requirements will still have be set, for instance in the area of accessibility and affordability. Democratic legitimisation of the direction taken by the urban development will also remain an important task of the authorities. Sometimes public (pre)investments will be needed, for instance in 'difficult' locations, or to give society a small push in the right direction. After all, not all urban nodes are taken up by private parties. This does not automatically mean large spatial goals will have to be abandoned: an accumulation of small steps can sometimes more effectively achieve a transition than changes that are imposed top-down and often prove difficult. Examples from Germany and the Netherlands show that recent (collective) self-construction projects for housing often offer much greater perspectives for an energy transition than do laborious rounds of negotiation between authorities and the business community at national and European level. In this way, urban policy has the potential to become not only more dynamic, but perhaps also more progressive and effective.

Is this picture overly optimistic? The small-scale approach is certainly not a panacea for the new city. Nor will it do away with inequality, conflict and sometimes merciless economic processes of elimination. Rather, it is a way of thinking and acting in order to deal with these issues in a pragmatic way, an approach for realising new futures and practices in the city, off the well-trodden path that in recent decades has mostly involved facilitating large-scale area development by institutional players. And so it is also a quest for new financing models that dispense with speculation and are implemented directly by the owners and users. The biggest problem lies with the planners and politicians themselves: they are still far too accustomed to the idea that only their (large-scale) interventions can change society and urban space in a positive way. For them, a new era means a necessary reflection on both planning instruments and their attitude towards society.

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19. Creative cities and shrinking cities: False opposites?

Marco Bontje

The European Union sees towns and cities, and especially the major cities, as a 'motor of growth'. At the same time, the EU recognises that many towns and cities are not growing, and 'shrinking cities' also occupy a prominent place on the European policy and research agenda. Shrinking cities do not fit the principles of European (or national) policy. They do not, for instance, meet the principles of the European model for sustainable urban developments: shrinking towns and cities are usually not 'attractive places' or 'motors of growth', they do not usually exhibit 'social progress', they are not 'powerful regional centres' and they are often situated in economically underperforming regions. Policymakers, not only in Brussels but also at the national, regional or local levels, usually wish to combat shrinkage with measures to return to growth as quickly as possible. One of the development concepts that often raises strong expectations is 'the creative city'. But isn't the creative city above all a policy concept for 'winners', for growing cities? Or do shrinking cities perhaps also have creative opportunities?

Shrinkage need not be a disaster

Before exploring possible answers to this question, we need to question the obsession (not only in Europe) with population growth and economic growth. Population shrinkage is not by definition a disaster for a city. There are different types of shrinkage: shrinkage occurs in all kinds of forms and degrees. Before a population forecast leads to panic in a city, one should first take a close look at what is really happening and whether there are

153

real reasons for concern. Elements that should be considered are whether just the number of city residents is decreasing or also the number of households (and linked to this: are houses standing empty or not), which population groups are shrinking and which may also be growing, whether the shrinkage is long-term and structural or only incidental, and above all the extent to which the population shrinkage is accompanied by economic shrinkage or stagnation. In this context cities also need to realise that many European towns and cities already have a shrinking population and that in the coming decades this will apply to many more European cities. Unless Europe becomes much more generous in admitting migrants (which is unlikely) or European birth rates rise strongly (which is also unlikely), population shrinkage is set to become 'the new normal'. Not only in rural areas but certainly also in a large number of European towns and cities.

Creativity as salvation of cities?

Every city would like to be a creative city. The term creativity has a positive connotation – not only among policymakers – especially when it involves forms of creativity that enable money to be earned and let a city put itself on the map. Since the 1990s the creative industry has been one of the fastest-growing economic sectors, and it also seems to have a promising future in the coming years. Museums, theatres, festivals, creative clusters, incubators and architectural landmarks have become important weapons in the international struggle between cities for investments and highly trained talent. But there is also a downside to a strategy aimed at the creative city. Not every city can be a creative city and not even all city inhabitants profit from such a strategy: it is often a strategy with relatively few winners and many more losers. The most successful creative cities are often cities that were already doing well economically and already have a long tradition as centres of culture and knowledge: this is usually not a new success 'that came from nowhere' but instead built on existing success.

Shrinking cities that need creativity as a means of rescue will unfortunately often find themselves grasping at straws.

Nonetheless, there are some examples of shrinking cities in Europe that, thanks also to a flourishing creative industry, have begun growing again after decades of decline, both demographically and economically. Leipzig for instance: after seven decades of dramatic shrinkage, which actually seemed to be accelerating in the 1990s, the population began growing again from 2000 onwards, quickly followed by a remarkable economic recovery. The creative industry seems to have played an important role in this recovery, including the art of the New Leipzig School as a successful export product, a growing media sector and crowd-pullers such as music festivals and game industry fairs. A growing knowledge cluster in the life sciences, the formation of a new automobile cluster and the superbly renovated city centre have also contributed to Leipzig's recovery. Comparable stories from the last ten to fifteen years can be told about Dresden (rebuilt historic centre as a tourism magnet and successful high-tech industry) and Manchester (from industrial to creative knowledge city).

But for the time being these seem to be exceptions. Having already been centres of culture, innovation and knowledge earlier in their histories, these cities can now successfully reference this tradition after spending several decades trapped in a temporary vicious cycle of decay due to an unlucky combination of circumstances. They are profiting from a more general 'back to the (big) city trend' that we have seen in many European countries, including the Netherlands, in recent years. Moreover, their recent growth is at the expense of their surrounding regions, which are growing much less strongly or even shrinking. Part of the new urban growth in these formerly shrinking cities is due to a reduction in the exodus from the city to the surrounding areas (less suburbanisation and people remaining resident in the city for longer) and an increase in the influx from the surrounding region to the city. Smaller shrinking cities and towns usually do not have these possible sources of new growth: they are not and never were centres of culture, innovation and knowledge,

and their surrounding regions are usually thinly populated, or they themselves are situated in the shadow of a larger city that attracts people from these smaller cities and towns.

Creative opportunities for shrinking cities?

How can these smaller shrinking cities and towns nonetheless play a role in an economy that is increasingly focused on creativity, innovation and knowledge? If we could develop the 'creative city policy strategy' in a rather more diverse and inventive way than has been the case in Europe up until now, then smaller shrinking cities should find opportunities as well. The nature of these opportunities depends partly on the location of these cities with respect to the dominant creative centres. Small shrinking cities and towns that lie close to major creative centres, and perhaps are shrinking precisely because of this proximity, may be able to augment the regional creative economy. They might be able to offer what the large creative city does not have (or no longer has): room for affordable working and living environments and free spaces for creative starters and marginal creativity. Commercially successful creative companies often arise from small businesses that are not profitable in their first years, or require these small businesses and freelancers as suppliers or project partners. The more large, commercially successful, creative businesses there are in a city, the bigger the chance that precisely these small start-ups and freelancers can no longer find an affordable place in the city. Then smaller cities and towns close to the big creative city may present an alternative start-up environment. An environment that still offers space (literally and figuratively) to experiment – with experiments that can also fail from time to time without this obstructing new opportunities.

Smaller shrinking cities and towns that lie further from the major creative centres will need to come up with something else. They could, for instance, see whether there are niches in the creative industry that are not, or hardly, represented and in which

the smaller cities could play a pioneering role. An exploration of local and regional traditions may provide inspiration: what do we have that others don't, or what are/were we good at? This can also include the valorisation of creative craftsmanship or old trades, or a combination of creative ideas and a more sustainable economy and society. Another option, separate or supplementary to the above, is to explore possibilities for creating alliances with the large creative centres or, on the other hand, with players in a similar position (other smaller shrinking cities and towns) to find growth options under the motto 'united we stand'.

Growth-shrinkage partnerships

The fastest growing cities in Europe often grow at the expense of other areas: either the rest of their own urban region, or other parts of the country. This raises questions about which kind of development is ultimately the most desirable at national and European levels: placing all bets on the fastest growers with the most competitive strength, or putting an emphasis on mutual solidarity between growing and shrinking parts of Europe? Two recent projects explore possibilities of helping, as a growing urban region, to solve the problems of shrinking regions. Under the title 'The Responsible Capital', Amsterdam has entered into a partnership with three shrinking towns and their regions at the edges of the Netherlands: Delfzijl (north-east Groningen), Sluis (Zeelandic Flanders) and Heerlen (South Limburg). This alliance includes knowledge exchange on urban development and cooperation in cultural events. A European project with similar principles was the Interreg IVC project 'Urban-Rural Partnerships in Metropolitan Areas' (URMA, 2012-2014). Led by researchers at the HafenCity University Hamburg, an international consortium worked on knowledge exchange on, and possible improvement of, partnerships between urban and rural regions. These projects are congenial in nature and certainly contribute to discussions that deserve a higher place on the European policy agenda. But

the concrete results of these partnership plans remain modest for the time being and such projects also raise questions about whether the shrinking regions really benefit from this, or whether it is the growing urban regions that ultimately profit the most. Nonetheless, they are a possible start for a new type of urban and regional development programme that creates better opportunities for shrinking parts of Europe.

Creative cities do not necessarily have to be growing cities; shrinking cities and towns can also play their part in a creative economy. A European urban policy that focuses exclusively on cities as 'motors of growth' threatens to exclude a large proportion of European cities and towns, or to impose a forced 'back to growth policy' with a major chance of failure. European urban policy should be a policy for all European cities and towns, not only for the growing and/or most creative ones and also not only for the most creative and/or highly educated parts of the population.

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Part 3
Creative cities

The third topic, creative cities, focuses on the innovative nature of cities – and not just in the economic sense. Joost Jonker provides a historical account of the creative destruction and economic recovery of cities. Claartje Rasterhoff explores the way that technological development can be seen as the symbol of the creative city, while Frank Kresin argues that citizens should become involved in developing and using technological innovations: smart cities need to cherish their smart residents.

The other contributions focus more on political and cultural innovation. Robert Kloosterman warns of the dangers of overly sanitised urban spaces: a tamed city is not a creative one. Moritz Föllmer also makes a case for the importance of unpredictability. In cities, this can also take the form of collective action and urban social movements, such as neighbourhood action groups and squatters. The Amsterdam squatting movement once had a lot of influence, but the large squats were cleared or legalised, vacancy rates are lower and squatting has been made illegal. Jaap Draaisma explains how the City of Amsterdam has attempted to preserve and harness the creativity of the squatting movement through the so-called 'creative-incubator policy' (*broedplaatsenbeleid*), an initiative to provide affordable studio spaces. Finally, Arnold Reijndorp discusses the opportunities inherent in new cities.

20. The creative destruction and recovery of cities

Joost Jonker

According to the Austrian economist Joseph Schumpeter, capitalism is a continuous process of creative destruction. Economic growth is driven by innovation, as entrepreneurs continually create new products. However, these new products replace existing products and manufacturing processes, resulting in capitalist society being in a constant process of innovative destruction.

As hubs of economic activity, cities are particularly affected by these processes of profound capitalist transformation. Time and again, economic activities – or entire sectors – disappear from the scene, with cities finding themselves needing to recover from the fallout. How they do this varies greatly from one city to the next, as does the degree to which government policy is able to make a successful contribution to economic recovery. Some local authorities endeavour for years to help their city recover from the disappearance of an entire industry – a sad fate that has befallen the cities of Liège, Lille, Liverpool and the cities in the German Ruhr Area, for example. Others are relatively quick to bounce back after one of these economic shocks, sometimes by deliberately changing tack to a completely different sector. By attracting companies in a targeted way, Rennes was able to build up a pharmaceutical business community, a sector which had not been represented at all in the city previously. In the case of Brussels, coincidence and location were key. The city was able to more than compensate for the loss of its role as an inland port and distribution centre when a host of different European bodies decided to make it their home.

The ability to adapt

A city's ability to adapt is determined by a range of very diverse factors. Obviously, cities with a central location and varied functions are quick to recover. You could say that London, for example, is in a constant process of transformation. Certain activities are lost and replaced by others seemingly effortlessly. Even recovering from the substantial bomb damage of the Blitz caused no significant upheaval. With a similar combination of a central location, a role as the seat of central government and high-quality services, Paris is also highly adaptable. However, the latter was unable to compensate sufficiently for the loss of its labour-intensive business sectors, like the automotive industry, which resulted in the establishment of suburbs with high unemployment rates and deep-rooted social problems. Location can make a city very resilient. Both Rotterdam and Hamburg were relatively quick to recover after the bomb damage of the Second World War thanks to their strong connections with the hinterland – in contrast with Coventry, where the process took a lot more time and effort because this city was also struggling with encroaching industrial decline. However, location alone is not enough. Liverpool's location – roughly comparable to those of Rotterdam and Hamburg – did not do the city much good when the process of de-industrialisation began to gather pace in England in the 1960s.

In order to arrive at a good understanding of these processes of creative destruction and recovery, then, we are better off studying cities which do not have clear advantages in terms of location or a key central function. Take Bonn, for example, which is still feverishly attempting to compensate for the departure of the German central government to Berlin, by establishing a number of brand-new conference facilities among other things. Amsterdam also fits into this category of cities which do not boast any obvious advantages.

Amsterdam

Amsterdam likes to see itself as the centre of the world, or at least of the Netherlands. But, of course, it is not. Truth be told, Amsterdam's off-centre location is logistically impractical, which means that the city is forced to rely on other, less clearly identifiable factors, such as the position it has established for itself, its social and economic infrastructure or its range of appealing cultural attractions. This introduces a certain amount of unpredictability into the pattern of urban economic development.

There have been a number of significant periods in Amsterdam's history in which existing patterns of activity disappeared and new ones had to be found to replace them. The interesting thing about studying these periods is that they do not provide an unequivocal answer to the question as to how exactly the city recovered from these processes of creative destruction. The same thing that achieved results in one period barely made a difference, or even had a detrimental effect, in the next. Sometimes the government was required to provide a significant impetus to the economy, while at other times the economy bounced back more or less of its own accord. Where in one sector substantial investments by local authorities yielded little or no returns, other sectors thrived and flourished without any significant financial intervention at all.

The final quarter of the 17th century is a good example of the city successfully managing to adapt to changing circumstances as a result of joint efforts between the local authorities and the business community. At the time, more and more international trade was withdrawing – partly as a result of protectionism abroad and partly because the emerging competition elsewhere saw the Amsterdam warehouse as a detour. French wine was no longer carried across the Baltic Sea primarily on Dutch ships, but on French, English, German or Danish ones instead. Instead of continuing to trade goods themselves, merchants diversified into supplying a highly-developed, comprehensive package of services – encompassing transportation, insurance and commercial

credit – to their foreign customers. Due to specialisation and volume, those services were much cheaper in Amsterdam than elsewhere. This transition enabled foreign trade to remain very buoyant until the final quarter of the 18th century. The local government contributed to this success by giving the Bank of Amsterdam the new role of seamlessly supporting the merchants in their endeavours.

Government policy and Amsterdam's adaptability

A comparable shift at the beginning of the 19th century failed, when trade had to be built up from scratch after the Batavian-French era (1795-1813). The cause of this can be found in the conflicting views that existed about the city's economic future. Merchants were bending over backwards attempting to win back Amsterdam's function as the distributor within Europe, but it had been lost forever. At the same time, King William I was pushing through a series of measures which, while well-intended, incited animosity within the city and its business community, as they were either superfluous or counterproductive: the establishment of De Nederlandsche Bank in 1814, the Netherlands Trading Society in 1824 and the construction of the Entrepotdok warehouse complex in 1827. In all, it took more than two decades, until roughly 1835, before the Amsterdam economy began to get back on its feet and new forms of economic activity, such as mechanical engineering, steam-powered sugar refining and mechanical rice husking, began to emerge.

Amsterdam has found itself at loggerheads with central government on many occasions since then, but in these cases it has usually been about money or the allocation of financial resources, rather than over a fundamental difference of economic opinion. However, a consensus of opinion does not necessarily make policy more effective. During the 1960s, the city and central government agreed on the necessity of large-scale planning, urban development and getting the population to move to new

housing in peripheral municipalities. However, in trying to implement these plans, they were faced with dogged opposition from residents, with the result that the city ended up retaining its unique, small-scale, historic character. In the meantime, persistent attempts to establish a petrochemical cluster at the Port of Amsterdam fell flat, again partly due to opposition from local citizens, and partly because the industry ultimately did not consider this a viable move.

The economic downturn of the 1970s marked the beginning of a difficult period for Amsterdam. The local authorities tried their best to prevent the loss of labour-intensive industries like shipbuilding and automotive manufacturing, but they ended up disappearing all the same, and without new industries taking their place. Due to problems with accessibility, more and more businesses opted for a location outside of the city. The city centre visibly deteriorated as a result, as high unemployment and depopulation meant that the middle classes had insufficient disposable incomes. It was only in the mid-80s that the tide finally began to turn, partly thanks to municipal policy. Under the powerful leadership of Alderman Jan Schaefer, an urban regeneration programme once again made Amsterdam an attractive place in which to live and situate your business, and the development of a new, large-scale office zone on the southern outskirts of the city brought about the necessary expansion in capacity for internationally oriented financial service providers.

However, it is striking that key developments that contributed to this economic recovery were not, or were only barely, the result of municipal policy. Schiphol Airport became a major source of employment in the region without the local authorities having to do much at all. In addition, the combination of frequent links to all corners of the world and the improved urban environment led a number of major multinationals to decide to move their head offices to Amsterdam, as it enabled them to offer their world-class staff the kind of working environment that places like Eindhoven, Arnhem or Zaandam

lacked. As a result, the population's purchasing power began to grow, which in turn stimulated the emergence of a highly varied retail and hospitality sector. This also drew day trippers from the surrounding area, as Amsterdam now once again had something unique and distinctive to offer. While the City Council injected millions into the Port of Amsterdam – with varying success – the city owed its economic recovery in part to the intimate urban fabric that had almost been destroyed thirty years before. The expensive container terminal was a flop, and the innovation ended up coming from the existing, partly historical urban facilities. Bearing this in mind, the billions that Amsterdam is seeking to invest in new locks on the North Sea could perhaps be better spent on developing and fortifying those facilities.

Conclusion

Processes of creative destruction are completely unpredictable. Once it has become clear that a struggling industry can no longer be salvaged, even the entrepreneurs that are driving innovation are often unsure what direction things will go in next. Microsoft founder Bill Gates did not initially think that the internet had much of a future, even during the height of its boom. Steve Jobs dismissed smartphone apps as a fun extra and initially failed to recognise their tremendous economic potential for Apple. That is why it is often very difficult for cities to replace lost economic activity, especially if it concerns a city that boasts no clearly identifiable benefits. What works in one period yields no effect in the next, though the reason behind this subsequent failure remains unclear. One thing, however, is clear. Cities, like entrepreneurs, need to tirelessly search for economic innovation and accept the fact that some of these efforts will be fruitless – without being able to know which from the outset. After all, sitting still is even more fruitless, and much riskier from a social point of view as well.

The author

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21. Visions and symbols of the creative city

From the patroness of the city to the 3D Print Canal House

Claartje Rasterhoff

North Amsterdam is home to the 3D Print Canal House, a prestigious 'research-by-doing' project that involves constructing a typical canal side property using 3D printing. If the architects and sponsors involved in the initiative have their way, this experiment will be the city of the future in microcosm: sustainable, socially-conscious and creative. Perfectly reflecting the zeitgeist, it is also an exhibition and event space, where the public can contribute ideas and watch live as a huge printer, the *KamerMaker* (RoomBuilder), produces the new building materials and designs.

Artist's impression of the 3D Print Canal House

Source: DUS Architects, Amsterdam

The project is also a symbol of the Amsterdam Economic Board's ambition of being Europe's number one creative metropolis by 2020. Why has it set itself this goal? Because urban creativity attracts and promotes economic activity and innovation, which in turn benefits the city and its residents. At least, that is the idea behind the creative city. Amsterdam policymakers are not the first to have big aspirations for their city, nor are they the first to bank on art and culture to make these goals a reality. But is it possible to plan a creative city? Or is wishful thinking ultimately the best that you can do? History suggests the latter. The question is whether that is such a bad thing.

Art and trade

Is it a coincidence that the 3D Print Canal House is on the very same site that was used, four hundred years ago, by cultural entrepreneurs *avant la lettre* Claes Jansz. Visscher and Pieter Bast to represent the city's grandeur – right on the bank of the river IJ across from the current location of Amsterdam Central Station? On this print from 1611, we see the Amsterdam city skyline from the north, looking east to west. Recently, the cityscape had undergone significant changes as a result of the first drawing-board plans for urban expansion becoming a reality, giving shipping and trade in particular more space reaching both eastwards and westwards. The image is dominated by the IJ, the city's artery, with countless ships bobbing along on its surface. Also striking are the exotically-dressed foreigners offering their goods. The city's buildings are prominently featured, with iconic sites and institutions such as the recently-established Stock Exchange, Dam Square and the Fish Market (*Vismarkt*). The patroness of the city of Amsterdam sits in the centre, holding the city's coat of arms and a model ship in her hands. She receives her guests among an array of cultural artefacts, including a globe, nautical instruments, sheet music, a painter's palette, silver and glassware and a copy of the New Testament. In the accompanying texts, we

Detail uit Profiel van Amsterdam, 1611, Claes Jansz Visscher, Pieter Bast

Source: Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam

can read about the library, where books in all languages could be consulted, about the presence of scholars and schoolteachers, about the many maps of places all over the world and about artistic prints by the greatest masters.

The emphasis on art, culture and science in this print symbolises the city's status as a patron of the arts and centre of human creativity. At the same time, the print represents art and science as being the foundations of urban development, referring to what we would now call cultural entrepreneurship and spill overs. Art and science served as both a honey pot and a fuel, and were invaluable tools in promoting the city and legitimising its administrative and policymaking decisions. For example, we can read the following words in Latin: 'Piety, trade, art, science and government spread Amsterdam's name all over the world.' The makers of this 1611 print were appealing to the egos of the new administrative elite. They did not only depict the city as they saw it, but also its future: Amsterdam as it could be, or even as it should be. And lo and behold, their visions became a reality, as evidenced by the impressive commercial and artistic achievements of the Dutch Golden Age.

About half a century after this print was made, the patroness of the city was once again prominently depicted. Her seat, the new city hall – now known as the Royal Palace of Amsterdam

– was constructed between 1648 and 1665. Its marble floors are inlaid with maps that depict Amsterdam as the centre of the cosmos, the world and world trade. This display of the wealth and power of the city government was intended to send a clear signal to other local authorities: good luck trying to come up to this level! Although Amsterdam boasted a prominent commercial position by then, this colossal building could also be seen as a dream of the future. Unfortunately, the second half of the 17th century did not bring the grandeur that the city government had been hoping for. It turned out that many economic sectors had reached the limits of their growth, while other European cities were on the rise. While Amsterdam managed to retain its position as a significant trade hub and financial centre for a long time, the country entered a period of relative stagnation. For example, the eastern part of the city, which had been prepared for construction for the envisaged urban expansion of 1662, remained strikingly empty until well into the 19th century.

Art and manufacturing

It was not until the mid-19th century that the city truly began making new plans for urban expansion and improvement again. All over Europe, cities were working on parks, boulevards and public facilities. Of course, Amsterdam could not lag behind. New buildings, new streets and entire new neighbourhoods were constructed. At the same time, the city's economic, social and cultural foundations were also subject to change and transformation. The new plans for Amsterdam were developed during a time characterised by frequent complaints about there being a lack of entrepreneurial spirit and innovative drive in the Netherlands, with people arguing that its past achievements had led the country, the city and the economy to become complacent. However, in the eyes of urban planner Samuel Sarphati, who was the driving force behind a number of large-scale urban construction projects, it was not a lack of drive among merchants and manufacturers

that was holding back Dutch progress so much as an overall lack of knowledge and capital. A series of new initiatives were undertaken with the intention of changing this. The *Paleis voor Volksvlijt* (Palace of National Industry) – which burned down in 1929 but was recently put back on the Urban Agenda by Dutch artist Wim T. Schippers – was supposed to play a crucial role in this. Sarphati dreamt of an unrivalled building which would promote and showcase progress in trade, manufacturing, art and science:

> [A building] that, in its dimensions, exceeds all other buildings in this city, a forecourt bigger than Dam Square, with a fountain, candelabras and tasteful planting, flanked by two rows of large, elegant houses facing onto streets more than twice as wide as Reguliersbreestraat and longer than Kalverstraat, will create such a vista that many other capital cities will envy us.

Opened in 1864, the palace ended up being built on *Frederiksplein*, at the site that is now the location of *De Nederlandsche Bank*, and its completion marked the dawn of a new era. Like London's renowned Crystal Palace, this impressive palace of industry was constructed out of glass and cast iron, and was 1,5 time the size of the Royal Palace of Amsterdam, with a dome that towered high above the rest of the city.

Like the print from 1611, the palace represented both the ideal and the reality. In this period, the relationship between culture – including urban culture – and economy was re-examined. The dominant belief was that, like the classical *Mercator Sapiens*, merchants and manufacturers should not strive for economic gains alone, but should also invest in society, in particular in art and science – not just for their own consumption, but for the benefit of society as a whole. This resulted in the construction of showpieces such as the *Concertgebouw* (home of the Amsterdam Philharmonic), the *Stedelijk Museum* Amsterdam and the *Paleis voor Volksvlijt*. These projects were driven by civilising ideals

– art to educate the public – but also by economic motivations – art as a stimulus for industry and trade. People often felt that machine-made products were ugly, and increasingly began to call for the integration of art and industry. The idea was that it was possible to gain an edge over competitors by having good designs and beautiful decoration. Industry, science and art had to be developed jointly, through exhibitions and associations for art and industry, such as in the *Paleis voor Volksvlijt*. This would make it possible to develop the public's taste by presenting the rewards of progress, while at the same time stimulating the demand for products.

From the mid-19th century, employing culture, art, science and innovation began to play a more prominent role in the competition between cities and countries through, among other things, large-scale buildings and exhibitions. The *Paleis voor Volksvlijt* itself was a particularly fine example of promotion for the city. In spite of the drive of the initiators and the palace's success as an impressive feat of architecture, the domains of art and industry ended up drifting further apart during the course of the 19th century. The use of art and creativity in industrial production largely remained limited to style and embellishment, partly as a result of an increasing, newfound appreciation for craftsmanship and decoration. Industrial design would not really get off the ground in the Netherlands until the 20th century. And it turned out that it was difficult to make the palace itself profitable, and as a result the emphasis in its programming shifted from industrial exhibitions to trade exhibitions and a role as a venue for events. Thanks to this increasing consumer function and the prominent location in the city, it ended up becoming an important part of Amsterdam as a cultural city after all.

Creative industry

Art, culture and science had an important place in the pre-industrial and industrial city, just as they do today. Whether they

were tools for marketing the city, legitimising administrative and policymaking decisions or product differentiation, art and culture were taking shape in tandem with urban society, and helped to put cities on the map. At the end of the 20th century, this utilitarian approach was formalised in the concept of the 'creative city'. For post-industrial societies, it turned out that it was difficult to compete with low-wage economies based on labour and raw materials. What industrialised cities could use to set themselves apart was knowledge, information, highly-developed skills, cultural heritage and the ability to give scope to individual creativity. The only thing that was missing was a way to get access to, and extract, these new raw materials. Working with policymakers, academics considered the question of the conditions that were needed for creativity to flourish and be transformed into commercial products. It turned out that cities offered all sorts of benefits compared to the countryside, such as a developed infrastructure and demand side, while social and geographical proximity strengthened the exchange of knowledge and cross-pollination that are the prerequisites for innovation and growth. The 3D Print Canal House is not one isolated project, but makes up part of the IJ bank, a centre of creative production and consumption by tourists, knowledge workers and creatives with relatively high incomes, including institutions such as the EYE Film Institute Netherlands, new media and technology hub A Lab, the new A'DAM tower and the Amsterdam Theatre School.

There is nothing neutral about the countless definitions and typologies that populate the domain of the creative city. The creative city with its creative industry, populated by the creative class in creative incubators – these are terms loaded with policy ambitions. Just like Visscher's print and Sarphati's palace, the 3D Print Canal House is a symbol of the interrelation of culture, creativity and economy that is particular to a certain moment in time. In addition, these symbols, as in previous times, are strongly influenced by wishful thinking. We want the previously rather grey bank of the IJ to become a

thriving hub of creativity. But will it? Back in 1611, Visscher and his contemporaries could not have suspected that they were on the brink of what would come to be referred to as the Dutch Golden Age. The builders of the Royal Palace of Amsterdam did not anticipate decay. Sarphati and his peers could not have predicted that their time would herald a separation between art, science and industry. If historical research into the relationship between cities and creativity tells us anything, it is that there are no guarantees and no recipes, and that nothing is fixed from the outset. Creative cities do not develop in a linear way; they do not change in the short term, and they do not operate in isolation.

However, this does not mean we should all sit back and wait for things to take their course. People give shape to the city, oftentimes with grand ideals and good intentions. Who knows, maybe Wim T. Schippers' grassroots initiative will be successful in returning the *Paleis voor Volksvlijt* to Frederiksplein? Mayor Eberhard van der Laan is already on board with the idea. And will DUS Architects actually usher in the future of innovative urban planning with the 3D Print Canal House? For now, it serves as a great 'PR coup' for the city, as evidenced by the visits by Prime Minister Mark Rutte and US President Barack Obama. What these examples do show is that every urban society – then and now, in the Netherlands and elsewhere in Europe – gives rise to a different kind of creative city. And all these cities deserve tailor-made policies, and should not be forced into some one-size-fits-all mould based on what is supposed to constitute a 'creative city'.

The author

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22. Smart cities value their smart citizens

Frank Kresin

Over the past few years Amsterdam has been doing everything in its power to become 'smart'. Like all other significant big cities, it is working hard to find innovative ways to make life more pleasant, safe and sustainable. It is positioning all sorts of sensors and collecting large amounts of data to help it make better decisions, and in so doing, automating society. Oftentimes this involves casting an envious eye on a number of smart 'model cities', such as Songdo in South Korea and Masdar in the desert of the United Arab Emirates. Here, large-scale pilot projects have been launched, full of impressive tech, sensors and screens that make life easier. Another attractive example can be found in Rio de Janeiro, where IBM has built a huge, futuristic command centre to regulate traffic as efficiently as possible, serve tickets for traffic violations and predict and respond to emergency incidents.

Smart cities 1.0

There are some flaws to this approach. The first generation of smart cities tries to provide their residents with all the comforts, but see them exclusively as consumers. Technology and data provide previously unheard-of possibilities for surveillance – criminals can even be identified before having committed a possible crime. In this context, every citizen becomes a potential offender who has to be kept in check. In the ultimate smart city, residents are anything but conscious agents who play a part in shaping their living and working environment. This smart city is a machine that needs to be optimised, with no consideration

or understanding of the organic reality. It wants to maximise efficiency and avoid friction, so it simply and non-negotiably imposes top-down, non-transparent technological solutions.

The paradox is that, by doing this, the smart city ends up stifling innovation. Citizens find themselves faced with increasingly complex systems that affect their lives profoundly, but that they have less and less understanding of. The same is true, incidentally, for politicians and policymakers; they tend to be just as removed from the innovations that they are promoting. The net result of this is that cities render their residents passive and, by doing so, leave their tremendous potential untapped. That is a great shame, because it is their experience, engagement and energy that are essential in identifying and addressing social issues. In short: the smart city urgently needs an upgrade – with citizens being the first link, rather than the last, in the chain of innovation.

This is especially vital because citizens are, in fact, rapidly getting themselves prepared for a new and active role. They are becoming more proficient in the use of new technologies than the governments that serve and monitor them. They are also up-to-date on the problems and opportunities within their city, neighbourhood and street. They are often willing to volunteer their knowledge, time and experience to improve the city they live in, are coming together in new kinds of associations (such as repair cafes, energy cooperatives, city villages, and car-sharing and house-sharing initiatives) and are not invested in old bureaucratic solutions that stand in the way of innovations. They are highly educated and have access to an infinite amount of information, which makes them valuable, clued-up conversation partners. The second-generation smart cities understand this, and are making every effort to actively promote smart citizenship.

An example: The Amsterdam Smart Citizens Lab

One of the complex issues that the modern city finds itself faced with is air pollution. More and more people worldwide are living in cities, and their health and well-being are to a great extent dependent on their living environments: on the quality of air, soil, water and noise. Recent research demonstrates that even small amounts of pollution can have an impact on life expectancy. No less than 90% of urban residents are exposed to fine particles and ozone which, according to the World Health Organization – a specialised health agency that forms part of the United Nations – are harmful to their health.

Municipal services, the Netherlands National Institute for Public Health and the Environment (known as RIVM) and various interest groups have traditionally made meticulous measurements as a way of gaining insight into this problem. Based on their findings, the political arena makes decisions, such as, for example, instituting a low-emission zone, lowering the maximum speed limit or introducing bus lanes. However, the official environment-monitoring network is necessarily very limited as to the number of monitoring points and data-gathering intervals, while major differences exist from street to street, house to house and day to day. This can now be remedied thanks to the arrival of new, cheap sensors. With some help, engaged citizens worried about pollution can take measurements themselves and find answers to their questions.

In 2014, an experiment took place in Amsterdam which involved the distribution of a hundred Smart Citizen Kits: small and cheap sensors that, unfortunately, yielded only mediocre-quality data. The participants, however, were very enthusiastic, the technology continued to evolve and partners presented themselves, including the City of Amsterdam, Amsterdam Smart City, the RIVM, Amsterdam University of Applied Sciences and the SenseMakers community. The Amsterdam Smart Citizens Lab was established in 2015 by Waag Society together with these partners. Here, citizens, social institutions, research institutions

and central government have all joined hands to get more insight into the environment, identify any problems and work on future solutions. Citizens' questions, concerns and input are central to this initiative.

Approximately sixty participants were found via social media. They immersed themselves in the complex issues. Armed with new knowledge, together with experts, they looked for the best way to collect relevant data. They formulated research questions, selected and tested sensors, or created them themselves where necessary. They then went on to collect data – which they are currently analysing – after which they will arrive at conclusions and, where necessary, take action. This could take all sorts of forms: changing their own behaviour, mobilising neighbours and local businesses, or involving the political sphere and proposing and/or demanding that measures be put in place.

Of course, the self-monitoring citizen still faces a lot of obstacles and challenges. This kind of engagement requires a high level of knowledge, and participants find themselves faced with technical issues and can get stuck trying to interpret the data. But it is already clear even at this stage that the lab is very much worthwhile. It actively involves citizens in their own city and makes them better informed. It enables them to enter into a dialogue on an equal footing with the government and other official bodies. In addition, the RIVM and the Community Health Service (GGD) can benefit from the new citizen data, which can be fed into their own models. The result: greater insight, better regulations and a clean, healthy and liveable city.

The participants are enthusiastic and there is a lot of interest in the initiative, both in the Netherlands and beyond. The universities of Wageningen and Delft are studying the lab in order to devise a generic approach to urban problems in which the concerns and innovative capacity of their residents can take centre stage. The first results are promising and suggest that this different approach could work. The findings are being distributed as widely as possible. Vienna, Barcelona, Manchester and Helsinki all have plans to establish their own

Smart Citizens Labs based on the Amsterdam example. The EU too, has woken up to the approach, and is creating scope for similar initiatives with its Collective Awareness Platforms programme.

Smart cities 2.0

Back to the smart city and its smart citizens. Technology undeniably can and will play an increasingly prominent role in solving urban problems. Applications are getting more powerful, smaller and cheaper every year. They will provide us with new insights and – whether automatic or not – will improve the flow of traffic, air quality, energy management and waste processing. This will almost certainly result in healthier living environments, cost savings and efficiency gains.

At the same time, it will become apparent that intensive civic participation is an essential ingredient of radical and sustainable innovation. Citizens are able to contribute truly new insights, and will only be willing to get involved in implementing solutions if their voices have been heard during the development stage. That is why second-generation smart cities are opting for a bottom-up approach to innovation, strengthening connections and embracing and encouraging the creative friction that results from this. This ensures that the new infrastructures that are created promote openness, transparency and reciprocity – making contributing to innovation something that is accessible to many. The smart city 2.0 is no longer a one-dimensional machine, but a multiform organism that, provided it is nurtured properly, can grow and flourish like never before.

The author

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23.   The dangers of a tamed city

Robert C. Kloosterman

The Asian tourists visiting Amsterdam are obediently trailing after their tour guide, who is holding up the sign for the group. They stop at the Oudezijdskolk canal at the top of the Zeedijk and crowd around the tour guide, who begins to describe the wild history of the area to them. Somewhat further away, a hipster on a bicycle is attempting to weave his way through the many tourists and day trippers who have ventured off the beaten track hoping to see something different from Dam Square or the Rijksmuseum.

And the Zeedijk is definitely still different. For example, there is a shop specialising in latex fetish wear that you are not likely to find on the Damrak or Kalverstraat. But the days when this street was the domain of the homeless, drug addicts and other representatives of the fringes of urban society are long past. The prostitutes strutting their stuff, the Surinamese addicts shivering in the cold Dutch winter, the drug users leaning against shop windows to smoke crack, the glass from smashed car windows underfoot and the noisy altercations and arguments that may or may not lead to physical violence – those were the types of scenes that typified the Zeedijk's image a quarter of a century ago, so much so that 'the top of the Zeedijk' was known virtually nationwide as being a gateway to the fringes of the big city.

Sanitised city

With just a hint of exaggeration, you could say that the cleaning up of the Zeedijk is representative of the transformation of the city of Amsterdam as a whole. In the 80s, the city suffered from high unemployment rates – officially, nearly a quarter of the working population was unemployed around 1985 – squatters' riots and a relatively large population of drug addicts. To quote Simon Kuper

(2014), columnist for the *Financial Times*: 'When I was growing up in the Netherlands in the 1980s, Amsterdam was for hippies, drug addicts, prostitutes, penniless bohemians, students, a native white working class and gays fleeing intolerant Dutch small towns.' The latter category still has a strong presence in the capital city, but there seems to be little left of those other subcultures that were such visible features of the urban landscape back in the 1980s.

It is difficult to pinpoint an exact turning point, but from the mid-1990s it became increasingly apparent that Amsterdam was going through a striking transformation. It has gone from being a city with a considerable number of members of the working class to increasingly being one for highly educated people (the largest proportion of the working population in Dutch cities). Where in the late 1980s the city was still characterised by high levels of urban decay with dilapidated and boarded-up properties, today's property prices (per square metre) in the capital are among the highest in the Netherlands. For the first time since the Second World War, the Dutch Labour Party (PvdA) is not represented in the Municipal Executive with Democrats 66 (D66) having become the biggest political party in the city. The pressing shortage of hockey pitches reported by daily newspaper *Het Parool* as a result of growing interest in the sport is a telling development in this context – after all, hockey has traditionally been the sport of choice for the upper middle classes. This transformation is also reflected in the changes that are taking place in the hospitality industry, where the traditional pubs (the so-called 'brown cafés') are losing more and more ground while 'third spaces' such as cafes, restaurants and coffee corners, sometimes with heated terraces, where people can also have a bite to eat, meet up and, increasingly, work on their laptops, are on the rise.

However, these highly educated citizens, in particular those who live within the ring road, are increasingly required to share their city with others. Nowadays these are no longer drug addicts and homeless people, but tourists and other visitors. In 2000, around four and a half million foreign tourists came to Amsterdam; by 2014, this figure had increased to nine million.

And this change is clearly apparent in the crowds walking from Amsterdam Central Station to Dam Square every day; the long queues in front of the city's museums; and the many tourists that pay a visit to the red light district, including the Zeedijk. Complaints by residents about disturbances caused by tourists are increasing – but so are jobs and revenues in the tourist sector. The urban experience economy (there are more festivals on average than there are days in the year) thus fulfils a crucial role in Amsterdam. But this success also brings new problems, which have less to do with residents' complaints about disturbances and overcrowding and more with the diversity of the urban environment.

The self-destruction of diversity

An ever-present danger associated with any successful sector of economic activity is what Jane Jacobs called 'the self-destruction of diversity', a process of homogenisation whereby one set of activities ends up pushing out the others. This phenomenon is increasingly occurring in those parts of the city centre where facilities aimed at tourists – ranging from tourist shops to Airbnb's – become more and more dominant. This homogenisation not only affects the quality of life for many residents in the short term, but also increases the city's vulnerability to crises. In the medium term, there is the risk that a dip in tourism due to, for example, a recession in China, rising oil prices or an imminent threat of terrorism will hit the capital's economy hard if that economy is too one-sided.

There is also a problem in the long term. When, in the 80s, Amsterdam was going through an economic rough patch, there was an abundance of cheap residential and commercial properties. As a result of the city's economic boom since 1990, slowly but surely those spaces were all laid claim to; the rough edges were smoothed away and given a new lick of paint and inevitably, as a result, prices rose. Jane Jacobs also pointed out the importance of accessible spaces: new ideas mainly take shape in old buildings.

New initiatives still need to prove their worth, and are dependent on affordable spaces. The economic success and the rise in prices in the housing market undermine the physical conditions that are required for the existence and emergence of new ideas and innovations. This could have a detrimental impact on the city's economic foundation in the long run.

This process is far from unique to Amsterdam. In cities such as New York and London, this phenomenon of rising property prices can also be seen. In her book *The Warhol Economy*, Elizabeth Currid described how New York was able to house musicians, visual artists and fashion designers in the 1970s and the first half of the 80s due to the economic crisis and low prices – and not just provide them with housing, but with affordable spaces located close to one another where the possibilities for meeting each other and, by extension, for the cross-pollination of ideas, were plentiful – a classic agglomeration economy. People could meet in the street, in nearby cafes and clubs and immerse themselves in the atmosphere of the city. The successive locations of Andy Warhol's famous Factory, with its eclectic entourage of real and would-be artists, were all in Manhattan, surrounded by a host of different amenities. With the self-destruction of diversity resulting from New York's economic boom, the possibilities for these types of experiments have been pushed to the city's periphery and sometimes even beyond city boundaries. Elizabeth Currid considered this to be a real threat to New York's economy. On the outskirts and especially outside the city boundaries, the conditions allowing people to meet each other – both intentionally and fortuitously – are less favourable, which means there is also less chance of the spill over of knowledge and, by extension, of innovation taking place.

However, it seems that this view is too pessimistic. The scale of New York City is such that there are still parts of the city where property is relatively cheap. However, the timescale seems to be shrinking, with processes of gentrification taking place at an accelerated pace. Williamsburg in Brooklyn is a case in point. With some exaggeration, you could say that where only yesterday this

area was a haven for artists, now it has transformed into a 'hipster Disneyland', with property prices having shot up accordingly. We also see this acceleration in London, where similar developments are taking place on the south bank of the Thames. The role of artists as pioneers of gentrification has come to be so well-recognised that, in many cases, their arrival alone will drive up property prices.

Like New York and London, Amsterdam has lots of space for new initiatives 'on the other side of the river'. But Amsterdam too has to think carefully about ways to safeguard innovation. This acceleration of urban processes of transformation also offers opportunities, for example pop-up spaces in former retail properties, schools, offices or other venues. It is also possible to combine different functions under one roof, for example by combining bars, restaurants and nightlife with studio spaces. There can be greater flexibility in terms of time and space. This requires changes to the regulations and the mentality of administrators, users and residents. One should keep in mind, however, a fully-tamed city is not just boring – it also ends up being a stagnating city.

The author

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24. Cities and creative unpredictability

Moritz Föllmer

The current rhetoric surrounding European cities places considerable emphasis on creativity. Local authorities strive to make their cities competitive by attracting investors, tourists and 'creative elites'. Nowadays, artists, designers and music producers tend to play a central role in what is increasingly an economic approach to urban policy – and are simultaneously expected to counterbalance this. More exciting than lawyers or accountants and cleaner than factory workers, they fit into a culture of trendy cafes, clubs and cultural centres. Creativity complements the intelligent and smooth planning that is often equated with the European character of cities like Amsterdam or Copenhagen – unlike London, which is dependent upon its financial sector, Naples with its traffic chaos or Warsaw, where socialist heritage, patriotic displays and competitive individualism coexist.

On the face of it, it is difficult to disagree with this view. After all, Amsterdam and Copenhagen are well-governed cities with a high quality of life. Here, cultural institutions, independent stores and bicycle paths abound. Social conflict does not seem to exist and an atmosphere of tolerance prevails. Without doubt, they are places that a lot of 'artistic' people feel drawn to. Nevertheless, there is also an important flipside to the current discourse and practice of creativity. The dual emphasis on intelligent planning and economic growth makes urban life more and more predictable, which means that there is less and less room for experimentation. In addition, this approach ties into an underlying fear of things falling apart, which has its roots in a specific conception of European cities: they are seen as distinctive because of their social harmony and good citizenship, but these very qualities appear to be under threat from the looming

forces of globalisation and individualisation. This is why local authorities are crying out for creativity, while at the same time wanting to control and restrict it.

While the emphasis on creativity as a priority in urban policy may be recent, the fundamental tension between experimentation and regulation is not. In the 1950s and 1960s, governments in all of Western Europe tried to put an end to the unpredictability that had come to characterise cities during and in the period immediately after the Second World War. Thanks to growing levels of wealth and significant public expenditure they were able to expand housing and infrastructure on an unprecedented scale. However, this development went hand in hand with nagging doubts that were expressed by artists and intellectuals. Was this relatively sterile urban modernity really the be-all end-all it purported to be? Were those high-rises and suburban homes not stifling human expression in favour of a nondescript uniformity?

Criticism of capitalist project developers, modernist urban planners and consumerist city dwellers became an important topic in the culture of the 1960s. Writer Georges Perec dissected the materialistic lifestyle of a young middle-class couple in *Les choses* ('Things', 1965); in *Playtime* (1967), director and actor Jacques Tati played a bumbling provincial who gets lost in the maze of a Paris office building; and in *Il ragazzo della via Gluck* ('The Boy from Gluck Street', 1966), singer Adriano Celentano reminisced about a run-down street in Milan that had once been home to poor southern Italian immigrants but was now being completely redeveloped. Bohemians who belonged to movements such as the Internationale Situationniste in Paris, the Provos in Amsterdam, the SPUR group in Munich or Subversive Aktion in Berlin took this criticism of functionalist modernity one step further, creating a playful, absurd alternative. They organised happenings, street concerts and other artistic provocations – and in so doing provided the media with a steady stream of sensationalist headlines.

After 1968 the radical left, which had soon begun to focus on local activism instead of trying to bring about a worldwide

revolution, gave this protest a political dimension. It presented capitalist project developers, modernist architects and social democratic politicians with a significant challenge. In some neighbourhoods, this movement gave rise to an entire landscape of alternative cafes and bookshops, squats and 'autonomous' cultural centres. But in the 1980s and 1990s, what had begun as radical opposition became, bit by bit, integrated into a new kind of urban life. Capitalist economies became more flexible as the significance of established businesses decreased, markets opened up and consumers began to look for new experiences. At the same time, local governments were trying hard to pacify previously heated conflicts, project a new image to the outside world, and look for alternatives to industry. This resulted, among other things, in not-previously-seen cafes with terraces, organic food stores, subsidised youth centres, music festivals and arthouse cinemas. Soon ethnic and sexual diversity were publicly recognised rather than denied. The very idea of the creative city derives from this mainstreaming of cultural critique, political protest and bohemian lifestyles.

For us today, all of this is old hat: nowadays we cannot even imagine cities like Amsterdam or Copenhagen without the customary mix of bars, restaurants and cultural institutions. But this familiarity also places boundaries on creativity – if indeed creativity is associated with experimentation. It results in a mild but recurring sense of boredom. And that is precisely why, ever since the nineties, so many Europeans with an interest in culture have been fascinated by post-reunification Berlin. Berlin shows that history can sometimes take surprising turns and that cities can go through unpredictable changes. The unoccupied spaces and low rents that the city had to offer (and still offers today, although gentrification increasingly limits this) enabled artists, musicians, designers and computer programmers to try out more new things than elsewhere. And although cities like Beijing or Detroit do not draw as many visitors, reports from these cities reveal a similar fascination with radical innovation and areas in which experimentation is taking place.

Of course, the outlook and atmosphere of Berlin – much less of Beijing or Detroit – cannot be replicated elsewhere. But Amsterdam, for example, is clearly lacking an awareness that things could again develop according to a different logic from that prevailing today, and that this does not have to be a bad thing. Local politicians and administrators can hardly be expected to stimulate unpredictability, but they might consider offering more fertile ground for it to take place. They could set aside buildings for cultural activities instead of selling them to project developers – accepting the risk of economic loss without wanting to call the shots on what ends up happening there. This would contribute toward keeping alternative options open instead of closing off future horizons. It could facilitate a broad and experimental approach to creativity, instead of a narrow, economically-motivated one.

By that same token, local authorities should acknowledge the importance of activists, from a purely urban perspective and separate from their respective agendas. After all, these activists not only end up unwittingly creating opportunities for city marketing, i.e. enabling the city to project a tolerant, harmonious image (as the Mayor of Amsterdam recently conceded following the occupation of the Maagdenhuis, the University of Amsterdam's main administrative building, in 2015). Their primary significance is in the unexpected and surprising developments they herald and the counterbalance they provide to the rhetoric of municipal public relations departments. In addition, the cultural dimension of activism suggests that creativity is not limited to one sector, but ultimately forms part of our broader vision for the city. An underlying fear of disintegration and a predominantly economic focus do not tend to facilitate attempts at new and sometimes radical things. In this context, the geographer Ash Amin rightly argued that if there is such thing as a 'good city', it cannot be considered a community, a kind of neighbourhood writ large. Instead, the good city should be seen as a space for diversity, open-endedness and experimentation – in other words: for creative unpredictability.

The author

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25. Cultural Incubators: The squats of the 21st century?

Jaap Draaisma

In 2015, '50 Years of the Provo Movement' was one of the highlights that city-marketing organisation I Amsterdam came up with. The international campaign was a proud look back at the activism of fifty years ago, including the squatting that took place back then, under the so-called White House Plan: 'Come to Amsterdam, the international birthplace of free-thought and creativity.' Meanwhile, on 25 March 2015, the Snake House (De Slang) was cleared. The house on Spuistraat, right behind the Royal Palace of Amsterdam, had been a squatting location for 32 years. And not only this property, but the entire block – twelve properties in all – were cleared by the police, marking the disappearance of the last substantial surviving example of 'alternative Amsterdam' from the capital's cityscape.

Squatters save the city

The Provo movement's White House Plan, dating from 1966, is considered to have marked the beginning of the squatting movement in Amsterdam. Following a court ruling in the early 1970s, the squatting of properties that had remained unoccupied for more than a year was no longer considered to be illegal. Around 1980, with the city's population in decline and the world in the throes of an economic crisis, the Amsterdam squatting scene grew into a mass movement with significant political, economic and cultural influence. It was partly due to pressure from the squatting movement that the City of Amsterdam was able to secure billions in funding from central government in order to renovate the old districts in the course of the 1980s. The legalisation of thousands

of squats, along with the preservation of the social and cultural infrastructure that had been established by the squatters, formed part of this. This infrastructure ranged from childcare centres to concert venues, from neighbourhood theatres to local cafes. Jan Schaefer, the left-wing politician who was the driving force behind the urban regeneration that took place during this period, made no secret of the fact that it was the squatting activity that enabled him to get his way to such an extent with central government. Not all squats were legalised: many were evicted as well, which often involved riots and clashes between squatters and the authorities. One part of the squatting movement strived for legalisation, while the radical squatters were actively seeking confrontation with the government. In the mid-1980s, these differences of opinion led to a veritable reign of terror by the radical wing, which significantly weakened the movement.

Amsterdam, booming city

From 1985 onwards, Amsterdam's population began to grow again – due initially to the large-scale expansion of social housing; but from the mid-1990s, the emphasis shifted toward owner-occupied homes and attracting wealthy residents. Amsterdam is one of the first cities in the world where the Urban Renaissance began to take shape – aided by a classical European city layout which had remained intact (partly thanks to the squatting activists), an international atmosphere with, since the 1960s, a large American and British population, and a lively counterculture with lots of room for experimentation and a large network of low-threshold spaces.

Cultural incubators as the answer to the evacuations of the 1990s

The explosion in property prices and commercial project development in the 1990s led to a wave of evictions of squats, in

particular squatted properties along the banks of the IJ, in the former port area, and warehouses that were suddenly called 'iconic', after the fact that they were being squatted had saved them from demolition in the first place.

In 1998, the evacuation of another large property on the IJ led to a manifesto, with a huge number of signatures, being presented to the city council: 'Amsterdam is losing its DNA as a city of experimentation, subcultures and free spaces; already, many people are moving to other cities, and Amsterdam is at risk of losing its international appeal.' Much to the surprise of the squatters, the city council took these words to heart, and a motion was passed stipulating that the City of Amsterdam must develop a policy to preserve affordable spaces for subcultures and experimentation. The local authorities decided that Amsterdam's success should not become its downfall. This realisation gave rise to an active government policy – running counter to market trends – of creating affordable living and working spaces for culture and counterculture. In 2000, the so-called 'creative-incubator policy' (*broedplaatsenbeleid*) was launched.

The Amsterdam 'cultural incubators' are similar to squats in a lot of ways: they are low-rent spaces with their own distinct character, connections with the surrounding neighbourhood and independent collectives, with cultural activities making up a significant part of their role (at least 40%), aside from the freedom to fill it in as they see fit. The municipal label of 'incubator' makes it possible to receive a seed grant as well as legal and other support. In principle, anyone can apply, but in reality it is primarily artist collectives and non-profit organisations that are developing and running the cultural incubators.

No culture without subculture

Although cultural incubators are an answer to the eviction of squats, of course they are *not* squats. Squats tend to be part of a movement exploring the idea of a different type of society; they are more prominently about social and cultural values,

and sidestep the process of seeking formal permission from the property owner and the authorities.

During the first few years following the launch of the creative-incubator policy, a number of squats were legalised, and the City of Amsterdam took the lead in developing a number of properties. The redevelopment of the massive NDSM shipyard into a cultural hotspot became part of the policy. Mayor Schelto Patijn made the slogan of the creative-incubator policy – 'no culture without subculture' – the title of his New Year's speech in 2000.

In 2004, Richard Florida, the self-proclaimed guru of creative urban policy, visited Amsterdam, and the creative-incubator policy was incorporated into the Amsterdam Creative City Arts Plan (*Amsterdam Creatieve Stad, Kunstenplan 2005-2008*). One of the principles was that those characteristics of the cultural incubators that were particular to Amsterdam would be retained.

The economic significance of cultural incubators for the creation of jobs in the new global creative economy, of which art and culture make up a key component, was widely recognised. It turned out that the squatting movement, with its subculture, alternative entrepreneurship and the closely-linked hacker movement, was at the cradle of the new economy. It led to the establishment of the first internet service providers in Amsterdam back in the early 1990s, and ten years later it was here that the first successful apps were created as part of the *Appsterdam* initiative. Cultural incubators became Amsterdam's international calling card, with half the world visiting to see the phenomenon with their own eyes, and talented people from all over the world flocking to the Dutch capital en masse. After fifteen years, in 2014 the new city council once again ratified and extended the creative-incubator policy for another four-year term.

Cultural incubators versus start-ups

A lot of start-ups and artists start out in cultural incubators. Twenty- and thirty-somethings are seizing the opportunity to

establish their own businesses here, amid young companies who are turning to cultural incubators for affordable workspaces and the chance of being immersed in a creative environment. All this new activity is not solely focused on the economic benefit, but also has a cultural, artisan, social, ecological, culinary or some other dimension. Cultural incubators create a broad foundation, a substratum of the sort of affordable, lively cultural spaces which underpin a successful city and are the wellspring of a lot of talent. In spite of all the rules and regulations that they are subject to – unlike squats – incubators serve as cultural free spaces and facilitate experimentation – a process of trial and error. They fulfil a real 'testing ground' role within the city.

This makes them fundamentally different from the incubators and accelerators that have strong commercial backing and that help start-ups to scale-up and market their product or service as quickly as possible. At the entrance of *B.Amsterdam*, one of the successful projects for creative start-ups, you will find the slogan 'Connect creativity with the corporate world'. This is about quick financial gains, conquering markets and finding investors. The idea has to be successful in no time at all, or the game is over. Participating in the corporate world is the goal. Nowadays, these types of incubators and accelerators can be found in all cities – often established by project developers, local authorities or venture capitalists, sometimes in conjunction with universities or IT companies. The Amsterdam incubators are fundamentally different, being far more focused on cultural, subcultural and social values – even though they also welcome economic success.

Both incubators and start-up spaces tend to be based in special properties that have been repurposed, such as former factories (Moscow, London, Rotterdam), slaughterhouses (Madrid, Casablanca), army barracks, hospitals and other iconic buildings. A lot of creative hubs – creative factories – in the Netherlands are a mixture of a relaxed 'creative environment', in which cultural and social values play a role as well, with the characteristics of more demanding, economically oriented start-up environments.

Examples of this are the Witte Dame ('White Lady') complex in Eindhoven and the Maassilo building in Rotterdam.

Cultural incubators as a driving force in gentrification

Cultural incubators also play a role in the process of urban development. The incubator established in the derelict NDSM shipyard put this site back on the map. In spite of its remote location, MTV, Hema, publishing company VNU and others established offices there, and property prices shot up. Incubators can serve as quartermasters, preparing the ground for the upper middle classes to discover neighbourhoods like De Baarsjes, Bos en Lommer or the Van der Pek district. An incubator that starts out in an empty school building does not drive anyone out, but its presence – like that of the coffee bar and the trendy restaurant – tends to make the neighbourhood more attractive to higher-income urbanites. These venues do not appeal to low-income residents, who find themselves culturally displaced from their own neighbourhood. The sale and demolition of social housing does the rest. This is how the inner city ends up spreading to also encompass the surrounding neighbourhoods, which then in turn also become unaffordable for artists and the lower middle classes, who are once again forced to venture still further afield as this next round of gentrification takes its course.

Some incubators are trying to play a different role in this process. They want to play an important role for local residents with low incomes and serve as social centres, with community services, community initiatives and art for the neighbourhood.

More of Amsterdam up for sale?

There are about sixty cultural incubators in Amsterdam, most of which have been established, with the City of Amsterdam's support, by artists and 'creative entrepreneurs' such as Urban

Resort in order to retain culture, subculture, artists and cultural and creative start-ups in Amsterdam. The creative-incubator policy made it possible for new projects such as the NDSM Wharf, the *Volkskrant* building (the former building of the newspaper), OT301, Pakhuis de Zwijger and A Lab (to be established). In addition to the new iconic cultural buildings that have sprouted up in every self-respecting city over the past fifteen years – such as the EYE Film Institute Netherlands, the concert hall Muziekgebouw aan 't IJ ('Music Building on the IJ') and the DeLaMar theatre in Amsterdam – in that same period a wholly new infrastructure of affordable, low-threshold buildings for cultural production came into being. Will this enable Amsterdam to hold on to some of its reputation for creativity after all?

After the lull caused by the 2008-2014 crisis, Amsterdam is once again booming. The city's popularity among highly educated young professionals from all over the world continues unabated. Following twenty years of slow gentrification, property prices are once again going through the roof. Seemingly overnight, the character of entire neighbourhoods has changed completely, and this is sure to happen to many more neighbourhoods in the years to come. In addition to the sale of social housing, the new city council, which took office in 2014, has also announced the planned sale of the majority of the properties and land in its possession.

Amsterdam's cityscape is rapidly transforming into a uniform vista of international chain stores, cute little vintage boutiques, pedestrianised squares and streets, expensive coffee shops for trendy MacBook users and exclusive flagship stores representing big-name brands. Entire neighbourhoods are sanitised and romantically refashioned into the mini-cities that Jane Jacobs predicted, where the only 'mixed use' is that of expensive housing existing alongside expensive amenities. The clichéd image of the historical European city so beloved by the United States is a reality here. However, Amsterdam's dual nature as a city that is both chic *and* shabby is fast disappearing.

Amsterdam, Magic City: fact or faked?

In the 1960s, the Provos dubbed Amsterdam the 'Magic City'. The Provos, the squatters and the alternative movement developed an attractive city which was embraced – much to their dismay – by the new middle classes: cycling instead of using the car, childcare facilities in the city, city squares as public spaces in which to meet, warehouses saved from demolition, a strong cultural infrastructure.

Amsterdam still has the 'bohemian quality' that Florida considers to be so important. The network of 'alternative' properties, projects, businesses and initiatives is to a large extent still in place and, in spite of all the squats that have been cleared, has even built in strength over the past decade, thanks both to incubators and to cultural entrepreneurs, with places such as the Westergasfabriek cultural venue and Amsterdam nightclub Trouw.

Somehow, straddling the conflict inherent between gentrification on the one hand and affordable workspaces on the other – of corporate culture and subculture – the Amsterdam creative-incubator policy has enabled a wide range of cultural and social initiatives to come about. It is vital to the city's well-being in the future that this trend continues.

In 2015, a wide range of activities were organised to commemorate the 50-year anniversary of the Provo movement, but contemporary activism, resistance and counterculture did not form part of the programme. They can be found in a host of different 'free spaces' and incubators – and, above all, on the street, like in Spuistraat on March 2015.

The author

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26.   New cities as testing grounds for a new urbanity

Arnold Reijndorp

If you think of 'the European city' you tend to think of an old city. Only rarely is this term associated with the new cities that developed half a century ago and that at the time were considered to be the European answer to both the congestion of the old cities and the resulting suburbanisation. The old cities attract millions of visitors every year. They are centres of culture and recreation. The fact that Euro Disney is situated in Marne-la-Vallée does not contribute to the popularity of this new city itself; for most people, it is first and foremost Disneyland Paris. The old cities are also the engines of the new economy, driven by knowledge, creativity and innovation, and are the old continent's best hope in its efforts to compete with the 'emerging markets'.

The urbanity of the European city is tremendously popular, and over the past years the focus of this interest has shifted from the busy commercial city centres to the surrounding districts, the creative living and working environments. These small-scale, multifunctional urban villages – city districts with an almost village-like quality, along the lines of Jane Jacobs' Greenwich Village – are increasingly the destinations of city trips. This typical type of urbanity has grown to represent the ultimate benchmark in urbanity, one that every other place in Europe's urbanised landscape is measured against.

In addition to the old cities, Europe has a number of new cities which were designed in the 1960s, and realised in large part in the following decades. The new cities are clearly distinct from the urbanity that characterises the old city. Where once they were the embodiment of an urban ideal that was intended to transcend the flaws of the old city, they now seem to have become the black sheep of the urban family. They are even depicted as having been

a planning failure which contributed to the decline of the old city and formed an obstacle to growth and regeneration. However, the question is whether the old cities can survive without the capacity for innovation that has characterised the new cities since their conception.

Metropolitan landscapes

The statistic is repeated ad nauseam: as of 2014, more than half of the global population lived in cities, and by 2050 this will have increased to two-thirds. But what does that tell us? The map of global urbanisation shows a number of metropolises that the major European cities – let alone the cities in the Netherlands – pale in comparison with. Some view the Netherlands as a densely-populated country with many small cities, while others view it as one single, sparsely-populated city – a city that, at nearly seventeen million inhabitants, still is nowhere close to being able to count itself among the major world cities.

What is true for the Netherlands is also true for many regions in Europe that are made up of an agglomeration of bigger cities, smaller towns, villages and suburban areas, connected by roads with ribbon development, motorways and railway lines, surrounded and separated by rural and recreational landscapes. The bigger European cities, such as London and Paris, also have this kind of fragmented structure, which rarely conforms to the familiar blueprint of a densely-concentrated city centre surrounded by more quiet residential districts ringed, in turn, by suburbs and leafy, affluent homes and neighbourhoods.

From a social point of view, suburbs can feel a lot more urban than many inner-city neighbourhoods, which will sometimes have a markedly suburban character. The fact that not every city dweller is an urbanite, that some urban neighbourhoods share many of the qualities of villages, and that the suburbs are in fact home to many urbanites has already been pointed out by many human geographers and urban sociologists. The

everyday reality of the urban landscape will often bear little resemblance to the original plans for the city. However, this European city – spread-out, but compact in comparison to other world cities – is the result of recurring attempts to create an attractive city for its residents.

The city as a residential town

Of course, the city is more than just a place to live – it is also a place to work and a centre for culture, both of which are also important draws for new groups moving to the city. Few economists would deny that the quality of life that a city offers is an important prerequisite for the flourishing of the urban economy. However, that this is a key element of a city's identity is less evident than might be expected. Of course, the city always has people living in it – after all, there would be no city without a population – but for many, all the city really offers them in this regard is a roof over their head.

The city as a residential town does not come about as a result of the people that move there permanently, but in reaction to the departure of those who can afford to be based outside the city. In 1868, the landscape architect Frederick Law Olmsted wrote that 'No great town can long exist without great suburbs,' but Central Park in New York – which he designed together with Calvert Vaux – was also conceived as a way of retaining wealthy residents in Manhattan.

Successive attempts at uniting urban and suburban qualities have effectively made the major European cities into metropolitan landscapes. They are the result of an ongoing process of seeking out and heightening those qualities that make the city an attractive place to live – which always partly occurs in response to suburbanisation, which kept flourishing in new forms. That search focuses on defining the nature of urbanity, a quicksilver concept that resists definition and continually changes meaning. Sometimes, it stands simply for bustle, diversity and

liveliness – with the obvious apparent contrast with the dull suburbs – while at other times, urbanity is thought of as being virtually synonymous with culture, civility and community, which renders it at odds with the reality of urban life.

New cities

In these metropolitan landscapes, the new cities created in the UK, France, Scandinavia, the Netherlands and various countries in Eastern Europe forty to fifty years ago take up a special place. Examples are the *Villes Nouvelles* (including Marne-la-Vallée, Cergy-Pontoise, Évry) surrounding Paris; Milton Keynes between London and Birmingham; Zoetermeer, Almere and a number of smaller so-called growth poles (or satellite towns) in the Netherlands; Nowa Huta near Krakow in Poland; and Hoyerswerda and Eisenhüttenstadt in the former German Democratic Republic. They were intended as a solution both to the congestion and lack of quality of life in the existing cities, and to the increased suburbanisation that was expected as a result of growing wealth and increased car ownership. The spectre of the unbridled sprawl of the US loomed, but this was not the only type of suburbanisation people were afraid of. Paris' *banlieues*, with their endless sea of small houses (*pavillons*) interspersed with high-rises (*grands ensembles*) represented just as much of a spectre – and one that was altogether closer to home. In the early 1960s, the French president De Gaulle flew over the Paris conurbation together with the urban planner responsible for its design and spoke the memorable words: 'Clean that mess up!' Not long after that, a plan for five new satellite towns in the greater Paris area was on the table.

The damage to the landscape that could result from suburbanisation left unchecked, was – and still is – on the agenda. However, the new cities are also the umpteenth attempt to create a form of urbanity that could bring together the benefits of both urban and suburban living – all the benefits of the city without

the drawbacks, not just on a spatial and physical level. Socially, the new cities were intended to square the circle between individualisation and community. With this goal, they symbolise the ideals of urbanity and collectivity as an alternative to the chaotic disorder of the periphery and the *my home is my castle* mentality of the suburbs. These ambitions and ideals help define the new cities as a 'modern' project, perhaps the last major project to embody the modernity that defined post-war European urban planning. Around 1980, just at the point that architecture and urban planning were falling under the spell of postmodernism, the German philosopher Habermas described modernity as not a finished, but an 'unfinished project'. Only a portion of the promises and expectations of this modern project ended up coming to fruition. This is also true for the new cities, which are quintessentially modern in character.

The new city as an unfinished project

The large 1960s high-rises on the outskirts of the major cities have assumed the role previously played by the inner city as the setting for crime novels and thrillers. If anything, the few novels or literary accounts of the new cities (for example Hoyerswerda, Évry, Cergy-Pontoise and Lelystad) are characterised by a sense of disappointment: about the failure of ideals and the puncturing of expectations. During the construction of those new cities, those expectations were adjusted on the hoof, to the extent that no new city would ever be able to meet them. Long before they neared completion, the ideal of the new city had been jettisoned in favour of a newfound appreciation of the old city. Urban regeneration and the transformation of the existing city became the new credo.

This newfound appreciation of the city coincided with the demise of the old economy. The major industries disappeared from the cities, and old industrial estates and port areas were transformed to better reflect an economy based on services and

knowledge. New museums and theatres were constructed to make the city attractive to a demographic of knowledge workers and large groups of visitors. In the wake of these developments, the 'creative city' arose, populated by a new creative class, in whom creativity was coupled with a low income. In view of this new urbanity, the still-incomplete new cities were immediately rendered obsolete. Where several years previously they had been prototypes of progress, now they were hangovers from the era of the *organisation man*, as William Whyte described the economy of large-scale industries and organisations. The new cities went from representing ideal examples of a new suburban urbanity to symbols of the anti-city.

What is striking is that this new urban ideal led to feverish attempts to also make the new cities more 'urban' – based on the somewhat limited conception of urbanity that lies at the heart of the concept of the creative city. But just as, back in Jane Jacobs' time, Greenwich Village could not function without the diversity and cultural exchange facilitated by the scale of New York City as a whole, the creative city cannot exist without the new cities. Together they form part of agglomerations that are, effectively, the *real* new cities. Within these structures, the original new cities are home to the broad middle class, without whom the urban economy – and the urban system as a whole – cannot function, but who are increasingly unable to find affordable housing in the old city. The emphasis on the creative economy fails to recognise diversity as a key component of the vitality that enables a city to reinvent itself and shapeshift time and again. Currently, this vitality expresses itself in initiatives promoting self-organisation on different levels: from collective self-build projects to home care for the elderly, from the self-management of public space to the development of new meeting spaces, and from energy generation to urban agriculture. This is also referred to as 'the new city-making'. These initiatives are not restricted to the creative districts in the old cities. The new cities in particular provide opportunities for an innovative approach in these areas. Suburban urbanity is an ideal environment for

the self-management of new public space, collective energy generation and urban agriculture.

Suburban urbanism

The relationship between the old and the new city is not static. The new cities are no longer suburban living areas exclusively for the middle classes. Socially, they are changing from being relatively stable environments into what might end up being the most dynamic of the conurbations. New groups of immigrants moving to the city settle there, alongside the more established immigrants who are improving their economic and social position and leaving the old city. While the new city is becoming more socio-economically and socio-culturally heterogeneous – and therefore more urban – the new ideal of urbanity actually seems to be 'suburbanising' the old city on a social and spatial level.

The 'urban' preference of new, highly educated urban families for the old city neighbourhoods has markedly suburban characteristics: sheltered urbanity, as urban geographer Lia Karsten describes it. This gives rise to a striking contrast between old cities that are suburbanising and new cities that are urbanising. It is time to breathe new life into the idea of *suburban urbanity*, which may in fact be the defining feature of the European city – not just to make the old city a more attractive place to live for those who can afford to settle there, but above all to return the 'unfinished projects' that are the new cities to their original position as testing grounds for a new urbanity.

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Part 4
Sustainable cities

The fourth theme is sustainability, in the broadest sense of the word, devoting attention to public health, social cohesion and the environment. In their examination of the social sustainability of European cities, Sako Musterd and Jan Nijman underline the role of government (national, local and European) in many aspects of the social sustainability of cities. This has been an issue where, up until now, European cities have fared exceptionally well in comparison to cities in the rest of the world. Two contributions focus on major public-health issues: Gemma Blok looks at the struggle against public drunkenness, and Coosje Dijkstra and her co-authors at the struggle against obesity and the promotion of a healthy lifestyle, especially among city children. The importance of more physical exercise is also reflected in Marco te Brömmelstroet's contribution on cycling in the city. However, his research is more about the cycling city than the cyclists as he considers the question: how can a cycling city be created and maintained?

One major point of concern is social cohesion in the city. Sako Musterd shows that socio-spatial segregation is growing in European metropoles, albeit slightly less in Amsterdam, and that changes in the role of government are leading to reduced mitigation of socio-economic differences. Jeroen Slot and Laure Michon look at the price of success and the future of Amsterdam amidst further growth and overexploitation. Who are the losers here? And what is the relationship between Amsterdam and the other municipalities in the conurbation? Examining the housing market, Arie van Wijngaarden reveals the limited access to the city for newcomers, while Jeroen van der Veer and Dick Schuiling explain the changing role of housing associations: there is a smaller social rented housing sector, but also less money for maintenance, renovation, and investments for social and environmental sustainability. The last issue in this section is spotlighted by Matthijs Hisschemöller in his contribution on a bottom-up energy transition and the role that neighbourhood initiatives can play here.

27. The social sustainability of European cities

The importance of local government

Sako Musterd and Jan Nijman

The European Union is the result of political processes at national and international levels in which national states agree to relinquish power and influence to the Union. The consequences of European integration can however mostly be seen and felt at the regional and local levels. Because the European population is highly urbanised, this is especially true of the cities and towns. About three out of four Europeans currently live in cities and towns, and in the Netherlands and Belgium this figure is actually more than nine out of ten. In the cities, one might say, the consequences of European integration can be seen under a magnifying glass.

The influence of European integration on the urban environment is exerted directly through policy and regulation – one good example is the internationalisation of cities resulting from free mobility of capital and labour. But we can also identify an important indirect influence in the form of the dominant free-market ideology that steers the process of integration: an ideology that is shared at the national levels and that trickles down to, and has an effect on, the urban environment. In the case of the Netherlands we see this, for instance, in the growth of the private housing market as compared to the social housing sector, or in the influence of increasing – ideologically tolerated – income disparities on the urban environment and residential segregation.

Urban culture is formed historically and often has local roots, certainly in a country like the Netherlands where the urban population has been in the majority for almost four hundred years. But urban culture is increasingly subject to international influences. To an increasing extent, the urban environment reflects the

political spirit and policymaking at European level. As a result, the social sustainability of our cities and towns is increasingly at stake. Social sustainability refers to the ongoing viability of urban society as formed in a historical-geographic context. The concept of social sustainability forces one to reflect on the nature of urban society as desired (at a local level), and about democratic urban policy.

This should not necessarily be understood as a criticism of European integration. There are many arguments in favour of its major political significance. Moreover, European integration can provide a major economic stimulus for certain cities and regions. But this can be at the expense of other towns, cities and regions. Even if a particular city benefits as a whole, as measured in terms of economic growth, this can go in hand in hand with economic, social and spatial restructuring. The point is that the effects of European integration (and globalisation in general) can present a challenge to local social structures and democracy.

The Netherlands and its towns and cities are doing relatively well, certainly when compared to regions in the south and the east of Europe. But in terms of subjective wellbeing it is of little significance for the local urban population of, say, Amsterdam to consider how the citizens of Lisbon or Athens are currently faring. What is much more important for the citizens of Amsterdam is how today's and tomorrow's situation compares to that of yesterday – in Amsterdam.

We will confine ourselves here to three urban challenges facing local policymakers in the Netherlands (but also in France, Germany and Belgium, for instance): problems of growth and shrinkage in the Dutch urban landscape, the importance of diversity of the urban population, and the need for social cohesion in the intended participatory society.

Growth and shrinkage in the dynamic European landscape

The accelerated global economic dynamism can lead to relatively drastic new growth and development of urban areas. We see

such growth occurring above all in metropolitan regions that are well-anchored in the international economy and that offer optimum 'classical' location-determining factors (accessibility, infrastructure, presence of higher education). Growth is not only a physical urban or economic phenomenon, but is also linked to an increase in social capital, with the ability to participate in society. In the Netherlands this can be seen above all in the Randstad conurbation, in particular the Amsterdam region. However, this growth is accompanied by shrinkage and decline in neighbouring regions. While the old regional-economic concept of 'cumulative causation' was mostly used to explain ongoing spatially concentrated growth in strong regions, we now also need to consider 'cumulative shrinkage'. Certain regions and towns or cities are confronted with a downward spiral: unemployment and ageing of the population are increasing, investments are falling, amenities (such as schools and hospitals) are disappearing and social engagement is coming under pressure.

Growth and shrinkage are usually mutually related. The population departing from shrinkage areas usually heads for the growth areas, increasing the growth in locations to which they move, but also exacerbating the shrinkage in the places they are leaving. In line with this, Amsterdam and Eindhoven are welcoming the young people whom the regions of Zeeuws Vlaanderen and Limburg are losing. Research shows that sometimes the population is the decisive factor in shrinkage regions, but that in other cases it is actually economic developments that trigger the shrinkage. Growth and shrinkage can lie far from each other in spatial terms, but usually they are very close together (city and surrounding region). The term 'periphery' is thus a scale-sensitive and relative term. Parkstad Limburg, a region dealing with shrinkage, is sometimes described as peripheral (with respect to the growing Randstad), but seen from another perspective the region is actually very close to growth areas such as Aachen and Maastricht. The economic and social decline of specific towns, cities and regions usually affects formerly well-developed industrial areas that, since the

1980s, have not been able to make the transition to the post-industrial era. The American experience, strongly determined by a large-scale free market and without substantial local or regional policy corrections, provides a warning: in that country, the consequences of shrinkage have proved disastrous for cities such as Detroit and Cleveland, and for large urban areas in metropolitan areas such as Miami and Philadelphia. In the Netherlands we have been able, so far, to prevent such excessive trends and spatial polarisation through central taxation and redistribution through resources such as the Municipal Fund. This has made it possible to guide cities with a relatively one-sided industrial structure, such as Enschede, Tilburg and Rotterdam, through a difficult phase of economic restructuring. But nonetheless shrinkage has rapidly increased in recent years and will increasingly need to be combated by means of multi-level governance. Public administration plays an important role in regional steering to retain amenities in selected locations where this intervention will prove most efficient, and where it will also have a positive influence on private investments and on employment.

Diversity and sustainability

The classic urban sociologist Louis Wirth stated that the essence of urbanism is found in a social dynamic based on a population concentration of a minimum size, density and heterogeneity. The combination of density and heterogeneity, said Wirth, is the most important condition for dynamism and social renewal. Therefore, it also lies at the root of the sustainable strength and resilience of an urban society. In some American cities this dynamism is undermined by extensive suburbanisation and sprawl. Dutch and European cities are, for the most part, more compact and have a higher density. But now the heterogeneity here is coming under increasing pressure, especially in the inner cities.

Urban economy, entrepreneurship, creativity and innovation are to a great extent conditioned by diversity among the urban population. Social, economic and demographic diversity contributes to social dynamism and diversification, as well as renewal of economic activities. This diversity is currently under pressure in many (inner) cities – something well-illustrated in Amsterdam. The area within the Amsterdam ring road has rapidly gentrified and internationalised. The current workings of the housing market leave little opportunity for lower income groups, the social housing sector is 'locked down' and the higher prices in the private sector block access by young people and recent graduates to the housing market in this area (which constitutes half the city).

This is an important demographic cohort – also including the creative entrepreneurs and middle-class citizens of tomorrow – that is currently having huge difficulty in acquiring a place in the city. The current poor workings of the housing market could lead to an economic backlash in the future. The private market currently provides no way out: the strong demand and the limited supply of housing in the private sector are pushing up prices even further. It is up to politicians and local authorities to take the long view and to create access to the housing market for starting entrepreneurs, young people and those with medium (and lower) incomes, thus creating a sustainable dynamism in the urban economy.

Social cohesion in the urban society

The recent Scientific Council for Government Policy (WRR) Survey 28 examines the moral and instrumental aspects of social inequality. The report explains the negative effects of extensive social inequality in, for instance the realms of welfare, economic opportunities, health and chances of survival. Research shows that social inequality in urban society generally goes hand in hand with socio-spatial segregation. The 'big sort' (spatial sorting

that leads to segregation and polarisation) usually attributed to American cities is now also increasingly showing itself in Europe – and the Netherlands.

Inequality and segregation are, in turn, associated with disaffiliation: certain sub-classes in the population becoming estranged or alienated from each other. This begins with light segregation, but experiences in Europe, North and South America and Asia show that this can lead to strongly segregated, fragmented and polarised cities in which the middle classes increasingly and literally distance themselves from the lower classes and where forms of cocooning occur, in the area of housing and – as research shows – also in other areas such as work, education and modes of transport. Inequality in access to amenities and facilities, housing and work can generate social tensions and political conflict about 'the right to the city'. In the Netherlands such trends have long been avoided, but this no longer seems to be the case.

Increasing inequality, spatial segregation and disaffiliation are undermining the social cohesion of society in urban regions of the Netherlands. Social cohesion and a sense of community are not only important for the living quality of the city, but also for the efficient functioning of the market and political sectors. And social cohesion is actually essential for the success of the desired participatory society (consider informal care, for instance). The participatory society, necessitated by a reduction in the welfare state, is all about citizenship, a sense of community, solidarity and social capital. And precisely these qualities seem to be in increasingly short supply.

This too therefore constitutes an important task for local authorities. Because the welfare state no longer guarantees the funding of certain amenities and facilities, it is up to public administrators to facilitate the alternative in the form of the participatory society. Promoting spatial and social diversity and integration is an important resource here, not so much involving the promotion of economic equality, but rather a sense of community. 'Citizenship and participation,' says the Dutch

sociologist Evelien Tonkens, 'is not just about redistribution, but also about recognition. Citizenship is a moral-emotional practice.' Citizenship is essential to an everyday urban sense of community and to sustainable social cohesion.

'Europe', in the sense of citizenship and identity, is still a distant abstraction for many people. European integration implies a certain shift of political power and decision-making from national to supranational level, but it also means greater freedom of action for subnational regions and cities. The role of local government is further emphasised by decentralising tendencies inherent to the neoliberal course of national governments, both in the Netherlands and elsewhere in the European Union.

The importance of the way that citizens experience their own local environment has been dramatically highlighted by the refugee crisis: supranational and national policy are important, of course, but it seems that citizens are above all affected and moved by the local confrontations with asylum seekers, with local relief and accommodation facilities and with the policy choices of their municipalities. This is just one current illustration of the structural role played by local authorities in the development of cities and regions.

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28. Bothersome and besotted

The struggle against public drunkenness in urban space

Gemma Blok

'The scandal of our society.' That is how the British Prime Minister David Cameron described British drinking culture. It seems that tolerance of excessive drinking has been rapidly decreasing in several European countries in recent years. Generally speaking the approach to alcohol abuse in the Netherlands and Western Europe has evolved from a period of repression (1890-1960) to steadily increasing tolerance after 1960. Now the tide seems to be turning once more. Over the past decade the problem of public drunkenness has received a high position on the agenda of several European cities. Rotterdam, for instance, has been participating in a partnership with various French, Belgian and German cities since 2011, with the aim of studying alcohol abuse by young people in public spaces and learning to manage it better. This project, entitled 'Safer Drinking Scenes', is being co-funded by the European Commission.

In 2012 the Mayor of Amsterdam, Eberhard van der Laan (PvdA), also joined the struggle against public drunkenness in his city. He felt that alcohol use among young people was becoming a serious problem. On Queen's Day 2012, ambulances were called out 575 times in the capital to pick up binge drinkers. 'This involves major costs for society,' said Van der Laan, and he recommended that drunken ambulance clients should pay a fine. The Mayor also wanted binge drinkers to pay the costs of their hospital admission and for any necessary police action. This plan has not been implemented for the time being, but the tone was set. Now, as a survey by Statistics Netherlands (CBS) reveals, 81% of Dutch people think that young people engaging in excessive alcohol use should pay the costs of their related hospital treatment in part or in full.

In English cities too, ambulances and hospital casualty departments work overtime on weekends and during certain public holidays. The city of Bristol chose an original approach: during Christmas 2014 a mobile Alcohol Recovery Centre went out on the streets. This specially equipped bus picked up blind-drunk Bristolians from the streets to examine them and see if they needed treatment. This type of bus is now planned for ten English cities. They are popularly known as 'drunk tanks', a reference to the cell blocks where drunkards used to be forced to sleep it off in the countries of the Eastern Bloc.

Sustainable alcohol policy

Binge drinking (known in Dutch as *komazuipen*) has become an established term in recent years, although of course it is not new. For centuries, European cities have experienced the phenomenon of alcohol-soaked public festivals and sozzled pub customers staggering through the streets. Students have also traditionally been hard drinkers. But now that downing a series of shots (small glasses of spirits) during a night out seems to be becoming far more widespread, social protest is growing as well. Cities have become veritable consumer Valhallas, with extensive nightlife venues. Young people now have more money and leisure time. Nowadays the 'public festival' takes place every weekend.

However, binge drinkers are a relatively small cost item for society. One out of five Amsterdam citizens drinks too much, researchers estimate, and this generates substantial medical and social costs. For some years there have been rising numbers of people over 55 who contact addiction care organisations. The most persistent, chronic alcoholics drink themselves to death at home; this group is seen as beyond recovery and is provided with palliative care by a host of care providers.

A look at the past may help in formulating a sustainable alcohol policy, which certainly deserves a place on the European Urban Agenda. What can we learn from the past? First of all,

that the effects of repressive measures in the past were minimal, or at least difficult to measure. Secondly, that a repressive approach brings a major danger of stigmatising vulnerable groups in society. Cities should thus take a less one-sided approach to the problems associated with alcohol consumption in public spaces. This is the most visible aspect and requires the most acute interventions, more so than drinking at home. Nonetheless, cities should broaden their perspective and strive for an integral policy on drinking.

Blacklisting

In 1886 the Dutch government made public drunkenness a punishable offence in the new Criminal Code. Citizens who were regularly guilty of public drunkenness ('habitual drunkards') were now sent to a state labour institution. Alcoholics in Amsterdam mostly went to the state labour institution in Hoorn, but sometimes also to the one in Veenhuizen in the distant province of Drenthe. In these special prisons they were to be transformed into self-controlled and hard-working citizens. They worked long hours each day and slept in iron cages. On Sunday they had to visit church. Those who misbehaved ended up in the punishment cell on a diet of bread and water. Intensive use was made of the state labour institutes, but they did not prove a great success. Many men reverted to their alcohol misuse after their sentence expired and the institutes were soon full of repeat offenders.

An alternative then arose in the form of addiction care in the 'Health Clinics for Alcoholism' as they were known. The first clinic was set up in Amsterdam in 1909, and dozens more quickly followed in the Netherlands. If convicted of public drunkenness, men could now choose between being sent to a state labour institute or living for several years under the control of one of these agencies, which managed their incomes. The men's wages, pension or welfare money were then paid directly to their wife or the landlord, no longer to the drinkers themselves.

This milder form of coercion resulted in few total abstainers, to the disappointment of the addiction care providers. But it was very effective in protecting the families of alcoholics against economic and social degradation.

In practice, the aforementioned measures mostly affected the older, chronic problem drinkers. Greater success among younger men was achieved with 'blacklisting' alcoholics, based on the English model and introduced at the start of the 20th century in a growing number of Dutch municipalities. The blacklist was managed by the police, and it included drinkers who caused problems or whose families requested inclusion. The list was displayed in a prominent position in all the inns and cafes in the municipality. A fine was imposed on anyone serving beer to people on the list. Owners of establishments received a personal letter from the Mayor when someone was placed on the list.

At the end of the 1950s there were some 380 Dutch municipalities – mostly villages and smaller towns – with a blacklist of this kind. The media referred to the blacklist as a 'pillory in modern form', and it was. But the pillory did have a useful effect, as stated by researchers of the day. Not on the incorrigible chronic drunkards: they were still able to get hold of their drink, for instance by going to another municipality to drink or turning to methylated spirits instead. But the lists had a deterring effect on beginning problem drinkers. Imminent placement on the blacklist was regarded as a major social disgrace by one's immediate social circle.

It is possible that all these stricter and milder forms of coercion did indeed have some success, because alcohol consumption fell sharply in the Netherlands after 1900. Between 1920 and 1960 it reached a historic low of less than three litres of pure alcohol per head of population per year. By way of comparison: in the mid-19th century the consumption was at over eight litres. But the conclusion that a strict approach with regard to alcoholics leads to lower alcohol abuse is hard to make in a broader perspective. In many countries with a stricter alcohol policy, such as America and Russia, the consumption of alcohol is relatively

high. And in the Netherlands too, alcohol consumption rose rapidly again after 1960, despite all repressive measures. As prosperity increased, so did drinking. Around 1980 the Dutch were drinking a well-oiled nine litres of pure alcohol per head of population. This is why many historians of alcohol and drug use currently state that the use of intoxicants depends on other factors than measures imposed from above. They point to the presence of social inequality as a background for substance abuse. The stress associated with urbanisation and migration also seems to promote the misuse of alcohol and drugs. In addition, group behaviour and social rituals concerning drink (and drugs) also play an important role. Many historians estimate that policy measures have a relatively small influence on the use and misuse of intoxicants.

Civilising offensive

There is no doubt that a tougher approach with regard to alcoholics is often accompanied by stigmatisation and marginalisation of certain groups of users. A century ago, male workers were the scapegoats, accompanied by the stereotypical cry of 'Oh, father! Please drink no more.' These irresponsible drinkers were said to beat their wives and reduce their families to penury. In those days, disciplining these alcoholics was linked to a wider project: the elevation of the 'lower classes'. Alcohol abuse was said to facilitate poverty, prostitution, crime and unemployment. There was no place for this kind of 'anti-social' behaviour in the orderly city envisaged by the bourgeoisie.

In practice, the target group for the judiciary and for addiction care organisations was selective and confined to problem drinkers from working-class environments or the lower middle class, who created visible problems in the city or at their work. It was all right for rich people of independent means to drink themselves to death, such has always been the attitude in the Netherlands – as long as no one else is inconvenienced. Separate

neighbourhoods arose in Amsterdam and many other cities for 'anti-social families', including many families where alcoholism was a factor. In these 'schools for living' (which existed up until the 1960s) they had to learn to live a decent life under the supervision of inspectors. The main result was that the inhabitants of these 'schools for living' were heavily stigmatised.

Now it is the binge drinkers – who include many younger girls – who are seen as the black sheep in the spotless white herd. Here too, the approach to these binge drinkers fits inside a wider civilising offensive. In Amsterdam and other Dutch cities, increased decency in public spaces is a 21st-century trend. Prostitution is being forced out of neighbourhoods where it was long tolerated. The number of 'coffee shops' (actually cannabis cafes) has been falling for years. In some parts of Amsterdam there are prohibitions on the public and shared consumption of alcohol and drugs. In short, the liberal city that has formed since the 1960s is slowly being cleaned up. In this process, the young binge drinkers form the ultimate symbol of the negative heritage of the 1960s. But the ideals of freedom and happiness propagated at that time never intended this result, did they? Scantily clad young women out on the streets with unsteady gait and slurred speech, ending the evening by puking in the gutter... Bah!

However, if cities take a tougher approach to binge drinkers, they will chiefly end up targeting certain groups with their disciplinary measures: people who are already in a socially vulnerable position. Research shows that risk groups for binge drinking in Amsterdam are mostly to be found among Antillean/Aruban and Surinamese young people, young people in Amsterdam-Zuidoost and young people with an educational level lower than senior general secondary education. In addition, binge drinking is twice as frequent among children who do not live with both parents as among children whose parents do live together.

When formulating a sustainable alcohol policy, European cities should not only take visible disturbance in public spaces as a point of departure, but also try to move beyond the front doors of the many home drinkers – both solitary persons and those

living with others, and from all social environments. Instead of a punitive approach they should prioritise an approach aimed at limiting harm: one aimed at preventing the mental and social damage caused by alcohol misuse for the individual and his or her direct surroundings. As the temperance campaigners of yesteryear already said: as long as we all enjoy our recreational tipple and the hospitality trade and the state earn plenty from this, we owe solidarity to those who cannot handle alcohol well.

The author

Gemma Blok is assistant professor in Dutch History at the University of Amsterdam. Her research focuses on the history of psychiatry and addiction treatment, as well as on the history of drug use and drug policy. She has recently finished a project on public mental health services in Amsterdam in the 20th century and is currently working on the 'epidemic' of heroin use in Europe during the 1970s and 1980s.

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29. ProefGroen (Taste Green / Test Green)

A healthy diet can also be tasty and sustainable

Coosje Dijkstra, Jutka Halberstadt, Jaap Seidell and Arnoud Verhoeff

The child exclaims in amazement: 'He's actually eating that radish!' when the school garden teacher in Amsterdam-Zuidoost pulls a radish from the ground and puts it in his mouth. The other children hesitate, but then most of them follow the teacher's example and the children find that their self-harvested school garden salad does not need any dressing, because it is already really tasty!

This is just one observation from the *ProefGroen* ('Taste Green'/'Test Green') study by VU University Amsterdam on how a school garden affects consumption of vegetables by children in deprived areas of Amsterdam. This kind of study is vital, because just one percent of Dutch children aged four and above eat sufficient amounts of vegetables, according to figures from the Dutch National Food Consumption Survey. What's more, one in eight children in the Netherlands are overweight or obese and in big cities such as Amsterdam this is actually one in five children. Obesity forms a typical urban problem in the rest of Europe, too, and occurs most frequently in deprived neighbourhoods. The lower the income and education levels, the greater the chance of obesity and other health problems. In Amsterdam, poor residents enjoy an average of fifteen fewer years of good health than their fellow urban residents with higher incomes. These differences are caused in part by different eating habits. Scientific literature shows that healthy nutrition reduces the chance of many diseases: less obesity, cardio-vascular diseases, type 2 diabetes, joint problems, depression, dementia and some forms of cancer. This is why people are advised to eat lots of fruit and vegetables.

Over the last ten years, however, food prices in these food groups have risen by 40 percent, in contrast to a strong drop in the price of sweet and fatty foods. Hence it is not surprising that families having to cope on a minimum wage or even lower also have less money to buy healthy food for their children.

Those who eat insufficient vegetables and fruit as a child have a greater probability of less healthy eating patterns as an adult, too. Making lasting changes in nutritional behaviour is complex. An individual's diet is influenced by a wide range of factors such as income, education, culture, taste preferences, upbringing, age and sex. We are also influenced by the availability level of healthy foods, good examples and support from educators and/ or people in one's surroundings, or conversely by an abundant supply and intensive marketing of unhealthy products.

The government is trying to persuade people to eat more healthily through all kinds of information campaigns, such as the Dutch Food Pyramid (*Schijf van Vijf, literally the Wheel of Five*) and slogans like 'two hundred grams of vegetables and two pieces of fruit a day'. But such campaigns have so far failed to solve the problem. In fact, in 2006 the Health Council of the Netherlands concluded that lifestyle campaigns have a minimal effect. It therefore advised: combine information campaigns on healthy behaviour with concrete measures in the living environment, such as healthy school or sports canteens, more playgrounds or less confectionary and soft-drinks machines in places often frequented by children. It is hard for parents and children to resist the temptations to which they are exposed every day. What can help is when the surroundings invite one to make healthy choices or, as the slogan goes, 'make the healthy choice the easy choice'. But this is not self-evident for children in large cities such as Amsterdam. Deprived neighbourhoods have an above-average number of fast-food outlets and supermarkets with a limited range of healthy food. However, in recent years the rising trend of agriculture and other green initiatives in the urban environment has been helping to create a healthier nutrition and living environment.

School gardens

One long-established and excellent example of the 'green' approach in Amsterdam is the school garden programme. Since 1920, school gardens have been a popular facility in Amsterdam. Shortly after the First World War there was a chronic food shortage in the city. School gardens were opened to mitigate the situation, and these gardens brought children into contact with healthy food that they otherwise would not have eaten due to the high poverty levels at that time. Growing food was a key issue and the children only worked in the gardens after school hours. Starting in 1945, teachers began giving biology lessons in the school gardens as well. From the 1950s onwards these lessons took place only during school hours, as fully fledged biology teaching matching the core goals and curriculum of the fifth and sixth grades, also incorporating geography and even language and arithmetic.

Currently the Municipality of Amsterdam has thirteen school garden complexes in the city, where each year 6800 pupils engage in gardening, each with their own little garden of ten square metres. A total of 25 full-time education workers and 13 full-time gardeners work here. The round-the-year programme offered in Amsterdam is unique in the Netherlands. During 25 lessons, each lasting 90 minutes, the children cultivate and process vegetables and herbs and they grow flowers. Before the outdoor lessons begin, the children learn about the soil and make careful contact with worms. They sow garden cress in trays and observe the growth from seed to plant. From April onwards the children look after their own garden, where they grow vegetables, flowers and herbs which they harvest themselves and take home. In spring the pupils harvest lettuce and radishes for the first time. After the summer holidays they can have fun harvesting, preparing and sampling their self-made school garden soup. The pupils pick large bunches of flowers and make colourful bouquets to take home. They can often hand-harvest half a bucket of potatoes,

although they planted just one seed potato. And every year the new carrot champion is proclaimed – who grew the heaviest carrot this year?

The school garden programme is a partner of *Voedselwijs* ('Food Wise'), the Amsterdam food education programme for children. Other *Voedselwijs* programmes are farm education, discovery trails in the Hortus Botanicus, cookery workshops or a no waste-lunch. In this way primary school pupils can experience the many aspects of food: where our food comes from nowadays and how they can grow it themselves, what is involved in commercial food production and processing and how they can put together a tasty, responsible and sustainable meal. Such initiatives are not conducted in isolation. Recently, more than one and a half million people signed the petition in which the British cook Jamie Olivier called on the British government to make food education a compulsory subject in schools. Besides the school garden programme, in recent years Amsterdam has seen an increase in all kinds of urban agriculture projects, such as growing vegetables on rooftops, food from the local vegetable gardens, keeping chickens in an office district and organising local farm-produce markets.

This positive development can be seen in various cities in Europe. The idea behind such projects is: let people experience where their food comes from, where it grows and how it tastes. Let them dig in the ground themselves, eat vegetables in a fun way, develop broader taste preferences and cook together in the neighbourhood. The aim is not to ensure food supplies within the urban area – that would require different measures – but to allow children and their parents to encounter healthier food and healthier city life in a positive and challenging way. This appears to lead to better attitudes, knowledge and preferences regarding vegetables and fruit. In turn, this ensures that children eat more vegetables and fruit, and get more physical exercise by working in the garden. This also promotes social cohesion within a class or neighbourhood and school achievement is positively influenced. Other green projects include

green schoolyards and green playgrounds in the neighbourhood. These play areas promote focused attention, physical exercise and wellbeing among children. Moreover, all these green initiatives can lead to improvements in the urban environment. People with more green in their environment feel heathier, visit the family doctor less often and have a greater sense of security in their neighbourhood. More green in the surroundings is particularly beneficial for vulnerable groups such as people with low incomes and education, children and the elderly.

The Amsterdam approach

ProefGroen is a study in harmony with the spirit and approach of Dr Samuel Sarphati (1813-1866). Sarphati is often remembered for his *Paleis voor Volksvlijt* (Palace of National Industry), a large exhibition hall that burned down long ago. He also aimed to improve public health in the city. As a doctor for the poor and a visionary entrepreneur, he was able to influence municipal policy regarding the endemic diseases of the day to such an extent that the health of many Amsterdam citizens improved significantly, especially in the weaker groups. In 1847 he was granted permission to collect waste and in 1855 he founded a bread factory that offered bread at 30 percent below the bakery prices, so that poor people too could eat better food. Such efforts resulted, around 1870, in a rise in the average life expectancy in Amsterdam. Sarphati brought many benefits to the city of Amsterdam with his interdisciplinary approach to the issue of poverty.

Inspired by this approach, in 2015 a partnership arose between the Municipality of Amsterdam, VU University Amsterdam, VU Medical Centre Amsterdam, University of Amsterdam, Amsterdam University of Applied Sciences and the Academic Medical Centre, united in Sarphati Amsterdam, Research for Healthy Living. Sarphati Amsterdam is a unique multidisciplinary and

interdisciplinary Amsterdam infrastructure for research in the field of public health. It contributes to effective and sustainable prevention of diseases of affluence through innovative interdisciplinary research. First and foremost, the focus is on one of the most acute lifestyle diseases: childhood obesity (in both its milder and more serious forms). The Amsterdam city authorities have formulated ambitious policy goals for promoting healthy behaviour and the quality of life among the city's youth in the programme *Amsterdamse Aanpak Gezond Gewicht* (*Amsterdam Approach for Healthy Weight*). The mission of this approach is 'to get all Amsterdam children to a healthy weight by 2033'. The programme aims to promote healthy behaviour in various environments: in health care, schools, sports clubs and neighbourhoods. It is vital to know what actually works in order to implement sustainable and effective policies.

Sarphati Amsterdam aims to make a contribution to changing obesity-related behaviour by conducting research in a way that does justice to the complexity of the issue. The unique infrastructure and high-level expertise will serve to attract students, researchers, policymakers and companies from all over the world. This will enable Amsterdam to further establish its reputation as a city of knowledge. But all this can only be achieved through collaboration with the citizens: it requires research with, for and by citizens. Only in this way can society be made healthier for present and coming generations.

Amsterdam, just like many other large European cities, is faced with major socio-economic health differences, caused partly by unhealthy lifestyles. *ProefGroen*, Sarphati Amsterdam and the *Amsterdamse Aanpak Gezond Gewicht* bring together research, policy and practice, in close collaboration with the citizens of Amsterdam. All parties must work together on sustainable solutions for a healthy and vibrant city from which the citizens and administrators of other European cities can also benefit. Amsterdam can thus become a scientific testing ground for Europe, a place where solutions can be found to the epidemic of lifestyle diseases. For now and in the future.

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30. Cycling is an acquired skill

A cycling city is created through trial and error

Marco te Brömmelstroet

European cities such as London, Paris and Munich are outdoing each other with plans for bicycle highways, under the motto 'going Dutch'. But doesn't this simplify things too much?

Cycling is increasingly being embraced as a crucial ingredient for sustainable mobility in European cities. The Dutch are often praised as an inspiring example. At first sight the simplicity of the bicycle is very appealing: it is a relatively simple means of transport that can serve a wide range of complex purposes. However, growing interest from various academic disciplines is increasingly revealing that this image ignores the mutual links between cycling and all kinds of social, cultural, economic and spatial processes. This raises important questions. Cycling requires more active attention and examination, not only in non-Dutch cities where cycling needs to grow beyond its marginal position, but also in the Dutch context. This chapter covers a number of striking connections. But first of all, let us examine why bicycles are seen as a partial solution to the classic mobility dilemma.

Mobility dilemma

Mobility can be defined as the possibility for moving people, goods or information. Professor of Transport Planning Luca Bertolini states that it creates a fundamental dilemma between the dependence on mobility and its negative effects.' On the one hand it is a condition for economic development as well as civic engagement and social emancipation: it enables people and businesses to participate in activities relevant to them. But

on the other hand mobility is producing ever more visible negative effects: energy consumption, air pollution, noise pollution, fragmentation of landscapes and cities, lack of safety, use of space, etc. Consequently, urban mobility policy is increasingly a balancing act. Cycling seems to have the best credentials to date: it considerably increases the action radius compared to walking, without creating the aforementioned negative effects for society. What's more, cycling is often associated with a spectrum of bonus effects: major health benefits, broad accessibility and even increased interaction among people and between people and their surroundings. In turn, these effects are associated with social capital: with happy, socially equitable and fair towns and cities. It is perhaps no coincidence that cycling is a very popular activity in the Netherlands (27 percent of all journeys are made on the bicycle) and that, according to the United Nations, Dutch children are the happiest in the world.

'The Dutch miracle'

So no wonder that cities increasingly aim to copy this success. The Dutch Cycling Embassy, a platform for Dutch bicycle expertise, states that it receives more than seventy inquiries a day. While Amsterdam alone received around 140 delegations in 2015. Cities that have put all their eggs in the car basket are now grinding to a standstill. Even successful public transport cities are finding themselves confronted with the limits of the system. They often seek inspiration from Dutch cities. But the quest for the Dutch recipe often leads to disappointment. The first myth to quickly bite the dust is that bicycles have always formed a key element of the mobility system in the Netherlands. It often comes as a huge surprise that fierce popular revolt and even urban warfare were needed to halt the rise of the automobile system around 1975. Moreover, the following four decades did not see an application of a clearly defined masterplan by an enlightened leader either. Even today the progress of the Dutch cycling system is chiefly the

sum of many small interventions by a large number of crucially important individuals. Just consider the recent and fierce debate about whether the passage under the Rijksmuseum should be reopened to cyclists.

Moreover, many important interventions were never directly intended to promote the use of bicycles. To give one example, the 'peripheral retail facilities policy', also known colloquially as the 'hypermarket act', ensured that the Netherlands was spared the global triumph of international shopping centre conglomerates. The resulting fine-meshed distribution of relatively small supermarkets proved to be an ideal environment for urban cycling. This is why cycling historian Professor Ruth Oldenziel has called our modern bicycle success an accident of history. The hope that remains for a policymaker in search of new approaches, following a visit to the Netherlands, is that a transition is possible but that there is no silver bullet to fall back on. It requires a consolidated series of small, context-sensitive interventions in various domains and over a longer period in order to move away at least partially from a high degree of automobile dependence. It is revealing here that a city like Amsterdam has only very recently issued its first policy plan on cycling, which is still largely responding to, instead of boosting, growth in cycling. True cycling policy is contained in many other policy domains. This brings us to the complexity of the seemingly simple cycling system.

Complex feedback

So what makes cycling so complex? Why it is not enough to simply create cycling paths in line with the famous Dutch standards? To understand this, we have to unravel so-called secondary and tertiary effects. As mentioned, cycling is linked to various urban processes. What makes things tricky is that these relationships are 1) often reciprocal, so that cycling is both a cause and an effect, 2) non-linear, meaning that small changes can have large

effects, and 3) mutually influencing, so that unexpected effects can occur. Below I illustrate this using two examples.

Mobility has reciprocal relationships with the spatial form of urban regions. Take for instance the example of the car. Its speed and freedom of movement allowed people to live far from the city and also made it attractive for amenities and employers to cluster in order to use economies of scale. Over time this mechanism led to an expanding urban structure in which distances between functions increased (secondary effect). In turn, these increased distances limited the mobility choices of individuals for linking relevant activities within a constant travel-time budget, as a result of which they increasingly had to rely on the car (tertiary effect). The same logic applies to cycling, although more in a more diffused way. In urban areas in the Netherlands where a majority of potential customers cycle (for instance the inner city of Amsterdam) it is more attractive for entrepreneurs to open and maintain multiple smaller branches. This is for instance reflected in the spatial structure of banks (and their cash machines), supermarkets, schools and day-care centres, which are thus able to serve as many people as possible (secondary effects). Because of this structure it is easier to link complex activities patterns of families by using the bicycle and increasingly hard for other modes (tertiary effect). This is further reinforced because families with a preference for cycling are increasingly choosing to settle in such urban areas.

The second example relates to the social and cultural status of cycling. In many countries bicycles are historically seen as poor man's transport. In Germany and England, for instance, the bicycle was chiefly a means of getting workers to the factory more quickly. Something that is embraced on a broad scale by socialist parties, who saw an important emancipatory role. In the Netherlands the bicycle was absolutely not a negative status symbol. Indeed, the bicycle is widely supported because it is used by all strata of the population. In the Netherlands no one will look twice if they see a prime minister on a bike on his way to an audience with the king, who is also happy

to have his photo taken on a bike to emphasise that he is so 'ordinary'. Giselinde Kuipers, Professor of Sociology, refers to this as 'conspicuous non-consumption'. Because both the managing director and the cleaner cycle to work, this 'national habit' is further reinforced (secondary effect). Dutch television commercials, even those for cars, regularly use the bicycle as a vehicle for appealing to a large target group. In film classics such as *Turkish Delight*, the rogue hero played by Rutger Hauer becomes 'extra Dutch' because he mostly gets around by bike (notably, in a film sponsored by the British Leyland Group, an automotive conglomerate).

The cycling challenge

So it would seem that the success of cycling in the Netherlands is partly due to it having become a background issue. It is so mundane that we now hardly give it any conscious thought: you 'just get your bike' and off you go. But this is also the danger. Recent dynamics in the cycling system requires much more explicit attention. Firstly, the secondary and tertiary effects are creating places where cycling suddenly increases strongly, as in some town and city centres and especially to and from train stations. This raises new allocation issues: from space on the road to parking capacity and waiting times at traffic lights. Choices in these areas that were made years ago now need to be reconsidered in the light of new developments.

Secondly, there are also spatial and social processes that have a negative effect on cycling in the Netherlands. The spatial, cultural and social structure of, for instance, the western garden cities in Amsterdam is leading to a gradual decrease in cycling and an explosive increase in mopeds, especially among young people. This not only leads to noise nuisance, air pollution and increased subjective and objective lack of safety. It is also displacing the bicycle on cycling paths, and this in turn reinforces other self-reinforcing spatial and social processes

that may be negative for the bicycle, such as location decisions by entrepreneurs and status (secondary effect). How should policymakers act or respond with respect to such developments? How can they prevent such a carefully developed cycling system from quickly disappearing again and prevent another 'accident of history'?

Challenges being encountered *outside* the Netherlands chiefly involve the questions of how and where one can overcome self-reinforcing, automobile-dependent tendencies. Recent mobility data show that ever more cities are recognising that the tide is turning and that they actually already have a growing cycling culture. It is then necessary to transform these often strong subcultures into the mainstream. At the same time, physical measures need to be taken to discourage car use in the city and to offer cyclists safety and comfort: a package of 'carrot and stick' measures – such as parking charges (stick) and cycling paths (carrot) in places where this is possible – around spatial structures that encourage short journey distances. This means one should not begin with a cycle highway from nowhere to nowhere (automobile logic), but instead with something like safe junctions in the highly built-up inner city. Preferably close to train stations with high quality cycling parking facilities. Cities have the best chance of getting a cycling system off the ground if they aim for interaction with the regional public transport system. The public transport plus cycling system in the Netherlands shows that the synergistic qualities of this (a rapid and high capacity alongside a finely meshed and flexible capacity) can be very competitive in comparison with the automobile system. In fact, as shown by Roland Kager, each of the two systems would seem to be a prerequisite for the functioning of the other.

While the rest of Europe can learn from the Dutch experience in all its complexity, the Netherlands must not forget to continue further work on maintaining its success. Our famous swarms of cyclists are the result of a gradually evolved ecosystem that continues to evolve – but which also continues to remain vulnerable and easy to destroy.

The author

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You can follow our research through Twitter and Facebook (@fietsprofessor) and via our the website of the Urban Cycling Institute: https://uci/strikingly.com

31. Growing socio-spatial segregation in European capitals: Different government, less mitigation

Sako Musterd

Social contrasts between residential environments in the capitals of European countries are increasing everywhere, albeit to different degrees. This is one of the most important conclusions of a large-scale comparative study recently completed by a transnational team of urban geographers. The study was conducted by local teams of urban specialists, acting simultaneously and according to the same methods, in Amsterdam, Athens, Budapest, London, Madrid, Milan, Oslo, Prague, Riga, Stockholm, Tallinn, Vienna and Vilnius. Together these cities represent Northern, Southern, Eastern and Western Europe.

This comparison of the development of socio-spatial inequality, as it is known, covers the period 2001-2011. The researchers applied as much as possible the same measuring instruments in all cities to establish inequality between the neighbourhoods and districts of the capitals. They focused on differences in income and profession. The accompanying graph, representing one of the results and using an established measure for this purpose, sets out the unequal distribution over the city between the lowest and highest classes of social groups.

The levels of segregation are still modest if we compare them with cities in North and South America, for instance, or in Africa. The segregation levels in Eastern Europe are generally a little lower than in the rest of Europe. However, the Eastern European cities are now quickly 'catching up' with the rest of the continent. In fact one can see an increase everywhere. In the supplied example, Amsterdam would seem to be an exception to the rule. However, a closer analysis of the dynamism in this city before

Closer analysis of the levels and development of socio-spatial segregation of the lowest and highest socio-economic categories in European capitals, in 2001 and 2011 (the scale of the dissimilarity index runs from 0 to 100; 100 is equal to maximum segregation).
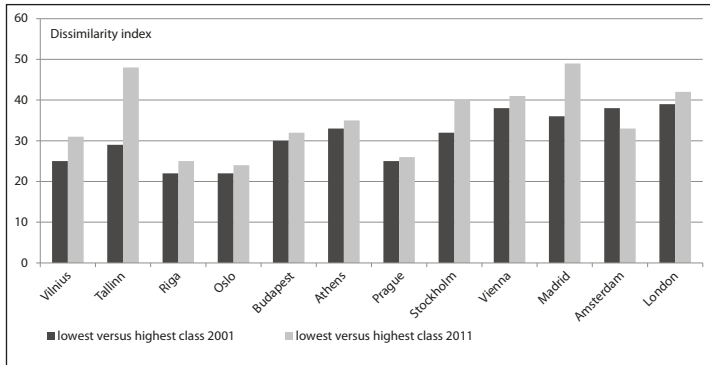
and after the outbreak of the financial and housing market crisis shows that this involves a temporary effect. The crisis put a brake on the buyers' market and many middle-class households postponed a planned move. As a result they unintentionally promoted the social mixing in the areas where they continued to live. This led to lower segregation. The dynamism before the crisis shows that the segregation will once again increase when the housing market picks up again.

Negative effects of segregation

The described development of increasing segregation – the increasingly separated residential distribution of poorer and richer parts of the population in important European capitals

– demands a response. After all, both residents and local and national governments, and even the European Commission itself, regularly express their rejection of the threat of increasing segregation. This is because negative effects are expected. There is a danger that the differences between rich and poor will become increasingly evident in the daily urban environment. In the case of very large differences this can lead to problems, especially if the inequality takes the form of a sharp division of the residential areas. We can see this, for instance, in the shape of gated communities: more or less closed-off residential environment cocoons comprising relatively prosperous households who wish to separate themselves from the rest of the population. In contrast, neighbourhoods with concentrations of the least prosperous can arise, where many other social groups no longer dare show themselves. A development like this would result in alienation and discontent. The alienation can lead to false images of others and discontent is the basis for social unrest and ultimately brings conflicts or riots. This situation ultimately also damages the economy. Naturally, no democracy wishes for such consequences.

Segregation also has unhappy associations for many other reasons and is thus seen as something negative. It is expected to cause adverse effects in many areas. It is assumed, for instance, that growing up in a relatively poor neighbourhood has an inhibiting effect on the individual development of young people: because there are few or no socially successful residents living close to them, but many who are less successful, young people mostly receive the 'wrong' role models. It is also thought that people have less chance of upward social mobility because the educational ambitions in poor neighbourhoods are said to be lower. Furthermore, it is expected that people in such areas will not be able to find the right networks, for instance to help them get a job. Although no conclusive evidence has yet been found for these supposed effects, they do generally cause worry among various levels of government and prompt them to intervene to turn the tide of segregation.

Factors causing segregation

In order to turn around the growth of segregation, it is essential to understand the factors responsible for the growth. This brings us to the theory behind the segregation. How does segregation actually come about? If we have the answer to this question, then it leads us to starting points for targeted intervention, which can help to combat the negative effects. Simply working against segregation as a symptom is of course also an option, but that costs a lot of money and – if the causes are not well understood – the effects of such symptom-countering can quickly evaporate. So in order to interpret the differences in the development of segregation between different cities, one must first examine the theory relating to segregation.

The previously referenced European study examined several dimensions of explanation. Firstly, the influence of the changes in the welfare state and, above all, the changes in the housing market. Secondly, the relationship with the degree to which the cities are connected to the networks of the global economy and the extent to which they have achieved a successful economic restructuring. Thirdly, the association with the level of social inequality in the countries in which the cities are located. Fourthly, the historical development of the cities. For the last of these four factors, the specific local historically developed context of the cities was examined in broad terms. It seems increasingly likely that this context can in itself have an important impact on the development of segregation.

All the aforementioned factors play a role and are in fact interrelated. In cities that are well-connected to global economic networks, for instance, we see a development in which many activities take place that require many highly educated and specialised workers. This results in a stratum of the population with a relatively high income and a prestigious profession. Simultaneously in these cities we see an upturn in the consumer-oriented services sector, which often employs less highly educated people. The social inequality manifesting itself here tends

to translate into socio-spatial inequality: segregation. Another influential factor is the neoliberal wave that has been washing over Europe for a while now. This shows itself in a changing role for governments, which are devoting less attention to 'broad-based policy and redistribution'; they are actively removing broad-based subsidies. The housing market has less and less space for social rented homes. As a result, this sector becomes increasingly the exclusive domain of low-income households, thus increasing the chance of stigmatisation. On the other hand, the government is devoting ever more attention and money to 'stimulating economic activity and market forces'. This shift of regime has probably contributed to the increase in social and spatial inequality.

The paradox of the post-socialist transition

It is hard to gain a solid understanding of segregation because some time often lies between the possible causes and the development of the segregation. This is best illustrated using experiences in Eastern Europe. After the fall of the Iron Curtain in 1989 and the disintegration of the Soviet Union in 1991, globalisation, neoliberalisation and large-scale privatisation – together with the restitution of former property to the owners from the time before the Second World War – were given a relatively free hand in the countries seeking accession to the European Union. The results first became visible in and around the capitals. Following the change of regime, which took place almost immediately after 1990, the social inequality quickly increased, most strongly in the more liberal Baltic states (Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania) and less so in the post-socialist and corporatist Visegrad countries (including the Czech Republic and Hungary). But socio-spatial segregation did not occur immediately. This was because first the old and decayed, but potentially valuable central city districts were refurbished and because middle-class households seized the opportunity to acquire a home in the suburbs. This had still

been impossible under socialism. This dynamism did not initially lead to an increase in segregation; in some locations an initial drop was even recorded, for instance because more households with higher incomes moved to the previously poor inner cities, temporarily leading to a greater social mix. This can be called a 'paradox of the post-socialist transition': a strong increase in social inequality, but initially without a corresponding strong increase in segregation. It was only in the new millennium that the inequalities slowly became visible through increasing socio-spatial segregation. The modelling of the housing market on the liberal section of Western Europe clearly began to have its effects. In the longer term this will also lead to a weaker position of the large-scale residential districts with standardised housing blocks, which in the socialist era still enjoyed high status and offered high living standards.

The mitigating effect of government intervention

The experiences in Eastern Europe show in a compact form how economic reforms and the transition to another model of the welfare state can have effects in terms of social inequality and socio-spatial segregation. On the basis of these experiences we should consider that most European cities still have relatively strong welfare state systems. Despite all the changes and the differences between European states with a more liberal, social democratic or corporatist nature, many cities have reasonable levels of social security, devote considerable attention to ensuring access to and affordability of housing for wide sections of the population, and have a broadly inclusive policy in areas such as education and health. Such government interventions serve to mitigate the negative effects of globalisation and economic restructuring. This seems to be the most important reason why the levels of segregation in European cities are still lower than those in, for instance, North America.

Historically developed, context-specific differences also play a role, of course, as well as those relating to the welfare state model and the evolved economic structure. It seems that social networks and family links can take over many tasks of the government, and can also contribute to mutual solidarity and a more balanced distribution of social and economic capital. This can be seen in Southern Europe and was reality in Europe at the start of the 20th century, when Europe was still strongly rural. But if such safety nets come under pressure, or if we consider the fact that in many places these structures have been transferred to the state in times of prosperity, then it becomes clear that a further withdrawal by the government in the aforementioned areas will bring considerable risks. The consequences will probably become visible in increasing social inequality and will lead, albeit with some delay, to sharper socio-spatial segregation.

The author

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http://www.tandfebooks.com/userimages/ContentEditor/1440163924152/9781317637486_Chapter_1.pdf

http://www.tandfebooks.com/userimages/ContentEditor/1440164093943/9781317637486_Chapter_15.pdf

32. The future of the city

Amsterdam between growth and
overexploitation?

Jeroen Slot and Laure Michon

Amsterdam is doing well. The population is growing, the
economy is picking up, and prosperity is increasing. Since
Glaeser's *Triumph of the City* (2011) and Barber's *If Mayors
ruled the World* (2013) the self-assurance of policymakers and
administrators has grown with respect to the future of the city.
So much so, in fact, that success seems a foregone conclusion. So
much so that little attention is given to the downside of success.
So much so that it is hard to initiate a discussion about which
future city is the most desirable. Even if the city were to have
a population of two million and free zones for start-ups in the
foreseeable future, and were to receive many more tourists –
meaning that it remains successful in the eyes of many – this
discussion remains relevant. Currently, it is too easy to think
that all ongoing changes (new lifestyles, developments in the
housing market and labour market) will by themselves lead the
way to the optimum city of the future. However, these changes
can lead to overexploitation: the city and urban society can also
lose much that is valuable.

   Three questions need to be addressed in this discussion on
the future of the city. The first question relates to the sustain-
ability of the success: how certain is it actually that the current
success will continue? The second question is whether enough
attention is being devoted to the downside of the growth
scenarios. And finally, how will we all decide about the future
of the city? In other words: what is the democratic basis for
the discussion about the future of the city, which also aims
to be a responsible capital and which also plays an important
regional function?

The success of Amsterdam

Who, at the end of the 1970s and the start of the 1980s, could have predicted the current success of Amsterdam? The outdated housing stock, the rise of the car and the decentralisation policy were at the time leading to suburbanisation. The city was emptying and at its low point had a population of around 675,000. This is now over 830,000, and Amsterdam is one of the fastest-growing cities in the Netherlands.

The growth of the population in Amsterdam is due to two related causes. Since the crisis (in the housing market), fewer families have been leaving the city. In addition, more people in their twenties and thirties are coming to the city to study or work. These groups are relatively well-off and the level of prosperity in the city has risen in recent years. But that also means that the increase in prosperity has taken place mostly among the more highly educated.

Besides the resident population, the number of tourists visiting the city has also grown strongly. This too has influenced the local economy positively. The crisis has had consequences for the economy and above all for the job market, but the developments in Amsterdam are more positive than in the other larger cities and in the Netherlands as a whole. Unemployment fell a little in 2014 and the housing market is picking up again.

However, one must ask how sustainable Amsterdam's success is. Firstly, there is a good chance that groups which remained in the city in recent years will now, prompted by the recovering housing market, leave the city again in search of space and green surroundings. In particular, those with lower-middle incomes find it hard to find a place to live in the city; relocating may be the only option for them. Moreover, housing preferences do not change overnight.

Furthermore, will growth in line with the trend of recent years essentially change the character of the city? Today's Amsterdam citizens have a close relationship with their city: eight out of ten Amsterdam residents feel attached to the city, and this feeling is strong across all population groups. How will this sense of connectedness be influenced by the further growth of the city? The

many expressions of dissatisfaction with the urban squeeze can be seen as a signal: for some Amsterdam residents, it has become less pleasant to live in the city. The attraction of Amsterdam is not one-dimensional: if certain groups move to the city (even more than was previously the case), then a completely different dynamic will be created. The recent news that ever more foreign investors are buying buildings for speculation purposes is one example of this. Apart from the question of whether this is desirable – and new dynamics are certainly not automatically negative – it is important to realise what the downside and possible negative impact of this may be.

The downside of success

Not everyone can benefit to an equal degree from the success of the city. It is mostly the more highly educated and people in employment who benefit from the current developments. But they too are unhappy with the pressure created by the strong population growth in the city and by the increased tourism. Moreover, the housing market serves only part of this group. So there is a realistic chance that precisely the families who lend Amsterdam's growth a special character (middle- and high-income families) will in part leave the city again, either from choice or necessity – certainly if the housing market stabilises further.

The big question for groups who benefit less from the growth of the city is: will there still be space for them in the future? Developments in the housing market play a primary role here. Rises in house prices and in rents are already making it impossible for people on low incomes to move to the centre of the city, and accessibility is coming under pressure in other parts of the city as well. Other issues also play a role, such as: will amenities in the city remain attuned to their needs or will investments mostly be made in what the more successful (potential) city residents find attractive? This question concerns the consequences of gentrification and segregation.

Comparisons with other European cities are often made both with regard to this issue and to tourism. To what other situations should and can Amsterdam compare itself? Which cities form shining examples for emulation, or conversely can be seen as horror stories?

London, Berlin and Paris are at the top of the European league. It is hard for Amsterdam to measure up to these cities. The population of London is almost ten times that of Amsterdam. Due to their scale and their much stronger economic (and tourist) functions these cities cannot be compared to the Dutch capital. Moreover, as seats of national government they hold strong regional, national and European positions of power. Nonetheless, the cases of London and Paris in particular can be taken as a warning when it comes to urban segregation and gentrification. Both cities are characterised by great wealth but also by huge differences and by conflicts (for instance the riots in Paris in 2005 and in London in 2011).

Resident population (in 2015) and overnight stays (in 2012), x 1.000

	Resident population 2015	Overnight stays 2012	GDP/resident in the agglomeration 2010
London	7,556	37,500	37,813
Paris	2,138	34,000	44,167
Berlin	3,426	25,000	24,854
Barcelona	1,621	16,000	28,447
Amsterdam	822*	9,800	37,779

*Source for residents: *OIS, other cities: World Population Review*
Source for overnight stays: MasterCard Index of Global Destination Cities
Source GDP/resident: Eurostat. Expressed in Purchasing Power Standard, to correct price differences between countries

When it comes to tourism, Venice holds a firm place as the horror story: a city floundering under tourism. In the historic centre of Venice, the number of residents halved between 1990 and 2009, falling from 120,000 to 60,000 (although very few tourists stay overnight in Venice). It is hard to imagine that Amsterdam would

go down this path. Indeed, quoting this horror story actually kills the debate: the discussion of the future of Amsterdam should thus not be about Venice.

A more realistic example for comparing urban developments (including tourism) is Barcelona. This city is slightly larger than Amsterdam and attracts more tourists. Recently the city has mostly been in the news due to the tensions created by the strong increase in tourism. The new Mayor aims to reverse the trend: no new hotels should be opened in the city centre and tourists should be distributed more evenly across the city. This seems to strongly resemble the solutions sought by Amsterdam. In Barcelona, the tensions between tourists and residents seem much stronger than those in Amsterdam. So it also forms a warning: tensions should not be allowed to rise so high that polarisation occurs.

Both the issues of tourism development and of segregation and gentrification revolve around the question: who makes the city, and for whom is the city? Displacement is the spectre in both debates. It should also be said that on both fronts there is no clear recipe for balancing the interests of various city residents and users. This requires a dialogue. At the moment we often see a stalemate where the concerns of one group are swept away by the ambitions of the other group, and vice versa. Moreover, this discussion on the future development of the city not only concerns Amsterdam, but the entire metropolitan region.

Who makes decisions, how and on what basis?

The downside of the success can also be seen in the region. While the city used to attract young people, who then left the city again for the surrounding urban regions after they had completed their education, found work and started a family (the city as escalator), this group of prosperous residents now departs from Amsterdam less frequently. Moreover, the city is growing less and less accessible for less privileged groups. As a consequence, the

traditional growth poles, such as Almere, are seeing shrinking populations and becoming less prosperous.

The issue of the relationship with the region brings us to an overarching problem, namely that of urban and regional democracy. The region does not have a say in deciding on the developments in Amsterdam, but the impact of these developments nonetheless affects the entire region. More generally, there are three problems. Firstly, there is a democratic shortfall: only half of the Amsterdam citizens voted in the last municipal council elections, and in some parts of the city this was less than a third of the residents. Lack of interest, barriers to participation in the democratic process (such as language) and cynicism are all obstacles to a good decision-making process.

Secondly, there is a democratic vacuum: Amsterdam decides about Amsterdam and in part also about what happens in the region, but which influence do municipalities in the region have on what happens in Amsterdam and the region as a whole? There are of course contacts and agreements between neighbouring municipalities, but there is no framework for discussion on the developments in the region in relation to the future of the city. This is not an appeal for a new administrative layer at (sub)regional level. Nothing will be solved by more elections. However, as a responsible capital, Amsterdam can ensure that this discussion is conducted jointly. This is an interesting task for reinforcing the success of Amsterdam: not only attention for and interest in what is already going well, but also ensuring positive developments in all parts of the city and success outside the city boundaries.

Here, attention will need to focus on the way the debate is conducted. This is the third problem in the current situation: there is no substantive basis for the debate. There is no lack of opinions, or forums, but people are talking past each other instead of with each other. According to some, the urban economy should be developed to full flowering by making the city even more attractive to tourists, to companies (above all the promising innovative companies) and to investors. Others

fear that precisely this approach will threaten what has made Amsterdam a special and attractive city up until now. But the various parties fail to arrive at a joint analysis and resulting task. It is not necessary to describe how this discussion can be conducted in practical terms here (e.g. a citizens' summit, a G1000 or another form of broad-based assembly); the main thing is that the discussion should be broad-based and constructive. And that it should involve an exchange of questions and logical, fact-based arguments. What are the current trends? What results do they have, also in the longer term, as regards prosperity and welfare? To what extent can these trends be influenced? What results can interventions have, and what are the costs? And for whom exactly? In and around Amsterdam, we can see developments that are also taking place in Europe as whole: the people of Germany and Greece cannot pretend that they can make decisions on the future separately. The same goes for the people of Almere, Diemen and Amsterdam.

The authors

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33. Welcome to Amsterdam! Well, not really

The right to the city requires a city in balance

Arie van Wijngaarden

Cities attract people, and big cities attract even more people. This is happening on a large scale all over the world, and in the Netherlands too. In particular, people are moving to the major cities of Amsterdam, Utrecht and The Hague. The right to live wherever one wants in principle gives everyone the possibility to move to the big city.

The attractiveness of the city

The big cities in particular have a number of attracting factors, such as the possibility of finding a job, the presence of higher education institutions, cultural amenities, the short distance to these amenities and the many possibilities for interaction. There are also less attractive aspects: the difficulty of finding a place to live and its high price, and the increasing pressure and bustle of the city. Health-related factors such as air pollution currently receive less attention, but they are also less serious than they were thirty years ago thanks to better technology and stricter emission standards.

Amsterdam is growing again

Following the exodus to the growth poles (suburban satellite towns) in the 1960 and 1970s, Amsterdam's population began growing again from the 1990s onwards, with a spurt in growth beginning in 2006. As of in 2015 the city had a population of 827,000, and the forecasts

by Statistics Netherlands and the *Projectbureau voor het Leefmilieu* (project office for the living environment) indicate continuing growth. Every day in 2014 in Amsterdam there were, on average:

30 births;
14 deaths;
98 people moving from other parts of the Netherlands;
96 people leaving for other parts of the Netherlands;
80 people moving from other countries;
67 people leaving for other countries.

The most important growth factors in that year were the birth surplus and the surplus of people moving from other countries, the latter also caused by the increase in the number of asylum seekers.

However, the growth of the housing stock has not kept pace with the growth of the population. The urban housing building programme is seriously lagging behind. In the period 2009-2013 a population increase of 65,926 persons was paralleled by a net increase in the housing stock of 9,355 dwellings. Following a long period of decrease in the average home occupation (the number of people sharing a home together), this figure increased again.

Stayers versus newcomers

It is difficult for newcomers to the city to find their niche – there is often inequality between established and new residents. The established residents have advantages over the newcomers, both regarding access to housing and also the price they have to pay for this housing. In addition to better knowledge of the local market, established residents until recently had an advantage in seeking a home in the social housing sector: residents of Amsterdam could have the length of their residence considered in their application for such a rented home. The social indicators that grant priority in allocation of social rented housing (such as the family situation or a fire in the previous home) tend to favour established residents more than newcomers.

Both private landlords and many housing associations are now raising the rents of newly vacant homes towards the legal maximum. As a result, newcomers (and also Amsterdam residents relocating within the city) have to pay considerably more for the same home than residents who have had a rental contract for a longer period.

Housing shortage

The principle on the housing market is that there is sufficient supply for those people who have sufficient private funds to pay for a private-sector rental home or an owner-occupied property. A search for a rental home (apartment or house) at the property site Funda.nl at the end of August 2015 delivered the following results:

Maximum rent limit	Number of dwellings on offer
Up to €1,000	46
Between €1,000 and €2,000	443
Higher than €2,000	427

Many of the homes are rented out fully furnished, but a good (double) income seems to be a prerequisite for renting in this market. On the private rental market, one must either have a high income or spend a huge part of one's income on rent. Many newcomers first enter the market by taking an expensive rented property and then look for an owner-occupied property.

A similar shortage of affordable homes applies to the owner-occupied sector.

Purchase price	Number of dwellings on offer
Up to €200,000	1,757
Between €200,000 and €400,000	2,201
Higher than €400,000	1,210

The accessibility of the more expensive owner-occupied homes is currently being eased by the low mortgage interest rates. This compensates for the recent stricter requirements applied by mortgage suppliers. But the high debt will remain, while interest rates may rise in future.

On the demand side, however, a large number of home-seekers are dependent on the social housing sector. According to current policy this sector is intended for households with an annual income of up to around €35,000. But here, the door is only opened a crack. In 2014 some 11,000 social rented dwellings were on offer, but 4,000 of these were student apartments and 2,700 were allocated directly to high-priority candidates or by institutions. The remaining supply amounted to 4,300 social rented dwellings – and this has led to an explosive growth in application and waiting times. In 2014, each of these dwellings had 180 candidates on average. And when dwellings, for which application time or residential time do not apply (as part of the stock that is distributed by lottery), the chance of being allocated a home was actually 1 in 865. The Dutch Postcode Lottery offers better chances of winning something.

Amsterdam inside and outside the southern ring road: Two worlds?

Access to the city is not equally difficult in all districts. When the urban renewal process began in the mid-1970s, the 19th-century neighbourhoods around the city centre were in a poor state. The slogan 'building for the neighbourhood' meant the process of renewal was aimed chiefly at established residents. Individual rent subsidy and rent transition contributions gave residents access to the newly built and renovated homes that the housing associations were able to build here while drawing on substantial public grants. But rent increases prompted a flow of mostly larger families to the Westelijke Tuinsteden and to Amsterdam Noord.

The inflow of new residents began with the introduction of owner-occupied homes in the 19th-century districts at the start of the 1990s. The additions to the housing stock in these areas have since then mostly involved owner-occupied properties. The inflow of the middle and higher income groups and the influx of students also changed the stock of shops and hospitality establishments. Goodbye milkman and hello ice-cream parlour, goodbye local pub and hello *brasserie*. The process of gentrification, beginning in the city centre, moved from neighbourhood to neighbourhood: De Pijp, Westelijke Eilanden, Weesperzijde, Helmersbuurt, all the way to Indische Buurt and De Baarsjes. All of these districts are within cycling distance of the centre, the universities and cultural amenities. The fall in car ownership shows that the car is not a precondition for a more chic residential environment.

The southern part of the A10 ring road and the IJ seem to form the dividing line between the areas where more prosperous buyers are creating a demand, and where they are not. Here are some more figures. Land register records for sold homes show that, within the ring road, the sales price of owner-occupied homes is above €3000/m² in all districts. With some exceptions like the Bos en Lommer, Indische Buurt, Kattenburg and Betondorp neighbourhoods. Outside the ring road, the opposite applies. Everywhere, the sales price per square metre is below €3,000, with the exception of a few rich enclaves, such as the Zuidas, the village of Sloten, the large Rieteiland and Steigereiland-Zuid on IJburg, and the houses along the pittoresque dikes in Amsterdam Noord.

Rights, privileges and accessibility

Is this pattern actually a problem? Does a 'right to the city' exist? In recent decades much has been written about the 'right to the city' (*recht op de stad, droit à la ville, Recht auf Stadt*). In a nutshell, this is the right to participate in the specifics of the city: in encounters and the process of emancipation.

Officially, the Netherlands has 'freedom of establishment': you can settle where you like – although in practice this means you can live where you can afford it. The right to the city is supplemented by the right to education, employment, housing and mobility.

There is also the right to state assistance for groups who, due to circumstances, cannot arrange these provisions themselves. But rights can collide. One person's right may mean the other person's injustice. The number of homes, training and education places and well-paid jobs is limited. The state has the task of achieving the most balanced possible society. If this aim is reached, it results in a just city.

In her book *The Just City*, published in 2011, Susan Fainstein cites three characteristics of the just city: diversity, democracy and justice. According to her, Amsterdam scores better on these joint characteristics than London or New York do. Important factors contributing to this include the large social housing sector and the land lease system. The social housing sector enables access to the housing market to be kept open for lower-income groups. The land lease system gives the municipality, as owner of the land, the possibility to use the redistribution of land lease incomes to promote mixed use buildings and to prevent the rise of segregated districts. Both the extensive social housing sector and the land lease system are now being buried by the right wing of the political spectrum. A slow dismantling is underway. The question is whether there is still any reason for optimism in the current situation. A stronger dependence on market mechanisms, which has so strongly influenced the developments in New York and London, can also gain ascendancy in Dutch cities if the laissez-faire approach continues to grow – making just distribution of living space impossible.

The task for the future: Balance in the city

The government, and certainly local government, has only limited means for steering society towards social justice and

sustainable development, and thus for keeping the city in balance. A number of areas require active intervention by the state.

Diversity and the prevention of segregation – The modern Western European city has few ghettos or gated communities. But a further concentration of rich and poor now threatens. In Amsterdam, one can see growing differences between the neighbourhoods within and outside the ring road (with the exception of Amsterdam Noord). If no public policy is implemented in this area, this becomes a self-reinforcing phenomenon. An active land policy, programming of the urban development and policy agreements regarding the social rented housing sector are spatial planning instruments that the state can apply to promote diversity and to oppose segregation.

The 'sense of home' in the city – The charm of a city like Amsterdam lies in its relatively small scale and its well defined public space. There are of course major urban amenities and institutions such as universities, national museums and important pop venues, but they are within cycling or tram distance of the residential areas. Some urban planners believe that cities need to grow in order to be internationally competitive and to score better in international leagues of competitive cities. But then the human scale is mostly lost and the distinctiveness with regard to other cities disappears.

A city for residents and visitors – This remains a difficult balancing act. The charm of the city attracts many visitors from outside the city. Hordes of tourists on hired bicycles sway through the public space. Crowd control is a new sport for municipal officials. Of course, tourism is an important economic factor. But too many excursion agencies, stag parties, major events in public spaces, Airbnb's and unrestrained building of new hotels will lead to a Venetian scenario, where the living city is replaced by stage scenery and tourists filing past this. A spreading of tourist facilities would limit the nuisance for the residents of the city centre. Excesses such as party bikes, booze boats and stag parties can at least be limited.

Equal treatment of newcomers settling in the city – Politicians want to maintain a safety net for established residents, with affordable housing, and when facilitating newcomers they mostly focus on wealthier households. But asylum seekers, young people wishing to

leave home, students from outside Amsterdam and people with a job in the growing services sector should have the same possibilities for finding their own niche. And if they do not have this, then the state should help out and promote the coming together of old and new.

Reinforce the social rented housing sector – The Netherlands, especially Amsterdam, has a large number of social-sector homes in comparison to other countries. The current stock is occupied by a wide diversity of income groups. A one-parent family on state benefits next door to a student who dropped out of his studies and is now a successful internet entrepreneur. The often small-scale new construction and renovation projects of the recent past contribute to this situation. Count your blessings! The important result of all this is not housing for the poorest of the poor, but mixed neighbourhoods. This is why municipalities should offer space for social housing in more expensive areas, too, and housing associations should not only sell homes in the neighbourhoods with the highest yields.

'The big cities are doing well,' is an oft-heard statement. This not only applies to public spaces but also to the economic potential and the reasonably relaxed coexistence of the population groups. We should urge government at all administrative levels to use all available means to keep things this way.

The author

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34.   More than just housing

The importance of housing associations for a
sustainable city

Jeroen van der Veer and Dick Schuiling

In the Netherlands, a policy has been implemented at national
level that aims to shrink the social rented housing sector.
However, the housing associations and a social housing sec-
tor of substantial size play a crucial role in the development
of Amsterdam as a sustainable city. A change in thinking is
required, away from shrinkage of the social housing sector and
towards a dynamic balance in the long term. Collaboration at
local and regional level remains essential here, as indicated by
the agreements made between tenants, the municipality and
housing associations in June 2015.

2.4 million social rented dwellings

There are 2.4 million social rented dwellings in the Netherlands,
rented out by 360 housing associations and private non-profit
organisations, all under state supervision. This corresponds to
31 percent of the national housing stock. This means that, in
relative terms, the Netherlands has the largest social housing
sector in Europe. The proportion of social rented housing in the
larger cities is even higher: 46 percent of the Amsterdam housing
stock consists of association homes, 24 percent of private rented
homes and 31 percent of owner-occupied homes.

   The average rent for all association homes in Amsterdam
amounted to €485 per month as per 1 January 2015 (not including
any individual housing benefits). The rent of social rented homes
after a change of tenant is, on average, around 100 euros higher.
In addition, every year housing associations offer some 2,000 free

market rental homes in Amsterdam. Almost 35 percent of these homes have a monthly rent of under €971 and are thus accessible to middle-income households. The average rent of these homes is around €840. This is relatively affordable. In the private rental sector, the rents are much higher on average, namely €2,120 (according to the supplier Pararius).

The volume of the association sector, its distribution across the city and the mix of income categories have been able to prevent the emergence of major concentrations of poverty and deprived neighbourhoods. In fact, since the 1920s, Amsterdam, with the architecture of the Amsterdam School, has been seen as a mecca of social housing. Especially after the Second World War, the city experienced major growth in housing associations.

In the Netherlands, the government now aims to reduce the social rented housing sector in favour of the private sector (rented and owner-occupied homes). The social rented housing sector, so the idea goes, should confine itself to its core task of providing housing for people with low incomes. In other Western countries, too, we see reforms in the welfare state leading to a reduction of the target group for social housing. A recent study of spatial segregation indicates this to be a European trend (see the contribution by Sako Musterd in this volume).

The influence of the European Union: Shrinkage of the social sector and landlord levy

The European Union does not concern itself directly with housing policies, but it influences this policy in the Netherlands through its competition policy. The European Union plays an important role in three issues relating to housing: a stronger curtailment on the low-income target group; the separation between state and market; budget agreements and spending cuts.

Since the mid-1990s housing associations have been financially independent and no longer receive state subsidies. Consequently, the funding of social housing has no longer formed

part of the national budget and the conditions for accession to the eurozone could be met. Since then, housing associations, as hybrid organisations, have been using income from market activities – such as the building of owner-occupied homes, the sale of social rented homes and the renting out of private-sector rented homes – to invest in social housing.

In 2005 the European Commissioner for Competition, the Dutch VVD politician Neelie Kroes, sent a letter to the Dutch government with complaints about unfair competition within the private sector. This was because housing associations borrowed money on the capital market. The Social Housing Guarantee Fund is a joint fund that guarantees the interest and repayment obligations of the associations. Local and national government provide a 'back-up' for this guarantee, and it is thus regarded by the European Commission as 'state support'. The European Commission believes that state support should be limited to the low-income groups and, in the reasoning of the Commission, the social rented housing sector was too big with respect to the size of the target group. It was recommended to privatize a large share of the social rental housing. Moreover, the European Commission had difficulties with the hybrid character of the housing associations and advocated a strict separation of activities for the target group and market activities. Ultimately, the budget agreements in the context of the European Union resulted in spending cuts in the social housing sector.

In 2009, in a European decision, the European Commission forced the Netherlands to set a national income threshold for social housing tenants. As per 2011 access to the social rented housing sector is limited to households that earn less than €35,000 per year before taxes, although in the past the sector was always broader and also offered accommodation to medium-income households. In a city such as Amsterdam, it is also difficult for families with an income of up to around €50,000 to find an affordable rented home. (Temporarily 10% of new lettings may be allocated to households earning between €35.000 and €40.000).

The division required by the European Commission was cemented in national legislation. In addition, the task package of the associations was reduced. In the new Housing Act that came into force on 1 July 2015, the number of activities that associations are allowed to carry out was strongly limited. This involves, among other things, the efforts of associations to provide housing for middle-income groups, project development and improving and maintaining the liveability of neighbourhoods. Moreover, associations must make a strict separation between their social activities on the one hand and their market activities on the other. Although it cannot be denied that this legislation provides a partial answer to the excesses and scandals that have plagued the housing association sector, with major risks in, for instance, the field of derivatives and project development, it now seems that the pendulum is swinging the other way. Urban renewal and the construction of mixed neighbourhoods are being hindered by the legislation.

Another agreement at the European level assumed a budget deficit that would be no higher than 3 percent of the GDP. In the Netherlands, the government achieved this by withdrawing money from the social rented housing sector, namely by means of the 'landlord levy'. Since 2013, social rented homes with a monthly rent of less than €710 are taxed with a levy that will amount to €1.7 billion in 2017 and €2 billion in 2018. The levy is applicable to all landlords that own more than ten social rented homes and is based on the value of the home. In international terms, this levy is unprecedented, because the building of social rented accommodation is no longer subsidised in the Netherlands, and instead landlords – and thus also landlords of social rented homes – must pay for part of the state deficit. In recent years the rents of social rented homes have risen more strongly, partly due to the landlord levy. The affordability is thus coming under pressure, also because housing benefits (a rent subsidy for low-income tenants) do not fully compensate for rent between €628 and €710.

Despite this, housing associations are improving the quality of their homes by investing in renovation and new construction.

Investments in quality also improve safety. In this respect, associations are replacing old boilers and gas heaters in order to prevent carbon monoxide poisoning, and they are making homes more energy-efficient. From July 2011 to December 2014 the Amsterdam housing associations realised almost 27,000 'energy label steps' in the existing housing stock. However, the landlord levy is putting such investments under pressure.

Housing associations involved in neighbourhood sustainability

The broad range of tasks taken on by housing associations in combination with the realisation of mixed neighbourhoods has favourably influenced the development of Amsterdam in recent times. Associations are involved in neighbourhood sustainability in close collaboration with the tenants and local government. Ever since 1994 performance agreements have been made between the associations, the municipality and tenants in Amsterdam.

In recent decades, housing associations and the municipality have invested in urban renewal in districts such as Zuidoost, Noord, Nieuw-West and Indische Buurt. The quality of the housing stock has been improved through renovation and demolition/new construction and a mix of social rented housing, owner-occupied homes and private sector rented housing has been created in these neighbourhoods. Urban renewal does not only mean improving the quality of the housing stock, but also that of facilities and amenities, such as the building of multifunctional centres with welfare and health facilities. This policy of urban renewal and liveability has worked. The satisfaction levels of residents in parts of Bos en Lommer, Indische Buurt and Bijlmermeer improved substantially between 2001 and 2015.

Housing associations are also involved in the transformation of empty office buildings (some 15 percent of the stock

in Amsterdam). One example is the repurposing of the GAK building beside the A10 motorway, carried out by Stadgenoot and AM, where 651 urban studios for starters and students were realised. The social rented homes of Stadgenoot in this building are being used as accommodation for young people and also for refugees. The Elsevier building in Bos en Lommer, also situated alongside the A10, has been rendered suitable for students and entrepreneurs on behalf of DUWO and Rochdale.

In the future too, collaboration at local and regional levels between tenants, municipalities and housing associations will remain crucial. In June 2015 the Tenants Association of Amsterdam, the Amsterdam housing associations and the Municipality of Amsterdam made new collaboration agreements for 2015-2019, centring on the affordability of housing. The ultimate goal is to achieve a sustainable and dynamic balance in the social rented housing sector. Any sale, demolition or liberalisation of social housing must, in the long run, be brought into balance with the new construction of social rented housing so that sufficient affordable homes are retained.

Shrinkage of the social housing sector is not a matter of course

Foreign specialists visit Amsterdam because they see the social housing sector in the Netherlands as a model for emulation. Especially in Asia, the growth of the cities and the poor living conditions of workers are creating an increasing need for the construction of social housing. In China, the privatisation of construction of social housing (by the government and factories) began in 1978, but now the state is making a U-turn. The construction of 36 million social rented homes is planned for the period 2011-2015. In Taipei, the capital of Taiwan, 0.7 percent of the homes are in the social sector, and in this city the purchase price of an owner-occupied home is, on average, around fifteen times the gross annual income. Due to these huge affordability

problems, Taipei City plans to build 50,000 social rented homes in the coming eight years. But alternatives for providing affordable housing are now being sought in European countries, too. In Spain, the economic crisis had led to many people no longer being able to pay their mortgage. More than 150,000 families have lost their homes. Now support for the creation of housing associations is arising in various Spanish cities, including Madrid and Barcelona.

Social rented housing remains in demand – in Amsterdam too. Every year the city grows by 10,000 residents, including people on low incomes. Seen from this perspective, a major shrinkage of the social rented housing sector seems undesirable in the long term. Creative solutions are required, such as the transformation of office buildings and a more flexible approach to the existing stock of social rented housing. Furthermore, it is sensible for housing associations to continue to test the boundaries of the (new) law, so that their broad approach to their task, for instance in the field of liveability, can be continued – which should of course take place in collaboration with other parties.

The Dutch landlord levy is disastrous for the viability of the social rented housing sector. We can identify a paradox here: government policy forces the housing associations to maximum rent increases, while at the same time the government believes that housing associations should focus only on renting out social rented housing to people with low incomes. The landlord levy should thus be abolished as soon as possible.

The authors

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Dick Schuiling is a retired assistant professor of urban planning at the University of Amsterdam and from 2000 to 2008 chairman of the Amsterdam Federation of Housing Associations (AFWC).

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35. The energetic city: Between dreams and deeds

Matthijs Hisschemöller

The ambitions

Every self-respecting city has defined its CO_2 targets and a sustainable energy policy. This is because energy from coal, mineral oil and natural gas (fossil sources) accounts for the majority of greenhouse gas emissions. The Covenant of Mayors (the European partnership of local and regional governments), following the line of the European Union, has set targets for 2030 and aims to reduce CO_2 emissions by 20 percent as compared to 1990 levels, to save 20 percent of energy and to generate 20 percent renewable energy. In fact, a number of Dutch municipalities aim for more. The Municipality of The Hague is following the national policy that aims for a 30 percent reduction in CO_2 emissions and 20 percent for energy savings and energy from renewable sources. Amsterdam aims for a 40 percent reduction in CO_2 emissions by 2025 with respect to 1990, while Rotterdam aims to emit no less than 50 percent CO_2 reduction by 2025. Haarlem is even aiming for carbon neutrality by 2030.

So the ambitions and goals are looking good. But things are less clear when it comes to realising them. How can these targets be achieved, and what effects will we see in a city that has renounced fossil energy? How will residents and businesses experience all these changes? Is it financially feasible? And if so, why are things going so slowly?

The future picture

Currently the energy demand of private end-users in North-western Europe comprises heat for home heating and hot water,

electricity and transport fuel. The demand for heat is the largest. Natural gas is currently being used for home heating and tap-water heating in the Netherlands. Most people also use natural gas for cooking. Electricity consumption is increasing because people are buying more electrical appliances. Even the most energy-efficient refrigerators, freezers, washing machines, dishwashers, laundry dryers and TV sets require (a lot of) electricity. Lighting forms just a fraction of electricity consumption. Most cars are still powered by petrol or diesel. This brings not only the problem of CO_2 emissions but also the emission of small particulates, which can cause diseases. This is especially a problem in inner cities and close to motorways. The energy consumption patterns of businesses are very different, so this article confines itself to private energy consumption.

In the energetic city of the future, households' energy demand will not differ very much of the demand today. However, natural gas, coal and mineral oil will no longer be used. This will have major consequences for the methods of home heating. The most important and most widely available source of heat is the sun. Solar heat will be 'harvested' wherever this is possible, using roofs, walls, windows, greenhouses, asphalt and (sea) water. Public spaces will be augmented with greenhouses that harvest heat in summer and then use it in winter to heat homes. Heat will be stored underground. The trend to heating with very low temperatures, which is already becoming evident, will bring radically different methods to those in use today. The metal heating radiators that still disfigure most rooms in homes and require up to 80°C to function will have disappeared. Rooms will be heated with heat distribution systems in the floor, the wall or the ceiling which can still create a pleasant indoor climate using very low temperatures (30°C). An additional benefit is that, in the case of a heatwave, people will also be able to cool their home, which is especially good for older people and young children. To summarise: the heating system in the energetic city is not only sustainable, but also increases comfort.

In some urban districts, a new infrastructure has been created for the transport of waste water. All the waste now entering the sewers will instead be channelled to the local digester. This innovation means that kitchen waste no longer has to go into the organic waste bin. Toilets are flushed using air, as in an airliner, which also brings significant fresh water savings. In addition, waste from parks, woods, verges and gardens is used for small-scale production of heat and electricity for domestic energy consumption.

In many neighbourhoods, it is not possible to harvest and store sufficient solar heat. The shortfall in solar heat is made up for by using electricity. The number of electric cars has increased dramatically, and so electricity consumption in the energetic city has risen accordingly. This is why all available space is used for solar PV panels; in many cases these are super-lightweight and integrated in roof coverings, as well as on tram stops, bus shelters and above motorways and railway lines. As is already possible, solar PV is used for the production of both electricity and heat. In addition to solar PV, large and small wind turbines form a familiar part of the cityscape, especially in the immediate surroundings of the city. Energy from waste and biomass is essential. But despite all this, the energetic city cannot meet the full electricity demand of its inhabitants in this way. After all, the sun does not shine in the evening, when electricity consumption is at its highest. And the wind does not blow all the time. Self-sufficiency is possible thanks to major advances in the field of energy storage. At neighbourhood level, there are many storage facilities for surplus electricity. Electricity is not only stored in rechargeable batteries, but also, as the technology becomes progressively cheaper, in energy carriers such as hydrogen, (green) gas and methanol.

The energetic city with its concentrated demand for sustainable electricity also presents the electric car as the most important option for storing electricity. In addition to battery-driven electric transport, the possibilities include the hydrogen car and also cars and buses fuelled by gas and vegetable oil. The fuel cell has superseded the inefficient internal combustion engine. Cars are connected to the electricity grid at car-parks close to businesses,

large shopping centres and in residential districts. The cars store surplus electricity and in peak periods they help to meet the city's electricity demand. So does this mean that even more cars will be on the roads in the sustainable city than is already the case? No. The capacity of an electric vehicle is so large that a small percentage of the total of road vehicles in the Netherlands can meet the electricity (storage) needs of Dutch consumers.

Feasibility

If one considers the energy system of the future city for a moment, it becomes clear that this will have huge societal consequences. The current practice of centralised and large-scale production and supply of energy from far outside the city will make way for decentralised generation and supply at neighbourhood level. The energy sector as we now know it will cease to exist, at least for private end users. The energy system will be integrated with sectors that are currently quite separate. The energetic city has decentralised urban agriculture and communal gardens, decentralised sewage treatment, waste processing and a transport system, all integrated with the local energy facilities.

This will bring far more social benefits than in the current, unsustainable, situation. Despite this, energy companies will probably not invest in this new system. This is because in a social and political sense it is a complex system in which many different parties will need to share the costs and benefits. Moreover, investments in this system will have a longer payback time than venture capitalists are prepared to accept nowadays.

Nonetheless, there is enough money available to invest in a system such as this. After all, millions of consumers regularly pay their monthly energy bills. On average, they pay around €1,700 for energy every year. If we include related expenses such as sewerage charges, water tax and suchlike, consumers often pay €2,000 a year, even though they could not pay this in advance for a longer period. Assuming a payback time of fifteen years and current low

interest rates, around one million households in the Amsterdam metropolitan region could together invest more than €30 billion to make their energy facilities sustainable, without actually having to pay more than they would otherwise. On the contrary, their energy payments currently disappear into the pockets of investors in internationally operating energy companies. If this sum were to be invested in decentralised, renewable energy systems owned by the end users, then the money would stay in the community. Moreover, this would provide an incredible economic boost: of each invested euro half would immediately benefit (regional) employment. This is of course subject to the condition that banks and authorities are prepared to loan the necessary sums to the local energy cooperatives.

One would expect the technical and financial feasibility of the transition to a sustainable energy system for residential districts in the Netherlands to have already been researched. After all, billions are spent in the search for solutions for the climate problem and a sustainable energy supply. But in fact only one example is known. The neighbourhood initiative DE Ramplaan, in a district of typical older buildings in the west of Haarlem, has had two scenarios calculated in technical and financial terms. This revealed that the scenario involving a switch to sustainable electricity using sun, wind and biomass in combination with heat pumps and heat output systems with very low temperatures in homes would earn back its costs for the residents within fifteen years. In the second scenario, which also uses solar heat from nearby greenhouses and barns, as well as energy obtained from waste water, the payback period is about twenty years.

What is possible in this urban district is probably possible in every average urban district in Northwestern Europe.

Obstacles

Just because something is technically and financially feasible does not mean it will immediately happen. There are all kinds of

social barriers. To begin with, there are the vested interests for which a system change forms a threat. Perhaps more important is that the current system is so firmly established that it hinders people in imagining that it could be totally different. Current practice narrows peoples´ thinking; in consequence, the most obvious questions – is this major step possible and what would it cost? – are not asked. Moreover, managers at government and company level are encouraged to stay on well-trodden paths and to shelve 'wild ideas'. Unfortunately, this is also increasingly true of universities.

The high levels of ambition regarding sustainable energy are still not widely shared by municipal policymakers. It should be a matter of course that, when plans for new or renovated buildings are being discussed, south-facing roofs should be included wherever possible. Yet, unfortunately, urban planners are also moved by other considerations than sustainability. It should be a matter of course that, where municipalities have authority over buildings, they make the roofs of these buildings available to citizens' initiatives for the generation of sustainable electricity. Yet, which municipality with high sustainability ambitions has already taken this simple step? Obviously, there is still a huge gulf between the targets set by urban authorities and their deeds in practice.

A suggestion

There can be no doubt that the breakthrough to the energetic city will be achieved sooner or later. If the Netherlands continues at its current pace the targets for sustainability of energy supplies will not be achieved. However, just a single small breakthrough can already lead to major changes. If a single neighbourhood-linked energy system became reality, that would be enough to trigger a breakthrough. Perhaps energy-oriented authorities, municipalities, national government and the European Union can make agreements with residents' initiatives about how to achieve this.

The author

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Part 5
Urban representation

The fifth theme is urban representation, in both senses of the word: 'representation' as imagination and identity on the one hand, and as a representative function in relations with other parties on the other. This section opens with a speech given during the Holland Festival 2015 by the Mayor of Amsterdam, Eberhard van der Laan, about the ideal European city. Following this, Michael Wintle opens our eyes to striking buildings in the city of Amsterdam, which can reveal to us how local, national and continental identities are interwoven. Patricia Pisters offers a very different kind of visual exploration that compares the filmmaker Eddy Terstall with Spinoza in her essay 'An eye for freedom'. Luiza Bialasiewicz highlights the problems involved in using the city for the rebranding of the nation-state, using Krakow and the rebranding of Poland as a full-fledged European nation as examples.

The other three contributions address the theme of diplomacy. Herman van der Wusten sees the city as backdrop in the diplomacy of states. Claske Vos, in contrast, examines diplomacy between European cities and Virginie Mamadouh focuses specifically on partnerships between cities.

36. The dreamed European city (urbo kune)

Eberhard van der Laan

During the Holland Festival in June 2015 the Mayor of Amsterdam, Eberhard van der Laan, talked about his vision of the future capital of Europe. This speech formed part of 'ein tag und eine stunde in urbo kune'*, a 25-hour event that took place in the Muziekgebouw aan 't IJ in Amsterdam.* Urbo kune *means 'the common city' in Esperanto, and it was inspired by the* 'Manifesto for the founding of the capital of the United States of Europe' *by the Czech architect Jan Tabor.* 'Ein tag und eine stunde in urbo kune' *is an artistic exploration of a cultural capital of Europe with music performances, exhibitions and lectures. The Mayor of Amsterdam was asked if he could provide a description of his 'dreamed European city'. He gave his answer in a speech at the start of the event. We reproduce the text here in English translation:*

Gesinjoroj,
Elkore Bonvenaj, Mi estas feliĉa esti ĉi tie (Ladies and gentlemen, a warm welcome to you, I am happy to be here).
Since my Esperanto is rather limited, I will switch to Dutch for the rest of the speech.
Asking the Mayor of Amsterdam what his ideal European city looks like is rather like asking an Italian chef what kind of cuisine he thinks is the best.
In my almost five years as Mayor I have often sung the praises of Amsterdam. And this was always in front of an appreciative audience, because most Amsterdam citizens are totally in love with their city. It is less usual that I am asked to talk about my city as part of an art project. It may only be a modest part of a 25-hour art event, but I am very honoured.

Jan Tabor, the spiritual father of *urbo kune*, sees the United States of Europe as an inevitable part of the future. And this requires a European capital, too. This ideal European capital will take shape in these coming 25 hours. When I look at the programme, it seems to be a city in which art and culture play a great role. A city where there is time for discussion, reflection and leisure. You will experience an 'urbanist opera', I read somewhere. What I am going to say, as part of this opera, will not be a song of praise to Amsterdam. Not because Amsterdam would not be the dreamed capital of Europe. Because it is, of course. Amsterdam is an international city. A city where the citizen has always stood on a pedestal, in higher regard than king or bishop. A city with 18,000 merchant's houses and not a single palace or cathedral. A city where, in the 17th century, all the world came together, from merchants to religious refugees. From that 17th-century melting pot blossomed science, art and innovation like never before. And all this in a culture of tolerance, of live and let live. Simply by virtue of this DNA, Amsterdam is a prime example of the dreamed capital of Europe. Small enough not to be threatening in the geopolitical sense, with more than enough history and culture to be atmospheric and inspiring, egalitarian and tolerant enough for all Europeans to feel at home here, and international enough to be the ideal gateway to Europe, regardless of whether you are coming here for business or pleasure. In short, you will not be getting that song of praise to this city today, but I think we can agree that Amsterdam is one of the cities that really deserve the label of European capital.

European cities, cities in Europe

Not so long ago I had the honour of chairing a symposium about the future of the city, at which Edward Glaeser, Harvard professor and author of works such as *Triumph of the City*, and Joan Clos, former Mayor of Barcelona and currently chair of UN Habitat, each held a speech. A man of academic research

and a man of practice, but also an American and a European vision of the city. In basic terms, Glaeser's message, interspersed with illustrations and figures that supported his position, was that the success of the city begins and ends with people. The greater the number of people living together in a small area, the more successful it is. In his view, it is of secondary importance whether this area contains outstanding modern urban planning or historical buildings. Glaeser believes one shouldn't be too sentimental about a city losing its population, as was the case with Detroit in the United States, for instance, after the collapse of the automobile industry there. People go where work and amenities can be found. Joan Clos disagreed with this. European cities are the most liveable cities in the world precisely thanks to urban planning and historical heritage. This is what attracts people. The megacities in India, China, South and Central America are experiencing explosive growth in a chaotic manner, and this is putting considerable pressure on liveability and sustainability.

I thought back to this symposium and I realised that the most attractive and successful European cities unite both of these factors. They are a magnet for people because work can be found there, especially in the sectors that occupy little space but actually benefit from many different people in a small area, so that exchange of ideas can take place. This includes the services sector, the financial sector and the creative sector. At the same time, they offer good quality of life and are attractive because people have thought about issues such as preservation of heritage, green areas, mobility and increasing density.

But there is something else that characterises European cities, something even more important. In my eyes, European cities are above all the domain of the free citizen. In the 19th century, the century of industrialisation, the West experienced a period of turbulent expansion. The population of Europe grew quickly and people moved to the cities in great numbers to find work and opportunities for personal development. But these cities were quite incapable of keeping up with the

growth. This is why our 19th-century ancestors were highly familiar with most of the problems now confronting growth metropolises in countries like India, Nigeria and Indonesia: Overpopulation, pollution of drinking water, air and soil, deadly epidemics, lack of social facilities, abominable working conditions and unhealthy basement flats. At the time, these problems seemed more or less insoluble. Social order appeared to be unsustainable.

This is one important reason why European governments, from the end of the 19th century onwards, focused major attention on urban development. The governments were pressured to do this and influenced by society, by free citizens and workers. They did this by guaranteeing utilities, reducing pollution of the living environment, investing in housing, education, social facilities and amenities and transport infrastructure. As a result of all this, the European cities not only became living monuments to free citizenship, but also bastions against the uninhibited effects of market forces and globalisation. Safe havens in an insecure world. In the 20th century this led to a successful balance between civic sense and the state. The two were in line with each other and reinforced each other.

The 21st century will be the century of the city. In Europe, cities are now, just as 150 years ago, focal points of growth and innovation. That is good news after decades of urban population shrinkage and impoverishment. The city is 'in'. The American philosopher Benjamin Barber believes that mayors should rule the world. The current Dutch government has decentralisation as its mantra and will soon be presenting its national Urban Agenda. Cities are the solution to almost everything, but at the same time new tasks are arising for the cities. To give one example: how do you keep the city in balance? How do you give space to this accelerating growth in terms of population and innovations, without people being disadvantaged in various ways? Disadvantaged because they fall behind in socio-economic status, because property prices spiral upwards, or because citizens increasingly feel a stranger in their own city. The future

belongs to the smart city, but only if a responsible government ensures a fair and level playing field in which all free citizens can act with economic and social freedom. This requires an inclusive application of technology. I always find it important to stress that the term 'smart city' is primarily about people, about people solving problems that people are faced with – and only then about technology.

The century of the city is certainly no exclusively European phenomenon. On the contrary. At the moment Beijing – and that maybe true of New Delhi or Mumbai too – is engaged in becoming what New York was in the 20th century, London in the 19th, Paris in the 18th, Amsterdam in the 17th and Madrid in the 16th: the vibrant focal point of international trade. There are cities that have grown from a population of eight million to twenty million in the space of ten years, and the end is certainly not in sight.

It should be understood that the typical 19th-century urban problems I just described now also apply to fast-growing cities such as Mexico City, Mumbai and São Paulo. My concerns about the tasks now facing us are nothing in comparison to the concerns of the so-called megacities. As Mayor, mindful of the Amsterdam DNA that combines curiosity with commercial spirit, I pay working visits to these cities. My jaw drops when I see the wealth of their history and culture, and I am seriously impressed by the rapid economic progress being achieved. But I always get a little homesick. Homesick for our continent that is able to minimise social differences. Homesick for our continent where self-willed or 'troublesome' journalists, artists and bloggers don't end up behind bars. Homesick for our continent where salmon once more swim in the River Rhine, where our children don't even know what acid rain is, and where we don't need to wear surgical masks whenever we leave our house. Homesick for our continent where, however imperfect they may be, democracy, human rights and independent judges have authority. Where in a city of thousands of demonstrations during my time as Mayor alone, some people still bear a grudge against the municipal

council because on *one* occasion a demonstrator was wrongly arrested (who was afterwards showered with flowers and apologies).

And then I haven't even mentioned all the European art, culture and preserved history. As is typical for homesickness, there is an element of idealisation here. But I view myself as truly fortunate to be a resident of Europe. And I ask myself the question: why does Europe have so little self-confidence?

Europe in the world, the world in Europe

The Union that once began as a collaboration between six countries in the area of coal and steel, under the motto of 'no more war' (which in fact was highly successful) has evolved over sixty years into an association of 28 Member States, and has now reached a crossroads. Support for an institutional Europe – characterised by conflicts on national interests, by bureaucratic legislation and by an excess of lobbyists – is falling. This union in the continent that, it should be remembered, is the cradle of democracy and of free and equal citizens, still has very little democratic content. A sense of community is imposed by a flag, an anthem and a language that no one speaks (I saw a lot of perplexity at the start of my speech...). Shared values don't need to be sought in such symbols of uncertainty, while in fact existing historical values provide so much more reason for self-assurance and confidence. The strength is currently to be found in towns, cities and regions, and above all in their inhabitants. In virtually all international comparisons, European cities lead the field in terms of quality of life and innovation. This, I am convinced, is to a great extent thanks to our democratic tradition and our way of looking after each other. Perhaps the only thing we are lacking is confidence in our own democracy. Powered by this self-confidence, our continent could also be a responsible continent, just as Amsterdam is trying to be a responsible capital. A capital that doesn't aim to keep all knowledge and prosperity for

itself, prompted by the memory of when, in the post-war period, the city was poor and unattractive, but was kept on its feet by the rest of the country.

The Union too, if it wants to take the right path at this crossroads, would have to focus on the free and equal citizens of Europe who carry the European values in their hearts. Such as the inhabitants of Athens, the city where democracy was born, the inhabitants of Amsterdam, originating from all parts of the world and with their 17th-century DNA of tolerance, the inhabitants of Paris, from where the revolutionary 'liberty, equality and fraternity' conquered the world, the inhabitants of London, home to the Churchill spirit, the inhabitants of Berlin, with the Wall as a historic European monument, the inhabitants of Madrid, Rome, Oslo and Prague and all the other cities and towns and regions that make Europe into this magnificent mosaic.

To conclude

Back to the ideal European capital of the United States of Europe. Does this automatically have to be the finest city, or indeed a fine city at all? In the United States of America, Washington was specially built by the founding fathers as a capital in a hot and steamy swamp, purposely not intended to become the most attractive or the most American city. Likewise the ideal capital of Europe, needs not have to be the most attractive or the most European city. Let Brussels remain as the European capital. Amsterdam and all the other dreamed capitals are really too nice for this role.

The author

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37. Interlocking identities

Amsterdam, the Netherlands and Europe in the
built environment of the capital

Michael Wintle

Architecture can capture and project identity. Kings and presidents try to secure their legacy with palaces and museums in prominent places; eminent citizens project their achievements and wealth by building imposing residences; even ordinary citizens instinctively choose dwellings which they think reflect their style and taste. And the same is true of cities, especially capital cities. Amsterdam, like other European capitals, presents itself by commissioning its built environment at various levels and in successive periods, especially its public buildings.

There is a common popular assumption that political identities are singular, fixed items; you have one, and it involves loyalty and allegiance to a particular body or unit, most usually a nation state. If you are Dutch, then your primary loyalty or identification is with the Netherlands, and sharing that identity with something else – another country for example – will weaken or even damage your Dutch identity. Half-measures are signs of weakness: you can only have one identity, and it is the same for everyone. Remember the trouble Princess Maxima got into when she had the cheek to suggest in 2007 that there was no single Dutch national identity? Perhaps the most notorious perceived clash of identities happens when *national* and *European* identities collide: many would take the view that the more you identify with Europe, the less strong your national identity becomes.

If that kind of view characterises populist rhetoric, then it is far too simplistic. Our identities always involve loyalties to all sorts of different things, like family, gender, age group, ideology, religion, region, country, continent and much else. In addition those loyalties change over time in themselves and in relation

to others, but together they make up a complete, total identity which is the sum of those many different allegiances. Some strands may be more important than others, but identities are invariably multiple.

Here I shall illustrate this by looking at the way three kinds of identity not only coexist, but actually support each other in Amsterdam. Those three forms are ones which might be seen as being especially mutually incompatible: the local identity of the city of Amsterdam, the national identity of the Netherlands, and a European identity. Amsterdam is a particularly good but by no means unique example: a similar exercise could be conducted in London, Lisbon, Vienna, or other capitals. In Amsterdam I will show how these three kinds of collective identity have worked together and strengthened each other over time. This mutual support system has been going on for centuries, and I shall highlight it by looking at the way the three identities are broadcast on many of the buildings in the centre of the city: the visual culture which surrounds us all the time has been and still is immensely important in reinforcing messages like this. These images in stone, adorning the built environment of the capital, actively support a three-level identification with the town, the country and the continent. Amsterdam is displayed and honoured as the great trading port and capital city; the Netherlands is reflected as a fine nation and country and a productive economy; and Europe is revealed as the best continent in the world: different from and superior to the rest of the world.

Take the example of the Royal Palace on the Dam, or the Town Hall as it was when it was built, around 1650, by Jacob van Campen, and his sculptor Artus Quellinus. In the west tympanum, shown in Figure 1, the four continents of the world are shown bringing their tribute to the maid of Amsterdam, who is supported by the two river gods below, the IJ and the Amstel. To the left of Amsterdam we see Europe, wearing rich clothes and a crown (queen of the world), with various symbols of her superiority: a warhorse to show her strength in war, a bull linking her with the ancient world through the myth of Europa and the

Figure 1 – Artus Quellinus, Amsterdam and the continents, c. 1648, frieze in the west (rear) tympanum of the Royal Palace, the Dam, Amsterdam.

Bull, a horn of plenty and bunches of grapes to show her natural riches and sophistication, and books to show her learning and wisdom. Africa, further to the left, is represented by a naked (and therefore primitive) woman; she has an exotic lion and elephant with her, and is bringing ivory and bales of goods as tribute. To the right of Amsterdam, we see Asia, accompanied by a camel and wearing a turban; she has (as always) a censer and some Turkish tulips, reminding us of the tulip fever of 1636-37. On the extreme right is America, with a feather headdress and a crocodile, tobacco, sugar and silver-mining. Amsterdam is of course the star of this show, but she is the capital of the Dutch Republic, a great trading nation with a worldwide network, and she is herself part of Europe, the best and most powerful queen of the continents. This is a piece of Eurocentric, Dutch, Amsterdam promotion, and it is an image found all over the Netherlands in the 17th century in architecture, books, paintings, sculpture, and many other forms of applied art. Identifying with Amsterdam, the Netherlands and Europe goes perfectly together, and indeed the three levels strengthen each other.

This kind of imagery is found all over the city, and was not confined to the Golden Age: there are many examples from other periods, especially in the heyday of modern imperialism, from the 1880s to the First World War. The frontage of Central Station,

built in the 1880s, has a series of sculptures in relief by Ludwig Jünger. Mirroring the Royal Palace version of more than two centuries before, there is a central figure of the Amsterdam maid and her two rivers (Figure 2, at the top), and in the panel to the left Europe and Africa are bringing her tribute (Figure 2, below).

Europe has books of learning, a jar of wine or oil, and grapes for sophistication in agriculture and diet, while Africa brings ivory, a lion and an exotic bird. On a third panel to the right (not shown here), are Asia and America, just as on the Royal Palace. There is a conscious repetition of the imagery here, again with the three main elements of identification, only this time the whole station building and its decoration is a celebration of the modern Dutch nation state, and its European status in the world; again, Eurocentrism is in the service of the Netherlands and especially of Amsterdam, and the combination works perfectly.

Throughout that period of later imperialism, many new buildings were commissioned in Amsterdam to glorify the town's commercial, political and cultural achievements, such as the Shipping House, built on the Prins Hendrikkade during the First World War, or the Colonial Institute (renamed the Royal Tropical Institute in 1949) on the Mauritskade, built between 1912 and 1926. The latter is copiously decorated with plaques and illustrations on both the inside and especially the outside of the building, and the designers had a clear message to send out: this is a celebration of the great Dutch empire, controlled from here in Amsterdam, and of European achievements set off against the primitive exoticism of the East. Again, the civic, the national and the Eurocentric combine in force to strengthen each other. Above the front entrance stand three female statues by Willem M. Retera (Figure 3): in the centre there is the Netherlands, with a freedom bonnet; the crowned figure of Europe appears on the left; and on the right we see a personification of the East Indies, in the form of an attractive, available exotic dancer from the distant, colonial archipelago. The Orient is summoned up in fantasy, but a fantasy concerned with communicating an identity for Amsterdam, the Netherlands and Europe, all supporting each other.

In the early 20th century a whole host of Amsterdam buildings continued to trumpet out the trinity of city, nation and continent, most of them built by the architects of the Amsterdam School, who with their decorative style dominated much of public architecture in the period between 1914 and 1930, especially in the capital but

Figure 3 – Willem M. Retera, statues over the entrance to the Royal Tropical Institute, Amsterdam, c. 1920.

also elsewhere in the Netherlands (and indeed further afield). Besides the *Shipping House* by J. van der Mey, and the Stock Exchange by H.P. Berlage, one could also point to the massive bulk of 'De Bazel' on the Vijzelstraat, built in 1924 by K.P.C. de Bazel as the headquarters of a colonial bank (*De Nederlandsche Handelmaatschappij*). All these edifices celebrate the city, the

Figure 4 – Theo Vos, sculptures of the continents on the Hotel NH Carlton, Vijzelstraat Amsterdam, c. 1928.

nation and Europe, and all support each other. A less well-known example is the Hotel NH Carlton Amsterdam (Figure 4), also on the Vijzelstraat, originally constructed to help with the shortage of hotel accommodation for the Amsterdam Olympic Games of 1928. It is festooned with all sorts of stylised and exotic images of all parts of the world: to welcome all the competing nations at the games, we

have Orientalism run riot. On the elevations facing the Muntplein and the Vijzelstraat, there are sculptures by Theo Vos of the four continents: from left to right, Europe with her bull, America with a bison, Africa with a lion, and Asia with an elephant. The imagery is not quite so detailed here, but it slots seamlessly into that powerful tradition of decorating the public built environment of Amsterdam by celebrating the capital, the country, and the continent all in one. That combination has been an essential component of the visual culture of the city for four centuries, and it is a perfect example of how – well before the time of the EU – identification with the civic, the national and the European displays not only a peaceful coexistence, but can palpably strengthen and reinforce the separate strands into a cohesive whole. Identities can be seen to have worked together here, as they still can, linking Amsterdam, the Netherlands and Europe.

The author

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(All the photographs were taken by the author.)

38. An eye for freedom: Spinoza and Terstall in Amsterdam

Patricia Pisters

In 2005, in a jam-packed cinema in Tunis, I saw the Dutch movie *Simon* (2004) by Eddy Terstall. The movie was part of a film festival organised by the European embassies, at which each country showcased their best movie from the past year. Terstall was present at the screening, and introduced the film in fluent Arabic and French. He warned the audience that the film – which is about the universal themes of friendship, love and death – may appear rather exotic to many of the Arabic and European audience members, as in *Simon* these topics are explored within the city boundaries of a liberal Amsterdam, where there is a tolerant attitude to sexuality and soft drugs, gay marriage is a commonly accepted fact and assisted dying is a legal option enabling someone who is facing the prospect of unbearable suffering to terminate their life in a dignified way. It just so happened that the Spanish offering at the same festival was the movie *The Sea Inside* (*Mar Adentro*, dir. Alejandro Amenabar, 2004), based on the true story of a quadriplegic who loses his battle with the Spanish legal system and the Catholic church for the right to terminate his life.

Spinoza's heir

The contrast between the different approaches to the same problem could not have been displayed more clearly. These films show that, even within the European Union, there are still major cultural differences when it comes to morality (including sexual morality) and ethical dilemmas. *Simon* addresses a range of different taboo topics, and is a movie which perhaps could not have

been made anywhere but in 20th-century Amsterdam. With the emphasis he places on freedom of speech and lifestyle, Terstall could be considered an heir to the ideas of Baruch Spinoza, the philosopher born in 17th-century Amsterdam, who considered freedom to be an important prerequisite for ethics and politics. Although Terstall never explicitly invokes his fellow townsman, he states in his book *Ik loop of ik vlieg* ('I Walk or I Fly', published in Dutch) that he wants to show through his movies that free thought and action is a hallmark of civilisation that is worth drawing attention to. In that sense, his films can be considered Spinozan treatises in defence of freedom. Below you will find some observations on the natural affinity that exists between these two free-state thinkers.

To start with, both Spinoza and Terstall view Amsterdam as a city that exemplifies the way that freedom and tolerance can lead to great prosperity and a healthy society. Although Spinoza was cut off by his Jewish community in Amsterdam, and his writings were largely published anonymously or posthumously and for a long time were forbidden throughout Europe, in his *Theological-Political Treatise* (1670) he sang the praises of Amsterdam as a flourishing city in which people 'of every nation and creed' lived together in harmony and were equal in the eyes of the law. Spinoza cited Amsterdam as proof of the success of freedom of thought and expression. Although Spinoza did not consider this freedom to be boundless, his philosophy centred on the struggle for freedom of thought and expression. In his films, Terstall shows what the contemporary free state of the Netherlands looks like. In the wake of growing secularisation and the breakdown of traditional religious and socio-political barriers that unfolded from the 1960s onwards, the Netherlands began to look more and more like Spinoza's ideal of the free state. The titular character in *Simon*, played by Cees Geel, is a tough-looking guy with a sharp sense of humour who runs a coffee shop in Amsterdam. Camiel (Marcel Hensema) is Simon's friend and the story's narrator; he is a dentist and, in the course of the story, gets married to estate agent Bram (Dirk Zeelenberg). Simon has

two children from his relationship with a Thai woman, both of whom moved in with him after her death. When Simon learns that he has terminal cancer, he decides not to wait for the end, but opts for a gentle death at a moment of his own choosing, surrounded by his friends, ex-girlfriends and family. Camiel and Bram will go on to look after the children. Terstall's films tend to feature an eclectic cast of people from all different walks of life, ethnic backgrounds and denominations. The urban landscape – Amsterdam's in particular – is the backdrop against which they lead their lives freely and openly.

For Spinoza, freedom was not determined by the principle of free will, a point on which he disagreed with his teacher and contemporary, René Descartes. Spinoza considered Descartes' theory – that there was a specific part of the brain (the pineal gland) that was the seat of free will, and that it was this that gave people the ability to act at their own discretion – to be a bizarre and completely inadequate idea. Spinoza believed that freedom is achieved by arriving at an understanding of the true causes of our emotions, and recognising the necessity of certain events by placing them in a broader context. For example, Spinoza stated that someone who is mourning the loss of something will be less sad when they come to realise that the loss was inevitable. In his *Ethics*, the philosopher gives countless examples of insights which will lead to greater understanding, and by extension to greater freedom. Placing this in a contemporary context, we can look to *Simon* for an illustration of the life-and-death ethical dilemmas that are raised by the debate on assisted dying, a debate that had not yet arisen as such in Spinoza's time.

However, Simon's choice to terminate his own life can be regarded as a Spinozan acceptance of the necessity of dying, and the subsequent freedom to deal with this in a dignified manner. Viewed from this angle, assisted dying is not the imposition of (Cartesian) free will and thereby a denial of the will of God. But making this active choice cannot be seen as a moral duty or dogma either – indeed, this is essential if one is to have the freedom to arrive at a well-considered ethical decision on one's

own terms. *Simon* powerfully shows how this choice is made, taking into account the broad range of different emotions involved in the process. A belief in freedom even when faced with non-negotiable situations, a freedom bounded by the vulnerability of human existence but unimpeded by dogmas – that is the second similarity between Terstall and Spinoza's worldviews.

Finally, there is a third similarity. It may seem that both Spinoza and Terstall are making a case for pure individualism, in which everyone is free to do whatever they want. But both of them are aware that freedom is subject to conditions that relate to the individual's responsibility to the collective and the political domain. For example, in his treatise on freedom of speech, Spinoza states – under the adage 'live and let live' – that it is impossible to keep the peace if people are not willing to contain certain areas of freedom in order to ensure that others do not suffer from it. People should be able to express differences of opinion, with other people as well as the state, but these discussions should be driven by rational considerations rather than lies, anger, hatred or other negative emotions that do not lead to constructive thoughts. Ultimately, the purpose of every political entity (which, according to Spinoza, can never be represented by one single person or institution) is to increase individual freedom; in a free society, people are also responsible for looking after each other. Empathising with other people's emotions is a key part of Spinoza's life philosophy. In Spinoza's time, his insights were not exactly part of the political mainstream, nor did they accord with the opinion of the masses. In the year 1672 – referred to in Dutch history as the 'disaster year' – Spinoza was deeply shocked by the gruesome murder of the De Witt brothers. His landlord only just managed to prevent him from taking a placard to the site of the lynching bearing the words '*ultimi barbarorum*' ('you are the greatest of barbarians'). It is difficult to dispel the emotional charge that builds up around freedom, politics and the voice of the people and redirect that energy into the rational sphere. Spinoza was all too aware of this, and was not immune to it himself.

Fragile balance

Terstall, too, has actively engaged with the political dimensions of an open and free society. A few months after the premiere of *Simon*, another gruesome event took place in Amsterdam: the assassination of filmmaker Theo van Gogh. Van Gogh was known for his outspoken opinions, and had made a movie about the radical side of Islam. He was murdered by a young man who had converted to fundamentalist Islam. In *Allerzielen* ('All Souls', 2004), a collection of short films paying tribute to Van Gogh, Terstall was one of the filmmakers who made a clear case for freedom of speech, free from the fear of violent retribution. In his film *Vox Populi* (2007), he went on to show how politics, the voice of the people and the opportunistic hijacking of populist opinion (as measured by vox populi and constant polls) in political agendas is resulting in a political climate in which frustration, fear and the daily talking points are increasingly putting freedom under pressure. Terstall's protagonist in the film, the politician Jos Franssen (Tom Jansen), ends up withdrawing from politics. The movie is a comment on the wider dissatisfaction that characterises the contemporary political climate in the Netherlands and the rest of the world, where dogmatic forms of religion and political rhetoric driven by negative emotion still make it difficult for Spinoza's ideal of a free state to become a reality.

Freedom continues to be the most important goal. In increasingly pluralistic urban societies, safeguarding freedom will become more and more complicated. Emotions, aroused by conflicting interests and ideas, will always play a part in the pursuit of freedom and, in a globalised world, are running higher than ever, as evidenced by the plethora of recent attacks on free speech and thought. If Spinoza had been alive today, he may also have become a filmmaker: he did, after all, work as a lens grinder and, as a philosopher, was keenly aware of the role the imagination plays in broadening one's mind. After the attacks on the Charlie Hebdo journalists in Paris, he would probably have

gone out to demonstrate with a 'Je suis Charlie' sign as well. But he would also have urged people to try to *understand* the anger, hatred and frustration of the attackers – not to condone their actions, but to acknowledge the ways in which freedom and necessity can sometimes meet in the cruellest of ways. In his last movie, Terstall was inspired by the tolerant, spiritual side of Islam. *Meet Me in Venice* (2015) is a road movie about a father (Mauro/ Beppe Costa) and a daughter (Liza/Roberta Petzoldt) who meet for the first time in 28 years. Their journey from Amsterdam finishes in Istanbul with a visit to a dervish ceremony, and makes reference to a poem by the Persian Sufi poet Rumi, in which he advises the reader to 'become nothing'. This film, too, is centred on freedom and the quest to arrive at an understanding of emotions and necessity. But nowhere does Terstall convey a Spinozan message of freedom and tolerance more clearly than at the end of *Vox Populi*. The politician leaves the Netherlands and, looking down from the plane on the flatlands and reflecting on the ideal of a national free state, he says: 'Let it be a country in which you can practice your faith or have no faith, without fear; let it be a country above whose gateways are written the words "male, female, gay, straight, white, black – they are all equal, always"; ensure the economy keeps turning, but without the weak getting caught in the cogwheels.' That this ideal is not easy to achieve, is brittle in places and can only ever exist in a fragile state of equilibrium is another point on which Terstall and Spinoza agree, and is the very reason that the search for the ideal free state is one that should never be given up on.

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political cinema, (trans)national media, neurocinematics and film-philosophy. Her latest book *Filming for the Future* (Amsterdam University Press), on the work of film director Louis van Gasteren who documented Amsterdam in many of his films, won the Louis Hartlooper Prize of Best Film Publications 2016. See for articles, her blog, audio-visual essays and other information also www.patriciapisters.com

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39. An urban geopolitics

(or, the perils of using the city to rebrand the state
– and Europe)

Luiza Bialasiewicz

Over the past decade, the term 'urban geopolitics' has entered the policy as well as academic lexicon. In an op-ed piece published in the summer of 2012, Saskia Sassen prognosticated the emergence of a new sort of 'urban geopolitics', noting that from tackling environmental questions to countering the threat of terrorism, in the decades to come it would be urban actors and city networks that would become key *geopolitical actors* and *sites of geopolitics.* 'Major cities will not replace any of the other geopolitical actors,' she argued, 'but they will play a role, both as actor and as the site for major challenges.'

In Sassen's work, just as in the writings of most other commentators deploying this term, the city becomes a geopolitical actor as/when it takes on what are considered the 'hard' geopolitical roles of the state: the defence of boundaries, the securing of territory, the management of flows of people and goods. And European cities are, indeed, increasingly doing all of these things: from the adoption of urban anti-terrorism strategies (e.g. London for the 2012 Olympic Games), to the roles that many cities have been forced to take in order to face sudden mass arrivals of migrants (e.g. Rome in the summer of 2015).

But geopolitics is not just about the management of space and populations. It is equally importantly about *representing* spaces and populations; about telling stories about what spaces are (and, even more importantly, what they *should* be), and about *who* belongs *where*. In that sense, the growing popularisation of the term 'urban geopolitics' only partially engages the various ways in which European cities today are, indeed, becoming geopolitical actors. Such discussions frequently fail to pay heed

to the powerful ways in which cities have begun to craft distinct 'geopolitical imaginations' not just for themselves but also for their constituent states – and what this might mean for the refashioning of identitary narratives in today's Europe.

Geographers have long analysed such spatial imaginations, highlighting how they have been fundamental to sustaining, for instance, the visions of European colonial empires and their claims to territories in Africa or Asia, framing these latter as part of an extended motherland/*patrie*. Yet such imaginations are never only about claims to space; they also recount a particular narrative about *who* the people of a state are: a 'chosen' people, the paragon of democratic virtue, the embodiment of civilisational progress etc. In other words, geopolitical imaginations tell a particular story about a state, its past, its present, and its future mission/destiny (in ways very similar to nationalist myth-making, but it is important to separate and distinguish the two).

What happens when cities suddenly take on this task? In a number of recent European urban policy documents, cities are being given just this role: in the latest EUROCITIES calls for an Urban Agenda for the EU, cities are seen as the key ideational sites for the shaping of an 'inclusive European identity', and should play a 'key role in combatting racism and discrimination'. The 2015 Vienna Declaration by the Mayors of the EU's Capital Cities invokes cities as 'a major pillar supporting the concept of a united Europe'. Cities today should be shining examples of what Europe *is* and especially, what it *should be*; they should tell a particular story about the European project.

This role assigned to – and actively seized by – cities is not entirely new. Its best known recent examples can be seen in the attempts by cities of the former Soviet Bloc to restyle themselves as 'fully European' following the collapse of the communist regimes after 1989. Whether in Krakow, Prague or Budapest (or in part even in cities further East, such as L'viv), the 1990s witnessed a both discursive but also very material and physical rebranding of these cities' urban landscapes. The key impetus of such

rebranding was the assertion of these cities' full Europeanness, full belonging to a 'European urban experience' from which they had been 'kidnapped' by the Iron Curtain and 40-some years of state socialism.

How was such rebranding accomplished, allowing for these cities' geographical 'drift' from Eastern Europe to Central Europe, to Europe, as various commentators in the early 1990s noted, tongue in cheek? Part of it relied, of course, on a discursive rewriting of their urban histories, just as the national states were busy rescripting their national founding myths and pantheons. This included both rehabilitating events and figures that may have been suppressed by state socialist regimes, but also attempting to reconnect these urban histories to wider European developments and trajectories. In many parts of Eastern Europe, this included new attention to common legacies of European imperial formations, the Austro-Hungarian one in particular ('We were all the same Imperial subjects once upon a time', sighed Habsburg nostalgics from L'viv to Budapest to Prague).

But such discursive geopolitical reimagining was just one part of the equation. The rebranding of these cities as fully European also required interventions of 'material geopolitics': that is, a *physical* remaking of urban landscapes – the creation of new spaces, but also the rebranding and repurposing of existing ones – in order to tell a new story about the city and its geopolitical identity. The remaking of urban heritage landscapes was key to this endeavour, materializing in concrete built form the 'truth' of the new geopolitical narrative about the city's historical (and thus current) Europeanness.

What should be noted is that such interventions were almost never *solely* urban endeavours. And here lay their 'geopolitical innovation': many such projects were actively captured, supported and promoted by the national states. Their genius? Since a 'European city' can only lie in a 'European state', these cities' rediscovered Europeanness *also* confirmed the post-communist states' full Europeanness.

There are wider lessons to be learned here, however, for this has not just been a crafty tactic of Eastern European cities trying to become 'more European'. Across Europe – East, West, North and South – over the past two decades cities have been increasingly deployed as a way of rebranding states and the EU itself. City landscapes and (some) urban populations, and their supposed 'traditions', 'cultures' and 'urban modes of being' have been galvanised to tell new and different geopolitical stories about the state – and about Europe. This ranges from the valorisation of the urban as a site where diversities (religious, national, socio-economic) 'have learned how to coexist', or the hailing of cities as places of refuge for new migrant populations, telling a very distinct geopolitical story of cities as somehow inherently 'hospitable' (think of the geopolitical stories told about 'multicultural metropolises' like Amsterdam, Berlin, London or Paris).

Perhaps the best known – and certainly most extensive – means through which such symbolic story retelling has occurred has been through the European Capitals of Culture programme, first launched 50 years ago (1985), which by now has touched-down in over 50 European cities. The explicit aim of the programme is to 'highlight the richness and diversity of cultures in Europe through its cities' and as such 'celebrate the cultural features that Europeans share'. The theme of cultural diversity is central to the initiative, with cities seen as somehow best able to express and showcase Europe's diversity and Europeans' capacity for coexistence.

Yet such initiatives have not been unproblematic, as lofty as the sentiments may be. I'd like to bring in closing one example that has attracted extensive popular and scholarly attention, and that I believe highlights some of the dangers of urban geopolitical agendas. I refer to the rebuilding and rebranding of parts of the Polish city of Krakow's former Jewish district, Kazimierz, as part of its European Capital of Culture programme in the year 2000, one of the most widely publicised parts of the initiative in the international press. The Capital of Culture initiative's emphasis

on Krakow's Jewish heritage was presented as a vital marker of the city's multicultural and multi-religious past, and thus by extension its European heritage. 'Multiculturalism' was popularly seen as a 'European thing' by post-communist urban elites, and in the case of cities like Krakow (but also Budapest and Prague), a selective rediscovery of an urban Jewish heritage became an important tool to this end. Beyond the questions raised by the physical interventions into the district's architecture as part of the Capital of Culture initiative, and the 'authenticity' of the reconstructed Jewish religious sites and gathering spaces, what many commentators saw as even more problematic was the sudden 'valorisation' of a Jewish past in a city and country where that past had been so tragic – and the use of the urban Jewish past to tell a new, rehabilitated story not just about Krakow, but also about Poland: multicultural, diverse, accepting, and thus fully European (while creating what Ruth Ellen Gruber termed 'virtually Jewish spaces' or 'Disneylands of Judaism', with no living Jews).

History has taught us the potential perils of state geopolitical agendas. We must be much more careful when vesting such symbolic capacities in cities as well. An urban geopolitics is not by definition necessarily 'better' than a national one. The geopolitical identitary stories that cities tell about themselves (or that are told about cities by the national state, or by European bodies and organisations) are not necessarily any less exclusivist, or any less reliant on highly selective versions of the urban past and present. Urban geopolitical imaginations are not by definition any more democratic or pluralist than national ones.

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40.   Decor and decorum in diplomacy

Herman van der Wusten

The Dutch Presidency of the European Union in the first six months of 2016 was largely based in Amsterdam, at the Marine Etablissement, the capital city's historical naval dockyard. This location – which is currently well-designed for security and has good transport links by road with Schiphol Airport – was the site of ministerial councils and other meetings, with the festive highlights being held at the nearby National Maritime Museum (*Scheepvaartmuseum*). Incidentally, the European Councils and other European institutions remained in their usual locations – which, in most cases, will be Brussels. According to Iver Neumann, author of *Diplomatic Sites* (2013), the choice of these locations and the way that they are designed is all part of the art of diplomacy, i.e. serves to facilitate and maintain international political ties. Politicians tend to perform the most visible roles on this pre-planned diplomatic stage.

In the dominant diplomatic tradition, diplomacy forms part of the system of nation states and is largely confined to the capital cities (disregarding the unique situation in the Netherlands, where there is a split between Amsterdam as capital city and The Hague as the seat of government). The average capital city tends to have a fairly clearly-delineated area in which political functions are concentrated, with prominent addresses for the head of state and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, who play the main roles in official dealings with the members of the local diplomatic corps. Partly for this same reason, embassies tend to all be based in the same area.

Incidentally, in the history of Europe, it took a considerable amount of time before state diplomacy assumed the classic form which is now considered the leading tradition. It is curious that the key diplomatic entities from before that time – cities and the Pope – now are once again reprising this role, for example when

it comes to issues such as climate change. They are even joining forces to do so, with NGOs, which act as an additional force, mobilising awareness and support. Their public meeting in July 2015 in the Vatican ended in an 'agreement', but was clearly also intended to point the way for the UN Climate Change Conference, dominated by nation states, held in Paris in late 2015. Incidentally, in addition to all the meetings of national representatives from the EU Member States, the Marine Etablissement was also the site of a Mayors' Meeting, bringing together the mayors of the EU capitals.

Over time, the way in which diplomacy is conducted has undergone tremendous changes as a result of the overall increase in international relations and the instant availability of information from everywhere to everyone via new, and increasingly fast, forms of media. All this has resulted in a growing interest in what is happening in the world of diplomacy, and a clamour for greater openness. In a lot of ways, diplomacy has lost its exclusive character. It largely takes place on a stage that has been designed with an appropriate decor for the performance, but in order to be effective it also needs a certain level of secrecy. It is becoming more and more difficult to find the right balance between the two. In many situations, diplomatic efforts require a certain level of decorum – i.e. an appropriate degree of restraint and adherence to protocol – but this is not always beneficial for diplomacy's effectiveness, either in public or behind closed doors. Striking the right tone at the right moment is an art in and of itself – it always has been, and it is so now more than ever.

Cities that specialise in diplomacy

Much diplomatic activity is still concentrated in cities, and more specifically in cities that explicitly specialise in diplomacy. In addition to the capital cities, these are the seats of important international institutions – New York and Geneva in particular

at the global level. At the macro-regional level, these institutions tend to be based in capital cities, and their presence can supersede even the importance that the diplomatic function of being a nation's capital confers on a city. Brussels is the best example of this. If we look at things in this way, we are essentially considering the presence of diplomatic posts – the offices of diplomats – to be an indicator of the level of diplomatic activity. While this is not entirely inaccurate, it does not reveal the complete picture.

More than any other group of public servants, diplomats are by definition mobile, which means that diplomatic practice can, for brief periods of time, perfectly well take place away from its regular location. However, if we look for example at those places in which multilateral agreements have been concluded over time, we see that there has been, and remains, only limited flexibility in terms of location for these important types of diplomatic activity. Of the nearly six thousand multilateral agreements that have been ratified in the past four centuries, it turns out that, of those in which the location could be determined, 76% were signed in capital cities.

Of course, these types of agreements have also come into being outside of cities from time to time: in castles, at battlegrounds and in locations that resulted from all sorts of priorities and considerations as to what would constitute the ideal place (halfway between the different parties; exemplifying a position of power that had been obtained; at a beautiful location; at a place of historical significance; somewhere as remote as possible).

The comparative advantage of seats of government as locations for international diplomatic activity is further augmented by the creation of particularly favourable conditions. For a number of years, The Hague has been working on optimising its so-called International Zone. This has partly been driven by the need to manage security risks as effectively as possible while maintaining an open living environment. All in all, this can increase the quality of the zone and contribute to the further

expansion of the city's role on the international stage. This is a long-term approach to setting the stage for diplomatic activity. And when effective solutions are found, sometimes the thought is entertained of marketing this design to other cities as well.

Iver Neumann emphasises that diplomats choose the sites for international relations and prepare them with a view to the effect that is to be achieved. Aesthetic considerations are employed in a functional way as part of this process. The effect must be felt by the participants – but now, more and more, directly and indirectly (i.e. through the media), spectators are involved as well. However, the idea is one that, in and of itself, has a long history. Byzantine diplomacy in Constantinople, for example, employed a great deal of pomp and circumstance. In the 1,000 years before its fall in 1453, the Byzantine Empire maintained relations with its many neighbours and neighbours' neighbours. The Byzantine rulers' sophisticated attempts to wow their guests, with an ornately-decorated urban setting unrivalled in its splendour and a code of behaviour aimed at enforcing respect, played an important part in this. Neumann considers diplomacy to be a display of the sublime.

Latter-day changes to the environment in which diplomacy takes place, in particular the pressure of public opinion and the omnipresence of the media, have led to new forms of diplomatic display: different decors, different decorum. While the city as a site of diplomatic activity has by no means been relegated to the background, it does sometimes seem that, in urban diplomatic settings, the 'sublime moment' has. This may be related to the fact that many urban sites are difficult to manage and keep secure, and due to the disturbance to residents that can be caused by mass orchestrations of political events. The severe congestion in the entire Randstad conurbation caused by the 2014 Nuclear Security Summit in The Hague served to illustrate this. To explore this issue in some more detail, I will compare diplomatic practice in the EU with the meetings held by what has, at different points in time, been known as the G6, G7, G8 and G7 again.

Summits and their diplomatic flavour

The constitutional treaties on European cooperation bear the names of the cities in which they came about as a result of multilateral negotiations (Rome, Maastricht, Amsterdam, Nice, Lisbon). With the exception of Rome, these locations relate to the rotating Presidency of the European Union and the organisation that preceded it, and to the city in which the Presidency was based by the time that the long-term preparations had progressed to the stage of final negotiations on a treaty.

Those long-term preparations have increasingly come to be concentrated in Brussels, which, under the Treaty of Nice, has been the seat of the European Council since 2002. This idea was not only championed by the Belgian lobby, but also supported by practical considerations: the need for permanently-available facilities and established meeting protocols. These came in very handy only recently. Between mid-June and mid-July 2015, four European Council meetings and nine meetings of the Eurogroup (the finance ministers of the eurozone) were necessary in order to prevent, for the time being, a resurgence of the crisis surrounding the situation in Greece – and it was clear that even these extensive talks were extremely unlikely to be the end of it.

These sorts of events in Brussels have come to follow fixed patterns of regulated publicity, with press opportunities when the delegates enter the conference venue – the schedules of which have been announced, down to the minute, in advance, often along with a basic gist of the information that will be given – more in-depth press conferences with the participants at the end of the conference which are also carefully regulated, and live tweeting during the meetings, primarily to announce the moment that a meeting is concluded or adjourned. If you are looking for the sublime, the group photo amid a panoply of flags, with carefully orchestrated positions for all the attendees, is the closest you will get. The team photos of the football teams at the start of the season look playful by comparison.

The G6/G7/G8 meetings reveal a systematic shift in preference away from urban meeting locations and toward non-urban ones. At the instigation of Giscard d'Estaing and Schmidt (the French and German leaders at the time), the leaders of what were initially six major economies convened in 1975 for a fairly informal gathering aimed at discussing the most pressing economic issues of the day (at the time, the world was still in the throes of the first oil crisis). It was to become an annual event, with slight variations in the number of core members and including, eventually, the President of the European Commission, as fixed attendees, as well as a variable number of invited guests, depending on the agenda.

The first G6 Summit took place in Rambouillet, fifty kilometres outside Paris. After that, the meetings went on to be held in a wide range of different places – at first primarily in the capital cities or other major cities, but more recently often in remote luxury resorts which appear to have been selected for their natural beauty, security opportunities and their ability to hold demonstrations at arm's length. This change clearly came into being following the violent disturbances in Genoa in 2001. During riots involving 200,000 protesters, one person was killed. The change in the choices of location can be clearly seen when we look at the subsequent locations that were selected in the UK and Germany. Before Genoa, three meetings had taken place in London and one in Birmingham, two in Bonn, one in Munich and one in Cologne. The meetings following on from Genoa took place at Gleneagles in Scotland, on the shore of Lough Erne in Northern Ireland, in Heiligendamm in deepest Mecklenburg on the Baltic Sea coast, and recently in Schloss Elmau outside Garmisch in Bavaria.

The G7 Summit in Elmau in June 2015 was guarded by a massive police presence: more than 17,000 German police officers provided the core security, with a further 2,100 colleagues available at the nearby Austrian border. The protests remained predominantly confined to the city centre of Munich, about 100 kilometres away. Extensive negotiations were held with the

organisers in advance about these protests, and what would and would not be allowed. A total of 5,000 journalists travelled to Elmau to report in-depth on the summit.

At the luxury resort, informal pictures were taken by the Chief Official White House Photographer Pete Souza, which were published straight away. Souza and his staff take these types of photos on a constant basis – up to 20,000 per week. On the most popular of these photos from Elmau, we see Obama from behind as he leans back on a bench with his arms stretched out on the backrest, looking out onto a stunning mountain panorama in the distance. We are outside in a rolling meadow. Chancellor Angela Merkel is standing in front of him, addressing him (and partly addressing us too). They are most likely discussing the climate, as that was the main topic of the final declaration of the summit. In his photos, Souza is constantly looking for the sublime moment.

The sublime in diplomacy and the city

The Marine Etablissement, the EU Presidency's main working site, was the property of the Ministry of Defence, but soon the Ministry will withdraw. It will instead be redeveloped as a prime location in the city centre, a permanent decor for the sublime. But this stage will then be exclusively set for urban life itself. As far as the EU Presidency was concerned, the interest in the sublime remained confined to the nearby National Maritime Museum. On future occasions the Byzantine example of the sublime in diplomacy within the city will perhaps even have to be increasingly confined to settings away from the city altogether.

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41.   Urban diplomacy in Europe

Mutual engagement or business-minded pragmatism?

Claske Vos

Over the past few decades, the role that cities play in international politics has increased. In an age in which people, goods, money and information are more than ever transcending national boundaries, cities serve as platforms for the discussion of shared international issues. Mayors appear at big conferences on climate and sustainability and compete for the right to host international events such as the Olympics or the European Capital of Culture. Where originally diplomacy was primarily the domain of states, nowadays it is also familiar territory for cities. This diplomacy does not only manifest itself globally but also at the European level. New partnerships are established in which European cities join forces to promote shared interests. It is partly because of these developments that the EU regards cities as important partners for the European agenda setting and devising strategies for addressing this agenda. However, the question is whether this type of urban diplomacy can be an avenue for closer European cooperation. Does it attest to a shared engagement with European issues, or is it mainly a platform for business-minded pragmatism?

The diplomatic positioning of cities

Traditionally, diplomacy has mainly been linked to the state, serving as a means to keep the peace, defeat common enemies and promote trade. As far back as Ancient Greece, ambassadors were used as representatives of the Greek city-states outside city boundaries. During the Renaissance, Venice and Milan

regularly organised diplomatic missions abroad, and in the 19th century diplomacy became the domain of the European nation states. Nowadays, states no longer have the monopoly on social, economic and political activity, and a large range of other players are active in the field of diplomacy. For example, cities increasingly act as representatives on issues that can be promoted and addressed at an international level. It is no wonder that diplomacy has become an important part of urban policy. Cities tend to be the hubs where businesses settle, the economy flourishes, migrants meet and young people engage in creativity and innovation. Cities have increasingly become the logical locus of international cross-fertilisation.

The value of urban diplomacy for European cooperation

It is partly because of these developments that the EU sees cities as important partners for European agenda setting and devising strategies for tackling European issues. Partnerships between cities can construct important international bridges, making it possible to address issues that transcend European boundaries. One of the first initiatives in this context was the European Capital of Culture programme. In 1985, the Greek Minister of Culture, Melina Mercouri, proposed that European cities be given a key role in representing European cultural diversity. In so doing, she aimed to confront an issue that the European Community was struggling with at the time: citizens did not feel enough of a connection with the European Community. The European Capital of Culture programme could serve to raise awareness of Europe's cultural richness and thereby strengthen people's identification with Europe. Over the years, this intergovernmental programme became one of the European Commission's flagship cultural initiatives, and was further formalised. A rotation system was introduced, enabling countries – both Member States and candidate Member States – to take turns nominating cities. In addition, certain

criteria were introduced that cities were required to meet if they were to be eligible to bear the title: they needed to invest in civic participation and have a clear notion of the European dimension of the city.

In addition to the European Capital of Culture initiative, since the mid-1990s the European Commission has supported a wide range of partnerships between cities. An example of this is the EUROCITIES network. The objective of this network of European cities is to strengthen the role of local governments at the European level. In doing so, it aims to influence EU legislation in order to be better able to address issues at a city level. The European Commission funds the activities of this network, and is closely involved in tackling social issues in particular. Another example is the establishment of the Covenant of Mayors, under which local and regional governments work to increase energy efficiency and the use of sustainable energy sources in the areas they oversee. The 5882 mayors who are signatories to the Covenant are aiming to achieve a 20% reduction in European carbon emissions by 2020.

These examples demonstrate that the European Union supports urban diplomacy as a way of finding solutions to specifically European issues. The EU becomes involved with existing partnerships to tackle relevant European issues in situations where the national governments of Member States (or candidate Member States) are taking a less proactive approach. It follows from this that the European interest in urban diplomacy is functional in nature. This is also reflected by the EU Urban Agenda that was drawn up by the Commission in 2014. This agenda emphasises the significance of cities in addressing issues relating to the economy, climate, environment and society at large. However, the question is whether European cities share this ambition. For them, what benefit is there in participating in European initiatives and working together with the European authorities? What goals do they hope to achieve, and do these tally with those of the European Commission?

The value of European cooperation for cities

There is no single answer to the above questions. The ways in which different cities use diplomacy at the European level and to what ends depends to a great extent on their social, economic and cultural characteristics, the socio-economic means at their disposal and their general level of self-sufficiency. Cities that are strongly dependent on others (such as national and European government agencies) to meet certain needs tend to be vocal proponents of cooperation. But the opportunities for cooperation tend to be limited in these cases, as the city itself will have relatively little to offer. A city with a lot of potential for innovation, a strong economic position and a highly international complexion, on the other hand, will benefit less directly from this cooperative way of meeting its needs, but *will* have what it takes to gain international prestige, play a pioneering role and exert influence on decision-making at the European level. Participation in European cooperation projects is also determined by the city's role in the country that it is in. Cities that play a key role in representing the national interests of this country are more likely to be utilised to support the foundations of the state than to contribute to European integration.

Amsterdam is an example of a city with a clear focus on Europe and the European Union. The Mayor regularly goes on working visits to Brussels, a representative of the city is permanently stationed in Brussels and a European Strategy has been drawn up with the objective of making Amsterdam into a so-called 'smart global hub'. Amsterdam is promoting itself at the European level because it wants to establish an international reputation for itself as a business hub and breeding ground for the development of knowledge, innovation, sustainable urban development, active citizenship and participation, as is stated in the 'Amsterdam International Responsible Capital City 2014-2018' policy document:

Amsterdam is an international city that is open to new developments: a proud, compact and 'smart' metropolis that has much to offer Europe, but that also has strong connections with the rest of the world. This position can be strengthened and

expanded, with the European Institutions in Brussels (policy/regulations) and the European cities (knowledge networks, business relations) as the most important target groups. Amsterdam's ambition of positioning itself as a responsible capital city is borne out by the role it assumes on the European stage: playing the lead and setting the example in some areas, sometimes playing a supporting role, but always endeavouring to connect people.

European cooperation enables Amsterdam to put itself on the map and enter into new partnerships with other European pioneers. The city is looking for ways to capitalise on its already-strong position; it operates independently, and is only partly reliant on the EU.

In many other European cities, the situation is different – and this is perhaps particularly true for cities located in countries that are still in the process of transitioning from socialist societies to liberal democracies and are not – or not yet – members of the European Union. Belgrade is one such city. It, too, is vying for the position of European Capital of Culture, is participating in European urban partnerships such as EUROCITIES and is part of a range of different EU-funded programmes. However, its position with respect to Europe is different from that of a city like Amsterdam. Belgrade is not a pioneer, but operates from the side lines. As a city from a candidate Member State, it has very little influence on the European agenda. In addition, the city is struggling with the legacy of Yugoslavian socialism and recent conflicts which have led national interests to take precedence over European ones. The city is literally still 'under construction' and has a lot of catching up to do. Its residents tend to look back nostalgically on the days when the city flourished as a cosmopolitan hub, inextricably linked to the rest of Europe. It was during that time that the cultural and artistic avant-garde emerged in Belgrade, the major cultural institutions flourished and the economy boomed. During the wars in the nineties, the city was cut off from the outside world, the avant-garde was forced underground and the economy collapsed. The aftershocks from this situation can still be felt today, particularly at the national level. The country

remains inward-focused rather than looking out beyond its own horizons. The city is having a difficult time making the leap to reconnecting with Europe and the rest of the world.

Yet the city is still diplomatically active in Europe. The former avant-garde has continued to rebel against the establishment, and with the help of foreign investors has begun turning its back on the government's isolationist approach. Former links with other European cities are in fact playing a major part in this. In the absence of economic means, the city also finds itself having to take part in competitions and European projects in order to acquire funding that can be invested in gentrification, art and culture, innovation and social facilities. For example, Belgrade has (unsuccessfully) tried to become the European Capital of Culture in 2020 in order to draw tourists to the city, put Serbia on the map in Europe and give the city a new impetus during a time of austerity. Cooperation at the European level thus becomes a way of increasing the city's self-sufficiency and promoting the national interest while getting out from under the yoke of the state and once again playing a role at the European level. For a city like Belgrade, urban diplomacy is vital – there is no alternative.

Mutual engagement or business-minded pragmatism?

This brief outline demonstrates that European cities have different priorities and motivations for becoming involved in European diplomacy. What they have in common is that these choices cannot be disentangled from local, urban interests. In that sense, European cooperation is not the end goal for these cities, but is primarily a means to an end. Where the European agenda chimes with the local agenda, there is a benefit to working together. Ultimately, cities mainly want to communicate their own ambitions at the European level. Some cities, like Amsterdam, are successful at putting their own interests onto the European agenda. Other cities, like Belgrade, are forced to

adopt measures from the European agenda to increase their chances of being awarded funding for local projects.

For both the EU and cities, pragmatic considerations are key to the decision to work together at the European level. They need each other to achieve certain goals. Does this result in a somewhat superficial form of European cooperation, dominated more by pragmatism than idealism? It does seem that way. However, this does not necessarily mean that there is a lack of engagement in the processes of European unification. Pragmatism is itself, by definition, one of the hallmarks of diplomacy: maintaining contacts with the outside world in order to safeguard one's own interests. It was also the guiding principle in various aspects of European integration, with the interests of the Member States constantly being weighed up as part of the process of determining the contents of European cooperation. This pragmatism does not preclude genuine mutual engagement; in fact, it is one of the prerequisites for more in-depth involvement in the future.

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42. Town twinning

Over the (ir)relevance of the paradiplomacy of European cities

Virginie Mamadouh

Town twinning has a boring image. People tend to be rather derisive about it: 'gesture politics', 'junkets to distant locations for mayors and municipal officials keen to travel. In other words: irrelevant, ineffective and corny. It therefore came as quite a surprise when, early in 2015, Amsterdam's plans to twin with Tel Aviv and Ramallah caused a real stir. Clearly the concept had some relevance after all.

Amsterdam, Tel Aviv and Ramallah: a ménage à trois?

After the local elections in March 2014, the Amsterdam city council decided to review the city's international policy, resulting in the ratification of the 'Amsterdam International Responsible Capital City 2014-2018' policy document. In addition, at the instigation of the liberal party Democrats 66 in the city council, plans were made to explore the possibility of a partnership with the Israeli city of Tel Aviv. However, the idea had to be put on hold in the summer of 2014 due to the hostilities in Gaza. In January 2015, talks resumed, but at the request of left-wing party GroenLinks, the Municipal Executive wished to explore the possibility of a partnership with a Palestinian city as well. The choice fell on Ramallah, the de facto capital of the Palestinian National Authority.

The relationship between these cities, and the states of which they form part – or, more precisely, the question of whether twinning with these cities would legitimise them and their politics or could in fact be a way to promote alternatives – was the central

issue in the political and societal debate that ensued about Amsterdam's town twinning plans. In the motion presented to the City Council, the Municipal Executive emphasised the benefits for the cities involved. They could learn from each other about tolerance and dialogue (the Arab and Jewish communities in Tel Aviv, and the Muslim and Christian communities in Ramallah serving as examples for Amsterdam), city marketing and branding (with Amsterdam being the one to serve as an example for the other two), economic growth (Amsterdam has much to learn from Tel Aviv – which is second only to Silicon Valley as the start-up capital of the world – and could invest in Ramallah's potential, with its highly educated population) and urban planning (Ramallah needed Amsterdam's expertise). They did not go into explicit detail about what Ramallah and Tel Aviv could gain from each other. They did, however, highlight the positive attitudes of the representatives of the three countries involved.

In the discussion that took place in Amsterdam, the advocates of the twinning emphasised the potential for exchange and fostering mutual understanding, while the sceptics argued that it would lead to the 'importation' of conflicts, which was liable to polarise people in Amsterdam. And, they asked, what would we do if Israel were to intensify its policy of occupation, or if Ramallah were to elect a Hamas mayor? Some were against a twinning agreement altogether, as it could be interpreted as a legitimation of Israel's policy vis-à-vis the Palestinians and the Palestinian Territories (the Gaza Strip and the West Bank).

For the proponents of twinning with Tel Aviv, there was a kind of selective outrage. They felt there was a double standard at work. Criticism of Israel was considered a reason not to twin with Tel Aviv, but no one seemed to be critical of the political stances of the other countries in which the city had twin towns (China, Turkey, Morocco…). Many Jewish locals felt personally offended. Ronny Naftaniel (who was until recently the president of the Centre for Information and Documentation on Israel, CIDI) was in charge of the campaign in favour of the twinning. Criticism

of a possible twinning was equated with an out-and-out attack on Israel's right to exist. But opponents feared that entering into a twinning agreement with an Israeli city would antagonise Amsterdam's Muslim population.

However, the ménage à trois idea – intended as a compromise to address the sensitivities of Dutch supporters of both the Israeli and the Palestine causes – was considered unacceptable in Ramallah. A partnership with an Israeli city was out of the question for the Palestinian movement, which was calling for a boycott of all official Israeli institutions. The City of Ramallah stated that it was abiding by the Olive Declaration of December 2014. Drawn up in Seville during the United Nations-sponsored International Conference of Governments and Civil Society Organizations in Support of Palestinian Rights, this declaration calls on local governments to 'not contract (...) with parties and not twin (...) with cities that support or benefit from occupation or violate related prohibitions under international law'. For this reason, while twinning with Amsterdam was welcome, twinning with Tel Aviv was unacceptable. Where Amsterdam celebrated Tel Aviv as the 'Amsterdam of Israel' (international and cosmopolitan, ethnically diverse, gay-friendly and tolerant, creative and politically more inclined towards the parties that are critical of Netanyahu's policies), the Palestinians underlined the city's provenance (built at the expense of destroyed and ethnically-cleansed Palestinian villages and the city of Jaffa) and its central position in 'Israel's regime of oppression, colonisation and apartheid'. In this context, Israeli start-ups – which are often associated with military technology and applications – are not considered examples to be emulated.

The Mayor of Amsterdam was very much in favour of the double twinning, but only D66 and CDA representatives in the city council were on board with the idea. VVD supported a twinning with Tel Aviv, but not with Ramallah. The left-wing parties (GroenLinks, PvdA, SP and Partij voor de Dieren) wanted to hold off altogether for the time being. On 1 July, the Amsterdam city council made the decision to refrain from entering into a

twinning agreement and, instead, to further research alternative possibilities for cooperation. A visit by the Mayor to both cities was scheduled for the autumn to this end. 'We can date Tel Aviv instead, we don't have to get married,' said Marjolein Moorman, the leader of Amsterdam's PvdA party, in an interview with the *NRC Handelsblad* daily newspaper.

Town twinning and urban diplomacy: A long history

Relationships between cities come in many different forms. In the modern system of nation states that took shape in Europe following the Treaty of Westphalia in 1648, the nation state increasingly became the container for a political, social, economic and cultural community which was, increasingly, clearly separated from the rest of the world by rigid national boundaries. The nation state began to monopolise the relationships with those abroad, and controlled cross-border movements more and more tightly. Cities increasingly came under the authority of the state; local governments increasingly became the enactors of central-government policy and had less and less autonomy to develop their own policies.

However, cities never ceased to maintain their external ties. At the beginning of the 20th century, when the major social and political movements were looking for solutions for problems caused by industrialisation and urbanisation, emancipation and combating poverty, local administrators met to exchange ideas and experience relating to hygiene, housing and public health, city administration, public utilities and spatial planning (think of the garden cities, for example). There was an international network of local authorities which, following the 1913 Ghent World Fair, formally established itself as the *Union Internationale des Villes*: 'Local authorities of all nations unite!' Though it was predominantly a European movement, in the 1920s it was supported by the major American philanthropic foundations (Carnegie, Ford, Rockefeller). However, attempts

to obtain official recognition from the League of Nations (the precursor of the United Nations) fell flat because it was reluctant to give legitimacy to local authorities, as this would damage the sovereignty of the nation states which, of course, constituted the membership of the League of Nations.

After the Second World War, bilateral twinning agreements really began to take off. Through twinning arrangements, local politicians hoped to make a contribution to a lasting peace. National governments often encouraged twinning arrangements to foster understanding between citizens in different countries. In the US, President Eisenhower promoted citizen diplomacy and the establishment of 'sister cities'. In Western Europe, the French-German partnership between De Gaulle and Adenauer promoted town twinning between French and West-German cities. British and Dutch cities were also very involved with the initiative. Following the fall of communist regimes in Eastern Europe in 1989, pan-European town twinning was stimulated by the powers that be as a tool for a peaceful transition and as a symbol of European reunification. This 'message of peace' is the reason that the European Communities, and later the European Union, have always encouraged twinning links.

Through the second half of the 20th century, twinning agreements and similar partnerships became increasingly frequent and diverse. In the 1980s, local development cooperation between local authorities on opposite sides of the equator became increasingly popular. The same happened later with the exchange of skills and expertise as part of 'Local Agenda 21', the contributions of local governments to the United Nations' Agenda 21 action plan for sustainable development. The fight against the apartheid regime also featured the establishment of twinning links, in the case of Amsterdam with the port city of Beira in Mozambique, which had lost a lot of traffic following the worldwide boycott of South Africa. The twinning links with cities in Nicaragua (Amsterdam–Managua) had a similar political objective. In this case, it was about expressing support

for the Sandinistas, at a time when the US – the Dutch government's primary military partner – was supporting the Contras. In the past fifteen years, new objectives have become important. Cultural partnerships – aimed at the countries of origin of large migrant groups – began to come into fashion. But economic partnerships became even more important, with the emphasis being on shared economic interests, import-export, exchange of knowledge, investments, etc.

The economic benefits of town twinning are extensively debated. Other objectives – such as the exchange of knowledge and expertise – are also difficult to evaluate, and this is even more true for its potential impact on peace. Nevertheless, time and again participants have found that twinning links bring people closer together. The people involved in this type of exchange get a special glimpse into the daily life of someone from a different cultural background, and that often ends up being a formative experience. The personal friendships that come about in this process can permanently alter people's perceptions of the political developments in each other's countries. However, this is mainly the case in smaller towns, whose inhabitants are less likely to come into contact with people from a wide range of other cultures by other means. In a city like Amsterdam, town twinnings barely register on people's radar, because the likelihood of becoming directly involved is very small and they have a lot of other opportunities to meet people from other countries and become acquainted with their cultures. But even in these cases, long-term twinning links bring specific benefits through their sustained engagement with specific places elsewhere.

Pertinent and alternative?

The paradiplomacy of cities often dovetails seamlessly with the foreign policy of the country of which they are a part; only very rarely will there be discrepancies, such as when American cities became involved in climate policy after the US government

decided to retreat from the Kyoto protocol – or when Dutch local authorities declared themselves nuclear-free while the Dutch government was allowing American nuclear weapons to be stored on Dutch territory. Or nowadays, when European local authorities are declaring themselves TTIP-free zones in protest against the transatlantic trade deal that the EU and the US are negotiating. Mayors are presenting themselves as rescuers when states are failing, because they are both too small and too big for policy to be effective and too far removed from their citizens: see the Global Parliament of Mayors inspired by the American political theorist Benjamin Barber. Often, urban paradiplomacy is presented as an alternative to conventional inter-state relations: closer to the day-to-day life of citizens, more informal, more practical and therefore a source of hope when inter-state relations are at a seeming impasse, such as between Israel and the Palestinian National Authority.

In other words, if the gap between citizens on both sides of the barrier/wall that bisects Israel and the West Bank gets wider and wider, any opportunity for interaction – whether this be through town twinning or otherwise – is like oxygen: a promise for different ways of engaging with each other, and a reminder that our interaction with those abroad need not be monopolised by the nation states. There is a wide range of other mental blockages that call for the establishment of new twinning links: the polarisation between north and south within the eurozone (financial crisis) and between old and new Member States (internal migration), or the imbalance of power between the European Union and its neighbouring countries in Eastern Europe and in the southern Mediterranean (refugee crisis). Even in an era in which satellite television, the internet and social media are freeing individuals from a state monopoly on international relations, the tried-and-tested model of town twinning is not a bad way to bring schoolchildren, athletes and dance companies closer together, and to liberate citizens from the stereotypes and half-truths they may hold about each other.

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Part 6
Cities in administrative and policy networks

The sixth topic focuses on the role of the city in administrative and policy networks. In other words, it is about municipal authorities and their relationship to other administrative levels. Martijn van der Burg and Anne van Wageningen discuss how the city was used under Napoleon's policy as a tool for European integration. P.W. Zuidhof makes a case for cities as sites of resistance against the neoliberal policies of national, European and international governments. Lia Versteegh shows how Dutch local governments are using the so-called 'bed, bath and bread' arrangement to address the issue of asylum seekers whose application has been dismissed and no longer have permission to remain in the country, but who are staying nonetheless. Monica den Boer examines the potential of cooperation between local governments, and between local governments and the European authorities, in the area of security.

The other contributions focus on European urban policy. Thea Dukes looks back on the political battle surrounding the URBAN Bijlmermeer programme, when funding awarded by the European Commission led to conflict in Amsterdam Southeast that exacerbated racial tensions, but ultimately resulted in increased civic participation. Federico Savini discusses the lack of attention given to the peripheral areas: in his view, there is no such thing as 'the city', and many suburban and peri-urban areas need to be involved more in the European Union's urban policies. Wouter van der Heijde contrasts two interpretations of the Urban Agenda for the EU: does it constitute an attempt to create more policy *about* cities or more policy generated by working *with* cities? Whether these two processes can mutually reinforce each other and how the adoption of the Pact of Amsterdam during the Dutch Presidency of the European Council in 2016 will impact the relations between cities and states is difficult to predict, but in the final contribution, Anne van Wageningen looks ahead to the next fifteen years and envisions an urban secession.

43. The city as a tool to promote European integration: Napoleonic Amsterdam

Martijn van der Burg and Anne van Wageningen

In the period from the French Revolution (1789) until the Congress of Vienna (1814-15) Europe underwent an extensive reorganisation. The patchwork of early modern states made way for a more modern system of nation states. At the time, it was not the European Union itself, but one of the major European powers – France, to be more precise – that was the driving force behind European integration. Between approximately 1799 and 1815, France was ruled by Napoleon Bonaparte. Later in his life, as an exile on the island of St Helena, he declared that he had striven to found 'a grand federative European system (…) conformable to the spirit of the age, and favourable to the progress of civilisation.' From the perspective of Paris at the time, integration was inextricably bound up with 'modernisation', i.e. the transition from a traditional to a modern form of society.

The goal was the unification of Europe along the lines of the French model. The Napoleonic regime attempted to impose its own state institutions top-down on the subjected populations of Europe, in part because it saw itself as the driving force behind the modernisation of the continent. And the Napoleonic model of modernisation, directly or indirectly, did indeed leave its mark beyond the French borders. Among other things, modernisation took the shape of a modern governance system involving a hierarchical structure very much inspired by the French one.

Of course, these developments had major consequences for the capital of the Netherlands, Amsterdam. The years around 1800 were not exactly the city's heyday. It was a period in which the city lost many of its residents. Where during the Golden Age it had had a population of 220,000, by the end of the Napoleonic

era this number had dwindled to around 180,000. Compared with other cities, this was a tremendous decline in population. At the same time, Amsterdam's place on the global stage was changing. The city was increasingly embedded in larger structures. Amsterdam had always been fairly autonomous: as the most powerful city in the province of Holland, it had enjoyed a lot of influence both within the Dutch Republic and beyond. Even after the Batavian Revolution of 1795, Amsterdam was still able to play a central role. Although The Hague became the seat of the new central government, Amsterdam remained influential. Under Louis Bonaparte (Napoleon's brother, who was King of Holland between 1806 and 1810) Amsterdam even became the King's place of residence. New national institutions, such as the precursors of the Rijksmuseum and the Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences, based themselves in Amsterdam.

In spite of Amsterdam's decline, the French (who annexed the Netherlands in 1810) still held the city in high regard. That was understandable: there was still a great deal of capital to be found there. Amsterdam's still affluent and influential elite enabled it to weather the economic crisis in Europe reasonably well. More importantly, after Paris (with a population of 600,000) Amsterdam was the largest city in Western Europe (if we choose to exclude the UK from this category, which most Brits will probably not object to) – a fact that is probably less commonly known today. In order for the Napoleonic integration of the Netherlands to succeed, it was vital that Amsterdam was successfully integrated – of that the regime was sure. Under Napoleon I, Amsterdam remained the capital following the annexation, just like Rome – though both took second place to Paris, of course. Napoleon had elected to have three capitals in his new empire.

Institutional integration

The Napoleonic regime saw the potential in Dutch cities to be engines for successful administrative integration and

possibly cultural integration too. The dense urban network in the Low Countries – Holland in particular – could speed up the implementation of a uniform system. Of course, the process of modernisation that was embarked upon led to its fair share of clashes between different administrative, legal and cultural traditions. One of the major effects of King Louis Bonaparte's reign was the introduction of a single executive authority at all administrative levels, entirely subordinate to the central government. The king considered this French approach to be superior to the Dutch system, which he felt was characterised by a large degree of passivity. He was frustrated with the passive resistance of the old Dutch elite, which only wanted a modern approach to governance if it did not differ too much from their own traditions. This was also the case during the annexation of the Netherlands by France (or the *réunion*, as the regime called it).

Furthermore, institutional integration turned out to be problematic in practice because cooperation between the different authorities did not always work very well. Other state institutions, such as the army and the police, often interfered with governance. The French authorities agreed that the integration of Amsterdam, and by extension North-western Europe, was the French Empire's number one priority, but were unable to achieve consensus as to which strategy to use.

Cultural integration

Institutional integration was one thing; cultural integration was an altogether different story. Napoleon's attitude towards the Dutch was ambivalent in that regard. He had a certain respect for the former Dutch Republic and its history, but he looked down on its administration and politics. For this reason, Napoleon had different opinions on the Dutch depending on the context. He had, incidentally, always been very negative about the people of Amsterdam, whom he considered to be arrogant. The confident Dutch believed that the works on

science and art that were written in their own language made Dutch worthy of being protected by the Emperor, just as he also protected the Italian language. And Napoleon did indeed allow the Dutch to retain their language. Charles-François Lebrun, the Governor-General of the Dutch departments, who lived in the Royal Palace on Dam Square (known at the time as the *Place Napoléon,* Napoleon Square), operated on the principle that the local circumstances should always be taken into consideration. Lebrun, along with many other Napoleonic administrators in the region, endeavoured to reconcile local and national interests, as they believed this was the only way that integration could end in success.

Governor Lebrun's approach to integration was one that William I was later to employ, albeit in his own way. William had to find a middle ground between the ideal of a return to the pre-revolutionary past on the one hand and the desire to preserve the revolutionary Napoleonic legacy on the other. This could only be achieved either by attenuating the Napoleonic institutions, or by reintroducing the old structures alongside them. After Napoleon, local and provincial authorities, as well as independent state institutions, were able to regain part of their autonomy. In the longer term, this development often turned out to be counterproductive. Since the time of William I, the reforms to the system of the Kingdom of the Netherlands were a slow and difficult process. Johan Rudolph Thorbecke was the one who, with the 1850 Province Act (*Provinciewet*) and the 1851 Municipal Government Act (*Gemeentewet*), did away with the 'mixture of antiquated Dutch and Napoleonic-French elements' once and for all. In doing so, he removed a lot of the contradictions that had existed within the Dutch constitutional administrative system. This historical example shows that making a real choice – in favour either of modern uniformity or traditional pluriformity – increases the effectiveness of governance.

Although Napoleon very much preferred a top-down approach to governance, administrators in the regions often

considered cities to be essential tools for forging European integration. Amsterdam, in particular, was regarded as a strategic centre and testing ground for the durable integration of the country into the French Empire. Perhaps the European Union should take a similar approach. The EU undertakes a lot of initiatives and has a lot of policy documents that assign local governments a significant role in the process of European integration. Napoleon's officials already knew that integration is most effective when local communities are actively involved. The most successful Napoleonic administrators entered into a dialogue with the local administration, which tended to consist of the old elite. However, the current structure of the European Union – with prominent roles given to the delegates from the Member States in each decision-making process – leaves little hope of the cities entering into a dialogue with the EU independently, let alone being involved in decision-making. It seems that both Napoleon and the EU can be considered ambivalent towards the cities, and somewhat inconsistent in their approach to them. While viewing cities as playing a major role, at the same time both their styles of governance betray a centralist approach.

The authors

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44. The European city as a bulwark of resistance against neoliberalisation

P.W. Zuidhof

The European Union conquers the city

Soon the European Union will be visiting your city too. That is the message of the Urban Agenda that was recently drawn up by the European Union. The EU tends predominantly to be associated with 'Brussels', supranational bureaucrats and the political tug-of-war between Member States and heads of state. In a city you only really tend to run into the European Union when, in the context of the rotating presidency, the European Council sets up shop there, such as happened in Amsterdam during the first six months of 2016. Currently, we only think of the 'European city' as the site of international treaties or important policy proposals: Rome, Schengen, Dublin, Maastricht, Copenhagen, Amsterdam, Bologna, Nice, Lisbon. However, this is changing with the arrival of the Urban Agenda, which was published by the European Commission in July 2014.

The key principle behind the Urban Agenda is that many of the economic, environmental and social policy challenges faced by the European Union apply mainly to urban contexts. It therefore makes sense to involve cities more intensively in the implementation of policy and ensure that this policy better reflects the urban reality. With this initiative, the European Union seems to be making a conscious attempt at sidelining the national level of Member States and making direct policy interventions where they can have an immediate impact. At the same time, it is bringing its policy closer to citizens. This proposed change of scale in EU policy raises the question of how it imagines the

European city. How does the European Union legitimise its urban policy, and what political rationale can be inferred from it? And how well does the political rationale propagated by the EU stand up when compared to the everyday reality of urban life? When EU policy ventures into the city, what reaction can be expected?

The European Union and the city: A rescaling of neoliberal policy

The EU lays out the key idea behind its vision on the city as follows: 'Cities play a key role in implementing EU policy, including the Europe 2020 strategy.' This reveals that the EU does not formulate specific urban policy as such, but sees the city mainly as a fertile microcosm for the implementation of existing EU policy. The Urban Agenda, then, mainly seems to be a *rescaling* of existing supranational policy. The 2010 Toledo Declaration, which preceded the Urban Agenda, assigned cities a similar strategic role in achieving the Europe 2020 objectives: 'Cities and towns are vital for achieving the general objectives and specific headline targets of the Europe 2020 strategy.' In other words, European policy puts the city exclusively in the service of the Europe 2020 objectives. From the EU's perspective, the European city is primarily a place in which to create smart, sustainable and inclusive economies which contribute to increased employment, higher productivity and greater social cohesion.

I would argue that, by making urban policy all about the Europe 2020 targets, the city is – intentionally or unintentionally – co-opted into a neoliberal policy framework. In this context, 'neoliberal' means that the interests of the economy and market forces represent the core value, legitimation and rationale underlying the policy. The reason to call Europe 2020 'neoliberal' is that this policy is predominantly legitimised by reference to economic or market criteria. Like its predecessor, the Lisbon Agenda, the Europe 2020 strategy is informed by the notion that Europe is competing economically with the rest of the world – a

notion that has only been reinforced by the 2007 financial crisis and its continuing impact on the euro crisis. Where the Lisbon Agenda aimed to overcome the crisis by making Europe the most competitive and dynamic knowledge economy, with the Europe 2020 strategy attention is shifting to a competitive economy focused on smart, sustainable and inclusive growth. The strategy is not neoliberal so much because of the economic goals being pursued, but essentially because the policy is based on economic values, with non-economic measures also being motivated by economic criteria. The EU is not striving to bring about smart, sustainable and inclusive cities as a goal in and of itself, but because they are seen as a driver for further economic growth. In this type of policy, economic growth is seen as both the core value and the vehicle of the policy, which means that policy is focused entirely on an economic rationale.

In order to get some insight into how, under the banner of 'Europe 2020', the European Union's urban policy is taking a neo-liberal turn, it is helpful to compare it with the urban policy that was being pursued under the Cohesion Policy. It has been noted before that the Europe 2020 strategy, like the Lisbon Agenda, seems to be the product of a mixed, hybrid political rationale. On the one hand, it is informed by typical market goals such as economic growth and competitiveness, but it also contains more socially-orientated goals such as job creation, sustainability and social cohesion. What is the relationship between these two different sets of criteria? The Cohesion Policy was initially primarily focused on employing initiatives like the Structural Funds to help regions and cities that were at risk of falling behind as a result of the establishment of the single market. In other words, the social rationale mainly existed as a way to redress an imbalance that had been created by the market rationale. Europe 2020 turns this relationship on its head, making the social rationale subordinate to the market rationale. Cities need to become smarter, more sustainable and more inclusive to be competitive, and it is only through economic growth that social objectives can be achieved. In this situation, the market rationale

determines the social rationale. Another difference is that, under the Cohesion Policy, cities were primarily recipients of funding, whereas in Europe 2020 the city is primarily mobilised as the executor of policy. Cities are not viewed as the passive objects of social policy, but as active tools in making this policy a reality. These are two examples of how, with the rescaling of the Europe 2020 strategy, the city is incorporated into a predominantly neoliberal policy rationale.

The European city: Neoliberal or post-neoliberal?

How will cities respond to the proposed rescaling of the Europe 2020 strategy and the concomitant neoliberalisation of urban policy? The Urban Agenda will be able to count on the broad overall support of local authorities – not only because they contributed to the drafting of the policy via consultation forums such as the CITIES Forum or the Covenant of Mayors, but above all because it chimes with an existing neoliberal approach to policy already present in cities themselves. Many cities are happy to get on board with the idea of strengthening their economic competitiveness and innovative capacity, becoming more sustainable or combating poverty, and have embraced the sort of neoliberal policy approaches that are associated with it, such as city marketing or policies aiming at attracting businesses (known as business location policy). However, since the onset of the financial and economic crisis and the ongoing repercussions felt in the euro crisis, it appears that cities are becoming the main bulwark of resistance against the advance of neoliberalisation. Neoliberalism is often viewed as the cause of the crisis, for example due to the large-scale deregulation of the financial markets. The austerity measures that were implemented in response to the crisis, and the euro crisis in particular, are often interpreted as a continuation of neoliberalism. Where the EU Member States are offering little or no resistance to ongoing neoliberalisation, it is primarily the cities that have developed into the new centres of

resistance. This can be best illustrated using two examples which show that the city is both a site of resistance and a site of change.

The most visible examples of urban resistance to neoliberalism are the public protests that have taken place throughout Europe and the rest of the world since 2011. Inspired by the occupation of Tahrir Square in Cairo, similar 'occupations' followed in Europe, for example the so-called *indignados* in Madrid's Puerta del Sol square or in Syntagma Square in Athens. Following the example of Occupy Wall Street as an expression of explicit resistance to neoliberalisation, similar demonstrations took place in numerous European cities. The protests are often sparked off by locally-specific problems or events, such as anger about high unemployment rates, austerity measures or reforms triggered by the euro crisis. Although there are significant differences between these different social protests, Marlies Glasius and Geoffrey Pleyers point out that they are all characterised by a general appeal to the values of democracy, social justice and dignity. Protesters will occupy a square or streets in the city as a way to reclaim those values. In so doing, they make use of a shared repertoire of practices and rituals, ranging from setting up temporary campsites, instituting democratic consultation forums and alternative ways of organising and sharing resources, promoting the platform on social media and using expressions of solidarity such as 'we are X', through to a wide range of creative and performative actions that give expression to the shared values. In other cases, such as the recent occupation of the University of Amsterdam, these techniques are used not as a way to reclaim public space, but instead public institutions.

With their emphasis on social justice, democracy and dignity, it makes sense that the best explanation for these social protests is that they are a response to neoliberalisation gone too far. The protesters are opposing a political zeitgeist that is dominated by market standards, and for this reason are trying to breathe new life into democratic decision-making processes. With their campsites and sharing economy, they are challenging a society that is dominated solely by the market. Where market standards

are robbing people of their dignity, activists try to reclaim it through peaceful and active protest. The many different creative expressions of protest, such as an *indignado* in Barcelona holding up a sign with the words *No som mercaderia en mans de politics banquer* ('We are not goods in the hands of politicians who work for the banks'), are often aimed at disturbing a political and policy discourse that is peppered with market terminology like 'competitiveness' and 'innovative growth'. Instead of making use of the traditional national political centres, the protesters are transforming their own squares and cities into a new 'polis' and political community in order to put up a barricade against the further undermining of politics and democracy by the market.

However, the city is not only a bulwark of resistance to neo-liberalism, but also the site of experimentation with political change. Just as the protest movement itself is experimenting with alternative forms of consultation and organisation, cities, too, are more creative when it comes to finding new political solutions. For example, Madrid and Barcelona have elected (female!) mayors with roots in the *indignado* movement who are making the city into the first front for political innova-tion. It is also telling that it was the Amsterdam city council, rather than the national government, that passed a motion in July 2015 against the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (better known as the TTIP) and the Investor-State Dispute Settlement instrument that forms part of this agree-ment (better known as ISDS), because these would once again render political power subordinate to the requirements of the market. It is cities that are experimenting with initiatives for sharing or participation economies, alternative approaches to combating poverty, employment policy and housing policy in order to lift them out of the influence of the market. In the absence of a new overarching ideology, the alternatives to neoliberalisation have to be developed on a small, local scale. This is why stakeholders within cities and institutions are trying to cast off the shackles of market forces and reclaim their own living environments.

For a long time, the city has been fertile, but also resistant, ground for neoliberalisation. I would therefore advise the Council not to harness the city's dynamism to rescale neoliberalisation, as the Urban Agenda is proposing. After the havoc wreaked by the euro crisis, Europe needs – above all – cosmopolitan cities that are doing the opposite, and are instead contributing to the regeneration of democracy, social justice and dignity.

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45. About bed, bath and bread

Municipalities as the last resort for rejected asylum seekers

Lia Versteegh

There is a clear difference in the interpretation of humanitarianism between the Dutch state and Dutch municipalities in relation to the plight of rejected asylum seekers. Where the central government does not consider it necessary to provide them with shelter, Dutch municipalities are offering a minimum safety net, through their so-called 'bed, bath and bread' arrangements.

Asylum procedures

Asylum seekers in the Netherlands can be granted asylum in the event that they require protection, for example because they are being persecuted for their religion, political beliefs or background. The obligation on the part of the Netherlands to grant asylum in these situations is based on international treaties. Over the past fifteen years, the European Union has established many rules to protect people seeking asylum in the EU. The most important document in this context is the 2003 Dublin Regulation, which determines which EU Member State is responsible for processing an asylum application.

After receiving an asylum application, the Dutch Immigration and Naturalisation Service (IND) will assess the risk that the asylum seeker would face if they returned to their country of origin, but it will also take into account whether the asylum seeker has family in the Netherlands and if they are in 'a situation of disproportionate hardship'. If, in the Immigration and Naturalisation Service's view, this is not the case the Dutch government is no longer obliged to provide them with shelter and

housing. Rejected asylum seekers have a right to appeal if their application is rejected. If the judge upholds the decision made by the IND, the asylum seeker is required to voluntarily leave the Netherlands within a certain period. He or she must do so from a location in a municipality designated by the government. The Ministry of Security and Justice's Repatriation and Departure Service, the body responsible with implementing the government's so-called return policy, goes on to review whether forced departure needs to take place. This service registers the actual departure of rejected asylum seekers. If rejected asylum seekers do not depart voluntarily, the Royal Netherlands Marechaussee and the Aliens Police can deport them. If the asylum seeker or the government of their country of origin do not cooperate in their departure, the only remaining recourse of the asylum seeker is to fall back on the humanity of the municipalities, which provide shelter through the municipal 'bed, bath and bread' arrangement. It should be added that, for families with underage children, there are special family locations available where they can stay if they refuse to participate in voluntary departure.

Legal inequality

The policy on the 'bed, bath and bread' facilities is different in each Dutch municipality, and lies outside the control of the national government. This means that the national government does not know which rejected asylum seekers are homeless and which are staying in municipal shelters. They may travel from one municipality to the next to make use of the municipal services that exist there. The majority of municipalities subsidise a reception location, with the organisation tasked with implementing the policy, in cooperation with social care organisations, providing night shelter, breakfast and supper. The municipality may also opt to be in charge of a reception location itself, in which case rejected asylum seekers may receive support directly from the municipalities. These differences in policy result in legal

inequality and legal uncertainty for rejected asylum seekers, as it offers no surety that a municipality will provide them with shelter at all, and policies vary from one municipality to the next.

European frameworks: The Social Charter and the European Court of Human Rights

In this context, the question arises as to whether rejected asylum seekers in the Netherlands might be entitled to protection anyway, even though their applications has been rejected. European law does not address the situation of rejected asylum seekers, as they fall under national law. Under Dutch law, a rejected asylum seeker does not have any rights and must leave the Netherlands immediately. In other words, the Dutch central government does not provide 'bed, bath and bread'. In these situations, Dutch municipalities offer help on humanitarian grounds; in doing so, they feel supported by a ruling by the European Committee of Social Rights appointed by the Council of Europe's Committee of Ministers (note: not the European Union), which was established under the European Social Charter and monitors compliance with the Charter. Under the Dutch Constitution, the Netherlands is not obliged to comply with the Social Charter, as it is not a binding international treaty. However, the rights set out in the Social Charter have been incorporated into the Dutch system and apply to Dutch citizens and to those who are staying in the Netherlands legally – in other words, *not* to rejected asylum seekers. Nevertheless, the Committee of Ministers investigated a complaint made against the Netherlands about the issue of whether the Dutch government, by refusing to provide food and shelter to rejected asylum seekers, had violated articles of the Social Charter.

The complaint against the Dutch government had been lodged by an NGO, the Conference of European Churches. In April 2015, the Committee of Ministers formally ruled in a resolution that the Social Charter applies to rejected asylum seekers, as water,

food and clothing are 'closely linked to the most fundamental rights of (…) persons, as well as to their human dignity', and that the right to housing and protection against homelessness applies in order to prevent those concerned from being placed in a situation of extreme helplessness. According to the Committee, the right to life and human dignity not only includes the right to shelter, food and clothing, but also the right to a safe place to sleep. The denial of this right to emergency assistance would harm rejected asylum seekers in the Netherlands more than conferring these rights would burden the Dutch government. With this ruling, the Committee ruled against the Netherlands and in favour of the rejected asylum seekers' representatives. The ruling all but unleashed a revolution. The Committee not only deemed the Social Charter to be applicable in this situation – i.e. to people who are residing in the Netherlands illegally – but it also used a broad interpretation of the term 'human dignity'.

Incidentally, back in November 2014, in anticipation of the ruling by the Committee of Ministers, the Dutch Central Appeals Tribunal had already issued a preliminary ruling stating that Dutch municipalities were required to support rejected asylum seekers by providing food, clothing and shelter. The Dutch government was far from happy with the resolution by the Committee of Ministers, and felt that the Committee had used far too broad an interpretation of the rights of rejected asylum seekers. In response, the Dutch cabinet decided in April 2015 that the temporary shelter of rejected asylum seekers by municipalities had to stop, and that the government would only provide five reception locations in Dutch municipalities. The emphasis should very much be on a quick return to the rejected asylum seeker's country of origin; shelter should not last for more than a few weeks. According to an article published in the *Volkskrant* daily newspaper on 29 April 2015, several Dutch municipalities, contrary to the state's stance, did not consider it 'humane' to 'put or leave rejected asylum seekers out on the street'. They therefore refused to cooperate with the Dutch cabinet's plans to bring about accelerated deportation, and instead offered bed,

bath and bread. This means that many Dutch municipalities are choosing to provide greater levels of support and shelter than the Dutch state is in favour of.

Municipalities were not happy with the solution proposed by the government, as it would require the many reception locations to be closed, but also because it would make rejected asylum seekers homeless, as they are often unable or unwilling to cooperate in their return to their country of origin. And that would mean that the municipalities would still have to provide shelter. The strange thing about this situation is that the Dutch state is trying to avoid the responsibility for the provision of shelter, while the Dutch court (the Central Appeals Tribunal) is complying with the ruling by the Committee of Ministers and taking the side of the Dutch municipalities. The Dutch cities are aware that, no matter what the courts or the Dutch political sphere may decide, they are ultimately the ones who will be saddled with looking after rejected asylum seekers.

The legal route which would be open to rejected asylum seekers after that is via the European Court of Human Rights in Strasbourg, which adjudicates cases according to the European Convention on Human Rights. The rulings of the European Court are binding for the Dutch state. The European Convention on Human Rights covers not only civil and political rights, but also the right to housing. A rejected asylum seeker could follow this route as a way of enforcing their right to shelter. A procedure could be initiated with the European Court to this end, providing that the highest legal authority in the Netherlands has first issued a ruling with a negative impact on the rejected asylum seeker. So far, no case of this kind has been brought before the European Court of Human Rights.

Cities provide humanitarian shelter

The above reveals that the so-called return policy is an Achilles' heel in the Dutch asylum policy. At the political level, the

protection of rejected asylum seekers has been provided for neither by the Dutch nor the European authorities. At the legal level, both the Dutch courts and the European Committee of Ministers are taking a progressive line, but under the Dutch Constitution the Dutch government cannot be forced to comply with the stance of the European Committee. For this reason, legal protection for rejected asylum seekers can be expected neither from the central government nor from the local authorities in the Netherlands. The only protection that rejected asylum seekers can hope for is from those Dutch municipalities that are offering bed, bath and bread facilities on humanitarian grounds. These facilities are not offered by all municipalities, and can vary from one municipality to the next, which results in legal uncertainty on the part of rejected asylum seekers and can lead to unequal treatment compared to rejected asylum seekers in other municipalities where such facilities do not exist. To prevent this, the Association of Netherlands Municipalities (VNG) must establish a uniform policy for municipal bed, bath and bread arrangements. It is also clear that the approach of the local governments runs counter to the national stance on rejected asylum seekers. As long as no ruling has been issued by the European Court of Human Rights that obliges the government to assume responsibility for the necessary provisions for rejected asylum seekers, the municipal facilities – no matter how insufficient they may be – are unfortunately very much necessary.

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46. Safe cities in Europe: Making the leap to sustainable connections

Monica den Boer

The city is often regarded as a dystopia. The city never sleeps. There is constant movement in the streets. Glaring lights shine everywhere. Tall buildings loom like taut sails in the wind. The city dizzies people, disorientates and hypnotises them. This is how Fritz Lang, the maker of the 1927 movie *Metropolis*, depicted the city of 2026. Now, almost a century after the film's creation, the city is actually associated with many positive things. Cities provide spaces for innovation, recreation, greening, sustainability and creativity. And yet studies on cities also present a gloomier picture. Cities are afflicted by structural issues such as poverty, social inequality, unemployment and inadequate housing. These issues are detrimental to the quality of life and safety in cities. After all, the wealthier and more spacious cities are, the less safety is an issue for them.

This dichotomy visible in and between cities is a cause for concern. First of all, there is the inequality that exists between different cities. Instead of joyful synergy or healthy competition, cities find themselves struggling with an imbalance between growth and contraction, between economic attraction and decline. Cities are being hit by the massive cuts to public spending that have taken place in the past few years, putting significant pressure on public services. In 2012, one in four Europeans lived in poverty or were at risk of poverty. Of Europe's 500 million citizens, 125 million are struggling with socio-economic shortages on a daily basis. Between 2009 and 2012, the number of Europeans living in poverty increased by 10 million. Cities are therefore dealing with a growing need for public funding for

benefits, public services and health care, and doing so in the face of shrinking budgets.

Cities are faced with a wide range of problems, such as immigration, the ageing population, unemployment, social marginalisation, poverty, unaffordable housing, congestion and pollution. Although no direct causal link can be drawn between these problems and the increase of criminality and unsafe streets, they are certainly indicators that weigh negatively on safety in cities. What is also tricky is that these are stubborn problems. People who are living in poverty now will pass this problem on to future generations, providing the problem with a structural, long-term, cumulative character. Women, children, single-parent families, low-skilled workers, migrants and other vulnerable groups such as the disabled are all risk groups for poverty. Underinvestment in educational opportunities for children in particular will lead to higher public expenditure in later stages of the life cycle – in concrete terms, more government intervention in the areas of housing, employment and health care. And, as Thomas Piketty teaches us, the gap between rich and poor is growing. Cities are structurally affected by this, and will have to develop integrated policies to address the issue. The Association of Netherlands Municipalities (VNG), for example, is using a range of different interventions to address safety, such as tackling radicalisation, creating safe houses, managing public space and working with ex-convicts and juvenile delinquents.

The Urban Agenda has barely addressed the issue of safety explicitly. There appears to be a lacuna here. The document has acknowledged that decentralised governments have to deal with European policy relating to the 'area of freedom, security and justice' (AFSJ). The European Union is aware of security issues that transcend city boundaries, such as radicalisation, human trafficking, organised crime and civil rights. The Dutch Presidency of the Council welcomed urban creativity and innovation, in part to combat violence and effectively promote the integration of new EU citizens. However, the topic of safety has drawn insufficient attention. The Urban Agenda has not

explicitly addressed the question of how cities can take concrete administrative action to give further direction to international cooperation on safety and security issues. Fortunately, avenues do exist for a more dynamic interaction between the Urban Agenda and inter-city partnerships in the area of safety.

Safety on the Urban Agenda of the European Union

The European Commission's Urban Agenda mentions urban innovation in the areas of energy, transportation and IT. The Urban Agenda also refers to the goal of making cities more resilient, especially in view of threats relating to climate, energy, health and infrastructure. Given the major consequences that calamities, crises and failure of public utilities can have on the day-to-day life of city dwellers and on safety and crime, it is rather surprising that these problems are not explored in the Urban Agenda. In addition to concentrating on creating 'smart cities', there should be a greater focus on 'safe cities'.

The European agenda does focus at length on the development of urban knowledge, including on topics such as safety and crime prevention. In this context, the European Urban Knowledge Network is an excellent example of knowledge sharing and mutual enrichment by cities. The aim is for cities and surrounding municipalities to work together more, which can be promoted through greater synergy and more funding for ambitious projects within metropolises and urban agglomerations. Various partnerships have already been established in the south of the Netherlands – including with Belgium – to combat problematic drug use and the related environmental issues. In the future, cities will increasingly be the testing grounds for European policy. A European Innovation Partnership with smart cities and communities can be a good basis for tackling security issues that transcend city boundaries. Partnerships between cities could strive to exchange knowledge more often, share expertise and establish long-term administrative relationships.

Cities are vulnerable because they can be confronted with crises and calamities, such as the bombings in Madrid (2004) and London (2005). The SafeCity project sees the use of information to predict unsafe situations and facilitate preventative measures as playing a major role. But as with many other projects supported by the European Union, safety seems to be approached primarily from a technological angle. There seems to be far less attention given to how cities deal with safety and security challenges on an administrative level.

State or city: Subsidiarity and managing safety and security

Traditionally, the area of safety and security falls to the Member States to address, but since the Treaty of Lisbon came into effect, many strategies that relate to safety and security – including crime prevention – are developed jointly (i.e. at the community level). Although the principle of subsidiarity stipulates that urban policy does not fall under the competence of the European Union, three-quarters of European regulations are implemented at the local and regional levels. This creates an opportunity to explicitly put the topic of safety on the agenda of cities and partnerships between cities. At the same time, local safety practices could be reviewed in the light of the normative framework laid down in European privacy law and the Charter of Fundamental Rights. This might include policy practices relating to wide-ranging issues such as surveillance, prostitution, human trafficking and drugs, shelter for asylum seekers, access to benefit records or providing fingerprints when applying for identity cards. Europe is becoming increasingly important as a policy partner for decentralised governments.

In any case, where the domain of safety and security is concerned, European regulations will have more and more of an impact at the local level. So far, the European Union has given little consideration to the question of whether cities have

sufficient funding, expertise and human resources to be able to implement new regulations imposed by the EU at the decentralised level. In order to be involved as a fully-fledged partner, cities could take a more proactive approach (exerting influence, lobbying, participating in decision-making), also with a view to absorbing and implementing regulations and funding from the European Union, as well as bringing about organisational changes to the administrative apparatus. This would result in a gradual 'Europeanising' of local governments.

Local governments are also increasingly faced with cross-border police and judicial cooperation, for example in the case of cannabis cultivation or football hooligans, but also for disaster and crisis management. The European Commission can in fact initiate proceedings against Member States for non-compliance with European regulations on police and judicial cooperation. It can even ask the Court of Justice to impose a fine or penalty payment on the central government. If the violation has been committed by a local government, the central government can hold the local government responsible or recover damages from them. Cities are ill-prepared for these kinds of eventualities.

Safety as a connection

Marginalisation, safety fears and crime are issues that transcend city boundaries. With the prospect of continuing urbanisation, more citizens will want to move to the cities. With their role as economic engines, cities have a magnetic pull on people looking for employment and education. This also means that cities find themselves faced with a higher proportion of highly educated citizens, who tend to be empowered and engaged. This requires a change in governance, including where safety and security is concerned. A patriarchal, top-down form of government is less and less suited to an informed, active citizenry. Alternative forms of cooperation are very much necessary. Governments – including local governments – will increasingly be able to position

themselves as 'directors', providers of a platform, agenda setters or motivators. Of course, it is important to invest in cooperative relationships between all administrative levels, from local to European levels. And cooperation between cities needs to be actively pursued as well. An example of this in the context of the European Union is the Cities Conference on Foreign Fighters to Syria, which was held in 2012 by the Radicalisation Awareness Network. At this conference, local officials and experts discussed the impact of various anti-terrorism measures at the local level, and how to handle those going to fight in Syria before, during and after their journeys. The European Cities Against Drugs network is also an excellent example of cooperation between 250 local authorities in combating drug abuse, with its activities including an annual Mayors' Conference. It is easy for local governments to get on board. The platform aims to present a clear and consistent stance on drug policy, support and enhance the exchange of information and expertise between policymakers and professionals at the local level, disseminate information about evidence-based practices, develop a network of contacts at all relevant administrative levels, and organise conferences and seminars.

In addition to taking note of good examples and exchanging information – including where this relates to safety and security – cities should be involved a lot more often at all stages of the decision-making process on topics that affect them. In addition to active participation, cities should be given the opportunity, as part of the process of drafting new regulations, of undertaking reviews of the likely impact of new measures on the city. For now, the European Union itself is working towards putting improved regulations and more practicable financial instruments in place, and offering a platform for urban creativity and knowledge development. An important challenge for the European Union is not to lump all cities in together. Some cities are flourishing, while others are struggling.

Finally, the Urban Agenda is lacking an external dimension. After all, the European Union is active in a lot of Third World

countries, in which urbanisation and safety are pressing issues. The issue of safety and security is taking on a hybrid character, moving through 'glocal' connections. For example, many of the European External Action Service's efforts have to do with civil protection and civil crisis management, as well as contributing to good governance. Now that urban warfare is threatening to spread to Europe too, it is advisable to stay alert to the relationship between the safety of European city dwellers and conflicts elsewhere in the world, and to continually be on the lookout for possible contagious effects. European cities can play a central role in the transfer and use of knowledge to benefit cities in Third World countries. The Urban Agenda makes no mention of this external dimension. It is high time that integrated connections be created in the field of security, both within and outside Europe.

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47. URBAN Bijlmermeer

How a European programme became the catalyst for a 'black revolution' in Amsterdam Southeast

Thea Dukes

Twenty years ago, Amsterdam's Bijlmermeer neighbourhood spent months in the throes of a conflict surrounding the European Commission's URBAN programme. Some talked of a 'black revolution'. Local ('black') groups felt overlooked by the programme's decision-making structure, and demanded the opportunity to have their say. They used a black-white dichotomy as a lever to enforce a breakthrough within URBAN Bijlmermeer, but, more than this, they were seeking to achieve the emancipation of the 'black' population and bring about an actual improvement in their situation. Ultimately, their efforts were successful: not only was the structure of the programme drastically revised, but progress was also made with respect to increasing participation by the local population in the district on the whole.

The summer of 2015 marked the 20-year anniversary of this conflict. In commemorating it, a heroic role was ascribed to the *Zwart Beraad* (sometimes translated as 'Black Consideration', 'Black Deliberation', 'Black Assembly' or 'Black Caucus') group in particular. However, it is unclear to what extent the outcome of the conflict can be attributed to the URBAN programme or the *Zwart Beraad* group.

The URBAN programme: funding for disadvantaged areas

In 1995, Amsterdam's Bijlmermeer neighbourhood was assigned funding by the European Commission as part of the URBAN

Community Initiative as a contribution to the socio-economic regeneration of this section of Amsterdam Southeast, which was described as a 'disadvantaged area'. The neighbourhood consisted exclusively of high-rises, and housed a population of approximately 50,000.

This area-based urban programme involved a considerable sum of money. Amsterdam was assigned 4.8 million euros in subsidies from two of the European structural funds (the European Regional Development Fund and the European Social Fund). However, the condition for this subsidy was that co-financing had to be found. The Netherlands Ministry of the Interior, which was responsible for the co-financing, therefore doubled this sum from the funding pot set aside for the so-called big cities policy (*grotestedenbeleid*) that was in effect at the time. At the same time, regional and local government, public institutions and private individuals also invested in the programme. The condition of the co-financing applied at the project level as well: a project was only eligible for URBAN funding if a co-financier could be found. The URBAN programme was able to leverage total investments to the tune of around 66 million euros. At the local level, the financial responsibility for how the URBAN funds were to be distributed fell to the City of Amsterdam. The district of Amsterdam Southeast was responsible for the development of the programmes and projects.

The funds had to be used by the end of 1999, and an organisation had to be set up to allocate the money to projects that fitted within the European policy framework. To be eligible for URBAN funding, project proposals could be submitted that were then assessed according to a number of different criteria. The decision-making structure that was established to this end, in line with European guidelines, consisted of two committees: a Supervisory Committee which was in charge of the implementation of the programme, and a Steering Committee which was authorised to assess the project proposals that were submitted and allocate the URBAN funding. Ethnic, religious and neighbourhood organisations were not represented on these

committees. This was striking, as local participation, including residents' organisations, was an important condition of the URBAN programme.

Protest from below and the threat of a 'black revolution'

Shortly after the start of the URBAN Bijlmermeer programme, a storm of protest was unleashed among some sections of the population of the Bijlmer, who felt that the organisational set-up of the programme did not take their interests into consideration. On 6 February 1996, a number of 'worried Bijlmer residents' organised a protest meeting to debate the organisational structure of the URBAN programme. Their criticism was mainly centred on the decision-making structure, not so much because of the under-representation of the local population in general, but above all because of the under-representation of 'black' people. At this meeting, which was attended by virtually the entire district administration, the non-white district councillors came in for strong criticism. They were accused of having seriously failed to live up to their responsibility to voters – non-white voters in particular – in having unquestioningly accepted the flawed way in which the URBAN programme was organised.

Although the URBAN programme was the catalyst for the conflict, the root cause was much deeper. Quite apart from the organisation of the URBAN programme, there was criticism of the lack of any participatory structure for ethnic groups in decision-making processes in the Southeast district, of the under-representation of the black population in all important positions within the district administration, and of the inadequate communication between the district administration and migrant groups. In addition, many felt that the socio-economic problems that Bijlmer residents were struggling with, such as unemployment, debt (including rent arrears), crime, drug abuse and the deterioration of the neighbourhood, were being insufficiently addressed.

The ('black') councillors took the criticism to heart, and joined forces in what became known as the *Zwart Beraad*. The group soon came into conflict with 'white' district councillors who did not share their point of view. This so-called 'black and white conflict', then, was not only a conflict between the local population and the district administration – within the administration, too, a fierce battle erupted. The tensions ran so high that the URBAN programme ended up being put on hold for months to allow the conflict time to calm down.

The conflict, which was widely reported in the local and national media, appeared to spread beyond the boundaries of the city district. The Dutch government was concerned that tensions would escalate, and the National Security Service (BVD, now the General Intelligence and Security Service, or AIVD) monitored the developments closely. The possibility of ties with radical separatist organisations in the US was considered. The Black Consideration group fed this fear with highly combative rhetoric. It referred to the 'anger' that existed among the lower classes in the Bijlmer. The neighbourhood, they said, was a powder keg and a time bomb. There was said to be intensive contact with black politicians in The Hague and Rotterdam in order to broaden the row to a national level. The movement was said to be striving for 'Black Power', and there were predictions of war breaking out in the Bijlmer when the Netherlands became President of the European Community on 1 January 1997. In other words, a black revolution appeared to be imminent.

The URBAN Bijlmermeer programme reformed

In order to resolve the impasse, substantial changes to the organisational structure of the URBAN Bijlmermeer programme were proposed at the administrative level. The Steering Committee was replaced with the *Uitgebreid Bestuurlijk Overleg Bijlmermeer* (Bijlmermeer expanded administrative consultation, or UBO), and seats were reserved on both the UBO and the Supervisory Committee for

representatives of ethnic minority groups and religious organisations. Projects that were submitted had preferably to be developed from the bottom up and to reinforce the multi-ethnic community.

The URBAN Bijlmermeer programme has often been described as an important catalyst for the project of emancipating the local population. It is unequivocal that the programme heralded an increase in civic participation in the neighbourhood. However, this is only partly thanks to the programme. After all, where the European Commission had praised the programme for the scope it gave for participation by the local population, the initial decision-making structure proved otherwise. In addition, the stringent framework of the URBAN initiative turned out to be too restrictive for grassroots initiatives, with supplementary forms of funding being needed in order to realise these.

The meaning of 'black'

One final question remains: to what extent can the increase in local participation in fact be attributed to the efforts of the Black Consideration group? Without attempting to downplay the significance of their role, the group's image does require some nuancing.

First of all, there was not really one united 'black' front. In reality, multiple groups that portrayed themselves as the representatives of the 'black' Bijlmer residents were involved in the conflict: the 'worried Bijlmer residents' (who later came together in the '*Allochtonen Breed Overleg*', ABO), the Black Consideration group and the Platform Bijlmer. These different 'black' groups had their own agendas and fought against the local establishment, as well as with each other. The members of the ABO and the Black Consideration group were predominantly Afro-Surinamese and, with one exception, male. The members of the Platform Bijlmer came from a range of different ethnic groups.

An interesting point that should be mentioned separately in this context is a problem that many of the people involved in the black-and-white conflict struggled with: their political loyalty

versus their ethnic loyalty. This loyalty problem led to rifts within local political parties. In 1994, the representation of D66 in the district council was pulled apart along ethnic lines. The party's national executive threatened to disband the local branch and the D66 group in the Southeast district council, though ultimately this did not happen. The 'black' faction continued under the D66 banner, while the 'white' faction became part of *Leefbaar Zuidoost* ('Liveable Southeast'). Within the Labour Party (PvdA), too, there was the risk of a rift between the 'black' faction, who were part of the Black Consideration group, and a mixed group led by party luminary Wouter Gortzak. The 'black' members from the latter group primarily viewed themselves as PvdA members. Within the centre-right VVD party, on the other hand, the black-and-white divide did not play a role.

Secondly, the meaning of 'black' was not unequivocal, but highly diverse. Juxtaposed with 'white', 'black' was shorthand for colonial suppression, disadvantage, discrimination and a certain approach to conducting politics. In addition, 'black' referred to ethnic groups from a range of different countries of origin; there was a normative distinction between the 'right' and the 'wrong' black people (token black people, 'Bounties', etc.), and other political divides often lurked behind the term 'black'.

Finally, support from constituents was considerably less substantial than was being suggested. 'Black' parties had found in each other a common rhetoric that created the suggestion that an unprecedented popular revolt was under way – when in fact, the movement remained restricted to a relatively small, though very active and politically engaged, group of participants.

This goes some way towards qualifying the role of the Black Consideration group. However, this does not mean that the conflict, in which it played a fundamental role, was a mere rhetorical battle, yielding no real results. On the contrary: the organisational structure of the controversial URBAN programme was modified to include representatives of ethnic groups; there was a significant increase in the number of 'black' politicians on the district council after the district elections thanks to preferential

votes within the regular political parties; the district council got its first 'black' president in 1998, and promoting participation and the 'multiculturalisation' of the administrative organisation became key policy priorities.

Greater attention must be paid to local diversity

In principle, intervention from Brussels at the local level presented unexpected possibilities for the socio-economic regeneration of Amsterdam's Bijlmermeer neighbourhood. If the conditions for participation in the programme's decision-making structure had been more attuned to the cultural diversity of the area, the time, money and attention that had to be expended on resolving the conflict may have been better directed, for example toward the implementation of the programme.

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48.   A Europe of peripheries

Federico Savini

Europe is a diversified territory made of towns, cities, agglomerations, conurbations and regional networks. The very notion of a 'European city' might seem obsolete with respect to the kaleidoscopic and undefined urban structure of Europe. The fuzzy boundaries of urban areas in the EU have been politically defined, and statistically homogenised in the past decades in order to set the stage for a common European urban policy framework. The past programmes of urban restructuring and regional growth (URBAN I-II, TEN-T etc.) have been largely tailored to a clear identification of a European urban-regional network made of nodes and corridors. The European city has no particular perimeter or recognisable morphological physiognomy. What characterises the European city is a way of governing, a particular form of governability, a tradition of policymaking and a multi-scalar organisation of governance. It is not a spatial character per se. The main problem of today's urban policies is the misconception, certainly inherited from two decades of urban policymaking, that 'urban' is synonymous with 'city', and that an urban policy is a policy that targets to the 'city'. Urbanity is not exclusively a feature of what we imagine as fully fledged cities. Today's urban areas are instead increasingly characterised by polycentric organisation of functional and lived space, which often combines historically consolidated cores with emerging postmodern zones of social and economic dynamism.

The hundreds of thousands of commuters from the hinterlands of Milan, Paris, Athens or London, as well as the mass of people that every morning move across regional clusters of activities, aptly demonstrate this new polycentrism. European citizens are highly mobile and distributed. The wealthy Brianza in the Lombardy region, as well as the widespread urbanisation between Cologne and Bonn, are less 'urban' than the inner

quarters of any European historical city. Yet, it is there that important sectors of the urban economy and population of the EU are today located, from chemical companies to clusters of high-level scientific research and large residential areas. Yet non-urban (i.e. suburban spaces) are also areas of marginalisation and exclusion. The large pockets of poverty in East London districts, as well as the housing estates of the fringes of Budapest, still seem to suffer a submissive position towards their urban cores, and to the economic and governmental headquarters of Europe. These are also the first spaces to suffer from austerity policies, and from the lack of investments and jobs. The majority of the European population live in such non-urban spaces, not in urban cores. The urban periphery is also the nest of the EU's cultural value, as demonstrated by the Stelling van Amsterdam (the defence line of Amsterdam), the châteaux on the Loire, and the Blaenavon Industrial Landscape.

Why does it make sense to think about the suburban, the non-urban and other peripheral spaces in order to reconstruct a cohesive Europe? The main challenge of an urban agenda for policymaking is to emancipate the 'urban' from the 'city', to embrace a wider and more inclusive definition of the European city, and to establish a broad policy framework able to adapt to the variegated territorial manifestations of European city-zenship.

An urban agenda for balanced urban development?

The European institutions have recently started to recognise this need of diversification of urban policies and interventions. Yet this process has not yet crystallised into a genuine and innovative framework of urban and territorial cohesion that is able to include the periphery of cities. While outer areas are certainly identified as core targets for investments and social regeneration, they are still framed as fully functional and dependent on the well-being of the urban core. Nonetheless, there are several indications that a truly sustainable urban development model

for Europe cannot further overlook the different forms of urban organisation and ignore them as socio-economical entities. The *Cities of Tomorrow* conference (2011) as well as the Leipzig Charter (adopted in 2010 by the European Ministers), the Toledo declaration (by the EU Urban Development Ministers, 2010), and the Territorial agenda of the EU 2020 research programme of the European Commission all underline that the European urban system is *polycentric*, *fragmented* and *diversified*, with small, medium and large *communities*. The European Parliament elected in 2014 has confirmed that

> functional urban areas in the EU are not limited only to big cities but also include a unique polycentric structure built around large, medium-sized and small towns and cities and peri-urban areas, thus going beyond the traditional administrative borders to encompass various territories linked by their economic, social, environmental and demographic challenges (Draft Report on the urban dimension of EU policies, Committee on Regional Development, 2014/2213. INI. p. 5 item B.)

These in-between spaces, medium- and small-sized urban communities are functionally linked to larger city cores. Yet they have their own specificity and their own position within the European multi-level governance, which is still dominated by regional governments and large municipal authorities. The urban challenges of Europe – including the key challenges expressed in the future urban agenda – need to show sensitivity to the asymmetric development between these urban formations, and to appreciate the potential of in-between spaces and peri-urban areas. In practice, Europe shows a wide array of best practices on this aspect, most of which have built on self-organising regionalism between municipalities and proactive local governments. The best examples are those that build on the idea of European citizenship, smart specialisation within the European market and socio-cultural characterisation to establish cohesive urban

networks. The regions of Lisbon, Lyon, Turin or Eindhoven (to name a few) have built upon a sentiment of inclusiveness in the European social, cultural and economic space, found their specialised character, valorised their cultural and industrial heritage and stimulated important redistributive policies. Others regions are instead still largely focused on mono-centric development patterns, often sustained by institutionally fragmented governance and divided between leading and following municipalities. Paris and Amsterdam metropolitan areas are examples of the latter.

The notion of periphery, to indicate outer areas, is well known in European circles, yet it is biased towards a nationalistic and international definition. It is used to identify the marginal regions of the European Union. The new Member States in former Eastern Europe do get substantial subsidies and funds from the EU to boost economic development and they are becoming prominent targets of European economic policies. This is not the right scale to use this term. The Polish, Rumanian or Hungarian city centres are less peripheral than the suburban *banlieues* of Paris or Marseilles, or the sprawling areas of Naples. While the concept of periphery was traditionally used to emphasise the socio-economic asymmetries between the highly developed and the less developed regions of Europe, the contemporary notion of periphery shall emphasise the diversified urban territory rather than an East-West and a North-South divide. In doing so, it should better tailor urban policies *within* each region of Europe.

In the last 20 years of urban policy in many European states, the urban periphery has become an important geographical, social and political target for policymaking and policy analysis, but this awareness among academics and practitioners has not been recognised within European policy levels. EU institutions do naturally tend to look at the systemic interdependencies beyond Member States, at a large scale, and thus tend to problematize the interregional relations. Regions are still targeted as aggregated statistical units or as solid administrative spaces. As such, the EU is not yet geared to appreciate the internal

nuances of regional urban systems, despite the fact that these nuances are the key variables for both European problems and opportunities. Furthermore, European policies addressed to problematic poorer areas tend to be difficult to coordinate, both horizontally towards integrated policy actions and vertically through the alignment of national, local and EU policies. This is due to the mismatch between the spatial logics of EU policies and the real socio-spatial development of city-regions. The former is being built on the political and economic leadership of core cities, while the others are increasingly being developed along polycentric patterns of functional distribution.

A new urban policy process?

A policy for the European city needs to appreciate the large variety of socio-spatial relations in urban areas, and valorise the potentials of peripheral, marginal, suburban and peri-urban spaces. This is possible only through a process which valorises bottom-up inputs and existent successful experiences in urban regions and that enable the sharing of knowledge between local administrations. This also requires a political sensitivity towards the new urban equilibrium of Europe. This is much more a political and institutional question rather than a matter of statistical organisation and data management.

The very idea of the 'periphery', the 'sub-urban' or the 'peri-urban' is politically constructed in the multi-scalar process of European policy making. As such, it reflects mental representations of the European Union by its citizens and inhabitants. The European Union provides several ways to understand marginal and excluded areas, often defined according to measurable socio-economic standards. Yet these definitions underlie social and psychological elements, which need to be appreciated in the way they manifest themselves in political action. In the urban and regional spaces of the EU, the urban tension between central and peripheral areas is not

merely a local matter. It affects, and is affected by, the multi-scalar articulation of the European space, which is founded on principles of subsidiarity and proportionality. Centrality and 'peripherality' are political categories. By conceiving the periphery as a marginalised space (a space of exclusion or dependence from the core), the EU is perpetually reproduced as non-cohesive space. The main challenge for policymakers today is thus to understand the symbolic and political iconography that is used for interventions on the periphery. Encouraging the prominence of urban cores, and arguing for their wealth for the cohesion of Europe, means to further promote a conflictual view of polycentrism. And this is the death of any idea of cohesive development.

The effects of this asymmetric conception of European urban areas are very evident today. The geography of emerging political movements oriented towards hyper-localism and anti-European feelings has a relatively clear spatial pattern. The recent electoral success of (neo)nationalism has found its electoral base outside the urban cores. Euro-scepticism has recently increased in peripheral territories of Europe and current research also reports spatially polarised patterns of trust in different EU regions. The ongoing economic crisis, and the EU's subsequent responses, tend to be increasingly delegitimised by emergent groups because of their spatial selectiveness. Central areas are said to benefit from institutionalised links with EU institutions and to benefit the most from scarce EU resources. These policies generate a sense of political exclusion and fierce political discontent. The wave of anti-European movements cover transversally most Member States, including France, Italy, Greece, the UK, Spain and the Netherlands. Separatism is in many cases, but not always, connected to sentiments against the ideas of globalisation and internationalisation. These movements accuse globalisation and international competition to be (re)producers of exclusion from the political arenas and from the labour markets, as well as residential exclusion between the wealthy core and the poorer outer areas. The EU is perceived as either a passive actor or at

times an active enemy of local specialisation and of the territorial potential of growing peri-urban areas.

Only by *re*-placing the urban periphery at the centre of the European urban agenda it is possible to truly set the conditions for addressing important EU problems and to re-establish a European citizenry of diversified communities. The nature of polycentric regions contains the seeds for smart specialisation, social cohesion and social development. Tailor-made development policies of the urban periphery and the understanding of the wide variety of cultural identities and indigenous communities is a necessary condition to enable diversified regional economies and dynamic urban environments.

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49. An Urban Agenda for the European Union: *About* cities or *with* cities?

Wouter van der Heijde

In any discussion about cities that takes place in Brussels, the 'Urban Agenda' for the European Union is sure to be mentioned. Is this agenda a programme with priorities for European cities or an approach to involve cities in the European debate? And did both tracks come together during the Dutch presidency of the European Union in 2016.

The debate about cities has a long history in Europe. Much of what the European Union does affects cities, but cities are often not directly involved in the shaping of initiatives that come out of Brussels. And yet the main societal challenges in Europe such as work, energy, immigration, etc. are frequently metropolitan projects. What is striking is that there is much talk *about* cities and not so much *with* cities themselves, while cities are increasingly important for economic growth, sustainability and innovation. Already approximately 67 percent of Europe's GDP is generated in urban areas.

The three goals of the Urban Agenda for the EU

Generally speaking, the European Urban Agenda has three goals. The first is to set the agenda for cities within the European Union. Much of what the EU does is not specifically focused on cities, even though more than 70 percent of Europeans live in cities and cities contribute significantly to the European economy. At the same time, cities are also concentrations of problems. This

combination means that cities require extra attention and, for example, easier access to European subsidies.

The second goal of the European Urban Agenda is to ensure better coherence in European policies that affect cities. EU policies are usually generic in nature, but they do have implications for cities. Placing a greater emphasis on the city would make it clear where the problem lies. For example, clean air and cars with low emissions are both regulated by the EU, but the regulations are not synchronised. The result is that cities cannot meet the European air quality standards because the European source-based policy on vehicles takes effect later than the air quality standards. An Urban Agenda should prevent this from happening.

And third, the European Urban Agenda aims to ensure that all the substantive issues that are important for cities are brought together. This type of programme with priorities is probably what first comes to mind when one hears the term 'agenda'.

Many players, many visions

Many players are involved in the European Urban Agenda. The focus of the Urban Agenda as well as the objectives and instruments to be worked out will be slightly different depending on the person you speak to. In other words, the process is well underway. Below, I summarise the most important players and their positions.

In 2014, the Member States adopted the conclusions of the European Council urging them and the European Commission to develop an Urban Agenda. At several ministerial meetings, the topic of cities in Europe was put on the table. In 2011, the European Commission published the report 'Cities of Tomorrow', which outlines the challenges facing European cities and sets out a vision of the development of smart, sustainable and inclusive cities as well as benchmarks of urban development. The report also describes measures to strengthen the European urban network. In 2015 the European Commission took an important step by publishing the results of a consultation on

EU urban policy. The consultation identifies the main objectives of the European Union (the so-called Juncker priorities) that have an urban dimension: 1) Jobs, Growth and Investment; 2) Digital Single Market; 3) Energy and Climate; 4) Migration; and 5) Democratic Change. In addition, the European Commission has indicated how it will approach the EU Urban Agenda. Moreover, the name of the directorate-general responsible for regions and cities has been changed to DG Regional and Urban Policy.

The European Parliament also has an opinion about cities in Europe. It has called on the European Commission and the Member States to step up the pace of the Urban Agenda. It too believes that cities should be more involved in the European Union's initiatives. The Parliament has asked the Commission to examine the effects of EU initiatives on cities from a more comprehensive perspective and to invest more in the exchange of knowledge and best practices between cities.

Cities are also making themselves heard – both through the Committee of the Regions, which formally represents cities and regions in Brussels, and via urban networks. The Committee adopted among others a proposal by the mayor of Delft to write up an advisory report on the need for an EU Urban Agenda. EUROCITIES, an important voice of cities in Europe, is closely involved in all these developments. EUROCITIES issues statements and lobbies on behalf of the cities. And then there are the mayors of the capital cities within the European Union that are also contributing to the debate. Since 2012, these mayors have been meeting on a regular basis in the presence of the European Commissioner for Regional and Urban Policy. At their last conference in Amsterdam, they expressed their support for a European Urban Agenda.

Partnerships

Various instruments have been devised to achieve the different objectives of the European Urban Agenda. For example, within the European Commission, an *urban lead* (an urban

representative) might be appointed to direct more attention to cities. And *urban proofing* (an impact assessment) of EU policy will involve systematically assessing the effects of new European initiatives on urban areas. This requires more and better data about cities in Europe, because much of the existing statistical information is not gathered at the city level. Another idea has been recently implemented: a website with European initiatives that have an urban dimension which shows at a glance exactly how and in what areas Europe and cities affect each other.

In order to further develop the priority themes of the Urban Agenda, partnerships are established in which players interested in a particular theme work together in developing them. In this way, like-minded people can find each other and share knowledge and expertise. The partnerships should contribute to better EU legislation, lead to the better use of EU funding, and ensure a better sharing of knowledge base and knowledge exchange.

As is common, each actor has its own list of priority themes. The Commission would like to focus on smart, green and inclusive cities. Among the Member States, the main topics are youth unemployment, affordable housing, energy efficiency of built-up areas, disadvantaged neighbourhoods, etc. EUROCITIES is concentrating on jobs, refugees, migration within the European Union, air quality, sustainability and energy, and affordable housing. Eventually an agreement was reached on twelve priority themes that the partnerships will focus on. This decision was not taken by the cities themselves.

The Urban Agenda in Amsterdam

Did the different ambitions and interpretations of the EU Urban Agenda converge in 2016 within the Pact of Amsterdam that formally establishes the Urban Agenda for the EU? And what role will cities play in this? During the presidency of the Netherlands in the first semester of 2016, all the official meetings in the Netherlands took place in Amsterdam. A number of these

meetings were about the EU Urban Agenda, some were *about* cities (such as the informal ministerial meeting that agreed on the Pact of Amsterdam), others were *with* cities (such as the mayors' conference where there was direct dialogue between the capitals and the European Commission). In addition, there were meetings with city dwellers themselves who put forth their own ideas on an Urban Agenda in Europe.

All the players involved did not follow exactly the same line in Amsterdam, but there is nothing wrong with that. *Europe* thrives on diversity and on providing its own interpretation to developments, and there is no reason to believe that it will be any different with the European Urban Agenda.

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50. 2031: The year the city disbanded the state

Anne van Wageningen

The die is cast. What everyone had been expecting for so long has occurred. The joint convention of mayors of Europe's major cities has declared that all affairs will now be handled between the European Union and the major cities. This declaration of separation was released just before the first summit of the Council of heads of state and government leaders. With this move, the major cities have in one stroke sidelined their own nation states.

The convention was summoned on the basis of an initiative of EU capitals to meet more often to exchange knowledge, share ideas and discuss urban challenges and problems they had in common. By 2015, it had become clear that not only the capitals but also the major cities were dealing with comparable administrative problems. Consequently, a group of European cities came into being that soon began exchanging knowledge, expertise and ideas. But they did not stop at this. The group began to lobby the institutions of the European Union, in particular the European Commission. States declared that they did not want to deal with this group because, in their opinion, municipalities could represent their interests within the appropriate constitutional framework in their own state. It was in response to this declaration that the convention of European mayors was ultimately established.

And now in 2031 the convention has taken the ultimate political step of burying the nation state, without further ado. This step was elucidated by the spokesman of the convention with the following pronouncement: 'People do not live in states, they live in cities.' The German city states in particular – Berlin, Bremen and Hamburg – have expressed their full confidence in this step. They already have a significant amount of experience

with enacting legislation and working with their own judicial system. Venice, Genoa and Amsterdam also foresee few problems and consider this a normal step from a historical point of view. Barcelona and San Sebastian/Donostia have also joined the convention. They recognise that the old state system no longer bears any relation to urban citizenship. They add that the governance of the city has finally been given back to the residents rather than being transferred by a historical aberration from the alleged ownership of one faraway monarch to another, equally distant government. When asked to comment, Paris declared that it did not see what had changed, as the governing had always been conducted from Paris. Vienna remarked that it had already been a city without an empire for more than a century.

During the convention, the major cities had already identified many common topics for which the Member States had done too little, not just at the state level but also at the European level. The growing polarisation of society, the influx of tourists, public and private housing, migration from within and outside the European Union, the energy transition, environmental issues, and the effects of failed financial policies were all visible on the squares and streets of major cities – and not in government buildings.

Urban innovation and activism

Dutch city councils let it be known that developments had already for some time been pushing the Netherlands in the direction of independent city states and urban agglomeration. They had made clear that they were unable to solve acute social problems on the street or in households solely within the framework of the state, which simply passed the buck. By around 2015, municipalities had already been made responsible for the social domain, which included social support, home safety, youth welfare, labour market reintegration and adequate education. As the expansion in their responsibilities was not accompanied

with an expansion in financial resources, cities began to work more closely with neighbouring municipalities. It all began with the exchange of knowledge, but it soon led to the merging of municipal services to make better use of the limited financial resources they had.

This collaboration was also intensified in the area of spatial planning. Municipalities were forced to react to developments in the tourist sectors. Popular cities such as Barcelona, Paris, Venice and Amsterdam saw their city centres change significantly: both the number of hotels and the number of residents who put their houses up for rent increased dramatically. And residents who could no longer rent a house in the ever-expanding city centre were obliged to move to the outskirts. Because these developments occurred so rapidly, huge infrastructural problems arose. Of course, cities benefit in all sorts of ways from tourists, namely through the creation of jobs and a rise in revenues from tourism taxes. Amsterdam was one of the first cities in Europe that made a tax deal with an intermediary platform for individuals renting their houses to tourists. But the income for municipalities was insufficient to solve the problems that arose, including the financing of more public transport and bike paths to transport workers to the city where they used to live. And in this way another taboo was gradually lifted: that of municipalities developing more and more new categories of tax revenue.

In addition to the tourist tax and the property tax, municipalities have become increasingly innovative in the levying of other taxes. It began with the decision to raise the tourist tax in response to the increasing flow of tourists. The tax did not have the desired effect, as the tourists continued coming. What the tax did result in is more financial resources for the popular municipalities. In the Netherlands, the property tax had been one of the few taxes that municipalities could levy themselves. Inspired by the example of London, cities began to experiment with toll charges. Amsterdam introduced a toll charge to finance extra infrastructural facilities intended to shorten the commute between the suburbs and the capital city. These projects were

taken up by Amsterdam in collaboration with other municipalities in the region such as Almere, Amstelveen, Purmerend and Zaandam. In reaction to the convention, these municipalities remarked that when it came to infrastructural problems, they dealt with Amsterdam more often than they did with the state. The fact that the metro finally connected their cities to Schiphol Airport had only been made possible by financing by the municipalities and by European Union regional funds. These funds were a new financial instrument based on a veiled tax in the form of fines the EU levied on states that violated the Stability and Growth Pact or that persistently failed to meet the obligations of EU membership.

Urban policy and global problems

A very different urban problem arose around 2015. The arrival of a stream of people from mainly Syria, Yemen and Eritrea seriously tested the improvisational talent of cities. Many asylum seekers were able to stay in Europe on the basis of the refugee status they received. And those whose requests for asylum had been rejected were officially deported, although if they did not have any identification from their country of origin they were simply put out on the street and not, according to a spokesman from the Association of Netherlands Municipalities, 'in the Kingdom of the Netherlands'. Municipalities had to deal with both groups (refugees and asylum seekers). The state had come up with an arrangement in 2014 in which five municipalities would provide emergency shelter, but this only seemed to add an extra element to the increasing disparity between Dutch municipalities. The rest of the European Union faced similar problems. Hungary criminalised the irregular entry of asylum seekers, but this did not alter the fact that Budapest had to do something about the stream of refugees. By contrast, in Germany the state and cities were much more able to work together.

In almost all Member States of the European Union, the problem of the asylum seekers generated similar policy issues.

Extra schooling for children had to be organised in addition to extra housing, integration and language courses for adults, and retraining of professional skills acquired in their country of origin. Due to the rise of all sorts of nationalist parties, politicians at the state level did not dare to touch these dossiers, as a result of which municipalities had to solve these matters themselves.

Looking back on it now, one can say that it was the asylum seekers who ushered in the renaissance in public housing. The municipal housing association was re-established and new types of social housing were built. Architects seized the opportunity to combine environmental objectives with energy-neutral housing, also primarily because the new houses had to be built cheaply. The demand for large numbers of new houses unleashed an innovative force in the entire European Union that roused the continent from a long and peaceful winter sleep.

The energy transition also needed just such a spark. State policy had been languishing and lacked innovative power. The transition to clean energy was, moreover, being hampered by the large coal and gas plants and by state interests. Municipalities throughout Europe moved back to establishing municipal energy companies, which focused on wind and solar energy. Innovative capacity was thus brought back to the level of municipalities, according to the spokesperson for energy policy and transition at the convention.

Reactions of EU institutions and Member States

The European Commission has declared that it is still considering the situation. It acknowledges that it already maintains active relations with municipalities in various ways and that a significant amount of regional subsidies and policy decisions are coordinated together with municipalities. The Commission is, however, very much aware that the European Union is still governed by the joint Member States that meet in the Council.

The European Parliament has said that it is following developments with great interest and that this matter is in theory an

internal affair of the Member States. The Parliament has declared that genuine democratic control within the European Union is of the utmost importance. It is therefore prepared to continue to guarantee and exercise democratic control over European Union territory if national parliaments are no longer able to fulfil this task.

In a press release, the Council has distanced itself from the convention. It considers the legal integrity and sovereignty of the Member States as immutable and not up for discussion. The French president reaffirmed the Council's statement, noting that France is one and indivisible. She also let it be known that the prefects are monitoring the situation and, where necessary, would take all the decisions in the interests of the state. The German chancellor asserted that she did not wish to go back in time a full century and pointed out that the Federal Republic of Germany has a constitution that allows it to operate strong and stable state institutions in a democratic setting. She also expressed her intention to put this matter on the agenda of the next Franco-German summit. The Dutch Government Information Service, meanwhile, has announced that the festivities organised for the 450th anniversary of the Act of Abjuration will be kept very sober. Amsterdam, however, sees no reason to cancel the festivities. The mayor of Amsterdam stated that he considered the fireworks in the city to be a fitting way to mark and usher in the new beginning.

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