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Special Feature: Gentrification through the ages

From hippies to yuppies: marginal gentrification in Amsterdam's Jordaan and De Pijp neighbourhoods 1960–1990*

Tim Verlaan and Aimée Albers

Challenging the prevailing assumption that gentrification is a recent development, this contribution explores the (re)discovery of central urban living in Amsterdam by using the concept of marginal gentrification. Two inner-city neighbourhoods that have experienced the influx of marginal and middle-class gentrifiers, the Jordaan and de Pijp, will serve as case studies. In historiography, the transformation of both areas is portrayed as an unexpected and sudden development kickstarted by neoliberal housing policies in the early 1990s. However, historical research on Anglophone case studies has demonstrated that gentrification should be understood as a long-term process of social, cultural and economic change, already beginning in the 1960s. Through the use of newspaper articles and policy documents from the period under research, this contribution will reveal how the changing living preferences and consumer cultures of 'urban pioneers' can be understood as a case of marginal gentrification. Thus, this contribution will offer a deeper understanding of the ways in which structural changes in Amsterdam's

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urban society shaped the everyday life of its citizens, and identify some of the inequalities in which these changes resulted for specific social strata.

Introduction

> Simon is a political scientist and has advanced plans for pursuing a PhD. Marlise is a welfare worker. Double income, want for nothing, and the bank will take care of their mortgage. [...] Strangers think you can still find the Amsterdam working class in the Jordaan. They will be deceived. The neighbourhood is roaming with graduates, who experience the romanticism of a poorer past in prosperity. [...] According to many, the Jordaan is the cosiest neighbourhood of Amsterdam, and if your pockets are deep enough, it is easy to convert a former working-class tenement into a palace. [...] Gentrification is what it is called in English. (*Het Parool*, July 13, 1979)

To any reader, this somewhat cynical description of neighbourhood change might have been written yesterday. The trope of a young urban couple being satirized for their lifestyle and search for authenticity are all too familiar in our time, even to those outside the field of urban studies. Yet, when this was written in the summer of 1979, Dutch newspapers mentioned gentrification almost exclusively between inverted commas and Amsterdam was in the middle of a hard-hitting urban crisis (Verlaan 2020). This might explain why to the author, columnist for the local newspaper *Het Parool* Evert Werkman, gentrification was not yet the dirty word it has become over the last two decades. Werkman's observations enrich the history of gentrification in Amsterdam by naming a development that for the post-war period has been only marginally discussed by Dutch geographers (exceptions include contemporary studies by Cortie and van de Ven 1981; Cortie, van de Ven, and de Wijs-Mulkens 1982; Cortie et al. 1984): the emergence of a highly educated social stratum with a preference for urban living and a distinct consumer culture. The Dutch journalist was not alone in his fascination. By the end of the 1970s, local editions of major Western newspapers frequently ran background stories on the 'good life' of a younger generation of urbanites—probably because many of the writers were members of these chattering classes themselves. A 1977 article from *The Guardian* on neighbourhood change in Islington perfectly captures the mockery with which gentrifiers were usually described: '[Camembert colonialists] leading positive lives, making their own beer, reading *New Society* and riding bicycles to work' (*The Guardian*, 21 August, 1977).

This contribution investigates the living preferences and consumption behaviour of the new urban middle class by going further back in time than our colleagues in the field of urban studies, taking Amsterdam neighbourhoods the Jordaan and De Pijp as case studies. By doing so, we hope to shift the focus away from the Anglophone context most scholars focus on when discussing the pre-1980s period. For the purpose of this study, we will work with Lees, Slater and Wyly's classic definition of gentrification as 'the transformation of a working-class or vacant area of the central city into middle-class residential and/ or commercial use' (2008, xv), which is similar to how Ruth Glass defined the term in 1964 (xviii). Thus, we limit ourselves to the conversion or refurbishment

of older structures and exclude more present-minded definitions. Hackworth, for example, defines gentrification as 'the production of space for more affluent users' (Hackworth 2002, 815). This definition allows for the inclusion of urban redevelopment and newbuilds but, as we will demonstrate, would be an anachronism to apply to our case studies. In the period of 1960–90 specifically under study in this article, gentrification was to a large extent the ultimate consequence of citizen protests against comprehensive urban redevelopment. From the late 1960s onwards a broad coalition of community activists, squatters and preservationists successfully protested against municipal plans for the wholesale renewal of rundown central areas such as the Jordaan and De Pijp. Yet, while this history—and the broader urban crisis characterized by suburbanization, disinvestment and dilapidation—has received ample scholarly attention over the last three decades (Mamadouh 1992; Uitermark 2009; De Liagre Böhl 2010; Kaal 2011; Verlaan 2017), the crosscurrent of early gentrification has remained in the background of this battle over the right to the city. Based on our definition of gentrification, the phenomenon was first observed in American cities during the 1950s (Gale 2020, 286–287), and starts with the arrival of highly-educated but modestly-earning professionals in inner-city neighbourhoods (Rose 1996, 1984). While the literature does acknowledge the importance of this pioneering stage of neighbourhood change (Gale 1984; Smith 1996), geographers usually treat this moment as a mere afterthought (exceptions are Zukin 1982, 2010; Caulfield 1994; Ley 1996; 2003). Historians have only recently forayed into the field of gentrification (Moran 2007; Osman 2011; Reick 2018). With the exception of a few case studies (Cortie and van de Ven 1981; Cortie, van de Ven, and de Wijs-Mulkens 1982; Cortie et al. 1984; Dekker et al. 1985; Ebels and Ostendorf 1991; de Wijs-Mulkens 1999; Wagenaar 2003), the genesis of gentrification in the Dutch context thus remains understudied by geographers and historians alike. According to Osman (2017), this scant attention should be attributed to the wariness of historians towards examining recent historical developments, contemporary hypes and chaotic concepts, of which gentrification is a prime example. In addition, early gentrification is poorly visible in contemporary government records, as the process initially attracted little official policy attention, and most quantitative data on neighbourhood change is either inaccessible due to privacy issues or non-existent because of poor recordkeeping.

Because of the long-term perspective we propose, it makes sense to empirically test the periods or stages along which gentrification supposedly develops. The classic stage model, as proposed by Gale (1984), discerns three phases in neighbourhood change; the first stage is characterized by the arrival of risk-taking, unconventional singles and childless couples, the second stage is defined by the buying of properties becoming more widely seen as a wise investment; and the third stage, in which an area is marketed as investable by the media and property business. While Gale's model applies to how gentrification might develop on the local level of one particular neighbourhood, Hackworth and Smith (2001) conceptualize how gentrification has developed, mutated and expanded over time and distinguish three consecutive waves, two of which are relevant to our case studies as well. The first wave finds its origins in the late 1960s and is sporadic and marginal in nature, but gains force during the 1970s when developers and investors become more active on inner-city housing markets.

During the 1980s this second wave mutates in a third, when gentrification establishes itself in hitherto disinvested central districts. As historians, we are particularly interested in the transition between the first and the second wave, which—although not referring to stage models—was characterized by David Ley as the moment 'the yuppies began following the hippies' (Ley, 175–221). Damaris Rose (1996) has labelled this early phase 'marginal gentrification', a term that despite its importance for how the process develops over time (Smith 1996, 98) has been rarely used since its coinage (Criekingen and Decroly 2003, 2455). This article aims to resuscitate the concept of marginal gentrification by examining the consumption patterns of early gentrifiers and those who followed them during the second wave of the late 1970s and 1980s. 'Could it be that the youth culture of the 1960s included not only the *last* in a long line of poorer households occupying the inner city, but also the *first* in a new sequence of residents for whom the inner city would not be the site of last resort for households with few choices, but rather the preferred location of a middle-class cohort with a rather different vision of the opportunities of city living, indeed a group whose residential location was part of the repertoire of their cultural identity?', is what Ley (1996, 175) provocatively asked at the beginning of his chapter on the cultural politics of gentrification. In many ways, the answer had already been given by Sharon Zukin in her seminal study on the emergence of loft living in 1960s New York (1982). In her later work, Zukin (2010, 11) describes the desire for an 'authentic urban experience' as a reaction to the redevelopment efforts and urban crisis of the first post-war decades. Although both Ley and Zukin pay considerable attention to artists, preservationists and young urban professionals as pioneers in gentrification processes, their geographical scope is confined to the North American metropolis and their source materials and timeframe too limited for rigorous historical analysis.

We propose to correct the myopic view on the history of gentrification by uncovering a new set of primary sources—newspaper articles in particular. As the opening citation of our contribution demonstrates, newspapers potentially constitute a wealth of information on the cultural meaning of gentrification. The recent digitization of newspapers by the Dutch National Archives, most notably Amsterdam daily *Het Parool*, allows us to explore how contemporaries actually experienced and understood gentrification, and by extension how journalists themselves contributed to putting neighbourhoods 'on the map'. Our main body of primary sources concerns newspaper articles published between 1960 and 1990, of which a long list was made using the selected keywords 'Jordaan' and 'De Pijp'. Subsequently, we narrowed our selection down to approximately one hundred articles focusing on neighbourhood change. We analysed articles written around occurrences of early gentrification, in particular when artists, students, preservationists, and, in later stages, property developers were involved. In addition, we have drawn on qualitative sources such as municipal surveys and reports, sociological studies and minutes of political and neighbourhood meetings. As argued by Lees (1996), journalists have been instrumental in representing gentrification. Our source materials do not only reveal 'actually existing' gentrification but also demonstrate how the media contributed to the process, in particular as journalists were among the first arrivals in gentrifying neighbourhoods. In this article, we will provide the consumption-side

theories on the Anglophone context as put forward by Ley and Zukin with a firm empirical base, focusing on the actors, their housing preferences and consumption behaviour in the context of post-war Amsterdam. The reason for selecting the Jordaan and De Pijp as case studies is their similar physical and social fabric. Both are inner-city neighbourhoods of comparable size close to the city centre with fragmented ownership patterns and historical charm. Once slated for redevelopment, over the last half-century both have transformed from dilapidated working-class neighbourhoods into bulwarks of the urban middle class and are frequently presented as such by Dutch media outlets. However, both changed along distinctive patterns, thus functioning as complementary case studies. Based on a preliminary review of newspaper articles on neighbourhood change in other European capitals (*Berliner Morgenpost*, *The Guardian*), we have strong evidence that the marginal gentrification of the Jordaan and De Pijp runs parallel to the post-war development of places such as Kreuzberg and Islington. Thus, our contribution also serves as a pilot study for scholars wishing to adopt a historical scope to gentrification. Based on our two case studies, we demonstrate that gentrification patterns in Amsterdam did not neatly develop along the lines of wave models and the economic crises with which they are aligned. Rather they occurred in tandem with a broader urban crisis, which lasted well into the 1980s and saw some parts of neighbourhoods spiralling into decay while others experienced revitalization and reinvestment. This underlines the importance of the historical-empirical approach we have adopted for this contribution. Historians can potentially adjust existing theories and make social scientists aware of the gaps or inconsistencies in their knowledge and how it is produced (Sewell 2005, 5). The trajectory of gentrification in post-war Amsterdam is simply too complex and idiosyncratic to fit into established paradigms. We therefore invite our colleagues in the field of urban studies to rethink fixed categories and include a more inductive and time-sensitive line of reasoning, investigating the 'when' of gentrification just as thoroughly as its where, how and why.

A city of two tales

Amsterdam has a long history of social housing construction and providing the needy with a decent place to live. With the nationwide introduction of the Housing Act in 1901, non-profit housing corporations came to play a significant role in the provision of affordable housing to lower and lower-middle class residents (Hochstenbach 2017, 44). During the 1950s and 1960s, the city laid out ambitious redevelopment and expansion schemes designed in the modernist style. The consensus amongst urban planners was that outdated housing blocks and industrial infrastructures were to be replaced with modern tower blocks, office buildings and shopping centres. While the city centre had been experiencing suburbanization and office construction since the late 19th century, during the post-war period these developments were expected to accelerate due to growing car ownership (Verlaan 2019, 4). Thus, it seemed only logical to designate the Jordaan and De Pijp as redevelopment areas, particularly as these neighbourhoods were close to the city's central business district and had begun to experience an urban crisis characterized by a decaying housing stock,

crumbling infrastructures, increasing congestion, struggling public utilities and rising crime levels (Verlaan 2020). In particular for more affluent families, the newbuilds in Amsterdam's fringe areas and hinterlands were to be preferred over the unhealthy, unsafe and rather unattractive inner city. Those wishing to stay nonetheless often had no choice but to move due to enforced rehousing (De Liagre Böhl 2010, 53).

This narrative of urban decline—and the subsequent 'urban renaissance' of the 1990s and 2000s—has come to dominate post-war historiography (Osman 2017). However, a more detailed historical account of urban change on the neighbourhood level will reveal a much more idiosyncratic unfolding of events. While Amsterdam was gearing up for urban redevelopment, the city underwent significant demographic change. In the late 1950s population numbers peaked at 870,000 souls, but soon began plummeting due to suburbanization and decreasing household sizes (Atzema 1991). By the early 1970s the city shrunk by a net average of 10,000 residents annually (Gemeente Amsterdam 1970, 6). This population loss was partially compensated by a growing number of labour migrants from Morocco and Turkey as well as people from the former Surinamese and Antillean colonies, in addition to a younger generation of students, artists and young professionals. While their arrival did not offset the net negative effects of suburbanization (den Draak 1967, 213–225; van Hulten 1968, 69–128; Stam 1979), from the 1960s onwards they left a significant imprint on the city's cultural scene. Both long-time residents and newcomers organized into social movements and community action groups protesting the city's inability to cope with the urban crisis (Kaal 2011). Eventually, their protests resulted in a massive construction spree of social housing overseen by the municipality and—ironically enough—the setting in motion of localized gentrification processes (Uitermark 2009) (see Figure 1).

In particular the younger newcomers and their outgoing lifestyle were quickly noted by contemporary observers. Their wish to live independently and prolong single life, combined with improved educational opportunities and a delayed entry into the labour market, led to the emergence of alternative living arrangements and a vibrant cultural scene (van de Kaa 1987; van Noort 1988, 89–92). Between 1964 and 1980 the city centre's share of 20–39-year olds rose from 30 to 50 percent (Gemeentelijke Sociale Dienst 1975). The national planning agency began noticing how a countermovement of young avant-gardists felt remarkably at home in the Dutch capital (Rijksplanologische Dienst 1969, 10–24). Sociologist Jan van Hessen observed that central urban areas had come to shelter 'bohemian youths' with an outspoken preference for dilapidated tenement houses over the 'modern, streamlined products' of the construction industry (van Hessen 1971, 38). The 'discovery' of the urban milieu was fostered by an expanding welfare state, which sponsored the proliferation of marginal gentrifiers. Not only did the national government invest heavily in higher education, it was also the largest employer in the quaternary sector. Its employees had a strong preference for central locations as this was where many Dutch universities and governmental institutes were situated (Cortie, van de Ven, and de Wijs-Mulkens 1982, 357–359). Sociologist Herman Vuijsje even observed the emergence of a state-employed urban middle class of welfare workers, civil servants and scholars (Vuijsje 1977, 27–40). In addition, the Dutch

welfare state sponsored many art initiatives and cultural centres. Between 1950 and 1975, the state budget for arts and culture doubled every five years (Smithuijsen 2007, 58). Boasting two of the largest universities and many of the country's cultural institutions, Amsterdam became a hotbed for youth culture and radical art forms.

The newcomers readily embraced the mixed-use character and historical complexity of inner-city neighbourhoods. In 1971, sociologist Jan den Draak noticed the first 'cosmopolitans' roaming the streets of Amsterdam: 'They experience the city more integrally: they live, work and play here, and enjoy the fleeting and vague contacts in the public sphere. In short: in the city centre they search and find a surplus of urbanity not to be found anywhere else' (den Draak 1971, 223). Around the same time, Anglophone scholars began reappreciating urbanity for its emancipatory powers as well. In 1970, Richard Sennett argued that 'dense, disorderly, overwhelming cities can become the tools to teach to live with [his, TV] new freedom. [T]he jungle of the city, its vastness and loneliness, has a positive human value. Indeed, I think certain kinds of disorder need to be increased, so that men can pass into full adulthood' (Sennett 1970, xvi; xvii). Similarly, Jonathan Raban in his reflections on cultural change in 1960s London, unravelled how the emergence of a counterculture changed both physical and mental landscapes: ' … in the city personal identity has been rendered soft, fluid, endlessly open to the exercise of the will and the imagination' (Raban 1974, 68). Indeed, inner-city neighbourhoods came to function as a gateway to educational and career opportunities, and as a refuge from an increasingly bureaucratic and numbing society. Or, as Ley (1996, 210) has observed about the bohemian urban spaces of the 1960s:

> Older neighbourhoods in the centre city then became oppositional spaces: socially diverse, welcoming difference, tolerant, creative, valuing the old, the hand-crafted, the personalized, countering hierarchical lines of authority.

As this section has demonstrated, first-wave gentrification, typically situated in the late 1960s and early 1970s by urban scholars, was not a natural process, rather it was a side-effect of demographic trends and the expanding welfare state. Amsterdam was a city of two tales during this period: one of decline and decay for long-time residents who chose or were forced to move out, and one of new beginnings and opportunities for an increasing number of young people and overseas migrants (cf Berry 1985). Thus, we propose to replace Hackworth and Smith's wave model with an image of ebb and tide, at least for the period under discussion in this article.

The Jordaan: Epicentre of the cultural revolution

Epicentre of Amsterdam's cultural revolution was the Jordaan, a working-class neighbourhood to the west of the city's prosperous canal belt. From the mid-17th century onwards, the area had developed into a mixed-use district characterized by a mingling of social classes, light industry, workshops and small retailers. Towards the end of the 19th century the area began losing residents to the newly

constructed tenement blocks surrounding Amsterdam's urban core, including De Pijp (Bos 2001, 224). In 1889 the neighbourhood still counted some 80,000 residents; a number that had fallen to 51,198 in 1930. The announcement of small-scale redevelopment schemes in the interbellum and the lure of modernist expansion areas and suburban developments during the post-war period only increased depopulation: in 1965 the district was home to a mere 22,464 residents. Most of the flats in the area were privately-owned but rent controlled. Given the decreasing population and financial risks of refurbishing structures that would possibly be abandoned, there was little incentive for landlords to maintain their properties, which led to further dilapidation and decay. In 1969, the municipal administration announced the first comprehensive redevelopment scheme for the area, which called for the thinning out of the urban fabric and construction of expressways and office developments—although most of the canals and canal houses on the neighbourhood fringes were to be preserved (De Liagre Böhl 2010, 148–157) (see Figure 1).

Figure 1: 'The Jordaan in ruins?' (1970), placard protesting against redevelopment of the Jordaan, with houses slated for demolition coloured red (Amsterdam City Archives).

In concurrence with the exodus of long-time residents, mostly working-class families who relied on employment in the city's dwindling industrial sector, the Jordaan experienced the influx of a younger generation. The new arrivals were spearheaded by students and emerging artists: 40 percent of the newcomers arriving in the second half of the 1960s were aged 20–25 years (Lesger 2013, 360). The ways in which their emergence led to the first stirrings of marginal gentrification was quickly noted by the local press. Already in 1963, the *Parool* newspaper was fascinated by the unexpected emergence of espresso bars, Chinese dinners, antique shops and boutiques (*Het Parool*, September 9, 1963). In the same year, the newspaper reported on the conversion of a vacant warehouse into a spacious photo studio inaugurated by a 'morning drink' consumed by leading figures in Dutch photography, advertising and journalism (*Het Parool*, April 4, 1963, cf. Podmore 1998). Admiring the influx of aspiring young artists, art critic Hans Redeker spoke of the neighbourhood's 'resurrection' as a centre for artistic production (*Algemeen Handelsblad*, January 9, 1970). It was not only the affordable housing and cheap working spaces that attracted a younger generation to the Jordaan. According to architecture critic Simon Mari Pruys, this was one of the last places where one could be 'truly free' and discover a social cohesion written off by city officials. While Pruys considered urban redevelopment and its strive to tidy things up 'petit-bourgeois', the mixed character of the Jordaan was an authentic cross section of Dutch society with emancipatory qualities:

> Here, someone with a degree in economics lives next door to a cab driver and an artist and their families. [...] From a social perspective, this communal structure is invaluable because it makes the Jordaan a halfway house for artists and students on their way to important positions in society. (*Algemeen Handelsblad*, March 14, 1970)

Preserving the past

Spurring the arrival of newcomers were Amsterdam's conservation and heritage groups. From 1960 onwards the Diogenes foundation, chaired by reputed conservationist Geurt Brinkgreve, had begun buying up, renovating and converting properties into artist accommodation (*Het Parool*, January 22, 1964). Aided by funding and gifts from its supporters, charities, businesses and in some cases future residents, Diogenes and other heritage groups would eventually acquire hundreds of properties in the Jordaan. Consequently, an increasing number of artists not only worked but also came to live in the area—confirming its reputation as a bohemian village (Ardon 1964, 62). One of the most prolific renovators-cum-investors in the Jordaan was 'Stadsherstel', a foundation similar to Diogenes that made a habit of buying corner houses to hamper comprehensive redevelopment and inspire other property owners, or as its former director explained: 'The contagious effect of our work has been immense. Because of our efforts, landlords in the area came to see the potential' (Feddes 2016, 52). The increasing number of listed buildings in Amsterdam's city centre indeed had a ripple effect. Office conversion, which was prohibited altogether during the 1980s, became more difficult due to the small size of monumental buildings and their limited accessibility by car (Terhorst and van de Ven 2003, 91). If conversion did happen it was from production or office into

residential use (van de Ven and Westzaan 1991, 303), thus putting a halt to the expansion of the central business district along the canal belt.

Amsterdam's heritage groups boasted strong ties with local politics and banking firms, reflected by the large number of active and former politicians on their boards of directors and supervisors. Brinkgreve himself served as a council member for the Catholic Worker's Party (Katholieke Volkspartij, KVP), and countered the city's redevelopment agenda with proposals to rehouse the creative class inside central districts, or as he explained in 1963 (cited in Verlaan 2016, 139): 'The present generation wants a city centre restored to its former glory, not a jumble of concrete monstrosities and slums. A city centre, where one can find all the leading, creative, specialized professionals and bodies, who can only thrive and interact in central areas'. Reflecting on the agenda of Brinkgreve and friends, in 1966 communist city councillor Leen Seegers foresaw an unholy alliance: 'The middle classes' conservative and progressive forces have found each other: proponents of careful preservation and those who are only concerned about the liveability and atmosphere of the city' (cited in Verlaan 2017, 142). While the Jordaan would remain a communist bulwark until the early 1980s, on the local level the municipal elections of 1970, 1974 and 1978 reflected an increasingly fragmented political landscape with room for social-liberal parties and the New Left as well (Gemeente Amsterdam 1970, 341, 1978, 380 cf. van Gent and Boterman 2019). Although the heritage groups did not explicitly call for social upgrading, the rents they charged after renovation were substantially higher. Despite good intentions, their agenda did not always correspond with the interests of long-time residents and low-income groups. Brinkgreve admitted that Stadsherstel was renovating for midcareer actors and musicians rather than the struggling young artist (*Het Parool*, May 28, 1970). In an appeal against redevelopment, already in 1970 fellow preservationists Amstelodamum even admitted that they saw merit in demographic change: 'We are fully aware that the social structures in the Jordaan are changing rapidly [...]. Despite its shortcomings, the Jordaan is now extremely popular amongst an avantgarde of students, artists and intellectuals. Expats also enjoy settling here. Because of population decline and the higher expectations of retailers, numerous local shops were forced to shut down but have been reopened as fashion boutiques, antique stores and galleries' (Amstelodamum 1970). While Amstelodamum proposed 'spontaneous rehabilitation' instead of comprehensive redevelopment, they also called for the removal of workplaces and craft shops from inside the Jordaan's courtyards. The number of reported renovations increased annually from only 2–10 during the 1950s to several dozen from the late 1960s onwards (Zantkuyl 1978, 10). This 'monumentalization' of the Jordaan did not go unnoticed amongst long-time residents. Some of them organized into locally run collectives, buying up and refurbishing worn-down tenements themselves; stating that the monuments business was 'elitist', 'anti-social', and, most importantly, pushing up prices in the area (*Het Parool*, December 19, 1973; *Het Parool*, March 27, 1975).

Embracing the old

The growing appreciation for Amsterdam's historic environment was reflected by both increasing renovation subsidies and reinvestments by a growing

number of property developers. The yearly government expenditures on Amsterdam monuments went up from 972,000 guilders in 1957 to 13,515.000 in 1966 (Gemeente Amsterdam 1968, 125). After the instalment of Han Lammers as planning alderman in 1970, the Jordaan's redevelopment scheme was eventually shelved. In many ways, Lammers himself was a representative of the liberal middle classes that came to dominate local politics during the 1970s. Being foreman of the New Left and a progressive journalist, in preceding years he had turned against Amsterdam's redevelopment agenda and described the city centre as a 'cosy, chaotic and messy' place (Lammers 1973, cited in Verlaan 2016, 149). The land use plan that was ratified under Lammers' watch in 1972 prescribed the preservation of most of the older structures and the original street pattern, and ordered housing corporations and property developers to respect the Jordaan's historical surroundings (De Liagre Böhl 2010, 163). The new policies demonstrate the diversity of people speaking up for authenticity during the 1960s. Historic preservationists, community activists and early gentrifiers such as the artists who began moving into the Jordaan bonded over their aversion to urban redevelopment for its detrimental side-effects, whether this concerned social displacement, increasing congestion and pollution caused by car traffic and office construction, or the demolition of historical structures.

From the early 1970s onwards, more serious money began pouring into the neighbourhood. Breaking with tabula rasa modernism, in 1971 a building company announced the construction of canal houses designed in a traditional style (*Het Parool*, July 3, 1971). Driven by the saturation of their home market and Britain's impending membership of the EEC, British developers began ogling the Jordaan as well. They were encouraged by Lammers, who in 1973 even flew to London to meet the most prolific British developers on the Amsterdam market (*Het Parool*, January 11, 1973). The British were most certainly welcome but had to abide to his rules, or as Lammers told the *Financial Times* (March 12, 1973): 'Basically, the city's natural beauty and character must be preserved and we cannot tolerate any demolishment of housing, of which there is a big enough shortage already'. Heeding these calls and sensing a new market, British developers pioneered the refurbishing of canal warehouses into swanky new apartments. In a background story, a local journalist prophesied further gentrification in 1973: 'The irony is that maybe the residents will soon pay more for their tiny flats than the owners of luxury dwellings on the urban fringes. [...] The city centre's future will probably be destined by affluent singles or couples, small but comfortably settled in old houses or warehouses' (*De Tijd*, June 6, 1973).

It is clear that as a consequence of the land-use plan of 1972 and its decision to leave most of the remaining structures untouched, by this time the Jordaan was entering a new phase in its gentrification. In the late 1970s, private investors would buy and refurbish more buildings in the area than the municipality altogether; activities that concentrated alongside canals in the northern part of the neighbourhood (Dekker et al. 1985, 72–73). An increasing number of dwellings were split into one-storey apartments, indicating a strong demand for central urban living amongst singles and childless couples (van Hinte 1984, 73–80). Renovation usually went hand in hand with changing floor plans, which led to a steady decline in the average number of occupants per dwelling

in the area: from 2.09 in 1974 to 1.96 in 1976 (Gemeente Amsterdam 1976, 175). As one contemporary geographer put it, population decline was not the same as depopulation and did not necessarily lead to empty streets and abandoned buildings (van Hulten 1968, 162).

Out of the more than 70 million euros (corrected for inflation) spent on Jordaan properties in the second half of the 1970s, private investors had channelled close to 53 million into renovation against 17 million into newbuilds (Dekker et al. 1985, 62–67). These figures contrasted sharply with the slow pace of social housing construction, which was complicated due to dispersed property ownership and complex building logistics. Local action groups began protesting municipal neglect and the continuing influx of more prosperous newcomers. They were enticed by a growing army of proprietors and rental agents—the notorious Gerard Bakker being one—who commodified the bohemian image of the Jordaan in their advertisements: 'For many, the Jordaan is a relief: here one can still find a salutary peace, which cannot be said of many other central districts. The little traffic, village-like atmosphere and small backstreets with their curiosity shops all contribute to the Jordaan's attractiveness as a place to live' (*De Telegraaf*, March 10, 1979). The neighbourhood's name, which allegedly derives from the French word for garden, was adapted for branding purposes as well: Bakker renamed the area 'the flower district' and even graced one apartment building with the title *Residence le Jardin* (*De Telegraaf*, November 10, 1979) (see Figure 2).

Figure 2: Recently refurbished warehouses (1981), Amsterdam City Archives.

Bohemian like you

The newcomers brought about radical changes in the consumer landscape, particularly in regard to fashion and eating out. In the Jordaan, fashionable young people could find the 'London look' as well as the first biodynamic traiteurs selling 'healthy' and vegetarian produce (*Algemeen Handelsblad*, November 21, 1969; *De Telegraaf*, November 9, 1968). While the local open-air market was shrinking in size, establishments catering to the rather exotic taste of the newcomers were mushrooming, or as the *Parool* observed (November 25, 1972): 'Every single week a new boutique, bead seller or some hip retailer selling rosemary tea from a paper cone sets up shop'. In the same year, the city's promotional magazine, which had been a strong advocate of urban redevelopment, admired the emerging scene: 'Amsterdam confronts us with political action and uprooting, […] with the experiment, the resistance of people against the forces of technology and organization, countless crisis phenomena and questions concerning the direction of our future' (Mastenbroek 1972, 7). Transformations in the local range of shops and retailers accelerated in the second half of the 1970s. A 1978 survey revealed that out of the 59 establishments in the Jordaan's central shopping street, 30 were catering to newcomers. Strong espresso instead of weak coffee, brunch served with croissants and baguettes, 'tasteful' pop music and English-written menus reflected the changing consumption behaviour and lifestyle preferences of the hip and happening (Noyon 1978). In the words of a 1981 study on the leisure functions of Amsterdam's city centre, 'young people, singles, fashionable thirty-somethings and tourists have taken over the streets' (Bergh and Keers 1981). Around this time, the Jordaan also began to appear on the radar of Dutch geographers. In two seminal articles Cortie and van de Ven (1981) and Cortie, van de Ven and de Wijs Mulkens (1982) explored the emergence of a new urban middle class. Using Gale's stage theory of gentrification, they concluded that parts of the Jordaan were indeed experiencing revitalization and displacement. They attributed these developments to the relocation of workshops and offices from the city centre to peripheral business parks, a rent gap attractive to first-time buyers and property developers, the renovation activities of preservationists, an expanding quaternary sector and the growing demand for urban living amongst its employees, the growing costs of transportation, and an overall decline in housing construction in the latter half of the 1970s, which limited homebuying and renting options for young urban professionals and was mostly geared to lower income groups anyway. Different than the Anglophone context, in the case of the Jordaan demographic change was mostly attributable to capital reinvestment and the wish of fresh graduates to remain in the city rather than middle classes returning from the suburbs (Cortie, van de Ven, and de Wijs-Mulkens 1982; cf. Smith 1979). While these contemporary scholars in urban studies concluded that it was yet to be seen if gentrification would really take off in Amsterdam, history has proven them wrong. From 1978 onwards a broad political coalition, spearheaded again by the social democrats, combined a massive building spree in social housing with the further revitalization of inner-city areas. Thus, in Amsterdam gentrification and social housing construction went hand in hand. This prevented further displacement of lower-income groups in most neighbourhoods (Terhorst and van de Ven 2003, 92). State-led regeneration initiatives focused on a few particular locations, most notably the red-light district and the city's docklands. In the first case, the municipal executive

setup a public-private partnership with an international hotel chain and cleansed public spaces of homeless people and drug users. Meanwhile, in the latter case, inspiration was taken from the redevelopment of London's docklands—a poster child of inner-city regeneration actively promoted by the Thatcher government. These developments indicated that consumption and leisure became increasingly vital to the economic viability of the city centre (Burgers 1992; ter Borg and Dijkink 1992), which had an upward effect on house prices in the private sector. Much to the delight of conservative-liberal housing minister Ed Nijpels, who after having dinner in the Jordaan in 1988 remarked that 'things are going in the right direction. [...] Houses are for sale now listing prices that give me the shivers. The fact that such sums of money are being paid, sums I cannot afford, says everything about Amsterdam's regained splendour' (*Trouw*, November 20, 1988) (see Figure 3).

Figure 3: 'Eastern boutique' with its owners in front (1971), Amsterdam City Archives.

De Pijp: underdog in times of change

While the Jordaan attracted reinvestment from the 1960s onwards, De Pijp remained under the radar of investors for much longer. The neighbourhood's mostly 19th-century fabric was (and still is) of little interest to Amsterdam's conservation and heritage groups. While the National Monument Act of 1961 designated 40,000 structures as monuments, virtually no buildings constructed after 1850 were listed (Verlaan 2016, 52). Aspiring to preserve the historical core, in 1955 Amsterdam preservationists even proposed to reconstruct De Pijp as a central business district (Heijdra 1997, 94–97; Verlaan 2017, 136–137). According to Brinkgreve, comprehensive redevelopment could simultaneously save the esteemed 17th-century cityscape and clear the poorly built slums surrounding it (Brinkgreve 1956, 107–109). There were also no signs of interest from foreign developers at the time, as was the case in the Jordaan. Accordingly, social geographer Michiel Wagenaar (2003, 234) posits that De Pijp's transformation into a place of residence for the affluent and trendy occurred suddenly and unexpectedly in the early 1990s. Although not with the same bravado and publicity from preservationists and local journalists as in the case of the Jordaan, our research demonstrates that during the 1960–90 period De Pijp had already begun to transform from a landscape of production into a site of cultural consumption.

Developed to accommodate the rapid urban growth that came with the Industrial Revolution of the 19th century, De Pijp had long been known for its dreadful living conditions. Its housing stock was constructed on a dense grid of lengthy narrow streets alongside factories and small manufacturing firms, and largely consisted of privately-owned tenements with a storefront and three floors, each with two alcove dwellings, equipped with a shared toilet or lacking sanitary facilities at all (Heijdra 1997). By 1930, De Pijp was home to some 75,000 residents, living close to the site of their employment (De Liagre Böhl 2010, 334–335). From the end of the Second World War onwards, the neighbourhood's reputation further deteriorated due to increasing decay, declining employment in local industry, and aggravating traffic congestion. Similar to the Jordaan, most families who could afford to do so left for the post-war estates on the city's outskirts or even further away. By the mid-1980s, the area's population had dwindled to a mere 21,249. At the same time, De Pijp was among Amsterdam's poorest neighbourhoods (Musterd and de Pater 1992, 118–129), making it less obvious for the history of gentrification. Yet Musterd and de Pater (1992, 118–129) had also found in De Pijp a particularly high share of young singles and of people who regularly went out, thus demographically substantiating De Pijp as a stamping ground for marginal gentrification already from the early 1960s onwards.

Given the poor reputation of De Pijp, one would expect contemporary newspapers to confirm the dilapidation and obsolescence of the interwar period and immediate post-war years. Surprisingly, journalists encountered a rough and shabby looking, yet crowded and bustling neighbourhood where retail and gastronomy were thriving. As in the case of the Jordaan, a younger generation arrived on the heels of the departing working-class families, consuming the city in an unexpected manner. In a background story on the closing of a Protestant

church (*Trouw*, January 20, 1968), a reporting journalist concluded that it was not depopulation but changing demographics that had sealed the fate of the place of worship. On a Sunday stroll to attend the last service, he passed young people protesting the Vietnam War or polishing their cars rather than vacant tenements and abandoned stores. Two months later, the vacant church was converted into a self-service supermarket owned by one of the first chain stores in Amsterdam (Lesger 2013, 324–327), which aimed at middle-class customers looking for shopping convenience, fixed low prices and a wide range of products. Similarly, other premises in the area lost their original purpose and found a new function aligned with the lifestyle preferences of the young newcomers. In the mid-1970s, both a local monastery and the vacant milk factory were converted into community centres (*Het Parool*, February 5, 1976). By 1985, the monastery was again repurposed by the Amsterdam Bhagwan-community, paving the way for the beer brewery and trendy restaurant currently located in the building (*Trouw*, September 21, 1985). And after being squatted to prevent its demolition, the local bathing house was converted into an art gallery by the end of 1988 (*de Volkskrant*, December 4, 1988; *Het Parool*, December 12, 1988).

Welcoming difference

Attracting the newcomers to De Pijp were both its affordable housing stock and proximity to the city centre. Moreover, it was the excitement of an emerging multicultural hotspot. In addition to students and artists, from the 1960s onwards migrants began arriving from Turkey, Morocco, Surinam and the Dutch Antilles, cordially identified by *Het Parool* as 'the New Amsterdammers' (*Het Parool*, August 25, 1981). De Pijp, where rents were low and footfall guaranteed, offered migrant communities a seemingly tolerant foothold for starting their own business. The Albert Cuyp open-air market, located along one of the lengthy narrow streets, was the beating heart of the area and attracted an average of 20.000 visitors on weekdays and about 50,000 on Saturdays throughout the period under study in this article. Journalist Nico Polak had already visited the market in 1963 to confirm rumours among 'the bon vivant of Amsterdam' about the abundance of exotic products such as breadfruit and octopus (*Het Vrije Volk*, November 27, 1963). The inquisitive journalist expected the rumours to be false or at least exaggerated, but instead found a market 'hipper than ever before' where a mixed clientele searched for fresh bean sprouts, plantains, long beans from Surinam, overseas delicacies and spices, sixteen types of potatoes and 'chic fish'. In their testimonials, vendors credited their increasingly black clientele for motivating them to switch from typically Dutch products to exotic food specialties. Simultaneously, their customers increasingly concerned artists and a new middle class, or as a fish vendor observed: 'Spaniards, Italians and artists buy octopus, millionaires buy fresh salmon'. Polak depicted De Pijp and its reputed market as 'a gathering of immigrants who had settled there in recent years, affluent residents in pursuit of something extraordinary, snobs, romantic idiots and rebels'.

Over the 1970s and 1980s, De Pijp's outlandish food culture and multiculturality were increasingly depicted as positive assets by local and national newspapers. In 1980, journalist Carolijn Visser summarized the developments of the preceding fifteen years as the emergence of a 'paradise of exotic food consumption' (*NRC Handelsblad*, October 4, 1980). Benefitting

from the market's thriving business, overseas migrants had opened Turkish tea houses and bakeries, Moroccan butcheries and barbershops, Indian clothing shops, Spanish cafes, Arabic bookshops and music stores, Surinamese beauty salons, and Hindu eateries. According to a local resident 'they appear like mushrooms. When I came here ten years ago, the number of shops was far less'. Visser concluded that young Dutch residents generally considered the arrival of migrants a boost for the area, which was confirmed by other background stories on local neighbourhood change. Ethnic diversification was praised by Dutch-born locals, while overseas entrepreneurs happily adapted their assortment to Dutch middle-class preferences. In 1984, *Het Parool* argued that the magnetism of De Pijp was the result of its authentic atmosphere, providing young residents with 'the summit of living in the great city' (*Het Parool*, November 5, 1984). By the end of the decade, newspapers shifted their attention to the emergence of student cafes, organic vegan restaurants and grocery stores, art galleries, and a trendy restaurant-cafe aiming at the rapidly multiplying middle-class clientele (*De Waarheid*, August 21, 1987; *Het Parool*, April 6, 1988) (see Figure 4).

Cosmopolitan living

Lacking the early reinvestment waves that spurred the arrival of newcomers in the Jordaan, landlords saw little merit in renovating and converting their

Figure 4: Local bar 'The little horse' (1982), Amsterdam City Archives.

properties until the onset of neoliberal housing policies in the early 1990s, hence maintaining the run-down appearance of the area. However, behind the shabby facades a remarkable transformation was taking place. In the mid-1960s, newspapers broadly reported on a 'revolutionary' home refurbishment in De Pijp (*Trouw*, November 10, 1965; *De Waarheid*, March 18, 1966), executed by a 28-year-old woman who managed to transform a damp and smelly tenement into a comfortable and modern looking home. By knocking through the walls between the alcoves, she created a more spacious and lighter living room covering the entire floor. Seemingly apologetic for the sweat equity she had put into home improvement, she displayed the pioneering mindset of early gentrifiers: 'To me it was quite a financial burden. But it's not necessary to be a capitalist to bring about such a refurbishment'.

This refurbishment was not an isolated case. National newspaper *NRC Handelsblad* was amazed by sales figures in the area (*NRC Handelsblad*, May 19, 1973). According to one real estate agent, young unmarried couples in particular were interested in buying their first house in De Pijp as housing policies denied them access to the rental market until the age of 27. As a sales technique, he recommended that his clients knock through their walls as it would provide them with a spacious apartment for little money. Indeed, both long-term and new-coming residents deeply cared for their living environment and its social cohesion. In the words of Dieneke Schaefer, the wife of reputed housing alderman Jan—who had moved into De Pijp in 1967 at the age of 27: 'The absurdity is: once you live here, you never want to leave' (*NRC Handelsblad*, April 22, 1972). In particular artists quickly came to understand that after extensive renovation De Pijp could offer them affordable and spacious studio-apartments. Exemplary is the testimonial of an artist couple in *Het Parool*, in which they explained their purchase in 1973 as a unique opportunity to have space suitable for combining a place to live, work and exhibit (*Het Parool*, March 7, 1985). Over the course of the 1980s, the neighbourhood increasingly accommodated exhibitions and art tours along with about two-hundred artists, drawing more and more attention to its liveliness and 'cosmopolitan' atmosphere (*Het Parool*, September 10, 1988; *de Volkskrant*, September 15, 1988; *Het Parool*, September 4, 1989).

Virtually unaffected by early reinvestment, De Pijp's transformation rather stereotypically found its genesis in grassroots developments. The sweat equity of young highly-educated but modestly-earning newcomers and entrepreneurial migrants, who shared a rich understanding of city life, eventually saved De Pijp from further decay and demolition. The pioneering stage of neighbourhood change seemed to have lasted much longer than in the case of the Jordaan. Indeed, Amsterdam's neighbourhoods were simultaneously reviving and declining, demonstrating that early gentrification processes occurred haphazardly and chaotically with little direct involvement from the local government. For more than two decades the area remained a shabby resort for the young and trendy, while the Jordaan during the same period was already experiencing a second wave of reinvestment. As such, the experience of two Amsterdam neighbourhoods nuances Hackworth and Smith's (2001) assumption of distinctive, successive waves of gentrification.

Conclusion

The newspaper reports we have selected for this contribution were more than blips on the radar. During the 1960–90 period, long before gentrification became a popular topic of research, marginal gentrification clearly affected Amsterdam's residential and consumption patterns. In turn these patterns affected reinvestment opportunities, as demonstrated by the growing interest of property developers in the Jordaan and homebuyers in De Pijp. Although both neighbourhoods share many similarities in their social and physical fabric, a few major differences should be acknowledged here, in particular as they influenced the outcomes of early gentrification processes. Gentrification manifested itself more forcefully in the Jordaan: the neighbourhood was closer to the city centre and its mostly 17th-century building stock was considered more precious than the 19th-century tenement blocks dominating De Pijp, as evidenced by the stronger involvement of heritage preservation groups.

From a consumption-side perspective, the recent commodification of urban bohemia ultimately originates from the living preferences of the baby-boom generation, who in the 1960s and 1970s unconsciously set the scene for the emergence of a new urban middle class. Artists, preservationists and the first young urban professionals provided new places to live, work and play in an environment that was slated for demolition only a few years earlier (cf. Osman 2017). We have demonstrated how their cultural capital eventually influenced policy and investment decisions. While marginal gentrification was an unintended side-effect of changing demographics and expanding welfare state, from the end of our research period onwards local and national governments began to recognize its potential—eventually leading to the implementation of neoliberal and revanchist urban policies. As Sharon Zukin (1987) asserts—and both our case studies exemplify—cultural and financial capital should always be explored in tandem when researching gentrification patterns. Our study has only briefly examined the understudied responses of facilitators on the supply-side of urban housing markets, amongst others policy makers, homeowners and property developers. The reason for this omission is the lack of historical data and sources on the functioning of Amsterdam's housing market. Still, future research could pay more attention to the historical correlation between the arrival of newcomers, rent gaps and increasing property prices. It seems no coincidence that, as the city stepped up its pace of social housing construction from the late 1970s onwards, the Jordaan and De Pijp saw only limited government intervention and were mostly left to private investors and the whims of the market. Further investigation into the history of gentrification might also demonstrate how local residents have successfully protested against the process, and thus how we can learn from action strategies of the past. A new line of research, for which historians are well-equipped, could be the experiences of residents displaced by urban redevelopment and gentrification during the period under investigation in this article. An oral history project into eye-witness accounts of social urban change has the potential of adding yet another historical-empirical layer to the methods and sources of our colleagues in the field of urban studies.

This contribution has three broader ramifications for the study of gentrification. Firstly, it has shown that current debates about the growing unaffordability of cities and changing consumption patterns has a long and path-dependent history. To quote David Ley (2003), artists and preservationists played active roles in the 'aestheticisation' of inner-city neighbourhoods. It has become clear that hypotheses formulated for Anglophone cities also pertain to Amsterdam, and it is our assumption for other European cities as well. The importance newspapers attached to changing consumption behaviour promise new inroads for examining the history of gentrification, for example by investigating lifestyle and leisure magazines (cf. Zukin, Lindeman and Hurson 2017) and how journalists spurred gentrification by reviewing and recommending shops and restaurants. Secondly, we have clarified how gentrification occurs in long waves as opposed to eruptions—something geographers increasingly acknowledge, albeit with scant historical evidence (Hackworth and Smith 2001). Broader developments in post-war society such as the expansion of the welfare state, the maturing of baby boomers and the rise of a post-industrial economy all dovetailed with transformations on the urban level. This demonstrates how—in the words of Charles Tilly (1996, 702)—urban historians are the best interpreters of the ways in which global social processes articulate with small-scale social life. Thirdly, we have learned more about how contemporaries actually experienced and interpreted changes in their living environment. Scholars in the humanities are mostly interested in how people give meaning to the world around them. By engaging with and complicating theories such as gentrification, historians can potentially adjust existing theories and enrich the models of their colleagues in other fields.

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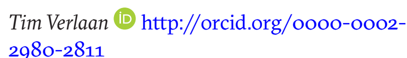
Tim Verlaan  http://orcid.org/0000-0002-2980-2811

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