

Who is my new neighbor?

Residents' evaluation of socio-economic and ethnic population change in a restructured neighborhood in Rotterdam

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Drawing on qualitative fieldwork in neighborhood in Rotterdam a recently restructured (conducted as part of a larger research into neighborhood reputation), we show that residents ascribe the restructurings' effect on the neighborhood mostly to the resulting population change. When evaluating this population change they use images of the newcomers and leavers based on both ethnicity and socio-economic class. Whereas residents disliked the presence of lower class ethnic minorities in their neighborhood, they do see the entrance of ethnic minority households with a higher income as an improvement to the neighborhood. As such, our findings in Rotterdam point in different directions than St. John and Bates (1990) and Zubrinsky Charles' (2000) quantitative research outcomes on neighborhood preferences in the USA.

Introduction

In the last ten years in the Netherlands many disadvantaged post-war neighborhoods have been demolished and rebuilt. In most of these urban renewal schemes it is a clear objective to diversify the housing stock according to price, by building more expensive dwellings in these neighborhoods. The socio-economical make-up of the population of the neighborhood will change as a result. This is usually accompanied by a shift in the ethnic make-up of the neighborhood. That is because the new more expensive dwellings generally attract mostly native Dutch households, since ethnic minorities in the Netherlands have on average a lower income per household. However, in the larger Dutch cities a substantive amount of ethnic minority households have joined the middle class, and are moving into the new housing in the disadvantaged post-war neighborhoods as well. How is this population change viewed by old residents and newcomers? American research on neighborhood composition preferences suggests that people prefer to see whites moving into the neighborhood over ethnic minorities, even if these ethnic minorities can be expected to be middle or higher class. It is interesting to see whether this holds for a Rotterdam urban restructuring situation.

In this paper we will try to shed light on the question: *How do residents think about the population change in their restructured neighborhood in terms of class and ethnicity, and how do they think this affects the neighborhood?*

To answer this question we will first give attention to socio-economic population change as a result of urban restructuring in Europe. Then ethnic population change is discussed. The next part deals with international literature on preferences for neighborhood racial composition. We will then proceed to analyze residents' per-

ceptions of new neighbors according to race and class in a recently restructured part of Rotterdam, named the Burgen in Zuidwijk, while giving attention to how residents construct both categories. As such, we use a Dutch case of urban restructuring to put quantitative research on neighborhood composition preferences, into perspective.

Socio-economical population change through urban restructuring

According to the literature on urban policy, creating socio-economically mixed neighborhoods is a logical cause in many western countries today. Lees argues that ‘encouraging socially mixed neighborhoods has become a major urban policy and planning goal in the UK, Ireland, the Netherlands, Scandinavia, Australia, Canada and the United States’ (2008, p. 2451). Droste et al. show a similar process since the mid-nineties for France and (parts of) Germany (Droste e.a., 2008). Musterd finds that ‘social mix (...) has become one of the supposedly promising and explicit targets in today’s urban policies in countries including the Netherlands, Sweden, the United Kingdom, France, Belgium, Denmark and others’ (Musterd, 2008, p. 898). Both Lees and Musterd do not speak of socio-economical mix, but of social mix. However, since ethnic, racial or cultural diversity are no topic in their description of social mixing, we can safely assume that they implicitly mean social-economic mixing.

Except for the United States (where diversification also takes place through relocation of poor households) mixing neighborhoods socio-economically is mainly done through redevelopment of the housing stock. In the Netherlands, ‘there has been a consensus for many years now that mixing (...) should be encouraged, by building dwellings for sale in deprived areas, and rental housing in the social sector in the suburbs’ (Uitermark and Duyvendak, p. 87). According to Kleinhans ‘housing diversification is the core of Dutch urban renewal policy’ (Kleinhans, 2004, p. 368). In 1997 the need for diversifications was stated in the Dutch Government Memoranda on Urban Renewal:

“To ensure a healthy future for cities a differentiated composition of its population and housing stock is a prerequisite. If in certain neighborhoods uniformity prevails or looms, investment should be made in quality improvement of the living and working environment, by increasing the variety of the housing stock” (Ministry of Housing, p. 5).

Since then it has become part and parcel of urban planning in the Netherlands. In 2008 Bolt and Van Kempen analysed the Multi-year Planning Programs of the 31 largest Dutch cities. Almost all of these plans (94%) stress the need for ‘mixed’ neighborhoods. Although it is not always clear what it is that should be mixed, most plans add that the mixing should relate to income.

Ethnic population change through urban restructuring

Alongside this pursuit for a socio-economic mix, there is in the Netherlands also a wish to prevent neighborhoods from becoming ethnic concentration neighborhoods. In other European countries, such as France and Great Britain, the objective of preventing ethnic concentration may not be as prominent (or at least not as overtly prominent) as in the Netherlands, where the political debate on cultural integration is getting much attention (Musterd and Andersson, 2005, p. 764). In

2004 the wish to halt spatial concentration of minorities was expressed by the Dutch national government.

“The government supports an approach of problems of concentration that acknowledges two central and equal objectives: to decrease of the concentration of low incomes in neighborhoods and to halt the negative effects of concentration of minorities regarding their integration in society.” (Ministry of Migrant Affairs and Integration, 2004)

On a local level, municipalities express concerns regarding concentration of ethnic minorities in neighborhoods (33% of the municipal multiyear planning programs define ethnically mixed neighborhoods as a goal). The recent victory of the right-wing Party for Liberty (PVV) in the European elections (second-most votes after the Christian Democrats nationally, majority of the votes in Rotterdam) indicates that this theme may gain even more importance in the Netherlands. The city of Rotterdam is already making use of possibilities created in a national law from 2006, to stop newcomers from outside the municipality (and often from outside the Netherlands) that are on welfare from entering certain neighborhoods (Ouwehand and Van der Laan Bouma-Doff, forthcoming). Urban restructuring can also play a role here. Because even when dispersal of ethnic minorities is not a goal of urban restructuring, it is in most cases the outcome, since minority households have on average a lower household income (28% lower according to the Dutch Bureau of Statistics, 2000, p. 55) and thus less budget to buy the new, more expensive housing. Wittebrood and Van Dijk found accordingly that in the Dutch urban neighborhoods that underwent substantive restructuring, the amount of ethnic minority households did not increase as much as in the average urban neighborhood (Wittebrood and Van Dijk, p. 56).

Residents' perceptions of socio-economic and ethnic population change

Urban restructuring, as we discussed, has its impact on both the socio-economical and the ethnical composition of the neighborhood population. But how does this fit into residents' appreciation of population change? When residents say that there are too many immigrants in the neighborhood, the present statistical relationship between low economic status and ethnic minority status in the Netherlands may obscure the causal chain. When residents say they do not want any more immigrants to enter the neighborhood, do they express racial or class hostility? It seems like the classical collinearity problem.

In the United States there is a research tradition that tries to disentangle the relationship between class and ethnicity in residents' perceptions and preferences. American sociologists have addressed the question whether or not a stated dislike for (more) black people in the neighborhood should be understood as nothing more than 'a proxy' for a range of class related characteristics that people do not want to take place in their neighborhood, such as lower housing quality, neighborhood deterioration, poorer city services and schools and higher crime rates (Skogan, 1990, Berry and Kasarda, 1977, Frey 1979, Harris 2001 and Morenoff and Sampson, 1997 in Krysan, 2002, p. 523). In other words, 'does race exert an independent influence on racial residential segregation?' (Emerson e.a., p. 922). Several sociologists have approached this collinearity problem by logistically modeling neighborhood evaluation, taking ethnic composition, average income and other neighborhood characteristics as independent variables. Harris thus finds that residents' aversion of black neighborhoods disappears when controlling for a range of nonracial neighborhood characteristics (Harris, 2001). Many re-

searchers however do still find an effect of the racial composition of a neighborhood on its appreciation, after controlling for factors as cleanliness, crime and housing quality. Stipak and Hensler, for instance, matched neighborhood satisfaction scores with neighborhood population data (average income and proportion whites, Hispanics and blacks) and found that living in minority neighborhoods creates greater dissatisfaction, independent of the neighborhood's economic level, also among blacks (1982, p. 318). There are also other methods used to disentangle class and race impacts of neighborhood population on neighborhood evaluation. St. John and Bates (1990), Emerson, Yancey and Chai (2001) and Shlay and DiGregorio (1985) presented people vignettes of imagined neighborhoods with various characteristics. St. John and Bates included different levels of crime, cleanliness, housing quality, respect for neighbors, distance to the center of the city, and proportion of black residents (as opposed to white residents) in their vignettes. They analyzed respondents' appreciation of all combinations of these factors, and learned that whites do not like to live in black neighborhoods, even if this is unrelated to the other neighborhood characteristics. Blacks moreover do not like to live in neighborhoods with more than a certain share of other blacks (they do also dislike neighborhoods with no or very few other blacks). St. John and Bates therefore conclude that race in the U.S. is a master status that has influence on the neighborhood evaluation among whites and blacks, whatever the actual circumstances in these neighborhoods are. Emerson e.a. and Shlay and DiGregorio reach a similar conclusion.

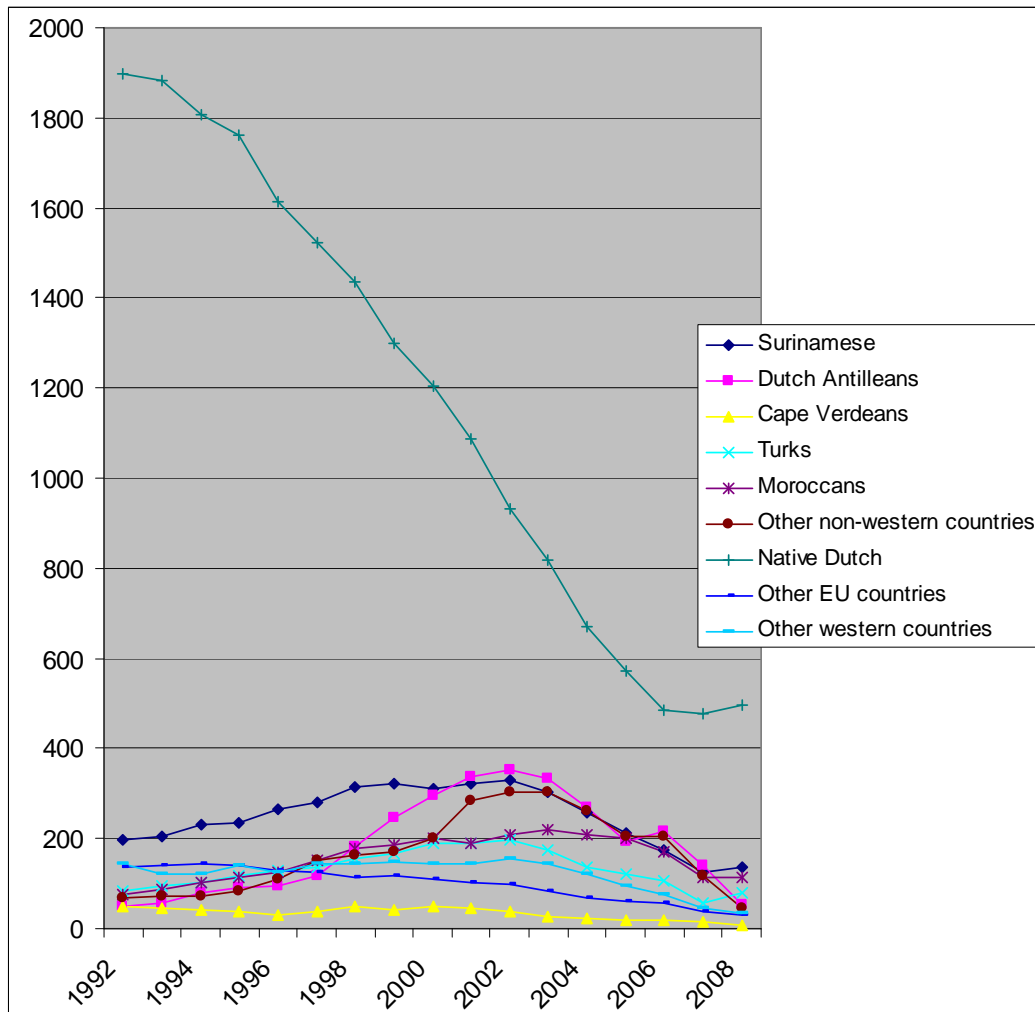
Farley et al. (1978), Zubrinsky and Bobo (1996) and Zubrinsky Charles (2000) used a flashcard technique. They asked their respondents to select (or draw) a card that for them represents the perfect neighborhood in terms of ethnical composition. Zubrinsky Charles asked respondents subsequently to rate four ethnic groups (including whites) on a series of stereotype traits such as intelligence and preference for welfare dependency, and tendency to be poor. She concludes from combining the data thus gained, that 'there is a clearly defined racial preference hierarchy' (p 401), in which 'negative racial attitudes are potent predictors of neighborhood racial composition preferences, and social class concerns and common fate identity are not' (p 395). In the Netherlands, lastly, Bolt and Torrance (2005) conducted survey research, asking residents of newly restructured neighborhoods whether the safety, shops, cleanliness, tranquility, atmosphere, reputation and population composition had improved in their neighborhood. Multivariate analysis yielded that only the evaluation of neighborhood composition change influenced the overall evaluation of the neighborhood. In one of the two neighborhoods half of the residents expressed negative feelings about the population change, native Dutch residents more often than ethnic minority residents. Almost all of these residents (95%) defined the population change in their neighborhood as an increase of ethnic minority households.

However, none of these studies pose the question how people view the presence or entrance of middle class ethnic minorities into their (or a hypothetical) neighborhood. In the multivariate analyses of existing neighborhoods the data relating to class were measured at neighborhood level. In the vignette researches the information about wealth was also presented at neighborhood level. Residents in the Dutch survey that complained about the increase of minority households were not asked what they perceive the socio-economic status of these households to be. It is important to know how people feel about the influx of minority households that are more wealthy than average, to know if minority dislike is grounded in aversion of their ethnicity or their low socio-economic status, or an aversion against the combination of both. If there is a (strong) independent negative evalua-

home for mentally and physically disabled people was built at an open spot). In the course of the urban restructuring, all but one of the multifamily housing complexes and several streets of terraced housing were demolished; approximately 1100 of the 1300 dwellings in the Burgen were pulled down between 2002 and 2007. Most of the remaining, rather small, terraced housing was renovated in the same period and remained rental housing. The first new housing was an apartment tower of rental dwellings for elderly, that was completed in the winter of 2007. Half of these apartments are rented out against market rates and the other half are rented out as affordable social housing. After that several new streets of owner occupied houses were completed. These are terraced houses with gardens and shared private inner courts. They stand on the sites where the multifamily complexes used to be. The other demolished plots (crossed in the map) were at the time of the fieldwork (summer 2008) still fenced off construction sites. The Burgen was a neighborhood 'under construction'.

The physical changes in the Burgen led to population changes as well. Its population size had been constantly at around 2700 between 1992 and 2002. Since the start of the demolition in 2002, the population fell, to ultimately 993 residents in 2008. When the other restructuring plans will be completed, the population will recover, but not fully, since the chosen reconstruction program comprehends a lowering of the housing density. The restructuring also stopped the trend of white Dutch households leaving the area. In 1992 the Burgen had 1897 native Dutch residents (70%), falling steadily to 932 (35%) in 2002. After 2002 the native Dutch population kept falling in absolute numbers, but its relative share no longer declined. With the completion of the first new houses in 2006, the amount of native Dutch began to rise again modestly, (to 498 persons or 50% of the neighbourhood population in 2008) whereas the share of Dutch Antilleans and people from 'other non western countries' fell sharply. The shift in population make-up over time is shown in figure 1. It also shows that the number of Moroccans, Surinamese and Turks has slightly grown in the last year, marking the movement of middle class households of these ethnicities to the new houses.

Figure 1: Population of the Burgen according to ethnicity between 1992 and 2008



Source: Rotterdam Centre for Statistics

Methodology

By interviewing 26 residents in the Burgen in a semi-structured way, we learned among other things, how residents perceive the population change to impact their neighborhood. Residents were asked to participate at a neighborhood organization meeting (7 participants) or were approached door to door (19 participants). Since we wanted to learn about views from older residents and newcomers, and native Dutch and minority ethnic groups, we made sure there was enough variation in the group of participants accordingly. 18 native Dutch participants were interviewed and 8 first or second generation immigrant residents. Half of the participants were from the older housing, half were newcomers living in the more expensive housing (two of them already lived in the Burgen before moving to the new houses). This way we can look for differences in the ways in which new and old, and native-Dutch and residents with other ethnicities, look at population change. The number of participants is too small to make generalizations possible for these groups or for this neighborhood, but in this study we want to get a first idea about how people perceive the neighborhood population to change, and what factors influence these perceptions. Interviews took on average one hour and were conducted in the homes of residents. The interviews were later transcribed ad verbatim and coded using a computer tool for analyzing qualitative data.

Perceptions of population change

If (one of) the goal(s) of the urban restructuring is to increase the appreciation of the neighborhood by its residents, then we would like to gain insight in how residents perceive that to happen, and what role the population change plays in this. In the interviews we asked participants to reflect on how and why their neighborhood had improved or deteriorated over time.

When we asked this type of questions, not many participants gave a reply that relates to the physical look of the neighborhood. When they did, it wasn't always positive either. Participants from the old rental homes found that the modern new buildings were too square ('like lego blocks'), or too defensive, because of the closed inner courts. Another resident lamented the fact that the streets of her youth had been torn down. A Turkish woman was more positive about the physical change. She is a social worker, and has been living in one of the rented dwellings for 27 years:

"Yes of course, the new houses, you can't beat that. That just looks better, yes, well I have to be honest, I think that part of the new buildings, that just looks good. Looks fine".

A white Dutch resident, working in a children daycare centre, agrees with her and explains that the new, still empty houses give her a feeling that the neighborhood will look nice in the future:

"And these houses are simply neat houses, nice inner courtyards. You can see it by the way it looks from the front. Even looks a bit chic, with those inner courtyards and neat, so I think, yeah, that looks nice. I like that I'm starting to live in a neighborhood that is going to look fine".

But she continues that this perception is connected to the kind of people she expects to move into these houses.

"So I also think that these people, you will see, they are generally people that are working. And not people that are sitting about idly. I don't know how to say it. They will be in any case working people that want to get ahead."

A hard time

These kinds of statements, which connect population change and neighborhood improvement, were more prominent in residents' views on neighborhood change than remarks on physical changes. They contrasted the current neighborhood population with the former population. Almost all long time residents thought their neighborhood had faced hard times when people in the flats caused troubles in the years before and during the restructuring. Recently it has become more quiet and peaceful again because new kinds of people now replaced the old trouble makers. This is said for instance by another white Dutch woman, living on an allowance because she is handicapped, that has lived in rental houses in the neighborhood for 30 years now. She talks about how the neighborhood has evolved through time:

A: Well, a lot has changed in those 30 years. There's all kind of people living here now. It's a mishmash of cultures now. Especially in the new owner occupied housing, there are a lot of ... ethnic minority households, I had to think a while (laughs).

Q: And what was it like before?

A: It used to be a working-class neighborhood, with actually almost only Dutch people

and a Turkish family or an Indonesian family here and there. It was a very quiet, green neighborhood. It was a very beautiful neighborhood, honestly

Q: And you talk about how long ago now?

A: That would be about 25 years ago.

Q: And what was it like later?

A: After that time it deteriorated. People left. And uh, there came uh, well, I have to say it, that's my experience here, a lot of Antilleans came to live here and we experienced a lot of nuisance from them. For at least 10, 12 years. The whole, all those flats they filled up with Antilleans, and when those get together... than it became... we had a lot of nuisance from noise, people living at night, smoking weed, dealing drugs, those kind of things, and those car radio's playing very loud. Yes we had a lot of trouble with them. Throwing garbage out. And because of the urban restructuring, these people moved, and now it is nice and quiet again, because you can hear it yourself; when there's no noise from the construction activities, it's once again a very nice, quiet neighborhood.

Noise, litter and occasional shootings are recurring elements in people's narratives about that hard time for the neighborhood. A white Dutch renter, living in the Burgen for 24 years now, sums it up like this.

Q: What do you find the atmosphere to be like now in De Burgen, at this moment?

A: You don't know everybody. You don't know the new people. But if you compare the atmosphere to the old days, with all these flats and the like: lots better! Much more quiet. Now there are no radio's thrown down from that flat, every weekend, or anything like that. Oh, that used to happen here. Before the demolition, and no, during the demolition as well we had another occasion, when, at the lawn, somebody was shot through the head. We all experienced that. No, it has clearly become a lot quieter.

Although all of the long time residents that have been there during the restructuring (and some new residents familiar with the neighborhood before moving) mention this troublesome period, there are different perceptions (or at least phrasings) of who caused these problems. Some talk about 'ghetto-people', a term that seems (in Dutch) to indicate a low socio-economic status only. A Surinamese resident, who has bought a new house after renting in the neighborhood for about eight years, describes it in these terms:

A: This here was a neighborhood going downhill. I don't know if [the social housing agency] did it on purpose, but all those ghetto-people were dumped in one corner. So after a while it was just a big mess.

Q: What do you mean by ghetto-people?

A: I just mean people that hang in the streets, living off welfare, or ill, that too. People that are just home all the time."

In his statement, socio-economic position, and especially joblessness, determines the nuisance you can expect people to cause. However, a majority of the residents who entered the neighborhood before the restructuring, mention in the first place the ethnicity of who they think the troublemakers were, as the woman who living in the neighborhood for 30 years did. A Turkish woman, living on welfare, is also clear about ethnicity:

Q: Do you think the neighborhood has improved or not?

A: (Daughter translates) She says 'yes, it's better now. Because before there were really a lot of Antilleans in those old houses and things like that. And now there's new houses.

A: Really a lot of Antilleans, many fights. I don't like. I think better than before.

A (Daughter): When they were fighting in the houses we could just hear it.

A Turkish resident, who is a social worker and has been living in one of the rental dwellings for almost all her life, connects nuisance and ethnicity likewise:

A: When those flats were still standing, well, there were many Antillian and Moroccan families, where, almost every other weekend - well that's a bit exaggerated- there was a problem. A couple of times persons were shot here. So, well, those families moved out, but you saw quite a deterioration of the neighborhood. Getting worse.

When we talk a bit more with participants about why they especially mention Antilleans, many people tell stories about their loudness and the incidents of armed crime in which they were involved. However, with our research method we cannot investigate whether this group was really responsible for the disorder in the neighborhood. It is known from literature that residents' perceptions of neighborhood disorder may be literally coloured by the ethnical make up of the neighborhood (Sampson and Raudenbush, 2004, Krysan, Farley and Couper, 2008).

Reification of an ethnicity-based culture, or not?

Some of the residents seem to connect the noise and crime not just to the Antilleans that used to be around, but to an Antillean way of life. As such, they express views that fit into the dominant discourse of culture and ethnicity, to use Baumann's terminology. That is, a discourse in which culture is reified and directly connected to ethnic identity (1996, p. 17). In this discourse culture (and ethnicity) 'seems to connote a certain coherence, uniformity and timelessness in the meaning systems of a given group (...) it falsely fixes the boundaries between groups in an absolute and artificial way' (Lutz and Abu-Lughod 1990, in Baumann, pp. 10-11). A native Dutch elderly woman, living in the new apartment block, reifies an ethnicity based culture when she says:

'You always have the most problems with the Antilleans, I stick to that. Moroccans are always friendly'.

Her neighbor living one floor above her, who is also white Dutch, explains:

"At that time [when I came to live here] you had those, those, well, how should I say this, those antisocials a little bit, they left, and you saw foreigners taking their place. And in principle there's nothing wrong with foreigners. Turks you can keep under control, Moroccans as well, and as I said, also from Iraq and Iran, no problem with them. But it's mainly the Antilleans."

It seems that these ladies perceive the behaviour of Antilleans to be fixed, bound to a culture that is stable across time and space, a view that Baumann's describes as the 'dominant discourse'. However, it might also be that they implicitly talk only of the Antilleans (or Turks or Moroccans for that matter) they (think they) know in their neighborhood until recently, which have a low income. This becomes more visible when comparing two statements of a white Dutch resident, living in the rental low rise for 36 years. At first glance, judging from the first statement, she could be understood to consider hostility and a lack of empathy and consideration as elements of Antillean culture:

"I have stood among the Antilleans while they were threatening a lady, and then I said: you should do that to your mother! Then the one guy became so angry, and he had a knife, but I said: they are also moms and grandmas. (...)They, they allow themselves to do anything, and they can, so they allow themselves to do anything but you're not allowed to make a comment (...) You can't change them".

However, this is not reification as defined by Baumann, where ethnicity equals culture and culture equals behaviour, because later in the interview she expresses a totally different view on Antilleans:

Q: Do you think the neighborhood will get better or worse in the future?

A: No, better, better, one hundred percent!

Q: And why do you believe that?

A: Nicer houses to start with, other people, young people, yes, and also many ethnic minority people, but that's very nice. So, and also Antilleans are between them, so that can just be very nice as well.

Q: Yes, and what is then the difference with these earlier (mentioned) Antilleans?

A: Oh please, you can't begin to imagine. Used to have six on a staircase and two others, they used to have such a lot of power. Big mouths, cars on the pavement.

In this situation, when she talks about the more affluent future residents, that will live in more expensive houses, having Antillean neighbors can be 'very nice'. If she connects an unruly attitude to ethnicity (and even that is not sure), than that is something that only goes for the poor Antilleans. Although the new houses in her street are still empty, she expects the ethnic minority newcomers to be pleasant neighbors.

A positive view on the new ethnic minority households

As we saw before, many residents indeed got a positive view of the middle-class ethnic minority households living in the new housing. They perceive them to be the biggest share of new people and expect or experience that their presence benefits the quietness and tidiness of the neighborhood. The fact that these newcomers are (hard)working ethnic minority people is decisive in their evaluation. As said by a middle class white Dutch man, living in the apartment tower, facing the new housing.

Q: Because of the restructuring of De Burgen, because of the new built dwellings, new people moved in, didn't they? It changed the population composition.

A: Yes, of course. Of course. But yeah, that's in every neighborhood in Rotterdam of course. But here too. But, then it all depends, look, down here in those new houses, almost all foreign people are living. Fine people, because they, yeah, they have to work of course like normal, because otherwise you can't buy a house. And they maintain their houses, so they are just like us, you know. Like Dutch, you can say, you'll have no problem with them at all. If you go further to back [of the neighborhood] though, where all that scum is, that have to run to the welfare office all the time, they just turn the place into a mess (...) But then you hear people talk about population make-up now and then, but I think that there [in the new housing] 80% is darkish, don't matter what, be they Moroccans or Antilleans, don't matter.

A white Dutch man, who told us afterwards that he voted for the right wing Pim Fortuyn party last election, made a similar distinction, be it a lot more reserved. (He moved from a flat to an owner occupied house in De Burgen)

Q: In the new dwellings, are there mostly ethnic minority people or native Dutch people?

A: No, it's really a mix, a mix.

Q: And what do you think about that.

A: Well, I don't mind. I say, they are just people that don't give any trouble. I don't think that's bad at all. But that is not the point to me. But I see a lot of things that happen, and especially because I have seen this neighborhood in the last few years, those are things that make me say: this should not be tolerated any more. That cannot pass, at a given moment. Like I said, when you see a dead person laying in the street one day, because there has been an armed conflict in the drug scene. And then again there's a shooting somewhere else, because somebody's golden neck chain has been stolen, with a machine gun. Well, excuse me, I don't like that kind of things and that's happening in my street, at the end of the street. That's why I say: It's only a certain kind of people that arrives in the neighborhood, after a given time. And I absolutely don't have anything against the, against certain races or anything, not at all, I mean. But it's a certain grouping that is part of that, at a given moment. I think what's living there [in the new dwellings] now, those

are all people that are working and such, you don't have trouble with them. And I just don't care about that either.

Negative views on the newcomers

As these two men seem to base their preference on class rather than ethnicity, or send the message they only hold prejudices and aversion against lower class minorities, there are also some (though not many) participants who do not appreciate the ethnic minority households in the new dwellings that much. The woman who claimed that you can keep Turks and Moroccans 'under control', also thinks that the new dwellers have too many children, which hang around making noise and litter. A Dutch couple in their forties from the rental dwellings is now leaving the neighborhood after 4 years. They leave partly because they don't feel at home in De Burgen. They have bought a house in a dominantly white new suburb. They do not enjoy to live among many ethnic minorities, be they lower or middle class.

Q: In the new dwellings, there are a lot of, you could say foreign families moving in. Do you think that impacts the neighbourhood's reputation?

A1: Well that depends, I think. We once walked through these streets, well, right? We once walked there and then you hear, it was crawling with kids. So, screaming and litter, and, well I think that doesn't do a street any good. But maybe those people are living there and enjoying it. But we say, well, I wouldn't want to live in between this. (...) But I have to say, it's getting neater, people are doing their best to get there.

A2: Yes

A1: But maybe I'm too much of ehm, of a Dutch man for that. I don't think that I'm discriminating towards foreigners, but I just think it's too much. I don't mind if there's up to 20, 30% foreigners in your neighborhood, but after that I think it's enough.

The last couple is worried with their lack of social contacts in the neighbourhood. Although they have tried to make friends in the neighborhood (the woman has asked her Turkish neighbor to go to the market together and has joined the local gym to make contacts, her husband has joined the residents board) they find it hard to be at home in a neighborhood with so many different nationalities. Moreover they feel excluded by the arrival of the more affluent residents.

A1: You don't have contact with the new residents. They don't go here, and we cannot get there, because, all those, all those inner courts they are all closed. You cannot get in.

Q: Yes, that's the trend, right?

A: I think that's not nice. I really don't like that.

Q: Because otherwise you would walk through there?

A: Yes we often walk a bit at night. If the weather is nice we walk a few blocks. Just a nice little tour. And then you have to walk around those complexes, and you are allowed to look through the gate to see how they have it there. I think that is, no, that's not my thing.

It seems that ethnical and / or physical and / or class distance to the newcomers, can make it difficult for some people to find the social contact they are searching for. The Turkish woman (that complained about Antilleans making noise), living on welfare, has a similar experience. She is looking for contact with other Turks, but although there are new Turks in the neighborhood, these have a different socio-economic background:

Q: And the people that came to live there [in the new housing], these are also Turkish people.

A: There are three Turkish people there. I talk with the children of these Turkish people

A: (Daughter) She knows that there are Turkish people there, but their parents are working.

Q: You've been living in this neighborhood for 14 years now. You say you are missing the contact with more Turkish people a bit. That there isn't too much of that. That was different in the neighborhood where you lived before?

A: (Daughter) The Oude Noorden was nicer. She says. But not the house there (...) She says people are more friendly there than here. The Turkish people, than here.

A Dutch woman, a lower educated clerk, tells both stories we have heard more often in the neighborhood. On the one hand she is happy that the Antilleans have left and the neighborhood is quiet again

Q: What do you like about the neighborhood

A: That it's so quiet. There are no more excesses, like shootings, or, well, a lot of Antilleans lived here and it was a mess with garbage bags and litter. Well you don't see that anymore, it's no longer there. Calmness came to the neighborhood.

On the other hand she does feel distance towards the new residents, caused by a class difference. Contact with people that have a different ethnicity is easy for her. The atmosphere in her multi-ethnic street of rental dwelling is 'perfect! Everybody should have it like this.' The class difference troubles her.

"This really used to be, or that's how I saw it, a working class neighborhood. And that is, well, I notice that the people that live here, that they do tend to keep a bit of distance to all the new business. And I also do that myself. Yeah, it's not my thing. So, yeah, they can have it. To think they have ruined our neighborhood. That's how I see it. It's not like that, because it looks better, I can understand that, but."

However, it should be noted that only five participants were speaking about distance to the new residents (on the basis of class, and sometimes also ethnicity), and most of these mentioned a discontent with their social contacts in the neighbourhood as a whole. Generally, people were optimistic about the future of the neighborhood and the newcomers. On the other hand there were very few renters who mentioned a newcomer among their contacts in the neighborhood and vice versa.

Conclusions

Many West-European countries strive to create mixed neighborhoods, by restructuring older and poorer parts of the city. This often leads to a population shift in both socio-economic and ethnical terms. The question is how residents believe this shift to affect the neighborhood. In connection to that we ask whether in these restructured neighborhoods also among white and ethnic minority residents a preference for more white households, as literature suggests?

The semi-structured interviews with residents from the selected Rotterdam neighborhood undergoing a substantive population change, show that residents believe the population change, much more than the physical change, to benefit the neighborhood. They do not necessarily prefer white newcomers. Residents shape their images and prejudices of the new residents on the basis of both ethnicity and class. Although there is a small group of residents that holds prejudices and aversion against the new middle class ethnic minorities in their neighborhood, regardless of their socio-economic status, most residents experience the influx of middle class ethnic minority households as beneficial to their neighborhood. This could mean that for these interviewed residents, class, and not ethnicity is the defining characteristic when evaluating their neighbors. Their criticisms on ethnic minority lower class groups that used to live in the neighborhood, however, show that eth-

nicity is probably their focus too, but that they form different images for different configurations of ethnicity and class. There are strong aversions where certain ethnicities and low socio-economic status intersect. Lower class 'jobless' ethnic minority households, especially Antilleans, are strongly believed to give a lot of nuisance and crime. (Whether this corresponds to the 'real' situation in the Burgen between 1992 en 2002, cannot be fully understood by this research). We can conclude that, at least for this Rotterdam situation, trying to disentangle ethnicity and economic class is hardly possible. Almost all residents form different images for different combinations of ethnicity and socio-economic class. Ethnicity does not *mean* the same thing to them when they talk about higher income newcomers, as when they talk about the old renters. This can be true even for some residents that use a discourse of culture reification. An intersectionist approach acknowledges that to try and distinguish an *independent* effect of race on neighborhood population preferences, as in the American research tradition, can be problematic. This is because people often form preferences on the basis of their images of how race or ethnicity and class (and other characteristics for that matter) tend to be connected. It is hard to do justice to this complexity when doing quantitative survey research on neighborhood population preferences. This is because when survey questions address race or ethnicity of (potential) neighbors, a respondent will probably have a general class image for this group in mind when responding to the question. However, when less prevalent configurations of race and class are encountered in everyday life, which happened in the course of the urban renewal in De Burgen, these images can change.

For the situation in De Burgen, we do not find evidence for Zubrinsky Charles' findings that there is a 'clearly defined racial preference hierarchy' in which 'negative racial attitudes are potent predictors of neighborhood racial composition preferences, and social class concerns (...)are not'. Instead, many residents from the Burgen have an image of lower class ethnic minority households (they are troublesome and will cause neighborhood deterioration), and quite another of their new middle class ethnic minority neighbors. They do not expect crime and nuisance from them and enjoy an improvement of their neighborhood. The neighborhood can now return to its quiet, suburban atmosphere. A few residents, who focus on their opportunities for social contact, are concerned that the newcomers, who have another ethnicity or have more income, are less easy to approach. This might however coincide with an overall discontent with their social contacts in the neighborhood, whereas the majority of residents does not feel bad about their contacts or the newcomers.

In brief: how participants appreciate their neighbors according to class and ethnicity depends on their experiences and perceptions of different configurations of both categories, and what qualities participants look for in their neighborhood. By using ethnographic data we have tried to show that ethnicity, class and neighborhood attractiveness are interdependent concepts that should be treated as such. Most importantly, images of ethnic groups and ethnicity based culture are connected to income and these images can improve when their socio-economic position rises.

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