



Oostbroek-Zuid as viewed from the Transvaal side of De La Reyweg

Neighbours, the neighbourhood, and the neighbourhood of neighbourhoods: Oral histories of intra- and inter-ethnic social relations in Rustenburg-Oostbroek, 1990-2016.

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Acronyms

BIT	<i>Buurt Interventie Team</i> (Neighbourhood Intervention Team, part of the BORO which patrols the streets to clean up rubbish and address concerns with public space)
BORO	<i>Stichting Bewonersorganisatie Rustenburg-Oostbroek</i> (Rustenburg-Oostbroek Residents' Association)
CBS	<i>Centraal Bureau voor de Statistiek</i> (Statistics Netherlands)
HTM	<i>Haagsche Tramweg Maatschappij</i> (The Hague tram company)
NS	<i>Nederlandse Spoorwegen</i> (Dutch Railways)
PvdA	<i>Partij van de Arbeid</i> (Dutch labour party)
PVV	<i>Partij voor de Vrijheid</i> (Dutch Party for Freedom)
SPVA	Social Position and Use of Public Utilities by Migrants survey
STEK	<i>Stichting voor Stad en Kerk</i> (Association for City and Church) a.k.a. De Paardenberg
VvE	<i>Vereniging van Eigenaars</i> (A homeowners' association for apartment owners in The Netherlands)
ZZP	Zelfstanding Zonder Personeel (An official freelancer status in The Netherlands)

Introduction and overview

‘Several studies on neighbouring in The Netherlands have found’, writes Fenne Pinkster in her literature review for a project researching a low-income neighbourhood in The Hague, Transvaal, ‘that the neighbourhood has lost its meaning when it comes to social relations’.¹ Though not a statement made by historians, this is an historical statement, and one in which this study is intended to address.

Rustenburg-Oostbroek is on the periphery of one of the archetypal problem neighbourhoods identified by the Dutch government in the 1990s, Transvaal.² It has not been the subject of any academic focus compared to Transvaal, but has undergone quite dramatic changes in terms of the composition of its population since the 1990s. This has, in part, been related to the restructuring that occurred in Transvaal. As such, it provides a novel location for carrying out historical research at the neighbourhood level.

Indeed, the purpose of this study is to assess the relationship between three contextual factors – (1) a housing stock dominated by private properties (both owner-occupied and rented); (2) an historically low level of government involvement; and (3) a diverse and demographically-influential “neighbourhood of neighbourhoods” – against three major historical developments in Rustenburg-Oostbroek: (1) a successful neighbourhood-organisation-led campaign, inaugurated in 1997, against restructuring measures that would have been reminiscent of those carried out in Transvaal; (2) a relatively swift diversification of the population between 1997 and 2005, supplemented by “spillover” migration from Transvaal; and (3) a second layer of diversification in the form of CEE migration in the period from 2007 to the present. In doing so, it will be possible to observe what impact the neighbourhood had on the social relations of residents over a long-term period, specifically in relation to increasing levels of immigration.

The question I am therefore seeking to answer in this thesis is *what role did the physical neighbourhood play in shaping natives’ and migrants’ social relations?* Furthermore, as an historian, I will secondarily ask, *how and why, if at all, did this role change over time?* This will be answered using a robust, multidisciplinary theoretical framework, and empirical evidence drawn from a combination of municipal databases and sixteen oral history interviewees (see Appendix A and primary-source bibliography).

¹ Fenne Pinkster, ‘Localised social networks, socialisation and social mobility in a low-income neighbourhood in the Netherlands’, *Urban Studies* 44:13 (2007) 2590.

² See Gideon Bolt and Ronald van Kempen, ‘Neighbourhood based policies in the Netherlands: Counteracting neighbourhood effects?’, in: David Manley c.s. (eds.), *Neighbourhood Effects or Neighbourhood Based Problems? A Policy Context* (Dordrecht 2013) 195-213..

Theory

Whereas the temptation might be to move towards the seemingly magnetic force of the debate surrounding Putnam's diversity hypothesis, which I will outline below, I intend to also consider some more recent theoretical perspectives against which to test my findings.³

For example, much of the theory and historiography on neighbourhoods encircles the question of equivalence between space and community. Arjun Appadurai observes that neighbourhoods are constellations of 'actually existing social forms in which locality, as a dimension or value, is variably realised'.⁴ In other words, he advocates a non-equivalence between space and community. More nuanced, empirical studies, such as the work of Richard Alba and Victor Nee, have yielded results that contrast with Appadurai's ideas. In their 'new assimilation' framework, they note, in the case of immigrants, that it is mainly those with low human capital who tend to concentrate and establish (isolated) communities.⁵ Reflecting Richard Dennis and Stephen Daniels' view that the term 'community' is seldom used in a negative sense – Alba, John Logan, and Wehnquan Zhang make a further distinction between the phenomena of ethnic *communities* and immigrant *enclaves*.⁶ Broadly speaking, communities are, in the authors' eyes, preference-based, whereas enclaves emerge mostly because of economic necessity.⁷ Meanwhile, from a more intersectional perspective, Marlou Schrover and Jelle van Lottum problematise the notion of equating spatial concentrations with communities on three levels: (1) because sentimental association can exist 'with little reference to locality'; (2) because such an observation, in the case of ethnic groups, overlooks the economic and consequential gender structures which, in their eyes, enforce spatial concentrations; (3) because it focuses on ethnic groups at the expense of consideration of individuals'/households' residence tenures.⁸ Following the logic of Allport's well-known contact hypothesis, however, it would seem that concentrations are precisely what create communities, based on the assumption that spatial proximity and contact leads to better and

³ Robert Putnam, 'E pluribus unum: Diversity and community in the twenty-first century', *Scandinavian Political Studies* 30:2 (2007) 137-174; Robert Putnam, *Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community* (New York 2000).

⁴ Arjun Appadurai, *Modernity at Large: Cultural Dimensions of Globalization* (Minneapolis 1996) 179.

⁵ Richard Alba and Victor Nee, 'Rethinking assimilation theory for a new era of immigration', *International Migration Review* 31 (1997) 826-874.

⁶ John Logan, Wehnquan Zhang and Richard Alba, 'Immigrant enclaves and ethnic communities in New York and Los Angeles', *American Sociological Review* 67:2 (1990) 1153-1188.

⁷ *Ibid*; see also Marlou Schrover and Jelle van Lottum, 'Spatial concentrations and communities of immigrants in the Netherlands, 1800-1900', *Continuity and Change* 22:2 (2007) 216.

⁸ *Ibid*, 217-218.

stronger social ties.⁹ Ronald van Kempen and Bart Wissink perhaps best highlight the complexity of the theoretical debates on neighbourhoods and spatiality in both recognising and reconciling the fluidity of the current age of unprecedented mobility and the fact that, bluntly, ‘people still live in neighbourhoods’.¹⁰ In proposing a new agenda for neighbourhood-level research they observe that neighbourhoods are still important, but in different ways than before.¹¹ Using an historian’s lens, I hope to uncover in what ways this might be the case, and why.

Secondly, any discussion of neighbourhoods from a social historical perspective – especially with regards to changing dynamics related to immigration – ought to take into account the sociological concept of “strangers”. In establishing a framework for his typology of local models of integration policies, Michael Alexander provides an overview of the theory of ‘host-stranger relations’.¹² Reviewing the literature, he notes the framing of the ‘stranger’ in scholarship of immigration in Europe as the ‘newcomer’, or, in other words, ‘immigrants or recent ethnic minorities whose roots are ‘elsewhere’’.¹³ Overall, host-stranger relations are presented as the social manifestation of the Sartrean notion of othering, which emphasises the idea of reciprocal threat between the host and stranger. For example, this can take the form of ethnocentric attitudes, either, as Katerina Manevska and Peter Achterburg might contend, in terms of material interests, or perhaps more pervasively in terms of cultural identity.¹⁴ More widely, these arguments speak to seminal works such as Norbert Elias and John Scotson’s *The Established and the Outsiders*, which characterised such relations as being rooted in ‘balance-of-power struggles’.¹⁵ These authors brought into sharp focus the localised nature such exclusionary dynamics can take in their study of Winston Parva (fictional name) as newcomers faced stigmatisation based on the collective fantasies of established groups.

In some ways, more recent scholarship, reflecting post-Cold War processes of globalisation, has sought to complicate the host-stranger (or old-group/new-group, in Elias and Scotson’s terms) binary in urban contexts, however. In this sense, who exactly is a stranger becomes more difficult to identify. For instance, Steven Vertovec coined the term

⁹ Gordon Allport, *The Nature of Prejudice* (Cambridge 1954).

¹⁰ Ronald van Kempen and Bart Wissink, ‘Between places and flows: Towards a new agenda for neighbourhood research in an age of mobility’, *Geografiska Annaler: Series B, Human Geography* 96:2 (2014) 95.

¹¹ *Ibid*, 104.

¹² Michael Alexander, ‘Local policies toward migrants as an expression of host-stranger relations: a proposed typology’, *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 29:3 (2003) 413-417.

¹³ *Ibid*, 413.

¹⁴ *Ibid*, 413; Katerina Manevska and Peter Achterburg, ‘Immigration and perceived ethnic threat: Cultural capital and economic explanations’, *European Sociological Review* 29:3 (2013) 437-449.

¹⁵ Norbert Elias and John Scotson, *The Established and the Outsiders: A Sociological Enquiry into Community Problems* 2nd edition (London 1994) xxxvii.

‘superdiversity’ in 2007 to describe what he viewed as unprecedented demographic patterns induced by immigration into Britain; he argues that not only is there a diversity of ethnic groups, but there is also diversity within them.¹⁶ In 2013, Tuna Tasan-Kok, Ronald van Kempen, Mike Raco, and Gideon Bolt took scholarship on demographic complexity in European cities a step further with their conceptualisation of ‘hyperdiversity’.¹⁷ In their words, this refers to ‘intense diversification of the population, not only in socio-economic, social and ethnic terms, but also with respect to lifestyles, attitudes and activities’.¹⁸ Combining these ideas with the theory on neighbourhoods in historical perspective, as this thesis will do, thus provides a novel approach to studying the social dynamics and governance of migration and diversity. Implicitly, this study traverses the supposed host-stranger-to-hyperdiversity trajectory.

Thirdly, I intend to respond to theories regarding social ties within the context of migrant networks at the neighbourhood level. In establishing the relationship of the spatial neighbourhood and diversity I will analyse the way respondents discuss the nature of their contact with neighbours over their life histories. While ‘strong ties’, such as familial ones and those of close friends, are conventionally regarded as important (for instance, in individuals’ labour market progression or as support networks), since the work of Mark Granovetter in the 1970s, scholars have theorised on the roles of weaker ties. Granovetter’s 1973 article on the ‘strength of weak ties’ triggered consideration of the dynamics of ties beyond how ‘strong’ they are, and towards how that strength relates to other factors, such as hierarchy and negativity, in the accumulation of social capital.¹⁹ One place where this has occurred has been in the work of Putnam, who makes a distinction in this process between (1) *bonding*: that is, accumulation via those who are alike; and (2) *bridging*: that is, accumulation through via those who are different, or, in other words, ‘weak ties’.²⁰ Louise Ryan, however, has criticised Putnam’s dichotomy in her research on Poles in Britain and argues for the need to focus on social location and resources as determinants of ties, as opposed to difference and similarity.²¹ This theoretical

¹⁶ Steven Vertovec, ‘Super-diversity and its implications’, *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 30:6 (2007) 1024-1054. Anna Gawlewicz has also carried out an empirical linguistic study of this concept among Poles in Britain comparing their experiences to life in the comparably homogeneous country of origin, see Anna Gawlewicz, ‘Production and transnational transfer of the language of difference: The effects of Polish migrants’ encounters with superdiversity’, *Central and Eastern European Migration Review* 4:2 (2015) 25-42.

¹⁷ Tuna Tasan-Kok c.s., *Towards hyper-diversified European cities: A critical literature review* (Diversity report Utrecht University 2014).

¹⁸ *Ibid*, 12.

¹⁹ Mark Granovetter, ‘The strength of weak ties’, *American Journal of Sociology* 78:6 (1973) 1378.

²⁰ Putnam, *Bowling Alone*.

²¹ Louise Ryan, ‘Migrants’ social networks and weak ties: Accessing resources and constructing relationships post-migration’, *The Sociological Review* 59:4 (2011) 707-724; Louise Ryan, Umut Erel and Alessio D’Angelo

debate has sparked empirical studies of, for example, the labour market, such as Agnieszka Kanas *et al*'s, which underlines the positive impact having contact with natives has on the likelihood of immigrants improving their employment status.²² Another realm in which these processes have been studied is within social media. Rianne Dekker and Godfried Engbersen have found that not only does social media enable the maintenance of strong ties among migrants, but it is also a means of activating weaker ones; weaker ties, can for instance, be used to access 'streetwise' information from experienced migrants.²³ Sabina Toruńczyk-Ruiz's study of Ukrainian migrants in Warsaw concludes that weak ties at the neighbourhood level are, in fact, unimportant in determining their social capital accumulation and mobility.²⁴ According to her, these people rely on strong ties based on kinship and not locality. I intend to revisit this assertion in my analysis.

In the fourth place, a major component of my theoretical framework – which in some ways relates to Tasan-Kok *et al*'s hyperdiversity concept – is Maarten van Ham and Tiit Tammaru's recently-developed 'domains approach' to ethnic segregation.²⁵ Their proposed approach seeks to transcend the traditional residentially-based understanding of segregation in favour of acknowledging the degrees to which it can differ across time and space as one moves between 'domains'. Domains are taken to mean areas where one pursues a 'life course' career. The four examples the authors use are home, leisure, work/school, and travel. They see this approach as potentially providing a more comprehensive metric for integration which considers individuals' parallel and often interrelated careers in these domains. A fictional vignette, one of a number used by the authors, perhaps best explains their concept:

X, female and first generation immigrant, lives in an ethnic concentration neighbourhood. She has no formal education, and her husband, who is currently unemployed, is a second-generation immigrant from the same ethnic background. Their two children go to a local school which is highly ethnically segregated and their friends mainly have an ethnic minority background. X travels to work in the city centre every day at 5:30 by underground rail, where the majority of fellow travellers also have an ethnic minority background. She works as a cleaner in a large bank where her main social interactions are with other people with an ethnic minority background. X and her

eds., *Migrant Capital: Networks, Identities and Strategies* (Basingstoke 2015); Anne White and Louise Ryan, 'Temporary migration: The formation and significance of social networks', *Europe-Asia Studies* 60:9 (2008) 1467-1502.

²² Agnieszka Kanas c.s., 'The role of social contacts in the employment status of immigrants: A panel study of immigrants in Germany', *International Sociology* 26:1 (2011) 95-122.

²³ Rianne Dekker and Godfried Engbersen, 'How social media transform migrant networks and facilitate migration', *Global Networks* 14:4 (2014) 401-418.

²⁴ Sabina Toruńczyk-Ruiz, 'Neighbourhood ties and migrant networks: The case of circular Ukrainian migrants in Warsaw, Poland', *Central and Eastern European Migration Review* 3:1 (2014) 41-62.

²⁵ Maarten van Ham and Tiit Tammaru, 'New perspectives on ethnic segregation over time and space. A domains approach', *Urban Geography* 37 (2016) 953-962.

family live in a similar segregated neighbourhood as where her husband grew up with his parents.²⁶

To put this approach into practice, the authors say that researchers require ‘rich longitudinal data on the time-space paths of individuals’.²⁷ A collection of oral histories provides qualitative data of this nature and has the added feature of imbibing the respondents’ subjective reactions to their domain careers, to use van Ham and Tammaru’s terminology. Being mindful of these domains enables the historian to specify *where*, conceptually, change might have occurred as well, of course, as *why*. Out of the empirical testimonies, I hope to unveil whether these domains are exhaustive, or whether there is scope for developing this framework. This approach, along with the theoretical observations listed above – though coming from a multiplicity of disciplines – provide some possible explanations as to why the role of a neighbourhood might change when we approach it historically. Therefore, these four areas of theory that I have listed will be referred to throughout the empirical chapters.

Empirical studies in the Netherlands: A state of the art

While historians have not studied the neighbourhoods of Rustenburg-Oostbroek in any depth, there have been a number of studies – within and outside of the discipline – of other Dutch neighbourhoods, including other parts of The Hague. One of the main historical works when it comes to Dutch neighbourhoods is Marlou Schrover and Jelle van Lottum’s 2007 study of the spatial concentrations of (primarily German) immigrants in Utrecht throughout the whole of the nineteenth century.²⁸ By taking a long-period perspective, they counter the prevalent view among social scientists that spatial concentrations (of migrant groups) equal formulated communities. What they found instead was that the locations at which migrants lived in Utrecht was, for the most part, dictated by economic geographies. This meant, for example, where employer-owned housing was located, or the proximity of culturally-relevant shops. According to Schrover and van Lottum, however, this did not equate to community formation – even in the event of high concentrations of certain groups – because the turnover of residents was so high and interactions, therefore, lacked a long-term basis. The significance of this work was that it problematised the resilient assumption of spatial concentration as a metric for integration. Indeed, it countered the proximity hypothesis which holds that residential

²⁶ *Ibid*, 955.

²⁷ *Ibid*, 959.

²⁸ Schrover and van Lottum, ‘Spatial concentrations’.

proximity is independently an indicator of social affiliation.²⁹ A 2012 study by Nienke Bruijn of the Schilderswijk – a district geographically close to the subject area of this thesis – in the years 1960-2000 made a similar finding.³⁰ Based on interviews with residents, Bruijn argues that inter-ethnic contact in the area emerged from the residents' perceived necessity of having a 'circle of friends with weak social ties' and on this basis challenges Allport's contact hypothesis.³¹

More recently, in 2013, Diederick Klein Kranenburg completed a social history of that same district for this doctoral thesis. This area, historically speaking, has endured an 'increasingly poor reputation' related to the perceived diversification of the population since the 1980s, although he argues that it was a heterogenous neighbourhood, with its own subculture, long before this time.³² Focusing on the years 1920 to 1985, again, he problematised the prevailing notion that immigration has entailed a disruptive force causing decline and cultural segregation in what might be regarded as an archetypal Dutch problem neighbourhood. He found, contrarily, that the internal dividing lines were largely economic. For example, broadly speaking, richer households in the 1930s pursued 'neat' Dutch family life, with many eventually moving to the newly-built areas around Zuiderpark, which is where Rustenburg-Oostbroek is located. Poorer parts of the Schilderswijk, on the other hand – namely those close to the Oranjeplein and Hollands Spoor train station – were correlated with prostitution and crime, with inhabitants enjoying little privacy. This trend was perpetuated by post-War housing policy on the part of the municipality, where the 'social dumping' of 'socially weak families' in this district led to further crime and prostitution and a perception that this was an area with its own sub-par social standards.³³ Klein Kranenburg argues, however, that within closed networks of strong ties, the norms among residents were of domestic neatness. More notably, in stark contrast to the externally-perceived disruption brought about by immigration, his interviews with old inhabitants unveiled the 'welcome breakthrough in social relations' that the newcomers represented.³⁴ It was policy, again, that, for Klein Kranenburg, led to neighbourhood decline at the social level in the 1980s. As the neighbourhood was restructured

²⁹ Justus Uitermark, Cody Hochstenbach and Wouter van Gent, 'The statistical politics of exceptional territories', *Political Geography* 57:1 (2017) 60-70.

³⁰ Nienke Bruijn, *Interethnisch contact in de Schilderswijk: Een onderzoek naar de omgang tussen Nederlanders en migranten in de Haagse Schilderswijk tussen 1960 en 2000* (MA thesis Leiden University 2012).

³¹ Original text reads 'een kennissenkring met zwakke sociale banden', from *ibid*, 62. c.f. Allport, *The Nature of Prejudice*.

³² Original text reads '*steeds slechtere reputatie*', from Diederick Johannes Klein Kranenburg, 'Samen voor ons eigen': De geschiedenis van een Nederlandse volksbuurt: de Haagse Schilderswijk 1920-1985 (PhD thesis Leiden University 2013) 341.

³³ *Ibid*, 343.

³⁴ Original text reads '*een welkome doorbraak van de sociale verhoudingen*', from *ibid*, 347.

at this time to accommodate large, low-income families, many of the old residents were relocated, and thus ‘the old infrastructure of small shops, familiar faces in the street and a native language disappeared. The *Schilderswijk*, which did not exist in the aftermath, became a nostalgic shadow of the past’.³⁵ While keen to avoid unnecessarily romanticising the residents, his argument places policy (and sometimes lack thereof) above immigration as a factor of the Schilderswijk’s disadvantaged status.

The prevailing view, therefore, at least among historians, is that ethnic concentrations in neighbourhoods in the Netherlands do not necessarily equate to (ethnic) communities. Equally, communities are not especially spatially-bound and historical trajectories suggest that they are becoming less and less so in a remarkably linear manner. Indeed, it is certainly not unusual to see the argument that the “neighbourhood” is no longer important in Dutch society being made.³⁶ At the same time, studies such as Klein Kranenburg’s have shown the merits of continuing to conduct research at the neighbourhood level in seeking to deconstruct how physical spaces generate widespread (mis)perceptions.

Much has also been written about neighbourhoods and neighbourhood-based policies in the Netherlands from other disciplinary perspectives.³⁷ A notable and contextually-relevant example is Fenne Pinkster’s analysis of social networks in the Transvaalkwartier in The Hague, which borders Rustenburg-Oostbroek to the north-east and is a particularly diverse area when compared to other urban Dutch contexts.³⁸ Based on interviews with residents and local experts, she established the primacy of locally-oriented extended ethnic family networks in explaining the paradox of it being ‘a neighbourhood with strong informal social structures on the one hand, and a considerable lack of social cohesion on the other’.³⁹ These networks are

³⁵ Original text reads ‘*Dé Schilderswijk, die achteraf gezien niet eens zo lang bestaan heeft, bestond alleen nog als nostalgische schim uit het verleden*’, from *ibid*, 349.

³⁶ Pinkster, ‘Localised social networks’, 2590.

³⁷ For example, *ibid*; Bolt and van Kempen, ‘Neighbourhood based policies in the Netherlands’; Uitermark *et al*, ‘The statistical politics of exceptional territories’; Reinout Kleinhans, ‘A glass half empty or half full? On the perceived gap between Urban Geography research and Dutch urban restructuring policy’, *International Journal of Housing Policy* 12:3 (2012) 299-314; Sanne Boschman, ‘Residential segregation and interethnic contact in the Netherlands’, *Urban Studies* 49:2 (2012) 353-367; Mérove Gijsberts, Tom van der Meer and Jaco Dagevos, ‘“Hunkering down” in multi-ethnic neighbourhoods? The effects of ethnic diversity on dimensions of social cohesion’, *European Sociological Review* 28:4 (2012) 527-537; Wenda van der Laan Bouma-Doff, ‘Confined contact: Residential segregation and ethnic bridges in the Netherlands’, *Urban Studies* 44:5/6 (2007) 997-1017; Bram Lancee and Jaap Dronkers, ‘Ethnic, religious and economic diversity in Dutch neighbourhoods: Explaining quality of contact with neighbours, trust in the neighbourhood and inter-ethnic trust’, *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 37:4 (2011) 597-618; Aslan Zorlu and Clara Mulder, ‘Location choices of migrant nest-leavers: Spatial assimilation or continued segregation?’, *Advances in Life Course Research* 15:1 (2010) 109-120; Gwen van Eijk, ‘Good neighbours in bad neighbourhoods: Narratives of dissociation and practices of neighbouring in a ‘problem’ place’, *Urban Studies* 49:14 (2012) 3009-3026.

³⁸ Pinkster, ‘Localised social networks’.

³⁹ *Ibid*, 2593.

the means by which residents find jobs, for example, and Pinkster asserts that the neighbourhood is reified by such dynamics – even to the extent of it being a pull-factor for more immigrants, although this consequently entails lower levels of social mobility.⁴⁰

In a wider theoretical perspective, Robert Putnam's 'out of many, one' thesis has been widely tested by Dutch scholars.⁴¹ Putnam essentially argues that when we analyse ethnic diversity at the neighbourhood level, a causal relationship between the diversity of the neighbourhood and lower levels of trust and cooperation emerges.⁴² That is, by using American, Swedish, British, Australian, and Canadian data, he argues that different ethnic groups 'hunker down' into their own communities within increasingly diverse neighbourhoods. In his words, 'there is a tradeoff between diversity and community'.⁴³ This reinforces his bonding/bridging dichotomy that I introduced above.⁴⁴

When it comes to the Netherlands, however, the picture emerging from scholarship is less clear. Mérove Gijsberts *et al* criticise Putnam with an analysis of neighbourhoods in the 50 largest Dutch cities. They used a four-dimensional approach to social cohesion (based on trust, informal help, voluntary work, and neighbourhood contacts) to analyse survey data from the Netherlands Institute for Social Research. They argue that apart from in the dimension of neighbourhood contact, Putnam's theory is not sufficient to explain the Dutch context. Indeed, rather than 'hunkering down', the trend the authors observe is, in their words, 'that ethnic concentration and ethnic diversity are – empirically – largely the same in the Netherlands', which also explains, in their view, the ambivalent conclusions of previous studies of diversity in Dutch neighbourhoods, in relation to Putnam's hypothesis.⁴⁵

One such study is that which was carried out by Wenda van der Laan Bouma-Doff in 2006.⁴⁶ Her conclusion leans closer to a Putnam-style argument and furthermore underlines the resilience of the role of the neighbourhood as a physical and social space in orchestrating the degree to which individuals are integrated into Dutch society. Using data from the Social Position and Use of Public Utilities by Migrants (SPVA) survey from 2002, she measured structural integration, ethnic bridges, and demographic background against ethnic concentration and concludes 'that ethnic concentration exhibits a strong negative association with the probability of maintaining contacts with native Dutch, even when also taking into

⁴⁰ *Ibid*, 2600.

⁴¹ Gijsberts *et al*, 'Hunkering down' in multi-ethnic neighbourhoods?'

⁴² See Putnam, '*E pluribus unum*'.

⁴³ *Ibid*, 164.

⁴⁴ To avoid confusion, I will henceforth use the term 'bonding' to refer to 'hunkering down'.

⁴⁵ Gijsberts *et al*, 'Hunkering down' in multi-ethnic neighbourhoods?', 535.

⁴⁶ van der Laan Bouma-Doff, 'Confined contact'.

account the individual characteristics of the neighbourhood residents [...] the neighbourhood does indeed matter'.⁴⁷ Indeed, this has been the rationale behind Dutch housing policy over the past twenty years or so, which van der Laan Bouma-Doff was testing.⁴⁸

Looking at four dimensions of diversity in Dutch neighbourhoods – ethnic, economic, religious, linguistic – Lancee and Dronkers have more recently also made the case that ethnic and religious diversity have a negative impact on the quality of contact with neighbours and inter-ethnic trust among natives. However, in this study the picture is not as clear-cut as in van der Laan Bouma-Doff's. Among immigrants, the effects are respectively neutral and positive.⁴⁹ For Lancee and Dronkers, economic diversity produces better neighbourhood effects in terms of quality of contact and inter-ethnic trust than ethnic diversity.⁵⁰

Jochen Tolsma *et al* complicate the state of the art further.⁵¹ Their study is based on the *Culturele Veranderingen* survey from 2004, they reach a 'radically different conclusion' to Putnam:⁵²

In the Netherlands, ethnic heterogeneity does not have a uniform negative effect on social cohesion; whereas it diminishes some forms of social cohesion – at the municipality level it is negatively related to the propensity to do voluntary work, it stimulates others; tolerance to neighbours from a different race is higher in ethnically heterogeneous neighbourhoods.⁵³

Similarly, in the past year, Floris Vermeulen and his colleagues have examined the relationship between spatial dimensions and neighbourhood organisation legitimacy, concluding, based on data from Amsterdam, that increased ethnic diversity can lead to lower legitimacy, and that such organisations ought to rely on external urban actors to increase legitimacy, as opposed to the 'residential environment' alone.⁵⁴

Thus, despite the confidence with which many scholars present their findings, it is a truism that there is a degree of ambivalence regarding the relationship of space and proximity

⁴⁷ *Ibid*, 1013.

⁴⁸ See *ibid*, 999-1000; Bolt and van Kempen, 'Neighbourhood based policies in the Netherlands'; Kleinhans, 'A glass half empty of half full?'

⁴⁹ See also Karien Dekker and Gideon Bolt, 'Social cohesion in post-war estates in the Netherlands: Differences between socioeconomic and ethnic groups', *Urban Studies* 42:13 (2005) 2467.

⁵⁰ Lancee and Dronkers, 'Ethnic, religious and economic diversity', 616.

⁵¹ Jochem Tolsma, Tom van der Meer and Maurice Gesthuizen, 'The impact of neighbourhood and municipality characteristics on social cohesion in the Netherlands', *Acta Politica* 44:3 (2009) 286-313.

⁵² *Ibid*, 303.

⁵³ *Ibid*, 303; see also Boschman, 'Residential segregation'.

⁵⁴ Floris Vermeulen, Joran Laméris and Debra Minkoff, 'Welcome to the neighbourhood: The spatial dimensions of legitimacy for voluntary leisure organisations', *Urban Studies* 53:11 (2016) 2253-2272; Floris Vermeulen, Debra Minkoff and Tom van der Meer, 'The local embedding of community-based organizations', *Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly* 45:1 (2016) 23-44.

with interactions and integration. It is to this inconclusive debate that I hope to offer a novel contribution via a methodology and discipline that has not been previously used by scholars; namely, oral history. Where much of the theoretical work and the “historical” consideration therein has involved largely descriptive accounts, I hope to add an analytical dimension to the changing role of space over time; in this case, multiple decades.

Historiography

Wider historical works on “the neighbourhood”

In terms of the historiography of neighbourhoods, this thesis speaks to the “spatial turn” which was initiated by the Chicago School of Urban Ecology in the mid-twentieth century, which advocated the causal linkage of space and community. This gave rise to scholarly consideration of space in relation to human behaviour, both individually and more widely in terms of households, neighbourhoods, and societally.

An important historical work to consider in this vein would perhaps be David Garrioch’s 1986 study of the dynamics of neighbourhood and community in eighteenth-century Paris, to which I shall devote some extended attention because of its relatively neat conceptual overlap with and empirical complement to van Ham and Tammaru’s ‘domains’ methodology.⁵⁵ In it, he illustrates the way in which neighbourhoods differed in importance along the lines of wealth and class. Overall, his research shows that the three criteria of ‘community’ – social bonds, interaction, and conformity – were most strongly established among poorer Parisians.⁵⁶ Through exploration of social institutions, however, Garrioch offers a nuanced perspective on the role and development of neighbourhood and community over time.

For instance, when it came to the family, while ‘for a great many’ this was the primal institution, among workers ‘family and neighbourhood were frequently inseparable’, with neighbours often overlapping in function with family, such as in finding marriage partners.⁵⁷ As Garrioch argues, ‘the family was in practice very often absent, because of death or geographic mobility, whereas the neighbours were always there’.⁵⁸ Yet at the same time, there was a ‘moral solidarity’ inherent to family ties, based on honour, which neighbourhood ties lacked; for example a sense of ‘solidarity against the outside world’ between husbands and wives, or a duty among ‘uncles and aunts’ to provide an apprenticeship for nephews and

⁵⁵ David Garrioch, *Neighbourhood and Community in Paris, 1740-1790* (Cambridge 1986); van Ham and Tammaru, ‘New perspectives on ethnic segregation’.

⁵⁶ Garrioch, *Neighbourhood and Community*, 5-7.

⁵⁷ *Ibid*, 93.

⁵⁸ *Ibid*, 94.

nieces.⁵⁹ The fundamental and gendered role of family within the neighbourhood is something that will be reflected on in this thesis.

Regarding the institution of work, Garrioch notes its ambivalent role in facilitating neighbourhood ties. This was dependent, to an extent, on types of trade and workplace structure, though ‘no trade automatically made someone part of the neighbourhood community or excluded them from it’.⁶⁰ It is in this institution that he unveils one of his most interesting findings, worthy of note in relation to this thesis’ focus on immigration:

It was not necessarily difficult for a new arrival, even for a temporary migrant, very quickly to become part of the community, perhaps through contacts with family or *pays* already in the city, but frequently with the help of the very jobs which might be supposed to cut him off [usually domestic services or street trade]. Migration was not always a cause of dislocation, either for those who moved or for the society which received them.⁶¹

This contrasts with the low participation of a specific group – young men – in neighbourhood (and family) relations, due to the geography of their labour, though this would often change as they started their own families. Ultimately, Garrioch’s study emerges as a historiographical watershed in his overturning of historians’ characterisation of neighbourhoods as closed, static conglomerations of equally closed, static social ties based on conceptualisations of “the village”. For him, neighbourhoods in an urban context were and are ‘dynamic and extremely flexible’ entities; a characterisation which resonates with the more contemporary urban context of this thesis.⁶²

Richard Dennis and Stephen Daniels have traced the concept of community within the social geography of Victorian cities in Britain. Here, they argue that this concept only became spatially localised in tandem with processes of industrialisation, or, more specifically, urbanisation.⁶³ Colin Pooley provides a study of this phenomenon in process, focusing on the residential concentrations of migrant communities in mid-Victorian Liverpool. Here, he outlines three factors that reinforced (or weakened) these communities. Namely, these were (1) their socio-economic status, (2) the degree to which as a “community”, they were cohesive, and (3) whether they had previously lived in an urban context.⁶⁴ Also in a British context,

⁵⁹ *Ibid*, 79-95.

⁶⁰ *Ibid*, 146.

⁶¹ *Ibid*, 147-148.

⁶² *Ibid*, 260.

⁶³ Richard Dennis and Stephen Daniels, “Community” and the social geography of Victorian Cities’, *Urban History Yearbook* 8 (1981) 7.

⁶⁴ Colin Pooley, ‘The residential segregation of migrant communities in mid-Victorian Liverpool’, *Transactions – Institute of British Geographers* 2:3 (1977) 364-382.

Roger Hood and Kate Joyce have used oral history to reconstruct narratives of social change in relation to crime in London's East End neighbourhoods.⁶⁵ When it came to the aspect of immigration, the common thread was for the older respondents to adopt a 'rosy glow' when reminiscing – although the authors point out that this was not entirely based on romantic construction – of the time before widespread Bangladeshi immigration to the area; there was a recurring theme of lamenting a lost community.⁶⁶ This perception sharply contrasts with the idea forwarded by Merle Zwiars and her colleagues that neighbourhoods, despite residential dynamics, tend to stay the same because their physical characteristics, generally speaking, do not change.⁶⁷

In sum, there are a number of reasons, some of which are outlined here, why we might surmise that the role of the physical neighbourhood might change over time in structuring the relations between residents. Following Alba and Nee's logic, *economic* decline, and the possible consequent concentration of residents who have *low human capital*, might lead to stronger ties, but, it could be the *quality and nature of such ties*, in themselves, that structure neighbourhood-level relations.⁶⁸ This hinges on factors such as *residency tenure*, as argued by Schrover and van Lottum, the *location of family*, using Garrioch's perspective, and the *preference/force* differentiation used by Alba *et al* to characterise communities and enclaves respectively.⁶⁹ *Diversity*, is argued to have different effects by different scholars. Some, such as Putnam and van der Laan Bouma-Doff, argue that it leads to lower social cohesion, meanwhile others argue that as diversification reaches a state of demographic 'hyperdiversity', where people group together on the basis of interests and attitudes as opposed to ethnicity. Following the logic of Elias and Scotson, and to some extent the work of Dennis and Daniels, it is *newcomers* that affect overall social cohesion, as they strengthen the cohesion of *established* populations, who exclude them on this 'established-outsider' basis.⁷⁰ When it comes to the spatial turn, it could be physical *neighbourhood characteristics* that structure social relations. In the Netherlands, the policy rationale when it came to such characteristics

⁶⁵ Roger Hood and Kate Joyce, 'Three generations: Oral testimonies on crime and social change in London's East End', *British Journal of Criminology* 39:1 (1999) 136-160.

⁶⁶ *Ibid*, 150.

⁶⁷ Merle Zwiars, Reinout Kleinhans and Maarten van Ham, 'The path-dependency of low-income neighbourhood trajectories: An approach for analysing neighbourhood change', *Applied Spatial Analysis and Policy* (2016) 1-18.

⁶⁸ Alba and Nee, 'Rethinking assimilation theory'; Toruńczyk-Ruiz, 'Neighbourhood ties'; Mark Granovetter, 'The strength of weak ties', 1378; Ryan, 'Migrants' social networks'; Ryan *et al*, *Migrant Capital*; White and Ryan, "'Temporary' migration".

⁶⁹ Schrover and van Lottum, 'Spatial concentrations', 216; Garrioch, *Neighbourhood and Community*; Pinkster, 'Localised social networks'.

⁷⁰ Elias and Scotson, *The Established and the Outsiders*; Dennis and Daniels, "'Community" and the social geography of Victorian Cities'.

has been that concentrated *socio-economic* diversity can achieve social cohesion, while some scholars have questioned whether *space* has anything to do at all with these processes. In other studies, even the role of *nostalgia* has been advocated as a factor influencing neighbourhood-level interactions.⁷¹ Others have argued that neighbourhoods generally don't change because of their *physical characteristics*.⁷²

Context: Rustenburg-Oostbroek and Dutch urban policies 1980s-present



Figure 1: Map of Escamp, including internal administrative districts. Note: Transvaal is located on the other side of the north-eastern side border of Rustenburg-Oostbroek and Moerwijk.⁷³

Rustenburg-Oostbroek: A brief introduction

As a residential area, the administrative *district* Rustenburg-Oostbroek (located in the administrative *urban district* Escamp), to the south of The Hague's city centre, is almost a century old.⁷⁴ The land was previously used for agricultural purposes, but the area as it is now recognised was constructed during a second 'wave' of housing development on the part of the

⁷¹ Hood and Joyce, 'Three generations'.

⁷² Zwieters *et al*, 'The path-dependency of low-income neighbourhood trajectories'.

⁷³ Gemeente Den Haag, Wijkprogramma 2016-2019: Stadsdeel Escamp – Rustenburg-Oostbroek (The Hague 2016) 1.

⁷⁴ On terminology: It is worth noting that the terms 'district' (*wijk*) and 'neighbourhood' (*buurt*) have historically – and confusingly – been used almost interchangeably. The italicised terms in the paragraph above represent the present administrative delineations employed by the municipality.

The Hague municipality in the 1920s, stretching into the 1940s.⁷⁵ The construction was based on plans drawn up between 1908 and 1911 by the influential Dutch architect, Hendrik Petrus Berlage.⁷⁶ This is an important contextual consideration to make, as it is one factor that explains the relatively low municipal involvement in the area in recent decades, compared to neighbouring Transvaal, for example, where the housing stock was much older during the peak of urban redevelopment in The Hague, which occurred in the 1980s and 1990s.⁷⁷ Indeed, architecturally, the area has barely changed in any major ways in its entire history; the buildings, according to local historian Esther van Wissen, were ‘still shining’ in the 1970s.⁷⁸ It is a ‘tilting’ neighbourhood. That is, it is not ‘deprived’ in terms of administrative categorisations, but a combination of data suggests that this is possibly where it is heading.⁷⁹

It was built for working-class citizens of The Hague but has historically been out of the reach of the poorest residents, instead housing the ‘upper elements of the working class and middle-class [...] working people who’d not be the rank-and-file in a factory [meaning] the schooled elements and the blue-collar workers’.⁸⁰ The population over the past 40 years has vacillated at around 18,000, with the biggest administrative *neighbourhood* being Oostbroek-Zuid (population circa 7,500) largely because of the prevalence of commercial buildings and transport infrastructure within the spatial boundaries of the Rustenburg (circa 4,500) and Oostbroek-Noord (circa 6,000) neighbourhoods.⁸¹

In terms of ethnicity, Rustenburg-Oostbroek crossed the minority-Dutch threshold in 2005, becoming the seventh of The Hague’s 44 districts to do so, as part of a longer-term demographic trend: In 1995, Dutch people represented 74.3 per cent of the area’s population;

⁷⁵ Esther van Wissen, ‘Rustenburg-Oostbroek tot 1920’, *Oog voor de wijk*. 27 April 2015, <http://www.oogvoordewijk.nl/95-jaar-rustenburg-oostbroek-2/rustenburg-oostbroek-tot-1920/> (19 April 2017); Esther van Wissen, ‘Rustenburg-Oostbroek van 1920-1940’, *Oog voor de wijk*. 27 April 2015, <http://www.oogvoordewijk.nl/95-jaar-rustenburg-oostbroek-2/rustenburg-oostbroek-van-1920-1940/> (19 April 2017).

⁷⁶ van Wissen, ‘Rustenburg-Oostbroek tot 1920’.

⁷⁷ Richard Kleinegris, Fred van der Burg and Just de Leeuwe, ‘150 jaar sociale woningbouw in Den Haag’. Public lecture in Den Haag Centraal Bibliotheek, 13 April 2017.

⁷⁸ RV, Afdeling Statistiek en Onderzoek der Gemeentesecretarie, *Statistisch jaarboek van 's-Gravenhage 1974* (The Hague 1974) 91; Gemeente Den Haag, ‘% housing by construction period – 31 Rustenburg en Oostbroek’, *Den Haag in Cijfers*. 4 May 2017, https://denhaag.buurtmonitor.nl/Jive?sel_guid=7456ea5b-4838-4ae7-bba2-358e218bea39 (23 May 2017); Esther van Wissen, ‘Rustenburg-Oostbroek van 1970 tot 1980’, *Oog voor de wijk*. 10 November 2015, <http://www.oogvoordewijk.nl/95-jaar-rustenburg-oostbroek-2/rustenburg-oostbroek-van-1970-tot-1980/> (19 April 2017); Interview with Richard Kleinegris; Conversation with Richard Vermeulen.

⁷⁹ Cissy van der Zijden, ‘Zondag 7 mei: Wijk in beweging’, *Oog voor de wijk*. 18 April 2017, <http://www.oogvoordewijk.nl/duurzaamheid/zondag-7-mei-wijk-in-beweging/> (19 April 2017).

⁸⁰ Interview with Richard Kleinegris.

⁸¹ Gemeente Den Haag, ‘Number of residents per 1-1: Neighbourhoods: 30 Rustenburg, 31 Oostbroek-Noord, 35 Oostbroek-Zuid’, *Den Haag in Cijfers*. 4 May 2017, https://denhaag.buurtmonitor.nl/Jive?sel_guid=f8780c34-f1df-4f33-aec8-1e9e297a88c3 (15 May 2017).

by 2016 the figure stood at 36.1 per cent.⁸² The particular timing of this development will form part of my analysis later on. As far as they go, the ethnicity statistics somewhat reflect national immigration-induced trends, where Turks and Surinamese have historically constituted the biggest ethnic groups, with the Surinamese being overtaken numerically by Eastern Europeans (mainly Poles and Bulgarians) in recent years.⁸³ Within Rustenburg-Oostbroek, Oostbroek-Zuid is home to higher proportions of ethnic minorities than Rustenburg and Oostbroek-Noord.⁸⁴

When it comes to the socio-economic character of the area, one crucial observation to make is that social housing historically constitutes a relatively low proportion of the housing stock, reaching a peak of eight per cent in the early 2000s.⁸⁵ It is, in the mind of policymakers, a private-housing area.⁸⁶ Historically and presently, the area experiences above-average unemployment as compared to the statistics for the whole of The Hague.⁸⁷ When it comes to disposable income per household, in 1994, Rustenburg-Oostbroek was the twelfth poorest district (out of 38 measured) in The Hague. In 2004 it was ninth, and in 2013, it was tenth.⁸⁸ Therefore, in this sense, it has consistently been among the poorer of the city's districts, although perhaps "a step" more wealthy than the poorest. Historical figures since 1994 consistently show that around half of the population of Rustenburg-Oostbroek could be considered as of low income.⁸⁹ Residents have historically worked in a variety of professions, although small pockets of residentially-proximal occupational networks were in existence, for instance, British construction workers who arrived in the 1980s.⁹⁰

⁸² Gemeente Den Haag, '% Dutch – districts', *Den Haag in Cijfers*. 4 May 2017, https://denhaag.buurtmonitor.nl/Jive?sel_guid=9ee7f4db-1f83-419a-ac17-4f8a389b1b0d (15 May 2017).

⁸³ Gemeente Den Haag, 'Cube number of residents [by ethnicity as %, Rustenburg-Oostbroek breakdown] 2006-2016', *Den Haag in Cijfers*. 4 May 2017, https://denhaag.buurtmonitor.nl/Jive?sel_guid=7a187392-cb9d-4d83-976b-f6f56127def7 (15 May 2017).

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*

⁸⁵ Gemeente Den Haag, '% housing types: Rustenburg-Oostbroek vs. Escamp vs. Municipality Den Haag, 1992-2016', *Den Haag in Cijfers*. 4 May 2017, https://denhaag.buurtmonitor.nl/Jive?sel_guid=2f812d00-2d66-46f7-b327-3782b940aa2d (15 May 2017); Interview with Richard Kleinegris.

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*; Conversation with Richard Vermeulen.

⁸⁷ Gemeente Den Haag, '% unemployed job-seekers, total – Districts vs. % unemployed job-seekers, total – Municipality, 2000-2014', *Den Haag in Cijfers*. 4 May 2017, https://denhaag.buurtmonitor.nl/Jive?workspace_guid=1023c198-7fe1-4d75-97f1-a4b35b23b561 (15 May 2017); Gemeente Den Haag, 'Industry, Economics, Labour Market – Districts [1996-2014]', *Den Haag in Cijfers*. 4 May 2017, https://denhaag.buurtmonitor.nl/Jive?sel_guid=b1a48529-9c88-4e30-ba59-71c9b719afb2 (15 May 2017).

⁸⁸ Gemeente Den Haag, 'Disposable income of private households – Districts [1994-2013]', *Den Haag in Cijfers*. 4 May 2017, https://denhaag.buurtmonitor.nl/Jive?sel_guid=233d9374-cb29-44eb-bc6a-c42762ffa2f2 (18 May 2017).

⁸⁹ Gemeente Den Haag, 'Private households by income – Districts [1994-2013]', *Den Haag in Cijfers*. 4 May 2017, https://denhaag.buurtmonitor.nl/Jive?sel_guid=d43ec07f-6491-4980-9f13-b3b144dbb38f (18 May 2017).

⁹⁰ Interview with Richard Kleinegris.

Regarding social cohesion, based on data from the 2000s, Escamp is the urban district with the second-highest crime rates in The Hague. Within this district the statistics for Rustenburg-Oostbroek are average. For instance, the district within Escamp with the highest number of crimes recorded in 2006 was Moerwijk, with 1,206, and the lowest was Leyenburg, with 629 (discounting Wateringse Veld and Zuiderpark because of their significantly lower populations). The figure for Rustenburg-Oostbroek stood at 919.⁹¹

Aside from the housing stock mentioned above, some other physical and infrastructural aspects of the area are worth noting. Firstly, the Dierenselaan, one of the seven main shopping precincts of the city, is located at the heart of the three neighbourhoods. *Tramlijn 6*, operated by HTM, has connected this street to the city centre since 1932, and in 2009 redevelopment around Appeldoornselaan and Dierenselaan led to the introduction of a Randstad Rail line connecting the area to Zoetermeer in one direction and De Uithof in the other.⁹² Also nearby is the Zuiderpark, one of the country's oldest public parks, which also bears the name by which Rustenburg-Oostbroek is colloquially known.⁹³ The Zuiderpark is also a major outdoor music venue and until 2007 was home to the city's football team, ADO Den Haag, with a capacity of 11,000.

There are four primary schools, but no secondary schools, in Rustenburg-Oostbroek, of which, Rosa Bassischool is Catholic, and the Ds. D.J. Karresschool is Protestant. There are no Islamic schools within the administrative boundaries, but nearby in Transvaal there is, for instance, the Yunus Emre primary school.

When it comes to religious institutions, the largest and most visible building in the neighbourhood is the former Capitol theatre premises, which for over 50 years has been a Pentecostal church, having been founded by prominent Dutch evangelist Johan Maasbach in 1966. On the corner of Soestdijksekade and Escamplaan, the City Life church has congregated for over twenty years. There is a mosque on Terlestraat, the Ehli-Beyt Cami-Moskee, which was granted a license for religious purposes in 1995, with the license being revoked in 1997, although since 2000 it has informally resumed this function, despite local and PVV resistance

⁹¹ Gemeente Den Haag, 'Offences 2003-2009, all urban districts', *Den Haag in Cijfers*. 4 May 2017, https://denhaag.buurtmonitor.nl/Jive?sel_guid=8ac3fa80-ccdc-4d5d-8bc5-ea793c9ed2d3 (15 May 2017); Gemeente Den Haag, 'Offences 2003-2009, all Escamp districts', *Den Haag in Cijfers*. 4 May 2017, https://denhaag.buurtmonitor.nl/Jive?sel_guid=f1947f42-428c-48b1-801b-927ee8c1af71 (15 May 2017).

⁹² DHRI, 151338, Marnix Norder (Wethouder van Bouwen en Wonen), Herinrichting Openbare Ruimte Dierenselaan Rustenburg-Oostbroek, 18 December 2007; Cissy van der Zijden, 'Rustenburg-Oostbroek 1990 tot heden', *Oog voor de wijk*. 13 December 2015, <http://www.oogvoordewijk.nl/95-jaar-rustenburg-oostbroek-2/rustenburg-oostbroek-1990-tot-heden/> (19 April 2017).

⁹³ Interview with Cissy; preliminary correspondence with Ed.

regarding the noise from calls to prayer.⁹⁴ There is also a Mormon congregation based on Leersumstraat.⁹⁵

Policy, political, and social contexts: On the periphery of social mix

The policy context in which this historical investigation takes place is that of Dutch urban policy, which, especially in the 1990s, was focused on addressing 83 ‘problem neighbourhoods’ by promoting social mixing, or, in other words, people-based solutions.⁹⁶ Before this, the focus had been on physical restructuring, but policymakers found that ‘physical investments did not solve the social and economic problems in most urban renewal areas’ and concluded ‘that the concentration of low income groups was the root of the problem’.⁹⁷

Much has been written about these policies and the interventions that have been made, but this study diverges from existing scholarship, and indeed, offers potentially new insights into the social dynamics related and perhaps directly caused by these policies.⁹⁸ This is because Rustenburg-Oostbroek has never been regarded as one of these problem neighbourhoods, but it *is* in the periphery of some well-known examples in The Hague that have historically received a great deal of policymakers’ attention. The closest of these are the neighbourhoods of the Transvaalkwartier (postcode area 2572), the Schilderswijk (postcode area 2525) and the South-West region (postcode area 2533) of the city.⁹⁹ These areas have experienced major restructuring, such as the total rebuilding of entire streets and population displacement. This context will come to be prevalent throughout the study.

More widely, the study is situated in a shifting political context when it comes to diversity. It traverses, at a heavily localised level, ‘rise and fall’ of official multiculturalism by the 1990s, and that decade’s move towards the wave of ‘new realism’ embodied by figures such as Frits Bolkestein, Pim Fortuyn, Paul Scheffer, and most recently, Geert Wilders, who retains prominence today.¹⁰⁰ Of course, related to this is the wider social context of increasing

⁹⁴ DHRI, 256661, Gemeente Den Haag, Beantwoording schriftelijke vragen van de raadsleden mevrouw D. de Winter, de heren M. de Graaf en J.C. van der Helm, 20 March 2013.

⁹⁵ Interview with Bep, Joeke, Jeannet, and Ahmed.

⁹⁶ Gwen van Eijk, *Unequal Networks: Spatial Segregation, Relationships and Inequality in the City* (Amsterdam 2010); Bolt and van Kempen, ‘Neighbourhood based policies in the Netherlands’.

⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, 195.

⁹⁸ For some Dutch-language examples from The Hague, see: Richard Kleinegris, Reinout Kleinhans and Richard Vermeulen, ‘O, o Den Haag: Herstructurering achter de duinen’, *Geografie* 18:6 (2009) 12-15; Richard Kleinegris, Reinout Kleinhans and Richard Vermeulen, ‘Scheefheidsreductie als bijvangst van herstructurering’, *Tijdschrift voor de Volkshuisvesting* 18:6 (2012) 56-59.

⁹⁹ CBS-CvB, Outcomemonitor Wijkanaanpak: Eerste Voortgangsrapportage Totaalbeeld 40 aandachtswijken in Nederland (The Hague 2010) 33-34.

¹⁰⁰ Baukje Prins, ‘The nerve to break taboos: New realism in the Dutch discourse on multiculturalism’, *Journal of International Migration and Integration* 3:3/4 (2002) 363-379.

levels of immigration since the 1970s and the super- or even hyper-diverse cities this has created in the Netherlands.¹⁰¹ By approaching this historically, it is possible to draw comparisons between the immigration experience at the neighbourhood level among newer groups and older groups, namely those who have arrived since the accession of the A8 into the EU and the opening of Dutch borders to their citizens in 2007 versus those linked to earlier waves, such as that of guestworkers in the 1960s and early 1970s, or postcolonial immigrants from Surinam.

Material & method

Oral history interviews, therefore, form the core primary material for this research. While the aim of this thesis is not to obtain a statistically representative picture of neighbourhood change, oral history provides an entry point to understanding the diversity of roles neighbourhoods can play for individuals over a long-term period.¹⁰² The interviews provide sharp vignettes of how hypotheses such as van Ham and Tammaru's domains approach take shape in real lives. In this manner, I have chosen not to structure my chapters chronologically, but rather on the basis of the categories of interviewee (see below). Because the respondents had such varied backgrounds and tenures in the neighbourhood, a chronological approach may have read incoherently. Ultimately, this represents a new way – in terms of source material, disciplinary perspective, methodology, and theoretical framework – of approaching a longstanding debate. Indeed, where Elias and Scotson argue that neighbourhoods do not exist in a sociological vacuum, it is important to remember that they do not exist in an historical one either.¹⁰³

A supplementary form of source material, providing an empirical context to be used in tandem with the governance perspective and expert interviews, but also in contrast with residents' recollections, will be historical statistics from the municipality of The Hague's 'Jive' platform – also known as *Den Haag in cijfers* (The Hague in numbers) – and the Dutch government's central office for statistics (CBS).¹⁰⁴ I will use social statistics, such as those relating to population structure change, crime, and deprivation to reconstruct the ways in which Rustenburg-Oostbroek has changed over time before translating these findings into something of a social history of the area. Ultimately, I hope that the *stories* will nuance the *numbers*.

¹⁰¹ Steven Vertovec, 'Super-diversity and its implications'; Tuna Tasan-Kok c.s., Towards hyper-diversified European cities, 12-13.

¹⁰² cf. Paul Thompson, *The Voice of the Past: Oral History* (Oxford 2000).

¹⁰³ Elias, and Scotson, *The Established and the Outsiders*, xii.

¹⁰⁴ Gemeente Den Haag, 'Jive Swing v5.1.1', *Den Haag in Cijfers*. 4 May 2017, <https://denhaag.buurtmonitor.nl/jive?&lang=en> (8 May 2017).

Limitations

It is worth noting some of the drawbacks of this methodology, such as the fact that answers are often dependent on who the interviewer is, and of course the context of the interviewee. For example, in this instance, while I live in this neighbourhood, I may be responded to as an “outsider” both in terms of my researcher capacity, my nationality, and the relatively short time I have spent there (9 months). Furthermore, on the emotive topic of migration, there may be a sense in which respondents may want to downplay their feelings for fear of causing controversy.

Another obvious limitation is that I am not fluent in Dutch. This, of course, has meant that a number of potential interviewees have been out of my linguistic reach. As such, there was something of a gender imbalance with regards to the interviewees, where Ed was the only male ‘native’ resident I was able to interview, for instance, and, conversely, more male *allochtonen* were interviewed than females. This was simply a result of who was willing to be interviewed within the timeframe of completing this thesis after I had made requests via social media, walking around the neighbourhood, and through asking other interviewees for further contacts.

At the same time, because my limited knowledge of Dutch has rendered a great deal of archival material inaccessible for this study, I am enabled to elevate the individual-narrative aspect of social history and give primacy to the memories of those I have been able to interview. Where this perhaps falls short somewhat is that the interviews took place, for the most part, with people who have had a medium- to long-term residency or association with the neighbourhood, which may not reflect the fluidity of the population structure as will be outlined in the Context section. While the voices of those who came and went (and come and go) are to some extent silenced in this study, these people are not made invisible, as the chapter focusing on interviews with Dutch residents in particular will show.

Furthermore, the notion of a neighbourhood is widely contested and perhaps permanently intractable, thus it limits the extent to which the boundaries of this study are objective in nature. Thus, while the boundaries of the administrative neighbourhood Oostbroek-Zuid are my ideal focus, I have considered the wider administrative “district” Rustenburg-Oostbroek (see Figure 2) and its environs as part of my geographical area of study, as well, of course, as respondents’ subjective notions of what they consider the neighbourhood to be. In the case of the latter, for example, one respondent said they had lived ‘around Zuiderpark’ all of their life when I made a request for an interview, while another claimed that

the area was commonly regarded as the ‘Zuiderpark neighbourhood’.¹⁰⁵ Officially, the Zuiderpark is in neither the neighbourhood nor the district, occupying the space to the south of Soestdijksekade, as can partially be seen below. Therefore, the terms Rustenburg-Oostbroek and Oostbroek-Zuid will be used interchangeably and will be appropriately reflective of more than the sum of their parts.

Another way in which my study has been limited is in the lack of available statistical data before the 1990s, and especially during the 1980s. This is due to a cost-saving measure within the municipality of The Hague to destroy many documents over twenty years old.¹⁰⁶ A partial remedy to this was offered by Senior Policy Researcher in the municipality, Richard Vermeulen, who has retained a small number of the city’s statistical yearbooks. I have listed some of these within my primary source bibliography as part of an archive, so to speak, under his name.



Figure 2: Map of Rustenburg-Oostbroek (source: denhaag.nl). Oostbroek-Zuid is comprised of the south-east corner of the red area, bordered to the west by Zuiderparklaan, and to the north by Apeldoornselaan and Dierenselaan

¹⁰⁵ Interview with Ed; Interview with Cissy.

¹⁰⁶ Conversation with Richard Vermeulen.

Interviews

The interviews were carried out between April and June 2017. Almost all resident interviewees were medium-to-long-term inhabitants, with tenures ranging from one to 50 years. They were mostly held at various locations in or close to Oostbroek-Zuid, usually in the interviewee's home, but also at other places such as my own residence or local cafes. There were three categories of interviewee: (1) neighbourhood expert (not necessarily a resident of the neighbourhood, but somebody with professionally-grounded knowledge, such as a municipality representative or community volunteer); (2) native (Dutch people living in Rustenburg-Oostbroek; this includes internal migrants); (3) minority (somebody who either moved from another country to mainland Netherlands, or whose background (parents or grandparents) is not Dutch). However, these overlapped somewhat in places – for example, I interviewed Cissy, who is both a native-Dutch resident of the neighbourhood, and a neighbourhood 'expert' in terms of being a prominent volunteer for the residents' association, the BORO. In the cases of categories (2) and (3) there is a degree to which they refer to the decreasingly-preferred *autochtoon/allochtoon* binary, but they continue to be operational for the purposes of this study, and, as Frank de Zwart has pointed out, there is a functional resilience to such categories that enables them to outlive their administrative tenures, rendering them useful for the sake of clarity if nothing else.¹⁰⁷ Here it is worthwhile to introduce the interviewees very briefly. It is worth noting that in some cases, names, addresses, or ages were withheld by respondents. Asterisked names are pseudonyms. Figure 2 provides a reference point for the streets mentioned.

Neighbourhood experts/governance actors

Richard Kleinegris was a senior policymaker for The Hague municipality from 1979 until his retirement in 2012. He was heavily involved in the planning and restructuring of Transvaal and therefore has a great deal of contextual knowledge of Rustenburg-Oostbroek. He also works as a local social historian and has recently completed a book on social housing in The Hague with Fred van der Burg and Just de Leeuwe.¹⁰⁸ Richard Vermeulen is a senior researcher for the Urban Development Service in the municipality. Although we did not conduct a formal

¹⁰⁷ Frank de Zwart, 'The dilemma of recognition: Administrative categories and cultural diversity', *Theory and Society* 34:2 (2005) 137-169.

¹⁰⁸ Kleinegris, Richard, Fred van der Burg and Just de Leeuwe, '150 jaar sociale woningbouw in Den Haag'. Public lecture in Den Haag Centraal Bibliotheek, 13 April 2017.

interview, I had an informal conversation with him about the resources he has retained at the municipality which, of course, was relevant to this thesis.

Cissy is retired and is the current secretary of the BORO, the residents' association in Rustenburg-Oostbroek. Her association with the BORO dates back to when she was heavily involved in the campaign in the 1990s against the demolition of several apartment blocks in the neighbourhood, carrying out architectural research in the city archives. She has lived on Harderwijkstraat for 25 years, having lived on Velpsestraat for a short period before that, and is originally from The Hague. She co-wrote the 95-year history of the neighbourhood for the BORO in 2015.¹⁰⁹

Bep, Joeke, Cora* and Jeannet are volunteers at De Paardenberg STEK organisation, which operates in the Julianakerk close to Kempstraat in Transvaal, around 200 metres to the north of the Rustenburg-Oostbroek/Transvaal border. This organisation provides care and advice for elderly people from minority populations in both Transvaal and Rustenburg-Oostbroek. While Bep (Ermelostraat; from Scheveningen, near The Hague) and Joeke (Gooilaan; from The Hague) have lived in the latter area for nearly twenty years, Jeannet lives in Rotterdam. However, the three women share an expertise and insight into the area that emerges from their voluntary work.

Native residents

Therefore, Cissy, Bep, Joeke, and Caro fulfil dual roles in terms of the interviewee categories, since they are also Dutch residents in the neighbourhood. As well as these, Marein is a secretary, 53, and owns a house on Harderwijkstraat. She has lived her whole life in The Hague, with her family coming from close to Scheveningen, but only moved to this neighbourhood as a single mother with a ten-year-old son seventeen years ago.

Ed, meanwhile, has lived in the neighbourhood all his life, bar two spells; one in Germany and one elsewhere in the Netherlands. He is 50 and works at one of the city's public libraries. Currently, he lives on Nunspeetlaan.

Cora has also lived in The Hague all of her life, coming from the Regentessekwartier which is close to the city centre, but moved to De La Reyweg seven years ago. She has been unemployed for two years due to illness but spends her time doing volunteer work for De Paardenberg STEK and a charity that feeds the homeless in the city centre.

¹⁰⁹ Esther van Wissen, '95 jaar Rustenburg-Oostbroek', *Oog voor de wijk*. 27 April 2015, <http://www.oogvoordewijk.nl/geschiedenis-van-de-wijk/95-jaar-rustenburg-oostbroek-2/> (19 April 2017).

Minority residents

Engin is 40 and moved to the neighbourhood seventeen years ago. He is a second-generation Turkish immigrant who grew up in Germany before moving to The Hague to work for his uncle. Prior to living on Harderwijkstraat, where he remains with his wife and family, he was living in Transvaal, but moved because it was ‘too busy’ there.¹¹⁰ He is also Cissy’s next door neighbour. His wife, Meryem*, also participated in segments of the interview between checking on their two children who, meanwhile, were playing with friends outside the house. Burak is 25 and has lived in and around the neighbourhood for most of his life, except for a short period in Delft. Currently, he works in the Başak Nur bakery on the south-east corner of Harderwijkstraat and Schaarsbergenstraat.

Joyce*, 57, arrived in The Netherlands from Surinam seventeen years ago, and purchased an apartment on Soestdijksekade fourteen years ago. She came as part of a group of nurses who were hired whilst still in Surinam to be brought over to work in the Antoniushove hospital to the north of The Hague. Shortly after, she transferred to the Haga hospital approximately two kilometres south of Rustenburg-Oostbroek. Initially she, like Engin, lived in Transvaal, but moved to Oostbroek-Zuid in part because of the better transport links it had and, again, because it was less busy than Transvaal.¹¹¹

Simon* is British but has a lifelong connection to The Hague, having been schooled at the British School in The Netherlands in Voorschoten, the area where he grew up. Having completed his studies in England, he returned to The Netherlands in the mid-1990s to work firstly in horeca, then in construction. He initially lived at the north end of Oostbroek-Noord, before purchasing an apartment on Ermelostraat three years ago. He is in his forties.

Gosia is in her thirties and arrived in the Netherlands in 2009 from Poland, with her young son and husband remaining at home until 2013. She lived near Zuiderparklaan for around three years at first, but has now moved to a different area of the city. However, she still spends most of her time in Rustenburg-Oostbroek, running her Polish clothing shop on the corner of Dierenselaan. Wojciech arrived in The Netherlands last year, having founded his own ZZP finding work for Poles, Czechs, and Slovaks in the neighbourhood.

Furthermore, a small number of non-recorded informal conversations with residents and former residents were held that have informed the research in this thesis. These are mentioned in my primary source bibliography.

¹¹⁰ Interview with Engin.

¹¹¹ Interview with Joyce.

Chapter 1: Governance perspectives of the neighbourhood and neighbourhood-level social relations in Rustenburg-Oostbroek

Having interviewed representatives from a number of governance stakeholders (the *Gemeente*, the BORO, and De Paardenberg STEK) in and around Rustenburg-Oostbroek, it is perhaps appropriate to begin my analysis by presenting their perspectives on the area. The most concise characterisation one could make of the municipality's social and spatial interventions in Rustenburg-Oostbroek, especially with regards to immigration and diversity, is that they have been relatively scarce. However, this does not adequately explain the relationship between the governance stakeholders and the neighbourhood, nor does non-involvement mean that there is nothing to say. I will begin this chapter by outlining perceptions of the neighbourhood from a local-government perspective, before explaining, based on interviews, why there has been little local government involvement but also what involvement there *has* been. After this, I will consider NGOs in the neighbourhood before moving on to make some analytical remarks on the history of governance in Rustenburg-Oostbroek and how that topic informs this study.

Spillover from Transvaal

To a large extent, the underlying perception behind the municipality's view of social dynamics in Rustenburg-Oostbroek is summarised in a statement made by former policymaker, Richard Kleinegris: 'I've always felt that what happened in Transvaal [in the 1980s and 1990s, see Context chapter] would have its results in Rustenburg-Oostbroek'.¹¹² This can be expounded on two levels. Firstly, in 'what happened in Transvaal', his words refer to the ethnic diversification witnessed in that neighbourhood from the 1960s onward. A glance at the two areas' population structures over the past 20 years, visualised in Figure 3, and further back (see footnote), reveals a replication thereof in Rustenburg-Oostbroek to hold true.¹¹³ If we take Turks, for instance, and observe the data that was available to the municipality both then and now, there were 392 living in Transvaal in 1974, compared to a mere seventeen in Rustenburg-Oostbroek.¹¹⁴ The corresponding figures in 1980 were 1,145 and 44 respectively, while, by 1995, they were 3,776 and 773.¹¹⁵ A dramatic development, somewhat reflecting Kleinegris'

¹¹² Interview with Richard Kleinegris.

¹¹³ RV, Afdeling Statistiek en Onderzoek der Gemeentesecretarie, *Statistisch jaarboek van 's-Gravenhage 1974* (The Hague 1974) 16-17, 19; RV, Afdeling Statistiek en Onderzoek der Gemeentesecretarie, *Statistisch jaarboek van 's-Gravenhage 1980* (The Hague 1980) 18-19, 23, 104.

¹¹⁴ RV, Afdeling Statistiek en Onderzoek der Gemeentesecretarie, *Statistisch jaarboek van 's-Gravenhage 1974* (The Hague 1974) 17.

¹¹⁵ RV, Afdeling Statistiek en Onderzoek der Gemeentesecretarie, *Statistisch jaarboek van 's-Gravenhage 1980* (The Hague 1980) 19; Gemeente Den Haag, 'Population by ethnic group (VNG) – districts [Transvaalkwartier

thesis, occurred in the consequent ten years in the case of the latter neighbourhood, where the number of Turks rose to 3,021 by 2005, a figure over two-thirds the size of Transvaal’s Turkish contingent at this time, which stood at 4,373.¹¹⁶

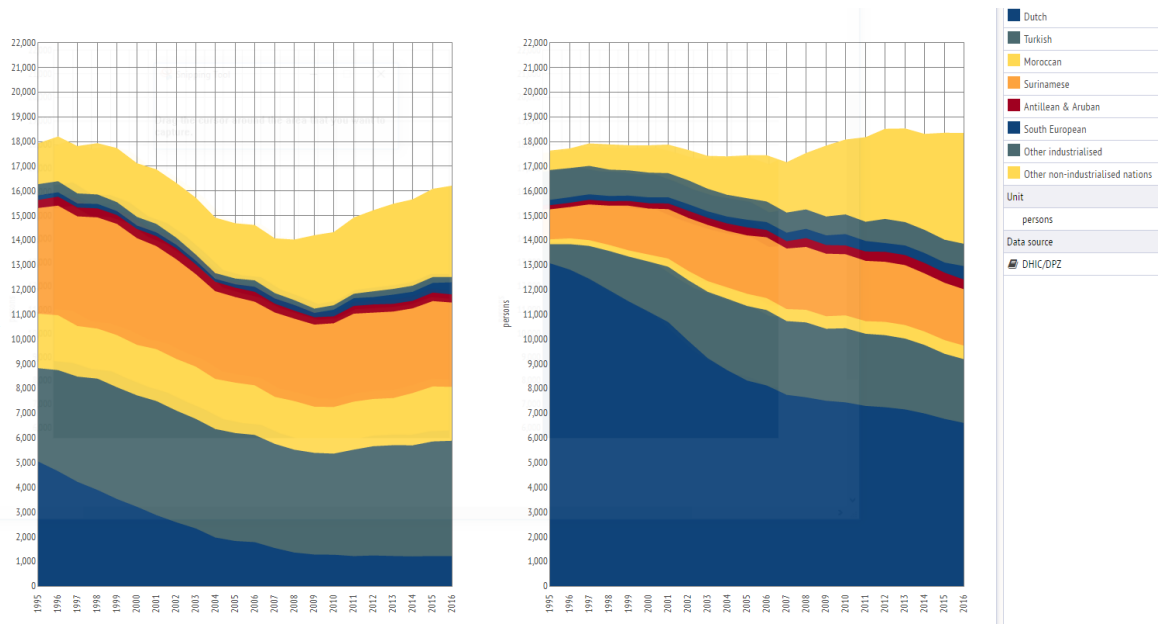


Figure 3: Population by ethnic group ((bottom to top): Dutch, Turkish, Moroccan, Surinamese, Antillean/Aruban, South European, Other industrialised, Other non-industrialised) in Transvaal (left) and Rustenburg-Oostbroek (right). Source: Gemeente Den Haag, ‘Population by ethnic group (VNG) – districts [Transvaalkwartier vs. Rustenburg-Oostbroek, 1995-2015]’, Den Haag in Cijfers. 4 May 2017, https://denhaag.buurtmonitor.nl/Jive?sel_guid=24d3cefb-ca72-413f-b39b-3bce52b7e5ac (22 May 2017).

Secondly, he was referring to the dispersal of portions of the Transvaal population. This too can be understood on two levels. Firstly, dispersal as a consequence of local government interventions made in Transvaal as part of its 1999-2014 plan, and secondly, dispersal as the exercise of autonomous aspiration. On the one hand, Kleinegris remarks that

we started demolishing the housing stock of Transvaal in two phases and I felt this was clearly going to lead to an overflow from Transvaal to Rustenburg-Oostbroek because most, well, migration, well you can’t call it migration [...] is in short distances. So you don’t move to the other side of the city, because you’re simply not familiar with what’s happening there.¹¹⁷

vs. Rustenburg-Oostbroek, 1995-2015]’, *Den Haag in Cijfers*. 4 May 2017, https://denhaag.buurtmonitor.nl/Jive?sel_guid=24d3cefb-ca72-413f-b39b-3bce52b7e5ac (22 May 2017).

¹¹⁶ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁷ Interview with Richard Kleinegris. He refers to the planned demolition of 3,000 (and actual demolition of 2,000 or so) of the 4,000-strong social housing stock in Transvaal in the 1990s.

Unfortunately, exact statistics regarding this trend are not readily available, but the figures presented above certainly show that it was a strong possibility, and furthermore, it was a trend that was noted in interviews with residents.¹¹⁸ What is interesting is Kleinegris' perception that most migration was and is of a short, intra-municipality nature, which suggests that, as a spatial entity, the notion of neighbourhood was important; that even if one was to leave the neighbourhood, the community (deducing from the observations of policymakers) did not become de-territorialised, but was rather reinforced by a desire for physical proximity, in this instance taking the form of the "next" neighbourhood out of town. This also, perhaps, led to a widening of residents', or local secondary migrants', subjective understandings of the boundaries of "the neighbourhood", which the interviews with residents unveils. Indeed, when asked whether Rustenburg-Oostbroek could be regarded as something of a 'spillover' area of Transvaal, Kleinegris responded, 'there must be a spillover effect. I'm certain of it'.¹¹⁹

Meanwhile, on the other hand, of those who were able to afford it, there were 'simply people who were living in social housing stock in Transvaal or who were living in private housing stock [who] thought they had seen enough, they wanted to better their situation and probably went over [to the other side of De La Reyweg]'.¹²⁰ The evidence of this, from a governance perspective and also from the residents' interviews, was plain to see from the shops that began to spring up in Rustenburg-Oostbroek as early as the late 1980s.¹²¹ Kleinegris remarks, 'in the shops you clearly saw that the Moroccans and Turks started to open up shops on the other side of the street from Transvaal and in the Dierenselaan which is one of the main shopping precincts in Den Haag. So it was clear that there had to be a shift in population otherwise there's no sense in doing that'.¹²² The notion of going 'over' the La Reyweg also shows that the physical boundaries of the administrative neighbourhoods were important markers of different areas in the minds of policymakers. There was, furthermore, a wider economic context to this, where in the 1990s,

we had a purple cabinet consisting of liberals and socialists [...]. At that time, you had the development of the new economy and the national government provided cuts in

¹¹⁸ cf. Gemeente Den Haag, 'Living-experience-duration [1901-2016] – 31 Rustenburg en Oostbroek [1996-2016]', *Den Haag in Cijfers*, 4 May 2017, https://denhaag.buurtmonitor.nl/Jive?sel_guid=9e67c866-d82d-4b9e-8a8c-29527617e5e1 (22 May 2017); Gemeente Den Haag, 'Living-experience-duration [1901-2016] – 30 Transvaalkwartier [1996-2016]', *Den Haag in Cijfers*, 4 May 2017, https://denhaag.buurtmonitor.nl/Jive?sel_guid=0f09f5dd-b9e7-4eb3-a22b-ce005cec64b1 (23 May 2017); Joeke.

¹¹⁹ Interview with Richard Kleinegris.

¹²⁰ *Ibid.*

¹²¹ Interview with Cissy; Interview with Marein; Interview with Ed Interview with Bep, Joeke, Jeannet, and Ahmed; Interview with Cora.

¹²² Interview with Richard Kleinegris.

taxation. Many people felt they were getting rich so they would be improving their housing situation or would be capable of improving their housing situation and that's when research pointed out that the eldest part of the social housing system would become obsolete because people would move out and a similar development may have taken place in the private housing stock. People indeed felt that they could improve their housing situation and moved out.¹²³

What this reveals is the way in which Rustenburg-Oostbroek provided the economic opportunity structure, supplemented by macro-economic confidence, for aspirational residents from Transvaal and, to a lesser extent, the Schilderswijk, to pursue entrepreneurialism.¹²⁴ This was coupled with the good-quality private housing stock that was on offer in far greater abundance than in those areas; itself a major factor, as will be observed next, in explaining both the nature of governance in this neighbourhood and in determining in what ways it, as a physical, spatial entity, has been a factor in shaping social dynamics among and between natives and immigrants. Furthermore, it adds a further level of understanding to the role of family ties in relation to neighbourhoods, where migration from Transvaal – an area noted by Pinkster to be dominated by extended familial ties – was underpinned by proximal family members and spatial familiarity.¹²⁵

What was (not) done

The municipality, as I have mentioned, has historically had comparatively little to do with Rustenburg-Oostbroek. Why was this the case? The housing – in terms of quality and type – provides a spatial explanation for this, whereas a perception of strong social cohesion provides a people-based explanation. At the same time, there were small interventions borne out of an emphasis on using public space, which underpin the strategic direction of the local authorities in this area even today, as well as a rejected proposal in the 1990s to demolish housing in several parts of the neighbourhood.

As discussed in the Context chapter, the housing in Rustenburg-Oostbroek, consisting almost entirely of three-storey *portiekwoningen* (see Figure 4), was constructed in the 1920s to the 1940s and has undergone almost no significant physical changes since.¹²⁶ Although built by the municipality as social housing during a wave of construction in the first half of the twentieth century, this simply 'didn't materialise' because the housing was too expensive for

¹²³ *Ibid.*

¹²⁴ *Ibid.*

¹²⁵ cf. Pinkster, 'Localised social networks'.

¹²⁶ Gemeente Den Haag, '% housing by construction period – 31 Rustenburg en Oostbroek', *Den Haag in Cijfers*. 4 May 2017, https://denhaag.buurtmonitor.nl/Jive?sel_guid=7456ea5b-4838-4ae7-bba2-358e218bea39 (23 May 2017); Gemeente Den Haag, Wijkprogramma 2016-2019, 6.

this purpose, and the area was, for the most part, taken over by private developers and became subject to the fluidity of the private rental market. Indeed, where the social housing exists, around Kortenhoefsestraat, it ‘fits in somewhat awkwardly’ among the private housing where the municipality limited itself to making it ‘possible that people could join apartments together into a bigger house’.¹²⁷



Figure 4: Portiekwoningen on Harderwijkstraat, May 2017. Photo by Nathan Levy.

This residential context led to the establishment of communities outside of the realm of common ethnic groups in the Netherlands, such as British labour migrants, or ‘labourers who felt they had no future under Thatcher’, as well as more transient, demographically idiosyncratic groups, such as international art students at the Vrije Academie which was once housed near Regentesselaan on the west side of the neighbourhood, and, later on, Polish migrants who were ‘able to buy a house’ but moved ‘to and fro’.¹²⁸ Even today, the area is home to young families who are starting out on the property ladder, according to a representative from the BORO, hence the population’s continued transience.¹²⁹ In this sense,

¹²⁷ Interview with Richard Kleinegris.

¹²⁸ *Ibid.*

¹²⁹ Interview with Cissy.

the neighbourhood's population developed autonomously, and it was perhaps natural for the municipality to have little involvement.

Not only this, but, combined with the potential cost of intervention arising from the need that would be generated to repurchase properties, policymakers saw interventions in Rustenburg-Oostbroek as not only inappropriate, but irresponsible. As Kleinegris recollects, when it came to social housing

because its value was nil, you could tear it down and start again. But because it was private housing [in Rustenburg-Oostbroek], we had to buy it up against market values because otherwise it would be judged by the courts and they would say whether the price was appropriate or not.¹³⁰

What also made intervention inappropriate from a policymaker's perspective was the understanding that, socially, in his words, 'I don't recall that there were many problems'.¹³¹ Aside from parking problems, which also often crop up in oral history interviews with residents, the view of this policymaker was that where Transvaal was 'already changing' in the 1970s, Rustenburg-Oostbroek was regarded as 'perfectly happy and normal' throughout his tenure in the municipality, adding that 'it's always been considered as a very decent neighbourhood'.¹³² From this standpoint, the opposite of what Alba and Nee's new assimilation theory appears to have taken place, where stronger human capital – in the form of private rental or ownership, as opposed to social housing – correlated with perceived stronger community cohesion.¹³³ In this way, historically-speaking, there was no need for the municipality to "fix something that was not broken".

At the same time, it was not the case that the local government did nothing; today and in recent years, it is certainly involved in the area. The current *Wijkprogramma* for Rustenburg-Oostbroek for the years 2016 to 2019 is focused on living and recreation being 'hand in hand', in the words of Escamp's PvdA councillor Rabin Baldewsingh.¹³⁴ This takes the form of the promotion and development of cleaner, safer, more accessible public spaces. This strategy is not without historical precedent, but what is different are the underlying perceptions of the neighbourhood. In the 1990s, since the residential interventions were out of the question, 'we

¹³⁰ Interview with Richard Kleinegris; Conversation with Richard Vermeulen.

¹³¹ Interview with Richard Kleinegris.

¹³² *Ibid.*

¹³³ Alba and Nee, 'Rethinking assimilation theory'.

¹³⁴ Gemeente Den Haag, *Wijkprogramma 2016-2019*, 2.

felt that we should try to concentrate on public space', as part of the threefold categorisation of neighbourhoods in The Hague:

we certainly made a distinction between areas that we were going to work over thoroughly – like Transvaal, areas where we weren't going to do much – like the Schilderswijk, because it had already been renewed, and areas where we were going to, sort of, try and spark off private efforts – like Rustenburg-Oostbroek.¹³⁵

The difference is that, then, as mentioned above, the premise was one of good social cohesion. Today, the municipality's view is that 'what is striking in Rustenburg-Oostbroek is that few people seem to know each other', based on surveys that show only a third of its residents feel at home there, while under half feel safe.¹³⁶ This suggests a degree of validation of Putnam's hypothesis, given the ways in which the population structure has changed in the intervening period, and, again, will be revisited in the chapters focused on residents.

In that intervening period, there was also one noteworthy proposal by the municipality that drew a great deal of controversy within the neighbourhood (see Figure 5) and actually diverged from the cost-based strategy of not altering the housing stock. However, this ultimately never came to fruition thanks to a significant protest on the part of the residents' association.¹³⁷ In 1997, it was proposed by PvdA alderman Peter Noordanus, with the support of large organisations such as NS and HTM, that 617 apartments across several locations in Rustenburg-Oostbroek were to be demolished to make room for a park and the construction of bigger, more expensive housing. The municipality's rationale was that the existing housing stock was too small for the residents.¹³⁸ In response, the residents showed delegates from each of the parties represented at the *Stadhuis* around the suggested demolition sites, which eventually led to a cross-party consensus to vote against the proposals. From a governance perspective, this unearths the view of the municipality at the turn of the century that Rustenburg-Oostbroek was an area with declining social cohesion but potential for gentrification. There are a number of connotations and normative controversies around this term, but this view was not, objectively-speaking, abnormal at this time, when Dutch urban

¹³⁵ Interview with Richard Kleinegris; see also DHRI, R128631-021152, Commissie voor Volkshuisvesting, Plan van Aanpak Rustenburg-Oostbroek 1992.

¹³⁶ Original text reads: 'Wat opvalt in Rustenburg-Oostbroek is dat maar weinig mensen elkaar lijken te kennen', from: Gemeente Den Haag, Wijkprogramma 2016-2019, 6.

¹³⁷ Cissy van der Zijden, 'Rustenburg-Oostbroek 1990 tot heden', *Oog voor de wijk*. 13 December 2015, <http://www.oogvoordewijk.nl/95-jaar-rustenburg-oostbroek-2/rustenburg-oostbroek-1990-tot-heden/> (19 April 2017).

¹³⁸ Interview with Cissy.

restructuring policy entailed a pursuit of socio-economic and ethnic mixing.¹³⁹ In an interview with a resident who was and is heavily involved with this campaign and the BORO, they summarised the municipality's strategy at this time as wanting 'expensive, big houses mixed with the apartments that are here'.¹⁴⁰ Eventually, the area received €8 million from the municipality, via central government, for a project entitled 'Residents renewing the neighbourhood without demolition', having consulted with residents to develop a neighbourhood plan in 2001.¹⁴¹

Hier volgt een exact overzicht van de betrokken adressen:	
- Lunterenstraat	160 t/m 182
- Voorthuizenstraat	32 t/m 86
- Wolfhezestraat	1 t/m 67
- Harderwijkstraat	1 t/m 47 en 224 t/m 342
- Eerbeeklaan	40 t/m 64 en 39 t/m 73
- Nunspeetlaan	15 t/m 73 en 437 t/m 529
- Hoog Buurlostraat	22 t/m 68
- Kootwijkstraat	85 t/m 183 en 122b t/m 212
- Hulshorststraat	16a t/m 108 en 35 t/m 125
- Hattemlaan	1a
- Uddelstraat	2 t/m 60
- Ermelostraat	1 t/m 49 en 2 t/m 50
- Loenensestraat	48 t/m 88
- Soestdijksekade	426 t/m 518

Figure 5: The proposed demolitions from 1997. Source: Zuidwest Nieuws/Cissy van der Zijden.

NGOs & the neighbourhood

The key stakeholder in terms of non-governmental governance in Rustenburg-Oostbroek is the *Stichting Bewonersorganisatie*, or BORO, whose mission statement describes the organisation as one that 'helps residents with information, funding requests, actions, events [...] with a large group of volunteers'.¹⁴² In addition to this, the BORO circulates a Dutch-language neighbourhood newspaper around the area to houses that do not have 'nee/nee' stickers. The protest against the suggested demolitions was orchestrated by the BORO, which, although it had been in existence since 1976, saw a dramatic swelling in its membership both during and

¹³⁹ Kleinans, 'A glass half empty of half full?'; Boschman, 'Residential segregation'.

¹⁴⁰ Interview with Cissy.

¹⁴¹ DHRI, G116590, Stadsdeelcommissie Escamp, Korte karakteristieken Rustenburg/Oostbroek, 24 May 2004 2; DHRI, G085487, Dienst Stedelijke Ontwikkeling, Wijkplan Rustenburg-Oostbroek, 2 November 2001.

¹⁴² Stichting Bewonersorganisatie Rustenburg-Oostbroek, 'Bewonersorganisatie Rustenburg-Oostbroek', *Oog voor de wijk*. 2017, <https://www.oogvoordewijk.nl/business/bewonersorganisatie-rustenburg-oostbroek/> (26 May 2017).

due to this episode, gaining 117 volunteers.¹⁴³ Cissy was one of these who joined in response to the municipal plans, and she relayed the growth of the organisation from her experiences during our interview:

the *Bewonersorganisatie* started information evenings telling people what they could do and what they *should* do. It was very crowded, Full of people. And, well, I got hooked! [...] Then, in one month's time- well, the *Gemeente* also had information evenings. Three to be exact. I was, everytime I was there because I wanted to know exactly what they were saying, and there were loads of people. It was *so* crowded. It was unbelievable. Everybody was mad. That's how the *Bewonersorganisatie* got a lot of volunteers.¹⁴⁴

Naturally, as one reads above, there was furore among those whose houses were intended to be bought off and demolished, and the BORO capitalised on the emotive context. This inevitably had repercussions regarding the relations between governance stakeholders in Rustenburg-Oostbroek. The perceived detachment of the PvdA's municipal administration from the neighbourhood and the its conflict of interest with the BORO was brought into sharp focus in the same interview:

there was a time when the *Gemeente* wanted 'housing differentiation' [...] So seven spots in the neighbourhood – they wanted to demolish this whole piece of the neighbourhood. So that's 300 or 400 apartments, well, that's one spot, and they wanted to put twelve expensive houses and a park and a lot of green around. Because they, the *Gemeente* said, well, 'the apartments are too small', and 'this is not good for the future, we have to think about the future'. We said, 'well, we have chosen to live here!'. It's not on the *Gemeente* to say that our house is too small. It's ridiculous. A ridiculous argument, [...] it would be such a waste! And we also made calculations of what it would cost – *the whole joke* – because they have to buy me out. They have to demolish the building. Then they have to rebuild. It's silly. It's wasted money. It's a lot of money. We thought it would be over 100 million *gulden*.¹⁴⁵

That they were successful in their campaign illustrates the capacity for neighbourhood organisations to be strategically innovative – in the novel approach of guiding representatives from each party around the neighbourhood; 'we told them a story different, depending on the party' – and operationally effective, in how they were able to channel the frustrations of most residents into a successful campaign.¹⁴⁶

¹⁴³ Interview with Cissy; van Wissen, 'Rustenburg-Oostbroek van 1970 tot 1980'; Cissy van der Zijden, 'Rustenburg-Oostbroek 1990 tot heden', *Oog voor de wijk*. 13 December 2015, <http://www.oogvoordewijk.nl/95-jaar-rustenburg-oostbroek-2/rustenburg-oostbroek-1990-tot-heden/> (19 April 2017); Cissy van der Zijden, 'Rustenburg-Oostbroek 1990 tot heden', *De BORO-krant* 26:12 (December 2015) 14.

¹⁴⁴ Interview with Cissy.

¹⁴⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁴⁶ *Ibid.*

The reason that I refer to ‘most residents’ is that, at this time, the non-Dutch population of each administrative neighbourhood within Rustenburg-Oostbroek constituted around 30 per cent of the total, yet they were invisible in the campaign. When asked whether any ethnic minorities were involved, the BORO representative responded, ‘not at all. Well, one. That was a man, a Turkish man, who lived already 30 years in the neighbourhood and he was quite *geïntegreerde* [integrated]’.¹⁴⁷ Did this constitute a deficiency of representation on the part of the BORO, or was it a lack of co-operation or integration among minorities? This is difficult to ascertain objectively, but Cissy’s view, specifically regarding the biggest minority group, Turks, and why they were not part of the protest, was one of cultural difference: ‘They are more interested in their own family. They help their own family. And they don’t think like Dutch people. That’s just the difference’.¹⁴⁸ There is something of an empirical basis to this observation; yearly statistics collected by the municipality since 2000, though lacking linear trends, show a gap in participation in voluntary activities between native Dutch people, and first- and second-generation immigrants. On average 22 per cent of Dutch natives in Rustenburg-Oostbroek participated in voluntary work during the years 2000 to 2013, compared to a figure of 13 per cent for first-generation immigrants, and 15 per cent for second-generation.¹⁴⁹

This observation was somewhat echoed by representatives from *De Paardenberg*, a church organisation based behind the former Julianakerk in Transvaal providing a social club for lonely elderly people within the Escamp region of The Hague. They offered an elaborated explanation based on their experiences over ‘several years’ with minority elders in this NGO capacity, as illustrated in this excerpt from a group interview held at the Julianakerk centre:

- Jeannet: It’s not true what people say, ‘Dutch people don’t want to connect’. She [Bep] would like to, with the BIT [*Buurt Interventie Team*], they try to include foreigners. But it’s also because Dutch people are used to being volunteers – in the football club for example – but in other cultures it’s not-
- Bep: *-dat is niet normaal* [that is not normal].
- Jeannet: Sometimes people ask me, well, ‘what are people earning who are working here?’ – because we are 80 volunteers in this place-
- Bep: -I am the best!-
- Jeannet: -and they are not getting anything. But sometimes people from Turkey or Morocco, they go, ‘you’re crazy for working for nothing!’
- Nathan: Even people who come to use the service?

¹⁴⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁴⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁴⁹ Gemeente Den Haag, ‘Participation in voluntary work (Municipal Survey) [Rustenburg-Oostbroek, 2000-2013]’, *Den Haag in Cijfers*. 4 May 2017, https://denhaag.buurtmonitor.nl/Jive?sel_guid=48f9768c-232a-45a6-994d-e17ad212d7a3 (13 June 2017).

Jeannet: Ooh, yes!
Joeke: We like to talk, we like to share our opinion. The other people, they don't like to talk.¹⁵⁰

Clearly, therefore, while neighbourhood-level governance in non-governmental capacities has been well-organised and successful in developing social ties among residents to an extent, there has, it appears, for reasons that are perhaps best to revisit in the resident-perspective chapters, been a long-term lack of engagement or participation of the non-Dutch population in these formal ventures. A more recent example would be the neighbourhood social networking website, Nextdoor, launched in 2015, of which the vast majority of members and regular users in the Oostbroek-Zuid group have Dutch names.¹⁵¹ This speaks to the findings of Tolsma *et al*, and Vermeulen *et al* that there is a lower participation among minorities in voluntary neighbourhood work and that ethnic diversity often somewhat delegitimises neighbourhood organisations.¹⁵²

Discussion

What then, do these things reveal in relation to the research agenda of this thesis? There are at least three observations we can make. In the first instance, the view of policymakers that diversification trends in Transvaal would be somewhat replicated in Rustenburg-Oostbroek, both directly because of the restructuring that occurred in the former, and because of desires among aspirational residents to take advantage of the flexibility of the private housing market in the latter, unveils the important role of opportunity structures at the neighbourhood level. What is meant here can be explained in two ways. Firstly, there was a favourable opportunity structure for short-distance, secondary immigrants in terms of the affordability of the 'cheapest housing to buy in The Hague'.¹⁵³ These movements were evidenced by the springing up of multicultural shops. The experiences of the 1990s, along with interviews with municipal representatives, showed that this phenomenon was supplemented by the wider context of economic confidence. In this way, Alba and Nee, and Garrioch's arguments that only those with low human capital form spatial communities is perhaps incomplete; even when human capital is accumulated, in this case, one could argue that the spatial communities simply

¹⁵⁰ Interview with Bep, Joeke, Jeannet, and Ahmed.

¹⁵¹ Nextdoor, 'Buren van Oostbroek-Zuid', *Nextdoor*. 26 May 2017, <https://oostbroekzuid.nextdoor.nl/directory/> [restricted access] (26 May 2017).

¹⁵² Tolsma *et al*, 'The impact of neighbourhood and municipality characteristics'; Vermeulen, *et al*, 'Welcome to the neighbourhood'; Vermeulen *et al*, 'The local embedding of community-based organizations'.

¹⁵³ Interview with Cissy.

became expanded.¹⁵⁴ This expansion forms part of the second way Rustenburg-Oostbroek constituted a favourable opportunity structure. It can be explained with the fact that it was the “next neighbourhood out” from Transvaal, thus, it was familiar, and abandonment of social networks was not necessitated. Rather than becoming de-territorialised, the importance of the neighbourhood was reinforced by, from policymakers’ perspectives, a desire for physical proximity. In other words, from a governance perspective, the importance of neighbourhoods as spatial entities can be activated by the potential for human capital development whilst remaining within what we might call the “neighbourhood of neighbourhoods”, where maintaining spatially-bound ties, social or professional, “strong” or “weak”, retains its convenience. Whether this led to a consequent extension of residents’ subjective understandings of “the neighbourhood” will be explored in the later chapters.

In the second place, despite comparatively little intervention, the neighbourhood was still treated by the municipality as an important entity in the formulation of social ties, if in perhaps different ways to elsewhere (for instance, the focus in Transvaal and the Schilderswijk has been on the housing structure). Only the premise changed – where it was regarded throughout the 1980s and 1990s as ‘perfectly happy and normal’, it has in recent years come to be understood as an area with low social cohesion by both the municipality and other local stakeholders alike. Why has this occurred? Perhaps this is best explained by the simultaneous trajectory towards deprivation noted in the Context section and the accelerated ethnic diversification that occurred at the turn of the 2000s. I say this because, based on the governance interviews, it appears that the neighbourhood is important in different ways to different people. For natives in a governance context, local organisations exist to create a sense of community within the administrative confines of Rustenburg-Oostbroek; to make the most of the area within the boundaries. Meanwhile, for the minority populations it certainly appeared from these interviews that its importance lies in its practicality and proximity to (already-existing) networks. Perhaps this is hypothetical, but it seems that the process of diversification sharpened this contrast and made it salient.

Thus, thirdly, in light of this, there is a theoretical observation to make, perhaps. In observing the lack of involvement among minority residents in local NGOs – both historically, as seen in the demolitions dispute, and at present, where certain immigrants are even surprised by participation in such initiatives – there is a case to be made for an additional ‘domain’ of segregation, to speak in van Ham and Tammaru’s vernacular, to have been in existence in

¹⁵⁴ Alba and Nee, ‘Rethinking assimilation theory’; Garrioch, *Neighbourhood and Community*.

Rustenburg-Oostbroek; that of governance (specifically at the neighbourhood level). Where on one level, the BORO contributed to creating a strong sense of community in the face of a perceived threat, at the same time, there were people who, simply put, were not part of this community. Perhaps, to an extent, this states the obvious, but consideration of this domain within van Ham and Tammaru's framework surely has implications for how we understand the way in which residents relate to one another, and the dynamics of networks both inter-ethnically and intra-ethnically. Looking at the governance of Rustenburg-Oostbroek historically, it appears that these processes have occurred autonomously, thanks largely to low state involvement, therefore it is perhaps appropriate to move on to the core of this study; a social history of the area.

Chapter 2: *Autochtoon* perspectives of the neighbourhood and neighbourhood-level social relations in Rustenburg-Oostbroek

In 2015, according to a municipal survey, 43.9 per cent of the residents of Rustenburg-Oostbroek fully agreed that ‘People in this neighbourhood hardly know each other’, with 40.6 per cent arguing that ‘I feel at home with the people who live in this neighbourhood’. Only around a quarter – 26.9 per cent – of residents argued that ‘I live in a pleasant neighbourhood with a lot of harmony’.¹⁵⁵ Just over a third – 37.8 per cent – of residents fully agreed with the statement ‘I am happy with the composition of the population in the neighbourhood’.¹⁵⁶ While these are not the worst figures in the city, if we speak universally rather than relative only to deprived districts in The Hague, they represent a picture of low social cohesion. This is compared to the reflections of Richard Kleinegris that it was always a ‘perfectly happy and normal’ place.¹⁵⁷ The oral history interviews with residents, especially those with Dutch residents, present a longer term, nuanced, people-based context to these assessments. While there is perhaps no such thing as “the Dutch” or “the native” perspective – ‘perspectives’ was deliberately used in the title here – and equally “the immigrant perspective”, there is a degree to which the diversity of experiences of the neighbourhood and how it has changed over the past twenty to 30 years can be aggregated into some analytical remarks. If nothing else, what was striking was the seeming *inherent* importance of the neighbourhood for Dutch residents, which spilled over into the area of inter-ethnic relations. This is deduced from three observations to be outlined in this chapter. Firstly, that, overall, the perception among medium-to-long term Dutch residents around Oostbroek-Zuid is that the neighbourhood has been in decline since the accelerated wave of immigration at the turn of the twenty-first century; social cohesion, in the minds of natives, has declined, though not dramatically. Secondly, that interactions between autochthonous residents and ethnic-minority residents have been characterised in a general sense by superficiality. Thirdly, that food – as trivial as that may be – has been the basis of positive inter-ethnic relationships – both in terms of the shops that began to spring up in the 1990s, and regarding domestic hospitality – according to the residents’ recollections of how they developed stronger ties with some neighbours; ties of which I will suggest a three-pronged foundation in this chapter.

¹⁵⁵ Gemeente Den Haag, ‘Statements 2015 – districts’, *Den Haag in Cijfers*, 4 May 2017, https://denhaag.buurtmonitor.nl/Jive?sel_guid=8898cbc1-3c20-428f-b661-a3f16e548a24 (19 May 2017).

¹⁵⁶ Gemeente Den Haag, ‘I – Districts [Survey results on social cohesion 2013-2015]’, *Den Haag in Cijfers*, 4 May 2017, https://denhaag.buurtmonitor.nl/Jive?sel_guid=020059cf-1162-4f4f-9669-9a2131ce8b53 (19 May 2017).

¹⁵⁷ Interview with Richard Kleinegris.

Doorstroom, cohesion, nice families: Interpretations of the neighbourhood

Despite varying residency tenures and historical associations with Rustenburg-Oostbroek, respondents were almost uniformly of the opinion that the past fifteen to twenty years, in light of increasing levels of immigration (and emigration), have witnessed a decline in social cohesion, though, as one respondent, Joeke, said, they held to the opinion that it was ‘still a nice neighbourhood’.¹⁵⁸ This was set in a context of clear imagined boundaries, particularly in the form of comparisons with Transvaal. In Joeke’s words, whom I interviewed at a location in Transvaal, ‘people moved from this area to Rustenburg-Oostbroek’.¹⁵⁹ Moreover, when Ed, a resident of Rustenburg-Oostbroek throughout almost his entire life, returned in 2001 after a period away, he decided that

I wanted to come back to The Hague, I made a decision where I wanted to move: On that side of the La Reyweg, because it was quiet, and it was not really like – it sounds maybe negative, but I *don’t* mean it like that – there weren’t too much immigrants. And I thought, okay, when I’m on that side [it will be quiet]. But everything has changed.¹⁶⁰

His, and Joeke’s, experiences mirror the observations of spillover made in the governance chapter.¹⁶¹ They also represent a conscious differentiation between Rustenburg-Oostbroek and Transvaal, since De La Reyweg is the administrative boundary between the two districts. When he came back, he perceived Rustenburg-Oostbroek to not be like Transvaal, but this perception evidently changed in response to the population changing.

Although it is not part of Rustenburg-Oostbroek, he also defined the “neighbourhood” in terms of its proximity to the Zuiderpark.¹⁶² This was not uncommon; as Cissy recalls, it was only in the face of municipal involvement that she came to recognise such definitions. In her words, the campaign against demolition ‘was the beginning of my life in Rustenburg-Oostbroek. Before, I didn’t even know that the neighbourhood was called Rustenburg-Oostbroek. I thought it was Zuiderpark. That’s what most people think’.¹⁶³ In this way, there are both physical and social dimensions to the Dutch residents’ conception of the “neighbourhood” and its boundaries.

¹⁵⁸ Interview with Bep, Joeke, Jeannet, and Ahmed.

¹⁵⁹ *Ibid* (translated by Jeannet).

¹⁶⁰ Interview with Ed.

¹⁶¹ Interview with Bep, Joeke, Jeannet, and Ahmed.

¹⁶² The municipality, in fact, regards Zuiderpark as its own neighbourhood, despite having a single-figure population.

¹⁶³ Interview with Cissy.

When it came to social cohesion, the perception of a decline thereof was evident in the way that the interviewees characterised historical host-stranger relations. Cissy, who has spent over 25 years living on Harderwijkstraat, after having lived on Velpsestraat, remarks:

This is a neighbourhood that has had a lot of, we say, *doorstroom* [‘flow-through’]. The inhabitants change all the time. Because these houses are cheap, they are the cheapest apartments to buy in The Hague, and people can afford it when they’re young. [...] That means that the inhabitants change over time and that is difficult for the cohesion of the inhabitants. That is troublesome. There is also a part of the inhabitants [who] live here a very long time, like myself. And there are people who were born here and are now 60 or 80 years and still, the same, living here.¹⁶⁴

Following the demolition protest in 1997-1998, she notes that ‘we had a *huge* influx. In five years’ time it [the non-Dutch population] was 55 per cent’.¹⁶⁵ While, ‘I really do like it [the diversity of Rustenburg-Oostbroek]’, she enthuses, ‘that was *shocking*. And it gave a lot of problems also’.¹⁶⁶ In Jeannet’s words, a volunteer at De Paardenberg, ‘there are always new people coming in who have to learn the language, and if they have enough money they move to another neighbourhood [...] cohesion is very bad’.¹⁶⁷ Cissy, for example, recalls instances of physical fights on Harderwijkstraat at the turn of the century between Dutch boys and Turkish boys, along the lines of ‘we are the boss of the neighbourhood’.¹⁶⁸ This was somewhat analogous to Elias and Scotson’s thesis.

Youngsters fighting may well be a feature of more or less any neighbourhood in any context, but there were also other ways that, from Dutch perspectives, this decline in cohesion took shape in Oostbroek-Zuid. In one word, *regels*; Dutch for ‘rules’. These, and flouting of these, were brought into sharp focus at the neighbourhood level, and their implications appear to have influenced social cohesion here. In her words, ‘the Dutch like *regels*. Everything is organised here in Holland, and foreigners who come here, or migrants, however you want to call it, they often don’t know how the Dutch society works. They don’t understand it [laughing]. And you have to tell them but they don’t always want to listen’.¹⁶⁹ The one example of this that every respondent mentioned was the process of taking out litter, especially larger items for disposal. While since 2012 the area has had underground waste containers, and despite efforts to explain the collection processes, this has ‘always been a problem and still is

¹⁶⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁶⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁶⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁶⁷ Interview with Bep, Joeke, Jeannet, and Ahmed.

¹⁶⁸ Interview with Cissy.

¹⁶⁹ *Ibid.*

[...] because somehow, the Turkish people think that you are allowed to put all the rubbish you have on the pavement. And you're not allowed to!'.¹⁷⁰ For Bep, when it came to the Poles, 'they put the bottles wherever and a few metres further you can put it in the garbage can [...] when I come to live there [Ermelostraat] sixteen years ago, it was much cleaner'.¹⁷¹ Cora, who has lived on De La Reyweg for the past seven years, echoes this view, that 'some people take everything there [...] sometimes there are chairs, bunk beds, everything is there. It makes dirty the street'.¹⁷² To some extent, the *regels* culture provides a causal dimension to Putnam's 'hunkering down' hypothesis, whilst perhaps reinforcing an established-outsider dynamic.¹⁷³ Moreover, the fact that the population is so fluid exacerbates this problem, in this way reflecting the thesis made by Schrover and van Lottum, and arguably furthers the cohesion deficiency that was subsequently perceived to have arose.¹⁷⁴ A further theoretical addendum here might be that in this instance, the nation-state-society paradigm, much maligned by scholars over the past two decades, seemed to manifest itself in this highly-localised context.¹⁷⁵ This was both in the (non-belligerent) sense that the newcomers were seen as essentially different, and in the sense of lament experienced by the "hosts" towards the normative ideal of social cohesion.

In a more intangible manner, the cohesion declined because of the gendered nature, in the view of these residents, of inter-ethnic relations, compounded by a perception of Putnam's notion of bonding among different groups, which rendered bridging difficult.¹⁷⁶ Cissy, for instance, recalls how, even though she always made 'an effort' to greet 'whoever comes living here', including Turks who 'don't speak a word Dutch', what she found was that 'women are easier to approach. The men are so, I don't know, difficult. And the way they treated women. I don't like that'.¹⁷⁷ This was exacerbated by the fact that, as well as there being 'nearly no women – all men' using community facilities, such as De Paardenberg nearby in Transvaal, within these facilities, Cora describes a situation where 'the Surinam people talk with the Surinam people, they play cards. The Turkish go together. The *Marokkanen* go together'.¹⁷⁸ Even in the environments where mixing is actively encouraged, fairly static, gendered ethnic

¹⁷⁰ *Ibid.*

¹⁷¹ Interview with Bep, Joeke, Jeannet, and Ahmed.

¹⁷² Interview with Cora.

¹⁷³ Putnam, '*E pluribus unum*'.

¹⁷⁴ Schrover and van Lottum, 'Spatial concentrations'.

¹⁷⁵ cf. Andreas Wimmer and Nina Glick Schiller, 'Methodological nationalism and beyond: Nation-state building, migration and the social sciences', *Global Networks* 2:4 (2012) 301-334.

¹⁷⁶ Putnam, '*E pluribus unum*'; Putnam, *Bowling Alone*.

¹⁷⁷ Interview with Cissy.

¹⁷⁸ Interview with Cora.

communities – to use Alba and Nee’s term – appear to have emerged in this neighbourhood, at least on the basis of these interviews, to the detriment of social cohesion.¹⁷⁹

There is a historical contrast worth observing here, based on the responses of Ed, who has lived his entire life in the neighbourhood, except for two short periods away. Much like the nostalgic elderly Eastenders in Hood and Joyce’s study, he recalls positive memories of ‘Indos’ in his school class as a child, and that ‘I always had friends from Surinam’.¹⁸⁰ Furthermore, he said the Zuiderpark was very popular with children in those times. Today, however, ‘I never see children’ there, and, despite the fact that ‘I’m really open to interaction. I really like different cultures’, he says ‘it’s not easy’:

It’s not only language but it’s also the people that are staying in their groups. It has been the same with the Turkish people and it’s now with the Polish people, who are keeping their own. So, it’s part language barrier but it’s also people want to stay in their group [...] it harms the neighbourhood.¹⁸¹

It was ‘strange’ for him that some people ‘feel more Turkish than Dutch’ despite living there for several decades.¹⁸² Furthermore, he said that ‘I *never* see children [in Zuiderpark]. Really, never, never’.¹⁸³ What he was keen to point out, however, was that ‘I love to see different cultures because they are important to have community’.¹⁸⁴

It was, therefore, this strong ethnic bonding that has occurred over the years that feeds the sense of low cohesion rued by Dutch residents in Rustenburg-Oostbroek. Indeed Marein recalled making a conscious decision when she moved to Harderwijkstraat nineteen years ago to send her son to a school close to Scheveningen, around a fifteen-minute cycle ride away, which was the area where she grew up and where her family lived. This was because

being a single parent, for me, it’s important to build a network from other mothers and fathers who can take my son home when I come home late from work. And here in this area it is mainly Turkish schools, and that’s okay, but they don’t speak Dutch. So I thought, when I have to call someone, ‘please can you take care of my child for half an hour?’ – how am I going to tell them that?¹⁸⁵

¹⁷⁹ Logan *et al.*, ‘Immigrant enclaves and ethnic communities’.

¹⁸⁰ Interview with Ed.

¹⁸¹ Interview with Ed – question asked: ‘When immigration started to increase towards the end of the twentieth century, 1970s, 80s, 90s, did you find yourself increasingly willing to interact? Did you find yourself naturally interacting?’.

¹⁸² Interview with Ed.

¹⁸³ *Ibid.*

¹⁸⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁸⁵ Interview with Marein.

Even in the seven years that she has lived there, Cora noted that Oostbroek-Zuid had become ‘more foreign’.¹⁸⁶

Indeed, continuing the theme of nostalgia were the instances of long-term elderly residents who resented the way in which newcomers had changed the demographics of the neighbourhood. Cora described her next-door neighbour, who is nearly 80, as someone who ‘hates the foreigners, really [...] she doesn’t say that so directly but I hear when she speaks that she don’t like it – ‘there’s too many’’.¹⁸⁷ When they talk about how life has changed in the area, ‘she told me [...] about former days on the old neighbourhood when she lived there. They were all Dutch people’.¹⁸⁸ Cissy echoed this when talking about electoral trends, saying ‘about 35 per cent of the voters here vote of PVV, for Geert Wilders, so there’s quite a lot of racism among the old Dutch people who live here. That’s a pity’.¹⁸⁹

However, there is historical evidence to suggest that social cohesion – even in a bonding context – is not out of the question in this neighbourhood. Eastern Europeans are now the second-largest minority group, according to municipal data, in Oostbroek-Zuid, and the experience of Polish immigration over the past ten years, despite the words quoted above, has shown signs of promise in this regard from Marein’s perspective, while also once again underlining a gendered experience.¹⁹⁰ Her memory of this significant immigration wave made an interesting revelation:

In the beginning it was, really, there were only young men, and they worked all week. And in the weekends they started to drink. They were really driving like crazy in the street, and the music – every night was party. Friday, Saturday night, the music was so loud and they really... we weren’t happy with them!¹⁹¹

Indeed, her reflections communicate the notion of gendered inter-ethnic contact that Cissy mentioned above, in that the emergence of families accompanying these young men in recent years appears to be a small panacea for – or even a restoration of – the cohesion that is perceived to have been lost, again reflecting Hood and Joyce’s ‘rosy glow’ thesis, over the decades:

But in regards to the years, there came their girlfriends and then they had children and now they’re really nice families! [...] It’s nice, they go out, have a walk around the

¹⁸⁶ Interview with Cora.

¹⁸⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁸⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁸⁹ Interview with Cissy.

¹⁹⁰ Gemeente Den Haag, ‘Cube number of residents [by ethnicity as %, Rustenburg-Oostbroek breakdown] 2006-2016’, *Den Haag in Cijfers*. 4 May 2017, https://denhaag.buurtmonitor.nl/Jive?sel_guid=7a187392-cb9d-4d83-976b-f6f56127def7 (15 May 2017).

¹⁹¹ Interview with Marein; Hood and Joyce, ‘Three generations’.

park, and it's really nice. It's so old-fashioned, *like Holland was years ago*. And now you see their children, or teenagers, hanging around. There's a big difference between ten years ago and now. It's really nice, I think it adds to the neighbourhood because they're always outside when it's nice weather [pointing at playground outside Rosa school opposite Harderwijkstraat].¹⁹²

This revelation complicates the theoretical duel of the established and outsiders. Firstly because it throws into question the implied rigidity of this differential. As families emerge – as opposed to lone young men – it appears that the gap perceived among the established between them and the outsiders can shrink. In this case, what is also interesting, is the spatial dimension. Marein would surely not have made this observation had it not been for seeing these people in the context of the physical neighbourhood, even if her words were not based on direct verbal interaction with the Poles.

Oppervlakkigheid, sharing dinner, proximal friendships: Interactions in the neighbourhood

A partial panacea this may be, but it became clear in the oral history interviews that even where relations were not based on ethnic segregation, there was a degree of superficiality, both intra- and inter-ethnically, in the general neighbourhood context. Cora perceived Turks and Moroccans in particular, and to a lesser extent, Poles, to be 'on their own' and while she said she enjoys living in the neighbourhood, 'I miss the contact. When I make contact with somebody they only say hello'.¹⁹³ In Ed's eyes,

I would say you have a *oppervlakkig*, superficial contact with neighbours. You say "hi" and you sometimes talk with them. But there are only two neighbours I know more about. About how they live, where they work, and about which plans they have. There's one guy, and he lives, well, 400 metres away, and I've talked with him and I know where he works.¹⁹⁴

This trend was echoed by other interviewees. When I asked Cora if she had friends in the neighbourhood, her answer was 'do I have friends? I know some people but not really friends'.¹⁹⁵ Even her elderly neighbour, she recounted, who would say 'bad Turkish, bad *Marokkaan*' when nobody was around, exercised this superficiality: 'when they are close by,

¹⁹² Interview with Marein.

¹⁹³ Interview with Cora.

¹⁹⁴ Interview with Ed.

¹⁹⁵ Interview with Cora.

she said ‘hello! Hello!’’.¹⁹⁶ An excerpt from the interview with Bep and Joeke summarises the context of superficiality:

- N: When you first lived in the neighbourhood, did you know anyone?
J: No, I had nothing. But now I can talk with my nextdoor neighbours but also the neighbours on the other side.
N: And they are Dutch?
J: No, not so. They are Turks and Morrocans and Pakistanis. Not my close friends. On the street I say ‘hello’ and ‘goodbye’ and I borrow sugar, but not my close friends. They don’t come with me to drink coffee and tea,
B: I’m the same. I say ‘hi’ and something but not go in the home. Nobody in my neighbourhood come in my home. *Nee*, there are two or three who come for a *bakkie* [coffee].¹⁹⁷

Even for Cissy, whose investment in the neighbourhood, through the BORO, is particularly high, this was the case. She argued that this was because of the language barriers brought about by the swift diversification that came at the turn of the century:

Even at the beginning, I always make an effort. Whoever comes living here, I started talking, I say ‘good morning’, ‘good afternoon’ and that helps. People start talking. But there are quite a lot of people who don’t speak a word Dutch. And I don’t speak Turkish. I speak four languages but not Turkish!¹⁹⁸

She added that ‘it is still difficult’ in that the language barrier has not shrunk over time.¹⁹⁹ In some ways, this superficiality, it would seem, somewhat justifies scholarly observations that ‘the neighbourhood has lost its meaning when it comes to social relations’.²⁰⁰

However, as Bep remembered, on second thoughts, the ‘two or three who come for a *bakkie*’, so should we think twice before nodding in agreement with the consensus of superficiality. More than anything, it overlooks the complexity of neighbourhood relations, especially how they can change over time. One instance to illustrate this is recalled by Marein, who remembers when living below a Turkish family in Rustenburg-Oostbroek nineteen years ago, that

there was an older woman who lived there, with her son and his wife. And I always greet her, ‘*dag, mevrouw! Dag, mevrouw!*’. It took me a year before she answered. It

¹⁹⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁹⁷ Interview with Bep, Joeke, Jeannet, and Ahmed.

¹⁹⁸ Interview with Cissy.

¹⁹⁹ *Ibid.*

²⁰⁰ Listed in Pinkster, ‘Localised social networks’, 2590.

took a year! And then she didn't stop talking to me... in Turkish! Every time I came home, she – really often – she put a bag with food on my doorknob.²⁰¹

Clearly, this relationship developed into something more meaningful than the superficial small-talk experienced more widely. There are three reasons for this, which are reflected in the other interviews with Dutch residents, too. Firstly, it occurred because of characteristics and agency of the individual. In this case, it entailed the sustained effort and confidence of Marein to pursue this friendship. In Bep's case, it entailed the use of humour alongside being a 'very good listener', despite language barriers, in building relations with people at De Paardenberg, who, though 'they say they only want a cup of coffee', through these means, she was able to 'see their background' and the troubles they faced.²⁰² What is also worth noting is that Bep is retired, as is Cissy, while Cora is unemployed. All of them are involved in community work, but their involvement began when they stopped working. In this way, there is another dimension in terms of the governance domain noted in the previous chapter in that those who are not working are able to participate in such activities, while it also speaks to van Ham and Tammaru's work domain in that those who work, whether in the neighbourhood or not, are less able to do so.

Secondly, Marein's relationship with this woman developed on the basis of hospitality, or, more accurately, sharing food. This was a common theme in the interviews with Dutch residents, especially when it came to bridging with other ethnic groups. For Ed, neighbourhood relations on this basis were actually strengthened by immigration; he remembers his Javanese and Hindustani friends' parents welcoming him around for food when he was younger, while it was less common for them to be invited for dinner at his 'really Dutch' parents'.²⁰³ Later on, he had Turkish and Portuguese neighbours who invited him 'to have some food, or they brought something'.²⁰⁴ He regards minorities to be more hospitable than Dutch people in Rustenburg-Oostbroek, saying that 'if you're a guest, you're *really* a guest! I know that from experience', although he observes, simultaneously, that groups keep to themselves in general.²⁰⁵ As well as the Turkish woman from when she first lived in the neighbourhood, Marein discussed her current Surinamese neighbours, who bring her food on social occasions.²⁰⁶

The shops – and the consequent access to new foods that they provided – represented another way in which food became a means of developing relations between Dutch residents

²⁰¹ Interview with Marein.

²⁰² Interview with Bep, Joeke, Jeannet, and Ahmed.

²⁰³ Interview with Ed.

²⁰⁴ *Ibid.*

²⁰⁵ *Ibid.*

²⁰⁶ Interview with Marein.

and the newcomers who arrived in the neighbourhood through the 1990s. Cissy recalled that ‘quite a lot of Dutch people’ used the international shops in the area, not least because they were ‘cheaper’, but also because ‘Dutch like foreign food’.²⁰⁷ While this may represent a generalisation, it was generally true of all of my Dutch respondents. Marein is a weekly visitor to the Moroccan butcher that is closest to her, where she and her son have built up a friendship with the owner.²⁰⁸ Bep observes that since it became more diverse, ‘you have everything in your neighbourhood [...] everything that’s cheap. And when people say ‘hey, *de allochtonen dit, de allochtonen dat*’ – the *allochtonen* give us good fruit and veg! You can shop for under five Euro’.²⁰⁹ In this sense, food has been a bridge for both weak and strong ties.

Cissy’s first time eating out in the neighbourhood rather neatly connects this second reason to the third. ‘The first restaurant where I went to’ was Jerusalem Grill, a Middle Eastern café on Terletstraat, owned by ‘an Egyptian family that I know very well. I adopted [befriended] their daughter, and she’s 21 now. Everyday she comes round. Her mother cooks Egyptian food for me’.²¹⁰ What is important, here is not only the hospitality and food aspect, but the fact that they lived (and still live) in the same ‘square’ on Harderwijkstraat.²¹¹

Therefore, thirdly, the relationships such as the one I initially noted between Marein and her Turkish neighbour occurred precisely because these people lived literally right next to one another. They simply would not have occurred otherwise. Indeed, adding a layer of specificity to Allport’s contact hypothesis, one of the most noteworthy though perhaps unsurprising trends that I observed was the correlation between proximity and the strength of relationships; and, therefore, the underlying importance of the neighbourhood therein. I speak of Cissy’s ‘square’ and Marein’s ‘block’, for instance.²¹² When asked whether the threat of demolition and the result of the protest against it established a new neighbourhood dynamic, she answered that although it strengthened the sense of community more widely, it was still the case that ‘before that happened I had a good bond with the people around me. Maybe it’s the square who does that’.²¹³ In this way, Oostbroek-Zuid echoes Zwiers *et al*’s thesis of neighbourhood stability based on unchanging architecture.²¹⁴ These proximal friendships were indeed a consistent hallmark of the Dutch residents’ oral histories. Cissy went on to say that

²⁰⁷ Interview with Cissy.

²⁰⁸ Interview with Marein.

²⁰⁹ Interview with Bep, Joeke, Jeannet, and Ahmed.

²¹⁰ Interview with Cissy.

²¹¹ *Ibid.*

²¹² *Ibid.*; Interview with Marein.

²¹³ Interview with Cissy.

²¹⁴ Zwiers *et al*, ‘The path-dependency of low-income neighbourhood trajectories’.

even with eleven different nationalities in the square, ‘we have a very good bond here’.²¹⁵ She remembered Engin’s family, whom I also interviewed, moving in next door around fifteen years ago: ‘I knew that the other neighbours had moved and I saw that they were very young then – nineteen, twenty years. And I saw them on the square and I welcome them in our neighbourhood. That’s how the contact came’.²¹⁶ Similarly, Ed’s friendship with his Portuguese neighbours was founded on interactions on the stairs of his *portiekwoning*.²¹⁷ Another instance of a meaningful relationship based on proximity, was one developed between Bep, a nurse, and a Turkish neighbour, who had a disability. Bep on one occasion joined her neighbour ‘as a carer’ for one month in Turkey while she was visiting family.²¹⁸

Discussion

The neighbourhood, therefore, was – and is – important in shaping the intra- and inter-ethnic social networks of residents from Dutch perspectives, but perhaps not totally so. There are specific ways in which it is important; those I have outlined are merely examples based on the responses of a relatively small cohort of interviewees. The neighbourhood is where cultural differences, as in the case of *regels*, were brought into focus as the population diversified. Reinforcing points made by other scholars, the neighbourhood became the object of nostalgia for older, long-term residents as the population structure changes. In the case of Dutch residents in Rustenburg-Oostbroek, their perception of the neighbourhood changed in relation to changes and consequent spillover within the “neighbourhood of neighbourhoods” that I mentioned in the previous chapter. Related to this was the decline in cohesion from a Dutch perspective which, it appears, was, to a large extent, down to the speed of diversification between 1997 and 2005 in particular. A consideration of gender unveils the fact that despite Dutch residents perceiving a decline in cohesion, perceptions of certain ethnic groups or ‘newcomers’ – in this case, the Poles who have been arriving since 2007 – were not necessarily static. Where once they were perceived to be troublesome young men, the growth of families has resulted in them being seen as representing to some extent what is nostalgically referred to as ‘what Holland used to be like’, as Marein put it.²¹⁹ This change is rooted in neighbourhood-level experiences, such as seeing them drinking in the street or playing in the park. Furthermore, while intra- and inter-ethnic relations in this neighbourhood were in general characterised by superficiality, the

²¹⁵ Interview with Cissy.

²¹⁶ *Ibid.*

²¹⁷ Interview with Ed.

²¹⁸ Interview with Bep, Joeke, Jeannet, and Ahmed.

²¹⁹ Interview with Marein.

oral histories unveiled three bases on which more meaningful relationships developed, which were necessarily intertwined with the neighbourhood context: (1) individual agency; (2) food and hospitality; (3) residential proximity. In this way, the neighbourhood has not lost its significance in terms of social relations; indeed, in this way, the neighbourhood has not particularly changed.²²⁰

Moreover, the neighbourhood as a spatial entity was and is *inherently* important to the Dutch residents, as opposed to Oostbroek-Zuid specifically being inherently special in any sense, although, as it happened, that was the case in some instances, such as Ed's. This was the overall impression gathered from the interviews. I say this because of the implied normative conceptions of what a neighbourhood *ought* to be when the residents were discussing cohesion, which, most notably, meant somewhere where all residents could happily communicate with one another or drink tea or coffee together. This was despite the fact that most of the interviewees were not originally from the area. In some ways, maintaining cohesion came across to be a duty, as manifest in Cissy's insistence on greeting every new neighbour and Marein's patient relationship with the Turkish woman living above her. In all of the interviews, a sense of a lack of reciprocity as the population became more diverse was noted as problematic in this regard. This trend is interesting, considering van Ham and Tammaru's approach, since because of the historical diversity of professions represented among the residents, one might expect segregation in the work domain, occupying a significant part of the residents' 'time geography', to be strong, leading, perhaps, to a consequent lack of regard for building community in the home domain.²²¹ Instead, there was a loyalty towards the cause of cohesion and a generally positive view of the neighbourhood despite a clear perception of problems.

The interviews certainly provided further evidence for arguments made in existing scholarship, such as Schrover and van Lottum's suggestion that high population turnover leads to low cohesion. However, what this research adds to their thesis is how meaningful inter-ethnic relationships can develop even in such contexts. Of course, this does not nullify the established-outsider dynamics which also came through from the interviews, although, as I have mentioned, these were by no means static. Where bonding may have occurred, it seems from the interviews that it occurred because of rules in the neighbourhood; as one respondent said, 'the Dutch like *regels*', implying that those who are not Dutch, perhaps, do not.²²² While they of course represent subjective interpretations of reality, the oral histories unveiled the way

²²⁰ Zwiers *et al*, 'The path-dependency of low-income neighbourhood trajectories'.

²²¹ van Ham and Tammaru, 'New perspectives on ethnic segregation', 956-958.

²²² Interview with Cissy.

in which alleged cultural idiosyncrasies such as this one are brought into focus at the neighbourhood level, and often exacerbated by objective language barriers.

Chapter 3: *Allochtoon* perspectives of the neighbourhood and neighbourhood-level social relations in Rustenburg-Oostbroek

The way in which the non-Dutch participants in this study described the neighbourhood fundamentally underlined a different perception of its role in their lives to that of the native respondents. In this way, it appears that the nation-state permeates even neighbourhood relations. Where social cohesion was normative for the latter, positive neighbourly relations were almost a coincidence for the former; a secondary factor to the neighbourhood's geographical context carrying a spatial, physical function in the non-native respondents' residence preferences (which were, in turn, shaped by the context of the work domain and impulses in the leisure domain). As this chapter will reveal, it appeared that, over time, the increasingly diverse character of the neighbourhood came to be appreciated by these interviewees, although there was a sense among those from older migration flows that newcomers posed a threat to jobs and resources, although this did not translate into resentment. Bonding and migrant networks were of little and decreasing importance, apart from in the Polish case. For most respondents, ties in these senses existed primarily to serve a practical function, as opposed to being based on homophily. The exceptions to this, however, were Gosia's and Wojciech's cases.

Neighbourhood perceptions and the governance domain

Neighbourhoods can be the prism through which wider social changes are observed and interpreted. This is especially the case with regards to immigration, which was evident in the interviews with native residents. The oral histories of non-Dutch residents reflected this also. Where the Dutch residents perceived a decline in social cohesion, there was a sense of resignation towards newcomers who have settled in the area – something of a neighbourhood-level manifestation of Leo Lucassen's findings in *The Immigrant Threat* – among those from “older” migrant groups.²²³ Importantly, however, this did not translate into outright resentment, or a clear-cut established-outsider dynamic. Simon recalls that in the 1990s and early 2000s, it

was good money then. In the time before the Poles came along, and nothing against the Poles, because we were in theory “the Poles” as well at the time, but, I mean, what was it? Twenty Euros or 25 Euros in your pocket per hour. [...] You know, it used to be only one in ten cars you'd see were Polish here, and people were saying, ‘oh, ***** Poles taking our jobs here’, this, that, and the other. I mean, I couldn't say anything because I was in someone else's country as well. But you know what I mean, when I

²²³ Lucassen, Leo, *The Immigrant Threat: The Integration of Old and New Migrants in Western Europe Since 1850* (Champaign 2005).

got laid off, four Polish took my job. For the same price for what I was doing it for. Well, I can't really say anything because if I was a businessman I'd probably take them on as well.²²⁴

The reason I argue this to be a perception shaped by the neighbourhood context is because of his reference to the number plates. Indeed, he explicitly made the point that they became a subjective metric for measuring the presence of newcomers: 'I have always said look at the car number plates, and you'll go, 'right, that's the indication of who's here''.²²⁵

Similarly, when asked his views on how the area had changed since he had been a child here, Burak's interpretation of the changes was as follows:

- B: Too many Bulgarians and Polish people.
N: Too many?
B: Too many. Ten years ago I never see one. Maybe one of thousand, you know. And now it's thousand to one!
N: Why do you say too many? Do they cause problems?
B: No, it's not a problem for me, but, it's like the government is planning this, you know. They want less Turkish people, they want to send them all back. And they try something, so they say, 'we will cut your pension, but if you go now, we give you pension before 65', and that kind of stuff. They want us back and they want Bulgarian and Polish people. Uh, yeah, that's one [reason]. And the second is, since these people comes here, many people they lost their jobs. They are earning less. [...] Many Turkish people who work in the buildings, they earn, for example, people who are painting, they earn twenty Euros a square and these Bulgarian people, they saying 'ten Euros is enough'.²²⁶

What is important here, again, is that it was in seeing these people in his day-to-day life that he formulated this perception. These statements illustrate a theoretical conundrum when considered in light of Allport's contact hypothesis. Individual cases such as these undermine the simplicity of this logic. These respondents experienced something of a multiplied cognitive dissonance when it came to the way they responded to the changes that they were noticing in the neighbourhood. On one level, there was the well-studied notion of a resource-based threat, but at another level, there was the sense that they were once in the position of the newcomers.²²⁷ When it came, then, to interactions with newcomers, as will be mentioned later, they were – though superficial, as shown in the previous chapter – generally positive.

Another way in which the non-Dutch participants' responses differed to those analysed in the previous chapter was in their interpretations of the spatial dimensions of what exactly

²²⁴ Interview with Simon.

²²⁵ *Ibid.*

²²⁶ Interview with Burak.

²²⁷ cf. Manevska and Achterburg, 'Immigration and perceived ethnic threat'.

represented the neighbourhood. There was not a consistent definition, but the definitions consistently encompassed larger areas than the administrative boundaries of Oostbroek-Zuid, Rustenburg-Oostbroek, or the notion of the ‘Zuiderpark area’ identified in the interviews with Dutch residents. Simon, a homeowner on Ermelostraat, was particularly adamant in his answer, where he described the neighbourhood as being ‘Escamp. It’s got boundaries. You can’t change them!’.²²⁸ This was based on the fact that he had registered the purchase of his apartment in the municipality’s offices for the Escamp urban district. Burak, meanwhile, assumed ‘the neighbourhood’ to encompass what has hitherto been described as the neighbourhood of neighbourhoods. His definition appeared to be based on reputational association and a localised culture:

- B: This is a good neighbourhood. Mostly, in the papers, they said, Schilderswijk, Transvaal is the baddest town in Netherlands. *Over* [about] this neighbourhood. But it is really not like that. You don’t, maybe you don’t see many Dutch people, but even the Dutch people is like us, or we are like them. We are like the same, you know. Maybe people can think different but we act the same.²²⁹
- N: So would you say that this is part of Transvaal, Schilderswijk?
- B: Yup, yup.²³⁰

Engin’s perception was based on landmarks that were important in the leisure domain of his and his family’s lives:

Look at it, it’s very close to the park. To the market. Very close. You can walk in five minutes and go there. Very close to the centrum. It’s very close to the beach. So it’s like ‘I am bored today and I want to go to the park’ and you’re there. And I think it’s very important to have those opportunities.²³¹

Why these perspectives are important is that in their spatial scope they imply an absence of the normativity with which neighbourhood cohesion was discussed among the Dutch respondents. Such cohesion, by its very nature, as was displayed in that chapter, necessitated practical proximity. This is why I argued that the neighbourhood – regardless of whether it was Rustenburg-Oostbroek or not – was inherently important to these residents. In the cases of some of the non-Dutch participants, however, the value of the neighbourhood was observed precisely because it was Rustenburg-Oostbroek. That is, its value was found in its locational

²²⁸ Interview with Simon.

²²⁹ Interview with Burak.

²³⁰ *Ibid.*

²³¹ Interview with Engin.

and infrastructural context, meaning that neighbourly relations represented a consequence, even coincidence, that was secondary. This was both in terms of chronology – with such relations developing over time, as the next section of this chapter will extrapolate – and in terms of priority. Engin’s references to the park, market and beach show this, as does the way in which Joyce made the decision to move to the neighbourhood from the Paul Krugerlaan in Transvaal in the early 2000s:

When I find this job here in Haga²³², with a stable contract, then I thought, hm, every time I had problem from Paul Krugerlaan to go to the hospital. And, there was no trams early in the morning, weekends. Sunday and Saturday, maybe you have to start at work, seven o’clock, quarter past seven you have to be at work. [...] When I get my permanent contract, I say, ‘okay, I can look something here in the surrounding’. [...] So I ended up here. And I bought this here.²³³

As well as the transport links, she recalled the boon of being able to walk to get everything she needed, ‘you have the Albert Heijn, you have the Jumbo, you have the Blokker. You have all the shops here in the area. And you have here also close by, Dierenselaan’.²³⁴ In her eyes, it was ‘a safe area’ for when she was going to work at the time both early in the morning and late at night.²³⁵ This was the closest she came to discussing her views about social relations in the neighbourhood in relation to before and at the beginning of her time there. Both Engin and Simon, similarly, recalled that they chose housing in this area because of the possibility of having what they saw as a decent-sized garden.²³⁶ It was only later on, as the following section of this chapter will underline, that social relations were of any normative importance.

It is worth noting before moving to that section, however, that in the previous two chapters, the notion of segregation in a governance domain was suggested. While the implication might have been that there was non-participation among *allochtonen* in neighbourhood-level governance, this was not the case. What I found was that it could be informal, even perhaps somewhat invisible, as in the case of Ahmed, who cleaned the facilities used by De Paardenberg, or that it would transcend the conventional institutional means of local governance.²³⁷ This occurred at the bakery where Burak works, which, since coming under new management around ten years ago, has had a tradition of giving away what he quoted as usually 40 to 50 Euros’ worth of food for free to poorer residents of all nationalities at the

²³² A hospital around 500 metres south-west of the Zuiderpark. See figures in Context chapter.

²³³ Interview with Joyce.

²³⁴ *Ibid.*

²³⁵ *Ibid.*

²³⁶ Interview with Engin; Interview with Simon.

²³⁷ Interview with Bep, Joeke, Jeannet, and Ahmed.

end of each day.²³⁸ This was interesting in that it represented a departure from the family-network self-governance among migrants evidenced by Pinkster in her study of Transvaal.²³⁹ Moreover, it represents a form of governance that is specific to its spatial, socio-economic, and historical context. Where there was little participation in the BORO, and specifically its campaign against demolition in the 1990s, among non-Dutch residents, contributions to the community would necessarily need to come outside of this organisation, which had become perhaps the primary neighbourhood-level stakeholder (in particular given the result of its campaign). The context of private homeownership combined with low government involvement meant that efforts such as these would necessarily be borne out of individual or social-entrepreneurial agency, which is what developed in Başak here. This was something of an invisible not to mention autonomous form of governance, but in its nature, it performed a function of shaping inter-ethnic relations at a neighbourhood level. Examples of such relations will be investigated in the following section.

Loosened networks and relations with neighbours

One thing that was striking from the interviews was the way in which the importance of ethnic bonding at the neighbourhood level declined over time, if it ever had significance in the first place. Joyce's experiences illustrate this. She arrived in the Netherlands seventeen years ago as part of a group of nurses who initially lived together: 'we came from [*sic*] Holland and they've been in Surinam to look for nurses. And, so, they paid everything for us to bring us to Holland'.²⁴⁰ She purchased an apartment on Soestdijksekade in 2003. When asked if she had known other people from Surinam in the neighbourhood, she seemed surprised at such a question, leading to this exchange:

- N: Do you speak to many people from Surinam?
J: No.
N: When you came here, you moved here with other people from Surinam though?
J: We were with seven or eight, *hé*.
N: Are you still in touch with them?
J: No, no.
N: Why's that?
J: Because you don't have the close contact with each other. They just came from the job and everybody went to different places.²⁴¹

²³⁸ Interview with Burak.

²³⁹ Pinkster, 'Localised social networks'.

²⁴⁰ Interview with Joyce.

²⁴¹ *Ibid.*

Indeed, she was antagonistic to the notion of what Putnam would call bonding, both in terms of building spatially-defined networks and in terms of transnational pursuits:

You cannot think in part. You must be international. You must have contact with everyone, that is my vision. Not you have to think about Dutch, or, the Surinam, or the Turkish, or the – no that's wrong! You have to find your way among them. [...] Look, you must say Surinam, you're born there, that is your native place. But the thing is, you grew up, you are here living, you have to make, how you say, the best of it. You cannot stay back. I don't even listen to Surinam news or anything. I don't care!²⁴²

For over ten years, the Elaziğ Cafeteria on Ermelostraat, in a similar way to the coffee houses in Schilderswijk mentioned by Klein Kranenburg, has been a hub for Turkish men of all ages in the neighbourhood, but for Burak, while he said that 'I understand them', it was a waste of time to be in this group 'playing cards'.²⁴³ Moreover, the experience of briefly returning to Turkey when his father was made redundant from a rose-cutting job in the Westland around five years ago made him realise his appreciation for the 'different cultures here' rather than staying within a Turkish community, which was why he came back.²⁴⁴ Although he believes there are 'too many' Bulgarians and Poles in Rustenburg-Oostbroek, as quoted above, he has learned some basic phrases in order to interact with them in Başak Nur.²⁴⁵ Engin echoed these sentiments. Having moved to Harderwijkstraat in the 1990s as an example of a spillover migrant from Transvaal, he noted the tolerance of his new neighbours, which formulated his seemingly cosmopolitan identity. He attributed tolerance as an intrinsic characteristic of Dutch society, as compared to the German context in which he previously lived as a second-generation immigrant, which he characterised as 'very distant'.²⁴⁶ By contrast, describing how he felt when he first lived in Oostbroek-Zuid, he said 'I never feel that I wasn't welcome here. I never had that feeling'.²⁴⁷ Consequently, the way in which he shaped his identity was

as a European. Maybe I'm the most Dutch you have ever seen because I am very tolerant to everyone, you know, and this is very important. I mean, you can't close yourself and go into one room and sit with your own people and say, 'okay, now we are Turkish', for example, 'and we don't like them, we don't like them, we don't like

²⁴² *Ibid.*

²⁴³ Klein Kranenburg, 'Samen voor ons eigen', 238; Interview with Burak.

²⁴⁴ *Ibid.*

²⁴⁵ *Ibid.*

²⁴⁶ Interview with Engin.

²⁴⁷ *Ibid.*

them'. [...] I mean, we are not very fixed on our culture, you know, and maybe that's also a reason why you feel at home here at least.²⁴⁸

Simon also arrived in the area in the 1990s, initially working in various *horeca* positions before joining what he described as a 'clique' of British and Irish workers in the construction industry, of whom a presence had existed in Rustenburg-Oostbroek, according to Kleinegris, since the 1980s.²⁴⁹ These men enjoyed strong bonds across the three main domains within van Ham and Tammaru's framework: work, home, and leisure.²⁵⁰ Although he arrived after the numerical peak of the network, which he thought to have numbered '200 or 300 people', he still reminisced that 'it was one of the best times I've had, there [...] it was a big gang of 30-odd people who knew everyone, you know, and, like, for all the bars we went to, 200 people in one here [...] I would say I've had some great times there. I'll tell you. I met some mad characters. I'm glad they're gone actually!'.²⁵¹ Yet, when asked if he was still in touch with them, since the work had 'dried up' – a development which I will revisit later – his response was:

No, no. That was all mobile phone and this and that, Dutch mobiles and that, but as soon as you bounce off [leave a job/project][shrugging] – I'm not a Facebook or this, that and the other – I know a lot of people are but why the **** do I want to know what you're having for breakfast for?²⁵²

In this way, as Schrover *et al* found with the Demka factory workers in twentieth-century Utrecht, the combination of shared residential and occupational experiences provided a bonding mechanism, but in both Simon's and Joyce's cases, these networks dissipated when such proximity was lost; so, too, did any impulse to bond with compatriots.²⁵³ Furthermore, these stories speak to the findings of Dekker and Engbersen in that while they argue that social media strengthen networks and activate weak ties, so too, I argue, can social media form the basis for the weakening and even loss of such connections when we observe, historically, the pre-social media age against the one in which we inhabit today.²⁵⁴ Perhaps this is merely an extension of Dekker and Engbersen's logic, but what I mean here is that the influence of social media is such that when the loss of spatial proximity is accompanied by voluntary non-

²⁴⁸ *Ibid.*

²⁴⁹ Interview with Simon; Interview with Richard Kleinegris.

²⁵⁰ van Ham and Tammaru, 'New perspectives on ethnic segregation'.

²⁵¹ Interview with Simon.

²⁵² *Ibid.*

²⁵³ Schrover, Marlou, Judith ten Broeke and Ronald Rommes, *Migranten bij de Demka-staal fabrieken in Utrecht 1915-1983* (Utrecht 2008).

²⁵⁴ Dekker and Engbersen, 'How social media transform migrant networks'.

participation in social media, the importance of the neighbourhood as a structure shaping social dynamics is actually increased. A digital domain is therefore potentially worthy of being added to van Ham and Tammaru's framework. Furthermore, these testimonies vindicate Adrian Favell's warning that spatially-bound networks combined with transnational activities are not necessarily the symbols of an 'heroic new proletariat'; Engin and Burak, for instance, proactively pursued relations with their non-Turkish neighbours, explicitly at the expense of exclusively being part of the Turkish community in the neighbourhood.²⁵⁵

When it came to building strong ties through 'bridging' there was evidence of a similar story to that outlined in the previous chapter.²⁵⁶ Over time, Engin and Meryem's closest relationship – even, as he emphasised, with Engin's mother living nearby – came to be with their next-door neighbour, Cissy, whom I introduced in the first and second chapters. Engin made several references to her throughout the interview, along the lines of her being 'like family'.²⁵⁷ In his words, 'if I have any problem, I go to her, I talk about it. It's like my mother. But my mother, she used to live here and I don't have any connection to her'.²⁵⁸ This reinforces the point made in the previous chapter of the strongest neighbourhood ties being made on the basis of agency, hospitality, and proximity. As he recalled, 'the relationship with my wife and Cissy is also good. She [Meryem] was pregnant and she [Cissy] was driving to the hospital, to the appointments with the doctor, and so on. I mean, my closest family didn't help us'.²⁵⁹ As well as this, Engin echoed Cissy's remarks about the importance of the 'square', where the neighbours – from Greece, Egypt, Pakistan, Iran – regularly cook for one another.²⁶⁰ Moreover, Simon recalled developing friendships with those of other nationalities in the bars nearby, which, for him, referred to a handful of establishments surrounding the roundabout on Soestdijkseplein, located at the south end of his street. At these places, he noted, 'everyone knows everyone'.²⁶¹ They were, in his words, 'the epitome of The Hague', where 'Turkish, Surinamese, Moroccan' would share a 'beer or coffee'.²⁶² As well as this, he got to know a number of neighbours through local VvE meetings.²⁶³ In these ways, proximity, and by

²⁵⁵ Adrian Favell, 'Integration and nations: The nation-state and research on immigrants in Western Europe', in: Marco Martiniello and Jan Rath eds., *Selected Studies in International Migration and Immigrant Incorporation* (Amsterdam 2012) 394.

²⁵⁶ Cf. Putnam, *Bowling Alone*; Putnam, '*E pluribus unum*'; Granovetter, 'The strength of weak ties'.

²⁵⁷ Interview with Engin.

²⁵⁸ *Ibid.*

²⁵⁹ *Ibid.*

²⁶⁰ *Ibid.*

²⁶¹ Interview with Simon.

²⁶² *Ibid.*

²⁶³ *Ibid.*

extension “the neighbourhood”, was an essential factor in formulating more-than-superficial relationships across cultures.

If bonding was not to form a strong theme in the oral histories of these residents, then the role of neighbourhood-based ‘migrant networks’ – a central feature of almost all aspects of the lives of Transvaal’s residents, as Pinkster found – appeared to be primarily functional.²⁶⁴ For Burak, despite his views on spending time with fellow Turks, the neighbourhood provided the opportunity structure, reinforced by network ties, for accumulating human capital, as shown in his recollection of how he came to work in Başak Nur, located at the corner of Harderwijkstraat and Schaarsbergenstraat, where all but two of the current staff members are Turkish:

I know someone there. But I want to work in Mevlana [a popular local Turkish restaurant chain], you know, but I had no experience, so my friend said ‘come to the bakery, I will show you something, and when you go to Mevlana you can say you have experience’. When I went to the bakery, this boss, he saw me, he said ‘I don’t let you go, if you want you can work at my place’. [...] It’s good for me, you know.²⁶⁵

It was a similar story for Engin, who, like Burak’s father, originally worked in greenhouses in the Westland for his uncle, who lived in Transvaal, beginning when he was 22. For him, although he did not know the Dutch language at the time, ‘I thought, maybe, it’s a start’, referring to the goal of starting his own family.²⁶⁶ Engin’s wife, Meryem, developed a number of friendships with other Turkish mothers in the neighbourhood through the local school that their children attended, in a similar manner to the mothers that Nijhoff and Ryan have interviewed in their research, and to Marein in the previous chapter.²⁶⁷ These friendships were initially based on navigating the education system, and had an essence of functionality because they were based on the shared language. Since then, however, they have developed into stronger ties. This reflects the finding of the previous chapter in that it shows the way in which the spatial proximity offered by a neighbourhood can activate ‘latent’ ties and, in Meryem’s case, even eventually develop meaningful relationships.²⁶⁸ Crucially, however, the ties were originally activated to serve a function, rather than being borne out of a culturally homophilic disposition, as Putnam might imply. This contrasts with Toruńczyk-Ruiz’s findings on

²⁶⁴ Pinkster, ‘Localised social networks’; cf. Massey, Douglas c.s., *Worlds in Motion: Understanding International Migration at the End of the Millennium* (Oxford 1998).

²⁶⁵ Interview with Burak.

²⁶⁶ Interview with Engin.

²⁶⁷ Nijhoff, Karijn, ‘Polish migrants in The Hague: Stories of integration and attachment’, *International Migration & Integration* (2016) 10-13; Ryan, ‘Migrants’ social networks’, 716-718, 720-722.

²⁶⁸ cf. Dekker and Engbersen, ‘How social media transform migrant networks’.

Ukrainians in Warsaw, and, closer to home, Pinkster's findings in Transvaal.²⁶⁹ What this suggests, in light of this contrast with Pinkster's findings, is that the contexts of neighbourhoods do indeed matter; there are nuances with regards to social dynamics even within the neighbourhood of neighbourhoods.

Of course, this was not a unanimous trend; even in Gosia's experience this was true to an extent, but this time a particularly strong Polish network was accompanied by a tendency towards bonding. A telling statement from her oral history testimony revealed that when she is in Rustenburg-Oostbroek, although she only works there now as opposed to living there also, 'I feel like I'm in Poland, but with money!'.²⁷⁰ Her recollections of living near Zuiderparklaan when she arrived in the Netherlands eight years ago, were that she would do all of her shopping in the Polish shops that were emerging – pointing at Dierenselaan as she told me – and would interact mainly with Poles in her day-to-day life. This was embedded in the work 'domain' of her life, where nearly all of her colleagues at the greenhouses 'near Breda' were Polish.²⁷¹ Moreover, and perhaps most importantly, her family life was necessarily transnational, with her husband and son remaining in Poland until 2013. Much of her life in the Netherlands, she recalled, has been structured by Polish social media groups, such as 'Polacy w Den Haag' on *Facebook* and the news portal and forum for Poles in the country, *niedziela.nl*.²⁷² This, of course, is in line with the findings of Dekker and Engbersen, but it also suggests – without wanting to misplace causality – that segregation can exist within a 'digital' domain and have real-life implications made manifest in neighbourhoods. Furthermore, Wojciech, although not living within the administrative boundaries of Rustenburg-Oostbroek, by the nature of his business, which sources work for Poles, Czechs, and Slovaks in the neighbourhood, was also strongly inclined towards bonding.²⁷³ Indeed, he outlined his intention to return to Poland back to his family because he thought that the neighbourhood was 'too multicultural'.²⁷⁴ At the same time, the reason he had moved to this neighbourhood rather than his original preference – Amsterdam – was precisely because of the amount of Poles in proximity.²⁷⁵

Indeed, more than any other ethnic group, the Poles appear to have established proximal communities (in the way that Alba *et al* use the term) in Rustenburg-Oostbroek especially at

²⁶⁹ Toruńczyk-Ruiz, 'Neighbourhood ties'.

²⁷⁰ Interview with Gosia.

²⁷¹ van Ham and Tammaru, 'New perspectives on ethnic segregation'; Interview with Gosia.

²⁷² *Ibid.*

²⁷³ Similarly to Dutch respondents in the previous chapter, Wojciech defined the neighbourhood as 'the area around Zuiderpark'.

²⁷⁴ Original quote was in Polish: 'za dużo multikulturowości'. From interview with Wojciech.

²⁷⁵ *Ibid.*

the north-western end of Zuiderparklaan – where, today, surrounding a large Polish supermarket, Groszek, is a Polish hairdresser, a small Polish grocery store, a Polish café-restaurant, and offices offering legal and property advice in Polish – and along the western and eastern sides of Schaarsbergenstraat – where there are two Polish supermarkets, and one Polish hairdresser. While Gosia’s and Wojciech’s interviews do not necessarily represent this community as a whole, there is a sense of Polish exceptionalism in the way in which the *Polonia* have settled in Rustenburg-Oostbroek. There is, I believe, an historical dimension to this, which has been noted throughout this study; that is, the context of the neighbouring neighbourhoods – most notably Transvaal. Transvaal had already, and still has established extended networks within older migrant groups, as Pinkster has shown.²⁷⁶ Therefore, the Turkish presence in Rustenburg-Oostbroek was, effectively, a spillover or extension from Transvaal, as observed in the governance chapter.²⁷⁷ This meant that when the Poles arrived, a greater spatial opportunity structure existed to form a Polish community in Rustenburg-Oostbroek than did in its neighbouring neighbourhood, especially given the flexibility of the private housing market in the immediate context and the wider context of EU freedom of movement. This perhaps also explains why Rustenburg-Oostbroek has come to be one of the primary neighbourhoods in which Poles have settled in The Hague.²⁷⁸

Discussion

What role, then, did the neighbourhood play in shaping the intra- and inter-ethnic relations of non-Dutch residents in Rustenburg-Oostbroek in the past two-and-a-half decades? The findings that emerged in this chapter from the oral history interviews were that, just as for the Dutch residents, the neighbourhood represented the window through which wider social developments were observed and interpreted. As older immigrant groups – from the perspectives of Simon, a British construction worker associated with a small wave of such labourers that emerged in the 1980s, and Burak, whose Turkish family had lived in The Hague for thirty years – saw newcomers arriving from CEE countries in the 2000s, there was a sense of resignation that the jobs they were doing (in Burak’s case, what his father was doing) were now the jobs of Poles and Bulgarians. Crucially, however, though problematic, this did not lead to resentment or a strong established-outsider tendency. On Simon’s part, he understood the

²⁷⁶ Pinkster, ‘Localised social networks’.

²⁷⁷ Interview with Richard Kleinegris.

²⁷⁸ Karczowski, Michal and Anne Boer, Post-accession migration: Polish migrants moving from Poland to The Hague (Master thesis Radboud University 2010) 34.

economic rationale of such changes, while for Burak, he reached out to his new neighbours by trying to learn some of their languages. Why might this have occurred? To create a somewhat hypothetical contrast with Pinkster's findings in Transvaal, this trend was possibly related to the housing stock context, where the higher capital requisite to occupying private housing (either purchased or rented) offset the 'limited opportunity structures and negative socialisation processes' that at least partially shape the social mobility trajectories and precarity of residents in lower-income areas such as Transvaal.²⁷⁹ It perhaps makes sense that the neighbourhood's role did not change in this period so much as the *perceptions* that emerged from this function in line with population changes, since, as the Context chapter outlined, the housing stock has hardly changed in the neighbourhood's 95-year history.

Related to the private housing context, then, was the fact that the neighbourhood fundamentally served more of a practical purpose than a social one for these respondents. The normative way in which social cohesion was talked about in the interviews with Dutch residents was almost absent in the interviews with non-Dutch residents. It was only over time, and reactively, for example, in Engin's case, when he noted the tolerance of his neighbours, that building relations with neighbours became important. (Of course, at this juncture, it is worth bearing in mind that since there were no interviews with transitional residents, this does not explain the *doorstroom* of the population, and the consequences thereof, mentioned earlier in this thesis). Again, the nature of the housing stock perhaps explains why this occurred, when viewed through Alba and Nee's theoretical framework of assimilation, which maintains that migrants with a low human capital tend to form stronger ties; something, again, that was observed in Pinkster's work on Transvaal also.²⁸⁰ It explains the phenomenon in the sense that the comparatively higher social capital of those who moved to Rustenburg-Oostbroek perhaps offset the importance of building social ties, both inter- and intra-ethnically. This also explains why bonding did not represent a strong theme in the interviews and why, for instance, in Burak's case, the importance of having a 'migrant network' decreased over time.

It also explains, partially, why the case of the Polish interviewees, and the spatial manifestations Poles have made in the neighbourhood, appeared to be exceptional. This may seem paradoxical, but the full explanation lies in its historical and legal context. While other, older migrant groups had effectively spilled over from Transvaal, the Poles, since 2007, have been entering Rustenburg-Oostbroek essentially as a new group. In this way, with established communities having already been in existence in Transvaal, Rustenburg-Oostbroek represented

²⁷⁹ Pinkster, 'Localised social networks', 2600-2602.

²⁸⁰ Alba and Nee, 'Rethinking assimilation theory'; Pinkster, 'Localised social networks'.

a more favourable spatial opportunity structure for forming a community. In turn, what appears to have emerged, as exemplified by Gosia and Wojciech, is a cumulative reciprocity between bonding and a spatial environment(s) that facilitates it. This underlines the limited use that Alba and Nee's framework can have when confronted with historical evidence. It may be the case that low human capital is more likely to lead to network-formulation, but the neighbourhood context in historical perspective shows that this is not always the case. Thus, through historical analysis at the neighbourhood level that we are able to apply nuanced causalities as to why people may or may not be inclined to bond or bridge.

What this illustrates is that space still matters, especially in a neighbourhood context, when it comes to social relations. Proximity was the basis for a number of meaningful relationships both within and across cultures. This was observed in Simon's experience of being part of the construction workers' network in the 1990s, and Engin's family's relationship with the neighbours on their square. Even for the Polish respondents, although the social outcomes were different, they were undeniably shaped and underpinned by the neighbourhood context. It is difficult to deny that Rustenburg-Oostbroek, however it was defined subjectively, shaped the way in which its non-Dutch residents perceived societal changes and how they responded, in social terms, to their neighbours from all nations.

Chapter 4: Conclusion

Neighbourhoods play an important yet often intangible role in shaping the mini-societies which they contain. What was perhaps striking in this study, was how little the role(s) of the neighbourhood in Rustenburg-Oostbroek changed over the past two-and-a-half decades or so, which may not surprise scholars such as Zwiers *et al.*²⁸¹ Simply put, as I have just mentioned, the neighbourhood was where wider social developments – specifically in relation to immigration to The Netherlands – were observed and interpreted. On reflection, the unexpected theoretical implication of this is perhaps that, as a result, the much-criticised nation-state-society paradigm permeated even this highly-localised context.²⁸² This ran through the Dutch residents’ perceptions that social cohesion had declined over the years in relation to immigration and that they had a duty to then pursue cohesion at the neighbourhood level. It ran through the non-Dutch residents’ perceptions in more subtle ways, such as Engin’s experience of tolerance at the neighbourhood level and his consequent attribution of this as a characteristic of The Netherlands, but also, more generally, in the way that the neighbourhood was valued, initially, on a practical basis because of its locational and infrastructural merits. This is why I made the argument that “the neighbourhood” was *inherently* important to the Dutch residents (and perhaps would have been, had it been any neighbourhood in The Netherlands) as ‘hosts’, meanwhile for the non-Dutch residents as ‘strangers’ (for want of a less sociologically-loaded term), the neighbourhood was *specifically* important (as Rustenburg-Oostbroek, or as the spatial area that they subjectively defined as being “the neighbourhood”).²⁸³ Of course, this conclusion is not based on interviews representative of the total population in the area, nor may it be borne independently of the methodological decision to devote a chapter to *autochthonen* perspectives, and another to *allochtonen* perspectives. However, the contrast in emphasis on these themes between the two groups was evident so as to be worthy of note, and worthy of bearing in mind as this thesis and the immigration history of this neighbourhood is pieced together in conclusion.

The references to going over the La Reyweg, living close to the Zuiderpark, shopping on the Dierenselaan, as well as several explicit comparisons with Transvaal, illustrate the way in which the physical neighbourhood played a part in the thinking of residents and policymakers alike in this period. Overall, then, there were three primary contextual factors

²⁸¹ Zwiers *et al.*, ‘The path-dependency of low-income neighbourhood trajectories’.

²⁸² Wimmer and Glick Schiller, ‘Methodological nationalism and beyond’.

²⁸³ I use the terms ‘host’ and ‘stranger’ as an acknowledgement of the literature introduced in the Theory section of this thesis specifically Alexander, ‘Local policies toward migrants’.

that, I argue, explain *how* the physical neighbourhood played its role in shaping intra- and inter-ethnic relations and *why* it occurred in these specific ways. Then, from the oral history interviews, there were three events on which the social outcomes of that role hinged, given the physical context remained essentially unchanged; these are three events that I deduce from the oral interviews to have shaped Rustenburg-Oostbroek into the neighbourhood that it is today. The three contextual factors were (1) the type of housing stock on offer, almost entirely owner-occupied or in the private rental market; (2) the low level of historical local-government involvement in the area, as outlined in the first chapter; and (3) what I have termed as the ‘neighbourhood of neighbourhoods’ (specifically, the neighbourhoods within the administrative district of Transvaal). Chronologically, the three events were (1) the successful campaign run by the BORO against the demolition of several homes in the late 1990s; (2) the relatively swift diversification of the neighbourhood’s population immediately after this between 1997 and 2005, at which point the Dutch population became a minority; and (3) the second layer of diversification in the form of CEE migrants arriving since 2007.

Therefore, when it came to the first of these events – the BORO campaign – a strong sense of cohesion emerged in the face of a shared threat.²⁸⁴ The campaign was, of course, based on the potential of disruption to the first and second of my three contextual factors. The cohesion that resulted was supplemented by an organisation, the BORO, gathering a great deal of local operational legitimacy; an ingredient that is key to such organisations’ success and longevity, as Vermeulen and his colleagues have found.²⁸⁵ However, this sense of cohesion emerging from participation in local activism was not shared by everybody. The Turkish population – the largest of the minorities in Rustenburg-Oostbroek at this time, but still only comprising around ten per cent of the population – was not involved in this action against the municipality. This was both, it seems, down to a language barrier, and because of perceived cultural differences with the Dutch population. Consequently, a form of segregation within a ‘domain’ I suggested to be added to van Ham and Tammaru’s framework – governance – emerged because of the cohesion that pre-dated many immigrants’ tenures in Rustenburg-Oostbroek, to refer back to Pooley.²⁸⁶ This, therefore, explained, on one level, the sense of a decline in social cohesion, perceived among the Dutch residents I interviewed, as the

²⁸⁴ Cissy van der Zijden, ‘Rustenburg-Oostbroek 1990 tot heden’, *Oog voor de wijk*. 13 December 2015, <http://www.oogvoordewijk.nl/95-jaar-rustenburg-oostbroek-2/rustenburg-oostbroek-1990-tot-heden/> (19 April 2017).

²⁸⁵ Vermeulen, *et al.*, ‘Welcome to the neighbourhood’; Vermeulen *et al.*, ‘The local embedding of community-based organizations’.

²⁸⁶ van Ham and Tammaru, ‘New perspectives on ethnic segregation’; Pooley, ‘The residential segregation of migrant communities’.

population diversified in the years immediately following this campaign. (On another level, evidence in support of the *nostalgia* identified in Hood and Joyce's work also emerged as a potential explanation for this perception.) The BORO became, and, based on these interviews, *is still* an organisation being steered and contributed to almost exclusively by Dutch residents, reflecting Vermeulen and his colleagues' findings that such organisations lose influence when populations diversify.²⁸⁷ This is not to say that non-Dutch residents do not participate in measures towards neighbourhood welfare; the case of the Başak Nur bakery feeding poorer residents illustrate this. Thus, it is important to consider neighbourhood-level governance in a way that transcends formal organisations. The dynamics related to this 'domain' suggest that it is also worthy of being incorporated into van Ham and Tammaru's framework.

Secondly, then, the neighbourhood changed, in terms of diversification, over a relatively short period of time after this campaign. Eventually, the Dutch population of Rustenburg-Oostbroek stood at below 50 per cent for the first time in 2005.²⁸⁸ Based on information gathered from interviews with a former policymaker, and a researcher for the municipality, this diversification occurred, as some in the municipality had anticipated at the time, in large part due to residents who had the capital to do so "spilling over" and moving from Transvaal to Rustenburg-Oostbroek. These people were moving as a result of significant restructuring efforts in that district in the 1990s related to the Dutch government's policy rationale at that time of advocating 'social mix'.²⁸⁹ This is the context in which the normativity with which social cohesion was treated among the Dutch residents I interviewed took root, the causality of which is suggested above. It was also a context where most of the migrants I interviewed, two of whom had themselves moved from Transvaal to Rustenburg-Oostbroek in this period, saw the locational and infrastructural convenience of the neighbourhood and its physical characteristics as of primary importance. Social relations with neighbours, it appeared, were of secondary or coincidental importance. When social relations did develop within the neighbourhood, however, they were for the most part not on the basis of bonding, but, as shown in both chapters two and three, based on the very proximity that the neighbourhood context provides. This can, I believe, be amply explained on the basis of existing literature. Firstly, because of the context of private housing, these migrants were in possession of greater degrees

²⁸⁷ cf. Vermeulen, *et al*, 'Welcome to the neighbourhood'; Vermeulen *et al*, 'The local embedding of community-based organizations'.

²⁸⁸ Gemeente Den Haag, '% Dutch – districts', *Den Haag in Cijfers*. 4 May 2017, https://denhaag.buurtmonitor.nl/Jive?sel_guid=9ee7f4db-1f83-419a-ac17-4f8a389b1b0d (15 May 2017).

²⁸⁹ Kleinegris *et al*, 'O, o Den Haag', 12-15; Kleinegris *et al*, 'Scheefheidsreductie als bijvangst van herstructurering'; Gwen van Eijk, *Unequal Networks*; Bolt and van Kempen, 'Neighbourhood based policies in the Netherlands'.

of human capital on average than those who remained in Transvaal, thus, when this development is viewed through Alba and Nee's new assimilation theory, there was less of a necessity to bond or form locally-based migrant networks.²⁹⁰ Secondly, related to this, such networks already existed within the neighbourhood of neighbourhoods, thanks to the settlement of various migrant communities in Transvaal since the 1960s, as Pinkster has shown; thus, moving to Rustenburg-Oostbroek entailed the expansion of these networks' spatial scope, rather than the creation of new ones.²⁹¹ By moving to the next neighbourhood, these people were hardly abandoning the social structures of their previous residential locations.

The third major social change to shape the neighbourhood has been the second layer of diversification brought about by the accession of CEE countries into the EU, perhaps, to use the theoretical vernacular, rendering the neighbourhood 'superdiverse'.²⁹² The most notable and most noticeable group of these people has been the Poles, who continue to arrive in relatively high numbers.²⁹³ It was in relation to this, again, that the neighbourhood context shaped inter-ethnic relations. Number plates and street encounters as well as the loss of jobs experienced personally and among compatriots led some within older migrant groups to feel a sense of resignation that times had changed, although, interestingly, this did not lead to antagonism. I argued that the comparative economic stability (partially evidenced by the types of housing on offer) when set against the context of the wider neighbourhood of neighbourhood was one explanation for this, following Alba and Nee's logic, as well as arguments that have been put forward by Manevska and Achterburg on ethnocentrism.²⁹⁴ When it came to native Dutch responses to the Polish presence in the neighbourhood, there was evidence of a gendered host-perspective experience which somewhat undermined the implied rigidity within Elias and Scotson's established-outsider model. Where the Poles firstly arrived as young, single male labourers, over time they came to represent a nostalgic portrayal of what The Netherlands was perceived to be like in years gone by. However, out of the participants in the study, it was the Poles who indicated a uniquely strong tendency towards bonding, and the existence of a Polish neighbourhood-level network. This furthers the ambivalence of existing Dutch scholarship surrounding Putnam's thesis summarised earlier. This was, I believe, precisely because of the

²⁹⁰ Alba and Nee, 'Rethinking assimilation theory'.

²⁹¹ Pinkster, 'Localised social networks'.

²⁹² Vertovec, 'Super-diversity and its implications'; Tasan-Kok c.s., Towards hyperdiversified European cities.

²⁹³ Gemeente Den Haag, 'Cube number of residents [by ethnicity as %, Rustenburg-Oostbroek breakdown] 2006-2016', *Den Haag in Cijfers*. 4 May 2017, https://denhaag.buurtmonitor.nl/Jive?sel_guid=7a187392-cb9d-4d83-976b-f6f56127def7 (15 May 2017).

²⁹⁴ Alba and Nee, 'Rethinking assimilation theory'; Manevska and Achterburg, 'Immigration and perceived ethnic threat'.

neighbourhood context that I have outlined here. Since migrant communities – a term used in the sense that Alba *et al* intend – already existed elsewhere in the neighbourhood of neighbourhoods, namely Transvaal, the spatial opportunity structure for formulating a Polish community was greater in Rustenburg-Oostbroek. This is precisely what appears to have occurred in this neighbourhood with Poles, where a cumulative reciprocity between bonding and a physical environment (shops, offices, cafes, etc.) that facilitates it has emerged. This is supplemented by the local government’s historically low involvement in the neighbourhood, which has facilitated such entrepreneurship.

Returning, then, to the statement with which I began this thesis, noting the soft consensus that exists among some scholars of The Netherlands that ‘the neighbourhood has lost its meaning when it comes to social relations’.²⁹⁵ This, in short, is a hyperbolic assertion.²⁹⁶ It may be true that, for the most part, relationships in Rustenburg-Oostbroek were increasingly characterised by superficiality as the neighbourhood became more diverse. However, simultaneously, not only were there concerted efforts, as illustrated in chapter two, to establish social relations within this neighbourhood, and instances where such relations blossomed, but the neighbourhood level provided the context in which meaningful relationships could develop practically. From the evidence of the oral histories, these relationships were based on agency, hospitality, and proximity. It is on this foundation that neighbourhoods as spatial entities can, in time, become communities. Indeed, while there is no doubt that Rustenburg-Oostbroek is currently experiencing problems, its history in many ways suggests that the municipality is taking the correct approach in its 2016-2019 strategy for developing social cohesion in the area. As Escamp alderman, Rabin Baldewsingh writes in its introduction, ‘the efforts of residents and entrepreneurs are central’.²⁹⁷ If that was true, though perhaps in different ways, in the different contexts of Pinkster’s Transvaal and Klein Kranenberg’s Schilderswijk, then it was and is certainly true of Rustenburg-Oostbroek, as well.

²⁹⁵ Pinkster, ‘Localised social networks’, 2590.

²⁹⁶ cf. van Kempen and Wissink, ‘Between places and flows’.

²⁹⁷ Gemeente Den Haag, Wijkprogramma 2016-2019, 5.

Appendix A: Table of interviewees

Name	Category	Gender
Bep	Aut./Exp.	F
Burak	All. (Turkish)	M
Cissy	Aut./Exp.	F
Cora	Aut.	F
Ed	Aut.	M
Engin	All. (Turkish)	M
Gosia	All. (Polish)	F
Jeannet	Exp.	F
Joeke	Aut./Exp.	F
Joyce	All. (Surinamese)	F
Marein	Aut.	F
Meryem	All. (Turkish)	F
Richard Kleinegris	Exp.	M
Simon	All. (British)	M
Wojciech	All. (Polish)	M

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