

Reading the Nieuwe Binnenweg

A section of a city, a street and its
social territory

Explore Lab 33

Architecture and the built environment
Fall semester 2021/2022

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**"The street is the river of life through
the city, you come to these places not to
escape, but partake of them"**

William H. Whyte
The Social Life of Small Urban Spaces

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Fascination & Starting point

The starting point for this project was my previous thesis in sociology about a specific Dutch social-mixing policy (the *Rotterdamwet*) and the role of the representation of (urban) neighbourhoods therein. In a fear of a “spiky city”, a term coined by Harding and Blokland (2014) to express high intra-urban inequalities and socio-economic residential segregation, the Netherlands has adopted a tradition in social-mixing policies. This “spikiness” in the Netherlands mostly means growing concentrations of residents of certain socioeconomic strata and the rise of criminality in these neighbourhoods. These policies represent a dominant discourse (ranging from social-democratic parties, to neo-liberal, to far-right voices) in the debate around intra-urban inequalities (Musterd, 2020). The in-situ interventions range from trying to attract middle-class households to so called ‘problem neighbourhoods’ (which could according to Bridge, Butler and Lees (2011) also be considered state-led gentrification), to the *Rotterdamwet*, a law which is actively banning specified groups of (marginalized) people from these same neighbourhoods, implicitly showing a preference for middle- and upper-class lifestyles.

In general, these policies are only applied to neighbourhoods that are, according to certain measurements, represented as ‘problematic’. This implicitly shows that these interventions don’t stem from a fear of concentration per se, but from a fear of specific concentrations. Areas and neighbourhoods where these specified groups are concentrated have become important sites for policy interventions. Hereby making it spatial issues as well, while a spatial perspective in the governance of these issues often lacks. This opens possibilities, after having critically examined the representation of (urban) neighbourhoods in policy documents, to offer a more socio-spatial perspective. I am interested in investigating how these spaces can be represented differently. By shifting from sociology back to architecture, I would like to explore where the social and the physical, spatial territory meet, clash, and interact, hereby trying to develop a different way of reading and interpreting the urban tissue.

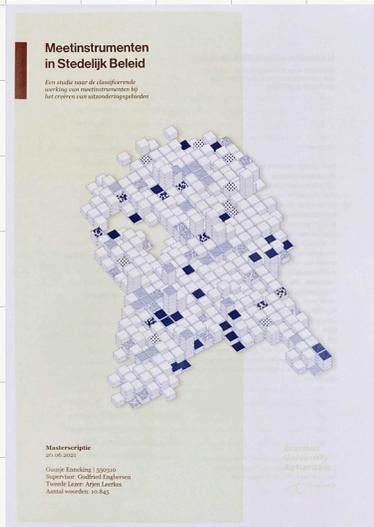


Image 1: The starting point, my sociology thesis

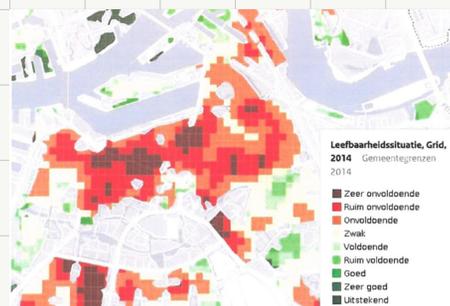


Image 2: An example of measurements used by the government

Problem Statement & Research Question

In the selection for areas to apply this law, “liveability” is an important concept. In the request by the municipalities to apply this law to certain areas, they must demonstrate that the liveability and quality of life is at stake in such a way that intervention is necessary. My previous thesis focused on this process of selecting areas for intervention (Figure 1, next page). Based on this I concluded that, because of increasing quantification, different measurement tools are used to demonstrate this. Municipalities bundle these results using statistical, visual, and semiotic methods to show that the “liveability” in the selected areas is ‘substandard’ and ‘out of balance’. This also made clear that this selection of neighbourhoods and the representation of “liveability” in those neighbourhoods is a political process. The concept of liveability, made measurable at certain scales and within certain boundaries, raises a lot of questions on how municipalities and policymakers ‘read’ a city and its urban life. Within this project I would like to focus on this process: the way neighbourhoods and cities are being understood, treated, read, and made legible, prior to being (re)acted on with aforementioned policies like the *Rotterdamwet*.

By focusing on quantifying and projecting “liveability” in confined areas, by confined categories, a lot of socio-spatial complexities are lost in the process. Complexities that go beyond the sum of people, houses and amenities that make up the “liveability” of a neighbourhood. Because it is also about the interaction between spatial, physical elements and social life. About how people assign meaning to space and about how space is experienced differently by different people. Besides, it also raises questions about the meaning and functioning of the border of the neighbourhood, who decides what aspects make neighbourhoods liveable and how to show the values of certain aspects of urban life that are not so easily quantifiable. This creates opportunities to come up with an alternative (more refined) reading of space, which could offer policymakers a different view on urban reality and the concept of liveability. Can, instead of projecting a certain definition of liveability on reality, another description of “liveability” be found in the distillation and abstraction of the particular, a specific socio-spatial reality? How can knowledge and value be found in multiplicity and specificity? And how can this be unfolded and translated spatially? This leads the following research question:

How can the reading of a specific place help in creating a broader understanding and redefinition of the concept (“liveability”)* and what [lessons] can be learned from this [for designers] of space and policies?

* I still struggle with the word “liveability” (among other policy terms) and the fact that it has to be made explicit. It is however a political reality we are faced with in the context of this law. That’s why I hopefully will understand it differently and redefine it along the way.

Problem Statement & Research Question

This question will be investigated by analysing a street in Rotterdam. By examining a specific space, its culture and its social life, an attempt will be made to abstract more general lessons about “liveability” (Figure 2, visualisation of research structure). I intend to research this by experiencing place through the eyes of different individuals and their social realities: the people who are in a way ‘experts’ of a location.

This research paper is structured using some key-words from the research question: first of all, **reading**. How is this reading done and what lens am I using? This forms my methodological approach. Afterwards I will turn to the **specific place**. What specific place did I go to for my research, who did I find there and what did I document there? In other words, my methods. This will lead me to “**liveability**”. What does “liveability” entail to different individuals and to me? Does it offer me the possibility to redefine this concept? In other words, the ‘results’ from my research. And lastly what kind of **lessons** can be learned from this **for designers** of space and policy? How can we transform these lessons in (speculative) architecture? Eventually leading to a kind of design brief. This will be followed by a conclusion, discussion and reflection.

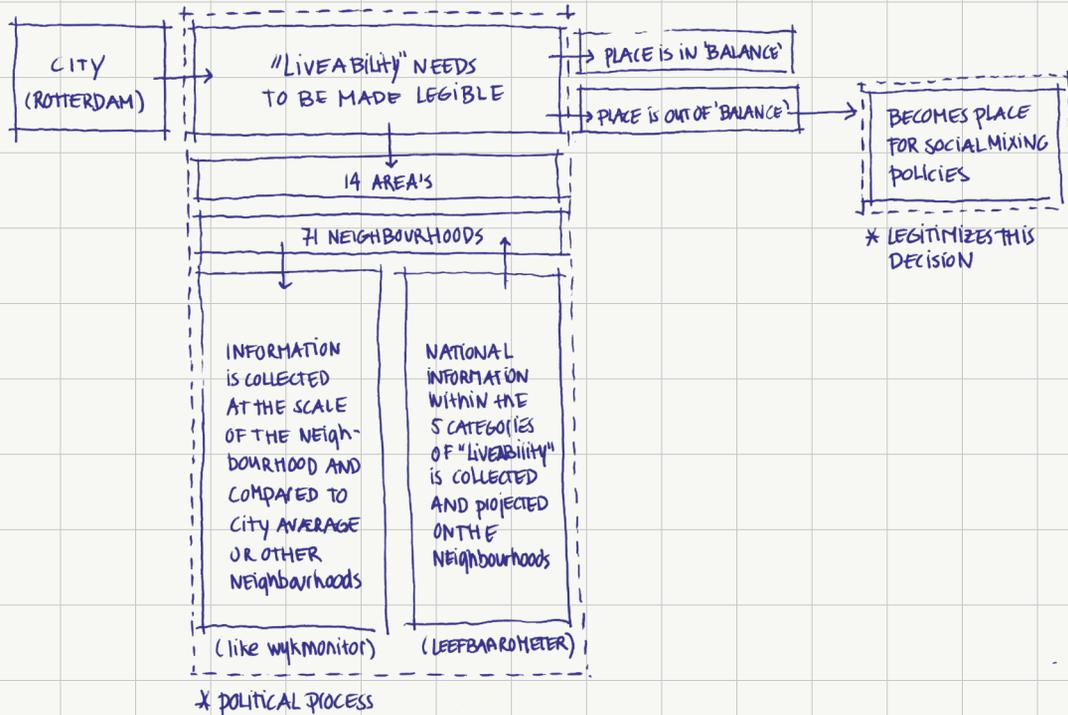


Figure 1: Selection of areas for intervention

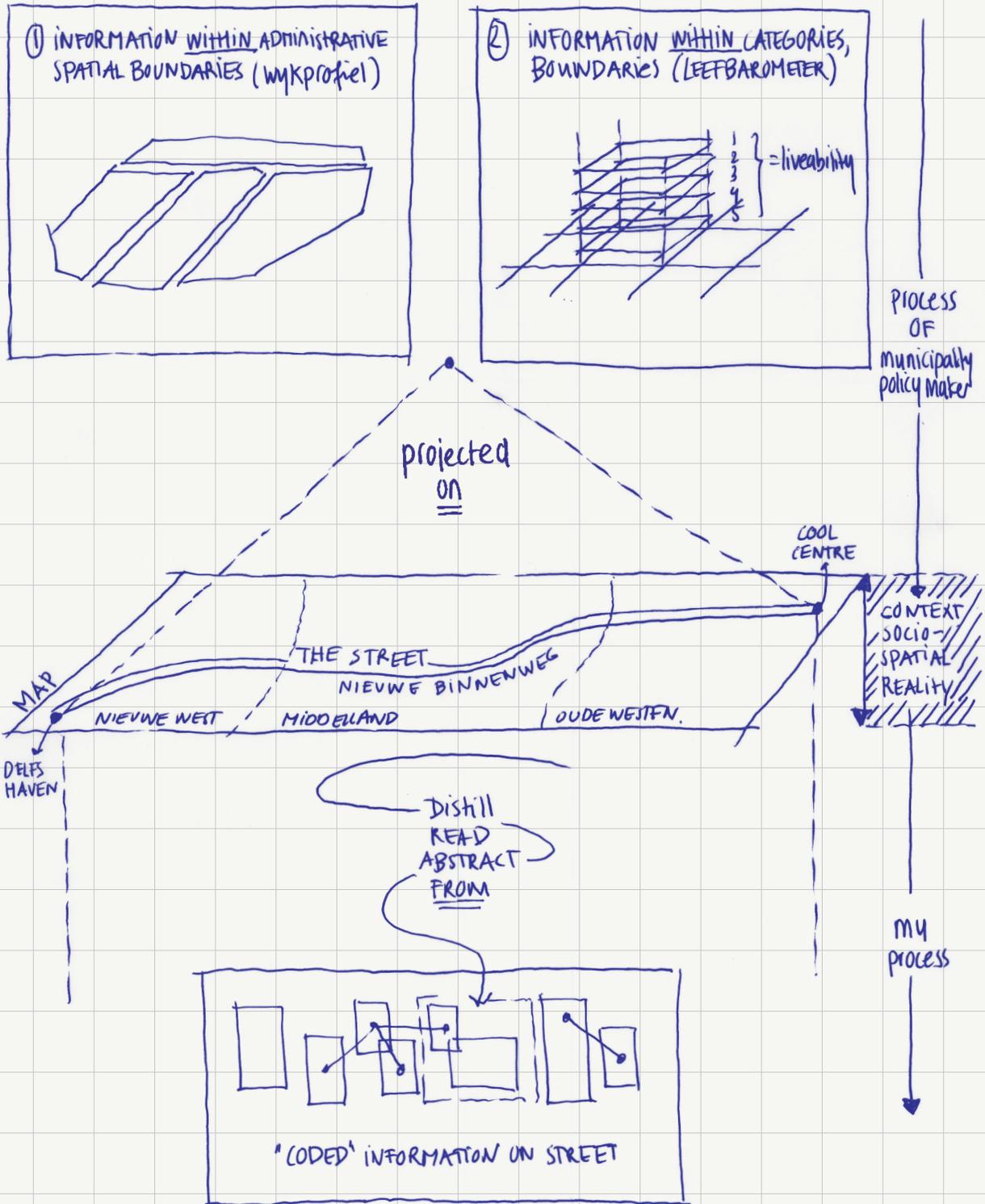


Figure 2: Visualisation of research structure

* How to show the value of aspects that are not easily quantifiable? Who decides what is considered "liveable" and what is problematic?



Image 3: Rotterdam Centre, a line by Lucebert



Image 4: Rotterdam South, an interpretation of Lucebert by Jack Segbars



Image 5: Demolition Tweebosbuurt

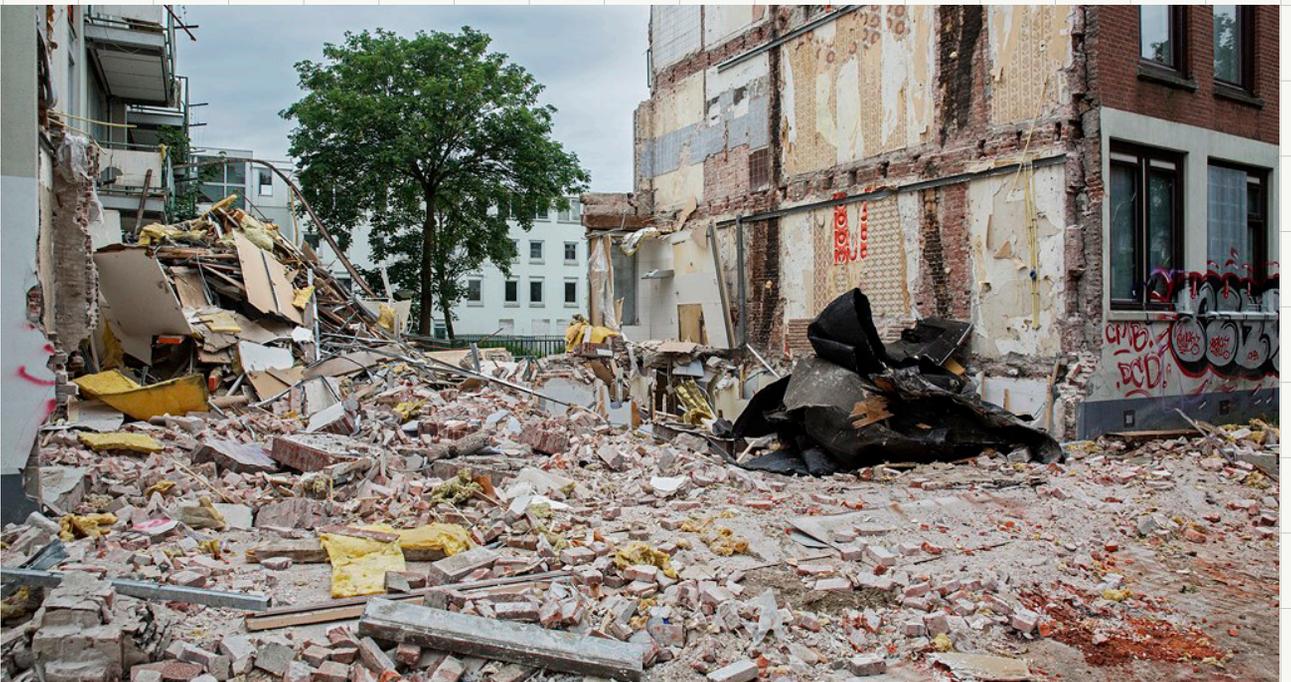


Image 6: Demolition Tweebosbuurt II

(Personal) Relevance

While in social-mixing policies the problem is made spatial - by focusing on different neighbourhoods as the space where these problems manifest itself -, a spatial perspective is lacking in the governance and managing of neighbourhoods that are considered "unliveable". At the same time, I personally also struggled with a lack of focus on social policies during my education in architecture. This while these policies are also very important in the shaping of spaces. This offers in my opinion possibilities for architects and spatial researchers to serve as a bridge and mediator between institutions and policies and the residents and users of a place. This project will be, by trying to move between the fields of policy, sociology, and architecture, my first step to try to discover how this could be possible. I see this project as the commencement of a process and (personal) struggle. It is not attempting to give solid answers but hopes to open and unlock a different representation of (public) space for policymakers and designers in trying to show the value of socio-spatial elements that cannot be easily quantified.

In previous studios I personally experienced maybe too much a 'problem and solution-finding' way of practicing architecture. That's why designing to me could feel quite imposing and normative, especially in contexts that are not familiar to you in any way. In this project I wanted to do design a for in a local context (Rotterdam is also the city where I live) and immerse myself in this context in order to try to (sort of) understand it first. I think it is interesting to see what we can learn from this process without problematizing certain aspects of it for a design brief.

*
As described by Madanipour (1996): "The search for a meaning of space is a necessary step to take as it is crucial that before we move into the normative realm of design we explore the realm of the descriptive and analytical, in other words to understand urban space before attempting to transform it"

"The highly prescriptive and practical nature of design requires a set of information to be assembled, often too quickly due to time [and financial] limits, and be employed in a solution-finding exercise"
(p.7)

A photograph of a building facade with a large, blue, 3D neon sign. The sign is mounted on a grey brick wall and features a quote in Dutch. The quote is arranged in three lines, slanted upwards from left to right. Below the main quote, the name 'J.A. Deelder' is written in a smaller, cursive-style blue neon font. The building has several small, rectangular windows with white frames. The sky is visible at the top, showing a large white cloud.

DE OMGEVING
VAN DE MENS
IS DE MEDEMENS

J.A. Deelder

Image 7: A Jules Deelder quote on a building

A socio-spatial approach

By applying social-mixing policies, the city is implicitly being seen as both the product and reproducer of inequalities (Harding & Blokland, 2014, p.128). This implies an understanding of space not as a mere container of social activities:

“Space not only contains actions but also constitutes a part of social relations and is intimately involved in our daily lives. It affects the way we feel about what we do. In turn, people alter space and construct new environments to better fit their needs. Hence, a dual relationship exists between people and space.” (Gottdiener & Hutchison, 2006, p.18)

Space is thus thought to constitute social relations and meanwhile produced through social relations, and constantly re-created. Lefebvre (1991) therefore argues that space is a social product, produced on three interconnected levels:

First, space is produced through **spatial practices** (*perceived space*) of production and reproduction. This refers to everyday social and spatial practices that take place in a specific space. “We need to ‘know’ how to navigate, be in and negotiate relations in space in a coherent and consistent way to make sense and function in the world” (Zieleniec, 2018).

Second, **representations of space** (*conceived space*) are produced by government surveyors and planners, by architects and scientists, reflecting their power positions, and creating the rationalized city of maps and plans. They “identify what is lived and what is perceived with what is conceived” (Lefebvre, 1991, p.38). This refers among other things, to the way the “liveability” of a specific space is represented now in the *Rotterdamwet* by politicians, policymakers, and scientists.

Third, **representational space** (*lived space*) includes space “as directly lived through its associated images and symbols, and hence the space of ‘inhabitants’ and ‘users’. This is the dominated - and hence passively experienced - space which the imagination seeks to change and appropriate. It overlays physical space, making symbolic use of its objects.” (Lefebvre, 1991, p.39) It refers to “space as produced through experiences, practices of the everyday, and imagined” (Harding & Blokand, 2014, p.128). In this space symbolic value and meaning is given to a place.

In this project I aim at focusing more on space as it is perceived and lived by its users and inhabitants in order to contribute to, and expand and inform the way the (“liveability” of) space is conceived right now.

A socio-spatial interpretation

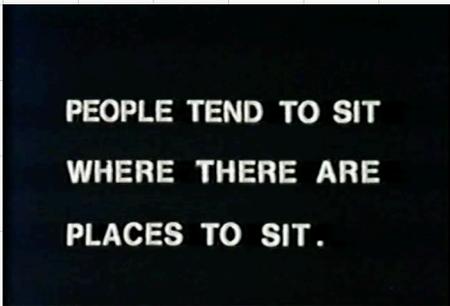


Image 8: Still from William H. Whyte's documentary



Image 9: Still from William H. Whyte's documentary

Lyn Lofland (1998), among others, represents in her work on the public realm this socio-spatial approach. She builds on the work of four social scientists, Gregory Stone, Jane Jacobs, Erving Goffman, and William H. Whyte (image 8,9). They were crucial in making her see the public realm as a social territory and to see it as one worthy of detailed exploration. Which she attempts to do in her book.

Her interest is specifically in exploring the socio-spatial aspects of the public realm, because according to her this realm is unique to urban life. Her starting definition of the public realm is:

“those areas of urban settlements in which individuals in co-presence tend to be personally unknown or only categorically known to one another. [...] The public realm is a form of social space distinct from the private realm and its full-blown existence is what makes the city different from other settlement types. The public realm [as her subtitle indicates], is the city's quintessential social territory. [...] it's the world of strangers and the street.” (Lofland, 1998, p.09)

According to Lofland (1998) these realms are not geographically or physically rooted pieces of space. They are social, not physical territories. Whether any actual physical space contains a realm, and if so what type, is always a matter to be discovered empirically. The realm type (private, parochial, or public) is not defined by the physical space in which it is located but by the relational form that dominates within it.

In her book Lofland (1998) explores the pleasures of the public realm:

“Just as relational forms that are actually native to other realms can be found within the public realm, so can forms of pleasure. [...] We shall concentrate on forms for which the public realm seems to provide an especially favourable environment.” (p.77)

She describes five aesthetic pleasures and four interactional pleasures, and some of the connections between them.

Aesthetic pleasure

In the following specification of sources of aesthetic pleasure, Lofland (1998) is attempting to follow the lead set by people like Jacobs and Whyte. She aims to define some experiences of enjoyment occasioned by certain (mostly) visual qualities of the built environment. She distinguishes five types of aesthetic pleasures.

The first pleasure is called “perceptual innuendo”. She describes this as “the pleasure that arises from glimpsing a small piece of the built environment, a glimpse that suggests that an interesting, exotic, weird, enticing, possibly enchanting social world exists just outside one's range of vision.” (Ibid. p.80) This pleasure is found in peeking, the balance between concealing and showing, “the alluring partial views

I like the word “pleasures”, because many of my observations in the street I would describe as pleasures, something that you enjoy, makes you think, sparks your imagination, or makes you laugh.

The word represents a certain humbleness, relaxedness and informality, which fits my view of the role of designers of space.

Or as said by Lofland:

“There is nothing outre, nothing grand, nothing monumental about them; they are the products of ordinary people going about their ordinary lives in ordinary settings.

Despite their ordinariness, however, my notes record that some persons respond to such scenes with expressions reflecting pleasurable excitement. [...] The point here is that pleasure is not the exclusive province of grandeur: it resides as well in humble spaces. It also resides in the commonplaces of everyday interaction.”

(p.87)

of a place that one encounters” (Seamon, 2018). One of Lofland’s examples is narrow streets and alleyways leading away from major thoroughfares (image 10,11); one may be intrigued visually and decide to explore the possibilities that the sightlines of these pathways offer. The second pleasure is “**Unexpectedness**”. Some research suggests that people prefer urban places that are familiar (Lofland, 1998). Without in any way challenging the validity of such findings, Lofland wants to “suggest that, for some individuals at least, the opposite of the quality of familiarity - unexpectedness - also seems to appeal.” (Ibid. p. 81) A third pleasure can be found in the “**whimsy**”. Lofland (1998) refers with this to environmental features that involve “frivolity, eccentricity, kookiness, nuttiness, capriciousness, oddness”. “Peculiar objects that one can’t help but notice it and be surprised” (Seamon, 2018). A fourth pleasure can be found in “**Historical layering* and physical juxtaposition**”. Lofland (1998) claims that

“a source of aesthetic pleasure appears to be created when urban areas develop slowly and incrementally and over relatively long periods of time. When that happens, we see a kind of “jumbling” in the environment [...] Historical periods may become “layered”. This same kind of “jumbling” can also be found when physical objects of one category are juxtaposed with physical objects of another category. For instance “those composing the natural environment” juxtaposing “those composing the built environment” (Ibid. P.84-85).

A final source of aesthetic pleasure appears to be found in “**crowding, stimulus diversity, spectacle**”:

“Some parts of the built environment seem to evoke pleasure because in their crowding together of people and things and elements and in the diversity of stimuli and the spectacle that are created by this crowding, there is to be found – at least by some unknown number of persons – a kind of visual excitement, a quality of electric invigoration.” (Ibid. p.86-87) (image 12, 13)

Interactional pleasure

Some of the pleasures of the public realm, as we have just seen, are aesthetic. They derive from a primarily visual apprehension of the built environment, but also involves the presence of other people. These other people, the ones populating a space, also provide another kind of pleasure: that which derives from human interaction. Lofland (1998) distinguishes 4 forms of interactional pleasures.

First, “**public solitude**” and the pleasure that resides in the comfort of “being surrounded by the hum of conversation”. The pleasure of being alone in the public realm may also come from “a sense of oneness with other inhabitants of a setting” (Ibid. p.88-89). Another reason for finding pleasure in public solitude is that “when one is alone, one can concentrate all one’s attention on the second source of pleasure,

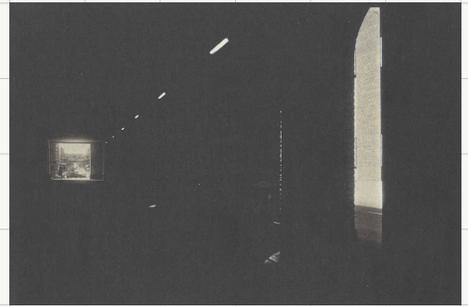


Image 10: Perceptual Innuendo by Lofland

*

And thus (in my interpretation) rejecting the idea of the urban masterplan or a “tabula rasa”



Image 11: Perceptual Innuendo by Lofland

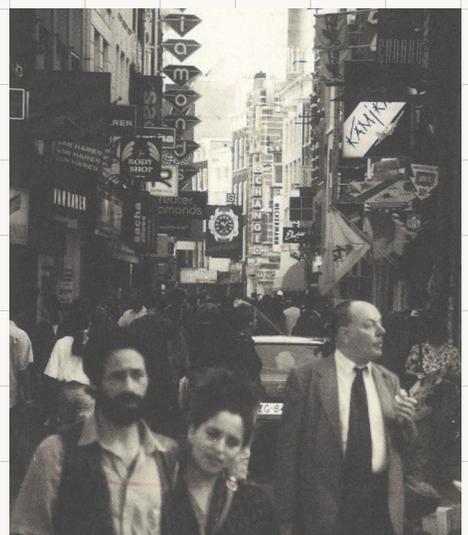


Image 12: Crowding of people by Lofland



Image 13: Crowding of elements by Lofland

“**people watching [or listening]**” (Ibid. p.90-91). What we specifically like about this activity, whether it is very visible or almost voyeuristic, is the fact that it fuels our imagination: “we overhear or oversee just enough to catch a glimpse of enticing real-life dramas; the filling out of the drama is a work of the imagination”. The third interactional pleasure is described as “**public sociability**”. This pleasure, unlike public solitude (and sometimes people-watching) by definition “involves spoken interaction between and among persons in dyads, triads and even larger groupings” (Ibid. p. 92-93). The fourth and last pleasure can be found in “**playfulness, frivolity, fantasy**”:

“exactly because it is full of diverse people doing diverse things, the public realm can and does offer the pleasure of playing when one “ought” to be working, of being frivolous when when one “ought” to be serious, of engaging in fantasy and daydreams when the workaday world beckons.” (Ibid. p. 93-94)

Lofland, while acknowledging that not all pleasures can be designed for, notices a lack of pleasures in many environments. She even thinks that many environments (“whatever the actual intention of their creators”) have been built to “discourage pleasures” and wonders why:

“The question, then, is why, granted that some pleasures may be beyond the direct control of the people who create the built environment, why do so many pieces of that environment exclude even those aesthetic pleasures that can be designed for? Why are so many pieces of public space empty of the people or empty of the diversity of people that give rise to interactional pleasures? And even if developers cannot ensure that we will, for example, encounter the unexpected, why do so many places seem to be designed to ensure that the unexpected cannot intrude even unexpectedly?” (Ibid. p.97)

The city as an (disorderly) assemblage

In making a general definition of “liveability” legible, and the importance of intra-urban comparison for this (that fact that in describing the liveability in different areas of the city, neighbourhoods and streets are constantly being compared to each other or a city average), rises the idea that the city should be seen as a well-functioning whole that should move in a certain direction. It ignores to a large extent the heterogeneous nature of a city (Munthe-Kaas, 2017). From an urban assemblage perspective however, it is claimed that the idea of the city as a single actor is politically loaded, as it suggests a harmony of interests within the city; “what’s good for one ... is good for all” (Marcuse, 2006, in Fariás 2010 p.10). From an assemblage perspective the city is instead being read...

“... as a plurality of sites between which the connections are changing and contingent, assembling the city in different ways. The relation between the elements of which the assemblage is made does not necessarily alter the elements themselves. It is the interactions between human and non-human actors that form the assemblage, and these interactions cannot be reduced to the individual properties of the parts.” (Munthe-Kaas, 2017)

According to DeLanda, Deleuze calls these interactions “relationships of exteriority”: relationships that can be separated out (European Graduate School, 2012). The parts interact with one another, but they retain their own identity in those interactions, so they can be detached from one assemblage and plugged into another assemblage. This constitutes one condition for an assemblage. According to DeLanda, another condition for an assemblage is that fact that it is constituted by material and expressive components (European Graduate School, 2012). He claims that we should make a distinction between the role that the different parts of an assemblage play: some components play a material role, and some components play an expressive role (but individual components may both have material and expressive roles). To explain this, DeLanda gives the example of a community in a town.*The materiality of the community constitutes for instance of the infrastructure of the city, the composition of the town (where is the church that reaffirms community every Sunday, or the pub that maintains community bonds), the proximity of neighbours to one another, in addition of course to the embodied agents (the people) that form the community. The expressivity of a community is multiple (language, actions, behaviour, attitudes), but can also be found in the material. Certain symbols or identities can for instance be expressed in the architecture of the community. According to DeLanda, from his reading from Deleuze, assemblages can be more territorialized (bound to a (physical) territory, having sharper borders) and more deterritorialized (less bound to a territory, having borders that are more fuzzy) (European Graduate School, 2012).

*
This approach offers an interesting view on how the socio-spatial can become material, physical.

Urban assemblages thus focus “on the concrete and situated practices of socio-material ordering in urban space” (Munthe-Kaas, 2017). By focusing on the spaces of territorialized assemblages, it can be interesting to see how communities as assemblages can overlap in a territory, how different assemblages make use of the same material components and how maybe sometimes a certain disorder and friction can be found in this. By focusing on analysing the specific and the multiple, perhaps different “assemblages” and the material and expressive components that ‘bind’ them can be identified.



Image 14: Archive image of a kiosk on the Nieuwe Binnenweg



Image 15: Archive image of meat machine on the Nieuwe Binnenweg

A specific place

What specific place? *

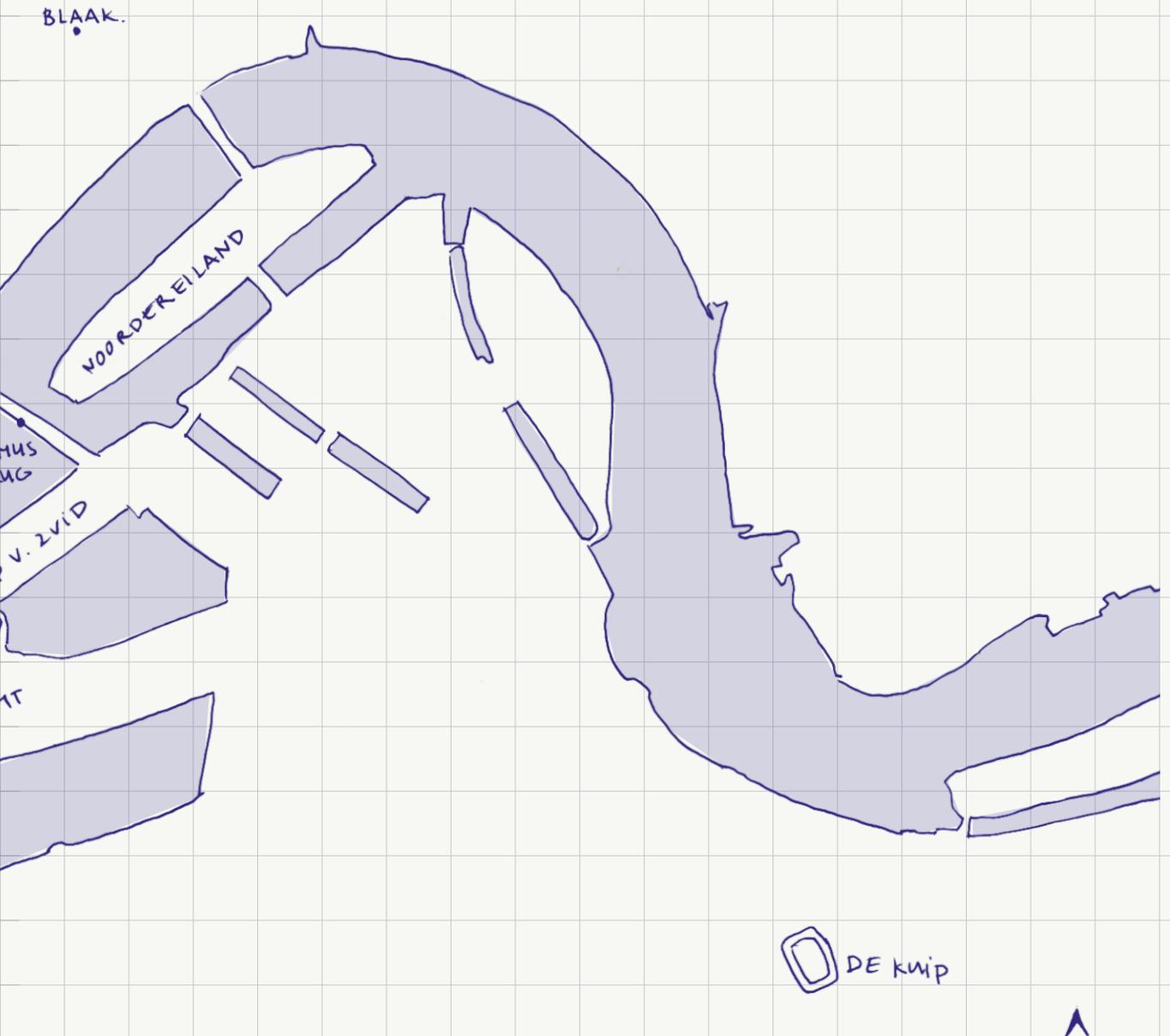


Figure 3: Nieuwe Binnenweg in the larger context of Rotterdam

A specific place

*

This project will be carried out in the context of Rotterdam. It is the place where the Rotterdamwet was 'born' and where there is a big tradition in quantifying aspects like liveability. Rotterdam was one of the cases I studied in my previous thesis, which makes it an interesting case to reflect on again.



A specific place

What specific place?

The aim of this research is to focus on and analyse one case, a specific socio-spatial reality, to abstract lessons about “liveability”. As a specific socio-spatial reality I chose the unit of the street, to test, using the example of Rotterdam, “how focusing on a single street could result in valuable broad insight into the neighbourhood, the city, and beyond” (Urbiquity, 2019). As described by Urbiquity, following a workshop they did on the topic of “Reading the Street”:

“On the street, issues of authenticity and belonging show themselves to be more than simplistic dualities. Urban spaces are defined by multiple overlapping narratives and spectrum of class, nationality, and intent. Through conscious study they reveal themselves gradually. [...] Much more than a summation of its material qualities, the street contains and provides a framework for understanding the way particular places relate to larger political, economic, and social shifts.” (Ibid. p.133)

Besides, the street is not an (administrative) area or a neighbourhood and, in that sense, serves as an urban section and ‘breaks’ with the way the city is read now in the context of “liveability”.

Within the context of Rotterdam, the Nieuwe Binnenweg is chosen as the specific location. The street crosses different administrative boundaries and thus allows for the questioning of these boundaries. At the same time the ‘influence’ of the different neighbourhoods it crosses can also be experienced in the street. In addition, the street can spatially be perceived as a whole, one space bounded by its two ends and the façades that frame it. But the pronounced curve in the street and the quite distinct streets (the Heemraadsingel, ‘s Gravendijkwal and Mathenesserlaan) that cross the street in a way also break the street in segments and create points of reference. This is reinforced by changing street profiles and building typologies. Moreover, the street feels socially quite coherent. All parts of the street seem socially and culturally diverse in terms of inhabitants, types of housing and range of shops. Besides that, there is also quite strong network of social initiatives present in and around the street (community centres etc.). At the same time a certain social and cultural ‘gradient’* can also be experienced. These social and spatial ‘tensions’ (as studied in the annotative mappings of images 16-23) make interesting factors in questioning the confined and categorized way of assessing “liveability”.

In addition, by living close to the Nieuwe Binnenweg, the context is already quite familiar to me. I have already experienced the street multiple (different) times, so some basic knowledge and understanding of the street is already there. This allows me to fully immerse myself in the context. At the same time this is of course also something to be cautious of when trying to establish an open and exploratory view and reading of the place.

*
“The street as a conductive urban element; a line passing through the various contexts of the city. Streets are the arteries through which goods and people can pass, but they are also the field for social life. As a result streets enable mobility, but are in motion themselves - shifting in desirability, identity and function.”
(Urbiquity, 2019, p. 8)

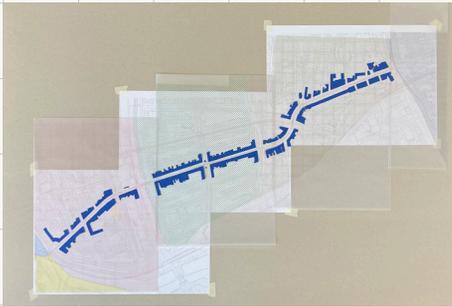


Image 16

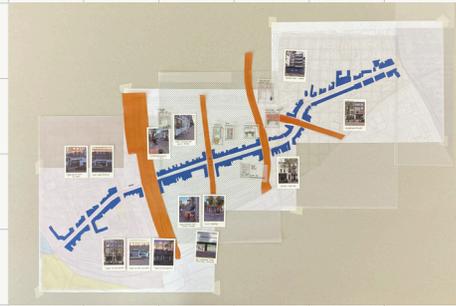


Image 20

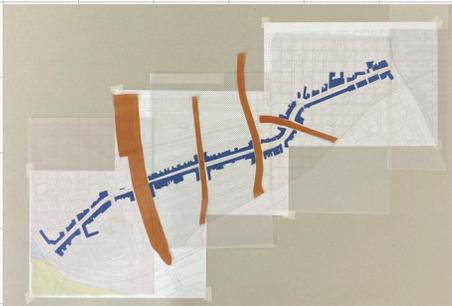


Image 17

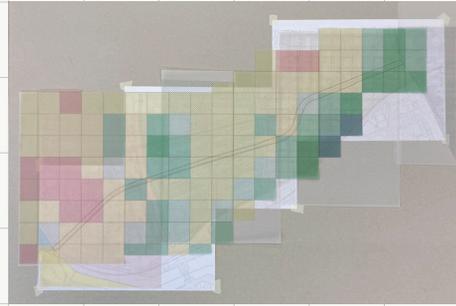


Image 21

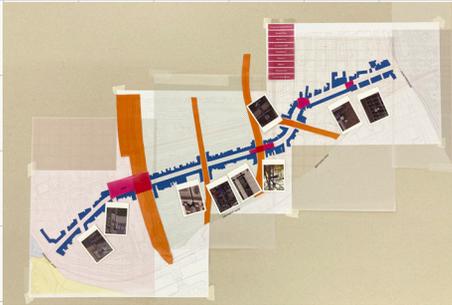


Image 18

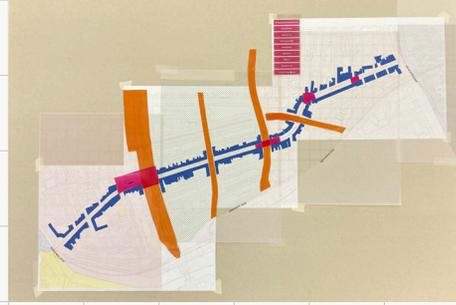


Image 22



Image 19

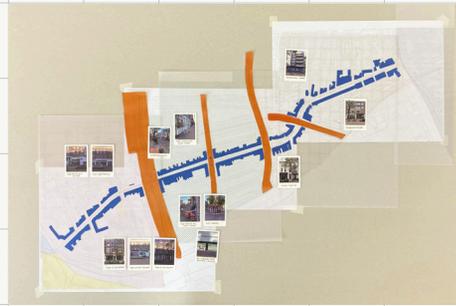


Image 23

A specific place

What specific place?

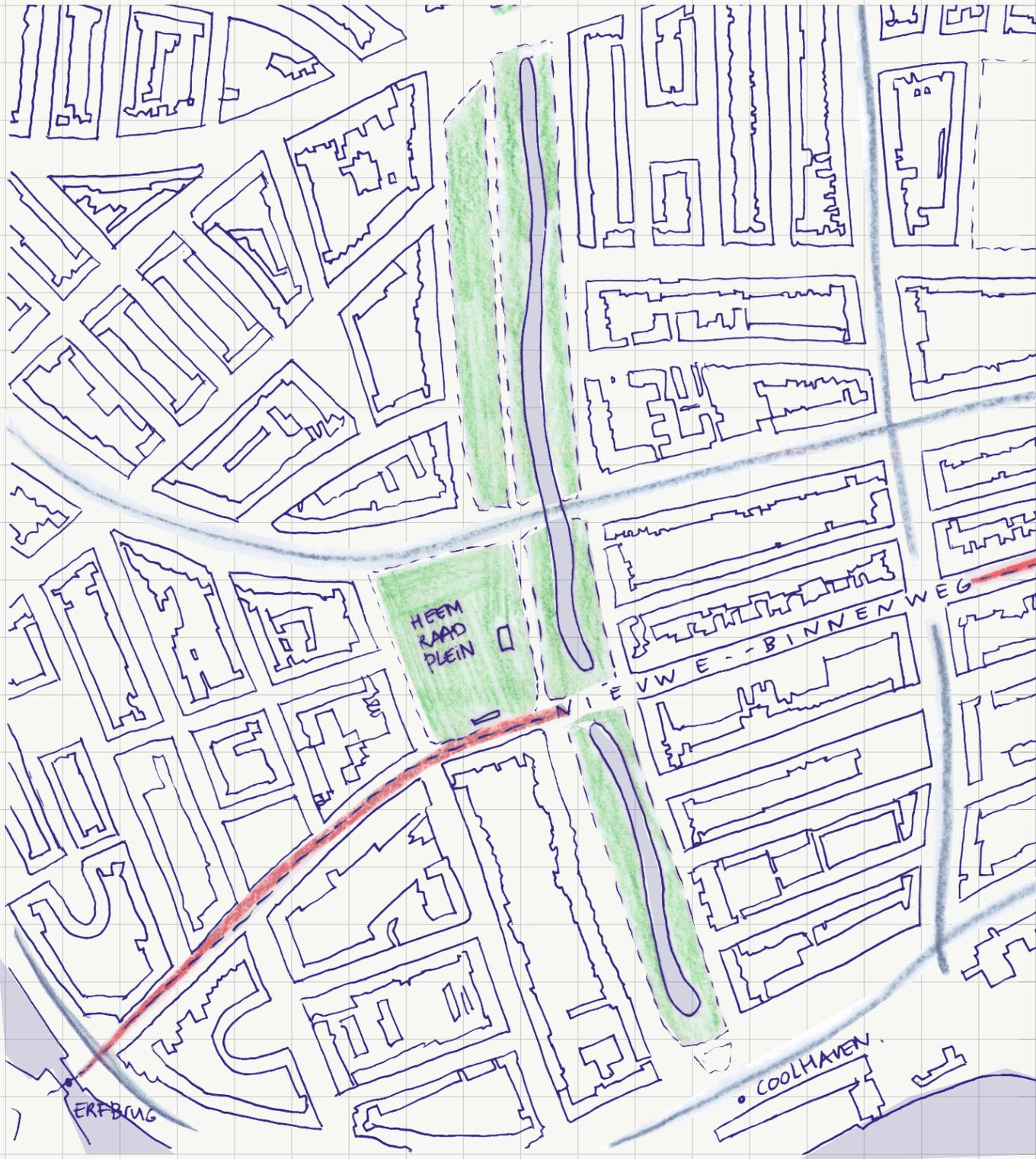
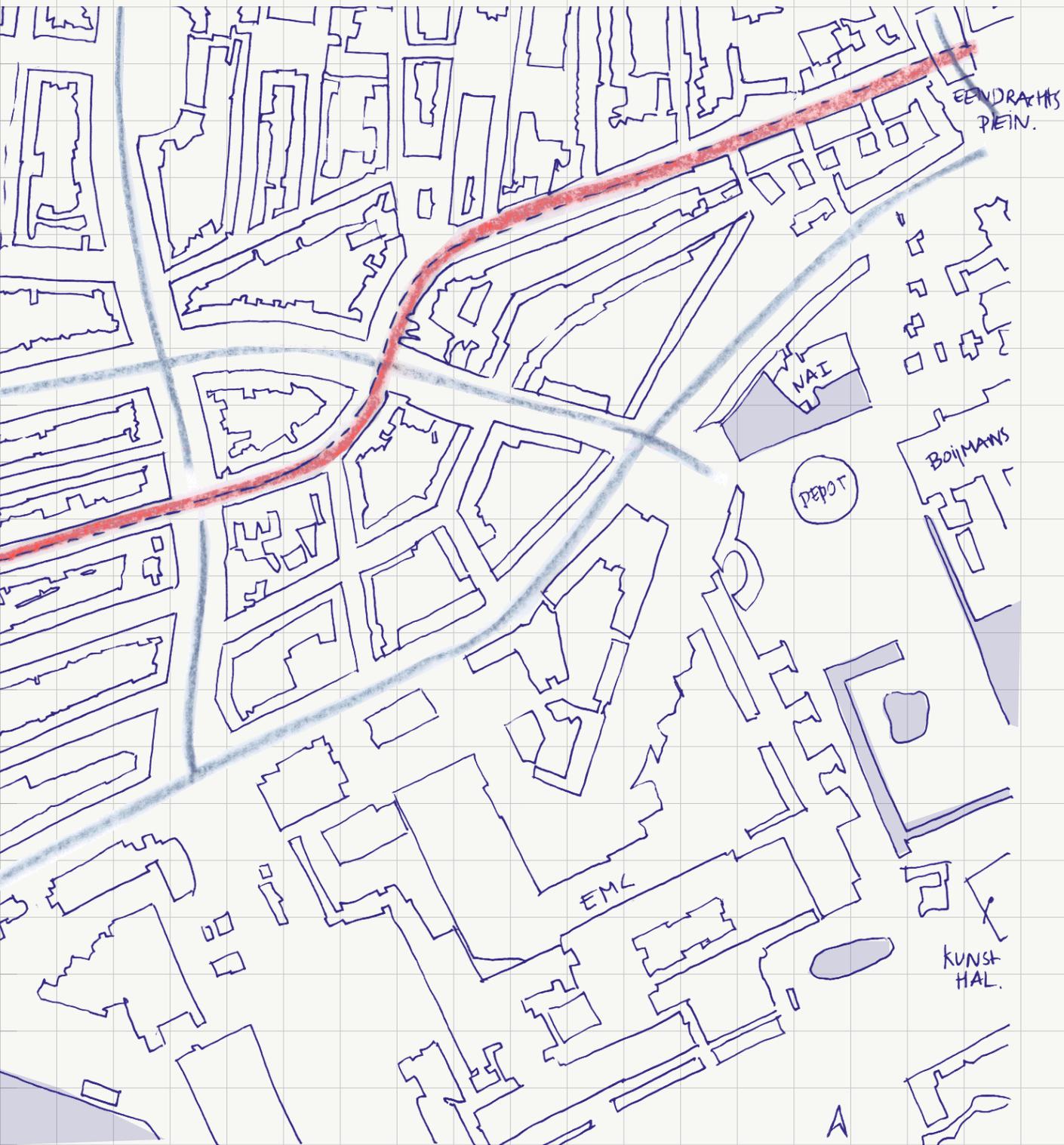


Figure 4: Nieuwe Binnenweg at neighbourhood scale



A specific place



Images 24-39: Scenes of a street scape, stills from a clip "east to west, west to east"



What did I do there?*

*

My methods of inquiry

For the research it is important, in following a socio-spatial approach, to focus on the way space is lived and perceived. To find new meanings and qualities to the concept of “liveability”, I want to document (everyday) social-spatial practices and the user perspective, the relation between space and its users. Following this, and the ambition of finding value in multiplicity and specificity, I chose to experience the street through different perspectives, different people. To do this I decided to employ the method of ‘walking and talking’. According to Pierce and Lawhon (2015) walking interviews “that interact with a neighbourhood context are used as a geographical-experiential prompt to provoke place-specific responses. [...] It will help us understand dimensions of participants’ spatial experience that might otherwise be difficult to elicit”. Besides, by repetitively walking the street up and down, it helps the researcher in getting to know the research subject and allows you to develop “local literacy” (Ibid. p.657). This is enhanced by repeatedly walking the street up and down by myself to do some more observations in context, as a very “natural way to gather data”. In this section I will elaborate further on the processes of selection, execution, and documentation of the walking interviews.

For the walking interviews I selected 10 people living (or used to be living) and/or working on the Nieuwe Binnenweg. This selection was carried out quite randomly. I walked the street a couple of times, entering many shops and bars to find participants that are working in the street. The people living in the street were a bit more difficult to reach. Some I addressed while they were entering their house, some I met through other people or through a neighbourhood discussion group I attended (*Dag van de Dialoog, Leeszaal West*, 30-10-2021). The interviews were carried out in context, during a walk (almost always) fully up and down the street (almost 4 km in total). The starting point for the walk was up to the participant to choose. This was often in their house or at the place they work. The length of the walking interviews varied from 30 minutes to 1,5 hours each.

The interviews were carried out in a semi-structured, exploratory way. Some questions were prepared, but there was always room for emergent topics or specific stories related to the street and our surroundings. I instructed people beforehand. I told them I was specifically interested in their habits, memories, stories, experiences, feelings, meaning and associations of/in the street, and (if possible) they can link it to things they see in the street, ranging from:

- Other people and events: other people passing by or staying in the street, encounters, events in the street etc.
- Traces of use: ranging from bikes, to garbage, to graffiti, to posters etc.
- Materials and objects: buildings, facades, store signings, benches, security camera's etc.
- Space and the street: the width of the street or sidewalk, corners, crossings with different streets, porches, parks

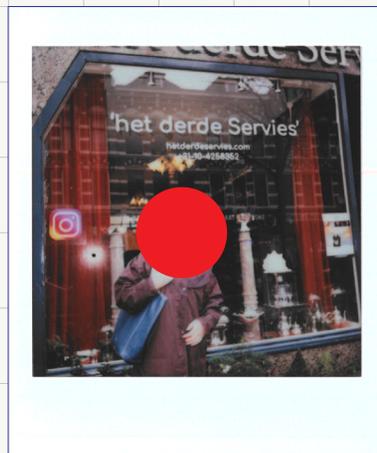
Simple probing questions, like “why do you think that?” turned out to be quite important in ‘helping’ people formulate certain feelings, experiences, and perceptions. I also stressed that people could ask me things. This turned out to make people feel quite relaxed and open. The same applies to the route. This was set beforehand, but leaving room for some deviation if the situation needed it.

All conversations (but one) were recorded and transcribed. The transcripts were analysed inductively to identify the moments people related spatial elements to certain (social) activities, meanings, memories etc. Based on each walk and accompanying transcript, a ‘map’ was created per person documenting the route, comments, observations, stories, and anchor points in the street. These drawings combined with the transcripts form the different perspectives that should inform the design(lessons) and can serve as a ‘test’ for the design.

Besides the walking interviews, these findings are supplemented with more interviews carried out by Neele Schlette. Neele is an Art Academy student also graduating on the different realities of the Nieuwe Binnenweg. I got to know about her project through one of my respondents and we decided to share the transcripts of our conversations and other findings. Neele's interviews were carried out with residents, often taking place in the houses of the participants. They focus more on the topic of feeling at home and domesticity and how this relates to the street.

A specific place

Who did I find there? *



A specific place

*
The ten perspectives
that informed this
project.....



A specific place

Documentation

The transcripts of the walking interviews can be found in the appendix of this booklet. These transcripts include some notes and marks.

This spread shows an overlay of all maps that were created after the walking interviews. The individual maps can be found in the separate leporello's accompanying this research paper.

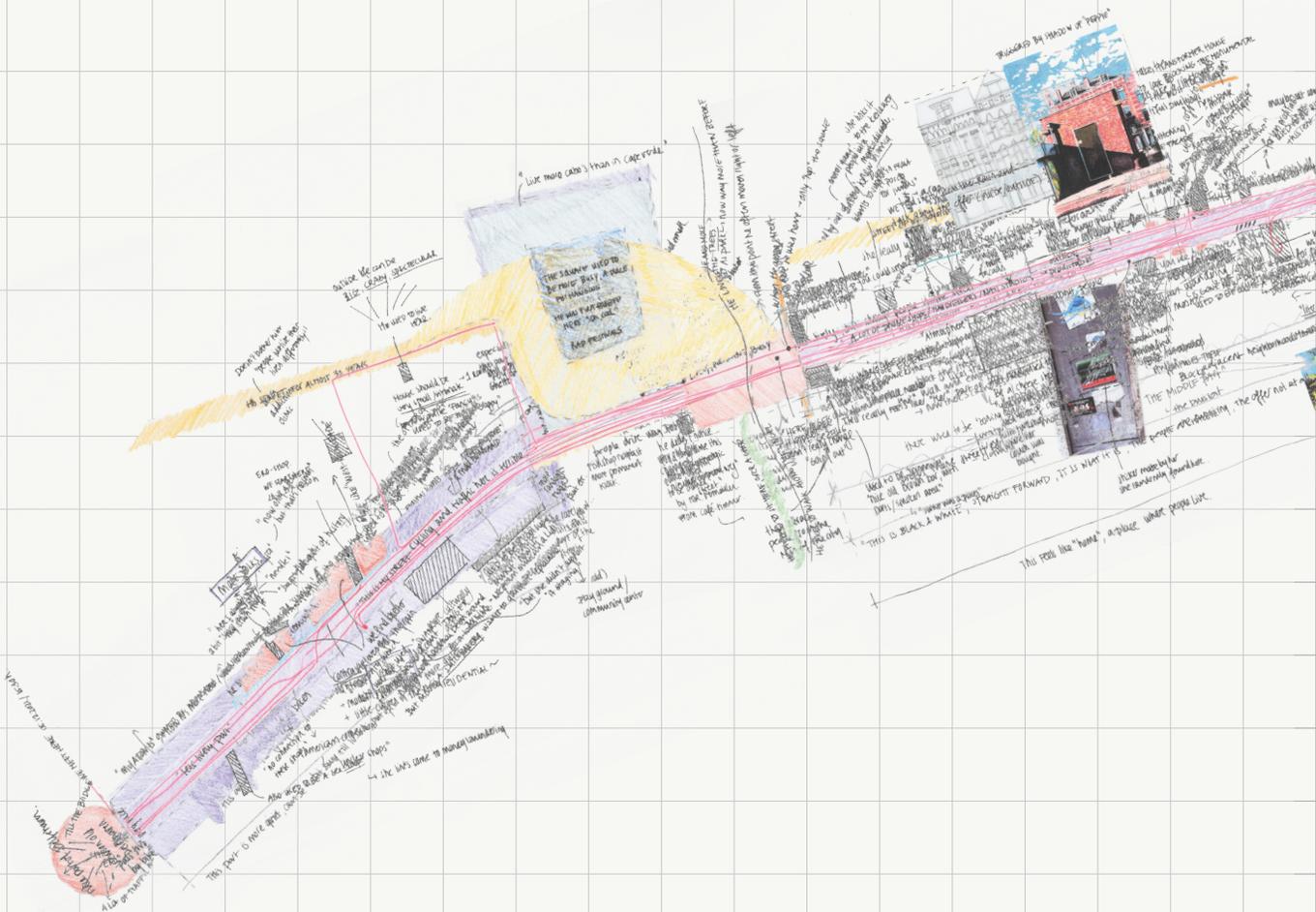




Image 40: Archive image of a busy shopwindow in the Nieuwe Binnenweg



Image 47. Archival photograph of a house in the Nieuwe Binnenweg

("Liveability")*

Elements of encounter

The walks, conversations, transcripts, and my own observations, notes and findings offered me a very rich, thorough (and sometimes overwhelming) amount of data on this almost 2 kilometres long "*complex little street*" as described by one participant. To be able to abstract and filter all this information, the aesthetic and interactional pleasures by Lofland (1998), turned out to be quite helpful as a starting point. First, because it is 'simply' about "pleasures" and experiencing feelings of joy or excitement about urban scenes. But also because these "pleasures" are (in the best sense of the word) quite **ordinary and everyday**. They are about the everyday uses, interactions and encounters in the street that are very often small, subtle, and modest. This kind of sensitivity is also something I am looking for as a spatial researcher.

By not just observing, but also talking and walking with ten individuals, not only stories and anecdotes about life in the street came to the fore, but also anecdotes about life behind the façades. The walks and conversations against the backdrop of the Nieuwe Binnenweg gave me an occasional look "backstage". This created moments for me where the decor, the rectilinearity of the façades that separates the street from the worlds behind it, was briefly interrupted: an underlying world that was previously unknown and that becomes pre-eminently more transparent by speaking to the figures behind those façades. You could say they gave the street more depth, more layering and me as a spatial researcher more sensitivity to that depth and layering, where in these layers these "pleasures" can be found and what they entail.

This was especially apparent because the focus of the conversations was on the street, how the street and its urban life is also related to from behind and through those façades and how it is valued. Sometimes with "pleasure" and sometimes specifically not. Essential in this are the elements, places, and moments where people have memories, recognition and tell anecdotes. The elements where a moment of encounter arises: seeing each other or specifically hiding from each other, hearing each other, greeting each other, pausing, or slowing down in the buzz of street life. Elements for diversity, unpredictability, curiosity, liveliness and the 'clutter' of people and object. Elements that offer space for the buzz of street life in all its complexity and layering.

*

Concluding that the word "pleasures" might be more suitable in the context of my research project.

This chapter will continue as "pleasures".

To describe and abstract my findings, I chose to describe **five elements of encounter** that serve as samples to express my experiences in the street. These elements combine to form the social, spatial, and material realms, also linking it back to the material and expressive components, as learnt from assemblage theory. Five material and expressive elements that, like Lofland’s description, in all their ordinariness offer space for interactional and aesthetic pleasures and a combination thereof:

- The Window
- The Door(step)
- The Portico
- The Corner
- The Café

These elements offer (social) affordances and, like described by William H. Whyte, offer opportunities for “secondary uses”.^{*} Furthermore, they also serve as great samples to describe changes and transitions in the street. In the coming section I will try to anecdotally describe these elements in five little essays and how they foster encounter in the widest sense of the word, using stories and quotes by participants as well as my personal observations in and around the street.

*
William H. Whyte gives in his documentary “the social life of small urban spaces” an example of “secondary use”. He addresses the concept of a pocket park next to the street: its primary use is a park, some extra space next to the street. Its secondary use is being on the street and watching the people in the park, pointing at them, smiling at them...

It’s not a refuge or escape from urban street life, it’s successful because it is so urban

“Then the whole Nieuwe Binnenweg
is just hanging out of the window,
like a spectacle”

The Window

When **sitting in** a window this element could be described as the main spot for people watching within the comfort and safe environment of people's own homes. People describe their window as "a kind of television" and the life in the street as "scenes" that play in front of their window: *"I tend to look more at the life in the street, than the physical appearance"*. These scenes sometimes show something big and loud, a 'spectacle': people screaming and fighting in the street, an accident, a carnival, a drug deal. A spectacle that connects the other spectators in the street: *"when some noises hold on too long, on the other side of the street you already see a lot of people looking out of their window in a certain direction, then you know where something is happening. Then the whole Nieuwe Binnenweg is just hanging out of the window, like a spectacle"*. People even adjust their interiors, by creating a little window seating, to this activity of people watching and the window as a television. But the exterior windowsill also offers the option **to hang in** and **put a drink on**. The bay window could be considered the ultimate luxury in this category, even offering a side view on the street. For people not living in the street the windows of coffee bars and cafés offer them the opportunity to *"sit in the window"* and watch life in the street pass by.

These windows, also allow for the sharing of little private moments. The big shop-windows **framing and showcasing** the men getting haircuts in the barbershop. But also allowing for sounds to travel through the façades: a couple arguing and screaming loudly causing people from the bar on the opposite side of the street to call the police (*"so now we always close the windows when we are having an argument"*). Or people having glimpses in the life of their neighbours through the rear windows, seeing things they were maybe not supposed to see: people having an intimate moment, the girls working at the strip club... Lofland (1998) describes the pleasure of people watching as *"overhearing or overseeing just enough of a scene or event to catch a glimpse of real-life dramas, wherein the filling out of the drama is a work of the imagination"*. Something that was also mentioned by participants as pleasurable and funny. Sometimes however the activity of people watching is less considered a pleasure and more a case of keeping an eye out, ensuring safety in your house, for your neighbours or when walking the street.

Sometimes these windows are fully **closed off to hide** the activities happening behind it, leading to curiosity from residents and passers-by. The openings in the facade of the strip club *Lido* just around the corner of the Nieuwe Binnenweg are closed off with wooden panels. The façade on the ground floor is even fully tiled. The windows of gay- and drag night bar *Bonaparte* are painted black. As one participant mentioned: *"because it is really shut off and you don't really see what is going on inside, it's really calling you to come inside"*. This non-visibility suggests something of an interesting world behind these closed walls, which spark a certain curiosity and leave room for imagination, but at the same time functions to hide the activities inside. A curiosity described by Lofland (1998) as "perceptual innuendo", a visible or (almost) non-visible hint, and *"the pleasure that arises from a glimpse that suggests that an interesting, exotic, weird, enticing, possible enchanting social world that exists just outside one's range of vision"*. But sometimes the closed windows are also a sign of something less interesting and intriguing. The changing shop offer in the street, that's getting more and more standardized according to some participants, turns windows more often into billboards. Flattening and closing the views as one walks the street.

"You see a lot happening. It is so much fun to smoke a cigarette in front of the door at Bonaparte and just look at people. You see everything passing by and there is always something happening."

The Door(step)

The element of **opening, moving through, a way in**. A way in that is sometimes controlled or under surveillance. The door of night bar Bonaparte has long been closed off by a doorbell (you always had to ring the bell to enter the bar) and now by a doorman. Behind the door is also a curtain, concealing an immediate view inside. Many coffeeshops, among which *Skyhigh*, also have a permanent doorman. A beacon for that part of the street. The same friendly face ensuring a safe environment around the shop, while also chatting with the little girls and their mother that live next-door.

The door and the doorstep also offer an excellent spot for **staying, leaning against the doorframe, or sitting on the doorstep** and slowing down to watch people walking and driving down the street. Keeping an eye on the surroundings of your shop or bar. Again, an excellent place for people watching, but with more possibility of interaction. You are on eye-level, in the transition zone between inside and outside, 'blocking' the way for people that potentially want to enter. *"The perfect place to smoke a cigarette and good people watching"*. The owner of Bonaparte for instance knows almost all the other entrepreneurs around his bar and keeps in contact with him by just hanging in the door opening, greeting them. But not just the other entrepreneurs. It's also a way of connecting with the local (homeless) people in the street, the regulars: *"they become familiar faces, always hanging around the same spot"* passing by when they are hanging in the door opening. People greet them, know their name, or give them a nick name. Hanging on your doorstep offers an opening to socialize. Some of these familiar faces always pass by *"just to say hi or bring a smile"*. A little staircase in front of the door offers even more possibilities to stay and sit in the opening.

The door is a transition zone between inside and outside, public and private. A zone that people also tend to mark with objects. Whether it is the displaying of the fruit and vegetables you're selling, putting up flags to mark your establishment (which in the case of the rainbow flag of Bonaparte sadly also gives them some trouble and bad reactions) or putting a little bench outside to have your morning coffee. These objects are reacted on with pleasure, which is perhaps in line with Lofland's pleasure of *"unexpectedness"*. People didn't literally describe the pleasure of unexpectedness to me, but rather criticized a trend of increasing expectedness and the disappearance of these objects in the streetscape. This is also caused by the changing offer of shops, bars and cafés in the street, which is according to some participants getting more *"conceptual", "predictable", "exchangeable", "standardized", "overly branded"*. One participant talked for instance about how at the location of the *Lidl* used to be *"a very cool supermarket with flags and vegetables outside"*. The doorstep now is completely empty and standardized. In the physical appearance of the street, this expectedness is criticized. One participant disliked the parts of the streets with *"long, grey façades with nothing, there is just nothing happening..."*.

(Pleasures)

"They hang a lot in the portico in
front of the door on number 185"

The Portico

In line with the door(step), the portico functions as a transition zone between private and public. It has more depth, which makes the transition a bit more blurred. It's a weird little in-between space, between inside and outside, an outside interior designed with the detail of an interior: a ceiling with details and ornaments, wall panelling, a lamp a tiled floor that is sometimes a bit elevated creating really a separate space in the façade from the sidewalk. It is, more than the door(step) a place for everyone to stay for a little while. Whether it is to **take temporary shelter** from the rain or to **swerve from your regular rectilinear route** on the sidewalk to make a phone call or look for something in your bag.

Where a closed façade or window hides a world behind it, a little offset in the facade can sometimes tell you just a bit more. The porticos in the street for instance can give you perhaps a small insight in, glimpse or trace of the life behind it. Again, like the pleasure "*perceptual innuendo*" as described by Lofland. Whether it is a very neat well taken care of portico with a flowerpot and Christmas wreath, a portico with (political) posters or a very old catalogue of dresses that place used to sell, a portico in decay, or a portico closed off with a gate (really ensuring it will not be more than just a little glimpse). By the cluttering of certain objects, we are briefly confronted with its owners and users. These sometimes "whimsy" objects and moments are also something people take aesthetic pleasure from. The objects in the street, that reveal a bit more life and show "*that something is going on here*". Some people mentioned painted planters in bright colours, stickers on the walls, unusual objects in unusual spots, showing you just a little imperfection and trace of life.

Sometimes the portico is more intensely used than only through objects. The portico of café *Fantastique*, which is elevated and a relatively large space, becomes part of the café. You can always find (mostly) men standing there with a beer. They are a bit higher than the people on the sidewalk, creating a separate, but still connected space to the street. But it's also still the entrance for the people that live above the café, causing some funny interactions every now and then. But the portico is also the home of the (temporary) homeless. Whether it is to stay the night or just a couple of hours. Also, personally in my own portico, just around the corner of the Nieuwe Binnenweg, sometimes I arrive home and I find two women smoking something and **sitting on the stairs** in our portico and **using the steps as a little table**. For a while this portico is theirs. They barely move when I enter to get to my front door. They are lost in an excited conversation and seem to be having a good time. On other days, when I walk out of the door, I see a sock left behind, an empty can of beer, or some smoked cigarettes. I realize the only thing separating my pillow and the visitor that night was the 30 cm wall behind my bed. This makes me laugh. It's the place to appropriate for a little while.

But some people are not very fond of the temporary visitors and don't want to be confronted with 'the other' in their portico. Also the police "*doesn't want people hanging in the porticos*". Although the portico is in essence about 'the other'. It is a shared space, connecting different entrances. It is the place you briefly meet your neighbours when you walk out the door, or make eye contact, and a little greeting with the people of the shop or bar below your house. But this 'other' is the reason some people put up a fence. Or get rid of the portico all at once. Straightening the façade and in a way also straightening the use of the street. One respondent criticizes this "*straightening*" multiple times and mentions she "*rather looks up at the façades that have not yet been smoothed out*". It's eminently the element in which the smoothing and straightening trend is most immediately visible.

"There is a lot going on at these
corners"

"They always stay strictly on that
corner"

The Corner

Even though the porticos are for some considered 'off limits' as a place to hang and stay for a little while, the sidewalk corners are still places where people **gather and clutter together**. It's the places where the Nieuwe Binnenweg is crossed by the perpendicular streets, making them into suitable anchor points and places where you have a good overview of both streets. A participant stressed this as well, adding there is a place for everyone: *"people just meet in the street and everyone has its own corner"*. Another participant who lives on the corner also mentioned it is really a spot for people **to gather and to pause**. She even spoke, when talking about the three corners around her house, about *"the Bermuda triangle"*. A triangle between three very distinct points in which people clutter and *"start acting a little confused and lost"*. This sometimes also shows a discrepancy in what people find 'acceptable' behaviour and places to hang around. According to one participant, the police, by using the security camera's that are (not entirely coincidental) most often placed at the corners, are trying to stop people from hanging at the corners: *"If I would hang on this corner tonight, and tomorrow again and the day after again, the fourth day they will drive passed me and ask me to hang somewhere else"*. Another participant also mentioned he thinks people hanging in front on the corners and shops are "not very inviting", also adding that this might be a bit *"narrow minded"* of him.

Then why are many cafés placed on the corners? It is not just about the corners of the sidewalks itself, but also the functions (shops, bars) that are placed at the corners. In the corner cafés also everyone has its own corner: *"In some café's there are only business people, in others just families and in other café's mostly young people and students"*. There is even a book written on a corner store and its social function in the Nieuwe Binnenweg (*"Scenes in de Copy Corner"* by Joke van der Zwaard). This copy store then became *'De Nieuwe Hoek'*, a tobacco shop that remained an anchor corner store in the street where people were always hanging in front of with a coffee and a cigarette. The place now turned into a tattoo removal shop, where you never see anyone anymore.

But this element is also about **going around the corner**. One participant described going around the corner, into the Nieuwe Binnenweg, always as a pleasure. It gave him a relaxed, comfortable feeling. It's the place where not only people go around the corner, but also buildings get a side, where the façade folds around the corner. Often an empty piece of façade leaving room for decoration. Whether it's the very old and recognizable painted billboards, blind walls for graffiti or a space for public art in the form of a neon quote by Jules Deelder, they were all elements that were mentioned by participants: a quote that *"reminds you of the people around you, not just your own world"* and they make it less *"grey"*. Or the blind wall with graffiti that turned into an art project for another participant. Again, a place for clutter of objects. But also, for contrast with the perpendicular streets, something that is also mentioned as pleasurable: *"the cute pre-war café building, combined with a sort of red-light district atmosphere and the big old trees crossed by the big infrastructural, concrete tunnel of the 's Gravendijkwal"*. The places where the rectilinearity of the street is briefly interrupted. A contrast and jumbling of the environment that according to Lofland (1998) also serves as a source of aesthetic pleasure. You see a broader network of streets coming together, the historical development of streets within a city.

"they have their own little rounds,
set patterns that they cannot let
go. Just to have a little chat with
people, otherwise they just go home
and sit by themselves".

"You have to allow for the centre
to be loud, and you have to allow
for the life to be in the centre"

The café

The neighbourhood café as **the second living room**. It is the place to meet, become part of a conversation and finding these encounters on purpose. The café or neighbourhood bar has a vital social function. There is even a book written about the once 50 cafés on the Nieuwe Binnenweg (written by Joris Boddaert), also describing the gossip in and between these cafés. In terms of cafés and bars, *“there is something for everyone. In some cafés there are only businesspeople, in others just families and in other cafés mostly young people and students”*. Now there are ‘just’ 28 bars left, but it is still the backdrop of little habits and routines. Some people do the same round of two bars almost daily: *“They need the social contact. They have their own little rounds, set patterns that they cannot let go off. Just to have a little chat with people, otherwise they just go home and sit by themselves. When bars closed because of Covid, it made people even disordered and sometimes lonely”*. Lots of these bars in the street have a very collective atmosphere. It is the kind of bar you can go to all by yourself and participate in a group chat. As described by the bartender of one of the neighbourhood bars: *“The older people that have been coming there for ages and have almost become part of the interior, but also young people. It mixes so well. When the bar is full it becomes one big group chat.”* It’s these routines that can give rise to new routines as well. The waitress of the bar now visits the market of Delfshaven on a weekly basis together with one of the older men of the bar: *“he always comes to the bar, and I found out he lives behind me, he also likes going to the market on the Visserijplein, so we decided to do this together.”*

Another bar in the street, one man described as his *“home-sick bar”*. He is not originally from the Netherlands and in this bar many people are in the same situation (most of them Cape Verdean) and sometimes want a less “Dutch” experience. When he is a bit sad and homesick, he visits this bar to feel better and to be taken care of: *“this cafe is where I really feel home. That somebody takes care of me. The owner calls me mi amor, my love. And if there is no food, she makes something special for me. It’s just a really nice place to go”*. The concept of the bar as a second home was also found in *Bonaparte*. It was described as *“a place to be yourself without judgement”* and *“identity confirming”*. But the shops around these bar are also important in this social functioning. The bartender of *Bonaparte* mentions for instance the barber shop in front where he can always wait if he is early for his shift and the bar is not open yet, or the tobacco shop further down where he feels he can safely buy his cigarette’s during the night when he is dressed up as his *“alter ego Lolo”*.

For these bars and cafés **the night** is also an important aspect. Some establishments find their full existence in the night. In the case of gay- and drag bar *Bonaparte* for instance, the night allows for more anonymity, and for people to transform. As described by the man that works there: *“when the night was cancelled because of Covid, we could only open during the day. It’s fun that other people can visit then as well, but that doesn’t make up for the function it used to have as a night bar, the meaning of the space”*. The night has vital function for the place. Besides the anonymity, it is one of the few establishments in the city that has a license to be open 24 hours a day. That’s why it’s quite iconic. For many people it’s the final stop after a night out, to have a last drink before going to bed. But the bars of course also cause some noise and nuisance, as one participant that lives above a bar mentioned: *“I moved here during new years, the bar underneath was loudly playing YMCA, and I thought what have I done?!”* But she can deal with it now and accepted the place for what it is: *“You have to allow for the centre to be loud, and you have to allow for the life to be in the centre, so I also have to respect that I chose to live on top of a bar, so I can’t really expect it to be this quiet, peaceful place.”*

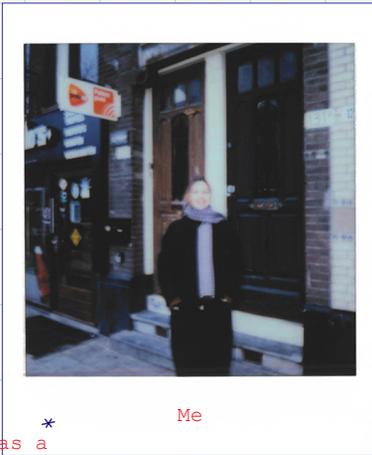
Even when the cafés and bars are closed and silent, the terraces with tables and chairs outdoors provide an ideal spot for an unexpected visitor and an exchange between day and night: a man, by himself, happily eating his late-night snack from *Shoarma de Sjeik* amid the stacked terrace tables and chairs of vegan breakfast bar *Lilith*, a woman sitting in the Sunday morning sun on the pick-nick tables of a closed café *Voigt* or a man using the pick-nick tables to sit and re-arrange his bags and groceries.



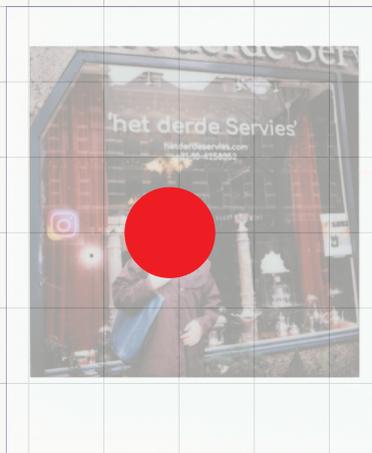
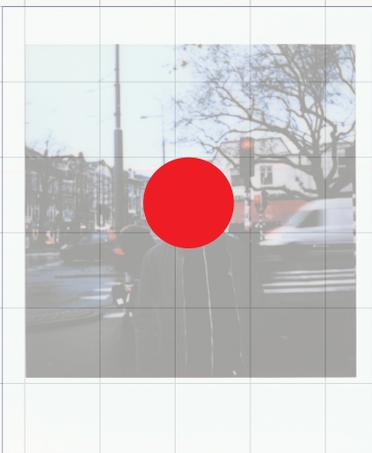
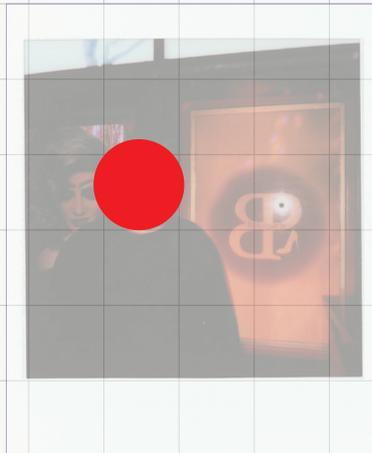
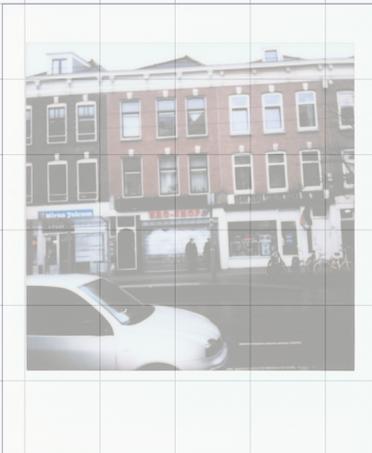
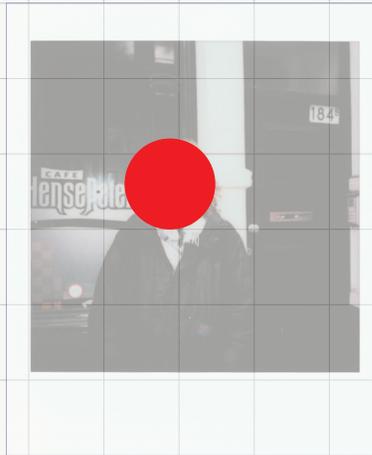
Image 42: Archive image of a shopwindow in the Nieuwe Binnenweg

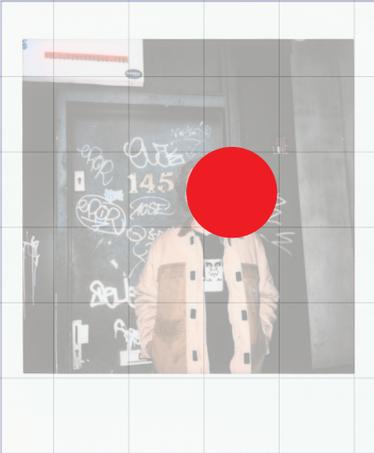


[Lessons for designers]

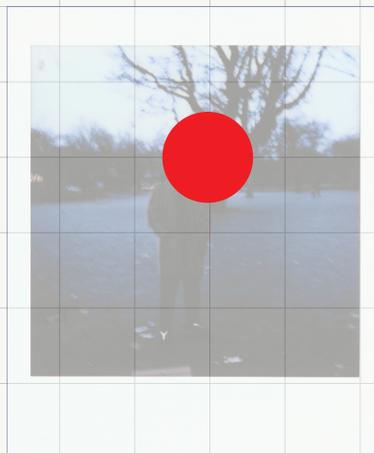
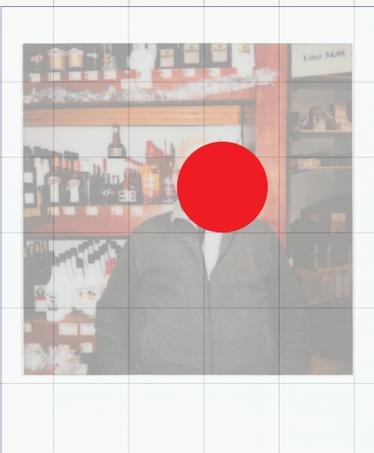


Where my layer as a designer comes in.





*
But also multiple other
layers of other future
users of space



Design challenge

Going back to the research question: “*How can the reading of a specific place help in creating a broader understanding and redefinition of the concept “liveability” and what lessons can be learned from this for designers (of space and policies)?*” these findings need to be explored in a design to see how this can be organized spatially, if they can become lessons for designers of space and policy. I would like to explore if a hypothetical architectural project, the process of designing, can be helpful in this. How can a material artefact accommodate and display all the aforementioned elements?

The context of this project is an existing building in the street. One of the newest additions in the street, a connection of 7 modules and two stairwells with a total width of approximately 40 meters. For this project I wanted to ‘redo’ a post-war, rather new building, because to me those most literally symbolize this smoothing and straightening of the façades and spaces in the street. I chose this specific one, because this building is situated in the ‘middle’ part of the street. To me this is the most interesting part of the street. As also learned from the research, it’s where the two ends of the street overlap, the most divers and mixed part, but it’s also facing approaching gentrification from the city centre onwards. The current concrete construction is taken as the starting point to work with in the design project. It’s the construction holding the current decor up. I want investigate how we can change and open up this decor.

I want to quite literally open up the building block and create a new route within the existing, fairly straight-lined, structure of the street and building block. In this I want to compose and intensify those subtle, modest elements of encounter that are already present in the street. The building already has a courtyard garden, which is now jointly managed by the surrounding houses, all of which do not directly adjoin the garden on the ground floor. This will become public space, creating the new condition of going under and through the building, the decor. Which automatically forces me to react on the adjacent façades around the courtyard that will become more accessible too. Thinking about how new movements and routes can arise in the city.

Some Conclusions

In this final section, I would like to return to the research question that began this project: *“how can the **reading of a specific place** help in creating a broader understanding and redefinition of the concept **“liveability”** and what **lessons** can be learned from this **for designers of space and policies?**”* I would like to share some of the findings and insights that this research project taught me.

First, this research project guided me in the struggle with the word “liveability”. Where it started (in my sociology thesis) as a very technical and quantified policy concept, I wanted to discover the more socio-spatial and human side to it. Within my reading of the Nieuwe Binnenweg, the conversations and walks, and guided by the literature, I discovered that for this it was more important to focus on the moments that people give meaning to, have memories of and tell anecdotes about. And how within these moments certain elements are referred to with pleasure, enthusiasm, excitement and love you could even say. That’s why the word “pleasures”, as coined by Lofland (1998) on urban scenes in the public realm, offers me a more suitable definition than “liveability”. As said by Lofland (1998) about urban pleasures:

“There is nothing outre, nothing grand, nothing monumental about them; they are the products of ordinary people going about their ordinary lives in ordinary settings. Despite their ordinariness, however, my notes record that some persons respond to such scenes with expressions reflecting pleasurable excitement. [...] The point here is that pleasure is not the exclusive province of grandeur: it resides as well in humble spaces. It also resides in the commonplaces of everyday interaction.” (Ibid. 87)

For me a lot is coming together in this quote, also in relation to this project. In the context of the Nieuwe Binnenweg, building on the conversations with ten specific people, my observations and the interviews done by Neele (my fellow researcher of the Nieuwe Binnenweg), I realized it is about the small, the everyday, the ordinary, the modest and about carefully listening and observing to be able to read this from the street and filter this. What this project has made clear, is that the moments when people talk about something with pleasure, excitement, with love, that is where the value of the built environment and the city can be found. This is something that every user of space in some way is capable of expressing, but up to the architect, the spatial researcher to put value on and appreciate. The more specific lessons that can be learned from this, in the scope of the Nieuwe Binnenweg are then about what elements foster these pleasures and how they become material and spatial.

What generally came up in the street was, as mentioned by participants and a can be observed, that there is a propensity to smooth and straighten both spatially and in terms of use and amenities. This is perhaps most directly visible in the façades, with less elements sticking

in and out, but also in the changing offer of shops and restaurants. This means less space for appropriation or staying, more commercialized and privatized spaces, but also more predictable spaces. This physical smoothing and closing off thus also straightens the use in a certain sense. The balance between informality, unpredictability, layering, complexity on the one hand and control, security, management, and maintenance on the other is increasingly moving towards the latter. This while the smooth, controlled, “huffer-proof” facades and spaces are almost never the places people talk about with pleasure, with love. Posing the question of what we value more in society?

The five elements described in the result section, are a starting point in defining and making more specific how this can become material and what elements we should carefully consider when designing. How can we design our cities and spaces with the greatest eye for detail within these elements? The level of detail we can find in the historic porticos and facades in the street, without romanticizing the past. Can we let these elements more flexibly shape the space around it and the uses, movements and interactions that can take place within it? While at the same time investigating how this can be possible without completely losing sight of the other side of the balance sheet: control, security, management. This is something I intended to investigate in my design project, in which I want to intensify and compose those subtle, modest elements of encounter and the dynamics that are already present in the street.

Discussion & Reflection

In this section I want to discuss and reflect on my graduation project thus far. First, I would like to focus on research and design and elaborate on my approach and choice of research method. If it 'worked or not' and what can be learned from it also in relation to the process of designing. But I also want to elaborate and reflect on the (scientific and societal) relevance of the project. Afterwards I would like to reflect more on my personal process during this graduation project and what I have learned from it.

Research & Design

After carefully having read a lot of literature on the intersection of the spatial and the social, I chose to start the research part in an open and exploratory way. I was above all interested in what could result from this, a more inductive approach, and not really trying to validate specific theories or findings. This, I believe, also accurately portrays the objective of the studio "Explore Lab": exploring and wandering, following a certain fascination. This was also something I was sometimes missing in my past studios. These studios, in my opinion, were perhaps overly focused on a 'problem and solution-finding' approach to architecture. Which could feel quite imposing and normative, especially in contexts that are not familiar to you in any way. In this project I thus wanted to work on a local context (Rotterdam, close to the Nieuwe Binnenweg, is also the city where I live) and immerse myself in this context to try to (sort of) understand it first. I think it is interesting to see what could be learned from this process without problematizing certain aspects of it for a design brief.

In summary, I am pleased with the research technique chosen which I found to be both useful and educational. Instead of just observing or talking to individuals in a more fixed setting, I think truly talking to people and experiencing a certain context while walking in it opened a lot of stories and finally led to a rich quantity of data in the form of transcripts and the supporting maps. In these conversations I also opted for an open and 'loose' approach. Some themes were prepared, but a lot of room was left for emergent topics to discuss (material) aspects of the built environment that prompted stories and anecdotes. In the case of my project for instance, perhaps unexpectedly, we also very often talked about how people relate to the street from behind the façades, instead of just experiencing the street as one walks through it. Besides, this open approach was also suitable to explore the more human and social side to the built environment. I didn't want to intimidate the people I was talking to by being too strict, serious, or 'scientific' in my approach and interactions. In retrospect some conversations sometimes maybe started a bit too open, which could have caused some confusion for the respondents. In a follow-up study it could perhaps be interesting to specifically reflect more on the specific (material) elements as described earlier in this paper.

Finding a balance in being specific on the one hand but leaving room for unexpected findings is challenging. Especially when talking to people. (One-time) Conversations with people you don't know require a lot of care and sensitivity, which is also the point in which the intersection with sociology becomes relevant in my opinion. This sensitivity and care in communicating with people, as well as the 'ethical concerns' that accompany it, are potentially features and skills that we as architects may acquire from the social sciences. Opening up the architectural profession both towards everyday users of space (by talking to them), as well as other disciplines. Taking a more interdisciplinary approach, both in terms of methodologies and in terms of research.

In reflecting on this process and my previously criticized 'problematizing approach' to architecture, I believe what's crucial to remember is that talking to people is not (always) about asking "what people want" or "what problems you can address". It's about developing a certain sensitivity and empathy to the context. That is why, as a spatial researcher, I believe it is equally critical to become familiar with the setting and to conduct extensive 'fieldwork' to examine "subjects in ways which require both physical and cognitive proximity, to experience what you are studying." (Sassatelli in Urbiquity, 2019). Realizing that in sociology, it was also important (and something I really appreciated) to develop this sensitivity. Or as my thesis professor in sociology described, developing *sociological imagination*, the ability to relate broader (social) developments to the individual world of experience and perception. This, I suppose, can also nourish a spatial researcher and designer. It feeds a way of thinking about how space can and will be used, about how certain elements make up a space, rather than shaping space in its entirety, about the life between those elements. Which also opens up questions about the role of the architect. Where does the architect stop? And where does life take over? What is fixed? And where do we let go of control? What other movements and dynamics does a design intervention instigate?

Thereafter, once you think you've developed that (particular) sensitivity and empathy it's interesting to take distance and consider the bigger picture. In the case of this project, how would my findings relate to other streets in Rotterdam, or other (Dutch) cities. And how would this manifest itself in a small community rather than a city? Like accurately described by one of the participants, the Nieuwe Binnenweg is a super diverse street: "I like the fact that so many different people walk around here. What I really like about the street is that it gives me the feeling that there is no dominant group, it's a real mix". This project is a reading and discovery of space in a super diverse street. But what and how can we learn from this if we want to draw bigger lessons about the city and our vision on urban life also in other parts of the city?

Discussion & Reflection

These kinds of lessons can be instructive considering (urban) policies and a more comprehensive approach. The policy side was also an important starting point for this project and a side that perhaps became more and more neglected within the project. Reflecting on this again I would say that the question about “liveability”, approached from a different angle, is still central in my project. It shows what another reading of that concept of “liveability” might look like, in a way also answering questions about what we find important and what we value in the public realm and society in general. Admitting I think it is still difficult, also when talking to people about the project, to define how both “disciplines” relate. I think designers of policies and designers of space are in a way fairly similar. Concluding that policymakers, similarly to architects, would benefit from developing this previously mentioned sensitivity, empathy and eye for the everyday, the ordinary.

Personal process

In the beginning, the planning of the research required a shift in mindset after doing the thesis in sociology, which was more rigid, structured, and theoretical. This approach felt too limiting in this project. After a while I started embracing a ‘looser’ and more ‘relaxed’ approach to doing research, something that was stimulated very much by both my research and architecture mentor. This and the fact that they trusted the process was very helpful for me. The more ‘relaxed’ approach also helped in my research method, in the conversations and walks I had in the street. This part of the project, going around the street, talking to people, and keeping an open, interested, and exploratory view within these conversations felt very natural to me and was something I really enjoyed. The challenge of balancing between asking questions and finding valuable information and connecting, making people feel comfortable to share stories and being careful was something I really enjoyed. And I think this joy was almost always mutual. People were open and willing to talk. Which made it in this part of the project easy for me to also trust on this approach and process.

After P2 the graduation schedule asks for more focus on design and again a shift in mindset. A step and part of the process that was more difficult for me to trust upon and to find joy in. It was the part in which normally some aspects are problematized to find a ‘solution’. Especially in thinking of a function or program for your project. In this shift I was again grateful for the help of my mentors, who stimulated me to take a more ‘radical’ approach and take more distance from the street and the people, my subjects of study. It helped me realize that maintaining this distance is crucial, especially in academic work.

In the end, the project turned out to be less 'radical' and actually quite context specific. However, I believe that this mental exercise of 'going radical' was important to get to this place, and important for me to realize that I prefer working in existing contexts. The main lesson learnt from this design project and my mentors, is to trust more on the process. Just like research, designing is not a puzzle that just has to be put together (there is not just one solution or outcome). It's a jumble of disparate, hazy notions that becomes honed and polished with time. In this process it is critical to not be frightened to let go of certain beliefs or ideas, or to allow your own 'opinion' or 'feelings' to play a role in the process. I learnt to approach this process in a more relaxed, less controlling manner, as I believe an architect should: letting go of the image of the perfectly planned, controlled building.

As mentioned before, I see this project as the commencement of a process and (personal) struggle. It is not attempting to give solid answers but hopes to open and unlock a different representation of (public) space for policymakers and designers in trying to show the value of socio-spatial elements that cannot be easily quantified. The value of the built environment and the city is found in the moments when people talk about something with love, excitement, and pleasure. I think everyone has their own way of seeing these pleasures. That is something that we, as spatial researchers and designers, must recognize and cherish. It is up to us to take in this information, listen to it, and discover it, among other things, by just walking with others and listening to them. It changed my understanding of the way I look at cities and how you may experience them. In some ways, it also showed me what I enjoy about architecture. Knowing that I don't want to be an architect (at least not right after graduation), I wanted to use this project to learn about how a more interdisciplinary approach can exist and what I would find fun and intriguing about it and I am grateful to my mentors for allowing me the flexibility and space to pursue this.

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Images

Image 1: By author

Image 2: Screenshot of Leefbaarometer (<https://www.leefbaarometer.nl/home.php>)

Image 3: Dereta, M. (z.d.). image 2: Rotterdam Blaak [Foto]. <https://www.bkor.nl/beelden/alles-vanwaarde-is-weerloos/>

Image 4: Dereta, M. (z.d.-b). Image 3: Rotterdam South [Foto]. <https://www.bkor.nl/beelden/van-alles-isweer-waardeloos/>

Image 5: Schot, J. (2021, 20 september). image 4: demolition Tweebosbuurt [Foto]. <https://versbeton.nl/2021/09/waarom-de-woonvisie-van-rotterdam-definitief-failliet-is/>

Image 6: Schot, J. (2021a, juni 24). Image 5: demolition Tweebosbuurt [Foto]. <https://versbeton.nl/2021/06/sloop-tweebosbuurt-is-deportatie-van-mensen-met-een-laag-inkomen/>

Image 7: By Author

Image 8: Screenshot “The Social Life of Small Urban Spaces” by William H. Whyte

Image 9: Screenshot “The Social Life of Small Urban Spaces” by William H. Whyte

Image 10: Scan from “The Public Realm” by Lynn H. Lofland

Image 11: Scan from “The Public Realm” by Lynn H. Lofland

Image 12: Scan from “The Public Realm” by Lynn H. Lofland

Image 13: Scan from “The Public Realm” by Lynn H. Lofland

Image 14: Stadsarchief Rotterdam

Image 15: Stadsarchief Rotterdam

Image 16 - 23: By Author (multiple images of the same map)

Image 24 - 39: Screenshot of clip shot by Author

Image 40: Stadsarchief Rotterdam

Image 41: Stadsarchief Rotterdam

Image 42: Stadsarchief Rotterdam

Figure 1: By Author

Figure 2: By Author

Figure 3: By Author

Figure 4: By Author

**Starting Point: Ero Shop Nieuwe Binnenweg
XXX works at Ero Shop three days a week. He
used to live around the corner of the shop
for a while, just off Nieuwe Binnenweg.**

XXX didn't want to be recorded, so there is no transcript. These are just some notes I made after our walk together:

He loves the diversity in the street, because he is not used to it from the place wherer he was born.

He likes to live in a very small house, he doesn't need much and he doesn't like to invite a lot of people, 3 XXXimum.

He also loves the contrast to the "world outside", where he likes small, cosy, intimate spaces at home, outside it can be big, crazy, grand.

For him the *Heemraadsplein* is an important anchor point in the street. He used to live around the corner. It is the place were he was robbed for the first time, but he didn't really mind. He doesn't care about possessions. The square changed a lot for him.

We pass *Cafe Steyn* and he mentions he used to go there a lot, because you could smoke weed inside. It was tolerated. He doesn't like spending time in coffeeshops.

When we talk about the shops in the street, he mentions he doesn't like the big chains like Albert Heijn (he even uses the word anti-social). He prefers the smaller shops, because they offer him more freedom (to buy one slice of ham for instance). For him this also touches upon the topics of expected/unexpected.

Story about buying inside (in the shops) and buying outside (on the street, more informal).

Around 's *Gravendijkwal*, all the nightclubs that have been there since "forever"

After this part, this is "where the Netherlands starts", more "white", more experimenting food-wise

Part around the *Saftlevenstraat*, used to be a lot of brothers and junks, this was exciting when he was young.

The part towards *eendrachtsplein* feels more urban.

He walks the street very often, maybe four times a week.

He is wondering if he still likes the street. Is he maybe done with the street?

But he still likes the excitement.

XXX works at Bonaparte on Tuesdays, but he is also a regular guest. He visits the street since he was young.

XXX started working here a few months ago but visits the place for a couple of years already.

[We start walking towards Eendrachtsplein]

XXX mentions this part awakens sentimental feelings for him. Near the end of the street "The black widow" is situated and he mentions how he sort of grew up there. [The black widow doesn't exist anymore] "The black widow" is a goth shop. He used to be there very often during puberty, so about 20 years ago. When he walks through and talks about this part of the street, it feels like talking about a different part of his life, because XXX grew up as a woman and transitioned four years ago. "So as little girl, this man used to come here." Before, the destination was "the black widow" and now it's "Bonaparte".

[Identity] Back in the days, this part of the street felt very "identity-confirming", by buying alternative stuff. It was mostly "the black widow" that caused this, but also the street in a wider sense, he associated it all with each other. "The whole area felt like the black widow, it was more than just a store, I met there with friends, back in the days we could still smoke inside".

When I ask what was so special about the place for him, he answered "he could be himself without any judgement". He got his first piercing there, it is his "little milestone place": "buying the first items of clothing with my first self-earned money". He thinks back on these times with warm feelings.

Back in the days, XXX only used to come in this first part of the street. Maybe till "Rotown", but not much further. Afterwards he went back to Eendrachtsplein and took the metro back to the east of the city: "For a very long time was not aware how terribly long this street is for instance". At some point he thought the street stopped at the Mathenesserlaan.

[We reach "the black widow", which is an expo place now]

XXX never comes here anymore. There was an expo he really wanted to see, but he missed it. "The black widow" is gone now for a year already, but he never really went there for some time already.

When he goes to Bonaparte, he arrives at the crossing with the Mathenesserlaan by bus. This first part of the street is mostly nostalgia for XXX. When he arrives in the street now, it depends on his "state". If it is just as himself, he just has a destination and he keeps on walking. But when he walks here as his alter ego [Lolo], then it is not really a pleasant street for him.

[We run into Lennie and XXX greets her, they talk about the lottery]

XXX mentions that he thinks that is the fun part of working in a bar here: "getting to know the people in the neighborhood, especially the homeless people in the neighborhood, people that have a roof over their head, but walk the streets during the day for different reasons. We give them a little nickname etc." So there is quite a local feeling at Bonaparte.

[div] According to XXX this feels quite "double-sided", because the neighborhood is quite mixed. There are a lot of strongly opinionated people that like to express that opinion. This can be very fun and positive, but it can also be very

annoying, especially when you work in a gay- and drag bar, it is not desirable for everyone.

[ext/int]

These unpleasant experiences don't happen necessarily inside the bar. But during summer they installed a terrace and then people would "yell and spit at them and threaten them". An unpleasant experience like this would happen almost every day. "But we would also get a lot of compliments, people that shift their route to say that we look nice".

[ext/int]

Bonaparte has been a night-bar for many years "so the façade used to be very closed, so you had to ring the bell to enter, or there was a doorman. So very closed". This summer they opened the façade for a terrace [because of Covid measures]. This caused a lot of curiosities for the people in the neighborhood. They wanted to have a peek inside and thought they were closed permanently. For "outsiders", there was quite some mystery around Bonaparte. The Bonaparte has existed for more than 50 years.

[ext/int]

This "closedness" is partly because it has always been this way, and because they want to create a safe, enclosed atmosphere inside. "Most people know Bonaparte as the final destination after a night of partying. If everything was closing, you could always go to Bona." So then you would ring the door, or pass the doorman and enter. This is mostly because for safety reason: "people that had too much to drink already or people with wrong intentions could not enter, which is quite often the case with such a diverse audience".

"safety"

[ext/int]

The façade was opened out of necessity during Covid to open a terrace. But Bonaparte never had a terrace. So the audience would change quite a lot. Sometimes the "old guests from the night as well, but there are also people that prefer to be themselves behind closed doors and not during daylight". Bonaparte is also a safe place for people that can be themselves in a less visible way. So when "the night" was cancelled, these people were excluded from their safe place.

time

XXX didn't personally talk to these people, but he noticed that when the bar opened inside again, some people would come again and sit all the way in the back and paid attention to who was looking etc. These are mostly Islamic homosexual people or men that like to dress in female clothes in a more closed environment. These people benefit a lot from closed facades and safe environments like these.

[We pass barbershop Schorem]

[identity]

XXX mentions that he thinks this is also a very nice spot in the street: "When I just started my transition, and my first beards started to appear, he always hoped that his beard would be full enough to go to Schorem. Because Schorem is THE barbershop". Recently, for his 36th birthday, XXX got gifted a treatment at Schorem. It was a moment he really he lived towards. "It was a boy-dream come true". It lived up to his expectations. "The process as well as the result was perfect".

XXX knew Schorem by reputation, but the men of Schorem also used to go to Bonaparte. "Most entrepreneurs in the street know each other, especially the owners". That is quite fun. When Richard [the owner of Bonaparte] waves again at someone, he knows what place they own in the street.

[int/ext]

When they opened the terrace, people in the neighborhood got a bit more curious and had a drink at the terrace sometimes. The threshold for people that usually didn't go there was way lower. Also in terms of hours, people that work usual hours can now visit and go to bed at a reasonable time (like XXX's parents). So the terrace also had its positive sides. "Bonaparte really has a function as nightbar. For people that are looking for that safe space, as well as the only place that is open during that time of day, for people to end their night. So it's fun that other people can visit now as well, but that doesn't make up for the function it used to have as a nightbar." The meaning of the space.

time

TIME / CLOSEDNESS.

[We almost reach the Mathenesserlaan]

[He lights a cigarette]

The only reason XXX would go to this part of the street back in the days was to go to Coffeeshop "de lachende paus", around the Chicken spot. He bought his first joint here. A lot of firsts in this street, while it is not the neighborhood where he grew up. When I ask him if he was tended to this place, he confirms: "Sure, in the beginning it was quite exciting to move further down the street. Because for him the center stopped at Eendrachtsplein, but it always moved up a bit." It used to be Eendrachtsplein, then it ended at the Mathenesserlaan and now it's even further. I asked why it felt exciting to move further down the street: "Especially when I was younger, and as a girl, the type of people that live here is still very much the same as back then, it is quite mixed. People are a bit louder than I was used from the new-build district I grew up in. So that was quite exciting. I felt quite brave, but I was on guard". XXX described himself as quite "alternative" back in the days, and according to him people have an opinion on this. Like with his drag now. So, he used to have a big mouth, but he was not very defensible. So, he used to be quite careful. In the heart of the center it is always very busy, so that gives him the feeling of "relative safety". "It's a different kind of busy here". I think I understand him. There are always people in the street, but you maybe don't have the feeling that there is always someone who will stand up for you in a difficult situation. This was very tense back in the days. He used to watch over his shoulder. But it was still quite exciting to explore those quieter parts.

[div]

exciting

XXX experiences a big difference between the first part [till the Mathenesserlaan approximately] and this part [after Mathenesserlaan]. He thinks this part feels more residential, and the first part feels more like "Gezelligheid, more shops, more cafés". He acknowledges that this also exist in the other parts of the streets, but it stands out less. In the first part XXX notices less the physical appearance of the street, he is more looking at "life", that is for him a big difference, later he notices more the physical appearance of the street. The later parts feel older, it has more character. "Back in the days I was only thinking about where am I, is it safe, and now I have more space to absorb my surroundings." He is much more peaceful as a person now, and he has more interest to notice the special physical details of the street. Now he subconsciously for instance asks himself if he would like to live here for instance. When he was sitting at the terrace of Bonaparte for instance he noticed stones or reliefs in the facades he never noticed before in all those years.

Physical/social

safety

[XXX mentions again that actually only this summer he realized how long the street is, because he would cycle and try out different routes]

XXX thinks the first part of the street is more designed to walk in, with wider sidewalks. "You see a lot happening. It is so much fun to smoke a cigarette in front of the door at Bonaparte and just look at people. You see everything passing by and there is always something happening."

[spectator]

But also positive sides. Sometimes famous people pass in front of the bar. "For instance, Gerard Cox that regularly eats at "de Pijp" the oldest restaurant of Rotterdam". Especially during summer, the most colorful people would pass by: "I think people-watching is always fun and interesting."

I ask about his experiences as Lolo, his alter-ego, in the street. XXX mentions he then never goes to part of the street past Mathenesserlaan, because he wouldn't feel safe there. He would avoid it on purpose. He walks from Bonaparte to Nono's to buy cigarettes by himself, but that is about it. He would also not take public transport by himself in drag. Only with other people. Unfortunately that is unsafe.

safety

I ask if the first part of the street feels okay for him, but that is just because he cannot avoid it. But when he would go out and drag and go for a last drink at Bonaparte, he used to easily take an Uber from Eendrachtsplein, because it feels safer than walking through the street. During the day it is different. He prefers an uber over cycling for instance. And when works on Tuesdays (in drag), he does his make-up at home, but goes in boy-clothes with a cap to Bonaparte and brings his clothing, heels and hair and then he swaps outfits again to go back with public transport. Other people in drag in Bonaparte have a similar experience according to XXX. It is strongly advised to not go in the street in drag by yourself.

SAFETY/TIME

Getting cigarette's at Nono's feels good though. Even if he arrives in full drag, they greet him with "Hi Neighbor", because they know him. "They are cool guys." Same when he used to work stand-in-services at Bonaparte, he arrived in drag. And when his colleague would have to open, but he was later, he would go to Schorem to wait for him. And the boys there don't mind that at all. So there are places where this is not a problem at all: "It is not like the full street poses a threat, but there is always a chance that something might happen and that is just difficult." But that is not just Nieuwe Binnenweg, he would feel that almost everywhere. But especially in more mixed areas he is a bit more on guard. By this he means ethnically mixed. "A few weeks back there was a fundamentalist in front of the bar, screaming, spitting on our flag, and throwing some bottles on the ground, so that is very threatening."

(SOCIAL) SAFETY

[div]

When walking the street in drag, Daylight is always more pleasant and also people and places that are already more familiar. That always feels more safe. But there are also funny, more positive interactions. And that is very positive for him, as a contrast to all the negative moments he also has to face. And this happens often enough for him. The positive comments happen more often, the negative comments are way louder.

time/safety

Except from Bonaparte, he rarely visits other bars in the street. He would still like to visit Boudewijn, because he loves a good beer.

[We go to a spot to find some shelter from the rain next to Tanger]

[int/ext]

I ask about the last part of the street and how he experiences this. He likes the old details. It reminds him more of Amsterdam. When I ask how he experiences the street by bike, I get an immediate "scary as hell", "no one cares about each other, all traffic flows cross each other." "I don't cycle here for fun." He describes the part of the street as less "lively", but traffic-wise it's a madhouse. With less lively, he means less people in the street. There are more bikes parked here. In the beginning of the street, it is more spread, or they are parked in the little side streets. This part feels more functional.

Physical/social

XXX mentions that he thinks the contrast between the older character and the modern tram displays is quite funny. Or the little curves in the street. He thinks it's a nice contrast. When I ask if he likes contrast, he confirms: "It's a theme I my life 'Balance and contrast'." Very cliché because his star sign is Libra, but also because he has a bipolar disorder, so it's one end or the other. So balance is quite important. By his friends he is described as looking like a construction worker, but his alter-ego is very colorful and graceful.

contrast.

XXX thinks sometimes contrast can be very beautiful and sometimes can be very restless.

We talk a bit about the contrast within the street. When I ask if Bonaparte could be situated in this part of the street he immediately says "No". Later he mentions that maybe as night bar, with a doorman, he thinks it could actually everywhere. But when it's more visible I would not place it in this part of the street.

[ext/int]

L timing / safety

Appendix

[He mentions he thinks the old signing of the companies that used to be there are very beautiful, because they tell a bit of history]

[He lights another cigarette]

We talk about being younger and what you see in the street. XXX thinks that when he was younger, he was more thinking about what other people are doing and seeing, compared to now. Now he found more balance and space to look at other details in the street.

[We decide to start walking again]

XXX is seriously considering taking the tram back. We got a bit cold, so we decide to walk back to Bonaparte.

He likes the fact that the end part is overlooking Old Delfshaven, the oldest part of the city.

Social/Physical When I ask if he feels comfortable in the street, he immediately says "yes". He likes that we are walking here now, because it allows him to look at the street "with different eyes". I say how this is exactly my goal to look to at the street through different eyes. He is now really noticing the physical street and buildings. While normally he would experience more a certain "atmosphere". For XXX, atmosphere is more about "activities". It is also a bit about the physical appearance, but mostly about the movements of people, how they are living, how lively it is. He describes the street as "gezellig": "Maybe this last part is a bit quieter than the beginning, but it is still alive, things are happening, you would always run into people."

[We pass Heemraadsplein, where his bus stops, he mentions he never really noticed that this was already Nieuwe Binnenweg, also because all the streets are curved here]

He thinks where the Singel crosses the street the atmosphere not really changes. Although he thinks that the more you go towards Delfshaven, the more it feels like a residential neighborhood. Maybe a bit more for the residents, rather than visitors. More towards the center it is more about cafés. XXX thinks you also see this in the way people move: "if people are moving with a clear destination, or if they are more strolling." These are all aspects he takes in consideration when talking about "atmosphere".

time He rarely shops here. He mentions he is almost 4/5 times a week at Bonaparte, "more often than at home". It's not just the place for him, but also the colleagues: "It's very nice to have place where you are always wanted". He first came to Bonaparte about four years ago. He already learned about Bonaparte when he was working in a drag bar in Amsterdam. He is more inclined to go in drag at night. "It is quite an activity to dress up." During summer he also used to sit in drag at the terrace to attract some people. "Not really working working but helping the business in another way." Or he used to go live on Facebook after a press conference to talk about the new regulations in the bar. He mentions his drag character has some fans, that also attract people to Bonaparte. He knows people from Arnhem going there every week.

[dir] XXX mentions he really likes the "foreign shops" in the streets, that sell very specific products. He likes it, because it comes from a certain demographic in the street, but it makes it possible for him to discover new products.

He now only notices these the copper streets that are war references [people were taken from their houses there]

[We pass the XXXXX and mentions he still wants to go there some time, because it is something like the Jamin for him]

social

We talk a bit about the homeless people in the street. XXX mentions that in his part of the street there are some people that have their own "spot", where they always stay. A bit further down there is also a 'day care', so that part of street is also a way to center. He says some are almost kind of friends. Some stop to have a little chat, so that are the people that stay in mind. He talks about Carla, who now as a little house in the area, but sells the homeless papers. She always passes by for a chat and to "bring a smile", she never asks for anything, just for some social contact. She also knows their names. XXX mentioned a woman, who stopped by for a little chat every now and then, recently died. Although he didn't really know her as a person, he knew her by face and describes it as "a face that has disappeared from the scenes of the street".

For XXX it adds something to street, to see something familiar faces and knows some names. But for him it's not a necessity. For some people in the street they also have nicknames at Bonaparte. "The person that always says "Hi Friend", we call Friend, the person that always says "Hi Brother", we call brother".

As colleagues they also joke among each other about the people that scream "Homo's" out of their car window, that one day they will pass the Westerpaviljoen and scream "Hetero's".

XXX is an artist. He used to work in a bar in the street and his girlfriend used to live just off Nieuwe Binnenweg.

He has chosen Heemraadsplein as the starting point for the walk because of its centrality.

[We start walking towards the bridge]

When walking towards the bridge he mentions he loved to go to the old cafés in Delfshaven.

div/social

What is special about the street to XXX is how he thinks the street changes every few meters in terms of atmosphere: at the beginning (the center-side) the stores appear different. They are meant for a different public. This side (the end to XXX) is more "volks". While on the end change is also visible. Cafés are being taken over and things get more "hip".

By "volks" he means that he feels that part is meant more for the residents instead of visitors of the street.

His girlfriend used to live in a little side street of Nieuwe Binnenweg, but her address was Nieuwe Binnenweg, but she moved.

XXX is an artist (a screen printer) and he made a print called "Nieuwe Binnenweg". This print shows the view from the kitchen window of his girlfriend's apartment.

For XXX, Bar3 was always also an important spot in the street. An important gathering point for friends. For the friends that live in this part of the city. Because XXX used to work in Bar3.

When XXX was younger (around 17) he went to school in Rotterdam (Grafisch Lyceum), while not living in Rotterdam. Back then he knew the Nieuwe Binnenweg because of a few famous coffee shops and because of the tram passing it. He didn't visit the street often, but the name was familiar to him.

div./exciting

XXX mentioned he always felt quite connected to the neighborhoods Oude Westen and Middelland, because there is a lot of hustle and bustle, a lot of life. It is never boring. You can find everything here, in all the little stores. There is something for everyone, which is for him positive way to express this. Though it is also a bustle that every now and then gets a bit too much for him. But it is definitely also the appeal.

[We reach the end of the street and turn around]

XXX moves around a lot in the west of Rotterdam. He jokingly says to friends he rarely moves beyond the other side of the Coolingsingel. He mentions this is an exaggeration, but he means that you can find almost everything in West.

social.

When the hustle and bustle gets a bit too much for XXX, he talks mainly about the people. Maybe too many "crazy people". There are quite a lot of "crazy people" in the street. Sometimes it just seems a lot. But it also depends on his own mood. Which is probably the main factor, sometimes it is just more difficult to tolerate. At other times it is just nice to get lost in it.

I wondered how he looks at the city from his perspective as an artist. And if this is a different way of looking. XXX thinks and hopes so. He tries to capture the things that strike him, but he

thinks it is difficult to put that into one category. He suggests going to some places in the neighborhood to show the sites of which he made some prints.

[when walking he mentions he really likes a store, Tropische producten de Waard, number 357, because of the tropical products and the fact that they have a lot of kitchen utensils]

I asked him about his way of working

Timing. For XXX walking helps a lot because you miss a lot when you cycle. When you walk you have more time to look. And sometimes "things stick to his retina". Sometimes he sees something and then afterwards feels like he needs to go back there. Or he makes a lot of photos while walking, and some really stand out. Then he thinks; this is it.

These walks are not always planned, he also takes pictures during his daily activities. Sometimes he takes a photo, and thinks this is cool, there is more to this. Then he goes back to take more pictures during another time of the day, waiting for the sun for instance. And the fact that you see a lot of Rotterdam West in my works, is just because I am here.

[We pass Heemraadsplein again]

(contribution?) I get back to the topic of the atmosphere in the street. XXX described the "end" of the street a bit more "volks". Towards the Heemraadssingel he describes it as more "gezellig", with the cafés. He thinks it's a pity the older cafés are being replaced by more modern stuff [all three corner cafés, rijke & de Wit, Bakeliet & Steyn, got new owners]. He understands and describes this 'complaint' as "sentimental".

Rijke & de Wit is still authentic. Café Steyn used to be more of a old-fashioned "stamkroeg" with old men and free "leverwost". But overall, he thinks it is also good that these pubs change owners and freshened up a little. He describes this piece of the street as very lively, busy on summer days and pleasant to sit in.

He noticed a lot of people nowadays, compared to a few years ago, use the Singel as a park.

XXX mentioned he always forgets what is exactly where, in terms of shops etc., in the part between Heemraadssingel and 's Gravendijkwal. He forgets what is between Heemraadssingel and Claes de Vrieselaan and what is between Claes de Vrieselaan and 's Gravendijkwal. He mentions, slightly annoyed, that he doesn't understand why since he has visited it so often. I recognize this feeling. We think it is because both blocks are quite similar.

He usually cycles through this part.

I asked if he has witnessed a lot of change during the passed years.

Anchor point. He mentioned that the chip shop [Peppie, the little kiosk on Claes de Vrieselaan] is gone now. It used to be quite a "concept" in the neighborhood, a little shabby chip shop. He took a lot of pictures of the shop, to maybe do something with it in the future, so he luckily still has the pictures. He mentioned he often noticed something was renewed or changed, realizing he didn't capture the old situation. Which is a pity to him.

He mentions again that to him this is more an area he passes by bike. Except for the corners. *L time/change.*

Anchor. [we cross the street to walk to see the site he made a print of]

We find the right spot and he shows me the print. Peppie was still there on the print. He chose to take a photo from the terrace, because he liked the way the

shadow fell on the transformer house.
I mention he will not ever witness this shadow again, because the little kiosk of Peppie is demolished.

[He mentions the initiative "Geef me de ruimte"]

contrast

What he also likes about the image of the print is the (monumental) transformer house in the front, which is very rectangular, and the old, ornamented houses in the back. The transformer house is actually blocking the view on the more "beautiful" houses behind it. He described this as funny.

Around the corner, on the 's Gravendijkwal, he made another print.

[we cross the street and turn towards the 's Gravendijkwal]

According to XXX, this image has a very different atmosphere. More a 's Gravendijkwal atmosphere rather than a Claes de Vrieselaan atmosphere.

I mention his prints are usually just off Nieuwe Binnenweg, rather than on the street itself. He never looked at it this way.

contrast

He mentions he actually constantly takes pictures. He might have a collection of the full neighborhood by now. While waiting for the traffic light he mentioned he loves the façade of the corner café (XXXX). He thinks the fact that it is very skewed is quite charming and gives the place an old character. To him this represents "gezelligheid". Especially on this very busy crossing. There is a lot coming together in one place. There is a big contrast between the old café and a lot of infrastructure, rush and air pollution. He thinks this is quite "typical".

On the other hand he thinks the tunnel traverse (which exists since 1942) of the 's Gravendijkwal gives quite an old-fashioned look, because he thinks nowadays they would design this as a solution for the traffic in a neighborhood like this.

[we stop at the place where he took a picture]

Meaning/atmosphere.

He passed it by bike a couple of times, when the sun was already setting, and the streetlights gave a bit of an orange glow to it. There were still more leaves on the trees. He mentions the massage salon as typical for a 's Gravendijkwal view, with the old trees and a piece of the tunnel. He is very happy with this print.

He thinks the massage salon is typical for the street because of the "red light district atmosphere" of the street, because of the OQ and Lido just a bit further down the road. This massage salon gives him a similar feeling, as if it is a sign for the rest of the street at the beginning of the tunnel.

[We start walking again and talk about how he makes his prints]

time/imperfection.

After he takes the picture he traces every layer by hand, using tracing paper. He decides on the layers with picture next to it, constantly looking back and forth from picture to drawing. Which means who looks at the picture for several days, looking at every detail.

We talk about the relationship between the print and reality. He likes to stay very true to reality. For instance, in the street there are a lot of parked cars and trash bins, which determine the scene of the street a lot. So, he would never 'hide' these aspects of the street, capturing it as it is, a picture of time. He mentions again sometimes regretting not capturing things before they are changed.

[we cross the street again, he runs into a friend he greets who asks if we are getting a hotdog]

We find the location of his print called "Nieuwe Binnenweg" which I recognized as

being in the street because of the old "van Nelle" advertisement.

impefection/time/charm. He noticed a cable hanging in front of the window. He doubted whether to portray the cable or not. But it was hanging there, so he chose to portray it. He made the print as a surprise for his girlfriend. He chose to put the corner of the building exactly in the middle of the print, so you would see as much of the old monumental façade as the blind wall: "it is just as present, so it is allowed to be there".

Not long after he made the print, the wall was painted to hide all the graffiti. So now he is happy he captured it with as it used to be because it belongs there, not shying away from "the ugly" or what could be considered "ugly" or less interesting. Like the garbage containers in the front.

He likes to look for the contrast, and to look for what defines an image of the street.

define. He mentions his admiration for an American comic illustrator, about whom he saw a documentary, in which the illustrator goes out to observe all street and traffic lights, cables and details in the street, because he also needed that for his comics.

He mentions that this part feels very different from a bit further back in the street. It is a bit more pleasant for the pedestrian, since the sidewalks are wider. But the cars drive way too fast. He compares cycling through the street to an amusement ride, something you are not always feeling like doing.

[we almost pass by Bar3 his old working spot]

time. He mentioned he used to walk home from work around six in the morning and how the atmosphere in the street was always very relaxed during time of the day, as very quiet.

Then he mentioned koningsnacht/dag, about how the first part of the street (till the Mathenesserlaan) is turned into a market then. He always used to work late and very early in the morning meet the people that put stuff already there for the market.

[He greets his (old)colleagues]

[Near Eendrachtsplein we cross the street again]

We talk about how the people working in the street (especially in the bars) have quite a lot of contact with each other. Together for instance they start a campaign against the cars driving too fast.

He mentions the tobacco place (De Nieuwe Hoek) that used to be situated at the corner, where he used to get cheap coffee on a lazy day. According to XXX there were always a lot of friends of the owner hanging in front of the shop, which was not very inviting to him. He would send them away if it was his store. A group of men doing nothing, hanging at the corner, give him more the feeling of wanting to pass quickly rather than finding it "gezellig" and inviting. "Why would you want that? Maybe it's narrow minded of me, I don't know".

div.
Atmosphere XXX mentions how the streets gradually shifts from more "generally accessible" to "volks", but how this is for him not the case in the adjacent neighborhoods, which he describes as equally "volks" as the end of the street. He thinks this is striking, that the more "center-feeling" of the beginning of the street is not felt in the adjacent neighborhoods. But he also describes as the "charm of Rotterdam", that when you exit central station, you immediately face a working-class neighborhood. In other cities this would be more on the back side of the station, rather than the center-side.

XXXX owns a building in the street for 12 years already. On the ground floor her tableware shop is located, the other floors she rents out.

XXXX is a bit delayed, so she sent me to "urban" to have a coffee and wait for her.

[We start walking towards the west side of the street]

time > history
She mentions, she bought the building, because it is a very nice building. What she really likes about the street is the fact that it was not bombed during the war, so all the old buildings are still there: "if you take the effort to look up, you see the most beautiful buildings". She mentioned how she thinks it's a pity that the image of the street is completely ruined by the stores underneath. She points at some facades on the ground floor that are "ruined" but mentions how it is very beautiful on the upper floors.

straightened
XXXX mentions how 10 years ago the municipality sold a lot of their buildings to a real estate agency called Ultee. According to XXXX Ultee promised to remake the street into a shopping street again, but he straightened the whole façade. Got rid of all the porches and stained glass because the straightening is easier.

L physical historical layers removed
[We pass the Albert Heijn and she mentions it is the first Albert Heijn in the Netherlands]

aesthetics
Every now and then, XXXX points at some straightened facades and calls them "terribly ugly". But also, the added overhangs she calls "misery". Also, the gates in front of the porches are added because of nuisance because of "junks". According to XXXX there used to be the problem of a lot of "junks" in the street, because it was close to the "Keileweg", where the prostitutes used to be.

social/business
A lot of "straightening" of the façade happened around 2010/2011. Many buildings were empty and neglected. This happened around the time XXXX bought the building, so she said she saved it from being ruined as well, because she likes the original ornaments.

She describes the ground floor often as "not to be seen", so she prefers to look up.

aesthetics/unity
In 2010 the municipality wanted to regenerate the street and sold some buildings to Ultee to freshen them up. They also created some guidelines about the signing of the shops because that was "completely out of control", with bright and flickering lights. So according to XXXX that is a bit better now. But slowly when the municipality is not closely watching anymore you see them appearing again.

The municipality stops paying attention when they have other priorities. According to XXXX, they reserve a little budget and put a project manager on it for a year, and when the year passes, they go to another area and don't pay attention to it anymore.

[We pass café Steyn, and she mentions how this is also still original and a bit Jugendstil-esque]

She mentions again how the municipality moves on to another area and then stops enforcing the regulations.

According to XXXX, the municipality now again is reserving 9 million euros to regenerate the shopping street. They have the plan to buy back 9 buildings and

Nostalgia.

find "nice shop owners for these buildings", to make the street "lively" again. The Nieuwe Binnenweg is one part of this plan (among other streets). But what they forget then, because they want a bakery, a butcher, a cheese-shop etc. again, that those shops used to be here, but were "swallowed by the supermarkets". Those people also need to earn their bread and if the profit is not enough, they quit trying. That is what happened in the 80s and 90s. The rents were too high, and then people quit the cheese-shop. And now the municipality wants to bring back that nostalgia again, but that is not feasible. And sometimes for an owner it is cheaper to keep store empty because it's just a tax write off for him. XXXX mentions how nowadays there are a lot of hairdressers, nail and beauty salons. Because all the owners just want to rent out the building and don't care about the kind of shop that will rent it.

XXXX mentions how she is part of the board of the Biz [a collective Business Investment Zone] and we see there is also a lot of money laundering with the beauty salons and hairdressers. Because good luck paying 2000 euros of rent and earning your money with a nail studio.

As the Biz they critique the municipality. They think the municipality doesn't have the means to tackle issues with the owners. XXXX gives Utrecht as an example where new hairdressers need a license for instance.

Physical

[every now and then XXXX points at a façade which she figuratively speaking could "cry over" because of the ruined building, "plastic maintenance free"]

XXXX says you can also question the concept of a shopping street in these times, "do people still go to shops?"

In this last part of the street [near the bridge] a lot of buildings are owned by Woonstad and Woonbron, who try to transform the shops into housing, so the part from the parc, till the bridge.

XXXX mentions how she bought the building, so she doesn't have to pay rent. But she wouldn't make enough money with the shop to pay the rent. But I would not be able to make a house in my building, because for now that's only meant in this last part of the street. But then the owners must also want that of course.

Social institution

We talk a bit about the Biz. It is not a shopkeeper's association, but an official body, for which people are obliged to pay, which is collected through the tax authorities. So, it is of course very difficult to involve the whole street, with all its different stores and restaurants. The Biz creates a newsletter, they try to drive on the municipality. For instance, about the fact that ("the biggest problem on Nieuwe Binnenweg") people drive way too fast ("Huffergedrag"). But also, double parking because of the takeaways, and then the tram is stuck. "Sometimes in front of my store the tram is ringing for 15 minutes, because it cannot pass."

When we talk about this with the municipality, they mention that they lack enforcement. Then we suggest not giving the takeaway places a license, because you can predict it is going to be problematic.

XXXX mentions how they try to involve people with the Biz, and try to be meaningful, but "it is very hard". Especially the moment of the year when people need to pay for the Biz, they get a lot of complaints about not doing anything.

The majority of entrepreneurs of the street voted in favor of a Biz, so now you are stuck with it for five years. So, if the majority wants, everyone is automatically a part of it. So now there is counter-movements in the street, for instance an action group to abolish the Biz, but that is not possible. So, there is also a lot of negative responses.

[XXXX keeps on mentioning the "ugliness" of some ground floors of the buildings]

Appendix

According to XXXX there are also a lot of "unclear" shops, a lot of money laundering constructions. For instance, the Shisha lounge next door, XXXX doesn't understand how they can pay the rent. She mentions how she would not be able to pay the rent. She can only afford it because it's her building.

XXXX bought her building in 2010. She was looking for a relatively affordable building, and she mentions how on the other side of the 's Gravendijkwal [towards eendrachtsplein] the buildings were already 100.000 euros more expensive. So there is a big price difference within the street, also in rent. She says how she is lucky because she bought the building with three renters above the ground floor, so that generates income for her. Besides, she is retired so she can afford a so-called "hobby-store". And back in 2010, the prices were way lower than nowadays. XXXX paid 280.000 euros in 2010 and she thinks it will now cost around 550.000 euros for the full building.

[she mentions a woman that has her clothing store, Swanky, since a long time and wants to quit it]

XXXX often visits all parts of the street because she is on the board of the Biz. Every now and then she goes around with someone from the Biz to deliver the newsletter and to have a little chat about how it's going. Or if new entrepreneurs arrive, they pay a little visit.

XXXX mentions the many hairdressers in the street. Her neighbor now is also a hairdresser. She used to have the vintage store, Ruby Lee, next to her, but they moved to the other side of the street because the rent was cheaper. But now she, quit because she still couldn't make ends meet.

She mentions how the last part of the street, towards the bridge, is the cheapest part. After café Steyn the prices increase and more towards the city center it gets more expensive.

XXXX meets a lot of people through the Biz. She likes that because some people really appreciate the Biz as well. Now for instance they developed a "boodschappentas" for entrepreneurs to put their products in, to sell. So, they try to organize a lot, also with the municipality. A big pro of being a Biz, according to XXXX, is being a serious partner with the municipality. But she thinks most shopkeepers don't read the newsletter. When they organize a meeting, 13 people show up, while there are 200 entrepreneurs in the street. But XXXX thinks that is normal.

XXXX actually voted against the Biz because she didn't really see it happening with all these different entrepreneurs. What indeed turns out to be the case. But then the majority voted in favor of it, and then XXXX also felt responsible for "her street", so she wanted to make the most out of it. Then she also wanted to take the advantage of it and join the board to be able to have a say.

XXXX was actively looking for a place in Rotterdam to start a table ware shop in Rotterdam. She took over the store from her sister, who died, and moved the store from the North of Holland to Rotterdam.

XXXX mentions how the Nieuwe Binnenweg used to be a very posh shopping street. Her mother-in-law is 95 and who lives in Rotterdam since she was born. She always says how you used to go to the Nieuwe Binnenweg to buy something "chic". XXXX experienced this for at the very end, around 2000. Back then there were still some chic stores every now and then.

[we pass someone for the municipality and a community police officer whom XXXX greets]

She mentions how with the Biz they complain that the municipality never pays a visit to the street, and how they try to keep on pushing attention on the street with the Biz. XXXX mentions how the municipality is one big mess, so "they act

responsible.

Nostalgia.

institutional

on the child that screams loudest for attention". Which according to her makes sense, since they also don't know where to start, unless it really goes out of control.

[she describes a façade again as a "pain for the eye"]

What they also try with the Biz is to find new entrepreneurs for empty buildings. But she says they rarely manage. At some point the house ~~owners~~ ^{aesthetics} must done with waiting and not getting rent and then it becomes a hairdresser again. They only care about getting rent.

XXXX complains about the takeaway shops, which bring nothing but misery according to her. "People throw their garbage on the street, they double park, it is not open during shop-hours (after 16.00 h), so it doesn't bring any life to the street."

Within the Biz it's ~~not just between entrepreneurs, but also with the people that own or manage the buildings.~~ ^{time} They also host a owner's meeting with for instance Woonstad and Woonbron, big players who have a lot of influence in the municipality. So it's practical to have them on board.

She mentions Halal Fried Chicken to talk again about the burdens of having takeaways in the street. "Then there are always five scooters parked, or they park them in front of another shop".

So what they do now, is always take a picture when something happens. For instance, there is a crossing in front of XXXX's door where people park their car sometimes. Then she takes a picture and then they share this in their group-WhatsApp, to address these kinds of issues.

XXXX already lives at the Nieuwe Binnenweg, above a bar, for X years now. She is XXX and a student in Rotterdam.

[ext/int]

social.

We start in XXXX's house on the first floor on a corner in the Nieuwe Binnenweg and walk down towards the street. We start to talk about the part of the street in front of her house. XXXX mentions how there's always people hanging around on the corner in front of her house. It seems to her like they get stuck between a streetlight and a traffic light. She feels like they never leave the area. Sometimes she sees them walking towards one point, turn around, and walk towards the other point. She jokingly calls it "the Bermuda triangle, because people just get confused and lost". There is one man that always comes there. XXXX thinks he has anger issues because he screams a lot. But there is also a lot of different people. They hang a lot in front of the door on number 185.

safety.

XXXX mentions how at the crossing a lot of accidents happen. Sometimes in the middle of the night she hears a bang and then there is a small car crash: "one time a truck took out all this glass, one time a car went through all these parked bikes". This happened mostly in the night. "Recently a car hit a scooter, it was really scary, there were a lot of people around and I thought it was his friends calling the police because he looked like he was not moving. But instead of calling the police they were just calling their friends that dragged him into a car. And then I called the police". The next day she saw traces of blood on the street.

XXXX calls the police quite a lot. There is some violence going around quite often.

[ext/int]

She mentions the nightclubs around her house at 's Gravendijkwal. Once she went in club OQ, for a project, because it is really shut off and you don't really see what is going on inside, so it's really calling you to come inside. For a study project she was interested in this notion of anonymity. For a project she needed to find a subculture in Rotterdam and she wanted it to be about the men that go to strip clubs. In the end the men didn't really want to speak, so she ended up speaking more to the women.

- anchor points.

[int/ext] change.

XXXX feels like there is a lot going on at these corners. The coffeeshop at the corner closed because they had hard drugs and guns in there. She also feels like everything in this street constantly switches "then there are new restaurants opening and then they don't make it and then it gets switched around". "One time ... sorry every story is a bit dark, but it is going to get a bit less dark later. One time I was in the kitchen and I just heard the sound of [she mimics a sound] and she thought it was the sound of a carrier going over a bump, but then she realized it was gun shots and someone shot into this bar, which is now being renovated out of the car, it was called Roffa Café and it was also not around for a very long time, someone was shot in the leg. They pulled him inside, somewhere in the back room, and when the police came, they cleared the whole area". So she was in the middle of the crime scene. There were men in white suits. "It was really weird, because afterwards the café was still open for a while, with gun shots in the window".

social

We pass 'XXXXX' and she mentions she really likes the guys that work here, because they are really funny. She comes there sometimes. She always gets the same thing, she always buys gin, so sometimes when she entered, they would already hand her the gin, because they knew she was going to get it, "they are really cute".

She points at restaurant 'Sranang' which is her favorite restaurant in the street.

comfort.

I ask her if she still feels comfortable in and around her house after the "dark" stuff she just said to me. She doesn't feel threatened herself, because she feels like the stuff that happens, happens within their own groups, people don't have a reason to harm her. She also doesn't really experience any catcalling, "maybe it is also because I dress quite big and masculine, so I have less attention like that". So there is a lot of bad things happening, but she mentions that also in her parents' village in the middle of nowhere bad things are happening: "I don't feel like a target, or uncomfortable". When I ask about how she feels like dressing, she mentions she would for sure feel self-conscious if she would walk there dressed differently: "it is a choice, but at the same time it's because I feel comfortable, because I know that I am not going to get bad attention. I understand what she is saying and have a similar feeling. She mentions: "It's a choice, because it makes me feel more comfortable, but why does it make me feel more comfortable? As soon as I will wear a skirt or something, it's a completely different story."

L adjust behaviour

[We pass the crossing with the Claes de Vrieselaan]

anchor point.

She mentions 'snackbar Peppie' and thinks people probably already told me about this. She knows a lot of people that are or were very enthusiastic about 'Peppie'. She had fries there a few times, but she found them "so gross, because they were cold, soggy and tasteless". So she didn't really understand what people found exciting about it, but probably because it had been there for so long, it became part of the culture.

She points at a street on the left, parallel to Nieuwe Binnenweg, where her ex-boyfriend lived whom she had been with for 2,5 years. And also a common friend lived in the same house, but she moved. So, it was super nice to live two minutes away from each other, but now it's a bit weird because I could run into him. So, it feels a bit strange to be around here.

div./fascination

She mentions she really likes the Toko at the corner, which is run by this old Chinese couple "and they are really funny, I don't know they have good sense of humor, they are really sweet". She walked passed the Toko for years, thinking she wanted to go inside, then one time it looked like they were closed down and she felt quite sad. Then they opened again and then she felt like she had to check it out. XXXX mentions she was drawn to the place, because she likes places where they have a lot of different stuff that other places don't have: "where I could find stuff, I would not be able to find in a different supermarket, that is very specific".

We pass by a wall that has a sticker on it she made. She doesn't know who put it there. She made them for her graduation project. She didn't make many, so it's really nice to see them around.

Then she mentions one funny story that she forgot to tell: "So, you saw the couch in my place, during lockdown she went on Marktplaats a lot to look for furniture. Then there was this couch, very far away, 2,5 hours from here, but I really wanted that couch. Then when I got it, the guy gave me the receipt and it was from the late 70s and actually the address was where the Albert Heijn is now. So there was a furniture shop where the Albert Heijn is now and the couch was sold there initially, so I brought it back into the same street". time.

nostalgia

She mentions the last bar before the crossroad, which is Bakeliet now. It used to be Spinnewiel, which was run by this old Dutch couple. It was very nice: "I love these older places where they have like a smokers area with darts and stuff. It was that kind of place. They had all this stuff on the ceiling, they had all these weird photocollage's from dart tournaments and stuff that they did. It was really cute. But they were pretty old and there were not too many people going in. I think I even know the star sign of the owner, like he was a Pisces".

in/out.

I ask if this is the part of the street where she comes most often. She mentions she also comes in the first part a lot, but when she is really settled and at home, this [till the Heemraadssingel] is really where she moves around and everything else feels way more "out". She mentions she used to go to Rotown, Bar3 and Stalles quite a lot. The part between 's Gravendijkwal and Heemraadssingel feels more like staying in the street, whereas the other parts feel more like going out. It's where she moves around the most when she's at home. The beginning feels less like her street because it is more center. It is where she could run into people more easily, while this feels more like a place where people live.

She mentions how she always plans to try to visit every restaurant, but in the end she often ends up at the same places. Also because it's more takeout kind of stuff: "I feel like I would more discover the places around, like when I go out, I actually want to go out out, and not just around the corner. That's also for a very long time I never had a drink in the bar below". She also had issues with them concerning sound, so she never felt like she wanted to hang out in that bar. She had her first beer there, three weeks ago. But she felt like it didn't really add anything to her life. She went with some friends. They actually wanted to go to Dizzy, but it was really busy, so they just tried the bar. Her upstairs neighbor basically lives in the bar. He is there every day after work: "He hangs around there like he owns the place". Through her job she knows a woman that works at the bar below her, and she mentioned her neighbor also leaves his key there and that he is always the last one to leave.

XXXX mentioned, it is quite annoying, because the heating systems of the houses above is also placed in the basement of the bar. So a few times they turned of the heating, but they didn't know this. They were really struggling with this at some point.

[we pass the single and reach the part towards Delfshaven]

XXXX mentions she only passes through this part most of the time to go to Delfshaven. There is just one secondhand shop that she really likes, de Stichting, it's full of shit but she found really nice old TV-screens. She really likes it, because sometimes she does installations with old electronics. But other than that she has never really been in one of the shops here. She feels like this part is not her home anymore: "maybe it feels a bit more like West-Kruiskade". Because of the more flashy hair shops and a lot of coffee shops in line. She experiences her part of the street more as a place to live and the West-Kruiskade and this part of Nieuwe Binnweg feels more as "going to the shops and going through". But probably also because she is not the one living there.

She mentions again how the shops change around very quickly: "there is always empty places, and places where you think, did anyone go in here for the last half year".

When I ask her if she experienced some change over the past years she lived here, she answers (with a bit of a laugh) how "definitely gentrification spreads out from the center, like more of the smaller super and Asian supermarkets are switching out for conceptual stuff". She mentions how people try it, but it never really works. She thinks what works best are the Surinamese Eetcafé's, because people just want to eat: "there was a vegan cupcake shop that didn't make it, that kind of stuff they are trying, but doesn't work here". XXXX thinks it's going to keep happening more, the shops that you have in the center also coming more to this street, because it gets expensive.

XXXX actually thinks it's nice to see that it's not working. She thinks sometimes you can just see that for instance "someone rich from Amsterdam came and had the idea for this conceptual shop, I don't know there is one really close to my place that I find so annoying, because you basically have like one table in between a bunch of shelves. It's like so not nice to sit there. You are basically just sitting in a shop with a table. It feels overly branded, trying to tick all the

change/gentrification. Change

in/out/residential!

nostalgia?

boxes that you would want from a place".

She mentions the corner shop from the Chinese couple, she likes the fact that when she goes there, she is directly helping them and that she can get something that she wouldn't be able to get somewhere else. Sometimes she needs old weird electronics, and Mediamarkt for instance does not sell Mp3 players anymore. So these kinds of shops, when it's not a big chain, they are going to have something like that laying around. The big chains know "what sells, so everything that never really sells just gets switched out, and with the shops that are owned by families they don't really have a system like that, so you can find really weird, specific things, so that is nice to know". "It becomes more generic, and less specific to the place". So the Lidl we pass for instance used to be a very cool supermarket, with flags outside and vegetables outside and now it's a Lidl. "It's more replaceable". But she mentions how they were also not able to stay, because the people that lived there didn't go there enough: "So it's also the responsibility of the people that live there, to go there, and I also didn't go there". So she is kind of annoyed that now there is a Lidl there, but she also never went there, so she also didn't really "support it staying".

Sometimes she sets the intention for herself to not go to Albert Heijn for a month and visit all the other shops. But in the end she never does it, because it feels like a lot of effort to find all the different things in different places: "you need to have time for that". She mentions how she still really likes the street. Although she liked the fact that is quiet for a while during lockdown, because she was really "going a bit insane". The sounds of the racing cars, the bar and everything. She was already living there for 4/5 years before lockdown happened. In all those years she never really put furniture in her house because it never really felt like a permanent place, because it was so loud. It was good at that time, but she never really felt like she wanted to "nest" and get furniture that was hard to move in and out. But during lockdown she bought some furniture, because now she could really picture herself staying there.

Even now [with lockdown slowing going away] it's still a lot better than it was before. Nightlife is not fully going yet, also the bar does live music a bit more. It's less "hard nightlife", a lot of drunk people around 2/3 h: "so it's sucks for me that I cannot go out or go to clubs, but at the same time it is also nice that I can go to sleep". At the same time "you have to allow for the center to be loud, and you have to allow for the life to be in the center, so I also have to respect that I chose to live on top of the bar, so I can't really expect it to be this quiet, peaceful place, because then I should move more outside of the center".

"So yeah, it's annoying, but there is also a lot of other things that I like about this place". A lot of friends tell her it would be "so sad if you moved out of that place". I would feel like the end of an era for her. For XXXX it would even be a weird thought that someone else would live there. She is not ready yet, to no be able to go inside. She would definitely stay until she is done studying. Also, in terms of housing prices, it is not a good time to move.

She doesn't feel completely comfortable in that place, because she is sandwiched between the bar and the neighbor that is quite sensitive to sound, but the place feels like hers now. She moved in around new years and the bar was playing YMCA very loud and then she thought to herself: "oh my god, what have I done". In the beginning it was very bad, but it got better and better.

I ask her if she is ever scared in her house. Sometimes she is scared that someone breaks in, also because the door doesn't close very well. And she mentions that sometimes noises from the street sound like they are in her room. Sometimes she can be a bit paranoid. She mentions she has pepperspray in her kitchen drawer just in case. Sometimes she hears there's people in the house that make sounds that she doesn't recognize, then she gets a bit paranoid. "But it's not so bad, it's just small moments in time ... Because I am just so used to all the sounds

Appendix

in the house, that when something's different, a different step, I am like, who is that?!".

We talk a bit more about the project. XXXX mentions it's "a complex little street".

XXX is living in the street for two years now. He lives above a XXX restaurant.

XXX lives with three other people. Before XXX lived in Oude Noorden. He notices he stays a lot in the area that he also lives in. So now his life is almost fully in west, not in north anymore.

XXX likes the Nieuwe Binnenweg. He describes the street as "relaxed" and a place where a lot is happening. In his house there is a very big window towards the street, so sometimes the sit in the window a full evening to watch people pass by. The only thing XXX is not happy about, is the traffic. Last year they did an experiment [he interrupts his sentence to point at a nice breakfast place] to make the street car-free. So they blocked off part of the street, but people found a way around it anyway. He is seriously sorry for that fact that this experiment failed.

He points at Bonaparte and asks if I have ever been there. He mentions that, when he didn't live here yet, this used to be the spot he visited when it was 06.00 am and everything else was closed. He visited it a couple of times, but he thinks he only went there after 06.00 am. This place and another place, the Keerweer, were famous for being open very late. He says he rarely sees people there during the day, except for a small group of regulars.

This is the part he walks most often, this is his bakery, he avoids the Vlaamsche Broodhuys, because it's a chain. He likes to go to the more local food entrepreneurs, but mostly because they have nice stuff. He also comes often at Albert Heijn.

He mentions how he thinks it's funny that, since there are that many shops in the street, the always doubts when he looks at a shop if it was already there for some time or not. He has seen some changes the past two years, but to XXX it doesn't feel very different. It feels more like something is being replaced for something that is quite similar, rather than big changes. Although he thinks it is becoming more "hip". You see some flea shops being replaced by coffee bars for instance, and then after a year it is being replaced again because it doesn't work. And the Albert Heijn XXX goes now, also was not there yet when he moved here.

This part of the street, from his house to Albert Heijn, he thinks he walks 2 to 3 times a day, because he never stocks food, he just wants to buy what he is feeling like eating at that moment.

He mentions he actively tries to discover some new places from time to time in the street. He thinks the other part of the street is very ugly though. This part side is way more "gezellig". He likes that very wide sideways here. It might be chaos with the cars, but at least you have a wide sidewalk. This is also more city center.

[we cross the street at Eendrachtsplein and start walking at the "ugly" side of the street]

When I ask why he thinks it's ugly, he says he thinks it looks very eastern-European. But then he adds it is probably also because all the bars are on the other side. You can sit outside there and there are more people on that side of the street, there is more life. He thinks the street would have looked very different if that was on both sides. *social / physical.*

XXX likes the fact that the street is quite busy. That's why they often sit in the window at home because there are so many people passing by. There are quite some

bizarre things that happened in the street. They overlook the Westerpaviljoen from the window, and one day someone leashed the dog at the table. But the dog saw something at the crossing, so it ran towards the crossing taking the table with him bumping into cars etc. "yes the traffic is quite bad here". Often when a car stops in the middle of the street, the tram cannot pass and then traffic is standing still for quite some time.

XXX mentions there is two things he thinks are really annoying about the street. So, one is traffic and the other one is the amount of homeless people. "I cannot walk towards the supermarket without being addressed by one or two people". Now is this not necessarily a bad thing, and it can happen every now and then, but it's mostly annoying because there is not really a certain consensus of recognizing each other and not asking people that live in the street anymore.

He was recently talking about this with a flatmate, who has been living with him for a year. When he just moved there, they walked in the street together and someone asked them, "can I ask you something" and then XXX answered "no". Then the flatmate was a bit surprised by his rudeness because someone is "always allowed to ask something right". And he has lived here for a year now, and I think yesterday he reached the point that someone approached him, and XXX was standing next to him, and someone asked if they could ask something. And then the flatmate answered "no". So it took him a year to develop this attitude. When this happens every day a few times it makes you a bit numb to the situation and you become a bit rude.

You also start recognizing them in the street. But unfortunately that is not the other way around. *habit...*

During Covid, when it was way more quiet in the street, XXX also started looking more at the buildings and architecture in the street. And when he just started living here, he also paid more attention to his surroundings. But now, because he is looking at it so often, he comes a bit blind to his surroundings. Sometimes he walks, but he doesn't register at all his surroundings.

With the neighbor below them, they have a friendly relationship, every now and then he asks them something, for instance recently they helped him install a printer. But it is not very personal. XXX grew up in a village where he knew his neighbors. He lived here now for two years, but he doesn't have a clue who his neighbors are. And for some reason they can make all the noise they want without having the neighbors complain. They only saw them once during New Year's Eve. But he already forgot their names. XXX thinks maybe it's different with people that own their building or shop.

When we talk about what still feels as 'his' street, he would consider it to reach till café Steijn [till the Heemraaddssingel]. But when we cross the Mathenesserlaan it feels already a bit less like his street, he admits. He really likes the part of the street in bend. It's a different atmosphere.

[You hear very loud claxons in the background]

He describes the traffic as "dramatic". XXX rarely cycles anymore, because it's terrible to cycle here.

[We pass XXXXX, and XXX mentions he comes here once a year during New Year's eve]

XXX describes the street literally as well as figuratively speaking a transitions towards a more suburban area, also when you look at "the shops, the people, the crowds". When I ask what to him represents most this transition, he describes "his part" of the street more "Dutch touristic" [although he adds Rotterdam is not really touristic], while the more you move towards Delfshaven it becomes more residential.

Appendix

XXX doesn't really go the the adjacent neighborhoods. They would sometimes walk towards the Heemraadssingel and then go back through a parallel street. Although he admits he sometimes still gets disoriented because of the bend in the street.

When we walk in the part past 's Gravendijkwal he says how he rarely visits the shops and restaurants in the street. Except for maybe Ekoplaza and Albert Heijn.

[We pass the Urban Espresso Bar and he mentions he got breakfast there recently]

He goes here most often for groceries related errands [also Vermeyden the "posh delicacies shop"]. And for the bars, but they are most at the end corners of this part of the street.

Mostly when they go for a walk they go the Museum park and not really in the street.

He mentions how he is looking at the street very differently now that we walk it together.

[We reach the Heemraadssingel]

XXX says: this to me is the end of the street. When I ask why he says: "here I go either to the left or to the right". When I ask if he never goes straight, he mentions this happens sometimes, but mostly to just go more west, so he quickly crosses that part of the street. It feels like there is nothing for him there. To XXX that part already feels like Delfshaven. He doesn't really like that part. It is similar to Delfshaven in the sense that there are very nice little parts, and parts that he extremely dislikes. For him this is a part he doesn't like at all. When I ask if he can appoint what he doesn't like about it, he thinks that is hard to describe, because it is really about a certain atmosphere. He tries to look for the right word. The word that comes to mind is "poorer", but not in the money-sense, but more culturally [he says questioning]. But he thinks it's difficult to pinpoint.

So when I ask if the street for him stops at these corner café's he adds: "Yes, maybe also the other corner café [Rijcke & de Wit]".

[We cross the street and we turn around]

XXX mentions how he likes it when they dress the street very "Christmassy".

When I ask him if he ever feels unsafe in any way, he says he doesn't. Although he adds that objectively the street could be considered unsafe perhaps, because there have been some shooting incidents etc. But he doesn't really feel unsafe, because there are always quite some people in the street. He adds that, compared to Oude Noorden where he used to live, although it was also not always super safe there, there was more of village like feeling in the area. He felt like everyone knew and recognized each other there, and that people were sort of looking after each other more than here. There he used to greet more people in the street, while here he would only greet perhaps the two restaurants below him. He feels like it's not necessary to know the whole street, but he would like it to know for instance the people from the 20 houses around him a bit better.

He mentions he thinks Dizzy and Ari's are quite iconic spots in the street, but how some spots in the street constantly change owners. When I ask how this is around him, he has no idea. He says they also live a little bit on an island in that sense.

He mentions how the house he now lives in, is already passed on to other people for twenty years. They made a housing association of the place, so through this legal construction the contract can never "open up" and people just pass on their

rooms to other people who become members of the housing association. So, in that way the rent cannot also not increase (only the minimal legal raise). In this way, they cannot adjust the price according to the market. And you can also not be kicked out of your house.

[We arrive at his house again and quit the walk]

She has lived there for 7 years now, and she works since XX years at XXX, a bar in the street. She is the manager.

We start walking towards Eendrachtsplein [with quite a pace], she mentions how everyone always says that the street has really changed a lot. She sort of agrees with this, mostly because there is a lot of empty buildings. *change.*

[We pass the corner with Claes de Vrieselaan]

Another. She mentions how at these corners in the evening there is always a lot of (young) people hanging around, that make a mess of the street. She thinks that only the part past the Heemraadssingel is still a bit "ghetto", but here it's okay. She thinks it's not really striking how fast the street changes, because when you live there it goes very gradually of course. But there are still some gun shots in the street and more "wild things". It sometimes happened to her that she was being followed in the night on her way back home from work: "but I am not really easily scared". Those are more people that would not really do something, but just have big mouth". So, when I ask if she is still comfortable walking the streets, she says yes, but sometimes not, but that's okay. She thinks it's not a place for everyone to live comfortably: "it can be a bit scary sometimes. A few years ago, someone was being shot in front of my door and next to work, so then it gets close. But she doesn't feel a part of this." When I ask her if these kinds of things still 'haunt' her for a longer time, she mentions there was one time she was really scared: "someone was following me and saw the house where I entered. Then he kept on waiting for a while in front of my door, that shocked me for a bit". She mentioned she had some trouble with this for quite some time, because he knew where she lived.

comfort.

Back then XXXX used to live alone. Now she lives with her Boyfriend. Her boyfriend works at the homeless shelter around the corner, so in the street you also see a lot of homeless people or people that are a bit lost, that also visit that shelter. She's seen them for years already in the streets, so she also knows them for years know already, but now because of her boyfriend she learns more about their life. She thinks they recognize her as well. Some she greets.

[We pass the 's Gravendijkwal]

div. change. She says that I probably want to know more about the buildings. I say not necessarily and ask if this is something she notices in the street. She mentions that she doesn't really look at the buildings, because everything stayed rather similar: "there is a lot of empty ground floors, and every now and then something new comes in, like a new hairdresser." But also, a bit more "hip" places. So, underneath her there is an African Bar, but next-door there is "studio Unfolded" which is a bit neater and newer. She mentions she likes that as well. She likes the diversity.

She points at the building next to the former "coffeeshop nemo", that changes every year according to her: "I never really understand why it changes so often". The corner where she works, has been a bar for more than 100 years already. When I asked if she already came there, before working there, she mentions she used to pass it thinking it looked very "gezellig". Then the first time she visited the place, she really liked it and immediately asked if she may could work there every now and then.

I mention how to me when I pass the bar it always really looks like a nice neighborhood bar. She mentions that it is exactly that. A lot of people from the neighborhood and the streets behind it have come there for some time already.

tradition

habit

Some already go there for more than 30 years, some even come twice a day: "they have their regular round, they go to Voigt first and then come here." She saw a couple of them yesterday and they have a lot of difficulties with the fact that Voigt now is fully closed because of covid for instance and that XXXX is closed during the week. Some of them don't work, but most of them used to come after work.

*(disrupted.**churchy*

Before she lived in the North of Rotterdam. Which she really liked as well, but she thinks she prefers it here: "you're more in the middle of things". It can be a bit busy for her, with a lot of noises, but luckily her bedroom is in the back of the house where it's quieter with a nice balcony. But she thinks it is really "gezellig" here, she really likes the west: "there is a lot happening, I really feel at home here, it really feels like a little neighborhood, a little village, also because of XXXX it feels quite village-like, because of everyone you know there in the neighborhood". This village-like feeling is more around "her" part of the street, maybe until "Westerpaviljoen". She mentions how for instance this afternoon she is going to the market in Delfshaven with an older man from she knows from the bar. So, you get to know people through the bar: "he always comes there and lives behind me, he also likes going to the market on the Visserijplein, so we decided to do this together." Also, when they want to refurbish something in the bar, everyone is also willing to help, or some regular guests that will lend them some tools etc. Quite a collective atmosphere.

[extra]

[We cross the Mathenesserlaan]

"village"

She thinks this part is more towards the city already. She doesn't come here very often. Although coincidentally yesterday she was in 'Bar3' and she also likes 'Boudewijn'. When I asked her if she immediately felt welcome in the XXXX when she went there for the first time, she answers: "Yes, there is a lot of eccentric people, young and old, they are all very unique, so everything is possible, that is what I like". Normally she works 3 days a week, 12 hours per day. Working there also helped her building a network in the area and getting more connected with people in the neighborhood. Much more than when she lived in the north. She didn't really have a "stamkroeg" there.

*div.**social*

As a bar they are in good contact with Voigt, another bar a bit more towards the center. The barkeeper of Voigt often visits the bar. And a lot of their visitors also go to Voigt.

[A random guy screams something to us, we are both a bit confused and laugh, we describe it as quite a typical "Binnenweg interaction"]

time/history/nostalgic

I ask if she knows how this connection go Voigt came about. She mentions how Voigt also already existed for quite some years, so people also have been visiting it for a long time already. And then owners change, but everyone knows each other since they were our each, maybe even younger: "Everyone has known each other for a very long time already in this neighborhood".

I ask if this is a neighborhood she would like to live in for a long time. She mentions how she really likes it for now, but that she is from Zeeland and maybe wants to back there at some point. Or she would prefer the streets parallel to the Nieuwe Binnenweg, which she really likes: "then you still have the vibrant area, but not directly at the busy street".

[We pass Eendrachtsplein, we cross and walk back in the other direction]

XXXX sees Eendrachtsplein as "the beginning", but she doesn't know why.

She mentions how she often hears from the people that have been living here for a long time, that it used to be quite dangerous in the street. Nothing compared to what it's like now: "they mention how now there are some shootings sometimes, but very rarely, but that used to be quite normal". She thinks this is about 20

years ago. Her boyfriend also already worked at the homeless shelter for 15 years now. So he has been going around the area for 15 years already. He mentioned to her how it used to be very different, and how there used to be a lot of sexworkers in the street etc., you don't see that anymore these days. XXXX never experienced this phase. When I ask if she would have liked living here back then. She says: "I think, if you live here, you just deal with the fact that you live here and you get used to it. You don't feel the urge to move, I think. For instance when that rapper was shot in front of my door, that's not very pleasant. I was luckily not there, maybe I would have seen it then, but since I wasn't at home you can also forget it quite easily".

When I ask how she feels about the newer, 'hipper' places that arrive in the street, like 'studio Unfolded', she mentions she prefers it over yet another hairdresser of burger place. She comes there sometimes, the people that own it are sweet, but since she lives almost right above she never really sits down to have a coffee there.

She tried some restaurants in the street, but there is not really a place where she often would like to sit down for dinner.

We talk a bit about my experience with the street, but I mention I only know it from "covid-times". We talk about the street during Koningsdag. She mentions that is always really "gezellig": "we would always gather at my place, to walk the street afterwards, but this actually rarely happened. We usually would just stay, open the windows and there was one big party also, because in the street there was a lot happening, so it was fun to watch".

She mentions it is a very good place to "people-watch". She does this often: "sometimes we are sitting at the couch, and then you hear people screaming outside, this happens quite often, but if the screaming lasts just a bit too long, we go to the window to watch. Then often there is another fight, men with cars, sometimes even with batons. This actually happens quite often". She is not really surprised by this anymore: "Then on the other side of the street you already see a lot of people looking out of their window in a certain direction, then you know where something is happening. And the boys that live above us are hanging out of the window. Then the whole Binnenweg is just hanging out the window, like a spectacle." She thinks she got a bit more immune to this violence. While she mentions it is not normal of course. But she feels like there is nothing you can do about this: "these are people that you cannot reach, they won't listen".

I ask how often this happens. She mentions it is more often during summer, when it's a bit hotter, then maybe even once a week.

[it starts to hail]

I ask if she is in good contact with her neighbors. There are three young students living above her, so sometimes she tells them they are too loud. They also had dinner with them, to keep in touch a bit, but not a lot.

She mentions some things are under construction for years already. So then for many years some places are not really something.

[We pass the 's Gravendijkwal again]

She thinks the atmosphere is very different here. It's more mixed. It reminds her a bit more of a holiday destination (like Berlin), streets with a very diverse, mixed offer. She likes that: "it's funny, gezellig". Although she mentions she, "stupidly" most often only goes to Albert Heijn.

[She mentions she really likes 'Bombay Curry house' when we pass it]

Sometimes she goes to 'Ekoplaza' or the 'Urban Espresso Bar', or she has her

trousers repaired in the street. But she doesn't really go to a laundry place for instance or 'Halal Fried Chicken'. Sometimes she gets her nails done in the street.

Most times she walks the streets, but mostly with a destination. She likes the little streets around it and the Heemraadssingel.

[We pass a place close to Albert Heijn that is under construction: "again something new". XXXX mentions it used to be a 'Retourette' for a very long time, a recycling place.]

She has no clue what new place will arrive there. When she passes a construction site, she often thinks: "Fun, something new. Then I am curious, but I never really dive into it, I will see it myself at some point". Sometimes when a new place opens, she visits out of curiosity. The big turnover of shops and restaurants doesn't really mean anything to her, she is always quite curious.

[We pass the Heemraadssingel]

She sometimes goes there for a longer walk, and in summer to sit along the water with a picnic blanket. But you must be careful, because there is also a lot of dogshit.

She mentioned before she thinks this last part is still a bit "ghetto". I ask her why she thinks this: "when you walk there it feels a bit more grey, there are more people hanging at the corners of the streets in the night, there is a coffeshop that maybe also attracts more people that like to hang there".

I ask her about XXXX's experience with the corner in front of XXXX. She agrees. There is 'Café Fantastique' and she feels like there are only crazy people that go there and hang in front of the façade. She doesn't understand why they keep giving them alcohol. She mentions some of them also go to the homeless shelter where her boyfriend works: "but yes, they always stay strictly on that corner". They don't go to XXXX. There is one man that always screams very loud at people that pass, in the end he doesn't do anything, he just screams, and he just stays at the corner. She thinks the people in the last part, is more hang youth, rather than people that are a bit crazy.

She mentions again that this part feels greyer to her. She thinks it's mostly in the facades and the offer: "it's not really attractive anymore". It feels a bit like the end of the area to her. Also, in the streets behind it. It less well maintained: "it's fine, but I like it more over there". She often just crosses this part of the street by bike.

I ask if there is more people that she knows from work, that she sees outside of work. She mentions she was in Bar3 yesterday, with the barkeeper from Voigt and some regular guests that go to both places. But this doesn't happen very often.

[in front of a post-store, a man drops a lot of packages from a carrier. We help him to load the carrier again]

When I ask about traffic, she mentions people drive way to fast. She doesn't understand why this is not taken care of, because of to her the solution is quite simple: "just put a speed camera". But also in terms of cycling she mentions you just get used to it.

[We reach the end of the street]

She mentions she likes that after this part of the street, you reach this nice part of old Delfshaven.

Appendix

We talk a bit about the homeless shelter on the 's Gravendijkwal where her boyfriend works.

[We pass Bakeliet]

change.

She mentions how it used to be a big brown bar, with five alcoholics sitting at the bar, but nothing left of it: "very sweet people that owned it, but this is now much more alive and very nice". A nice kind of change. They also attract people from the rest of the city, which was apparently necessary: "not that the brown bars should, close, they should obviously stay, but I think here it was time for change".

She mentions how a lot of people are very bored now that the bars are closed: "they have their own little rounds, set patterns that they cannot let go. Just to have a little chat with people, otherwise they just go home and sit by themselves". So it helps against loneliness. That's why she likes working there. Because it is very mixed: "all the old men that go there, but also the young people, it mixes so well". And she is also very much a part of the company as barkeeper: "when the bar is full, it becomes one big group chat".

Starting Point: in the house of XXX and her little son XXX just off the Nieuwe Binnenweg. She used to live at the Nieuwe Binnenweg for 12 years and then moved to a side street.

We start walking towards the street like she usually walks, past the Leeszaal West, towards Eendrachtsplein, although she usually goes to the part where she used to live [between 's Gravendijkwal and Claes de Vrieselaan].

She mentions how she is way more oriented towards the Binnenweg, compared to the Kruiskade, while it is about the same distance from her house. Just because she is used to the street, also from her previous house. The street feels a bit more "relaxed".

[We pass a building from Woonstad]

XXXX mentions they are renovating this to make it into a café. She heard from the woman of the Leeszaal that the rent will be 8000 euros a month: "you would have to sell a lot of coffees for that".

[We pass Bonaparte]

XXXX mentions she came here every now and then when she was younger. It was open until late night and then it would be the last stop to have a final drink before going home, she used to really like that.

XXXX points at the store "Buiten" where they pick up vegetables every Wednesday. These vegetables come from farms in Brabant.

[We pass 30ml]

XXXX mentions she likes to have a coffee there with her son XXXX, because you can sit really nicely in the window and watch the street. I ask if she visits the street often with her son. She answers she doesn't go very often because it is quite dangerous in terms of traffic. But they go together on one bike sometimes, or in the buggy.

We pass the corner where a secondhand clothing shop used to be. She didn't really go there because the owner was a bit scary. Now they are making another hairdresser: "how many hairdressers can one street have? I don't buy it". We pass an antique shop. XXXX mentions her son loves to watch the window. It is full of objects and lights.

She mentions again how dangerous the traffic in the street is. Although she likes the wider sidewalks. In the evening now everything is closed, except for the shawarma places and coffeeshops, she experiences less social safety. But for running in the evening it's okay. She mentions how she usually feels safe in the street. She is a bit more careful now that she has a child, but she "doesn't avoid" certain activities. She also she is a bit too old now to be the victim of catcalling. Sometimes people yell something, but that's not too bad: "if there is a group of men, I would just walk right through them". When I ask if she ever adapts her behavior, she only mentions she pays some attention to what she is wearing maybe: "no tops with a deep neck line".

[We pass the quote from Jules Deelder on a building]

XXXX mentions she likes the quote and the fact that it is hanging there: "it's social, you are reminded of the people around you, not just your own world". She links this to the painted planters we pass: "I like that these kinds of things are happening in the street, it makes it less grey".

[We pass the Westerpaviljoen]

She mentions she doesn't really like the coffee there, but it's a good spot for sitting and watching or reading a newspaper.

She mentions how there used to be no traffic lights at this crossing and how dangerous it was: "you could just sit at the terrace and wait for people to bump into each other". She prefers it with the traffic lights.

She also likes Arie's at the other corner to have dinner.

We pass some other restaurants and mentions she doesn't understand how they can survive. Then she mentions she probably thinks this, because it's not her idea of a nice place to have dinner.

They also have dinner at "Viva Afrika" sometimes. These places she already knew from when she was living in the street.

XXXX mentions how she thinks this part of the street is a bit of an "in-between" moment in the street, a part of the street you have to pass to get to the "real" street again.

She mentions how the building on the corner used to be a Turkish nightclub. She went there sometimes and quite liked it: "there used to be Turkish music and dancers".

[We pass XXXX]

She mentions she really likes this bar: "the used to do a little film festival once a year, with films from the neighborhood".

This is the part of the street where XXXX used to live.

She mentions again how dangerous the traffic situation here is.

XXXX mentions how she doesn't like the shisha lounges because of the smell.

[We pass café Patricia]

She mentions she likes it. A lot of Cape Verdean people go there, it's really "gezellig".

She used to have some contact with some neighbors and entrepreneurs in the street. We talk a bit about the changes in the shops and buildings. One building is already empty almost since she lived there in 2016. XXXX thinks it's always the same buildings that keep on changing in terms of shop or restaurant and also some that have been there since forever.

XXXX liked living on the upper floor. Sometimes she used to be out of the country for work for a couple of months. She liked the idea that it was not very easy to just break a window and enter. She mentions how there used to be way more houses on the ground floor. There is one shop (now "kleur op tafel") that did this quite cleverly according to XXXX. They made a smaller shop in the front and used the backside and garden as a bed and breakfast. Because the gardens are quite big, but mostly neglected.

She bought the house around 2012, when the street had just a sort of "make-over". We talk about the owner of the building with the bed and breakfast. She talked about this with him, because he used to fulfill a very active role in the street (he moved to France now), especially concerning nuisance. Apparently, he explained this was a way to ask a low rent for the shop in the front, because most income was coming from the bed and breakfast, while remaining a nice view towards the street.

I asked what kind of "nuisance" this man was mostly concerned about: "it was mostly about (drunk) people, very late in the night, screaming. And I think they were also quite disappointed that the "profile" and zoning plan of this street used to be "living" and "furniture", and now in the end it is a lot of café's and bars again". Apparently, they wanted to change the look of the street in terms of the kind of shops. But XXXX thinks this idea is overtaken by time:

"you saw back then that the municipality was willing to spend a lot of money on renovating etc., but after that they just let it go a little and didn't spend time on what kind of stores should be there". Also, in terms of opening hours, they didn't enforce this at all. At one point XXXX also mentioned this towards the municipality: "there was a place that was supposed to be closing at 01.00 a.m., but when I checked Google Maps it was busiest between 02.00 and 03.00 a.m., that just wasn't right".

[We pass where Peppie used to be, XXXX describes it as "iconic"]

XXXX thinks this part of the street looks a bit messier: "I think because of the facades, those grey facades, everything is "higgledy-piggledy" which is quite funny, but not the long facades, shopfronts, like at Albert Heijn, long façades with nothing behind it. But also the containers with garbage: "it just feels messier". For XXXX this part also feels a tiny bit wider, she thinks the part where she used to live is more "knus", but also because she knows it better. When she used to live there, the part between 's Gravendijkwal and Claes de Vrieselaan, really felt like her street. There are some familiar faces. She still lived there for half a year with her little son and then she moved just off the street.

[We pass Bakeliet]

XXXX mentions Bakeliet used to be another, old bar. She also mentions the woman from Steijn, who used to work at Arie's, is also quite active in the street. XXXX mentions how dangerous the crossing is there.

I ask about the "active figures" in the street, since I feel like there are quite some. XXXX agrees and mentions there used to be a WhatsApp group chat (an initiative by the man the moved to France, the community police officer was also in there) and people complained in that chat: "this is also how you get to know people".

XXXX she mentions she also saw a lot dealers on the street, they discussed this kind of topics with neighbors as well. It was mostly about nuisance. The only positive side about it was that people found each other in this.

[We reach the last part of the street, near the bridge]

XXXX mentions she rarely visits this part of the street. She only passes through by bike when she goes to Delfshaven. There is just no destination for her in this part. It doesn't even feel like the Nieuwe Binnenweg to her, more like a thoroughfare. Even more than the little part of the street in the curve. It's just really the way to Delfshaven.

XXXX mentions they tried to create a more unified image by hanging the flags. They used to be in the whole street as an initiative by entrepreneurs to get some publicity. In the beginning they have now been replaced by "Kabouter But plug".

[We decide to turn around at the crossroad]

XXXX thinks this part caters more towards specific other cultures, more towards the adjacent neighborhoods.

We talk a bit about how XXXX found her current house and the choice for the neighborhood.

We talk a bit more about the initiative of splitting the ground floor in half and having a smaller shop in the front. XXXX likes the idea that it makes it possible for shops to exist that are not very profitable.

She thinks there is a bigger task for the municipality to check which buildings host a "real store" and which "don't add up". And about the traffic situation as well. There are a lot of takeaway restaurants in the street, which causes a lot of dangerous traffic situations: "some cyclists are avoiding the street, because

it is too dangerous". She also wouldn't like her son cycling by himself in the street, when he is still young.

XXXX mentions she really liked the fact that everything was so close when she was living there. And the very diverse offer of stores. "But also the fact that so many different people walk around here. What I really like about the street is that it gives me the feeling that there is no dominant group, it's a real mix". She also mentions the addict's shelter and the homeless people in the street: "at some point those people also become familiar faces to you. There was always the same man in front of the 'EkoPlaza' that I always bought a croissant or a banana for, or a woman that always got a cappuccino in the morning from the UEB. Or a woman that was always walking around with a huge joint".

The biggest change in the street for XXXX is the change in the offer of shops: "more and more nail and beauty salon's keep popping up". She thinks to some extent the street is not getting more 'hip'. All the clothing and furniture shops are leaving. The only thing is that there are more and more coffee places. And nail salons of course. She misses a good Dutch bakery that doesn't just sell sourdough bread.

[XXXX mentions a hole in the wall, it's a ventilation opening]

XXXX asks some questions about gentrification out loud: "what is gentrification? That you cannot afford to have a coffee somewhere? That's true. But that is also the case for expensive furniture or a nail salon?". XXXX thinks it's a bit of a non-issue, and more an expression of a bigger problem: the fact that people cannot pay for housing anymore. XXXX thinks that when that is regulated in a better way, then it's not a really problematic if there is maybe a coffee place underneath you. For instance in the neighborhood, Middelland is quite popular and expensive, but Oude Westen is mainly social housing.

XXXX thinks it's a good place for people that like a bit of commotion and a busier city life, then this is a very good place to be: "the diversity is super positive".

Depending on whether they can find a school for their son, she would like to stay in the area. The only issue is traffic.

[On our way back to her house we pass a sort of coffeeshop/tea house]

XXXX mentions there is a lot of dealing going on there. But the men are quite friendly and always greet her. She also lived in The Hague for a while, next to a brothel, and she always got the feeling that the people that worked there were always avoiding any kind of problems: "they have no interest in commotion, they prefer peace and quiet, that is better for business". But she understands that people don't like it when they are dealing in front of their house.

XXXX doesn't live in the neighborhood but works in a liquor store in the street. He used to have his own liquor store in Kralingen, but now he works for a former colleague. He is retired, but he likes to keep busy

XXXX rather had a chat inside because it was too cold outside.

XXXX mentions how they worked quite a lot on the space the past time, because "they are fighting a bit with the space, it is actually too small".

XXXX is a born and raised Rotterammer, so the Nieuwe Binnenweg is not new to him. He now works here, because of a former competitor, because sitting at home is nothing for XXXX. He still works here six days a week.

When I ask him about the street the first word that comes to mind is "a mess": "when you walk the street here, you think where is this going?"

According to XXXX a lot has changed in the street, and often not for the better. XXXX mentions how the municipality is also not helping in this.

XXXX mentions how you hear the noise of a ringing tram all day, because it's waiting for a double-parked car.

He says that when you see old images of the Binnenweg, you actually see the Binnenweg, but "this is a mockery". XXXX mentions how nowadays there is only foodplaces and there are zero quality shops, which used to be very different.

XXXX mentions how he has already moved around ^{after} Rotterdam for his whole life. When he used to go to school in west, he would take the tram through the street. Back then the tram used to be one thing, now it's five cabins. That doesn't fit in the street. Besides, XXXX doesn't understand why the municipality didn't choose trams with a rail in the ground, without an overhead line, like in Bordeaux. This takes up way too much space in the street.

When I ask again about the offer in the street, he mentions again how bad the street looks. If it were his job, he would throw everyone out and do a big clean-up of the street, and then design the street again. That is the only chance of making something of the street again. "This looks very bad no?"

When I ask about how he would redesign it, he mentions he would make it more like it used to be: "when you see old pictures of the street, you will know exactly what I mean". Especially the last part is very bad, where the tram remise used to be. According to XXXX, that part of the street also used to look way better back in the days, with neat and tidy shops.

XXXX thinks the street is now too much centered on food. Back in the days there used to be more clothing stores, household items etc.

When I ask if they have a lot of contact with the other entrepreneurs in the street, XXXX mentions he has a lot of contacts: "I have contacts all day, even if I sit on a chair all day, I would be in contact with people from all over the world all day". He shows me something happening in Monte Carlo at that moment for him, proving me his professional contacts.

A lot of these contacts all originate from the times he was owning his own liquor and party center company in Kralingen. This used to be the biggest liquor store of Rotterdam. But according to XXXX, the municipality of Rotterdam "just kills you": "If they have a little friend that would like to be in your building, they will close your company for noise disturbance, that makes no sense." The place is now an Italian restaurant owned by the man from Dudok.

change/aesthetics/nostalgia

nostalgia

nostalgia

institutional.

XXXX mentions that when he walks through the Nieuwe Binnenweg his hands are itching to get the broom through the street, because there is "no coherence in the street". He thinks the beginning of the street (near Eendrachtsplein) is still quite okay. "There are some nice shops and the street is a bit wider. But in "his part", the tram is way too big and taking too much space.

Aesthetics / physical

XXXX was born in Nieuwe Westen, just off Nieuwe Binnenweg. He has been living there for almost 30 years now. He also works in a liquor store in the street.

Change XXXX feels very much at home in the street because he was born here. He lives around the corner for 30 years already. He mentions there are nice things less nice things about the street. He thinks everything looks quite neat now, where it used to be more chaotic. A lot of traffic accidents.

transition .

Change Back in the day he described it as a little "scary". A lot of "junkies" on the street. You see them still nowadays, but it used to be way more. Everywhere on the ground there where needles and little bags from drugs and weed. But as a child you don't know what weed is. Now you rarely see them in the street. Some junkies every now and then, but that's normal.

[we walk from the bridge towards Heemraadsplein]

He describes this part as "his part" although he feels at home throughout the entire street. Also, because he works in the street. He describes it as "his area".

social He really likes the fact that he knows a lot of people, so when something is going on there is enough people to ask for help: "if you know people, there is also a little hand for help everywhere". Everyone is together, everyone has their own business. But the most found business according to XXXX is definitely hairdressers.

As a little boy, XXXX also used to go around the street. For instance to the tram museum in the former tram remise, which is a Lidl now. The entrance to the museum was free and you could play with the trams. Behind there was also a playground and a community center.

He mentioned the store De Waard, which has been there since he was young, where he was sent often by his mother to get baking materials.

[we arrive at Heemraadsplein]

div. activity There used to be gravel here, which was nicer. And now you have grass and the swing set over there: "I don't like swinging". He describes the square now as a meeting place. There are little parties sometimes or a market with secondhand stuff. Also the freedom party of the cape Verdeans is being hosted here. They also call this the capital of Cabo Verde. Because I think there live more Cabo's here than in cape Verde.

social He points at Rijke & de Wit and mentions that it has been around since 1772. But it recently changed owner. It used to be owned by mr. Vermeulen, the owner of café Timmer. He points at Bakeliet, it used to be an Irish Pub (het Spinnewiel), but the owner, whom he know personally and really likes, sold it. He points at Steijn and mentions it used to be owned by "out of time", by a motor gang. He thinks out of time is still owned by a motor gang. Now Bianca took over the place.

XXXX started his job when he was 15 years old, just a few hours a week just to earn some pocket money. He mentions how this kept him of the street. He thinks that people who see him for the first time will probably think he is probably a "boefje".

reputation .

imitation

We talk about how diverse the street is. XXXX mentions how much has happened here in the street, good and bad stuff. Someone was murdered here. But it used to be way worse according to XXXX. Around 20 years ago, after 23.00, the police would sometimes block the street and put everyone that was still outside against the wall to ask what they were doing. "And not just regular police, police with masks and bullet free vests." He mentions how they usually did in summer when people were hanging in the corners of the street. But now they hang cameras everywhere, so they keep track when it is getting busy in the street with people and youngsters hanging around. It is being controlled and then sometimes they come to check out the situation: "If I would hang on this corner tonight, and tomorrow again and the day after again, the fourth they will drive passed me and ask me to hang somewhere else, not in the porches".

But XXXX never hangs in the porches, he says he doesn't have a lot of friends. He knows a lot of people, but he doesn't have a lot of friends.

XXXX doesn't mind the security camera's, he thinks it is good that they know what people are doing. He thinks it's pleasant. Except maybe for some privacy issues. For instance for when someone will rob the store that he is working at, it is nice that they can see this on camera.

divert

When I ask if he experiences differences and changes throughout the street, he immediately confirms with a yes. He talks about the first part [from the bridge to Heemraadssingel] which is quiet according to him. It can be a bit busy till 18.00 h, but after that it is very quiet. The middle part [from 's Gravendijkwal till Heemraadsplein] he experiences as the busiest part. He even describes it as chaotic. According to XXXX, it should be adapted. The adaptations made recently even made it worse. There used to be more parking spaces. Now it they changed a lot of the spaces into "(un)loading space". It used to be asphalt and now it's paved, but when it sinks, they fill it with asphalt again.

[He points at a zebra crossing they recently did, but it is already fully faded]

According to XXXX it was already busy back in the days, but he feels like more people are having cars nowadays, so the street became more busy car-wise.

[He points at café XXXX, and says it's one of the oldest cafés of the city]

change/instability/change

XXXX experienced a lot of change within the store and café offer in the street.

[XXXX interrupts his story every now and then to greet someone]

Except for the store he works, which has already been around since 48 years. There used to be way more cafés. Sometimes two next to each other. According to XXXX this changed after they adjusted legislation about smoking inside the cafés. The old people don't come anymore, "they prefer to sit at home with their glass of geniver". And the young people prefer the shisha lounges.

[We reach the bend in the street and he points at furniture store Metz, that has been around for ages and is very expensive]

For XXXX, the part between 's Gravendijkwal and Mathnesserlaan is the most historic part of the street. When you look at the buildings it looks most historic. Also this part feels very much as his street still to XXXX: "Of course, till Binnenwegplein it is my street".

He explains me about the naming of Delfshaven, the story he learned in school (de. GK van Hogendorp).

We reach the corner of Mathenesserlaan en Nieuwe Binnenweg. The people from the Nieuwe Binnenweg Instagram account put a picture of XXXX here on a billboard. According to XXXX the organization is representing the shopkeepers in the

street. To show people what the offer in the street is.

[He mentions het Vlaamsch Broodhuys used to be a big cigar shop *change.*

div. / atmosphere.

XXXX finds this part of the street more modern, more towards the center. This is part of the Oude Westen, while it feels less old than Nieuwe Westen. "This part feels very different, even the wind feels different." Walking from a very narrow street to a much wider street. And suddenly you also see different people. This change of people is very striking for XXXX. This part feels more white, with more Dutch entrepreneurs. Not less "gezellig", just with a different wind and less busy traffic.

XXXX is quite annoyed by the amount of traffic in front of his store. They always work with the door open and this gives a lot of noise disturbance.

[XXXX mentions that they used to have another part of the store located where now Rembrand is]

XXXX mentions he sometimes craves a bit more peace and quiet. When we pass the retirement home, he (jokingly) says he wouldn't mind living there already because of the silence. He has quite a sensitive hearing, especially when trying to sleep even the most subtle sounds can keep him awake. During the day the sounds don't matter that much to him.

He would move to the retirement home immediately if he can take his aquarium and if they can provide him a fiber optic connection. He says no grandmother or father will complain about him, because he is so silent.

[a car drives past very fast and he complains about the fact that they accelerate for no reason]

intuition.

If XXXX could change something about the street he would do something about the homeless people, to try to find a more long-term solution for this, not just moving the problem. Because in front of his shop a lot of his clients are being asked for money by homeless people. He thinks some just don't want to work. He thinks they should just ask for help at the municipality, like he did. XXXX mentions he also went through some tougher times money-wise, but he is very grateful for the help he received from the municipality. Farit thinks he wouldn't have managed this by himself.

These people on the street are also an issue to him because there are quite many, not just one or two. Sometimes they even look like a little gang. One guy oftens asks for money in front of Albert Heijn and then visits their store to buy one little beer.

Another thing XXXX would like to change is the number of hairdressers. According to him, there are just too many. He thinks he can literally count 50 hairdressers:

non-div.

([hairdresser, two meters further, hairdresser, ten meters further, hairdresser, on the other side of the street, hairdresser, hairdresser, hairdresser, hairdresser...]

Farit mentions how hairdressers very easily get a starting license, while for restaurants and cafés there are way more requirements about ventilation for instance.

Farit not often visits the cafés, he prefers to sit at home quietly after work. He walks from work to home and from home to work. Every now and then he likes to be outside, but then he prefers to go to the Maasboulevard, rarely in the street. He has seen the street by now, but when he was younger, he would spend more time in the street.

Sometimes even a little bit of mischief, like throwing eggs at the tram.

We talk about Farit's living situation. He now lives with his parents, but would like to move out at some point. When I ask if he would like to stay in this neighbourhood, he says "yes and no". He likes to be close to work, and he likes the big offer in the street in terms of shops, restaurants and takeaway. But he would like a little bit more silence sometimes.

He mentions how back in the days Sundays used to be super quiet. Everything was closed because it was the "holy day". Also, a lot less cars. When I mention the topic of having a car-free street during the weekend, he thinks that would be a very bad idea: "people will not be happy, then you might as well put people under house arrest" [though Farit doesn't have a car, nor a driving license].

[He mentions it was quite a walk and he feels his legs. He didn't do this in a long time.]

[XXXX greets someone again]

I say he that he knows a lot of people in the street and ask if that is also something he likes about the street. He mentions again how he knows a lot of people, but he has very little real friends. He describes these people just an "acquaintance". I ask if there are some people in the neighborhood he still sees since when he was younger: "Some, but most are now married with kids, I am the only one still by myself". XXXX mentions he likes to just make money and be a bit on his own.

XXXX says the business of the street is just part of being in a big city like Rotterdam. And people just meet in the street and everyone has its own corner. In some café's there are only business people, in others just families and in other café's mostly young people and students.

[we pass the fish shop, he mentions that the owner used to have a moveable stall, but now owns the more permanent kiosk]

According to XXXX there is also quite a lot of contact between different groups, which he describes as necessary, because you can't distinguish between people. "If you distinguish between people, you will put groups against each other". So he is quite content with the way a lot of diverse groups live together.

[we finish the walk at Heemraadsplein again, where he mentions the smell of the water purification house. He also mentions that there is a little sign with Heemraadsplein, with the cape Verdean name underneath it.]

"This is my neighborhood"



North



West

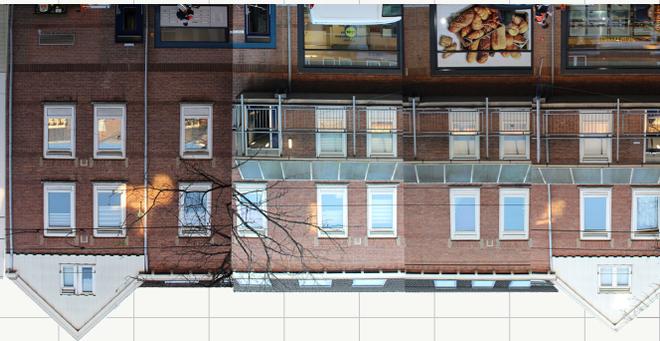


South











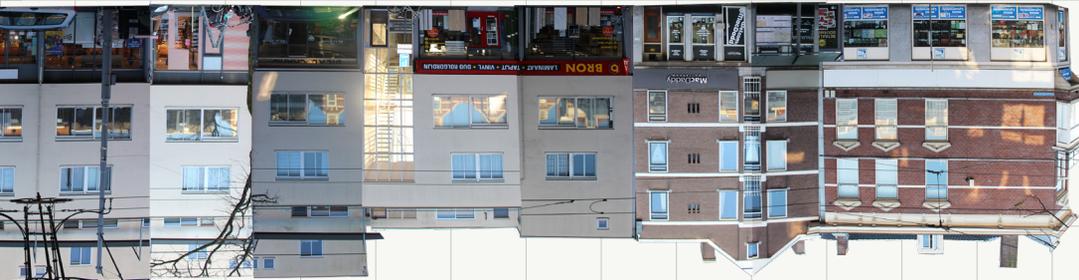


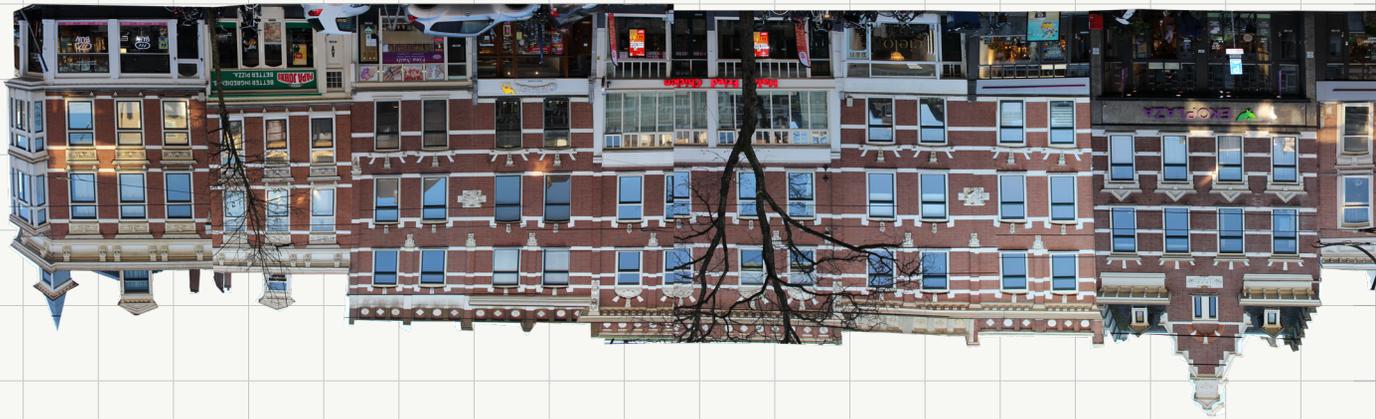


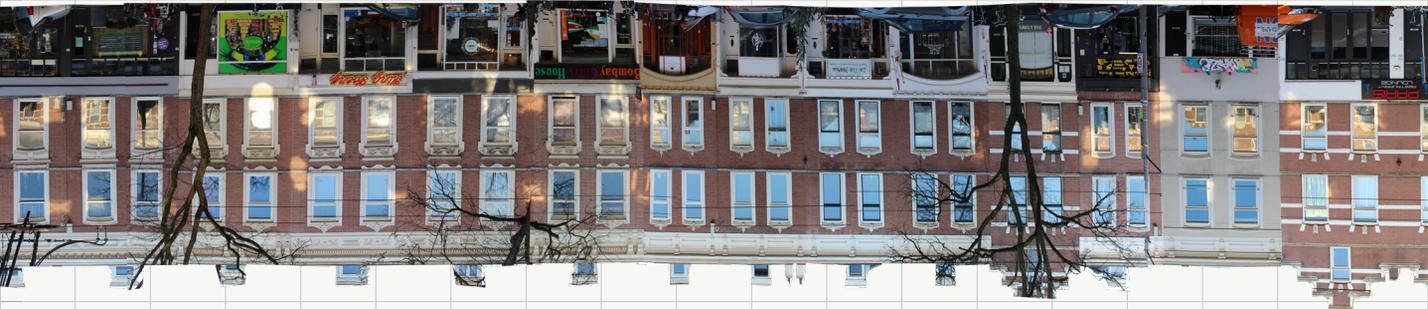


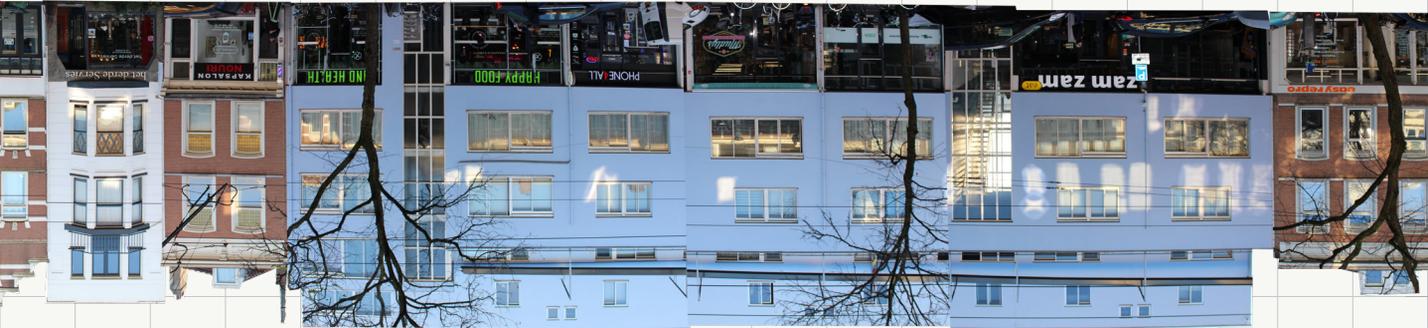




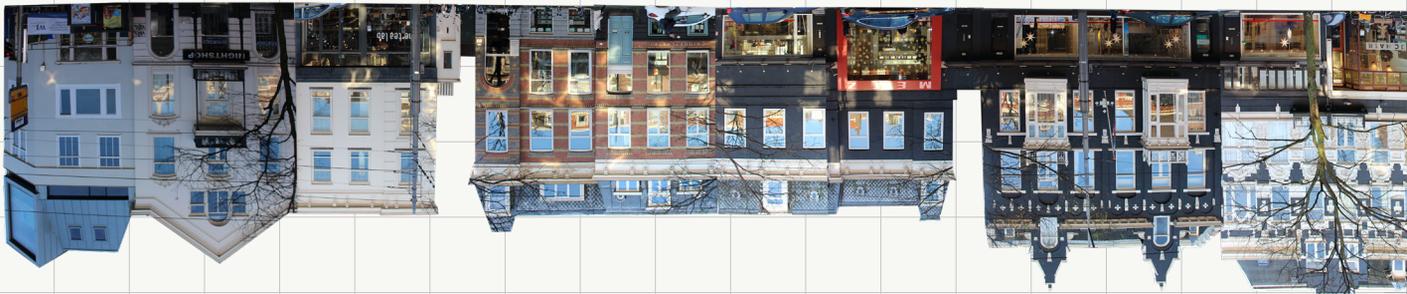


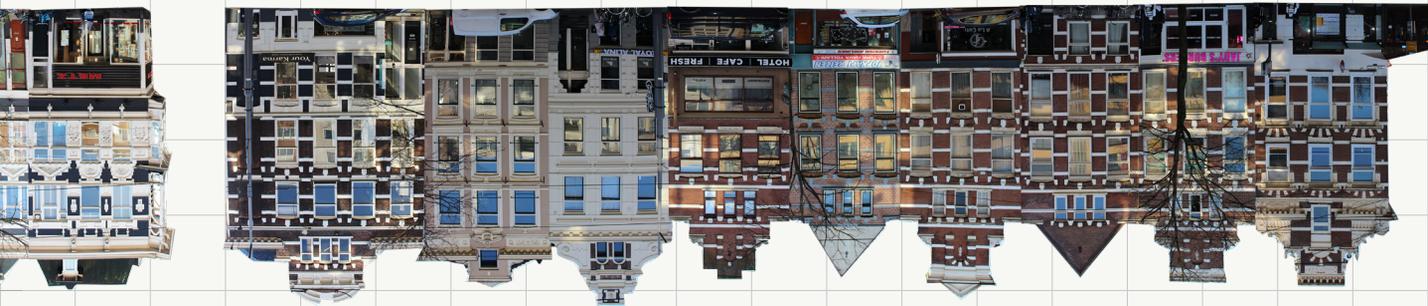


























North



East



South