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## RESEARCH ARTICLE

# “IF GEERT WILDERS HAS FREEDOM OF SPEECH, WE HAVE FREEDOM OF SPEECH!”: GIRLS’ SOCCER, RACE, AND EMBODIED KNOWLEDGE IN/OFF THE NETHERLANDS

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### Abstract

*This article discusses the role of race as it intersects with religion, gender, and class in Dutch public spaces through an ethnography of Moroccan-Dutch Muslim girls playing soccer. Racialized Muslim girls are “othered” and portrayed as unemancipated and inactive in Dutch society, not in the least by politicians such as Geert Wilders. Yet, racialized girls resist their “othering” by appropriating public sports spaces for their own girls’ soccer competition. I show how soccer players deal with racist comments in sports and how they respond to right-wing nationalism and racist populism by playing soccer. I argue that the girls’ embodied knowledge of such experiences is crucial for scholarly understandings of race, racialization, public space, and sports. This article demonstrates how race works in Dutch public sports spaces, and how gender, religion, and class are produced through racialization in sports. [sports, race, gender, Islam, the Netherlands]*

The Netherlands held local municipal elections on March 19th, 2014. That evening, the xenophobic, right-wing, anti-Islam, and anti-immigration Party of Freedom (PVV) held an election meeting in a café in The Hague, home of the Dutch government and parliament. Following the preliminary election results, party leader Geert Wilders made his way to the stage for a speech, accompanied by the song *Eye of the Tiger* and surrounded by security guards. He gave a speech that became well-known for its controversial and racist statements.

Geert Wilders: I would like to have an answer from everybody here on the following three questions. Three questions, please give a clear answer that defines our party, the PVV. The first question is: Do you want less or more European Union?<sup>1</sup>

The audience shouts: Less! Less! Less! Less! [thirteen times]

Geert Wilders: The second, the second question is—maybe even more important—do you want less or more Labor Party?<sup>2</sup>

The audience shouts: Less! Less! Less! Less! [eleven times]

Geert Wilders: And the third question is, and actually I cannot say this because people file a police report against you, and maybe there are even D66 officers who could make a legal case against you.<sup>3</sup> But freedom of speech is a great thing, and we haven’t said anything that isn’t allowed. We haven’t said anything that isn’t correct. So, I ask you: Do you want—in this city and in the Netherlands—more or fewer Moroccans?

The audience shouts: Fewer! Fewer! Fewer! Fewer! [sixteen times]

Geert Wilders: Well, then we'll take care of that. The audience laughs.<sup>4</sup>

This was not the first time that Geert Wilders had made statements in this vein. In the election campaign, he used the statement “Fewer Moroccans” (as well as “less Labor Party”) as one of his slogans. Whereas in previous elections, his slogans opposed Islam as a religion, this campaign marked the first time he explicitly referred to “Moroccans.” In the Netherlands, however, these two descriptors overlap significantly, as most Muslims are Dutch nationals descended from Moroccan or Turkish migrants who were part of the lower-skilled labor migration of the 1960s and 1970s.

Although Geert Wilders was one of the first to make such explicitly racist and fascist statements publicly by suggesting to expel a racialized ethnic group from the city and Dutch nation-state, “Moroccans,” especially youth, have been portrayed for decades by politicians and media as the ultimate problem group in the Netherlands. “Moroccan” has become a racialized, essentialized catch-all concept that implicitly subsumes other social categories such as religion and class, synonymous with “Muslim,” regardless of self-identification as Muslim, and assuming lower-class social status. “Moroccan” has become an iconic category in which the ethnic background of the citizen is assumed to be “wrong” (de Koning 2016, 111–12). For example, Labor politician Samson stated in 2011 that “Moroccans have an ethnic monopoly on nuisance.”<sup>5</sup> Despite broad social acceptance of Dutch politicians who blame Moroccans for social ills, the pledge made by Geert Wilders for “fewer Moroccans” led to a national outcry, and became a central topic of debate in Dutch society. Politicians of various parties were quick to critique Wilders, and a social media campaign prompted a police investigation of Wilders for “group insult because of race” and “inciting hate and discrimination.”<sup>6</sup> Wilders was prosecuted and found guilty of group insult and inciting discrimination, but without penalty. He was found *not* guilty of inciting hate. Geert Wilders argues that Dutch freedom of speech safeguards his right to say these things freely, something that Philomena Essed has analyzed as “entitlement racism”: “the sense that one has the right to offend ethnic minorities” (Essed and Hoving 2014, 14).<sup>7</sup> Interestingly, the term “racism” was not named in the verdict, which is characteristic for Dutch society, in which race and racism are rarely named and recognized under the guise of “tolerance” and “color-blindness” (Wekker 2016). This article

attempts to remove itself from the Dutch “color-blind” narrative, instead recognizing the importance of race, as it intersects with religion, gender, and class, in the lived experiences of young Moroccan-Dutch Muslim women who play soccer in public sports spaces in the Schilderswijk, a working-class neighborhood in The Hague.

Despite the creation of racialized hierarchies in Dutch public and political debates, the existence of race as a category of difference and social stratification is denied. Muslims are not seen as implicated in racial structures, and hence not seen as an object of racism (Rana 2016; Topolski 2018, 74). According to Dutch scholars of race, this is what characterizes the racialization of Islam in the Netherlands: Islam is seen to establish a hierarchical and naturalized order of “true” Dutch versus “inferior” and “unassimilable others,” ostensibly without recourse to racism, as race is understood to be strictly biological, and left behind conceptually after the Second World War (Essed and Hoving 2014; Topolski 2018, 74; Wekker 2016). Islam is racialized through religious and gendered bodily practices such as wearing a headscarf and by these means bodies are ascribed as non-white and essentialized as unemancipated, lower class immigrants inferior to the white Dutch majority (Abdul Khabeer 2017; Medovoi 2012; Rana 2016; Rana 2018; Wekker 2016). This article contributes to these understandings of race and religion by analyzing this intersection in a local gendered and classed public sports space. It shows how Dutch Muslim girls deal with and critique the racialization of their bodies in public spaces by playing the popular national sport—soccer.

In the Netherlands, there is an enormous increase in girls’ participation in soccer, both in official clubs and in spaces such as playgrounds and soccer courts (Romijn and Elling 2017). Street soccer is especially popular among girls with Moroccan-Dutch and Turkish-Dutch Muslim backgrounds in urban neighborhoods, who are less likely to be members of official clubs (Hoekman et al. 2011). Sports scholars have emphasized the double helix of sports and race: sports constitute a key cultural site for the production and reproduction of racism, Orientalism, and Islamophobia; at the same time, sports also function as a domain for (Black and Muslim) resistance and protest (Carrington 2010; 2012; Ratna 2013; Samie 2013; Thangaraj 2012; Thangaraj et al. 2018). In the Netherlands, this double helix materializes particularly in urban, working-class neighborhoods. Sports (especially soccer) projects have become a main instrument in

urban regeneration policies for putative problem urban neighborhoods with racialized Muslim youth. At the same time, Muslim girls have appropriated urban soccer spaces to resist persistent stereotypes of them as unemancipated, inactive, and oppressed. Following Thangaraj et al. (2018, 655), I situate the soccer practices of Dutch Muslim girls within the context of right-wing national populism, showing how nationalistic and racialized politics play out in everyday spaces and how local and grassroots sports initiatives function as forms of embodied resistance to contemporary ethno-nationalist politics. Indeed, while much has been written about the racialization of Muslim girls and women in the Netherlands (e.g. Bracke 2011; El-Tayeb 2011; Essed and Nimako 2006; Ghorashi 2010; Mep-schen, Duyvendak, and Tonkens 2010; Moors 2009; Wekker 2016), this literature mainly focuses on a critical analysis of the dominant discourses about Muslims, and not on the ways in which Muslim youth negotiate and experience racialization in and through their everyday embodied practices in public spaces, of which sports serve as an important domain.

I focus on how Muslim youth's experiences in sports generate an embodied knowledge about race and racialized Islam in the Netherlands. Embodied knowledge refers to the knowledge and understandings of the world generated through the body and bodily practices in specific social (sports) encounters (Fassin 2011; Lock 1993; Pink 2011); yet, I also see hate speech and discourses as part of the experiences and embodied knowledge production in sports. Scholars of sports and the body have argued in favor of an approach to embodied knowledge, therein critiquing implicit assumptions of mind/body dualisms in sports research (Davis 2015; Roberts 2013; Wacquant 2015). They assert that knowledge is not only produced through linguistic or discursive modes, but it is also embedded in embodied practices and produced through bodily modes of knowledge and lived experience (Davis 2015; Pink 2011, 345; Shankar 2013, 233; Wacquant 2015). Dance researcher Rosemarie Roberts (2013, 5) emphasizes that the body is not only a site of lived experience, but also of knowledge production; and in particular Black and Brown performing bodies are generating "social critique, commentary, and resistive stories." Further deconstructing the mind/body dichotomy, Roberts (2013, 5) and Fassin (2011) have emphasized that linguistic utterances are understood as embodied, as a single racist remark unleashes previous and historical dynamics and experiences of racial inequality, making racism a cumulative embodied reality.

Hence, I also approach discursive modes of racism and hate speech on the soccer field as embodied knowledge in sports (see also Pink 2011, 345; Shankar 2013, 233) as it generates a cumulative embodied understanding of race in Dutch society. Moreover, speech is a crucial element in the experience and practice of sports (Shankar 2013), particularly racist hate speech in sports media (Carrington 2011), on the field itself (Essed and Hoving 2014, 11), and from the spectators. Also in the Netherlands, Black soccer players structurally encounter racist chants from the audience, which directly impacts their performance on the field, for example by refusing to continue playing or by "answering" to the racism by making a goal.<sup>8</sup> Knowledge about race in sports is thus generated not only through the embodied experience and performance on the field but also through the language and racist hate speech that players respond to.

This article provides insights into how race is "written onto the body" (Carrington 2011, 90) in local sports spaces and how racialized girls negotiate the racialization of their bodies in everyday public (sports) spaces. It aims to include race and racialization as a central part of knowledge production about Muslim girls in the Netherlands—especially given the fact that race as a concept has failed to gain critical traction in Dutch academic and public discourse. Based on an analysis of racialized girls' embodied knowledge in sports, this article demonstrates how race works in Dutch public (sports) spaces, and how gender, religion, and class are produced through racialization in sports.

## **RACE, ISLAM, AND SPORTS IN PUBLIC SPACES**

The increased visibility of Muslim citizens in European public spaces, such as the soccer girls in my research, has fueled discussion about the role of Islam in Europe, often centering around women's bodies (El-Tayeb 2011; Göle 2006; Moors and Salih 2009).<sup>9</sup> Nilufer Göle has noted a paradox in these discussions: when Muslim girls became more ingrained in public urban life, contrary to their mothers who were more dependent on the home, their "integration" and "emancipation" (symbolized by the headscarf) became contested (Göle 2006, 252).<sup>10</sup> In the Netherlands, Muslim girls who are born and raised in the Netherlands are seen as foreign when they engage in public debates and in public spaces (El-Tayeb 2011; Sunier 2009). Abdul Khabeer (2017) and Rana (2016) argue that the notions of threat, suspicion, and terror are marked onto Muslim bodies in public spaces, which makes

the (biopolitical) control and regulation of those bodies central to the racialization of Islam. Such notions of threat, suspicion, and terror are central rationales for the creation of neighborhood sports leagues and youth activities in the Netherlands, where soccer is a means for local and national racialized integration policies. Neighborhood soccer projects especially focus on non-white youth with migrant and/or Islamic backgrounds and aim to assimilate or discipline them into becoming “proper” Dutch citizens (Rana 2014; see also Carrington 2010; Silverstein 2000), based on the idea that Muslim girls become emancipated and “free” themselves from religious and cultural restrictions through playing sports. At the same time, such spaces of regulation and control are often shielded under the narrative of multiculturalism, inclusion, and participation (Abdul Khabeer 2017; Silverstein 2000). It is implicitly expected of Muslim girls and women that they participate in sports in public spaces to signal their proper integration in white Dutch society. However, at the same time, sports are used as domains of control and regulation. For example, girls are not allowed to wear athletic headscarves while participating in sports projects, and some white Dutch sports instructors use sports classes to teach Muslim girls they should reject Islamic terrorism (van den Bogert 2021). Racialized Muslim girls’ bodies are marked as inherently suspicious and perpetually “other” because their religion is seen as essentially different and not part of Dutch society (Rana 2014; 2018).

While sports present “a highly regulated and embodied cultural practice” through which race and racialized differences become enlarged, produced, and popularized (Carrington 2010, 3), they are at the same time “an important arena for forms of cultural resistance against white racism” (Carrington 2010, 3).<sup>11</sup> Scholars have shown how local grassroots sporting practices that are initiated by young players themselves and not part of governmental sports leagues, such as urban street football, capoeira, and parkour, can provide resistance to local, national, or global racial politics and function as a form of political agency and belonging (Carrington 2010; De Martini Ugolotti 2015; Thangaraj et al. 2018). National populism, Thangaraj et al. argue, should be understood through its local challenges and protest (2018, 656). The embodied use of public space by playing sports is a way of re-appropriating public spaces and challenges the dominant nationalist and racial ideas of whom these spaces belong to (De Martini Ugolotti 2015; Watson and Ratna 2011; see also

Puwar 2004).<sup>12</sup> Yet, too often, the participation of Muslim women in sports is analyzed by media and the public as “liberation” from their supposedly oppressive Islamic background and culture, and not as resistance to dominant white society and sports culture (Ratna and Samie 2018). Orientalist representations of female Muslim athletes are the core narrative of most Western sports media, representing them as helpless victims and Islam as dangerous for gender equality and the (secular) nation (Prouse 2015; Samie and Sehlkoglou 2015). Muslim women’s athletic success, then, is seen by dominant white society as a sign of their emancipation, and of “Western” tolerance toward religious diversity, implicitly assuming Muslim female athletes have “freed” themselves from oppressive Islamic religion and culture. Moreover, their athletic success is represented in the media as a means of overcoming experiences of racism and sexism in society, placing female Muslim athletes in a post-racial and post-feminist narrative (Samie and Toffoletti 2018).

The growing body of literature on Muslim women and sports in Europe (e.g. Benn, Pfister, and Jawad 2011; Kay 2006) is similarly based on Orientalist stereotypes about Muslim women, as it starts from the idea that Muslim women are inherently “other” to modern sports, which is assumed to be “Western.” This literature portrays Muslim women as oppressed and as constituted above all by the gendered restraints supposedly stemming from Islam, highlighted through a problematic and narrow focus on the veil and gender segregated sporting. This literature does not include any critical questions about how Muslim women’s bodies are racialized through sports and how sports are used as a governmental policy of integration, as Ratna and Samie (2018) have noted. Feminist and postcolonial sports scholars (Rana 2018; Ratna 2013; Samie 2013) provide critical alternative approaches to the study of Muslim women and sports. Ratna (2013) analyzes intersections of gender and race in the experiences of British Asian female soccer players and shows how the women negotiate inclusion in soccer spaces by downplaying their experiences with racism in sports. Samie (2013) writes that the British Pakistani Muslim women in her research performed “hetero-sexy” embodiments on the public basketball field as a critique of mainstream Orientalist discourses that frame Muslim women as oppressed and victimized. Rana (2018), focusing on the Netherlands, critiques the sports-as-emancipation narrative by emphasizing Muslim women’s own

reasons for playing sports, such as feelings of comfort and sociability.

In line with these critical feminist and post-colonial sports scholars, this article departs from the question of sports as emancipation for Muslim girls, but rather analyzes such narratives as part of their racialization, and critically examines how race, in intersection with religion, gender, and class, is reproduced and criticized in public sports spaces. It emphasizes Muslim girls' embodied sports practices not merely as resistance but as part of the critical knowledge production about race and racialized Islam in the Netherlands.

#### **METHODS AND CONTEXT: SOCCER GIRLS UNITED IN THE SCHILDERSWIJK, THE HAGUE**

The ethnographic research for this article was mainly conducted in the Schilderswijk, a multi-ethnic and working-class neighborhood in The Hague, though some additional research was done with soccer teams from other cities in the Netherlands. The Schilderswijk is a well-known neighborhood, often featured in media, public and political discourses as the most disadvantaged neighborhood in the Netherlands. It has often been used as the ultimate symbol for all that supposedly went wrong regarding migration, multiculturalism, youth, and Islam. Geert Wilders frequently mentions the Schilderswijk as an example of problematic Islamization in the Netherlands and especially frames its young Muslim inhabitants as dangerous and criminals. He visited the neighborhood in 2013 to "support autochthon inhabitants of the neighborhood," after the publication of an article in the Dutch newspaper *Trouw* about a supposed Sharia-triangle in the Schilderswijk.<sup>13</sup> Sometimes the neighborhood is even called a "no-go area" for "native" (meaning white) Dutch people (Franke, Overmaat, and Reijndorp 2014; Rana 2014).

The Schilderswijk is densely populated and has an ethnic and religiously diverse population: 91.5% of the inhabitants have a migrant background, of which the four biggest ethnic groups are Turkish-Dutch, Moroccan-Dutch (both mostly Muslim), Surinam-Dutch, and Antillean-Dutch (mostly non-religious, Hindu, or Christian); and 8.5% is identified as native Dutch (mostly non-religious or Christian).<sup>14</sup> The Schilderswijk is represented as a site of unchanging poverty when in fact it is a site of continuous social mobility. Migrant newcomers are initially attracted by the low cost of housing but typically leave for other

neighborhoods as soon as they can afford larger, better quality housing.<sup>15</sup>

In 2014 and 2015, I conducted ten months of ethnographic fieldwork with girls and boys who play soccer in a competition they have set up themselves: Soccer Girls United (SGU). It was initiated in 2008 by a Moroccan-Dutch woman from the neighborhood, Hanan (now in her thirties), because she wanted to create more space for girls' sports and leisure.<sup>16</sup> Most soccer players in SGU are between ten and twenty years old and have Moroccan-Dutch and Muslim backgrounds, but there are also some girls with white Dutch and Surinamese-Dutch backgrounds. The competition is not a traditional sports club with official membership, but a less regulated, self-organized competition where the soccer players organize their own trainings, teams, and activities on public playgrounds and in sports halls, paying a modest contribution of twenty euros a year. The aim of SGU is to make the public spaces in the Schilderswijk more inclusive for girls and young women, as most public sports activities organized by sports and community clubs are targeted toward boys.

Although the competition is largely funded by various sports-for-integration government subsidies specifically aimed at the emancipation of Muslim girls, Hanan does not share the assumption that Muslim girls are not yet emancipated. Rather, Hanan wants to challenge the gender and race discrimination persistent in soccer. Challenging the masculine and implicit white constructions of public sports spaces is thus at the core of SGU's activities (see also Green and Singleton 2007). Although SGU is a girls' soccer competition, boys are allowed to participate and to volunteer as trainers, referees, or organizers, as long as they subscribe to SGU's aim: organizing soccer primarily for girls. Hanan and the soccer players are eager about engaging boys in SGU as they want boys to learn to play equally with girls and to learn that girls are also good soccer players.

The methodological foundation of this research was formed by feminist ethnography (Abu-Lughod 1990; Davis and Craven 2016), which means that I have taken the interaction of the soccer players in SGU with me as researcher in their competition central for the knowledge production on race, racialization of Islam, gender, and class in this research. It acknowledges that data is not out there to be discovered by the researcher but rather constructed through research practices and interactions (Abu-Lughod 1990). Part of the knowledge production is a reflection

on the racialized power relations that are involved in the positions of researcher and research participants. My positionality as a white, non-Muslim Dutch woman from outside the Schilderswijk formed an integral part of the talks and encounters with the research participants, as they critically engaged with me as a white researcher, and thus of the knowledge production on race. The main methods of data collection were participant observation and informal talks, taking place at public sports playgrounds in the neighborhood and at soccer competitions organized by SGU in sports centers and at soccer courts. In addition, I conducted twenty-two in-depth interviews with soccer girls from SGU and with (mainly white) sports professionals from neighborhood sports organizations in the Schilderswijk.<sup>17</sup>

### **PLAYING AND RESISTING THE GENDERED, RACIALIZED, AND CLASSED PUBLIC SOCCER SPACES**

The Soccer Girls United competition takes place on Sunday afternoons in a large sports center in the neighborhood. Different teams from several areas in the Schilderswijk then play against each other. There is a competition for ten-to-thirteen-year-olds and one for ages thirteen and up. The teams and team names are usually based on a local public playground where the girls gather during the week to train and practice together. At the end of the competition year, in May, the finals are played and celebrated with music, food, and dance, to which parents, residents, sponsors and other organizations from the neighborhood are invited. During the year, other soccer events are also organized, such as a mother-daughter or a boys-girls tournament. A few times a year, the best teams from SGU play in regional or national street soccer competitions that are organized by national sports organizations such as the Johan Cruyff Foundation or the Royal Dutch Soccer Association (KNVB).

The girls from SGU literally invade the soccer playgrounds in the Schilderswijk: they gather with a group of girls and then take over a playground, usually occupied by boys, in order to play soccer there. Sarah (twenty years old), who is coach of one of the local teams who play in the SGU competition, tells the girls in her team: “The soccer court is also *ours*, not only *theirs*,” referring to the boys on the soccer playgrounds. Despite the increase in girls’ participation in street soccer, they still have to negotiate gendered expectations, norms, and stereotypes on the playground, yet

they do so in a creative fashion. When I talked with a SGU soccer team about their strategies in the game, some of the players told me that in a match with boys, they first play shy and act as if they are afraid of the ball so that the boys become sure that they will win. Halfway through the game, they suddenly switch to full force and impress the boys by making one goal after the other. In this way, they turn gendered expectations about girls as bad soccer players into their soccer strategy, and through such embodied and strategic use of sports space, the girls challenge dominant ideas of who belongs in soccer spaces (Puwar 2004).<sup>18</sup> Fatima El-Tayeb describes this as “forms of resistance that destabilize the ascribed essentialist identities not only by rejecting them, but also through a strategic and creative (mis)use” (2011, xxxvi). This strategic and creative use is, according to El-Tayeb, the “queering of ethnicity.” In my research, the girls strategically used and re-appropriated ascribed identities based on gender but also on race and ethnicity, such as the idea of inactive Muslim girls, by incorporating them in their soccer strategies, thereby destabilizing essentialized and racialized stereotypes of Muslim girls. Nadia (fifteen years old) said: “I don’t mind when people see me with a headscarf on the soccer field and think I’m a bad player. Actually, let them think I’m a bad player so then I can make some more goals.”

Farah (twelve years old) told me in an interview about a recent experience in which she was staying with her aunt in a different neighborhood and wanted to play soccer there. The girls and boys in the playground told her that she was not allowed to play with them because she was “Moroccan and Muslim, and Moroccans steal things all the time.” Based on her appearance, she was immediately racialized as “other” through the vocabulary of “Moroccan” and “Muslim”—the ultimate categories of otherness in the Netherlands—and denied access. At the end of her story, she said to me: “Whose space is this in the Netherlands? It’s surely as much my space as it is a blonde Dutch girl’s space!” thereby explicitly re-claiming the soccer space as also belonging to her, and critiquing the construction of her body as “other.” In a similar way to the gendered soccer strategy that girls employ, Nora (sixteen years old) and her soccer team turned racialized expectations about Muslim girls and soccer into a winning strategy:

Nora: People underestimate us. A lot. Two years ago, we played the National Street

Soccer finals. The final was against a team from Heerenveen, and this was really a group with only Dutch girls. And, of course, they thought: “We will win, they are just Moroccan girls with headscarves, they can’t play soccer.” But in the end, yeah, we’ve beaten them to the max. But they really didn’t expect that, because they thought we couldn’t play, and they really underestimated us, so they played very nonchalant.

Kathrine: How did you notice this during the match?

Nora: They ridiculed us, laughed, such things. If we play against another team, then you see them laughing at us from the stands. Not that we care, because in the end we are the ones who run off with the trophy!

The laughing of spectators creates the bodies of Nora and her teammates as “others” on the soccer field. Although most girls do not explicitly use racial categories, as this is not part of Dutch vernacular language use, race is implicitly very present in how they narrate their stories to me. Farah referred to a “blonde” Dutch girl, indicating that she was talking about white Dutch girls who often have blonde hair. Similarly, Nora talked about a team from “Heerenveen” and “really only Dutch girls.” Here, Heerenveen is used not only to indicate the town where the team came from but also as a symbolic reference to white Dutch people, as supposedly few non-white people live in northern provincial towns such as Heerenveen.

These stories from Nora and Farah do not stand alone. More girls from SGU told me stories about being perceived as ethnic, racialized, religious, and gendered others on the soccer field when they play against teams from outside their neighborhood. Opponents or spectators then expect that they are not good at playing soccer, as playing soccer clashes with the cultural assumptions of being passive, inactive, and oppressed; expectations that are attached to the racialization of Muslim girls and that come to the fore when racialized Muslim girls’ bodies, recognizable by their appearance, enter the soccer field. When I talked with neighborhood sports organizers, most of them told me that girls with Moroccan-Dutch or Muslim backgrounds are not allowed to play soccer because of their cultural or religious background. Nora and other soccer players often

claimed that they did not care so much about such stereotypes as long as they could win the game. According to them, the best way to challenge these racialized and gendered prejudices in public sports spaces is not only to play but to win the game, and in that way prove the falseness of assumptions about Muslim girls.

Often, girls use ethnic categories such as “Dutch” and “Moroccan” in describing their soccer experiences. They do not use “Moroccan” in the same way as in dominant political and public discourses but re-appropriate the category of “Moroccan” in the soccer context and thereby critique the racialized and essentialized ways the category “Moroccan” is generally used in the Netherlands. For example, a soccer player from SGU told me that, especially when a “Moroccan” team is playing against a “Dutch” team, they insist on winning: “Then you just don’t want to lose, definitely not to Dutch people.” Furthermore, in an interview with Moroccan-Dutch soccer players (in their twenties) from an Amsterdam-based women’s soccer team, players first mentioned that ethnicity does not play a role on the soccer field because everyone is just a “soccer player”:

Mona: I want to enter the soccer field as soccer player and not as Moroccan or Dutch or whatever. And we also leave the field as a soccer player.

Sabia: Except when we win.

Mona: Indeed, then we are Moroccan, haha!

Although they later mentioned they were joking, it is also a creative and strategic engagement with dominant perceptions of Moroccan-Dutch Muslim women who play soccer in the context of discrimination, racism, and Islamophobia on and off the field. They not only reject using the category “Moroccan,” with all its stereotypical and negative connotations, in favor of an identity as soccer player, but at the same time reclaim the category when they win: as a response to the racism they experience, to reclaim public soccer spaces as also “theirs,” and to destabilize racial ideas of passive and oppressed Moroccan-Dutch girls as bad soccer players.

These examples show that the language that is used on the field and the framing of soccer teams in ethnic terms is inextricably linked with the embodied playing of soccer. When “Dutch” opponents laugh at them, the girls try even harder to win the game. The embodied play and embodied

strategies on the field challenge the gendered and racialized norms and hierarchies in soccer spaces. Furthermore, the girls produced and communicated knowledge about race and soccer through their embodied play on the soccer field as it is through soccer that the girls experienced the slurs and being laughed at from the stands and at the same time challenge these by winning the game.

However, the public soccer spaces where the girls play are not only racialized and gendered but also intersect with classed constructions of space and sports in the Netherlands. Soccer is considered the Dutch *volkssport* (people's sport): a sport where all layers of Dutch society participate, reflecting the egalitarian ideal of Dutch society. Although soccer is indeed less segregated than other sports, there is still a clear class division in soccer.<sup>19</sup> Yet, because soccer can be associated with both working-class and middle-class economies, tastes and moralities, the sport can take many faces in Dutch debates on integration and urban regeneration. For example, as I mentioned before, soccer projects are used in "disadvantaged" working-class neighborhoods for the integration and disciplining of its classed and racialized inhabitants. The municipality of The Hague has a sports department that funds and organizes sports hours on public playgrounds in several neighborhoods. I interviewed Kayleigh, a white sports trainer of one of these hours, and she mentioned that she teaches her pupils on the playgrounds "to be on time, practice discipline, to give a call when they do not participate and to help each other and not only think about yourself." Here, soccer is used for defining appropriate behavior and disciplining othered subjects in disadvantaged neighborhoods. This is especially striking since street soccer, or other urban sports, are in essence free practices that do not need designated training and playing times (De Martini Ugolotti and Moyer 2016, 201). For many girls in my research this is the reason that they prefer to play street soccer rather than club soccer: you can play whenever, wherever, and with whom you feel like, and with SGU they strive to increase girls' free access to public soccer pitches.

Besides as means of disciplining and defining proper behavior, soccer is also used as symbol for antisocial, *implicitly* working-class, behaviors. For example, in a letter Dutch prime minister Mark Rutte wrote about "tolerant" Dutch society, he critiques "screaming soccer fathers along the sidelines of the soccer field." Violence in youth soccer is often associated with lower-class and "Moroccan"

boys. When soccer is exercised by white youth in official soccer clubs, it is seen as a sign of "normal" behavior, and as part of "proper" participation in Dutch society (Rana 2014, 36). When it is exercised by racialized minorities in public playgrounds in disadvantaged neighborhoods, soccer is read as undisciplined and lower-class behavior by white residents and politicians, given their often negative statements about "Moroccan hang-around youth" (Martineau 2006).

Contrary to the sports projects organized by the municipality, where there is a focus on discipline and integration, SGU's own soccer competition rather functions as a space that is adapted to the needs and wishes of the girls in the Schilderswijk. For example, they can bring their little brothers and sisters with them if they have to baby-sit, and they can choose to join only when they do not have other responsibilities. In this way, they are able to enhance the participation of girls in soccer who have to combine playing soccer with studying, working, helping out at home or taking care of family members. In SGU, there are no strict rules on "proper" social behavior such as being on time and giving a call. Rather, girls' own ideas on how they would like to play and organize soccer are central. Yet, even there, the girls are confronted with dominant racialized and classed ideas in Dutch society about Moroccan-Dutch and Muslim girls.

#### THE LAUNDRY INCIDENT

While there are some boys who participate in SGU's soccer trainings and competitions, once a year the girls organize a "girls-only" soccer training in the sports hall. The boys left the sports hall, and the girls and I were sitting on the benches, dividing the teams before going to play. While Hanan, the coordinator, explained what we would do, three white middle-aged men with hockey sticks and sports bags coming from an adjacent room walked past us to the exit of the sports hall. The last one of them stopped, looked around, and said: "So, can I leave my laundry here?" Hanan immediately responded to the man, but I couldn't hear what she said, as the girls around me got very agitated and shouted: "He's a racist!" Some girls stood up from the benches and raised their hands. I got really angry as well because of his comment. Afterwards I couldn't recall exactly what had happened. I remembered that Hanan stayed calm and said: "Well, we shouldn't pay attention to those kinds of people," and continued her explanation of the training.

A couple of days later, I saw Hanan at a community center for an interview, and she told me:

I've organized girls' soccer in several community centers and neighborhoods. And still that's not always accepted. Or like that man from Sunday! Yes, you got very angry, me too, and if the girls hadn't been there, I would've hit him, but now I couldn't because the girls were there. So, I said to him: "Oh, because we wear a headscarf you ask this? That's racist." And then he reacted like "Well, well, well." But you know, next Sunday, I will go a little bit earlier to the sports hall and then I'll confront him with what he said. Then I'll ask him: "Sir, what did you mean by that?"

Reflecting on my own emotions during this encounter with the man, I felt personally humiliated, and in the uproar, I shouted: "He's a sexist!" When I heard the other girls shout "racist," for one second, I was surprised, because as a white privileged woman, at that moment I could only personally experience his comment in a sexist way. I do not have any experiences of racism or classism that the girls have because of their appearance as Muslim women in sports spaces and it shows the limits of understanding racism in soccer as a white researcher. As Hanan pointed out, for her and the girls it was through being visibly Muslim through the headscarf that they understand this comment first and foremost as racist, a clear example of the racialization of Muslim women's bodies. If there had been only white girls, it is conceivable that the reaction of the man would have been different, maybe making a comment on the girls' football skills, but not inciting the laundry question, which has strong racial, gendered, and class meanings. The sexism at work in this comment is thus a racialized sexism, as the laundry question refers not only to gendered labor but moreover to racialized and classed gendered labor. Therefore, the girls shouted racism.

In the Netherlands, hockey is known to be an upper-class sport and it is often described by the image of "blonde girls playing hockey."<sup>20</sup> Furthermore, in the Netherlands, white people mostly play sports in white-only sports clubs and therefore do not often encounter non-white people in their sports spaces (Vermeulen and Verweel 2009, 1210). This particular sports hall used by the hockey playing man and by SGU lies at the border of the Schilderswijk with the more affluent city

center and it thus caters to sports people with diverse classed and racial/ethnic backgrounds, who rent the sports hall for their activities. So, the white man, who in most public spaces belongs to the "somatic norm" (Puwar 2004, 8), is confronted with gender, racial/ethnic, and religious difference in "his" sports space. This contestation of the white norm generates an anxious response that is quite common in the Netherlands (Wekker 2016) in which he rearticulates racial, classed, and gender difference by reframing it in a power structure of a white employer and migrant Moroccan-Dutch Muslim women working for him through invoking the "laundry question."

Domestic jobs such as caretaking and cleaning are often performed by migrant women in white Dutch households, and for a long time those were the only jobs available for migrant women (Marchetti 2016; Sunier 2009, 475). Although now the situation is more diverse, the image of domestic work is still very much constructed through a racialized, gendered, and classed difference, and therefore the "laundry question" was such a strong metaphor for articulating and upholding this difference and the white, male, upper-class norm in the public sports space. The paradox that Göle mentioned is strongly present here: as long as racialized Muslim women perform domestic work and are not visible in the public spaces, they are accepted, yet always framed as unemancipated in the current political climate; and as soon as they occupy public spaces defined by a white male and middle-upper class norm, their presence is contested (Göle 2006; see also Sunier 2009, 475).<sup>21</sup>

The girls responded to the "laundry question" by framing the man and the question as "racist." In other events or interviews, girls described both racist and sexist experiences under the term "racism." My initial analysis of their use of the term *racism* was informed by the intersectional idea that all three axes of power are simultaneously in play, and therefore I saw the girls' analysis of this event as only "racist" as insufficient (van den Bogert 2019). Yet, by taking a closer look at the way girls described and analyzed this event as racist, and by taking seriously their embodied knowledge of this event, generated not only through this single racist comment but also through previous cumulative experiences of racism and hate speech, I came to see their analysis as crucial to understanding how the intersections of race, class, and gender work in Dutch society. Indeed, these are intersectional, but that does not preclude the possibility that one axis of difference

is the primary one through which other differences are constructed and embodied. In this case, in an encounter between racialized girls and a white man, the girls analyzed race as the primary category of difference invoked by the man's question and that subsequently constructs classed and gendered differences. Through their embodied experiences of invading public sports spaces as racialized girls, the girls know that it is in the first place their visible difference of brown skin and a headscarf that sets them apart from the white norm that persists in Dutch society (Wekker 2016). The girls' embodied knowledge is crucial to my understanding of the intersections of race, ethnicity, gender, and class in Dutch society.

### **RACE, CLASS, AND KNOWLEDGE IN THE ETHNOGRAPHIC ENCOUNTER**

The girls of SGU also engaged with difference and power along the lines of class and race in relation to me as a researcher, differently positioned on the axes of race, class, and religion from the girls who played in SGU. Not only the soccer spaces that I studied, but also the research itself was racialized, classed, and gendered, and my positionality as a white, highly-educated female researcher from a different city was not unproblematic. Through our interactions in the soccer spaces, the girls constructed their embodied knowledge of race and racialization of Islam in Dutch society and specifically in their neighborhood. At that time, much research, both journalistic and academic, was conducted in the Schilderswijk, most often in the form of incidental visits by white researchers or journalists from outside the neighborhood. At first, the girls and boys from SGU perceived me as "another one" and paid little attention to me, as many of them were tired of all the researchers visiting their neighborhood. My positionality became clearer through the following reflection:

I hang around with some volunteers and players of SGU in a public playground that is often used for outdoor sports activities by different organizations in the Schilderswijk. One of the SGU boys tells about his experiences of living in the neighborhood. Then, a group of five white, middle-aged people, mostly men, appear around the corner of the school next to the playground. One of them points towards the playground and starts to talk. The others observe us while we hang around and sit on the benches, but they stay at a distance and do not come closer. When it begins to feel like a weird

situation, one of the soccer players, who is running in the field, shouts: "Yes, indeed, this is the Schilderswijk!" The other soccer players on the benches next to me mumble and laugh a bit, but quickly go on with their talks without paying any more attention to the group of adults. After a few minutes, the group leaves. I feel that they were ridiculing their white adult observers, and it gives me a very uncomfortable feeling. It seems to me that what I am doing is not that different after all. I am also a white adult outsider who is studying and observing the soccer players of the Schilderswijk. My discomfort prevents me from asking the girls and boys about this incident; I do not want to bring attention to myself and remain silently seated with the soccer players on the benches until I feel it is time to leave.

Later in my research, when I did dare to ask about this incident, the soccer players told me that they are very critical of the large number of white journalists and researchers from outside the neighborhood who focus only on the negative aspects of the Schilderswijk, and who create negative stereotypes about the Muslim and Moroccan-Dutch young residents, without ever talking to them, as was also the case in the incident in the playground. By yelling "Yes, indeed, this is the Schilderswijk!" from the soccer field to the white observers, they engaged with the absence of communication from the observers and the physical distance they kept from the players in the field. In this situation, the girls' and boys' bodies become racialized as other and needing control. By framing their soccer field as "indeed, the Schilderswijk," they critiqued the dominant construction of racialized Moroccan and Muslim bodies in public spaces in disadvantaged neighborhoods as "dangerous," that white people need to stay away from. Their embodied knowledge of this event is expressively summarized in the sentence "Yes, indeed, this is the Schilderswijk!" while running and playing soccer in the field.

Because I did talk to the soccer players, and because of my specific interest in girls' soccer, and not about negative issues such as radicalization and criminality, most soccer players told me that they saw my participation in their own soccer competition SGU as an opportunity to show the positive side of the Schilderswijk and its residents. This does not mean that they readily accepted my involvement. The players were highly aware of the racialized and classed power relations involved

between us, and engaged with this in a creative fashion, as I will show.

### THE GEERT WILDERS INCIDENT

In the ethnographic fieldwork, I usually did not participate as a soccer player in the competition because of the age difference, my lack of soccer skills, and because I did not belong to any of the teams that were formed based on the location where the players lived in the Schilderswijk. Rather, I participated in the organization of the trainings and competitions, for example, taking care of the lunch or keeping track of the scores. After a few months of fieldwork at SGU, Hanan asked me to act as a coach for one of the girls' teams during a soccer competition for ten-to-thirteen-year-olds because their own coach was ill. My role was not significant as the girls themselves decided on their strategy and positions in the field, but I did make sure that they were all present when their match started, and that all substitute players got the chance to play. In the second match they played, one of the Moroccan-Dutch girls in my team, Ikram (eleven years old), made mean comments ("drop dead," "you're the worst soccer player in the world," "you're ugly") to two soccer players from the other team, the two only white Dutch girls in the competition. Although ugly comments are quite common in the broader soccer culture, this was something that Hanan, SGU's coordinator, always tried to combat, emphasizing fair play and a safe space for everyone, so that girls who are less skilled in soccer feel welcome. She explicitly critiqued the dominant soccer culture and whenever she heard soccer players swear at each other, she called them out. Therefore, when I acted as the team's coach and Hanan herself was not around, I felt I should do the same and I told Ikram that her comments are not nice, and that she should stop saying these things. Ikram did not really care about my remark and replied: "It is my opinion, and if it is my opinion, I can say whatever I want." I became somewhat insecure about what to do in this situation and replied: "Are you sure? Even if you say things about other people that are not nice?" Ikram's friend and fellow player in the team Sumaya (twelve years old), who stood next to us and was listening to the conversation, then looked at me and firmly said: "If Geert Wilders has freedom of speech, we have freedom of speech!"

I was blown away by their replies, as naively I did not expect girls of such young age to be so politically aware. With a poor "I still don't think you should say these things," I left it at that,

because I sincerely did not know how to respond, and after my first surprise, I actually thought they were completely right and I felt I had nothing to refute their statements. After the game ended, I saw that the two girls from the other team complained to Hanan about Ikram's comments, and Hanan reprimanded Ikram firmly. Ikram accepted that reprimand, and apologized to the girls. When the next game started and I again joined Ikram, Sumaya, and their teammates as coach, they both seemed to have forgotten about our encounter as later during the competition we were just normally chatting about soccer. Maybe they saw that I was impressed by their response and were therefore fine with me. Due to my feelings of discomfort in this specific situation, I never dared to ask them about their remarks on "freedom of speech" any more, as I was afraid to impede our relation by bringing up our conflict again. It was only later during the analysis that I became aware of the meaning of their response and the specific ways in which race mattered in this situation on the soccer field.

Although we were not speaking about politics at that moment, both Ikram and Sumaya were clearly very aware of our differently racialized positions in the current political climate, where right-wing politician Geert Wilders appropriates the right of freedom of speech to make racist and Islamophobic statements. Sumaya and Ikram, as Moroccan-Dutch, Muslim soccer players from the Schilderswijk then appropriate his language of "freedom of speech" against me, a white Dutch researcher and coach from outside the neighborhood. They made me uncomfortably aware of my presence as a white and highly educated middle-class researcher in their self-organized soccer competition in the Schilderswijk, by turning around Geert Wilders's racist "freedom of speech" in favor of their own position of power in the soccer competition. In this way, they critically negotiated and challenged the racialized and classed power relations (that intersect with age, religion, and place as well) in the urban soccer space and in broader Dutch society. I am a researcher that constructs knowledge about them and about their girls' soccer competition, but at that moment, they trumped me with their embodied knowledge about rights and freedom of speech; a knowledge based in their lived experiences of race and soccer in Dutch public spaces. These girls were clearly questioning my presence and authority as white woman within the SGU space by reversing Geert Wilders's appropriation of "freedom of space" to construct their racialized and classed bodies as dominant, at least for that moment in their own urban soccer space.

Just one sentence on the soccer field revealed their extensive embodied knowledge about race and racial relations in Dutch public spaces.

## CONCLUSION

In this article, I have discussed how race, as it intersects with religion, gender, and class, plays a role in everyday public sports spaces in the Netherlands, through an ethnography of Muslim girls' soccer activities in an urban neighborhood. It builds on research that focuses on race and the racialization of Muslim women in public spaces (e.g. El-Tayeb 2011; Essed and Hoving 2014; Göle 2006; Moors and Salih 2009; Wekker 2016), yet centralizes how Muslim girls challenge and negotiate their racialization in everyday public spaces through engaging with the popular sport, soccer. This article shows how local and grassroots sports initiatives function as forms of embodied resistance to contemporary ethno-nationalist and racist politics. Moreover, it argues that we should take the embodied knowledge that stems from Muslim girls' experiences in public sports spaces seriously as it reveals the intersections of race, religion, gender, and class in Dutch public spaces. In this article, I read Muslim girls' athletic success not as a sign of their "emancipation" but look to how they produce and communicate knowledge and experiences of race through playing soccer.

Public soccer playgrounds are structured in gendered, racialized, and classed ways in which Moroccan-Dutch Muslim girls are discursively excluded and constructed as ultimate others through racist speech. Even if the girls play soccer as a response to dominant racialized and gendered sports culture, they still need to continuously negotiate and emphasize their belonging in these spaces through, sometimes implicit, discourses of race in the public sports places of their neighborhood (see also Thangaraj et al. 2018, 653). Yet, playing soccer at the same time functions as embodied resistance to the gendered, racialized, and classed inequalities in Dutch public spaces. As such, the double helix of sports becomes visible: it is both a space where race and race relations are reproduced, as well as a space where they are resisted. Through their embodied invasion of public spaces, the girls reappropriate those spaces and challenge dominant ideas of who belongs there. I have shown how the girls not simply reject the labels that are used to racialize them as others, namely "Moroccan" and the "Schilderswijk," but

re-appropriate and reclaim these in a context of performing and winning.

The stories of the soccer girls show that their presence in these spaces generates a response from white people primarily based on race. As Gloria Wekker (2016) has also argued, race and colonialism are central forces in the construction of Dutch identity and society, yet at the same time made invisible and denied as such through discourses of "color-blindness" and "tolerance." In this article, I have showed how this "absence of race" is nevertheless a highly present and structuring factor in Dutch public sports spaces, and I argue that the role of race becomes knowable through the embodied knowledge produced by the soccer girls in my research.

Racialized Muslim girls negotiate their racialization and right-wing and nationalistic politics through the combination of embodied play and speech on the soccer field. Slurs and being laughed at are prominent in Muslim girls' experiences in sports, and an inherent part of their understandings of race and sports. As such, they generate an embodied knowledge about race that is not available to me as a white Dutch researcher. The embodied knowledge that the girls construct shows that race and racism are the primary factors shaping social encounters in public sports spaces, and that gender, religion, and class are subsequently produced through racialization in sports. Nevertheless, these girls create their own sports spaces and practices to resist racism, Islamophobia, sexism and classism, and their embodied knowledge of such events contribute to scholarly understandings of race, racism, public space, and sports.

The soccer field proved to be a space in which Moroccan-Dutch girls engage with the political situation in the Netherlands where "Moroccans" are stigmatized and used in racist election campaigns. The girls in my research might not have the political resources that adults have to engage with these situations, but use their spaces of soccer and embodied leisure to reflect critically on and analyze the intersections of race, class, religion, and gender in Dutch society.

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## NOTES

1. The PVV is, like many other European right-wing parties, anti-EU.

2. The Labor Party (Partij van de Arbeid) was at that time part of the Dutch national government and often critiqued by populist parties such as the PVV.

3. Here, Geert Wilders refers to the then leader of the liberal progressive party D66, Alexander Pechtold, who often critiqued Wilders for his racist statements.

4. See: Boon, Lex. 2014. "Minder, Minder enz. enz. Wat Zei en Deed Wilders Gisteren Precies?" *NRC*, March 20. Accessed January 20, 2021. [https://www.nrc.nl/nieuws/2014/03/20/minder-minder-enz-enz-wat-zei-en-deed-wilders-gisteren-precies\\_a1483864](https://www.nrc.nl/nieuws/2014/03/20/minder-minder-enz-enz-wat-zei-en-deed-wilders-gisteren-precies_a1483864). See also: NOS. 2014. "PVV-Aanhang Scandeert: Minder Marokkanen." *NOS*, March 19. Accessed January 20, 2021. <http://nos.nl/video/625574-pvvaanhang-scandeert-minder-marokkanen.html>.

5. NOS. 2016. "Samsom en Spekman Niet Vervolgd voor Marokkanenuitspraken." *NOS*, April 14. Accessed January 20, 2021. <https://nos.nl/artikel/2098694-samsom-en-spekman-niet-vervolgd-voor-marokkanenuitspraken.html>. The term *ethnic* is used by politicians because it is perceived in the Netherlands as a neutral and objective category different from race, and hence they do not need to talk about racism. Using *ethnic* obscures the racialization that is at work, as is a common practice in Dutch political, public, and academic debates (Essed and Nimako 2006; Wekker 2016). In public debates in the Netherlands, crime statistics are often presented in relation to ethnic background/descent, emphasizing the relatively high representation of people with migration backgrounds in crime. But this is an incorrect and incomplete statement. Social economic status is the most important factor relating to crime and differences in ethnic groups are largely explained by demographic and social-economic factors (Huijnk and Andriessen 2016).

6. NOS. 2016. "6474 aangiften tegen Wilders." *NOS*, October 31. Accessed January 20, 2021. <https://www.nporadio1.nl/homepage/1872-proces-teen-geert-wilders-van-start>. Here, I refer to race as it is used in Dutch juridical documents and language, which in jurisprudence includes "skin color, descent and national or ethnic origin." (Gerechtshof Den Haag. 2020. "Uitspraak." *Rechtspraak*, September 4. Accessed January 20, 2021. <https://uitspraken.rechtspraak.nl/inziendocument?id=ECLI:NL:GHDHA:2020:1606>.)

In the remainder of this article and in my analysis, I refer to race as a social construct that has no biological origin but is rather the product of racialization: the process whereby social categories of difference or identity, such as class, ethnicity, or religion, become essentialized, naturalized and biologized, and placed hierarchically in fields of power (Silverstein 2005, 364).

7. Hoorn, Jeroen. ND. "Waarom wordt Geert Wilders vervolgd?" *NPO Focus*, ND. Accessed January 20, 2021. <https://npofocus.nl/artikel/7475/waarom-werd-geert-wilders-vervolgd>.

8. As, for example, Ahmad Mendes Moreira did: Sportredactie. 2019. "Mendes Moreira: 'K-zwarte, k-neger, dat doet me erg veel pijn.'" *AD*, November 17. Accessed January 20, 2021. <https://www.ad.nl/nederlands-voetbal/mendes-moreira-k-zwarte-k-neger-dat-doeft-me-erg-veel-pijn~ab44432e/>.

9. Göle, Nilüfer. 2013. "Islam's disruptive visibility in the European public space." *Eurozine*: 1-19. October 11. Accessed July 5, 2019. <https://www.eurozine.com/islams-disruptive-visibility-in-the-european-public-space/>.

10. Göle 2013, 9. See note 9 for citation details.

11. See also Thangaraj et al. 2018, 655.

12. See also Göle 2013 in note 9.

13. de Vries, Joost. 2013. "Wilders in de Schilderswijk: 'Ik waan me niet in Nederland.'" *Volkscrant*, May 21. Accessed January 20, 2021. <https://www.volkscrant.nl/nieuws-achtergrond/wilders-in-de-haagse-schilderswijk-ik-waan-me-niet-in-nederland~be0efca5/>.

14. Buurtmonitor Den Haag. 2017. "Den Haag in Cijfers." Gemeente Den Haag. Accessed February 19, 2018. <https://denhaag.buurtmonitor.nl/home>.

15. Hoff, Stella, Jean-Marie Wildeboer Schut, Benedikt Goderis, and Cok Vrooman. 2016. "Armoede in Kaart 2016." Den Haag: Sociaal en Cultureel Planbureau. Accessed January 20, 2021. [https://digitaal.scp.nl/armoedeinkaart2016/assets/pdf/armoede\\_in\\_kaart\\_2016-SCP.pdf](https://digitaal.scp.nl/armoedeinkaart2016/assets/pdf/armoede_in_kaart_2016-SCP.pdf).

16. All names of organizations and persons in this article are pseudonyms.

17. I analyzed the transcribed data from the observations, talks and interviews by open and axial coding based on a grounded theory approach (Boeije 2010).

18. See note 9.

19. Pulles, Ine, and Koen Breedveld. 2015. "Sport Is Nog Steeds Vooral Voor de Elite." *Sociale Vraagstukken*, August 25. Accessed January 20, 2021. <https://www.socialevraagstukken.nl/sport-is-nog-steeds-vooral-voor-de-elite/>.

20. See note 19.

21. See note 9.

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