

DRAFT - Multiple Worlds in a Single Street:

Ethnic Entrepreneurship and the Construction of a Global Sense of Place

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Abstract

Doreen Massey's rethinking of space and place has made a significant contribution to the understanding of place development. In this paper, we apply our reading of Massey's work to the issue of place-making; in particular, to the question of how to improve the social and economic position of an ethnically diverse neighbourhood. Our case is the Willemsweg, a multi-ethnic shopping street in Nijmegen, the Netherlands, which has recently received support for a major uplift. We point out that each of the place-meanings adhered to by different local actors embodies a specific global sense of place, yet the consequences of this plurality of 'trajectories' for actual place-making remain difficult to grasp empirically. For this reason, we elaborate on a relational approach which joins Massey's notion of 'throwntogetherness' with various meso-theoretical concepts which shed light on specific trajectories.

Introduction

Almost two decades ago Doreen Massey 'globalised' Kilburn High Road in North West London, by recounting how a variety of local phenomena could be understood as a manifestation of locally interacting 'global' processes and flows (Massey 1991). This seminal piece of work contributed to the development of a spatial-relational perspective on place and scale. Since then, the discussion on how the global is locally grounded and what that means for our conception of place, has continued. One area in which this is a particularly pertinent discussion is the area of ethnically diverse places, as exemplified by Kilburn Road. A key question is to what extent a sense of place based on the articulation of the 'global' in the 'local' can help local communities, with policy support, to develop joint initiatives geared to strengthening the socio-economic position of a neighbourhood and the quality of life of its inhabitants.

The wider debate hinging on ethnically diverse neighbourhoods has posited the importance of entrepreneurship, specifically in the form of retail and hospitality services (e.g. Lin 1995; Spaan et al. 2005; Ford et al. 2008; Barca 2009; Hall 2010). For immigrant groups, self-employment and entrepreneurship represent major vehicles for gaining economic and social status in their own community as well as in their host environment. First generation immigrants generally face more difficulties in finding paid work, due to the lack of (locally accepted) diplomas and cultural differences. Immigrants of first and subsequent generations are often in possession of resources and capabilities that offer advantages in setting up their own business. These include, in particular, knowledge of, and access to, specific types of 'foreign' goods and services, as well as different work practices and attitudes. As such,

entrepreneurship provides income and social status to individuals living and working in a particular place. Consequently, entrepreneurship can invest a place with a particular socio-economic identity, including a reputation for particular forms of doing business which benefit the area as a whole.

In this paper, this twofold relationship between ethnic entrepreneurship and place development will be investigated from the viewpoint of three groups of actors: (1) entrepreneurs, (2) retail planners and (3) local policymakers and external experts joining forces to provide a rationale for municipal investment efforts. The neighbourhood we will shed light on here is the 'Willemskwartier' in the city of Nijmegen, located in the South-East of the Netherlands. In particular, we will zoom in onto our equivalent of Kilburn Road, 'Willemsweg', the main street and shopping heart of the neighbourhood. The Willemskwartier is a working class neighbourhood near Nijmegen Central Station built almost a century ago to host railway workers. Over the last three decades, it has turned into an ethnically diverse area, and has become part of major urban renovation schemes.

The paper will start with a brief discussion of Massey's core argument, and the way it can be employed, followed by an introduction of the Willemskwartier and Willemsweg and a note on methodology. The subsequent sections will summarise the major neighbourhood perceptions and visions of three groups of actors cast as 'trajectories', a key concept within Massey's work. It will be shown that these place-meanings each discursively open up to global-local influences and relations, albeit in very different ways. The final part of the paper will review our findings in light of the construction of a global sense of place. Our paper can be read first as an appraisal of

Massey's intellectual achievement, and second, as an attempt to unite Massey-inspired voices and ideas from the wider debate on entrepreneurship and place into a heuristic perspective on place-making in multi-ethnic surroundings.

'A simultaneity of stories-so-far'

In Massey's account of space and place, spatial relations should not be associated with unboundedness or fluidity. Places manifest many unique qualities, which are located and bounded. However, from a relational point of view, these qualities cannot be understood from within a fixed local context. They are the products, or better moments, of coalescing and colliding chains of events and movements, generally occurring at scales larger than the place itself. Explaining the local in terms of the 'global' thus avoids the 'endogeneity trap' which has continued to trouble geographical analysis (Sassen 2006). These chains, or in Massey's words 'trajectories', bear upon places in two fundamental ways. First, in a practical and material sense, through imprinting them with layers of investments and practices. Second, trajectories give rise to interpreted histories and spatial connotations, some of which come with more weight and influence than others. These serve to endow places with meaning and to help local actors develop a sense of place and engage with processes of 'place making'. Importantly, therefore, trajectories are useful in conceiving of lived experience as deeply influencing the making of place. The crux of relationality is thus, to use Massey's own words, 'the contemporaneous existence of a plurality of trajectories, a simultaneity of stories-so-far' (Massey, 2005, p. 12), which, in turn, constitutes 'space as the sphere of the possibility of the existence of multiplicity in the

sense of contemporaneous plurality' (Massey 2005, 9). What 'trajectories' bring to the discussion, in this context, is an understanding of how each chain of events and movements comes with its own kind of spatiality and temporality, which bear differently on place development and place making.

By accepting the multiplicity of the trajectories bearing upon place, effectively or potentially, one creates a genuine openness of the future. In the end, such spatial and temporal openness constitute, to quote Anderson (2008, 233), 'the very condition of the political'. For us, the implication of embracing the notion of multiplicity is that in generating and responding to place-narratives, we do not *a priori* assign statuses and authorities, that is, we do not privilege certain kinds of stories. While our work necessarily invokes conceptual frames dealing with space and society, we should be aware that these frames can never present neutral abstractions. On the contrary, '[t]hey are deeply embedded in social and political structures, perpetuated through policy making, disseminated by the media, and underscored and extended through academic analysis' (Rodgers 2004, 278). As Bridge and Watson (Bridge and Watson 2003, 14) assert: 'There is no one narrative of a city, but many narratives construct cities in different ways highlighting some aspects and not others'. Each trajectory thus presents a realm of the political, in the way certain practices, visions, agents, etc. are privileged as well as in how it is affected by broader developments and tendencies. Acknowledging and building on such a notion of plurality provides one important way of meeting the 'condition of the political'.

Together, 'sense of place' and 'trajectories' present the basis for what is, both analytically and normatively, an inclusive and extrovert perspective on studying places. 'Sense of place' refers to the consciousness of how places are linked to the

wider world, and how the 'local' and 'global' intersect in the 'throwntogetherness' of trajectories. According to Massey, the throwntogetherness of place provides a useful heuristic of how to come to terms with the manifold processes and stories that impinge upon and feed place development, and to unravel the political from a 'place' perspective. This idea counteracts the modernist logic that the chains and processes bearing on place cohere to produce a particular outcome at a particular moment in time. Rather, Massey locates the possibility of place in the 'conjunction' of trajectories – in the events where conditions and resources stemming from various trajectories meet to produce certain coalitions and spatial manifestations, (Massey 2005), thus presenting a material as well as political crossroads. For Sparke (2007, 400), 'the theoretical utility of Massey's account is that it enables us to re-imagine place as a venue in which space-relating and space-making processes come together in 'conjunctural events'.

What we see emerge, accordingly, is a two-way relationship between 'sense of place' and 'trajectories'. As explained above, trajectories bring to a place material and semiotic conditions and resources, which feed into the 'sense of place'. This may include socio-economic performance (e.g. through business investments), population changes (e.g. through migration), prevailing policy images, etc. Conversely, the 'sense of place' impacts upon the way trajectories are locally embedded and articulated, and how opportunities are perceived and grasped. This translates into notions of recognition and respect, constituting the basis for local forms of political action and responsibility (Massey 2004). A global sense of place, in this regard, may help to develop adequate responses to, and engagements with, trajectories unfolding at non-local scales, whether it concerns the economy (e.g. foreign investments,

innovation), population (e.g. migration), social issues (e.g. crime, drugs,...) or governance (e.g. administrative mergers). In the words of Longan (2002, 219), '[a] community informed by a global sense of place, rather than by notions of [local] inhabitation, may be better equipped to act upon problems and opportunities at non-local scales in order to effect change at the local scale because it recognizes the ways that places are embedded in larger power structures'.

The concept of trajectory is, in certain respects, comparable with other 'open' concepts. It focuses on material and semiotic aspects of the social world. It starts the exploration from a particular empirical observation, a specific phenomenon of place development. Trajectories are thus identified and characterised always in the context of a particular place. The concept, however, does not refer to a kind of semiotic system or formation, like the notion of discourses, in which certain elements and relations dominate. In exploring certain modes of influence and embedding, it is more akin to the chain characteristics of actor-networks (Latour 2005). Yet where the latter concept revolves around a particular interpretation of connections, through notions of enrolment, translation and mediators, trajectories draw on a somewhat looser notion of historical association. What counts for trajectories is not so much the stabilisation of a heterogeneous network or assemblage (DeLanda 2006), but the build-up of a consolidated effect on place development and making. Yet, while trajectories thus present a different angle, in identifying such effects, aspects of other theories may be usefully invoked. The durability and reach of certain effects may benefit from the network perspective and the 'tracing' approach elaborated by actor-network thinking (cf. Marcus 1995). The way different trajectories mesh (or not) together may be discussed in terms of assemblage theory. And the role semiotics play, such in the form

of dominant concepts, stories and images, can be understood with the help of discourse approaches. This may include revelations of how powerful images of 'competing places' or 'sustainability' prompt collective action, resulting in new flagship projects, and how the fixing of certain identities and forms of communication limits the possibilities for other kinds of trajectories to unfold.

We would like to take this argument one step further. It is not only the 'family' of concepts introduced above that can be invoked, but also theories and concepts closer to the object of research, that shed light on particular (aspects of) trajectories and their 'throwntogetherness'. We see the relational approach adopted here thus as a kind of meta-perspective, as the roots of a tree of which the branches may embrace specific perspectives to elucidate particular phenomena and linkages. Also our own, academic stories may play an important role (Dormans 2008). Academic stories, often containing (elements of) meso-level theories, not only reflect on events, linkages and patterns observed in a trajectory from an academic point of view, but they also help to constitute that trajectory. For example, this paper illustrates that meso-level theories on retail planning and cultural economy have influenced place-making, primarily in a semiotic way, but, through their impact on concrete actions, also with material consequences. In other words, academic stories do not stand outside of the material and political unfolding of the trajectories they reflect upon, but are part and parcel of it.

A methodological issue related to the studying of trajectories concerns the question of how to define which story to include and in what ways? The issue is compounded by the fact that not all possible stories are told and not all events and linkages are

accounted for. The question thus arises in how far, from an open, relational perspective, one should be on the lookout for 'hidden' traces and links, and for alternative stories. How to detect issues that might be all but intractable? In the words of Anderson (Anderson 2008, 234): '[h]ow to engage with radical alterity from within a system of relational thought. That is, how to engage with relations that remain unknowable, undecided or indeterminate?'

There are no simple or neat answers to these questions. Querying the notion of 'openness', in a normative as well as analytical sense, Massey (2005, 178) herself argues that there cannot be a universal criterion of openness. Normatively, there are many instances in which it is important that our places, from homes to nations, provide certain barriers and impediments, something which should be part of our considerations and open to debate. Tracing trajectories and their relations analytically, furthermore, presents a never-ending challenge: '[t]he beauty of empirical work is that you have no sooner reached such neat and satisfying conclusions than that they start to exhibit cracks and queries'. There is, accordingly, no escape from politics. There is no list of criteria we can easily deploy (cf. Rose 2007). What we can do though is think of certain research strategies that help to contain the intricacies of following a relational perspective. In our case, this means that we take inspiration from the 'tracing' method as elaborated under the labels of Actor Network Theory (Murdoch 1998) and multisite-ethnography (Marcus 1995). Starting from a nodal point, that is, our place 'under study', we follow traces and influences back to multiple trajectories taking us to different sites and scales. In tracing, we should be as open and inclusive as possible, immersing ourselves deeply in core site(s) and the networks linked to them. Moreover, we are open to abstract concepts and theoretical constructs, and how

they constitute, as well as contribute to our understanding of trajectories and 'throwntogetherness'.

Willemskwartier: an ethnically diverse neighbourhood

The Willemskwartier can be seen as a 'classical' spatial setting for attracting lower skilled migrant workers. The area was named after the Dutch prince and vice-regent Willem V, the last resident of the Valkhof Castle which was demolished in 1797. The Willemskwartier was mainly built between 1916 and 1929 as a 'working class' garden village, consisting of relatively small terraced houses with front and back gardens. Most houses are part of the municipal system of social housing. In the 1970s and 1980s, a substantial part of the original population moved out to more modern, better quality and bigger houses in the suburbs, and their places were taken in by migrants notably from Turkey, Morocco and Surinam, a former Dutch colony. In the same period, also due to the low quality of the physical environment, the area started to suffer from some major social and environmental problems, including high unemployment, crime and environmental degradation. Consequently, the neighbourhood, and in particular Willemsweg, became refuge to small businesses acting as a cover for serious forms of crime, such as (inter)national drugs trade, as well as for youth gangs that were increasingly banned from the city centre. Thus stigmatised with various 'problem area' and 'priority area' images, the neighbourhood became the subject of major government interventions. Given their pervasiveness, the

way the area has been (re)developed through a sequence of urban planning interventions provides our *first* trajectory.

Another important chain of events is presented by the way individual entrepreneurs, notably shopkeepers of different ethnic origins, have recently changed the face of the street. This constitutes our *second* trajectory. By way of introduction, Table 1 lists the current retail activities at Willemsweg. The Table details the location of the businesses in 2009, the ethnicity of the entrepreneurs, their trade and any investments done as part of government support. This shows that almost half of the venues is run by entrepreneurs from a Turkish background, a third from an ethnic Dutch background, and the remainder from various ethnic backgrounds. This division corresponds to what can be found in high streets in inner-city neighbourhoods across the country (such as Lombok in Utrecht, and Schilderswijk in The Hague). The relatively high proportion of Turkish entrepreneurs here reflects their interest in investing in retail activities.

While the policy documents frame local development and ambitions through the notion of ‘multiculturalism’ (Nijmegen, 2005), we have found no links to the wider immigration discourse in the Netherlands. Recently, the latter has started to question the success of immigrant minority integration and, consequently, the idea of multiculturalism altogether. .We ascribe this to the fact that immigrant entrepreneurship is one of the more visible aspects of what is labelled ‘structural integration’ (Dagevos, 2001), i.e. the ability to participate in ‘core institutions’ such as education and the labour market. Accordingly, in all policy documents covering

immigrant entrepreneurship at Willemsweg, the adjective ‘multicultural ’is used to describe cultural diversity as it exists on the street.

Insert Table 1

The *third* trajectory provides a cultural perspective on place development, drawn from new notions of consumption and shopping experiences, and how they bear on neighbourhood development. These notions are, in part, based on the production of alternative (re)imaginings of place by experts, a contribution which we will explore in more depth.

For our research, we have immersed ourselves in the area and engaged in tracing in a variety of ways. We have extracted information from entrepreneurs through a survey covering all businesses and eight in-depth interviews with entrepreneurs. Two additional interviews were conducted with local government officials, including the so-called ‘area manager’. All available documentation, ranging from policy documents to project descriptions, minutes of meetings and letters from the collective of entrepreneurs to the municipality and vice versa was thoroughly analysed. Leads were followed up where deemed significant. Finally, as three of the authors lived in the area at the time of research (2009), frequenting Willemsweg on an almost daily basis, the information has been complemented by a process of participant observation, ensuring a high degree of local immersion. We will now discuss the unfolding of the three trajectories successively.

Trajectory one: retail planning and neighbourhood regeneration

While more attention is paid to communication and participation today than in previous decades, Dutch urban planning remains dominated by classical top down forms of rational planning and policy-making. At the heart of the system, we find standard zoning policies where the allocation of housing, retail areas and business estates is based on detailed calculations and forecasts, an approach which was, to a large extent, inspired by a lecture given by Walter Christaller in Amsterdam as far back as in 1938 (Evers et al. 2005). In particular, retail planning holds on to a Christallerian landscape of functional hierarchy based on access, applying between cities (from core cities to basic rural shopping centres) and within cities (central shopping precincts, district shopping centres, and neighbourhood shopping venues). Such divisions are executed through the polling of (prospective) customers, as well as the drawing of municipal retail plans and detailed (plot-based) land-use plans.

In the latest review of the retail structure (Gemeente Nijmegen 2004), Willemsweg received the lowest categorisation of 'complementary neighbourhood centre', and was considered vulnerable. In customer polls and business data, the area continuously received low scores in terms of visitors/passers-by, (perceived) safety and attractiveness. Nevertheless, some positive trends were noticed in the vicinity of the Aldi location, notably those related to ethnic entrepreneurship (Municipality of Nijmegen, 2005). As a step to promote this further, the land-use plan was adapted in 2006, giving part of Willemsweg the status of complementary neighbourhood centre 'plus' - the 'plus' indicating the positive stance on ethnic entrepreneurship, allowing for mixed purposes. Not all purposes were considered welcome, however (see Figure 1

for the ruling land-use plan for Willemsweg). Additional measures limited investments in activities that are already abundantly provided by other shops. For example, the location of more hospitality businesses (bars, cafeterias) is currently subject to restrictions. Moreover, new ways were sought and explored to improve the area outside of the standard regulatory framework. This provided an opening for other kinds of events and incentives to intermesh with the urban planning trajectory, as will be discussed below.

Insert Figure 1

Neighbourhood policies are fed by monitoring statistics (<http://nijmegen.buurtmonitor.nl/>) and ranking methodologies comparable to those used for the allocation of EU Structural Funds. The latter have led to national lead tables of urban 'priority areas' underlying grant provision. In 1997, the Dutch state formulated the so-called Grotestedenbeleid (Revitalising Policy for Major Cities). This marked the beginning of a new approach to urban regeneration integrating social, physical and economic aspects. In 2000, an accompanying policy was launched addressing the urgency for reshaping inner cities, brown fields (former industrial sites and harbours) and post-war neighbourhoods. Since then, the importance of social-economic programmes for the development and upgrading of neighbourhoods has been acknowledged and, effectively, a shift in attention from physical renewal to the improvement of socio-economic conditions of neighbourhoods and their inhabitants can be observed. While the definition of target areas is based on practices of calculation and ranking, the development and implementation of local strategies involve intense processes of deliberation and consultation.

Under the heading of the Grotstedenbeleid, in 2003, the Willemskwartier was selected as a priority area among 56 other neighbourhoods. For the neighbourhood as a whole, this has resulted in an ambitious programme of urban renewal, drawn up in close collaboration with neighbourhood representatives. Also in the beginning of the century, the municipality started to take issue with drugs related crime, illegal businesses, crack houses, impoverishment and high vacancy rates in the area. Possible solutions to these problems were described in a neighbourhood vision document with the telling subtitle of “Encounter as the driver of renewal” (Gemeente Nijmegen 2005). The latter was conceived, in particular, in terms of the national slogan of creating a ‘clean, safe and undamaged’ street. The new policy resulted in the police evacuating crack houses and the municipality restructuring and upgrading the street. Amongst others, the measures improved the physical environment in which the established entrepreneurs run their businesses.

In 2006, the municipality opted for European rather than national support by initiating the project 'Willemsweg in Beeld' (Willemsweg in the Picture). This project is part of a series of development projects supported by the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF), and aimed at the restructuring of the Objective II area 'Kanaalgebied', encompassing largely the Western and Southern parts of the city. The main goal of the project was to stimulate business and entrepreneurship at Willemsweg (Gemeente Nijmegen 2006). In the project period (2006-2008), the properties of a number of real estate owners and entrepreneurs at the Willemsweg were upgraded. In addition, alongside a major uplift of the street itself, a coaching facility and an investment fund were created to help shopkeepers to upgrade their business facilities, including the

physical appearance of shops (facades, shutters) in order to improve the liveability of the neighbourhood as a whole. About 50 percent of Willemsweg entrepreneurs met the basic criteria to be eligible for a loan.

An intended effect of these loans was that the supported business together enhanced the competitive strength of the area. Also, through the project, the owners of vacant properties were compensated for the loss of income derived from rents. This measure also sought to prevent 'undesirable' businesses, such as call shops to locate in the street. Since such businesses had previously appealed to youth gatherings, they were considered to contribute to nuisance and a 'negative appearance' of the street. More recently, through tackling property vacancies and supporting refurbishment, the municipality has also taken steps to improve the business climate in the area. Besides providing for work spaces, an important aspect of the latter is the strengthening of the retail function of the Willemsweg. This facilitated the establishment of multiple ethnic shops, services and food outlets, alongside (sometimes in place of) the 'original' commercial venues already present in the Willemsweg. Other functions were banned, in some cases by the use of expropriation, while various rounds of concerted police action were notably taken against drugs trading and youth gangs.

Trajectory two: fostering ethnic entrepreneurship

The second trajectory presents the Willemskwartier as a place developed by ethnic entrepreneurs. This trajectory builds on stories, featuring in policy as well as academic circles, relating how immigrant self-employment, for instance through the

ability to sell specific types of 'foreign' goods and services, brings economic and social benefit to the neighbourhood. According to Kloosterman and colleagues, the role of immigrant entrepreneurs should be considered in light of the opportunities and constraints stemming from local institutional and market conditions. The latter is captured under the notion of 'mixed embeddedness' (Kloosterman et al. 1999; Kloosterman and Rath 2001; Kloosterman 2010).

Mixed embeddedness entails two levels of embedding. Individuals hold certain resources that are, to a large extent, drawn from their membership of broader social and ethnic networks. Besides particular skills and assets, this also includes practical issues such as finance and contact information. Subsequently, the micro-level of entrepreneurship is set within a meso-level of local opportunity and a macro-institutional framework, providing market opportunities (Kloosterman 2010). All levels should be seen as part of a specific spatial context. In the words of Razin (2002, 163): '[t]he concepts of embeddedness and mixed-embeddedness add an important explanatory framework to the unique impact of the specific urban economic milieu on immigrant entrepreneurship. It is not only the opportunity structure that counts, but also location-specific traits of the immigrant community and the complex ways in which immigrant businesses are inserted into the socio-cultural and institutional context of the host society'. Moreover, as Waldinger (1995) explains, the opportunity structures themselves are spatially mediated through the specific way they are locally constructed and regulated. This framework formed the basis for our local exploration of the role of immigrant entrepreneurship.

As revealed through the interviews and survey, the preference of shopkeepers for Willemsweg stems, for a substantial part, from the proximity to their place of residence. Yet, many entrepreneurs do not live in the neighbourhood. They opted for Willemsweg as a location for their business based on information obtained through personal and social links with the neighbourhood. Through their network the entrepreneurs became aware of an available venue to buy or rent, as well as the position and qualities of the street as a business location. Half of the entrepreneurs interviewed see the fact that the Willemskwartier is adjacent to the city centre as a core advantage. A specific component in the opportunity structure of the ethnic entrepreneurs is constituted by the ERDF-grant, which sponsors shop refurbishment.

Besides the cost aspect of the location, Willemsweg offers important market opportunities. Some businesses, notably the Turkish café and food outlets cater for customers from the same ethnic background living in the neighbourhood. Others seek to reach a much wider audience, both ethnically and geographically. These differences partly stem from basic conditions, such as population characteristics and the nature of the business involved. They also stem from more social and cultural characteristics. Many Turkish enterprises, for instance, are part of a closely knit community holding on to established forms of business making, relying on a loyal, local customer base. Some others are keener to invest in new activities and expand their market area. An example is the Surinam eatery Fawaka. Whereas other food outlets offer a mix of standard Dutch snacks, pizza and simple traditional food from their own ethnic background, Fawaka serves a range of Surinam specialty dishes, using specific (for instance Halal) ingredients (www.eethuisfawaka.nl). As a result, the venue is able to attract customers from the wider region. The latter was also experienced by some of

the Turkish and Moroccan food outlets, including the shop selling Mediterranean nuts and fruits. While initially only targeting their own community, these shops quickly attracted a high number of non-Turkish customers from a wider area. In response, they have diversified their stock and made their shops more identifiable and accessible for Dutch-speaking customers. While still representing a minority, some of these entrepreneurs have deliberately invested in a 'modern' shop facade and interior.

These particular stories undoubtedly reflect the upbeat tone that contrasts the earlier negative sentiments in the area. The more extensive survey data, however, show a more mixed pattern (Van Lanen, 2009). Most venues are rented, and face competition from what is, in economic terms, a business activity that is equally or even more profitable, namely renting out rooms notably to students. This limits the space available to shops and business activities. Even entrepreneurs owning a property are inclined to rent out a part of their accommodation to secure a stable level of income. Moreover, for many entrepreneurs (40%), Willemsweg is only one of their business locations, which reduces the need to extract value from the area. Overall, while most respondents are confident about the long term business prospects, average profit margins are low, and sufficient levels of income can only be achieved through the combination of different locations or kinds of business (like retail and room rental).

What all establishments share is a strong reliance on their own personal and social networks, particularly in setting up and investing in their establishments, finding staff and in organising their business. Ingredients and services are bought in via family, friends and acquaintances. In some cases, the same networks also constitute the market opportunities. In other cases, entrepreneurs clearly seek to extend beyond their

own social ties in finding customers and market opportunities, embedding themselves in a broader city-regional economic setting. Another mixed picture is where entrepreneurs have diversified among different spatial settings and types of trade. This allows them, in particular, to benefit from different opportunity structures. What plays a lesser role in this variety of embeddings, is actually the setting of the street itself. Both the survey and interviews indicate that collaboration between entrepreneurs is limited, even within the same ethnic group. Despite the strong role of community, there is fierce competition for instance between the Turkish entrepreneurs working in similar lines of business. This competition is primarily *economic*, however. It does not stand in the way of good social relations.

For the area manager and the owner of Fawaka, the extent to which entrepreneurs are able to get the most out of the available chances depends on personal characteristics. In particular, the accessibility and usefulness of the prevailing opportunity structure is influenced by enthusiasm, marketing skills, the ability to 'find the right route' in Dutch society, and the understanding of cultural norms, ways of communication and the Dutch language. When eating houses like Fawaka 'look' ethnic (Turkish, Surinam etc.), that is, when they carry ethnic shop signs, employ ethnic personnel, and serve ethnic food, and appear not to overly focus on status, for Dutch shoppers, they represent ethnic identity. Moreover, eating houses with a large Dutch customer base use ethnicity as a marketing tool, thereby representing the ethnic identity as well as the economic integration into Dutch society of their owners. By contrast, crafts businesses with both an ethnic and a Dutch customer base, and with a strong focus on status foremost represent a process of economic integration. Finally, bars have a strong focus on modernising but are highly ethnically oriented at the same time. In

sum, different social networks coexist at Willemsweg, connecting shop owners, personnel and customers to different parts of the world.

Various attempts have been made to build links between the diverse world of entrepreneurship and the realm of urban planning, notably in the form of institution building. This happened in 2004, when the Willemsweg shopkeepers association was revived. The association had been dormant since it had partaken in the drafting of the local land-use plan in the 1990s. In that context, the association had played a role in, amongst others, the establishment of the Aldi supermarket which is serving as a major pull factor. During the recent redevelopment project, the association has mainly acted as a defender of the shopkeepers' interests. It voiced concerns, in particular, about the negative consequences of temporary street closures, parking problems and a lack of communication from the side of the municipality, issues that have never been really resolved. In these actions, the association joined forces with the local migrant business association (AON). The association has been particularly active in 2006-2007. After completion of the street redevelopment, it has again become more or less dormant, which triggered another call for establishing a collective organisation. During our fieldwork, the owner of Fawaka expressed this call in the following way:

'[e]thnic entrepreneurs do not make enough use of the relevant organizations. Partially it can be blamed on them; partially also on the relevant organisations not having the right knowledge of ethnic entrepreneurship. How can someone help me with my psychological problems when they don't know my Surinam background? Organisations like the Chamber of Commerce should adapt to this by engaging ethnic consultants (...) However, the project of the municipality and the providing

of subsidies were successful. Many entrepreneurs made use of it and the street really received an impulse. The next step is that the municipality wants the entrepreneurs to join forces in a new retail association. I will be one of the chairmen. The purpose of the new association is to keep the street clean, encourage entrepreneurs to take action when necessary and to create more diversity in the street. We need a Dutch baker and cheese monger because there is a high demand of these kinds of products by Dutch customers living in the neighbourhood' (our translation).

These various attempts to build institutions represent efforts to intersect this second trajectory with the first one, to ensure steps to improve ethnic entrepreneurship dovetail well with the dominating regulatory and policy environment. In the eyes of the entrepreneurs, however, this is not successful. First of all, the municipality is not visible enough. In their view, it neither stimulates economic activities enough, nor does it contribute much to the liveability of the street. Furthermore, the accessibility of the municipality is not optimal and the facilities for starting or nascent entrepreneurs are too few. While the municipality recognises the possibilities of Willemsweg to develop into an important shopping street, practical constraints like high parking fees are currently chasing away potential customers. As the owner of a speciality foodstore explained (our translation):

'I have had some bad experiences with the municipality. I had a lot of problems getting a licence for a marketplace in the centre of Nijmegen. Besides this, the municipality doesn't stimulate starting entrepreneurs enough. Subsidies of last year went to the owner of the building. I didn't receive subsidies because my

business existed just for four months. Another thing is that in my view the municipality should take more action. They have to make the street more liveable and they should stimulate economic activities’.

What these stories echo is a place image that is highly functional to the direct interest of the entrepreneurs: attractive (clean, diverse), accessible (free and ample parking) and heterogeneous. To a certain extent, this imaging dovetails with the first trajectory, which also emphasises similar functional aspects. Where the two differ is in the way ambitions are grounded. The municipal trajectory of top-down spatial planning meets the interest of the entrepreneurs articulated bottom-up. The result is a clash between the formal, measured language of the council and the versatile, ‘no nonsense’ attitudes of the local entrepreneurs. In political terms, this amounts to what could be characterised as an ‘ontological clash’ manifested by nearly irreconcilable forms of communication: The resulting ‘conjunctural events’, to recall Sparke’s phrasing, constitute a political crossroads that feeds into the place’s ‘throwntogetherness’ and identity. It is at this crossroads, that we can enter our third and final trajectory.

Trajectory three (and-a-half): exotic Willemsweg

Our third trajectory stems from the way cities have institutionalised the social, cultural and economic relationships within immigrant communities in recent decades. In many instances, the concentration of ethnic groups in particular neighbourhoods was at first met with reservation and resistance from the side of city governments. When members of ethnic groups started to pay taxes and became involved in local politics, gradually, communities and settlements gained acceptance. Eventually, this triggered the 'parkisation' of ethnic neighbourhoods, with cities capitalising on and commodifying the 'exotic' features of immigrant communities (Laguerre 2000). In extreme cases, this has led to the creation of 'Little Italies' and 'Chinatowns' in areas where the ethnic communities in question moved out long ago (Ford et al. 2008). Although the Willemskwartier is all but such a post-modern theme park, it has effectively been imagined as such in recent years and it is this development which we consider as the third trajectory. Also, while Willemsweg entrepreneurs do not necessarily maintain dense economic relations with peers in faraway places, their connection with these places clearly lends their shops a sense of exoticism.

In terms of place development, 'exotic' imaginations stem from the circulation of appealing stories and images, transplanted from what are now conceived as exemplary (success) cases to new areas. Such circulation generally involves a range of actors, such as policy-makers, experts (including academics), civic entrepreneurs and 'imagineers' (Jensen 2007). In many instances, stories are underpinned by the idea that the meaning of the shopping experience changes according to who does the shopping, when and where (Zukin 1995).

In the case of Nijmegen, the trajectory of imagination has been instigated by the municipality, in a three-step process running between 2005 and 2008. First, a project consultant was asked to explore and identify basic options; second, an expert group was convened to detail more specific scenarios; third, the scenarios were introduced to local shopkeepers and neighbourhood representatives. The expert group consisted of representatives from the Chamber of Commerce, the national retail association, the municipality and its research department, the migrant business association and the local polytechnic. During this process, the consultant was based at the Willemsweg allowing for close contact with the neighbourhood. . In our vocabulary, the project consultant and expert group, working at the intersection of the three trajectories, can be seen as a kind of catalyst for 'throwntogetherness'. However, while they were able to open up imaginations of future development, through series of 'conjunctural events', they could not really overcome the clash identified before, as the continuation of this story shows.

The first round of discussion resulted in four scenarios, which all sought to promote and nurture the area as a multicultural place, but with different levels of intensity (Van Diemen and El Aidi 2007):

1. The most far-reaching was the 'Kasbah' scenario, in which the whole street was to be converted in a multicultural experience, including shopping, food, personal services, a flea market, etc. Both consultancy and municipal research advocated variants of this option.
2. A so-called 'mixed' scenario foresaw the growth of a 'modern' shopping centre with at its core a concentration of supermarkets and high street stores,

wedged between sections of restaurants and cafés, specialty shops and service providers.

3. The least ambitious scenario was that of 'consolidation', basically aiming at improving and securing current qualities.
4. Finally, a scenario was added labelled as 'consolidation-plus'. Here, actions were foreseen to acquire strategically located premises to influence investment choices. This presented an extension of the policy already pursued by the municipality and housing association to buy property to get rid of 'undesirable' activities.

The exemplary 'Kasbah' scenario and a 'Kasbah-like' shopping environment can be seen as the most concerted effort to capitalise on allegedly exotic features. As stated in the consultancy report (Van Diemen and El Aidi 2007), the Kasbah idea had been recurring in the long-standing discussions about the restructuring of Willemsweg. Where in the past the label came with a negative connotation, the revival of areas like Lombok in Utrecht meant a radical change in perception (Dibbits and Meder, 1999). Clearly, from the start the redevelopers were attracted by the idea to copy elements from thematic neighbourhood concepts that had proven successful elsewhere. By tuning in to what seems to be a trend from across the Atlantic the experts attempted to bring 'the global' to the Willemskwartier in yet another guise. The idea remained confined to the local area, however. In contrast to the case of Lombok, which was halfway to being turned into an outdoor 'museum' (Dibbits and Meder, 1999), in Nijmegen there was no attempt to make it part of wider developments in the field of retail planning and city-marketing.

The introduction of the scenarios to the shopkeepers and neighbourhood representatives produced mixed responses. A number of the respondents favoured a modern, upmarket development, while others opted for a more modest scenario, with the area as the 'place to go' for relatively cheap but good quality specialty products. Yet, the four scenarios produced one almost unanimous response. The 'Kasbah' scenario was rejected outright, while the 'mixed' scenario was also considered too ambitious. The preferred choice was actually consolidation, allowing for some elements from the 'plus' option, largely of a regulatory nature.

This seemingly conservative outcome may be attributed to two issues. First, while the shopkeepers and inhabitants wholeheartedly endorsed the multicultural grounding of the area's development, they did not want to be singled out as an alternative space, as the 'Kasbah' option would imply. Willemsweg entrepreneurs want to run what many describe as a 'modern' business, meaning that they aim to cater to all rather than a specific group of customers and place high demands on the shopping environment and the services of supporting organisations. In rejecting the 'Kasbah'-scenario, however, they did not deny the role ethnicity can play in neighbourhood development, but instead expressed a wish for planners and other institutional actors to be more receptive to ethnic and cultural diversity. Second, the entrepreneurs were sceptical about the extent to which major changes in the area could really be achieved and whether they would be in their own interests. As explained above, the entrepreneurs preferred policy interventions to be focusing on practical issues helping them to further their own businesses. It is this stance that explains why, in the end, the council opted for a twofold strategy: upgrading the street and helping existing entrepreneurs

to acquire investment subsidies. This was combined with some efforts to brand the street as a diversified area for shopping and catering.

Finally, local scepticism can also be related to a concern that an exotic direction would broaden out to what, from a local viewpoint, would be seen as an undesirable development, namely that of gentrification. Gentrification is understood here in its traditional meaning, as the process of displacement of less wealthy and less educated parts of the population by an inflowing middle class (Slater 2006; Carr and Servon 2009). In the Dutch case, gentrification, both spontaneous and induced by state redevelopment projects, is curtailed by the regulated differentiation of the housing market and community involvement in neighbourhood planning (Cameron 2003). Nevertheless, most redevelopment projects manifest certain levels of displacement, largely due to the fact that, in many projects, some of the cheap rental accommodation is replaced by owner-occupied houses (a practice that is growing, due to budget restraints). To a limited extent, for instance, this happened in the adjacent neighbourhood of Bottendaal, which was transformed from a deprived inner-city area to a thriving, socially mixed neighbourhood with a stronger presence of the middle class. Given the central location of Willemskwartier and the pressure on the local housing market, a tendency of gentrification, induced by an exotic potion, would not be improbable. It is for this possibility, which emerges and is hinted at in the discussions, that we have added an extra ‘half’ to this trajectory.

So, at the cross-roads formed by the first two trajectories, we see that the third trajectory foreshadows a development that, if adopted, would have made: “[a] quintessential example of the objectifying gaze of the flaneur or gentrifier, in which

cultural and ethnic diversity are reduced to aesthetics (...)” (Martin 2005, 7).

Encounters with ethnic shops and shopkeepers arouse conflicting feelings of spectacle and abjection among shoppers, especially in gentrified areas with a mixed customer base. Effectively, the shoppers’ gazes ‘fix’ ethnic shopkeepers as objects of exotic desire (Martin 2005; Pollock 1988; Urry 2002). Pumping up ‘islands’ of global shopping at Willemsweg could have turned out good for business, but it also would have prompted a form of relationality based on otherness and difference which Massey has tried to go beyond. When viewed in this light, while the consensus eventually agreed upon does not, for the time being, accommodate the more progressive voices, such as the suggestion to enhance policymakers’ sensitivity to ethnicity, the outright rejection of the ‘Kasbah’ scenario speaks to a relationality that is positive, ‘or, perhaps more accurately, not negative’ (Rodgers 2004, 282).

While politically positive, what remains to be seen is the material outcome of this course of events. Currently, Willemskwartier and the Willemsweg find themselves at a not only a political but also a major historical crossroads. In the view of the area manager, there are two likely scenarios for the neighbourhood: gentrification and impoverishment. On the one hand, if the neighbourhood would somehow succeed in attracting more customers and develop a better position in the urban shopping network, this could push up rental and housing prices and trigger a process of gentrification. On the other, if such an appeal would fail to materialise, a reverse development could follow.

Conclusion

When observed through the spatial-relational lens offered by Doreen Massey, the Willemskwartier represents more than a colourful neighbourhood physically and socially forged by suburbanisation and, in more recent years, regeneration efforts. Rather, it reflects a multiplicity of trajectories, each of them merging global influences and/or notions of extra-locality with, ultimately, localised place-meanings. As a place, moreover, it exhibits a ‘throwntogetherness’ in terms of the different spatialities and temporalities coming with each trajectory and the way they combine and clash. From an analytical point of view, we can thus locate the ‘political’ at two basic levels. The first level is constituted by the trajectories, through the unfolding of a particular stream of events, materialities, stories, images, etc. The second one is that of place and its ‘throwntogetherness’. In our case, we see that the way urban planning carves up space and projects longer term development images upon spatial divides (first trajectory) aligns as well as collides with the rather flexible, travelling place images of the experts (third trajectory) and with the grounded, network-based spatialities of entrepreneurs largely driven by short-term business interests (second trajectory).

For the regeneration of an ethnically diverse neighbourhood, this coming together involves processes of negotiating ethnic identity, economic integration and cultural modernisation. In order to analytically distinguish trajectories and reconstruct conjunctural events, we suggest it is helpful to take on board theoretical concepts that sit close to the empirical fields represented by the trajectories. In this paper, we discussed functional hierarchy, mixed embeddedness, and cultural perspectives on

consumption, amongst others, in the context of land use, ethnic entrepreneurship, and urban restructuring and city branding, respectively. These discussions enabled us to consider the articulation of global influences, the relative weight of particular spatial connotations and (hence) the nature of relationality for each trajectory. The result is a relational perspective which coins the notion of throwntogetherness *alongside* a set of meso-theoretical concepts. As the trajectories evolve toward different spatialities and temporalities, concepts can be pragmatically uncoupled and re-coupled, and other concepts can be added. For example, work on collaborative planning (cf. Healey 1997) could be engaged to gain more insight into the extent to which clashes in communicative styles can be addressed, something that would be helpful in our case.

If anywhere, this heuristic take delegates the future of Willemsweg to the sphere of possibility. By no means do the current twists and turns which the trajectories are taking imply a predictable, e.g. gentrified, future. Nor do the investments of the past years guarantee success: today, more retail lots at Willemsweg are empty than when we started our research. There is a danger that the street even loses its status as complementary neighbourhood centre due to strong competition from neighbouring shopping centres. Following Massey, in our view the closing of this chapter in the history of Willemsweg does not mean spatiotemporal closure. As it awaits the throwntogetherness that lies ahead, its future lies truly open.

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Table 1: An overview of Willemsweg shops, 2009

No.	Street no.	Name of shop	Core business	Ethnic background entrepreneur
1	1	Kleermaker Perfect	Clothing repair	Turkish
2		Kiosk		
3	13	Maison Germaine	Barbershop	Dutch
4	18	Fysiotherapie Aalsterveld	Physiotherapy	Dutch
5	17	Sjon's Tattoo en Piercing Studio	Tattoo shop	Dutch
6	21	Asya slagerij	Butcher	Turkish
7	25/27	Broodjeszaak De Tajine	Eating-house	Moroccan
8	26	Dengizz Electronics	Electronics	Turkish
9		Café Dallas	Café/bar	Moroccan
10	35	Schlecker	Drugstore	Dutch
11	37	Bakkerij Bereket	Bakery	Turkish
12	34	Aldi Markt	Supermarket	Dutch
13	43	Rijwielhandel Willemse	Bicycle store	Dutch
14	36	Fantasie (IPEK) Beautysalon	Barbershop	Turkish
15	47	Gaertner Gafo's Woninginrichting	Furniture shop	Dutch
16	48	Zuidvruchten & noten Kuruyemis	Nuts shop	Turkish
17	52	Cafeteria Gül	Bar/eating-house	Turkish
18	62	Estria Kapsalon	Barbershop	Turkish
19	55	Café Bar Erciyes	Café/bar	Turkish
20	59	Eethuis Anil	Eating-house	Turkish
21	64	Pottenbakkerij De Mussepot	Pottery	Dutch
22	72	FaWaKa Afhaalcentrum100	Eating-house	Surinam
23	74	Fantasie Hairstyling	Barbershop	Turkish
24	75/77	Günaydin Supermarkt	Supermarket	Turkish
25	78	Efe gordijnshop	Curtains shop	Turkish
26	90	New India Toko	Supermarket	Indian
27	92	New India kleding	Clothing	Indian
28	96	Tompion	Watchmaker/clocks	Dutch
29	98	Tompion 2 ^e hands	Clothing	Dutch
30	106	Aydo Electronics	Electronics	Turkish
31	112/114	Meltem market	Supermarket	Turkish
32	118	Chinese Cafeteria 118	Snackbar	Chinese
33	87	Wijkbeheer	Area manager's office	Dutch
34	147	Battal Export	Various products	Turkish

Source: own observation

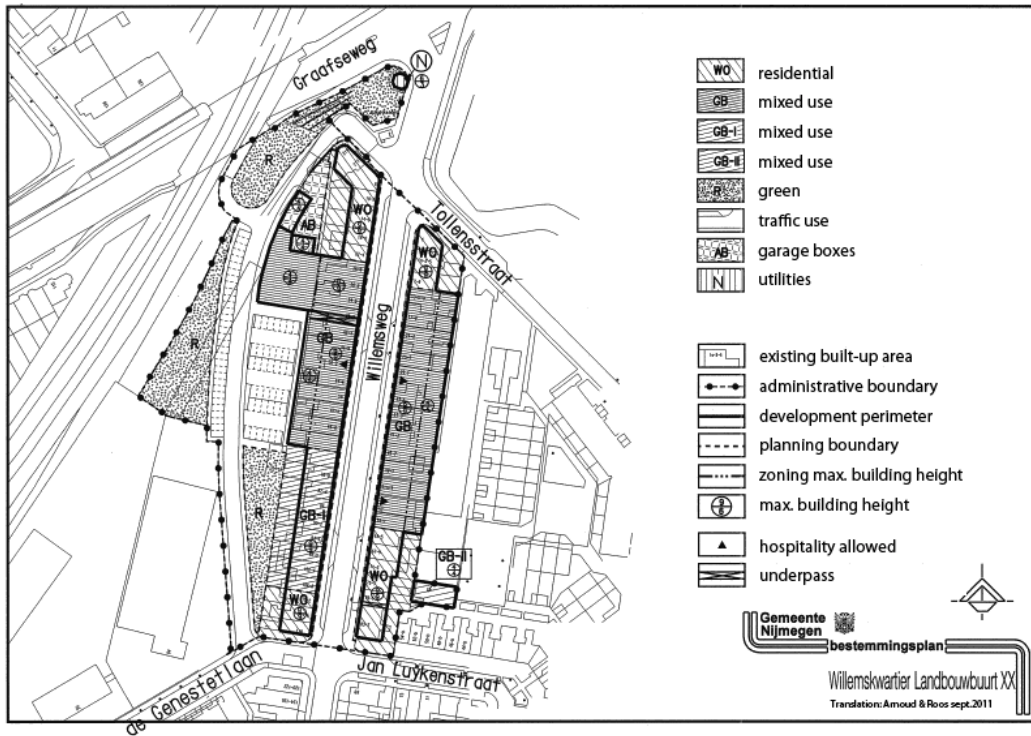


Figure 1. Land-use plan Willemskwartier