

# Is the fostering of an urban identity through a city's past becoming history?

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An inquiry into the (assumed) contemporary value of built cultural heritage for generating and maintaining distinctive urban identities within the Dutch context



**Master Thesis Human Geography**  
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**Radboud University Nijmegen**

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An inquiry into the (assumed) contemporary value of built cultural heritage for generating and maintaining distinctive urban identities within the Dutch context

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# Executive summary

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In the light of a number of major societal changes (which are, broadly speaking, placed under the headings of globalization and post-modernization), it is argued that many European cities find themselves in the midst of an urban identity crisis. As a result, the issue of place identity has been receiving an increasing amount of attention amongst scholars as well as urban policy makers. Within the debate, two major 'narratives' on the role of built urban cultural heritage can be identified. The first and more traditional view revolves around the idea that urban heritage has not lost (or has even increased) its ability to function as an effective 'urban identity generator', despite the changing societal context in which it is situated; it is actually because of the way in which today's society is and has been changing that cultural heritage is considered a sort of anchor of growing importance within the quest for unique, distinctive urban identities. The second discourse, on the other hand, postulates that so-called 'innovative urban design schemes' have (to a certain degree) overtaken the standardized, 'one-dimensional' and therefore within contemporary Europe less meaningful built cultural heritage when it comes to fostering distinctive urban identities.

This thesis aims at shedding more light on these more or less conflicting viewpoints. The hypotheses supporting the second of these views have been fused together in a conceptual framework by Aspa Gospodini, and put to an initial test in Bilbao and Thessaloniki by means of a survey among tourists and inhabitants. It is especially the hypotheses forming this framework which will be scrutinized in this thesis. Not by exactly replicating these initial inquiries, but first and foremost by surveying a number of relevant urban policy makers and municipal officials (as a 'pool of experts') in over 30 of the largest cities of The Netherlands (working in fields such as cultural heritage and monuments care, city marketing and spatial urban planning) on their views on built heritage as serving as an urban identity generator.

The main goal of the research is to gain a general overview of the (future) position of built cultural heritage as an urban identity generator within the Dutch (policy) context, especially compared to the role played by innovative urban design schemes. Additionally, by confronting the surveyed experts with the hypothesized trend shift, it is hoped that the presented scientific conceptualizations will find their way into the spheres of policy making and that such actors start to become aware of and reflect on the potentially changing position of built cultural heritage with regard to a city's identity in today's society, and perhaps even alter (the assumptions underlying) their 'urban identity-building practices' accordingly. If only as a kind of thought-experiment, they are invited to thereby take into account the (nowadays potentially significant) value of (even small-scaled) innovative urban design schemes.

Looking at the data gathered from 33 municipalities, it can first be concluded that, although the notion that is 'urban identity' is highly complex, multireferential and dynamic construction, a key dimension is formed by a city's physical characteristics. As a subcomponent of this dimension, (generally speaking) built heritage, which in general

tends to be clustered in larger urban cores and is first and foremost considered the carrier of an urban identity, does not seem to have lost its (assumed) urban identity generating ability, nor is it not prospected to do so in the (near) future (an opinion generally shared by respondents from the heritage domain as well as other fields). To a certain degree contrasting Gospodini's findings (she concludes that "heritage tends to get weaker while innovative design of space emerges as an effective new means of place identity" (2004, p. 242)), the majority of the experts even considers heritage as not only consolidating its position, but, for a variety of reasons, actually as becoming of growing importance as an urban identity generator. Multiple reasons (e.g. of a methodological nature) might be brought to the fore to explain this discrepancy. For instance, it could be argued that contemporary post-modern societal tendencies are not yet properly reflected upon by the surveyed respondents. On the other hand, it can be brought to the fore that they also refute the framework's hypotheses on the basis of their actual experiences 'in the field'.

On the basis of a number of contemporary 'heritage trends' (implicitly) highlighted by the respondents, attention is also paid to topics that have been given less attention in the conceptual framework but that may also be considered relevant for the 'heritage vs. contemporary design discussion' in the Dutch context, including other means in which heritage might serve as a means in which (urban) economic development might be realized (besides tourism), as well as 'heritage privatization', which is a development that could potentially have a profound effect on the degree to which the affected monuments can serve as the carriers of local identities and cohesion.

Finally, in her survey, Gospodini treats heritage on the one, and experimental urban design schemes on the other hand, as being two separate and almost incompatible poles of a dichotomy (which is not an illogical choice from a methodological point of view). However, it is argued that what could be called 'metamodern urban spaces' might offer a 'third way', a 'two in one experience', oscillating between heritage and innovative urban design. Although a number of limitations should be taken into account, there are several examples of projects that (attempt to) blur the boundary between what is labeled 'heritage' and what could be considered innovative design, integrating experimental urban morphologies with the monumental physical legacies of an urban past. Especially expansions and the contemporary heritage redevelopment discourse might offer feasible opportunities for integrating subtle innovative, contemporary schemata in situ of the cultural-historic values of the 'old spaces'.

Given a number of limitations, the final conclusions should be considered as merely preliminary and indicative, paving the way for and pointing towards multiple opportunities for additional analysis. For instance, (on the basis of the above), it is recommended that further inquiries also pay attention to the specific potential ability of such 'hybrid' elements of a city's morphology as well as e.g. immaterial forms of heritage to stand at the heart of urban identities. Also, the consequences of (the potential) heritage privatization should be monitored carefully.

**Key concepts: urban identities; built cultural heritage; innovative urban design schemes; globalization; modernism, post-modernism and metamodernism**

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# 1. Introduction

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## 1.1 Research background

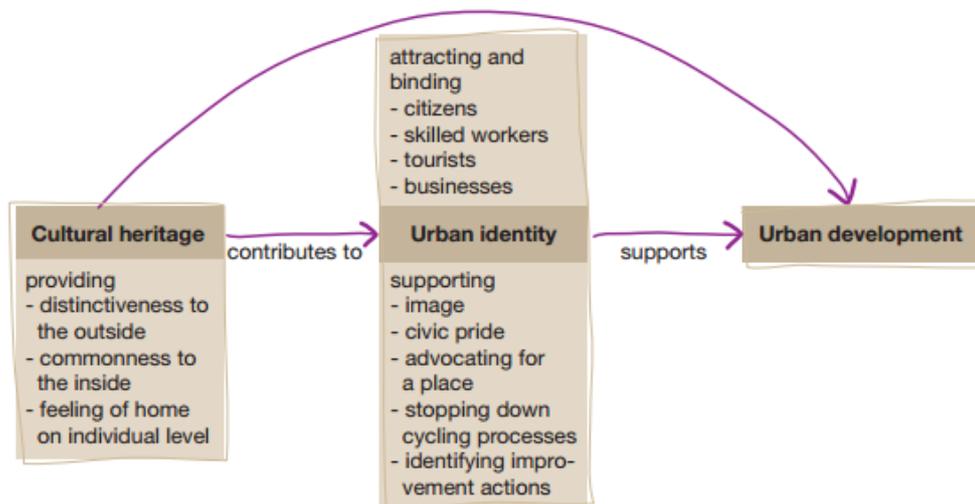
When browsing through a sample of randomly selected Dutch municipal policy documents on cultural heritage (*erfgoednota's* in Dutch), a notion that, without exception, keeps coming to the fore is that of '(local) identity' (see e.g. the municipalities of Arnhem (2008); Ede (2009); Haarlemmermeer (2011); Noordwijk (2011) and Winssum (2008). For instance, within the *nota* issued by the municipality of Noordwijk (2011, p. 3), it is argued that "the [municipality's] heritage forms a witness of our past and adds character and identity to our surroundings", while the municipality of Haarlemmermeer (2011, p. 35) states that the whole of local stories, traditions, cultural landscapes, archaeological objects, monuments, museums and archives contributes to the municipality's ability to "express its unique and special identity [...] to the outside world" [own translation]. In this regard, also the former Dutch minister of Education, Culture and Science can be quoted. Discussing the contemporary value of monuments, he also emphasized the importance of heritage for the ways in which people identify themselves with geographical entities of different levels of scale, such as the city, the street and, perhaps the most evident, the country: "People derive an important feeling of identity, of 'being at home', from the objects and landscapes of the past", [which makes them] "the carriers of a civilized nationalism" [own translation] (Plasterk, 2008, p. 2).

Also at the European policy level, the notion that built cultural heritage (in the form of monuments and other historic sites) forms a key component in the process of fostering and maintaining urban identities is widely accepted. As the The New Charter of Athens on European urban planning states (in Scheffler, Kulikauskas & Barreiro, 2007):

Heritage is a key element which defines culture and the European character in comparison with other regions of the world. For most citizens and visitors, the character of a city is defined by the quality of its buildings and the spaces between them [...]. [A]ctions, together with an appropriate spatial strategy, are essential for the well-being of tomorrow's city, and *the expression of its special character and identity* [emphasis added]. (p. 10)

This premise also stands at the heart of several practical heritage-focussed urban development programmes initiated and supported by the EU. For instance, in the framework of the URBACT programme, targeting promoting sustainable urban development within the EU, there is the so-called HerO project (Heritage as Opportunity), which focuses on "preserving cultural heritage and sustainable socio-economic development in [European] historical cities in order to strengthen their

attractiveness and competitiveness” (idem). Built cultural heritage is viewed as a catalyst for developing internal ‘civic pride’ as well as functioning as a ‘location factor’, helping to attract a variety of external target groups. Figure 1.1 provides an overview of the logics on which HerO is based.



**Figure 1.1: The role of built cultural heritage within the HerO urban development project. (Source: N. Scheffler, P. Kulikauskas & F. Barreiro, 2007).**

At first sight, this almost taken for granted assumption of built cultural heritage providing cities with a distinctive identity does not seem overly remarkable. As, for instance, the historian Frijhoff (2007, p. 63) describes, “[c]ultural heritage and identity are like Siamese twins: if you remove one, you endanger the life of the other” [own translation]. From a spatial (urban) perspective, Verheul and van Twist (2011, p. 71) state that “[u]rban icons [including certain objects of built heritage] tell a story, in most cases a story about the identity of the city.” On this basis, “urban icons are able to alter the meaning people attach to [a] city” [own translation]. In this light, also Graham, Ashworth and Tunbridge (2000, p. 204) can be brought to the fore, as they mention two characteristics which make heritage one of the key instruments in shaping spatial identities: “First, it is ubiquitous, all places on earth having a past and thus a potentially usable heritage. Second, it is infinite in its variety, every local past being inevitably different from the pasts of other places.”

However, what can be considered somewhat more striking is the, (whether or not explicitly expressed) belief that cultural heritage specifically, will gain (and has recently already gained) importance as a, what can be called ‘urban identity generator’ (see Gospodini, 2004). For instance, in an advisory policy letter directed to the council of the small municipality of Steenberg (2010), the local heritage commission states that “as a result of intensifying globalization, people are increasingly interested in gaining insights in the past and the remaining memories thereof.” As another example, the municipality of Heusden (2012, p. 5) states: “In the

past years, the appreciation for cultural heritage has increased.” And: “In this era of globalization and individualization the importance of heritage has [also] grown significantly” [own translation]. A similar train of thought is brought to the fore at the European level. For instance, in the framework of the aforementioned HerO-project, it is mentioned that:

[C]ultural heritage is steadily gaining importance as one important development asset, amongst others, to develop and to strengthen a distinctive identity to attract and bind citizens, enterprises, a skilled work force and tourists. Because of its bearing on cultural identity, cultural heritage is fast becoming an element that gives strength to a distinct urban identity, particularly in the context of globalisation. (Scheffler et al., 2010, p. 10)

However, with regard to the issue of how urban identities and the built urban environment are related within the contemporary (globalized) society, there are also other (even opposing) perspectives to be brought to the fore. Whereas the aforementioned heritage policy documents emphasize the importance of the older elements of a city’s built morphology as urban identity generating components (that is, heritage), there are also voices in favor of considering more contemporary, modern elements of this morphology as equally, or even better able to fulfill this role within today’s (European) society. In this regard, Hall (1998, p. 96) has signaled the emergence of other urban icons in the form of spectacular urban ‘flagship’ development since the 1980’s. He writes: “These developments are of many kinds; however, what they have in common is their large scale and their emphasis on the importance of eye-catching, decorative, spectacular or innovative, typically post-modern architecture.” Besides their (tangible) economic function (see e.g. Harvey, 1989; Hubbard, 2006 for an analysis), projects of this kind are also argued to have a (far less tangible but nevertheless very much related) symbolic function, as “they can act as central icons in the apparent transformation of a city’s fortunes, *image and identity*” [emphasis added] (Hall, 1998, p. 98).

Although it may be questioned to what degree they are mutually exclusive (see the research goal), on this basis it seems possible to identify two major narratives on the role of a city’s built urban morphology to generate and maintain distinctive urban identities. The first emphasizes (built) urban cultural heritage, whereas the other underlines the importance of what can be called (post-)modern, innovative and spectacular (‘flagship’) architecture.

In this regard, Gospodini (2004) provides a useful theoretical conjecture addressing the issue of urban morphology and place identity in European cities (2004), thereby focusing primarily focusing on the abovementioned distinction between the (potentially) changing role of built cultural heritage vis-à-vis the value of ‘innovative urban design schemes’ as urban identity generators. For this moment, it suffices to state that Gospodini offers an overview of what in essence is an

academic discussion on both these (more or less) opposing discourses. The main question at stake in the article is to what extent, within contemporary (that is, as also the municipality of Heusden observed, globalized and individualized) European societies, 'innovative urban design schemes' have overtaken built urban heritage as the dominant urban identity generating component of a city's physical morphology, with a number of scholars believing that this actually is very much the case (Gospodini, 2004). Without going into too much detail at this point, such scholars begin their analysis from the premise that a result of a number of major societal changes (which, broadly speaking, can be placed under the headings of globalization and post-modernization), European cities now find themselves in the midst of an urban identity crisis, which has put the issue of 'place identity' at the forefront of the attention of scholars as well as urban policy makers. Within this changing context, it is argued that built cultural heritage is (becoming) too uniform and one-dimensional and therefore less meaningful to "(1) the increasingly multi-ethnic, multi-national European urban societies and (2) the post-modern European urban societies dominated by the ideas of diversity and individualization" (Gospodini, 2004, p. 229). On the other hand, "[i]n contrast to built heritage that is layered by more or less concrete meaning, avant-garde design schemes, it is claimed, generate new types of public space, thereby permitting new and divergent interpretations by individuals and social/cultural groups", offering all of them a form of 'spatial membership' (Gospodini, 2004, p. 234). At the same time, innovative design schemes have the ability to become urban landmarks and add to a city's distinct urban landscape (Gospodini, 2004). In the following chapter, a more detailed overview of these different viewpoints is provided.

Gospodini (2004) has empirically tested the hypothesized shift in the importance of the two discourses in the city of Bilbao. She has done so by conducting a survey amongst different target groups (e.g. different types of inhabitants as well as tourists). One of her main conclusions is that "there is [...] some evidence that in contemporary European societies, built heritage tends to get weaker while innovative design of space emerges as an effective new means of place identity" (p. 242). A similar research, carried out in Thessaloniki revealed that although (just like in Bilbao), for the city's inhabitants built cultural heritage still functions as an important place identity generator, but that, especially for tourists, innovative design schemes were getting increasingly important.

Without having the illusion that it will provide a definitive answer, this thesis aims at shedding more light on both of these viewpoints, now from the specific perspective of the Dutch context. However, the focus and with that the main question of the research will be somewhat different than Gospodini's. This particular inquiry will not revolve around replicating Gospodini's one (i.e. conducting a survey aimed at questioning a large number of inhabitants of and tourists in one specific city). Instead, it aims at obtaining a broad, more or less general picture of the position of built cultural heritage as urban identity generator within the Dutch urban

context. In order to do so, policy makers and professionals in fields such as culture, spatial and economic urban development, city marketing and heritage management, working in over 30 of the biggest Dutch municipalities, will be surveyed on the topic (after being 'confronted' with Gospodini's theoretical framework.) The basic premise is that these respondents can serve as 'representatives' of the cities in which they live (or at least work), while, at the same time, they can be considered experts on either the topic of 'selling' and 'constructing' of urban identities, and/or the (possibly changing) value of built cultural heritage and innovative design schemes with regard to those identities (also, practical limitations obviously deny the possibility of applying Gospodini's strategy of surveying a large number of inhabitants in such a wide variety of Dutch cities).

By gaining more insight in how built cultural heritage and innovative urban design schemes (should) relate to each other according to the experts surveyed in this research, it is also hoped that some initial conclusions can be drawn as to how the built morphology of Dutch cities might develop in the future, or at least how it should develop in the eyes of the surveyed experts.

In the next paragraph, the research goal and questions that can be derived from this research background are presented.

## 1.2 Research goal and research questions

### **Research goal:**

The goal of the research is to develop a general overview of the (future) position of built cultural heritage and 'innovative urban design schemes' as Dutch 'urban identity generators' and the way(s) they might be integrated, by making relevant urban policy makers and professionals reflect on the hypothesis of the potentially greater ability of 'innovative urban design schemes' to generate distinctive urban identities within contemporary European societies, at the expense of the (future) ability of built cultural heritage to fulfil this role.

### **Main research question:**

To what extent is built cultural heritage, according to Dutch urban policy makers and professionals working in the fields of spatial and economic urban development, city marketing and heritage management, (still) able to function as an urban identity generator within the contemporary globalized and 'post-modernized' Dutch society, especially compared to the assumed ability of innovative urban design schemes to do so, and what might this imply for the future of built cultural heritage as a place-identity generator?

### **Sub questions:**

How is the notion of 'urban identities' theorized within academic debate, and what is considered to be the role of a city's physical morphology with regard to this concept?

What is (considered) built urban cultural heritage?

What are innovative urban design schemes, and what is their (hypothesized) role in a city's (identity) development?

How is the contemporary relation between a city's built urban morphology (specifically built urban heritage and innovative design schemes) and (the development of distinctive) European urban (place) identities conceptualized within academic debate?

What, for Dutch urban policy makers, determines their city's (distinctive) identity, and what role does the city's built morphology (and especially built heritage and innovative urban design schemes) play in this regard?

To what extent do Dutch urban policy makers feel that the hypothesized 'cultural heritage to innovative design discourse shift' applies to their city, and why, in their eyes, is this (not) the case?

What, for Dutch urban policy makers confronted with Gospodini's hypotheses, is the more opportune and sustainable trajectory for generating a distinctive urban identity: constructing innovative urban design schemes or improved heritage management, and why?

What (Dutch) heritage developments, threats and opportunities, not (explicitly) incorporated in the conceptual model, can be identified as possibly also influencing the position of built cultural heritage as an urban identity generator?

The first four of these research questions are of a conceptual nature. That is, on the basis of a literature review, a basic description is given of the individual notions of urban identities, cultural heritage and innovative urban design schemes. In addition, a theoretical account of their relation (and its hypothesized changing nature) is provided. With this, a conceptual context is provided which forms the starting-point of the actual empirical data collection. This data collection revolves around the remainder of the sub questions. First, an attempt will be made to provide an overview to how urban policy makers 'construct' the identity of the city in which

they work, and especially the current role played by both cultural heritage and innovative urban design schemes in this regard. In addition, if only because it might provide a number of interesting insights for further inquiries (but also because Gospodini's framework takes the idea that the built urban environment, in whatever form, is a key urban identity generator somewhat for granted), the respondents will also have the opportunity to provide a more detailed, open account of what they consider the identity of their city, regardless of the role played by elements of a city's built morphology. Do they, for instance, spontaneously bring up the built environment when asked to describe this urban identity, or are other factors actually considered to be more important? The final three research questions could be considered the key sub questions for reaching the research goal, as they revolve around the issue of the value of built cultural heritage as an urban identity generator, both now and in the future. Together, it is hoped, this set of questions provide a means of achieving the main goal of the research.

### **1.3 Societal relevance**

The societal (or practical) value of this research is threefold. First, given that the research aims at developing a broad overview of the elements of a city's physical morphology that are considered the most identity-defining by a number of 'internal specialists' (those who, to a certain extent, actually set the 'urban identity-course'), individual municipalities gain a better insight in what the other 'competing entities' have to offer in their quest for a distinctive urban identity. In this sense, cities, needing to 'know their enemy', could use the results of this inquiry to develop an increased awareness of what makes their built morphology actually unique and distinctive, and which of these elements are more or less commonly brought to the fore by the cities as analyzed in this inquiry.

Second, as the goal of the research summarizes, the surveyed urban specialists are, in a way, confronted with the existence of the hypothesis that 'innovative urban design schemes' are (potentially and partly) taking over built cultural heritage as the most powerful urban identity generators. As described in the introduction, the notion that built cultural heritage provides cities with a unique identity is almost naturalized and taken for granted, whilst the possibility of this being subject to (negative) change has not (yet) really gained ground within policy practices. Although this particular inquiry clearly will not provide definite answers nor instigate a policy shift (acknowledging that an historical heritage-city will obviously not be able or willing to shift the course of its urban planning, development and marketing practices from one day to another), it may, by making them familiar with the theoretical insights as presented in the next chapter, invite the interviewed policy makers and professionals to at least start reflecting on and taking into account this possibly changing position of built cultural heritage. Do these actors indeed feel that, in the midst of a number of major societal changes, there is a

kind of trend going which causes the role of built cultural heritage for generating distinctive urban identities to decrease, or do they perhaps actually notice an increased value of heritage objects in this light? Also, after being confronted with and having reflected on Gospodini's hypothesis, what do they consider the most opportune and sustainable trajectory for creating a distinctive urban identity in the future, a focus on innovative design schemes or a further improvement of the city's heritage management efforts? Answers such as these could also provide insight in how a variety of Dutch urban policy makers would like to see the urban morphology develop in the future.

Third and finally, it should be mentioned that the respondents interviewed in the framework of this inquiry are not only specialists and representatives of a certain municipal policy course, who, to a degree, are able to reflect on the subject matter from a certain distance. They are also just 'normal persons' living (or at least working) in the city about which they are interviewed, and about which they also have clear personal views to share. Therefore, similar to Gospodini's strategy, a number of the survey questions will also use the respondents not as specialists, but as 'regular persons' familiar with the city in which they live and/or work. For instance, one of the questions they are confronted with in the survey (see Chapter three) revolves around what, in their eyes, could be considered the most identity-defining constructions of their city. Questions such as these create a kind of crossover between this research and the work of Gospodini, and could also serve as a starting point for in-depth case analysis focussing on particular cities and their inhabitants and visitors. These inquiries, in turn, could help not only municipalities, but also organizations such as the National Heritage Agency better understand how heritage is nowadays perceived, and, on that basis, how it should be communicated about ('framed') to its audience. Also, if societal changes (falling under the headings of globalization and post-modernism) indeed impact the identity-generating power of the built urban heritage, other discourses on the nature and legitimization of urban heritage conservation are to be made more explicit in order to maintain support for (often expensive and time-consuming) urban heritage management (protection and enhancement) in the future. Also in this light, if 'avant-garde design schemes' turn out to be more effective ways of developing place identities as a result of fundamentally changing European societies, a change in urban resource allocation (whether or not at the expense of heritage management) might be one of the practical consequences. However, if, according to a variety of relevant urban actors, on the basis of their professional experiences in the field, as well as as 'normal users' of the public urban space, are not able to support the framework (or even notice an opposing development), it would seem that heritage conservation is still very much a justifiable practice if it is legitimized on the basis of the goal of maintaining a distinctive urban identity. Of course, it should be mentioned already at this stage that because of the fact that a significant number of the inquiry's respondents work in the field of heritage, it is arguably not unlikely for them to consider heritage as

becoming more important, with which there could be the danger of the final results being somewhat distorted and biased. However, as also professionals in more 'neutral' fields such as spatial planning, urban development and city marketing will be included, it is hoped that a more 'balanced' picture will be obtained (this difference will also be accounted for when analyzing the results).

#### **1.4 Scientific relevance**

Besides its practical value, the research also serves goals which could be considered to be more scientific in nature. It can be argued that this inquiry is very much oriented towards building upon and at the same time, in a way, also empirically testing an already existing conceptual framework. By doing so, more insights are hoped to be gained in the (possibly changing) ways in which, within the contemporary Dutch context, urban identities are constructed, maintained and altered by virtue of a city's built environment, but especially also in the views of key urban actors regarding these processes. This is also where its main scientific relevance lies: although very much based on the work of Gospodini, this research focuses on a different context, poses a different question and, with that, essentially takes a different approach than Gospodini's inquiry did, thereby attempting to complement (and not so much verify or falsify) her initial theoretical and empirical findings. Not by 'simply' replicating her inquiry and focussing on how different elements of a city's built environment are able to function as an urban identity generator in the eyes of 'the general public', but by bringing to the fore an issue not addressed by Gospodini: the extent to which a number of different relevant urban (policy) actors, those who construct (in a figurative as well as literal sense) urban identities, actually agree with and recognize the hypotheses and assumptions which underlie Gospodini's framework (at the end of Chapter two, a number of lacunae of Gospodini's inquiry will be addressed). With this, the research also has a somewhat exploratory character, also pointing out towards a number of sub-topics that might justify further in-depth analyses.

Second, it can also be stated that this inquiry aims at making a contribution to the more general discussion on how the spatial sciences can be of value in the light of cultural heritage issues. It can be noted that, to an increasing extent, geography is showing an interest in questions of and related to cultural heritage, which, in turn, also alters the scope of traditional heritage studies. For instance, at the beginning of this millennium, Graham et al. (2000, p. 4), exploring the relation between geography and cultural heritage, wrote that "hitherto the geographical debate on heritage has remained uneasily poised between being an addendum to tourism studies and forming an isolated, self-sustaining if micro-scale theme within the discipline". Within this particular subfield of geography, heritage sites, as Gregory, Johnston, Pratt, Watts & Whatmore (2009, p. 328) argue, were considered merely "spaces for inscribing nationalist narratives of the past on to the popular

imagination." A couple of years later, however, Smith (2006) noted: "Over the last decade [...], as disciplines such as geography start to consider heritage issues, greater attention has focussed on the idea of cultural landscapes and their heritage values" (p. 31). Books and articles with titles such as 'A Geography of Heritage: Power, Culture and Economy' (Graham, et al., 2000) and the somewhat more peculiar 'Geography of a hidden cultural heritage: camel wrestles in Western Anatolia' (Çalışkan, 2009) show that geographers have become more attentive towards the fundamentally spatial characteristics of cultural heritage in a broad sense (that is, both tangible and intangible have become objects of geographical inquiries).

Besides the rather basic statement that heritage always 'occurs somewhere' (an observation that logically leads to asking traditional geographical questions such as 'where?', 'why there and not somewhere else?', and 'at what scalar level is it of importance?'), as Graham et al. (2000, p. 4) argue, heritage forms an issue of relevance for the geographical discipline in two other ways. First, it is noted that "heritage is of fundamental importance to the interests of contemporary cultural and historical geography, which focuses on signification, representation and the crucial issue of [of course] identity". Cultural heritage, it is (again) emphasized, forms one of the key place attributes distinguishing the identity of one spatial entity (such as a city or nation) from another, with which it also plays a key role in how people (individuals as well as groups) develop a 'sense of place' towards their (local, urban, national etc.) surroundings. It could be stated that this thesis mainly focuses on this particular link between (the performative dimensions of) heritage and geography. Furthermore, the authors state that heritage can also be very much considered a consumable economic commodity, with which it intrinsically also has the potential to form an important asset in the light of regional development and regeneration (not in the least in relation to the contemporary trend of demographic decline in certain geographical areas, also see Chapter six), but which can also make it a forceful source of tensions between groups dealing with conflicting interests.

On the basis of these multiple crossovers between heritage and geography, now not only cultural landscapes (the traditional research object of historical geographers, see e.g. Antrop, 2005), but also built cultural heritage is getting an increasing amount of geographical attention (see e.g. also During, 2010 on European heritage discourses from a spatial perspective and Rypkema, 2005, on the influence of globalization on the position of urban cultural heritage). This thesis can be considered as adding to this emerging stock of knowledge.

## 1.5 Thesis outline

This thesis is structured as follows. Chapter two, providing the conceptual framework, has a double focus. First, in a relatively concise fashion, the three key concepts of the inquiry will be covered: 'urban identities', 'built urban cultural

heritage' (on the basis of a brief overview of the notion of heritage in a more general sense) and 'innovative design schemes'. Second, and forming the main theoretical foundation of the research, this chapter addresses the question how, in a general sense, the relation between these key concepts is conceptualized to change (or has already changed) within contemporary European societies. Obviously, this part will very much revolve around Gospodini's framework, although, when considered relevant, also inspiration is taken from a number of other scholars. Chapter three is devoted to questions of methodology, that is, to how data is collected and analyzed. In Chapter four, the results of the research are presented. Chapter five contains the thesis's conclusions and, with that, the answer to the main research question. Finally, on the basis of a description of the main shortcomings and limitations of the inquiry, a number of recommendations are brought to the fore in Chapter six.

## 2. Conceptual framework

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This theoretical chapter revolves around three main issues. First, the key notion of 'urban identities' will be explored, using what can be labeled a non-essentialist approach. Second, the phenomena of both 'cultural heritage' (and its very much urban nature) and 'innovative urban design schemes' are addressed in somewhat more detail than was done in the introduction chapter (although in still a rather concise fashion). These paragraphs could be considered as providing a conceptual foundation on which this chapter's main paragraph can be based. In this section, an overview will be presented of how the relation between built heritage and urban identities is argued to change (or has already changed), and the role played by innovative urban design in this regard. Obviously, Gospodini's framework will be at the heart of this part of the chapter. The chapter ends with a number of provisional conceptual conclusions.

### 2.1 Urban identities

Just as individual persons have their own specific identities, the same can be argued to be true for cities. Lynch (in Baris, Uckac & Uslu, 2009, p. 724), looking at the identity notion from a spatial perspective, defines the concept as "the extent to which a person can recognize or recall a place as being distinct from other places", a definition that also seems useful for the purposes of this inquiry. With this, what gives a city its identity seem to be those components which make it unique and thus fundamentally different from other urban conglomerations. As will be addressed below, it is possible to identify a variety of such components, of which a city's physical morphology is only one. In addition, these components making up an urban identity are also very much considered to be dynamic. As Scheffler et al. (2009) emphasize:

Urban identity is a complex and multireferential phenomenon – it embraces linkages between the material and immaterial; it has different scales: local, city, regional, national; it can be seen from various perspectives: personal, collective, external; it develops in time, affected by change, and influenced by many factors. (p. 9)

These two basic premises form the starting point of this paragraph, which first, very briefly, addresses the now very much accepted idea that cities, in the contemporary age, very much need to be in possession of a unique and distinctive identity. Relph, as one of the pioneers in the field of urban identity research, already described the need for places to be in possession of a distinctive identity over 35 years ago (in Oktay, 2002, p. 262). He states:

A deep human need exists for associations with significant places. If we choose to ignore that need, and follow the forces of placelessness to continue unchallenged, then the future can only hold an environment in which places simply do not matter. If, on the other hand, we choose to respond to that need and transcend placelessness, then the potential exists for the development of an environment in which places are for man, reflecting and enhancing the variety of human experience. (1976, p. 147)

In the latest decennium, an growing number of scholars have started to pay attention to this notion of 'urban identities' (see e.g. Baris, et al., 2009; Dormans, van Houtum & Lagendijk, 2003; Gospodini, 2004; Oktay, 2002; Padua, 2007; Scheffler, et al., 2009; Stobart, 2004). This burgeoning of literature is often explained using the notion of cities needing to be increasingly competitive in a globalized network society (see Castells, 1996). With this, it is argued, cities need to be in possession of a unique, distinctive and, not in the least, marketable identity (a very functional line of reasoning which, to a certain degree, contrasts Relph's more idealistic ideal of 'enhancing the human experience'). For instance, Dormans et al. (2003) argue that it is especially due to contemporary economic developments that cities are to an increasing extent becoming conceptualized as 'competitive entities', which need to clearly distinguish themselves from other ones. In this regard, they argue, more insight into how urban identities are constructed is of great importance. A similar line of reasoning is presented by Baris et al. (2009):

The increasing effects of globalization going along with economic monopolization and internationalization of capital create intensification of competition between cities. The cities must primarily have local characteristics and identity so that their economic value in the world market can increase and investment can be made there for their development. (p. 733)

In their struggle for attracting corporate investment, inhabitants and tourists (a fight now carried out in the arena that is a sometimes called a 'global village'), it seems inevitable for contemporary cities focus on (or construct) one or multiple unique selling points, that is (following Lynch), their identity defining characteristics (Lombarts, 2011). As a result not only academics, but certainly also mayors, planners and city managers are increasingly concerned with developing and 'managing' their city's identity, in order for them to survive in the global competition for visitors, investment and inhabitants. In addition, and as already illustrated by Figure 1.1 in the previous chapter, it is also argued that having a clear, distinguished identity is a precondition for creating internal cohesion, a sense of civic pride and urban commonness. As Scheffler et al. (2009) write:

Identity helps citizens become attached to their environment and confirms that it belongs to them, individually and collectively. This increases their willingness to advocate for a place. Identity can also help to improve the image of an area, stopping a down cycle process, supporting social transformation by positively marketing a place. (2009, p. 9)

As already touched upon, these defining characteristics (material as well as immaterial) should not be considered as historically fixed and absolute. With this in mind, and also given the nature of Gospodini's framework (see Paragraph 2.4), it would seem reasonable to take up a, what can be labeled 'social-constructivist approach'. From this perspective, urban identities are to be viewed as constructed, contested and dynamic, and thus not revolving around a fixed, singular and everlasting historical essence. Or as Hubbard (2006, p. 86) writes: "While some geographers still insist that particular cities have an essence that can be identified and distilled, the majority would accept that cities are in fact heterogeneous and variegated entities whose spatiality escapes any attempt at memetic summation and representation."

Under the umbrella of social-constructivism, still a wide range of sub-approaches to the phenomenon of urban identities can be distinguished. This is not the place to provide a detailed account, but a number of conceptually useful examples will be briefly described below.

Weichhart, Weiske, and Werlen, in their book 'Place Identity und Images' (2006), address urban identities using the perspective of action oriented theories, thereby "consciously avoid[ing talking] about place identity as something independent of the human. The material world, they claim, cannot have an identity of its own" (Kalandides, 2012). As Kalandides summarizes, the authors make a distinction between three types of place identity. First, there is 'identification of places', which refers to the ways in which individuals and groups understand and recognize places and their objects, assigning them certain characteristics. Second, there is 'being identified as', which revolves around how "people (again both groups and individuals) are recognized in their relations to their place or origin, residence etc" (idem). Third and finally, the notion of 'identification with' is based on the phenomenological work of e.g. Husserl and Merleau-Pontey, focusing on the ways in which "people incorporate place into their own identity construction" (idem). It is especially this first interpretation of place identity which plays a central role in this thesis: how do urban policy makers and professionals identify (recognize and understand) 'their' places, and to what extent do they consider their cities. By means of built cultural heritage and innovative urban design schemes, as becoming less or perhaps more 'identifiable'?

As another example of how urban identities can be addressed using a social-constructivist approach, the contribution of Manuel DeLanda (2006) can be

mentioned. In his book 'A New Philosophy of Society: Assemblage Theory and Social Complexity', he constructs a 'novel, non-essentialist approach to social ontology' which is based on the theory of assemblages as developed by post-structuralist thinker Gilles Deleuze. DeLanda limits himself to focus specifically on social assemblages (and the contingent historical processes (de-)stabilizing their identities), which can be considered "wholes whose properties emerge from the interactions between parts" (p. 5). For DeLanda each assemblage is defined along two dimensions (or axes), with which four variables can be distinguished. The first of these axes defines the role each of the assemblage's components has to play, with the two extremes of the continuum being a completely expressive role on the one (whereby expressive components can be linguistic and non-linguistic), and a purely material one at the other (of course, a component may play a mixture of roles, that is they may, given their 'capacities', be both material and expressive in nature). The second axis defines the degree to which a component contributes to (de)stabilizing the identity of the assemblage.

Exemplifying the anti-essentialist nature of his theoretical insights, an entire chapter in DeLanda's book is devoted to positioning the notion of assemblage against that of essentialism, the belief in the existence of 'reified generalities'. Assemblages, as DeLanda (2006) argues, are the result of contingent historical processes (that also could not have taken place): "Assemblage theory [...] avoids taxonomic essentialism [...]. The identity of any assemblage at any level of scale is always the product of a process [...] and it is always precarious, since other processes [...] can destabilize it. For this reason, the ontological status of assemblages, large or small, is always that of unique, singular individuals" (p. 28). Assemblages are only the temporary contingent result of complex historical 'lines of flight', with different processes constantly strengthening or attempting to change or even dissolve them and their identities.

Most important in this regard is of course DeLanda's analysis of urban assemblages and their identities. He thereby addresses a wide range of issues, amongst which are the dependency relations between cities and the countryside, geographical mobility as an example of a development deterritorializing a city's identity, and zoning regulations, urban congregation and segregation as territorializing forces. DeLanda, and this is important with regard to the objective of this thesis, also addresses the relation between a city's identity and its built components. DeLanda in this regard specifically mentions the expressive role of groupings of buildings:

The components playing an expressive role in an urban assemblage may [...] be a mere aggregation of those of its neighbourhoods or go beyond these. Let's take for example the silhouette which the mass of a town's residential houses and buildings, as well as the decorated tops of its churches and public buildings, cut across the sky. In some cases, this *skyline* is a mere aggregate

effect, but in the rhythmic repetition of architectural motifs [...] and the way these motifs play in counterpoint with the surrounding features of the landscape, may result in a whole that is more than a simple sum. Either way, skylines, however humble, greeted for centuries the eyes of incoming people at the different approaches to a city, constituting a kind of *visual signature of its territorial identity* [emphasis added]. (2006, p. 105)

With this, for DeLanda, a city's built urban morphology plays not only a mere material role, but also a highly important role in telling a city's story, bringing to the fore its own distinctive identity. How this expressive role is given form, however, is of course very much subject to changes (although often rather slow ones). DeLanda's ontology, in this sense, does not preclude the possibility of innovative design schemes indeed taking over the (dominant) role of built heritage in expressing a particular city's identity, as hypothesized by Gospodini.

Also Dormans et al. (2003) have addressed the notion of 'urban identity' through a constructivist lens. Using a very much 'DeleuzoDeLandian' line of reasoning, they state that a city's identity "is not be seen from the static perspective of *being*, but as a dynamic process of *becoming* [own translation] (p. 113). This process of becoming, of identity construction as never-ending work in progress, is to be considered a "broad and continuous process, which involves numerous urban actors. An important activity in this regard in the search for urban elements and characterizations which are considered to be image defining for the city" [own translation] (2003, p. 16). Dormans et al. (2003, p. 22) thereby make a distinction between three main dynamic categories (or domains) which are argued to provide these image defining elements, consisting of a city's physical, economical and social components (see Table 2.1). These obviously are container categories, of which each contains a number of not fully mutually exclusive elements (e.g. the city's built environment, employment and culture). Perhaps interesting to mention is the fact that these scholars have applied this framework to four Dutch geographically peripheral cities. Not, as they emphasize, in an attempt to try to determine something as 'the' urban identity of these cities, but by analyzing the ways in which multiple key urban actors strategically *construct*, define and legitimize their visions of the urban identity in question (also very much vis-à-vis the identities of other cities). For them, then, the question is not what the identity of a certain city is, but what identity is constructed by whom.

Category	Past	Present	Future
<b>Physical</b>	Physical characterization of the past: <i>historical image/identity of the city</i>		
	Current physical characterization: <i>current image/identity of the city</i>		
	Future physical characterization: <i>expected image/identity of the city</i>		
<b>Economical</b>	Economical characterization of the past <i>historical image/identity of the city</i>		
	Current economical characterization: <i>current image/identity of the city</i>		
	Future economical characterization: <i>expected image/identity of the city</i>		
<b>Social</b>	Social characterization of the past <i>historical image/identity of the city</i>		
	Current social characterization: <i>current image/identity of the city</i>		
	Future social characterization: <i>expected image/identity of the city</i>		

**Table 2.1: A conceptual framework for analyzing urban identity constructions. (Source: S. Dormans, H. van Houtum & A. Lagendijk, 2003).**

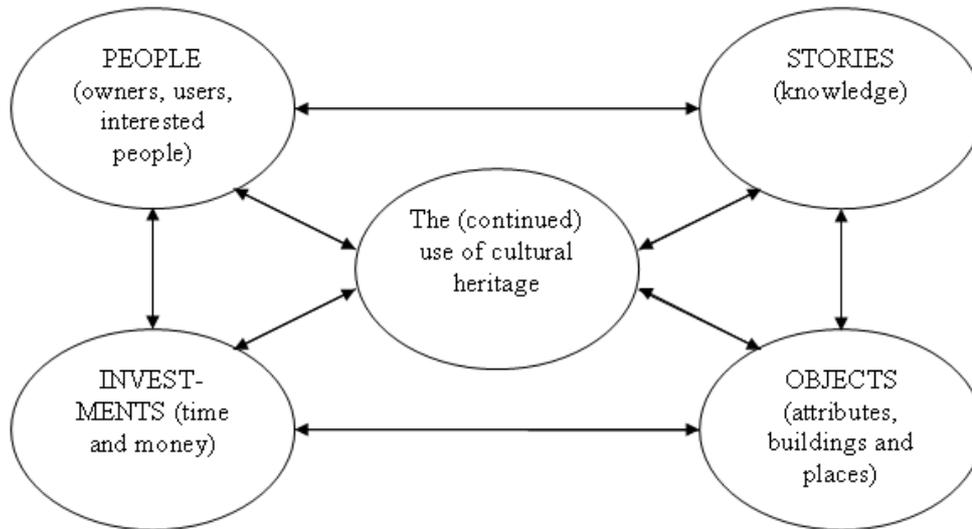
With this, a city's built urban morphology, of which built cultural heritage (interestingly, a term actually not mentioned once in the report by Dormans et al., although 'monuments' are mentioned six times) and innovative design schemes are two sub-components, forms merely part of a much more complex and multidimensional urban assemblage. However, for Baris, Uckac and Uslu (2009), this particular element of a city's identity could be considered a key component of how a city's identity is formed, changed and reproduced, not in the least because of its spill-over effects to other domains. They write: "[T]he physical structure of urban spaces cannot be considered separately from the socio-cultural properties, political processes and economic structure of the city and the society" (p. 734). Without making an explicit distinction between built heritage and innovative design, these scholars even argue that, "[u]nder present day conditions where the identities of cities are rapidly deteriorating and vanishing, the importance of urban design, which is a means of designing the urban spaces and their physical and social aspects, is ever growing" (p. 1). And: "[U]rban design is one of the most important factors effecting urban identity both physically and socially" (idem). This thesis will also attempt to scrutinize this hypothesis, as the fifth sub question revolves around investigating the role of a city's built morphology (in a more general sense) for fostering urban identities.

## 2.2 Cultural heritage

### *2.2.1 Cultural heritage and its dynamic and contested nature*

Without getting lost in an overly detailed and historical etymological exploration, it is useful to begin addressing the phenomenon of 'built urban cultural heritage' from a somewhat more broad perspective, by taking up the more general notion of 'heritage' as a conceptual starting-point.

Just like the notion of 'urban identity' is (now commonly understood as) a very much a dynamic and fluid concept, the same can be said of the notion of '(cultural) heritage'. As Den Boer (in van der Laarse, 2005, p. 54) points out, the term 'heritage' stems from the Latin word 'heres', which means as much as 'empty' or 'without owner' (after the decease of the legal owner). For a long period, it was this traditional legal understanding of the term which remained dominant: "Until only a few decades ago, the word heritage was commonly used only to describe an inheritance that an individual received in the will of a deceased ancestor or bequeathed when dead to descendents" (Graham et al., 2000, p. 1). Within the Dutch context, more strictly defined labels, such as 'monuments' or 'antiquities', were used within the wider discourse on the conservation of what remained of the past, with the importance of such objects in the light of remembering and preserving a 'shared national identity' being a key issue, very much in line with one of the assumptions underlying Gospodini's framework (Rijksdienst voor het Cultureel Erfgoed, 2009, p. 16). However, recently "the range of meanings attached to this formerly precise legal term has [...] undergone a quantum expansion to include almost any sort of intergenerational exchange or relationship [...] between societies as well as individuals" (Graham et al., 2000, p. 1). For instance, within The Netherlands, it is argued that "as a result of all kinds of emancipatory processes, interest arose for the identity of subgroups within society. The more general notion of 'heritage' ['erfgoed' in Dutch] suited this development well, [as it also] refers to buildings, objects and landscapes connected to aspects of the social and cultural life other than national politics [own translation]" (idem).



**Figure 2.1: The multidimensional features of heritage and its use (1). (Source: J. Bazelmans, 2012).**

This semantic expansion of the heritage notion, which took place more or less globally, has meant that, for instance, since 2003 UNESCO also started to focus not only on the protection of tangible heritage (both movable and immovable), but also on intangible heritage. This heritage domain is defined as “the practices, representations, expressions, knowledge, skills – as well as the instruments, objects, artefacts and cultural spaces associated therewith – that communities, groups and, in some cases, individuals recognize as part of their cultural heritage” (UNESCO, 2003, p. 2). Bazelmans (2012) goes as far as to state that the notion of cultural heritage should not only be understood as referring to merely certain material and intangible objects, but also to the whole of people, stories (knowledge) and investments related to them (the way heritage is dealt with, one could summarize) (see Figure 2.1 for his integrated vision on (the use of) cultural heritage (for a more detailed historical inspection of the semantic development of the heritage notion, see e.g. Frijhoff, 2007; Grijzenhout, 2009).

Importantly, cultural heritage (and with that, built urban heritage), is not a well demarcated analytical term (van der Laarse, 2005), since it refers to a highly contested and fluid phenomenon. Obviously, a certain object or tradition is not heritage by nature. Instead, it obtains that label within the praxis that is called culture. As an illustration, the phenomenon of Dutch painted wall advertising could be mentioned, particularly fashionable in the 1920’s to the 1940’s. Once considered to be condemnable disfigurements of the urban street scene (and therefore often removed without hesitation), now cherished as Dutch cultural heritage (Nijhoff & Havelaar, 2012). So, just as urban identities as context-dependent social constructions, the same is true for cultural heritage. As Hernández i Martí (2006) writes:

[Cultural heritage] could be described as a social construction, understood as a symbolic, subjective, processual and reflexive selection of cultural elements (from the past) which are recycled, adapted, refunctionalized, revitalized, reconstructed or reinvented in a context of modernity by means of mechanisms of mediation, conflict, dialogue and negotiation in which social agents participate. (2006, p. 95)

Heritage, for Harvey (in Smith & Akagawa, 2009) therefore should be considered a verb, a practice, not so much a noun denoting a clearly defined list containing a fixed and essentialized number of canonical objects or intangible performances. In this regard, Frijhoff (2007, p. 38) speaks of a “passive reservoir of relicts” [own translation]”, which in itself is not heritage, but of which certain objects receive that status when they are culturally constructed and constituted as such.

With this in mind, there is no objective and final answer to the question ‘what is (built) cultural heritage?’ By its very nature, all forms of heritage are always contested, always object of struggle between different interest groups, with different meanings attached to and derived from them in different (temporal and spatial) contexts. Graham et al. (2000) refer to this as ‘heritage dissonance’. Their vision on the heritage notion is visualized as follows (Figure 2.2). First, they argue (in line with what has been described above), people are not merely the passive receivers or transmitters of cultural heritage, but, instead, by attaching meaning to and deriving meaning from it, they are its active creators. According to these scholars, then, this creation process is based on particular needs, which can be cultural (identity related) or economical in nature. As heritage “also exists as an economic commodity, [this meaning] may overlap, conflict with or even deny its cultural role. It is capable of being interpreted differently within any one culture at any one time, as well as between cultures and through time” (idem, p. 3) (for a detailed analysis on the value of built heritage as a ‘marketable (touristic) product’, see e.g. Orbaşlı, 2000; Misiura, 2006).

These theoretical academic considerations on heritage as something essentially contested, have, almost inevitably, not precluded the construction of

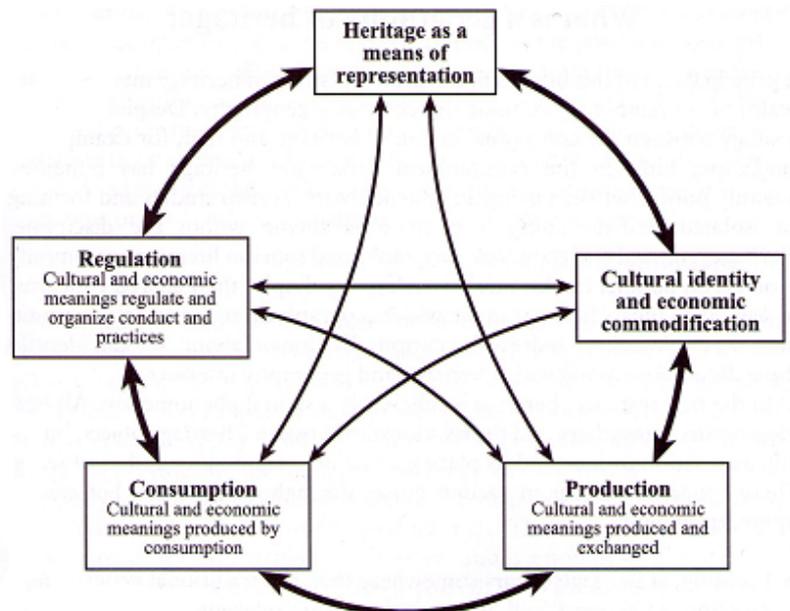


Figure 2.2: The multidimensional features of heritage and its use (2). (Source: B. Graham. G.J. Ashworth & J.E. Tunbridge, 2000).

numerous heritage typologies, classifications and lists, produced by a wide variety of organizations on different levels of scale. Although such lists can be considered as essentializing, 'itemizing' and 'canonizing' certain objects of heritage, by nature prioritizing them over (possible) others, they have become very much institutionalized as the main practical guidelines for determining which of the objects belonging to the 'reservoir of relicts' are considered of enough value to deserve protection. As Smith and Akagawa (2009, p. 6) write: "Any item or place of tangible heritage can only be recognized and understood as heritage through the values people *and organizations like UNSECO* give it [...]" [emphasis added].

For instance, in 2006, surrounded by a heated societal debate, the Canon of the Dutch History was presented, which consists of 50 'key-themes', including a number of built heritage objects. On the more formal side and more (yet not solely) focusing on built heritage, the most famous heritage classification arguably is the prestigious UNESCO's World Heritage List ('the Michelin guide of the heritage domain'), currently containing 936 objects which are, on a global scale, considered as irreplaceable and unique (725 of which are classified as 'cultural', 128 as 'natural' and 28 as 'mixed'). The Netherlands currently is represented with nine sites, including the Wadden Sea, the seventeenth-century canal ring area of Amsterdam and the historic area of Curacao's Willemstad (its inner city and harbor) (Stichting Platform Werelderfgoed, n.d.; UNSESCO, 2012). When it comes to the Dutch national scale, the most important list is that of the national monuments ('Rijksmonumenten'), which currently is made up out of about 62.000 objects (see Appendix A for an overview of the spatial distribution of a segment of Dutch national monuments) (the vast majority of which consists of houses, also see the example of Nijmegen in Appendix B). These are considered to be of national importance because of their aesthetic and/or cultural-historical value (Monumenten.nl, 2012). Then there are also the provincial monuments (albeit only in the provinces of Noord-Holland and Drenthe) and municipal monuments, which are considered to be of local or regional importance (Rijksoverheid, n.d.). Finally within the Dutch context, there are the 'protected cityscapes (and villagescapes)', which are sites containing multiple "image-defining buildings with historical characteristics [own translation]" (idem). In this inquiry, for analytical purposes, 'built cultural heritage' will be understood as those elements of a city's built morphology that have the status of being either a national or municipal monument.

### *2.2.2 Heritage as an spatial and urban phenomenon*

Up to this point, this chapter has dealt with cultural heritage in a rather general sense, leaving its dimensions of spatiality somewhat aside. From this moment on, however, the focus will be restricted further by considering heritage as (also) an intrinsically spatial category. This will result in an overview of Gospodini's conceptual framework in Paragraph 2.4. Before doing so, however, it seems useful to, as a kind of stepping-stone towards this key component of this theoretical

chapter, provide some additional insights in cultural heritage as not merely a spatial, but also a very much urban phenomenon.

In this regard, a number of inquiries have been conducted on the position of 'heritage parks' within post-industrial cities, characterized by cultural lifestyles that, in turn, revolve around "an aggressive pursuit of cultural capital" (Zukin, 1998, p. 825). According to Zukin (idem), as consequence of this 'cultural turn', cities can no longer considered to be landscapes of production, but have transformed into landscapes of consumption. For her (1998, p. 826), "[this] new emphasis on urban consumption also heightens competition between cities that serve as 'branch' nodes for the international distribution of the same standardized, mass-produced, consumer goods--such as [...] such as art works and '*historic buildings*' [emphasis added]. In similar fashion, also David Harvey has addressed heritage in the light of his views on the role of commodified signs, styles, metaphors and symbols, functioning as discursive devices in what can be called the 'post-Fordist consumer city' (Hubbard, 2006, p. 85). Urban heritage centres, in this light, have been mentioned as potential examples of manifestations of hyper-real urban forms, feigning authenticity by offering "commodified fantasy versions of other places and times."

From a different perspective, a more descriptive account of the spatial development of heritage clusters is provided Graham et al. (2000, p. 208), thereby applying the notion of the 'heritage city' as coined by Ashworth and Tunbridge (1990). As Graham et al. (2000, p. 208) write, "[m]uch heritage has been created in cities, which are used in various ways as stages for its presentation. In addition, cities themselves may be heritage objects of major significance." They thereby identify three basic urban attributes, in the form of size, spatial clustering and urban design, which have a major bearing on cities as 'heritage centres'. It is especially the latter two of these characteristics which can be managed and adapted by

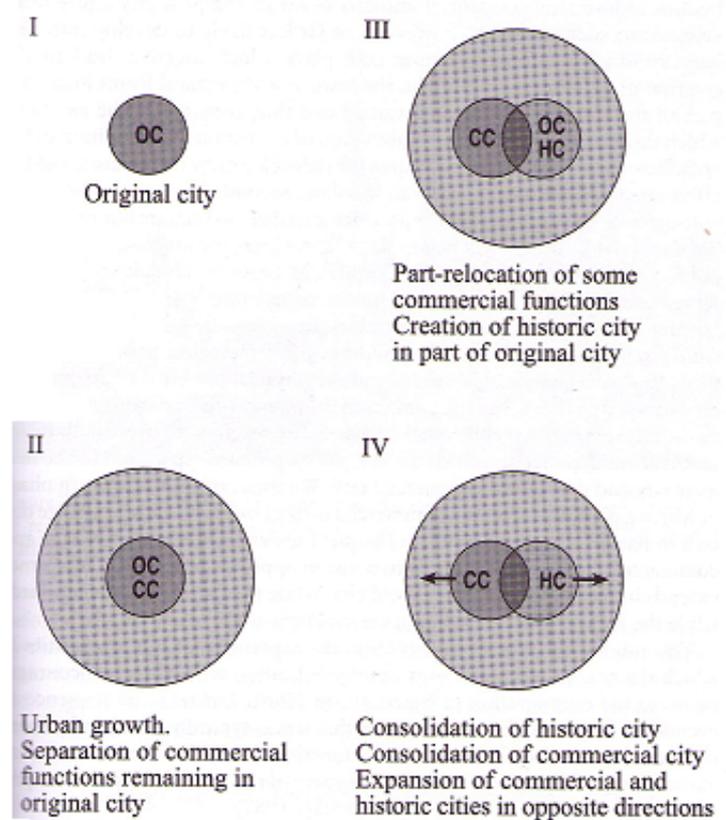


Figure 2.3: The heritage city model. (Source: B. Graham. G.J. Ashworth & J.E. Tunbridge, 2000).

urban planners and policy makers (idem).

Considering a city's size, they argue that, given that heritage occurs from past human interaction at specific locales, and the fact that large cities are the result and the décor of intensive human interaction, they are endowed with relatively many "areas, buildings and sites to which heritage values can be ascribed" (idem). Also, given that much cultural heritage is mobile, cities, through either chance or intentional design, will have accumulated a relatively large share of it (whether or not heritage originating from outside). Second, there is the role of spatial clustering. For a city to be a 'genuine' heritage city, "[t]he geographical clustering of heritage sites associations and objects, both which each other and with ancillary supporting services, is necessary to produce a critical volume of heritage potential in a spatially restricted area" (idem). Finally, there is the role of urban design for creating successful heritage areas. This component encompasses many elements, such as the nature and quality of the physical heritage objects themselves, but e.g. also other urban features such as pedestrian traffic management, street furniture, and a locale's paving and street lightning (idem).

Figure 2.3 visualizes the 'genesis' and development trajectory of the heritage city. First, it should be mentioned that the heritage city can be distinguished from merely 'old' or 'historic' cities. The heritage city is the result of a combination of both social and economic processes operating over time (with this, not every old city eventually becomes a heritage city). Contingent and dynamic historical processes as well as policy measures both have a determining effect on the answer to the question if a certain object is able to survive over time and to become part of an urban area which can be deemed 'heritage city'.

As can be derived from the model, the first phase of the four-step trajectory towards 'heritage city status' consists of the 'original city', which contains a number of urban functions and is assumed to grow in all directions. As a result of this process, a new (modern or commercial) core emerges, existing alongside its older brother. Two critical developments then have to take place. First, "the historic architectural forms in at least part of the city [have to] become valued and thus conserved" (idem, p. 209). This obviously very much resonates with what was described in Paragraph 2.1, as it again makes clear that heritage *is* not, it *becomes* (through the selection mechanism that is history). The answer to the question whether or not this happens is the resultant of e.g. the size and quality of the (potential) heritage object at hand, the pressure for redevelopment in the area in question and the ability of local conservation lobbies to convince policy makers that conservation is worthwhile (idem). Second, the authors argue, a process of 'functional change' will have to take place. This entails the emigration of certain activities towards outside the heritage area, and the immigration of others. Outmigration occurs as the result of a number of pressures being placed on the occupiers of heritage objects through policy measures and designations (e.g. higher maintenance costs and use and adaption restrictions). On the other hand, heritage

(buildings and areas) also attracts other parties and activities, offering benefits related to their 'enhanced historicity' (idem). This will result in the (whether or not planned) consolidation of a city's old and modern core, which are hypothesized to grow in separate directions, with an overlap area between the two being left for restructuring (phase four) (for the analysis of a number of variants on this model, see Graham et al., 2000). I will briefly return to the notion of the heritage city when discussing the results of the analysis in Chapter four.

### 2.3 Innovative urban design schemes

This subparagraph will, in concise fashion, address the (hypothesized) social economic and cultural role of innovative urban design schemes. As Orbaşlı (2000, p. 9) writes, "[t]he city is an ecosystem, in form of compilation of past and present layers providing a framework for the contemporary mechanisms of urban economy and life." One could argue that the most valuable part of these older (physical) layers consists of built heritage, while innovative urban design schemes form the most remarkable, experimental and attention demanding elements of a city's youngest layers. Or, as Gospodini (2004) describes the distinction between these two of a city's built morphology:

Thinking of built heritage as a constructed landscape narrative somehow evoking tradition and the city's past, and reducing the unfamiliar environment to the familiar, one might conceive of innovative design of space as its 'opposite', i.e. formal and spatial schemata somehow dismissing tradition and reducing the familiar environment to the unfamiliar. (p. 232).

She defines these elements as follows (2004, p. 232):

- formal schemata which are in contradiction to the morphological patterns characterizing the city's landscape (e.g. dominant architectural elements, signs and styles, the geometries of the street system, the urban block system, the open space system, the skyline, etc.); and/or
- spatial configurations which shift the existing structure of urban space (e.g. shifting the city's centre or altering the pattern(s) of the street system, the urban block system, the open spaces system, etc.).

These components of a city's built morphology, of course, exist in different forms. On the basis of Kevin Lynch's classic work 'The Image of the City' (1960), on the visual perception of urban environments, a distinction can be made between innovative design schemes in the form of paths, edges, districts, nodes and

landmarks. Together, Lynch famously argued, these elements of the built urban morphology make up a city's image.

A rather similar categorization is made by Verheul and van Twist (2011), who make a distinction between four types of contemporary 'image defining' elements within a city's built environment, in the form of buildings (e.g. iconic museums and skyscrapers) infrastructural projects (such as bridges and train stations), whole urban districts with special architectonic features and, finally, objects of arts in public spaces (such as monuments). It is argued that such projects can enable cities to materialize their sought-after identities, building what they want to be, without being dependent on what has remained of the city's past.

Verheul and van Twist (2011, p. 74) in this regard mention a city's 'iconic capital', which, for them is an asset just as important as a city's economic, cultural and social capital. Certainly given the enormous rise of mass tourism and mass media, they argue, the expressive power of urban icons has increased enormously over the years. For this reason, it is also argued by Gospodini (2004, p. 234), "innovative design of space appears to be a key factor of economic development in all categories and groups of cities: metropolitan cities, larger cities, smaller cities, cities in the core and cities in the periphery (economic and/or geographical) of Europe."

However, as Ashworth (2011) reminds us, discussing the role of prestige projects with regard to place branding, such innovative design schemes are of course not something completely revolutionary. He mentions the Colloseum, the Akropolis and the gardens of Babylon as ancient examples of projects not only serving a public function, but also as very much intended to make a statement on the rulers who realized them. The contemporary 'rediscovery' of this phenomenon can be traced back to (amongst others) the Centre Pompidou in Paris, a futuristic building which "was clearly not only meant as a location for the modern art collection, but, simultaneously, it had to express the image of France as a cultural and progressive nation, and especially show the strength of Paris amongst other world cities" [own translation] (p. 57).

For Ashworth (2011), the success of a flagship project mainly depends on two elements. First, obviously, the design has to be considered special and remarkable (which are, of course, highly subjective notions). In this regard it doesn't really matter whether or not the design is appealing for a wide audience. More important is the question if it is noticed, becomes topic of discussion. The scholar mentions the global competition for constructing the highest building as the manifestation of this urban urge to create something noticeable (and with that, discussable). Also bridges are mentioned as favorite objects of urban policy makers to create an urban icon, especially because of their often central location and the fact that they are the expression of both architectural and technical expertise.

Second, the role of the architect is considered almost as important as the physical structure of the building itself. A building can derive its status from the

very fact that it was designed by one of today's famous 'starchitects' (idem). Of course the 'Museo Guggenheim' (Gehry) and the aforementioned Centre Pompidou (Rogers), but e.g. also the 'Kunsthal' in Rotterdam (Koolhaas) and the Jewish Museum in Berlin (Liebeskind) are only a few of the many noteworthy examples of how a particular architect has the ability to add status and distinction to a particular building, and therefore to the city in which it is located. The ultimate goal of such projects, then, would be to create the so-called 'Guggenheim effect', named after the Guggenheim Foundation which "likes to expose its collection in remarkable and challenging buildings" (Ashworth, 2011, p. 58).

However, as Ashworth himself is also quick to acknowledge, in reality the success or failure of flagship urban development is a somewhat more complex matter, and there is always the risk of having realized a project which has no positive (socio-economic) spin-off effects on its surroundings, a so-called 'cathedral in the desert'. The ability of such projects to render socio-economic has therefore been analyzed (e.g. Smyth, 1994; Temelová, 2007) as well as questioned, not in the least because if 'successful', such prestige projects are often only so in a very strictly economic sense, without much benefits for the surrounding local population (see e.g. Bianchini, Dawson & Evans, 1992; Harvey, 1989). For instance, Temelová's research (2007), focusing on how a flagship project aimed at tackling urban decay in a post-socialist context (Prague), has shown that "a high-profile project can be one of the driving forces in physical revitalization through the provision of symbolic power, credibility and appeal to a declining neighbourhood" (p. 169). At the same time, "physical transformation is a multi-conditional and context-related process rather than an automatic and straightforward outcome of flagship developments. Successful revitalization depends on a favorable constellation of various factors" (p. 169).

Of course, there is no absolute, essential difference between built urban heritage on the one and innovative urban design schemes on the other. As the rather straightforward example of the Colosseum shows, what is considered innovative design in one era can be considered cultural heritage in another. This, however, does of course not preclude the possibility of making an analytical distinction between the two at a certain point in time (such as the present), and this is also precisely what Gospodini has done when testing her conceptual framework, which will be presented in the following paragraph.

## **2.4 The dialectical relation between urban identities and a city's built urban environment: a hypothesized trend shift**

In 2009, Smith and Akagawa wrote: "Heritage is intimately linked with identity – exactly how it is linked and its inter-relationship are yet to be fully understood." What does seem to be beyond doubt is the idea that heritage, "at global, national and local levels, [...] is used to define a sense of place" (p. 7). However, as already

touched upon in the introduction chapter, there are also scholars arguing in favor of the idea that heritage has lost (part) of its ability to contribute to the fostering of distinctive urban identities. By presenting Gospodini's conceptual framework, both of these 'discourses' will be addressed in more detail within this paragraph.

Gospodini starts her analysis by (also) claiming that, and here she draws on e.g. Castells and Harvey, economic and cultural globalization and European integration cause "national states of Europe [to] fade in their role, [with] individual cities emerg[ing] as a driving force in the making of the new Europe" (p. 225). Furthermore, in the light of mass migrations, European cities are transformed "into heterogeneous, multi-ethnic and multi-cultural societies", while simultaneously "the march to supra-nationality within the European Union (EU) is blurring national identities" (p. 225-226). As a reaction to the 'urban identity crises' that these developments instigate, it is argued that "place identity is becoming an issue of growing importance for both scholars and people" (p. 226). In this light, according to Castells (in Gospodini, 2004):

European cities will be increasingly oriented towards their local heritage—built heritage, cultural heritage—because first, the weakening of national identities makes people uncertain about the power holders of their destiny, thus pushing them into either individualistic (neo-liberalism) or collective (neo-nationalism) withdrawal; and secondly, the consolidation of heterogeneous populations in European cities is happening at a period when national identities are most threatened. (p. 226)

In a similar stream of thought, Harvey (in Gospodini, 2004) even believes that

the response will be an increase in xenophobia and the resurgence of reactionary place-bound politics as people search for old certainties and struggle to construct or retain a more stable or bounded place identity. The protection and enhancement of built heritage appear as one such attempt to fix the meanings of places, while enclosing and defending them. (idem)

In this way, according to these scholars, "the struggle of cities for place identity in a globalized world [goes hand in hand] with the protection and enhancement of built heritage" (idem; see e.g. also Rouwendal, in Schattenberg, 2012). This can be seen the underlying line of reasoning of a first of two major 'discourses' on the contribution of built urban heritage on (urban) place identities:

**1) Built heritage as an effective 'tool' working for place identity.** This mechanism is argued to work in (at least) two ways (Gospodini, 2004):

- By referring to both national identity and the city's tradition, built heritage has been invoking something common among individuals—members of a nationstate-oriented urban society. In this way, it has been offering a sort of 'spatial membership' to almost all individuals and social groups of such a society (p. 232)
- By adding to the city's landscape physiognomy, built heritage has been promoting economic development of cities as tourism places and/or entrepreneurial centres. In this way, it has been creating a sort of social solidarity (and perhaps civic pride) among individuals, grounded in economic prospects (idem)

In her article, Gospodini presents a conceptual model which summarizes how (different types of) built cultural heritage is (are) traditionally believed to function as a so-called place-identity generator (Figure 2.4):

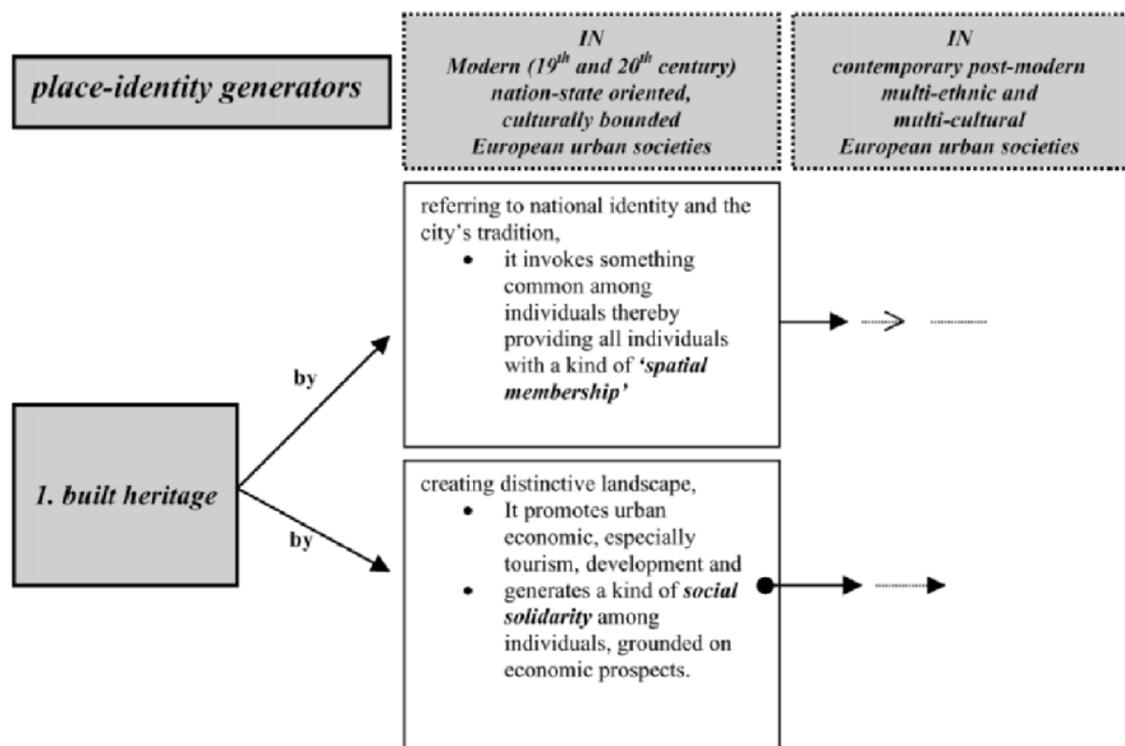


Figure 2.4: The hypothesized (altering) ability of built heritage to function as an urban identity generator (1). (Source: A. Gospodini, 2004).

But, as this model also already reveals, it is argued that in contemporary post-modern, globalized and individualized European Urban societies, built urban heritage (given that it can often be interpreted and given meaning to in one single way) is losing (or has already lost) most of its capacity to foster place identities.

Gospodini (2004) refers to a number of publications (mainly the work of Gregory Ashworth) the outcomes of which have lead to the conclusion that:

Built heritage [is] a contested entity, and manipulations in the production of built heritage in European cities have rendered the conserved urban landscape an entity that is in most cases nationally identified and even morphologically standardized, and thereby insufficient to work as a means of establishing and consolidating place identity in our post-modern, multi-ethnic and multi-cultural European urban societies. (p. 226)

Figure 2.5 summarizes the assumptions underlying the theorized belief that built cultural heritage has lost some of its urban identity generating capacity. For instance, it is argued that heritage management is to an increasing extent characterized by standardized 'best' conservation practices, and that (European) urban heritage is often single-dimensioned (enforcing certain elements of now weakening national identities) and therefore less meaningful within contemporary post-modern European societies:

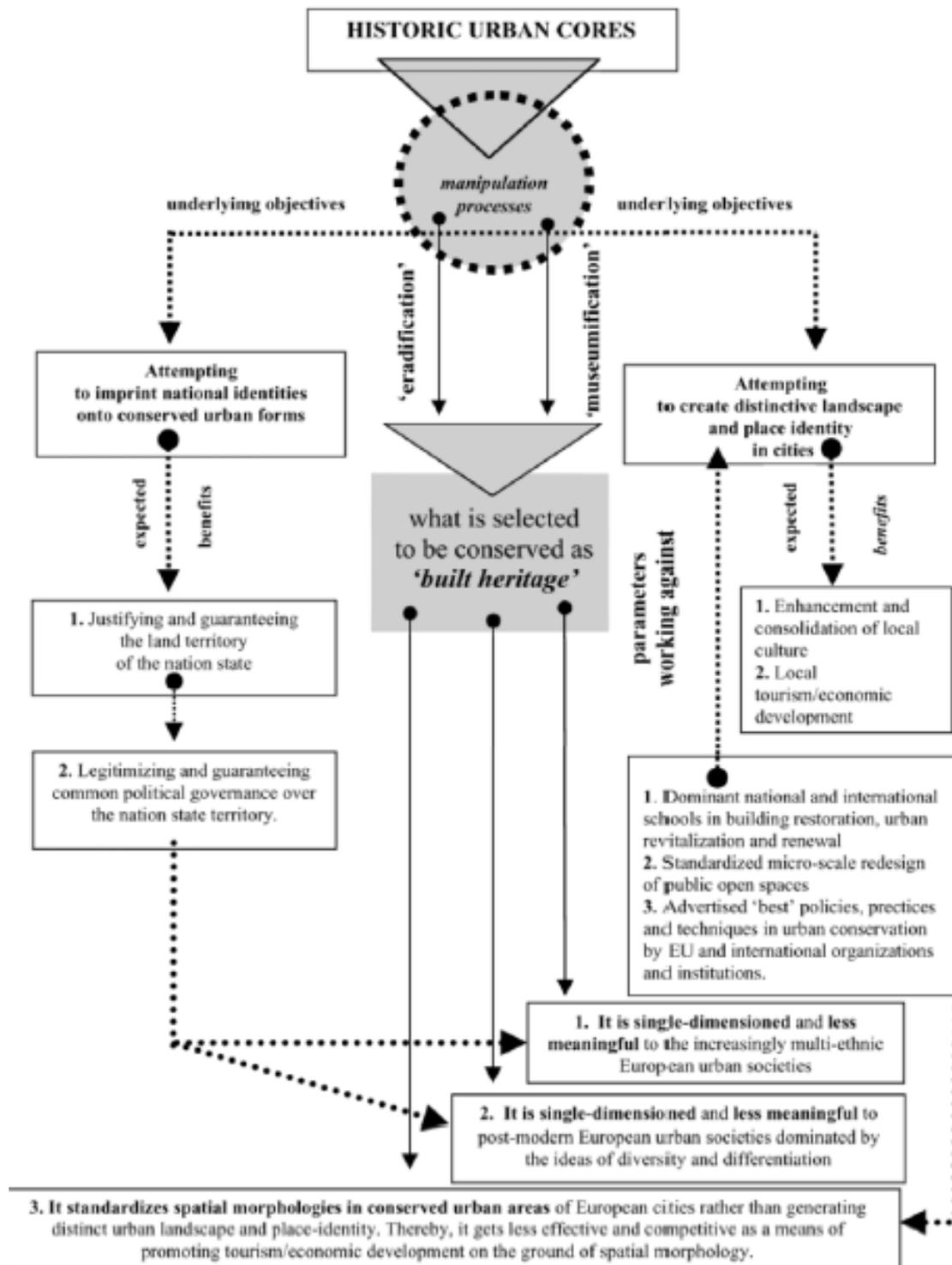


Figure 2.5: The hypothesized (altering) ability of built heritage to function as an urban identity generator (2). (Source: A. Gospodini, 2004).

With this, although rather implicitly, Gospodini makes a distinction between two (albeit very much interrelated) interpretations of the urban identity notion: 1) identity in the classic 'Lynchian' interpretation, simply that what makes a city unique and distinctive from others; 2) identity as the result of particular elements of the built environment offering a form of 'common spatial membership' (invoking a form of urban pride or social solidarity).

This second perspective on urban identities resonates rather well with the notion of 'monumental space' as coined by Henri Lefebvre (in McIver, 2008, p.262). In its original definition, monumental spaces, were those spaces as developed in especially the nineteenth century, with the aim of commemorating, re-inforcing and visualizing the norms of some kind of social order: "Monumental space is traditionally associated with the state and with public functions [...] and acts as a kind of 'social condenser', by constructing the key features of the social hierarchy." And: "Monumental space offered to each member of society an image of that membership, an image of his or her social visage" (idem).

Both of these dimensions will be addressed in the survey, although the first one will be brought to the fore somewhat more explicitly (also see the limitations of the research as addressed in Chapter six).

Then there is the second, opposing hypothesized discourse, which emphasizes the role of innovative urban design schemes:

**2) Innovative design schemes (as defined on page 25) have, in a way, replaced built heritage as an efficient place identity generator** (see Figure 2.6 for an overview of the underlying assumptions of this hypothesis).

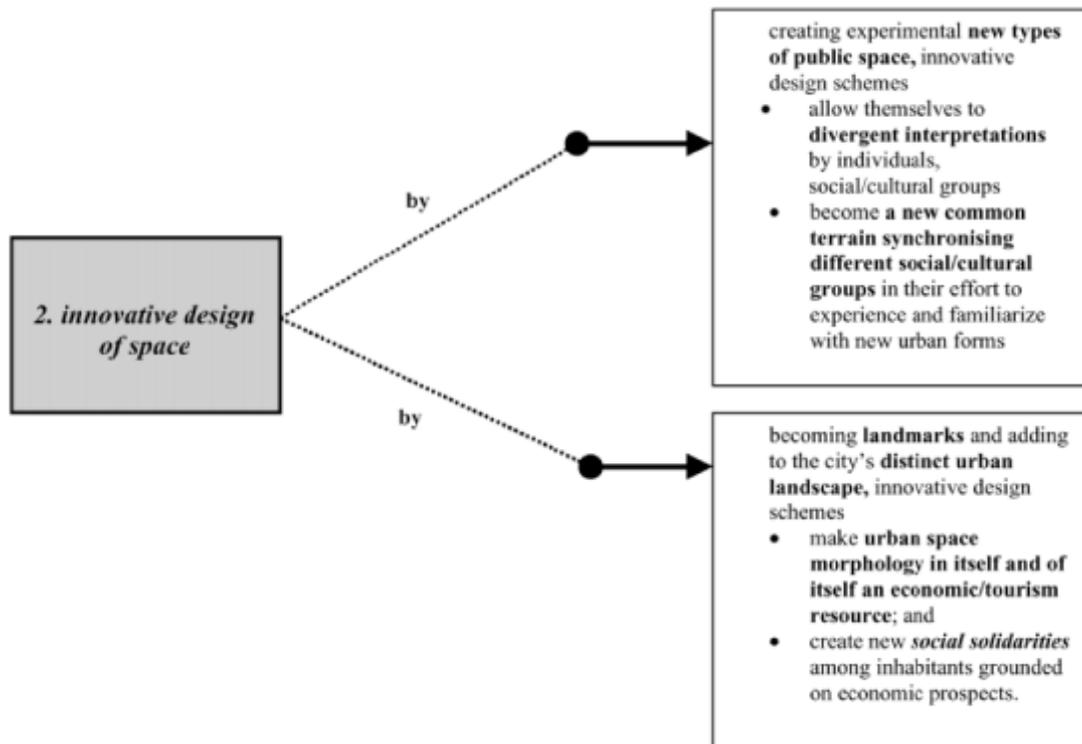


Figure 2.6: Innovative design schemes as the new urban identity generators within the contemporary European society. (Source: A. Gospodini, 2004).

On the basis of case-study researches in Bilbao and Thessaloniki, Gospodini (2004) indeed finds that innovative urban design schemes:

- (1) may permit divergent interpretations by individuals thereby fitting into the 'diversity' and individualization' of new modernity;
- (2) may synchronize different ethnic/cultural/social groups by offering themselves as a new common terrain for experiencing and familiarizing with new forms of space;
- (3) by becoming landmarks and promoting tourism/economic development, may generate new social solidarities among inhabitants grounded on 'civic pride' and economic prospects. (p. 225)

Her main overall conclusion then is:

In post-modern, multi-ethnic and multi-cultural urban societies, innovative design of space can work efficiently as a place identity generator in the same ways in which built heritage has been performing highly in modern—culturally bounded and nation- state-oriented—European societies. *There is*

*also some evidence that in contemporary European societies, built heritage tends to get weaker while innovative design of space emerges as an effective new means of place identity [emphasis added]. (p. 242)*

Interestingly, although the results show that for inhabitants (especially those with lower incomes) heritage still forms a key component in the ways in which they perceive their city's identity, Gospodini (2004) also states:

In the global–local interplay, urban sociologists often assume that whereas the economy is increasingly becoming global, cities and local communities can address the forces of globalization by defending their local culture and heritage. [However,] the results in Bilbao show the opposite. (p. 243)

Of course, it should be mentioned that Gospodini's inquiry also has its limitations and lacunae, leaving a number of issues untouched upon and some key questions unanswered. For instance, Gospodini claims (albeit somewhat implicitly) that the hypothesized developments she has captured in her model would hold for the whole of European society and thus, it can be argued, all of its urban settlements (whether small or large in size). However, she only presents two cases (Bilbao and Thessaloniki) to underpin her conclusions, with which there is still some room for improvement when it comes to the inquiry's reliability (external validity).

Also, in her inquiry, Gospodini pays no specific attention the status of more recent forms of built urban heritage (e.g. industrial), which might (also) serve as an important contemporary urban identity-generating component of a city's physical morphology. As a matter of fact, as Gospodini makes use of the method of presenting a specific list of pre-selected buildings, there is no possibility for the respondent to bring to the fore their own suggestions. From a practical point of view, this is hardly an illogical choice, but it does obviously exclude a wide range of other potentially identity-defining objects. For this reason, as will be explained in the next chapter, the respondents of this inquiry have been offered the chance to freely list what they believe are the most identity-determining buildings, conglomerations of buildings or other physical structures.

Finally, there is the issue of if and how her findings (the conceptual as well as the empirical ones) are recognized by a number of relevant urban actors and possible also included in urban policies (on heritage as well as (spatial) urban development in general). It is especially this latter lacuna (essentially revolving around the discrepancy between science and policy practice) that this thesis will seek to address. Exactly how this will be done is the central theme of the following chapter, which will follow after the conceptual conclusion of the next paragraph.

## 2.5 Provisional (conceptual) conclusion

Urban settlements can be considered complex social assemblages, with a variety of interacting (sub-urban) components together determining their identity, and, with that, the degree to which they are able to genuinely distinguish themselves from others. One of these sub-components is formed by a city's built urban morphology, a dimension which, in turn, can be distinguished further in, amongst others, built cultural heritage (which in itself also is construction, the result of a continuous selection process) and 'innovative urban design schemes'. In 'DeLandian' terms, these elements of a city's identity are obviously not only material components, but, as e.g. Gospodini has already shown in her initial inquiry, also have a significant expressive role to play.

In this light, Gospodini has made a distinction between two interconnected understandings the relation between the fostering of urban identities and a city's built components. First, there is the 'Lynchian' view, revolving around those elements of a city's morphology that make a city recognizable, unique and different compared to others. Second, related to the 'Lefebvrian' notion of monumental space, it is argued that some components of the city's 'hardware' have the ability to foster a form of 'common spatial membership', a 'perceived right to urban space' one could state (see e.g. also Purcell, 2002). This conceptualization comes quite close to Weichhart's et al. notion of 'identification with'. Both understandings, it is argued, can result in a form of urban pride or solidarity (albeit through different mechanisms. (Both of these understandings will be addressed in the survey as well, although the second conceptualization remained on a somewhat more implicit level, see Chapter four).

It is also argued that within contemporary 'globalized' societies, to an increasing extent, "cities should cultivate a strong, independent image for which people can develop strong identification and affection to attract and hold people" (Oktay, 2002, 270). In Gospodini's inquiry, a comparison has been made between the effectiveness of built cultural heritage on the one, and innovative urban design schemes on the other hand, to play a role in this contemporary urban quest. Although one should avoid painting an overly sterile black and white picture (i.e. built cultural heritage as being completely overtaken by innovative urban design schemes as the most effective contemporary 'urban identity generator'), an initial inquiry indeed yielded evidence pointing towards a kind of 'trend shift'. The extent to which this trend has also been recognized and adapted by Dutch urban policy makers will be the topic of the remainder of this thesis, with the next chapter devoted to a description of its methodological framework.

# 3. Methodology

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Verschuren en Doorewaard (2007) make a distinction between five research strategies (the whole of interrelated decisions on the way the research is going to be conducted), in the form of the survey, the case study, desk research, the experiment and the grounded theory approach. Up to this point, the research has revolved around what might be considered a form of desk research (or literature review). However, as mentioned in the introduction, the collection of the actual empirical data will take place using the strategy that is the survey.

## 3.1 The survey and its research subjects

The survey is an empirical research strategy focussed more on width and generalizability than depth and detail. The strategy is based on using a large number of research objects and a vast amount of data (using a random sample); more a quantitative approach than a qualitative one. The goal of a survey would be to get a good image of a broad phenomenon, with (causal) relations between the variables being a central issue. This is also the approach Gospodini has used to analyze the Bilbao case. As Korzilius (2008, p. 9) summarizes, the survey essentially revolves round the following characteristics:

- The research question focuses on the degree to which a phenomenon appears
- Relatively many people are interviewed
- The number of research characteristics/variables is relatively high
- The characteristics are: opinions, motives, ideas, attitudes, personal background characteristics
- Quantitative, statistical analysis of the data
- Making use of a sample
- Systematic data
- Data collection through an oral or written interview

Given the goal of obtaining a broad picture of the position of built cultural heritage as an urban identity-generator, it seems justified to make use of the strategy that is the survey, as it has generalizability (or external validity) as its most important advantage. However, although the data will be gathered by means of a survey, the analysis will, given the nature of the data as well as the research questions, only partly revolve around its traditional accompanying method, i.e. statistical procedures (see below).

In the previous chapter, it was argued that heritage is a social construction, the result of a selection of cultural elements from the past, and in which different social agents, with different objectives, have a role to play. As shown earlier (Figure

2.1), these actors are e.g. owners and users, but also, and especially important in this regard, heritage policy makers. These policy makers, having varying degrees of influence, can be found at the supranational level (UNESCO), the national level (e.g. at the Dutch Heritage Agency), the provincial level, but, first and foremost, at the level of the municipality. It is this latter group, those to a large degree responsible for how heritage is practically managed, that will form the research population of this inquiry. However, not only policy makers and professionals working in the field of heritage management have been invited to participate in the survey, but the net was casted somewhat wider: also those municipal professionals working in the municipal policy fields of city marketing and tourism (those responsible for 'framing' and 'selling' urban identities) and urban development (spatial urban planning) have been approached. Eventually, also quite a few municipal officials working in (other) 'spatial policy fields' took an interest in the research, so that for instance also the insights of a number of urban architectural historians and urban archeologists have been included in the research.

### **3.2 The questionnaire**

Appendix C contains the questionnaire as it was published on a website, the link of which was provided to the research subjects via email. This method was selected given that it is, as Sheehan and McMillan (1999) summarize, low in costs, yields high response rates and has quick response times. As will be described below, unfortunately not all of these advantages came to the fore overly clearly in this particular inquiry.

Before the respondents would fill out the actual survey, an introduction text was provided to them, again summarizing the background of the research. As the survey was not personalized and the respondents have rather different professional backgrounds, it was also stated that not all questions might be easily answered by or relevant for all of the respondents, but they were nevertheless encouraged to answer as many questions as they reasonably could.

The questionnaire was made up out of about 40 questions and likert-items in total. A small number of questions addressed the background characteristics of the respondent (i.e. the municipality for and the policy field in which the respondent in question works). No further personal information was needed to be obtained. The remainder of the questions revolved around attitudes and opinions concerning the identity of the core city of their municipality and, of course, the specific role played by built cultural heritage (in the form of municipal and national monuments) and innovative urban design schemes.

The first segment of questions was meant to obtain insight into how relevant urban policy actors conceptualize (or, in Dormans' et al. terms, construct) the identity of their city. They were asked to describe this identity in at most 100 words, and to select one or multiple of eighteen pre-identified characterizations which, in

their eyes, applies to the identity of their city. With this, a general idea of the degree of complexity of Dutch urban identities could be obtained, without yet focusing specifically on its physical component. Following this, the respondents were shown a number of urban features, whereby they were asked to determine to what degree they considered them to be of importance for the identity of their city. The first of these did not revolve around the built urban morphology (but e.g. the city's location and a specific urban mentality amongst its inhabitants), but the majority of the questions did address this component (e.g. bridges, religious buildings, squares and of course, monuments, as a more overall category). Next, a number of questions revolving around city marketing was asked (i.e. the selling of urban identities), and the importance of the built urban morphology in this regard ('hard marketing'). Following this, in line with the goal of the research, they were 'confronted' with Gospodini's conceptual hypotheses. Obviously, it was not possible to provide a detailed overview of her whole theoretical conjecture, especially given that it has been shown that there exists a negative correlation between the length of the survey and the yielded response rate (see e.g. Herbelien and Baumgartner (1978) and Steele, Schwendig and Kilpatrick (1992)). According to Sheehan and McMillan (1999, p. 7) "[t]his effect is [also] highly relevant to e-mail surveys, where survey length may be measured not only in the number of printed pages but also in terms of screen length." Therefore, a rather brief summary was used to introduce Gospodini's key hypotheses underpinning the potentially changing position of built cultural heritage vis-à-vis that of innovative urban design schemes as an urban identity-generator.

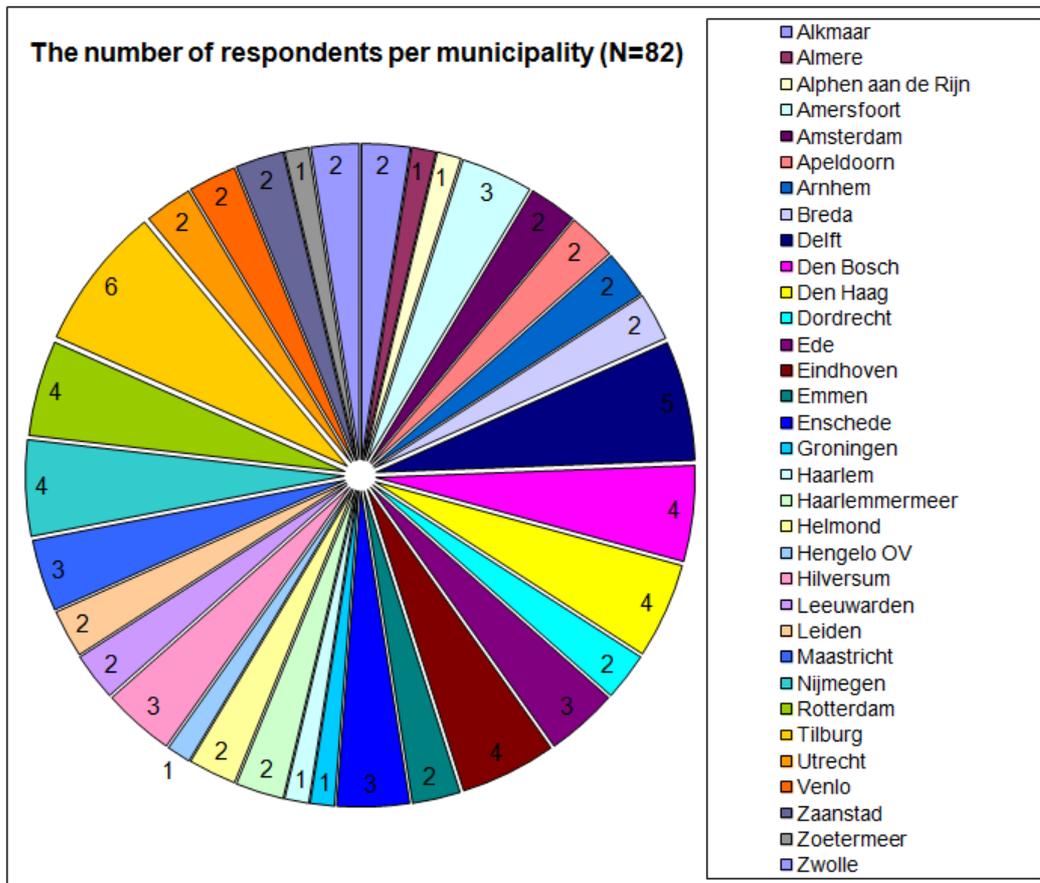
The remainder of the questions then addressed the key issue of the degree to which built cultural heritage, according to the respondent, is getting less (or perhaps more) important as an urban identity generator, in their own specific city as well as in a more general sense, and why they feel this is the case. This issue was addressed both directly and indirectly (by letting the respondent list a maximum of five concrete elements or buildings which, for them, serve as the most important urban identity-generator within their city). Also, it was asked what, in a hypothetical situation, the respondent would select as the most opportune way of fostering an urban identity in the future: the improvement of built cultural heritage management or the construction of an architectonically innovative urban design scheme, a modern urban flagship project. Finally, the respondents were given the opportunity to add some additional remarks on the (topic of) the survey, and they were thanked for their cooperation.

### **3.3 Response**

In total, 35 municipalities were contacted, selected on the basis of the size of their core city (given that the research focuses on urban, not municipal identities). This, for instance, ruled out the municipality of Sittard-Geleen, which as a whole does belong to the largest 35 municipalities of The Netherlands, but has no individual

urban core large enough to be included in the list. It must immediately be noted that not all of the included municipalities contain a (well-preserved) historic urban core, while the conceptual framework is first and foremost based on exactly this component of a city's built morphology. On the other hand, all of the included municipalities do possess at least some municipal and national monuments. With this, it seems valuable to also look at the 'heritage experience' in Dutch cities that are perhaps not explicitly known for their abundance of built heritage.

Initially, the survey was organized during the second half of July and August. An email (see the next sub-paragraph as well as Appendix D) was sent to either a general municipal contact address (in some cases a contact form had to be used), and/or, if an address was publicly available, to a specific municipal department or individual employee (no pre-notification was used). The email contained a brief explanation of the research and its background (e.g. the goals, target population and relevance), and obviously, depending on the recipient, the request to fill-out the survey and/or forward the email to a number of potentially relevant colleagues, as a kind of snowball sampling, a technique focusing on reaching 'concealed' research subjects via other ones (Bryman, 2004; Flick, 2009) (given that it was hoped that multiple responses would be obtained from each municipality). Also, it was announced that those filling out the survey would have the chance to win a copy of the Atlas of the History of The Netherlands, an element added with the eye on maximizing the response rate. During the initial period in which the survey was available online, at least one response was obtained from 30 of the 35 municipalities, although in a majority of cases multiple respondents filled out the survey. In total, the initial round (including a reminder mail) yielded 56 responses. During the second half of September and October, an attempt was made to further increase this number, finally resulting in a 'pool of experts' of in total of 82 respondents divided over 33 municipalities. Graph 3.1 provides an overview of the included municipalities, as well as the number of respondents per municipality.



**Graph 3.1: The number of respondents per municipality.**

It will be immediately acknowledged that a number of critical remarks is to be brought to the fore. First, given the varying number of responses per municipality, there exist profound differences in the degree to which a reliable picture is obtained for each individual municipality. For instance, whereas six Tilburg 'specialists' were willing to fill out the survey, only one response was obtained from e.g. Alphen aan den Rijn and Almere. Besides quantitative differences, also the qualitative variance should be mentioned. Given that a variety of policy fields was targeted, some are represented by a disproportionately large share of respondents compared to other (underrepresented) fields. Therefore, during the second round of sending emails, an attempt was made to try to correct both of these discrepancies. This, for instance, meant that the municipality of Tilburg was not contacted anymore, as opposed to the most underrepresented municipalities and/or policy fields. Although this did lead to a slightly more evenly distributed response (with fewer municipalities being represented by only one respondent), it won't be denied that it was hoped that the number of respondents would have been somewhat higher. Causes of the non-response might have the what could be considered the somewhat inconvenient period in which the survey was organized (the vast majority of the initial requests was sent during the summer holidays), the potentially response-detering length of

the survey (containing around 40 questions, some of which were also of an open nature), as well as the fact that some potential respondents felt that the topic did not really concern them (for instance, one Amsterdam architectural historian denied filling out the survey because of the fact that it contained the term 'policy', a notion with which he felt uncomfortable enough not to be interested). Also, although it was explicitly mentioned that multiple respondents from a single municipality were invited to fill out the survey, some might have not done so when a colleague already did. In addition, and this especially relates to the qualitative differences, not all of the surveyed municipalities share the same organizational structure. For instance, some of the surveyed municipalities don't have an 'in-house' city marketing department. Finally, although a rather wide timeframe was provided, a number of potential respondents declared 'not having enough time' to fill-out the survey (which, perhaps not overly surprising, was especially the case for aldermen). These issues could be considered a methodological backdrop, to a certain degree harming Korzilius's criteria of the 'high number of respondents' and the use 'of systematic data'. With this, it obviously will not be possible to come to statistically significant conclusions for each individual municipality. However, eventually data has been gathered from quite a wide variety of municipalities as well as a broad range of policy fields. Furthermore the (although sometimes few) responses per municipality could serve as the starting-point for further in-depth inquiries focusing on specific these cities, whilst the in total over 80 responses provided by what could be considered a sample of the population of relevant policy actors, provide a rather solid and broad general picture of what could be considered the national *communis opinio* on the physical urban environment and the importance of different elements thereof for maintaining and further strengthening urban identities within the contemporary and future Dutch (policy) context, in line with the goal of this research.

In the next chapter, the data as gathered my means of the survey is presented and analyzed. Although a vast segment of the analysis will consist of the application of descriptive statistics, also a number of inferential techniques will be used in order to highlight relationships between a number of key variables. Where relevant, individual respondents will be treated as such within the analysis, in other cases a mean per municipality is calculated on the basis of the total number of respondents representing the municipality in question. In addition, some of the data gathered by means of an open question will be treated as qualitative data, whereby either coding software will be used to present them, or a more summarizing, 'narrative' analysis of the data will be presented.

Finally, I will return to the strategy of the literature review, and pay attention to a number of relevant contemporary (Dutch) heritage trends and developments as (implicitly) brought to the fore by the respondents and other (Dutch) inquiries, which might also contribute to developing a better understanding of the contemporary position of built cultural heritage as an urban identity generator.

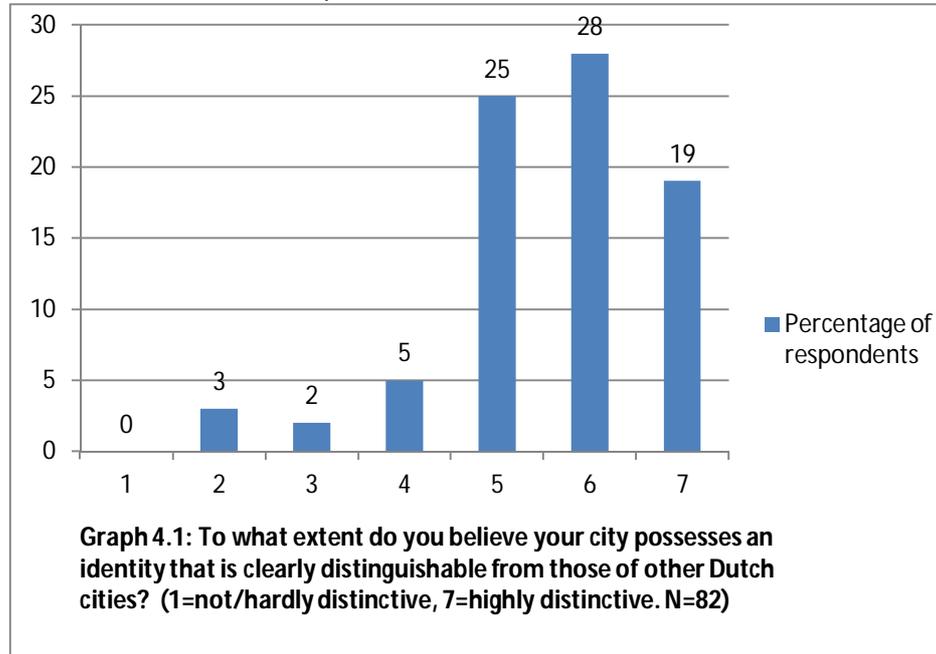
## 4. Research findings

This chapter contains an overview and the analysis of the data as collected through the survey. The first part revolves around Dutch urban identities in a more general sense, in line with the fifth of the sub questions as presented on page six. In the second part of the chapter, the focus shifts to address the specific role played by built cultural heritage as urban identity generators, especially compared to innovative urban design schemes.

### 4.1 Dutch urban identities and the role of the physical environment

#### 4.1.1 Dutch identities: degree of distinctiveness and key dimensions

The surveyed respondents generally feel that their city possesses a clear identity with which they are able to distinguish themselves from other Dutch urban settlements. As Graph 4.1 shows, none of the respondents felt that their city does not have a unique identity at all, while only five respondents (6.1%) (representatives from the municipalities Tilburg, Haarlemmermeer, Alphen aan den Rijn, Ede and Arnhem) responded to this question with a score of either two or three. Obviously, the question then becomes what it is that makes these Dutch municipalities to be considered to be so unique.



Above, it was mentioned that urban identities are a complex and multireferential phenomenon. Looking at the following data as collected through the survey, this is also very much the case for the Dutch context.

In the survey, the respondents were asked to give a description of at most 100 words to describe the identity of their city. This open question was included in the survey for two reasons. First, the question helps us to understand how, in a general sense, the urban identity notion is understood and constructed by urban policy makers. Are urban identities mainly conceptualized in terms of the past or the present? And what types of 'urban character traits' are mentioned frequently (without looking at city-specific elements), and what types are not mentioned? Second, the question obviously also enables the respondent to paint a relatively detailed picture of the identifying elements of their specific city, serving as a starting-point for the more specific questions in the remainder of the questionnaire, focusing explicitly on the specific role of the built urban environment.

In order to develop a kind of grounded overview of (the construction of) Dutch urban identities, Atlas.ti coding software was used, the result of which is the following. In total, 81 identity descriptions were given, covering 33 municipalities. In the first stage of the process, 'in-vivo coding' was used, creating a rather extensive list of codes of a relatively low level of abstraction. During the next step, this high number of codes was reduced to a list of 41 more abstract codes, presented in Table 4.1. These can be considered the main categories in terms of which Dutch urban identities have been 'constructed' or conceptualized by the respondents, and might provide a more detailed conceptual addition to the more general analytical framework provided by Dormans et al. (2003) as presented in Paragraph 2.1.1 (Table 2.1).

This list of codes exemplifies the multidimensional character of the notion that is 'urban identity'. For instance, whereas some respondents gave a relatively objective account of a number of historical events, others provided a highly positive (or in one case, negative) description of what it is that makes their city so special. Also, while some answers address a large number of topics, others revolve around one or two key issues (e.g. only the city's physical characteristics) which are considered to be unique for the city in question. Two random examples are the following, the first being one provided by a respondent from Amersfoort:

Amersfoort is a middle-sized municipality with 140.000 inhabitants, situated at the edge of the Randstad. The city is located at the crossroads between three different types of landscapes as well as at connecting points between high roads and railroads. Because of its spatial location, the availability of jobs, the pleasant and safe living climate, Amersfoort is home of relatively many well-educated inhabitants and young families. Also, the city houses a lot of knowledge institutes and main offices of companies. Amersfoort is known for its historic urban core and the architecture of a number of its young districts, such as Kattenbroek.

In this description, relatively many sub-topics are at least touched upon, resulting in the assignment of thirteen codes: 'accessibility', 'current economic-functional characteristics', 'factual characteristics' (e.g. number of inhabitants), 'famous/well known (for certain features)', 'monuments/heritage/historic urban core', 'green (parks, nature, landscape relief etc.)/'blue' (lakes, sea, canals) properties/surroundings', 'spatial location' (central or peripheral, near a border), 'population properties' (age, religion, nationality, level of education), 'attractiveness for businesses', 'positive description', 'specific buildings/urban districts', 'the (assumed) quality of life/happiness of inhabitants' and 'modern/innovative architecture'.

A-typical ('not Dutch')	International
Accessibility	Modern/innovative architecture
Age of the city itself	Monuments/built heritage/historic urban core
Amenities (e.g. sports, healthcare, education)	Multiple identities/contrasts
Attractiveness for businesses	Negative description (e.g. boring, identity crisis)
Attractiveness for tourists/visitors	Political orientation
Citymarketing slogan	Population properties (age, religion, nationality, level of education)
Connections (between people and different municipal cores)	Positive description (e.g. beautiful, unique/different, pleasant, safe, remarkable, surprising, quality)
Culture (e.g. cultural events, cinema, museums, theatre etc.)	Royal
Current economic-functional characteristics (e.g. shopping, tourism, education, transport, trade, fashion, knowledge, business & services, technology, government and law)	Scale and 'spatiality' (e.g. 'urban', a 'village-like' or rural feel)
Difference with another (nearby) city	Spatial location (central or peripheral, near a border etc.)
Dutch ('Hollands')	Specific buildings/urban districts
Factual characteristics (size, the (development of the) number of inhabitants, provincial capital etc.)	Sustainability
Famous/well known (for certain features)	The (assumed) quality of life and/or happiness of the inhabitants
Former economic-functional characteristics (e.g. industry, trade, military)	The (economic) position of the city within a wider region
Future development of the city (in a spatial or non-spatial sense)	The city's economic development/current position
Green (parks, nature, landscape relief etc.) and 'blue' (lakes, sea, canals) properties/surroundings	The historical development of the city's spatial and/or architectural form(s)
Historical events and/or figures	Urban mentality/atmosphere (e.g. hospitable, ambitious, hard-working, lively, cozy, 'Burgundian')
Innovation/creativity/renewal/dynamics/modern	Urban pride amongst inhabitants
Internal divisions	Urban traditions (e.g. dialect)/heritage other than built heritage

**Table 4.1: The list of codes distilled from the open identity descriptions.**

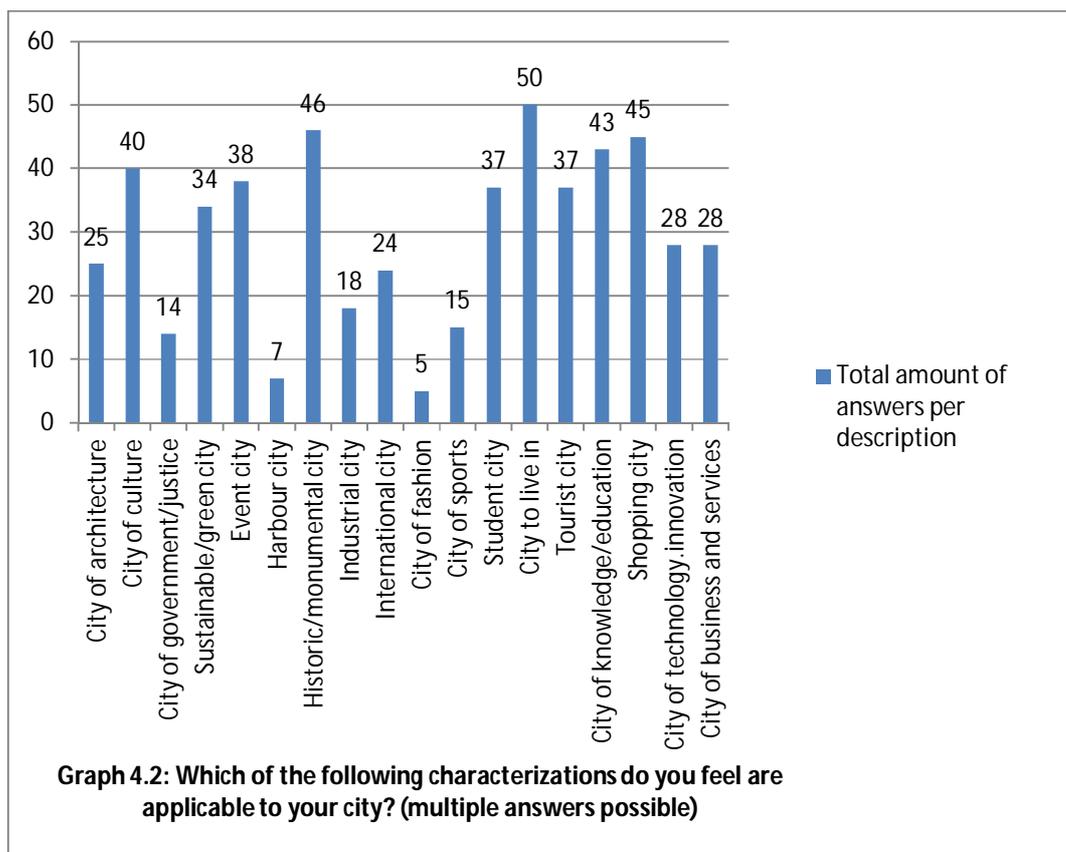
A somewhat different approach was taken up by the following respondent, describing his view on the identity of Breda:

[Breda is a] large municipality with a small historic urban core, which was formed in the period of the Nassaus. In the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century, Breda finds itself in a new period of wealth. It is in this period that Breda gets its characteristic cornices ('Iijstgevels'). In general, adjustments done in the 20<sup>th</sup> century complement the historic city well.

The codes 'age of the city itself', 'factual characteristics', 'historical events and/or figures', 'monuments/heritage/historic urban core' and 'the historical development of the city's spatial and/or architectural form(s)' were attached to this description.

Of the 81 open descriptions, 47, in some way or another, pointed towards the importance of the city's current economic-functional characteristics, with which it was the most frequently applied code (this obviously is a rather broad category; therefore in the next section, revolving around a number of closed questions, a somewhat more specific analysis of this particular topic will be provided). 'Positive description' (44), 'monuments/heritage /historic urban core' (38), 'green (parks, nature, landscape relief etc.) and 'blue' (lakes, sea, canals) properties/surroundings' (28) and 'urban mentality/atmosphere' (e.g. hospitable, ambitious, hard-working, lively, cozy, 'Burgundian') (26) are also topics that have come to the fore in the descriptions relatively frequently. Fewer open descriptions mentioned 'specific buildings and/or urban districts' (16) and 'modern/innovative architecture' (9).

During the next segment of the questionnaire, the abovementioned broad category of 'economic-functional characteristics' was given some more attention. When asked to select one or multiple eighteen pre-selected (mostly economic-functional) characterizations of which the respondents felt that they applied best to the current identity of their city, the 82 respondents selected 534 descriptions in total. This means that on average just over 6.5 descriptions were considered applicable to the city in question by each individual respondent. Graph 4.2 provides an overview of how often each characteristic was selected. Of course, given that some municipalities are represented by a higher number of respondents, the data is distorted, making it impossible to draw any significant conclusions on the basis of merely this graph. Nevertheless, in the light of this research it is at least already noteworthy that only the rather general description 'city to live in' ('woonstad') is mentioned more often (50 times) than 'historic monumental city' (46), which comes before e.g. 'shopping city' (45) and 'cultural city' (40), whilst 'city of architecture' is mentioned 25 times. Of the in total 33 municipalities, 22 have been labeled 'historic monumental city' at least once. Although additional and city-specific analysis into their exact historical urban development would of course be necessary, these might form examples of Dutch 'heritage centres' (Graham et al., 2000, also see Paragraph 2.2.2 and Chapter six).



Next, the respondents were provided with a rather extensive list of 24 descriptions of (mostly but not exclusively built) urban elements and asked to determine to what extent the identity of their city is shaped by each of these attributes. First, for each of the mentioned elements the average score for each individual municipality was calculated (it should be noted that in a limited amount of cases a question was left blank by a respondent; this was obviously taken into account when determining the average score for each municipality). On the basis of the scores for each municipality, a combined average was calculated, which could be considered a kind of national score. Table 4.2 provides a summary of this segment of the questionnaire.

I won't discuss Table 4.2 in full detail, but will give a very brief overview of some of the more interesting findings. First, it can be observed that a number of urban features can be considered to be somewhat 'polarizing', whereas others are valued more or less equally across the board. For instance, of all the included attributes, 'a local dialect' has received the lowest 'national' average score. However, when looking at the individual municipalities of Leiden, Leeuwarden and Venlo (scoring 5,5 or higher for this particular attribute), it seems that in specific cases, local language variants are (still) considered to be highly identity-defining, also at the urban level. A similar observation can be made for categories such as 'remarkable bridges' and 'mills'. On the other hand, categories such as 'the city's natural characteristics/location' (scoring 5.64, the highest average score) and 'urban

districts with remarkable patterns/architectonic properties' have received a somewhat more uniform response, playing some kind of role in most of the surveyed municipalities (it should be noted that this obviously not precludes the possibility of these features not providing cities with a unique identity, given that they are still rather encompassing categories; further comparative inquiries could focus on analyzing the value of their subcategories in more detail). It can also be noted that in most cases identities are considered to be something intrinsic. That is, identities are not often conceptualized by means of what might be called 'othering' practices. However, in some cases (e.g. Breda, Hengelo, Venlo and Zaanstad) the rivalry or contrast with another city is mentioned as being an important part of these city's identities.

Municipality	A l k m a a r	A l m e r e *	A l p h e n *	A m e r s f o o r t	A m s t e r d a m	A p e l d o o r n	A r n h e m	B r e d a	D e l f t	D e n B o s c h	D e n H a a g	D o r d r e c h t	E d e	E i n d h o v e n	E m m e n	E n s c h e d e	G r o n i n g e n *	H a a r l e m *	H a a r l m e e r	H e l m o n d	H e n g e l l o *	H i l v e r s u m	L e u w a r d e n	L e i d e n	M a a s t r i c h t	N i j m e r g e n	R o t t e r d a m	T i l b u r g	U t r e c h t	V e n l o	Z a a n s t a d	Z o e t e r m e e r *	Z w o l e	A v e r a g e		
A characteristic urban mentality	6,5	1,00	3,00	2,33	5,50	5,50	3,50	5,00	4,60	5,50	4,50	4,00	3,67	4,50	1,50	3,33	5,00	6,00	4,00	4,00	6,00	4,33	5,00	5,00	5,67	3,75	5,75	3,83	3,50	4,00	4,00	2,00	4,00	4,16		
The composition of the city's population	3,00	5,00	5,00	4,33	5,50	5,00	2,50	4,50	5,60	2,75	5,00	4,50	4,67	4,25	5,50	3,33	7,00	3,00	6,50	4,00	6,00	4,33	4,00	5,50	4,33	4,75	6,25	5,17	4,50	5,00	5,50	4,00	4,50	4,69		
A local dialect	1,00	1,00	1,00	1,67	4,00	2,00	1,50	3,50	1,20	2,25	2,75	3,00	1,33	3,25	3,50	3,33	2,00	2,00	3,50	5,00	4,00	1,00	6,00	5,50	4,33	2,25	2,50	3,50	1,50	7,00	3,00	1,00	2,00	2,80		
Other urban-specific forms of immaterial heritage	6,50	1,00	3,00	2,67	4,50	4,50	4,50	4,50	4,80	4,50	4,00	4,00	5,33	3,75	3,50	2,67	5,00	6,00	3,50	4,00	3,00	4,67	6,00	6,50	6,00	3,50	3,50	4,33	3,50	6,00	5,00	2,00	4,50	4,26		
The rivalry with another city	1,50	1,00	3,00	1,67	5,50	3,50	4,50	5,00	3,40	3,25	4,00	4,00	3,67	3,50	2,00	2,33	2,00	1,00	3,00	4,50	5,00	3,67	4,00	1,00	3,67	4,25	4,75	4,00	4,50	6,50	6,00	1,00	3,50	3,46		
The city's spatial location (as a central or peripheral city)	4,50	4,00	5,00	6,33	5,00	6,00	4,50	4,50	5,20	5,00	4,00	5,00	6,67	5,25	5,00	4,00	6,00	7,00	6,50	4,00	6,00	5,33	6,00	6,50	6,00	3,75	5,75	3,67	7,00	7,00	6,50	2,00	7,00	5,33		
The city's natural characteristics (e.g. located at a river)	6,50	1,00	6,00	5,67	6,50	6,50	6,50	5,50	3,00	4,75	6,50	6,50	6,67	3,50	6,50	4,67	6,00	7,00	6,50	5,00	6,00	6,00	6,00	7,00	6,00	6,50	6,25	5,17	5,50	7,00	6,00	2,00	6,00	5,64		
The presence of a historic urban core	7,00	1,00	1,00	6,67	6,50	3,00	5,00	6,00	7,00	6,75	6,50	6,50	3,00	2,50	1,00	2,33	7,00	7,00	2,50	4,50	2,00	4,50	5,50	7,00	7,00	6,25	2,75	3,67	7,00	6,50	5,00	4,00	7,00	4,88		
(Other) protected 'urban sights'	7,00	1,00	1,00	5,33	5,50	5,00	4,50	5,00	5,00	5,75	6,50	6,00	4,67	5,25	2,50	2,33	6,00	7,00	5,00	5,00	6,00	5,50	5,50	6,00	6,00	5,00	4,25	4,67	5,50	5,50	4,50	4,00	5,50	4,95		
Religious buildings	7,00	1,00	1,00	4,67	6,50	5,00	3,50	5,50	6,80	6,25	3,50	6,00	5,67	3,75	1,50	2,00	6,00	7,00	3,50	4,50	2,00	4,33	4,50	6,50	6,67	5,50	3,50	4,83	7,00	6,50	4,00	3,00	5,50	4,68		
Remarkable bridges	5,50	1,00	1,00	2,00	6,00	2,50	6,00	3,00	5,00	2,00	1,75	5,00	2,67	2,50	1,50	1,33	2,00	6,00	6,00	5,00	1,00	1,00	2,00	6,00	6,33	6,25	6,00	2,83	4,50	5,00	3,50	4,00	5,00	3,67		
Mills	7,00	1,00	6,00	1,33	4,00	5,50	1,50	4,00	4,00	1,33	2,00	3,50	6,00	2,25	2,00	2,00	1,00	7,00	5,00	3,50	1,00	1,00	1,00	6,50	3,67	1,75	1,00	1,50	2,50	3,50	6,50	3,00	5,00	3,27		
* Based on one respondent																																				

Table 4.2: The identity-defining value ascribed to various urban features.

Municipality	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	B	D	D	D	D	E	E	E	E	G	H	H	H	H	L	L	M	N	R	T	U	V	Z	Z	Z	A		
	l	l	l	m	m	p	r	r	e	e	e	e	e	e	e	r	a	a	e	e	e	e	e	a	i	o	i	v	a	o	o	o	v		
Urban feature	k	m	p	s	s	e	r	e	d	e	n	d	e	i	n	n	r	a	a	e	l	i	l	a	j	t	t	r	e	n	a	o	o	l	
	m	a	h	f	t	d	o	d	e	s	c	h	h	o	v	e	e	n	m	e	e	r	o	r	i	e	r	b	u	r	c	s	t	r	
	a	r	e	n	d	o	r	n	a	m	s	t	e	r	d	a	m	g	e	e	r	o	v	u	m	d	e	n	g	e	r	d	a	m	e
	r	e	n	f	o	o	r	n	a	m	s	t	e	r	d	a	m	g	e	e	r	o	v	u	m	d	e	n	g	e	r	d	a	m	e
Parks and public gardens	4,00	1,00	1,00	5,67	6,50	6,50	6,50	5,50	4,00	3,75	4,75	5,00	4,67	5,00	5,00	5,67	6,00	7,00	5,50	4,00	5,00	5,00	5,50	7,00	5,00	5,75	5,25	5,17	5,00	5,50	5,00	5,00	5,50	5,05	
Canals and (inner)harbors	5,50	1,00	1,00	5,33	6,50	5,00	2,00	5,00	7,00	5,50	4,50	6,50	2,67	2,50	4,00	3,33	6,00	6,00	3,00	5,00	6,00	1,00	5,50	7,00	4,67	2,00	6,50	3,17	7,00	4,50	5,00	3,00	7,00	4,54	
Squares	5,00	0,00	1,00	5,33	5,50	4,00	3,50	4,50	6,60	4,50	6,50	4,50	3,33	4,25	4,00	5,00	7,00	2,00	3,50	4,50	6,00	1,00	4,00	4,50	6,67	5,00	5,00	5,00	5,00	6,00	5,50	2,00	5,50	4,41	
Remarkable (historic or recent) architecture of public buildings (such as stations, libraries)	3,50	2,00	5,00	4,67	6,50	5,00	4,00	5,50	6,20	5,33	6,25	5,50	5,00	5,50	2,00	4,33	7,00	7,00	4,00	5,50	6,00	6,67	5,00	7,00	6,67	6,00	6,00	6,00	5,50	6,50	6,50	3,00	6,00	5,35	
Remarkable (historic or recent) architecture of commercial buildings	4,00	1,00	3,00	4,33	6,50	5,00	2,00	5,50	4,80	5,33	5,25	5,00	5,00	5,75	3,50	3,67	5,00	1,00	5,00	4,00	4,00	6,33	5,50	6,00	6,67	4,75	6,25	4,60	5,00	6,00	5,50	3,00	5,00	4,64	
Urban districts with remarkable patterns/architectonic properties	4,00	4,00	5,00	6,00	6,50	5,50	3,50	5,50	6,00	5,00	5,75	5,00	5,33	5,50	6,50	5,00	6,00	3,00	5,00	6,00	5,00	5,67	4,00	6,00	6,67	5,75	5,75	4,80	6,00	5,00	3,00	7,00	5,50	5,28	
Art objects in public spaces (including memorial monuments)	4,00	4,00	3,00	4,67	5,50	5,50	4,00	4,50	4,40	2,00	5,25	4,50	4,00	4,50	3,00	4,00	5,00	3,00	5,50	5,00	6,00	2,00	3,50	5,50	5,33	4,75	5,75	5,17	4,00	6,00	3,50	5,00	4,00	4,42	
Other landmarks (such as remarkable museums, towers)	4,29	3,00	5,00	4,33	6,50	5,50	6,50	5,00	4,20	2,50	5,00	5,50	5,00	5,75	2,00	4,33	5,00	3,00	4,00	4,00	3,00	4,67	6,00	6,50	6,00	5,50	6,25	5,00	5,50	6,00	5,50	3,00	4,50	4,78	
Archeological sites	5,00	4,00	7,00	4,33	4,50	5,50	2,50	2,50	4,60	4,50	2,75	3,50	3,00	4,00	5,00	4,00	4,00	1,00	2,00	3,50	2,00	2,33	4,00	6,50	6,33	6,75	3,75	3,50	5,00	5,50	4,50	2,00	5,50	4,09	
A characteristic 'skyline'	5,00	5,00	3,00	3,67	6,00	4,50	3,50	4,50	4,60	4,75	6,00	6,00	3,00	4,75	2,50	2,33	4,00	5,00	5,50	3,50	2,00	1,67	5,00	3,50	6,33	6,25	7,00	4,67	5,00	5,50	2,50	3,00	5,00	4,38	
Historical objects (in the form of national and municipal monuments of at least 50 years as well as protected 'urban sights')	7,00	1,00	1,00	6,33	6,50	5,00	4,00	6,00	7,00	6,50	6,50	7,00	5,00	3,50	1,00	3,00	7,00	7,00	5,50	5,50	3,00	6,33	7,00	7,00	7,00	6,50	4,50	4,00	7,00	6,50	6,00	3,00	6,50	5,32	
Remarkable/innovative forms of recent architecture (small-scaled or in the form of larger urban 'flagship projects')	4,50	4,00	5,00	5,33	6,50	5,50	3,00	5,50	5,00	5,75	5,50	4,50	3,33	4,75	5,00	5,33	7,00	2,00	5,50	5,50	5,00	4,67	6,00	4,50	6,33	5,75	6,75	4,67	6,00	6,50	6,50	4,00	4,50	5,14	

Table 4.2 (continued).

### 4.1.2 Selling urban identities through a city's physical characteristics

Of the 41 codes listed in table 4.1, six have a direct and explicit link to a city's physical characteristics ('green and 'blue' properties/surroundings', 'modern/innovative architecture', 'monuments/heritage/historic urban core', 'scale and 'spatiality', 'specific buildings/urban districts' and 'the historical development of the city's spatial and/or architectural form(s)'). Obviously, other codes (might) also have a physical dimension to them, for instance 'positive description', 'future development of the city (spatial or non-spatial)' and 'attractiveness for tourists/visitors' could all also be (partly) based on the city's physical characteristics. If we however, for analytical purposes, only take these explicit references to a city's physical characteristics into account, it can be noted that of the 81 descriptions, 66 (81,5%) have been given at least one of these six codes referring to a city's 'hardware'. Of the 33 included municipalities, only respondents from Haarlem, Almere and Hengelo have not made an explicit reference to these city's physical characteristics, which means that in 30 cases (90.1%) such as reference was made at least once, data clearly supporting Baris's et al. view on the contemporary relevance of the built environment for urban identities.

When looking at the role played by the physical characteristics within Dutch city marketing practices, it can be noted that they also largely reflect the above observations on the importance of this dimension of a city's identity. As Table 4.4 shows, when it comes to the Dutch city's attempts to attract new inhabitants as well as tourists and visitors, the physical dimensions of the urban identities generally seem to play a key role. As the final column of Table 4.4 reveals, this 'hard branding' of the city also seems to be considered a justified choice by the respondents included in the inquiry: in general, the answers seem to cluster around the neutral score of 4. Interestingly, no statistically significant difference exists in the degree to which physical characteristics are being brought to the fore when comparing city marketing activities focusing on new inhabitants on the one hand, and tourists/visitors on the other:

Paired Samples Test									
		Paired Differences					t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
					Lower	Upper			
Pair 1	VAR00001 - VAR00002	-,32545	1,10187	,19181	-,71616	,06525	-1,697	32	,099

**Table 4.3: Statistical analysis of the role played by the physical urban environment for attracting different target populations.**

A paired sample T-test was conducted to test whether or not there exist statistically significant differences in this regard (Table 4.3). The hypothesis are the following:

$$H_0: \mu_1 - \mu_2 = 0$$

$$H_a: \mu_1 - \mu_2 \neq 0$$

Although there is a difference between the two means (of 0.32 'in favor' of city marketing activities focusing on tourists/visitors), this is not statistically significant at the  $\alpha = .05$  level (as Table 4.3 shows, the 95% confidence level of the difference contains 0). With this, hypothesis  $H_0$  cannot be rejected.

Municipality	Item	What role do the physical urban characteristics within the citymarketing activities aimed at attracting new inhabitants? (1=the physical urban characteristics hardly play a role; 7=the physical urban characteristics play a dominant role)	What role do the physical urban characteristics within the citymarketing activities aimed at attracting tourists/visitors? (1=the physical urban characteristics hardly play a role; 7=the physical urban characteristics play a dominant role)	To what extent do you feel the physical characterizes of your city should play a more important role within the city marketing activities of your city? (1=The physical urban characteristics are completely underexposed; 7=The physical urban characteristics are completely overexposed)
Alkmaar		4,50	5,50	4,00
Almere		3,00	1,00	4,00
Alphen		1,00	1,00	3,00
Amersfoort		4,33	4,00	3,33
Amsterdam		6,00	6,50	5,00
Apeldoorn		5,50	4,00	2,50
Arnhem		4,00	4,00	4,50
Breda		5,00	5,00	5,00
Delft		6,40	6,80	4,60
Den Bosch		5,67	6,67	4,25
Den Haag		5,75	5,75	3,75
Dordrecht		5,50	6,50	4,00
Ede		4,67	3,33	3,67
Eindhoven		5,00	4,00	3,00
Emmen		3,00	2,50	4,00
Enschede		4,33	4,67	4,33
Groningen		5,00	7,00	4,00
Haarlem		2,00	6,00	3,00
Haarl.meer		4,50	5,00	4,00
Helmond		5,50	5,00	4,00
Hengelo OV		3,00	4,00	4,00
Hilversum		4,33	5,33	5,33
Leeuwarden		5,00	7,00	4,00
Leiden		6,00	6,50	3,50
Maastricht		5,67	6,00	4,00
Nijmegen		5,50	5,67	4,25
Rotterdam		6,25	6,75	4,50
Tilburg		4,33	4,50	3,67
Utrecht		5,00	6,00	4,00
Venlo		4,50	4,50	3,50
Zaanstad		6,00	5,50	4,50
Zoetermeer		4,00	4,00	3,00
Zwolle		5,50	6,50	3,00
Average		4,72	5,04	3,91

Table 4.4: The role played by the physical urban environment within city marketing activities per municipality.

## 4.2 Built cultural heritage as an urban identity generator in the Dutch context

In the previous section, an analysis was provided of the respondents' vision on their city's (or municipality's) identity in a general sense, as well as of the role of their city's physical characteristics. In this section, a more specific analysis focusing on the role of built cultural heritage will be provided, especially also compared to the (assumed) value of innovative urban design schemes.

### 4.2.1 Heritage, innovative design and city size

Before moving on to addressing the questions of the survey that are the most explicitly related to Gospodini's hypotheses, it is useful to shed some light on the role played by city size. In Paragraph 2.2.2, revolving around Ashworth and Tunbridge's notion of the heritage-city (and the model as developed by Graham et al. based on this concept), it was argued that variable 'city size' forms one of the key determinants for whether or not a city becomes a heritage centre or not. Below, a very brief analysis will be presented addressing the degree to which this is also true for the Dutch context.

If we then look at Table 4.5, Graham's et al. assigning of a key role to city size indeed seems to resonate with the empirical data of the Dutch situation. A Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient was computed to assess the relationship between the number of a municipality's inhabitants on the one hand (as the best available approximation for the municipality's main city's number of inhabitants, i.e. city size) and the number of national monuments on the other (see Appendix E), using  $\alpha = .05$  as criterion for significance. A strong and statistically highly significant positive correlation between the two variables was found ( $r = .725$ ,  $N = 33$ ,  $p = .000$ ). To be sure, this obviously does not preclude the possibility of smaller municipalities also being heritage centres. For instance, municipalities such as Middelburg (48030 inhabitants), Harlingen (15878), and Kampen (50403) do not belong to the largest 35 municipalities of The Netherlands, but they are listed in the top 25 when it comes to the number of national monuments that can be found there (1166, 533 and also 533 monuments respectively) (Statistics Netherlands, 2011; Dutch National Heritage Agency, 2012).

**Correlations**

		Numberofm onuments	Inhabitants
Numberofmonuments	Pearson Correlation	1	,725**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		,000
	N	33	33
Inhabitants	Pearson Correlation	,725**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,000	
	N	33	33

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

**Table 4.5: The correlation between city size and the number of monuments.**

So, in general, built cultural heritage can indeed be found in the larger urban clusters, a finding that doesn't seem to be overly remarkable. But what about city-size and the role of built cultural heritage as urban identity generator? Does the presence of a large amount of monuments also mean that they are considered the most important urban identity defining elements? And how do innovative urban design schemes as urban identity generators relate to city size?

Looking back at Table 4.2 again for a moment, the most important categories in this regard are formed by 'historical objects (in the form of national and municipal monuments of at least 50 years as well as protected 'urban sights')' and 'remarkable/innovative forms of recent architecture (small-scaled or in the form of larger urban 'flagship projects')'. As can be seen in Table 4.1, the former has received an average 'national' score of 5,32, whereas the latter (somewhat surprisingly) follows rather closely with an average score of 5,14.

Again, a Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient was computed, now to assess the relationship between the number of a municipality's inhabitants on the one hand, and the valuation of built cultural heritage and innovative urban design schemes as identity generators on the other, also using  $\alpha = .05$  as criterion for significance. As Table 4.6 shows, there is no statistically significant correlation between the number of inhabitants and the degree to which built cultural heritage is considered an urban identity generator ( $r = .094$ ,  $N = 33$ ,  $p = .603$ ). However, on the basis of this dataset, it seems a positive correlation does exist between the municipality's size and the degree to which innovative urban design schemes are considered an urban identity generator ( $r = .364$ ,  $N = 33$ ,  $p = .038$ ).

**Correlations**

		Inhabitants	Innovative Design	BuiltHeritage
Inhabitants	Pearson Correlation	1	,364*	,094
	Sig. (2-tailed)		,038	,603
	N	33	33	33
InnovativeDesign	Pearson Correlation	,364*	1	,242
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,038		,175
	N	33	33	33
BuiltHeritage	Pearson Correlation	,094	,242	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,603	,175	
	N	33	33	33

\*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

**Table 4.6: The correlation between city size on the one and the identity-generating ability of heritage and innovative urban design schemes on the other hand.**

So, although heritage tends to be clustered in larger (Dutch) urban settlements, on the basis of this data this does not seem to a-priori imply that also a positive correlation exists between a city's size and the degree to which built heritage is considered an urban identity generator. This, on the other hand, does seem to be the case for innovative urban design schemes. A possible explanation for this difference would be that (almost) any Dutch municipality (either large or small) contains some form of urban heritage, and thus also (still) defines the identity of this settlement, at least to a certain degree (irrespective of the absolute amount or exact nature of the monuments). On the other hand, innovative design schemes, especially the most spectacular, eye-catching types, can be argued to be generally found in larger urban settlements. Accordingly, they contribute to a large degree to giving those cities a more or less unique built morphology (not in the least vis-à-vis smaller municipalities).

The following part of this chapter is dedicated to comparing the gathered empirical data with (the assumptions underlying) Gospodini's conceptual framework.

#### **4.2.2 'Testing' the framework 1: the relevance of heritage and innovative design at the level of singular urban components**

The respondents were asked to provide the names of at most five buildings or other physical urban elements of which they feel that they are the most 'identity defining' for their city. In terms of methodology, this part of the questionnaire shows the closest resemblance to Gospodini's inquiry, as it focuses on the respondents first and foremost as 'regular persons' familiar with a city and its (built) components, not so much as specialists on e.g. heritage or the practice of 'selling' urban identities. However, whereas Gospodini's research specifically focuses on the role played by a number of pre-selected forms or heritage (e.g. excluding industrial forms), in this way the respondents are able to bring to the fore a much wider variety of objects. Table 4.7 provides an overview of the answers given to this question.

In total, 80 respondents gave at least two, and at most six answers to this question. For analytical purposes, a distinction between four time periods was made (with the year 1962 selected on the basis of the 50-year rule for a built construction to be able to become a monument). In some instances, a construction was mentioned that has been developed during multiple time periods, or that has been significantly reconstructed at a later stage, which is indicated by means of the color shading of the cells in question. Also, in other cases, a rather complex urban structure was mentioned (e.g. an entire harbor, urban district or university complex), containing elements from multiple or even all of the different time periods. This is also indicated in the table. Finally, there are those elements which are (described in a) too general (way) to have a clear and traceable year of origins (e.g. 'squares and trees', 'a number of streets within the inner city' or 'the integration of old and new elements').

If we consider this table as an initial indication for the contemporary status quo of the position of heritage as an urban identity generator within the general Dutch context, what observations can be made? First, although the structures dating from before 1900 and the period 1900-1962 clearly dominate the overall picture (a significant share of which are national monuments), it can still be stated that a rather eclectic picture has emerged. When it comes the oldest cities included in the inquiry (Maastricht and Nijmegen), almost exclusively physical elements dating from before 1900 are mentioned. However, there are also multiple municipalities in which more recent innovative architectural forms seem to (already) have taken up an identity defining role. This is obviously the case for Rotterdam, but e.g. also for Utrecht, Leeuwarden and Zaanstad. On the other hand, even in the city of modern architecture that is Rotterdam, classical national monuments such as the 'Laurenskerk' and the 'Witte Huis' are also (still) mentioned as providing the city with a distinctive identity. Besides this temporal diversity, also the functional characteristics of the mentioned structures show a rather high degree of variation. In addition to the frequently mentioned forms of 'classical heritage' (e.g. churches, palaces, historic urban cores, castles) also more recent monuments of remembrance and industrial, military and infrastructural heritage are mentioned more than once. This table shows that (when relevant) all of these heritage types should be included when analyzing individual urban cases, not in the least because it might be these particular forms of heritage to which urban inhabitants might be able to relate more explicitly than those types addressed in Gospodini's inquiry. Also, this overview shows that in general 'classic' heritage can still be considered unique enough to provide Dutch cities with a form of distinctiveness.

Municipality	no.	Building/physical urban element					
Alkmaar	1	Grote kerk	Waaggebouw	Hist. binnenstad	19e Eeuwse ring	Stadhuis	
	2	Grote kerk	Waag gebouw	Stadhuis	Hofjes	Monumenten/beeldbepalend panden gehele (binnen)stad	
Almere	3	Skyline Weerwater	Groene hoofdstructuur	Meerkernige opzet			
Alphen	4	Nieuwe stadhuis	Molen Viergang	Hefbrug	Oude Rijn	Ligging in groene hart	
Amersfoort	5	Binnenstad als geheel*	Muurhuizen/ Havik	Koppelpoort	Kattenbroek	RCE gebouw	OLV toren
	6	Lieve vrouwetoren	Koppelpoort	Muurhuizen	RCE gebouw		
Amsterdam	7	Grachtengordel	Rijksmuseum	Paleis/stadhuis	Vondelpark	Westerkerk	
	8	Grachtengordel	Rijksmuseum	Vondelpark	Paleis op de dam	Portugese synagoge	Monument op de Dam
Apeldoorn	9	Rijksbeschermd gezicht de Parken	Radio Kootwijk	Het Loo	Centraal Beheer	Kanaaloevers	
	10	Veluwe	Radio Kootwijk	Centraal Beheer	Beken & sprengen		
Arnhem	11	Sonsbeekpark	Eusebiuskerk	John Frostbrug	De Rijn	Landschappelijke onderlegger	
Breda	12	Grote kerk	Kasteel	Begijnhof	Haven*	Chassépark	
	13	Grote kerk	Kasteel van Breda /kma	Historische stadshart	Buitenplaatsen rondom de stad	De wijk Heuvel	
Delft	14	Nieuwe Kerk	Markt	Universiteitscampus	Prinsenhof	Beestenmarkt	
	15	Nieuwe kerk	Stadhuis	Hoogheemraadschapshuis	TU bibliotheek	Gebouw Natuurkunde	
	16	Binnenstad	Agnethapark	Aula	Campus		
	17	De historische woonhuizen	De grachten	De kerken	Het stadhuis	De pleinen en bomen	
	18	Toren+ Nieuwe kerk	Toren+ Oude kerk	Stadhuis	Maria van Jessekerk	Prinsenhof	
Den Bosch	19	St Jan	Rinnendieze	Vestingwerken	Paleiskwarter	Bosscse Broek (landschap)	
	20	Sint Jans Kathedraal	Zwanenbroedershuis	Vesting / Binnendieze	Stadhuis	Paleiskwarter	
Den Bosch	21	Sint-Jans Cathedraal	Binnendieze	Vestingwerken			
	22	Kathedrale basiliek van Sint Jan	Paleiskwarter	De kastelen in het buitengebied	Provinciehuis van Maaskant	De Moriaan	
Den Haag	23	Binnenhof e.o.	Vredespaleis	Atlantikwall	Malieveld-Haagse Bos	Nieuw Centrum	
Den Haag	24	Orthogonale grid-structuur (stedenbouwkundig)	Vredespaleis	Stadhuis aan het Spui	Strand/duinen	Boulevard Scheveningen*	
Den Haag	25	Vredespaleis	Binnenhof	Pier			
	26	Vredespaleis	Binnenhof	Stadhuis			
Dordrecht	27	Havenfront Merwede*	Havens*	Grote Kerk	Biesbosch		
	28	Grote Kerk	Het Hof	Damiatenbrug	Groothoofd	Binnenhavens*	
Ede	29	Jachtslot Sint Hubertus Otterlo (Berlage)	Kazernecomplexen Veluwe Poort Ede (diversen)	vml. Enka kunstzijdefabriek Ede (diversen)	Koepel Buurtbos Lunteren (Nieuwenkamp)	Museum Kröller-Müller (vd Velde)	
Ede	30	Kazernes	Enka-fabriek	CineMec (A12)	Raadhuis	Oude Kerk (centrum)	
	31	Kazernegebouwen	ENKA fabriek	Cinemec	Landgoed Kernhem	Stationsweg (oude koloniale bebouwing)	
Eindhoven	32	Evoluon	Philipskantoor	Catharinakerk	Voormalige rechtbank		
	33	Lichttoren	18-septemberplein	van Abbe museum	Evoluon	Klokgebouw	Witte Dame
	34	Witte Dame	Lichttoren	Hoog Elzent	Cicogne*	Striyp S,R,T	
	35	Evoluon	Lichttoren	Striyp-S (Hoge Rug)	Witte dame	Stationsgebouw	Bruine Heer
Emmen	36	Gemeentehuis+bruggebouw	Traverse	Structuur wijken	Wonen/werken Waanderveld	Gasbol	
	37	Dierenpark Emmen	Hotel ten Cate	Norit fabriek	Giraf, landmark	Ja-knikkers in Schoonebeek	
Enschede	38	Oude Markt	Roombeek*	Laan van innovatie	Van Heekplein	Erven	
	39	Grote Kerk	Stadhuis	Station	Roombeek	Synagoge	
	40	Roombeek*	Stadsparken	Stadhuis	Fabrikantenvilla's		
Groningen	41	Martinitoren	Vismarkt-Der A Kerk	Groninger Museum	Universiteitscomplex Broerstraat	Gasunie	

Table 4.7: The individual identity-defining urban structures and their age as mentioned by the respondents.

Haarlem	42	Grote Kerk - Grote Markt	Kathedraal ST Bavo	Jopenkerk	Teylers Museum	
Haarlemmermeer	43	Stelling van Amsterdam	Gemalen	Calatrava bruggen	Ringvaart	Polderwegen
	44	Drie gemalen	Geniedijk / Stelling van Amsterdam	Molen	Calatravabruggen	Kunstfort bij Vijhuizen
Helmond	45	Kasteel	Kanaal	Vlisco	Markt	Dierdonk
	46	Kasteel	Kanaalzone*	Wijk Brandevoort	Boscotondo	Mater Dei / Lambertuskerk
Hengelo	47	Lambertuskerk	Stadhuis	Tuindorp 't Lansink	Vereenigingsgebouw	ROC de Gieterij
Hilversum	48	Raadhuis	Vituskerk	Beeld & Geluid	TV toren	Landgoed Zonnestraal
	49	Raadhuis	Zonnestraal	Vituskerk	Gooiland	Dudokbuurten
	50	Raadhuis	Zonnestraal	Mediapark	Vituskerk	Dudok monumenten
Leeuwarden	51	Oldehove	Achtmeatoren			
	52	Oldehove	Achmea-toren	Fries Museum (gebouw sinds 2012 klaar)	Bonifatiuskerk	
Leiden	53	Grachten	Academiegebouw	Stadhuis	Pieterskerk	Wevershuisjes
	54	De Burcht	Pieterskerk	Hooglandse Kerk	ROC Station Centraal	Sterrenwacht
Maastricht	55	Pleinen met kerken Vrijthof/Markt/OLV plein	Maas met historische brug	Vestingstructuur	Bonnefantenmuseum	Herbestemde kerken Kruissherenhotel en Dominikanerkerk
	56	Vrijthof & kerkenensemble	Markt & stadhuis	OLVrouweplein	Bonnefantenmuseum	
	57	Servaasbrug	OLV Basiliek	Vrijthof (met St. Servaaskerk + St. Janskerk)	Maas	Stadhuis op Markt
Nijmegen	58	De skyline van Nijmegen met Waalbrug en St. Stevenkerk	Valkhofpark en Waalkade	Kronenburgerpark	Lange en Stikke Hezelstraat	19e Eeuwse schil
	59	Waal(front)	Historische Binnenstad	Stevenskerk	19e Eeuwse schil	Waalprong
	60	Valkhofpark	Romeinse restanten	St. Stevenskerk	Kronenburgerpark	19e-eeuwse stadsuitleg
	61	Waalbrug	Sint Stevenskerk en toren	Stadion De Goffert	Goffertpark	
Rotterdam	62	De Hef	Hotel New York	De Lijnbaan	Red Apple	Erasmusbrug
	63	De Zwaan (Erasmusbrug)	Laurenskerk	Lijnbaan	Nieuwe Centraal Station	Euromast
	64	Haven*	Erasmusbrug	Witte Huis	Montevideo	Lijnbaan
	65	de Erasmusbrug	de Kop van Zuid*	Het nieuwe Station	de Laurenskerk	Jet singelplan
Tilburg	66	Station	Paleis-Raadhuis	Textielmuseum	Hoofgebouw universiteit	Heuvelse kerk
	67	Lintbebouwing	Enkele straten in de Binnenstad	Enkele kloosters		
	68	Linten en frankische driehoeken	De Heuvel met kerk	Ringbanen	Bredaseweg	Toren Interpolis
	69	Station	Schouwburg	Kunstcluster	Gemeentehuis	Universteitscampus**
	70	Herdgangen/ linten	Hoogbouw in as ringbaan-west-Interpolis	Kroepoek-dak station	Cenakel in Zuid**	Integratie oud- nieuw (bijv Pieter vreeddeplein)
	71	Textielmuseum	Museum De Pont	Het Interpolisgebouw	Station CS	WillemIstraat/Stationsstraat/Nieuwlandstraat
Utrecht	72	Domkerk en -toren	Rietveld-Schröderhuis	Universiteitsgebouw Domplein	Stadhuis	De Uithof (onderwijs en medisch complex)
	73	Dom	Grachtenstructuur	Lage bebouwing	Nieuwbouw rondom CS	Uithof
Venlo	74	Binnenstad Venlo	Kloosterdorp Steyl	Kern en kasteel Arcen	Kazernekwartier	Floriadeterrein
	75	Stadhuis	Romerhuis	Ald Weishoes	Steeds terugkerend patroon van pleinen en parken	Limburgs Museum
Zaanstad	76	Intel hotel	Stadhuis	Zaanse Schans	Gracht (die nu wordt ontdekt)	
	77	INTELL hotel	Zaanse Schans	Hembrugterrein	Zaanse houtbouw	Industrieel erfgoed
Zoetermeer	78	Watertoren	Nutricia	Mandelabrug		
Zwolle	79	Toren Peperbus	Sassenpoort	Openluchtbad Wiebenga	Museum De Fundatie	De Spoorzone
	80	Peperbus	Grote Kerk	Sassenpoort	Stadsgracht	Middeleeuwse structuur binnenstad
* Contains defining buildings/ structures dating from all four of the periods		**Contains buildings/structures dating from the periods 1900-1961; 1962-1995; 1996-2012				

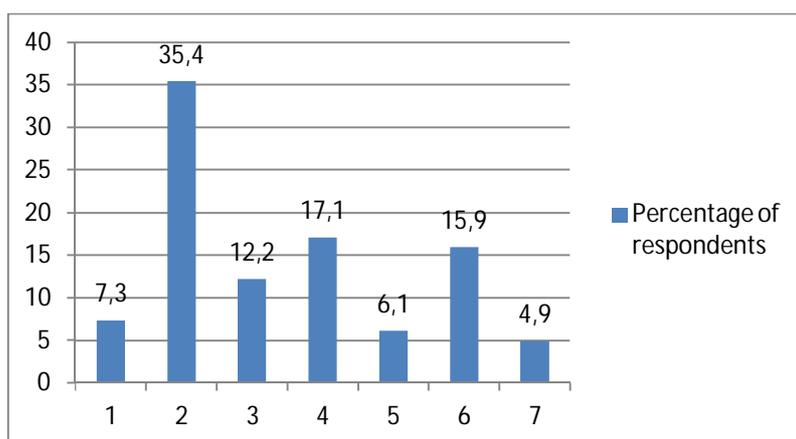
	Dating from before 1500
	Dating from the period 1500-1961
	Dating from the period 1962-1995
	Dating from the period 1995-2012
	Unclear/not applicable

	Working in the field of monuments/heritage/cultural history
	Working in the field of city marketing
	Miscellaneous

It must be mentioned that Gospodini makes a distinction between three types of reasons for why an individual building (not) serves as an identity generator, which are related to the 'morphology of meaning of space', 'the meaning of space', and the 'sense of space'. Although Figure 4.7 yields some insights into which different types of physical urban structures are seen as identity-defining by the respondents, additional inquiries will be necessary in order to develop more detailed insights into the specific reasons why these elements might be considered as such, also by different 'urban actors' (also see Chapter six).

### 4.2.3 'Testing' the framework 2: the scalar level of heritage

One of the sub- assumptions on which Gospodini's framework rests, consists of the hypothesis that built cultural heritage can be considered a one-dimensional phenomenon, in the sense that it only leaves room for a single interpretation: heritage first and foremost as the result of a national manipulation and selection process, the objective of which would be to imprint national identities onto conserved urban forms. According to this point of view, heritage functions solely as the carrier of some kind of 'national identity', 'justifying' the territory of the nation-state (it should be acknowledged that in Figure 2.4, she does also mention 'a city's tradition as playing a role in this regard. However, in the text of the article the focus lies almost exclusively on heritage as a national phenomenon). In order to test the value of this statement, the respondents were also asked to express the degree to which they felt their city's heritage indeed functions as the manifestation of 'a national identity', or that, alternatively, it is actually the urban level of scale that is more important in this regard. Although the response is somewhat varied, on the basis of Graph 4.3 it can be argued that the majority of the panel of respondents tends to refute the traditional national identity hypothesis, considering heritage to be first and foremost the manifestation of some kind of urban identity.



**Graph 4.3: At which level of scale do you consider the built cultural heritage of your city to be of importance? (1=I consider the built cultural heritage of my city to mainly be a part/manifestation of an urban identity; 2=I consider the built cultural heritage to mainly be a part/manifestation of a national identity. N=81).**

Although more (theoretically underpinned) motivations were provided on why heritage might be losing some of its urban identity generating ability, on the basis of this data it seems highly questionable to state that a fundamental reason would be that built cultural heritage serves exclusively as the carrier of a national identity. Given the number of answers concentrated also at the right side of the seven-point likert scale, one should refrain from arguing that the national level is not of any importance in this light, and that urban settlements function as separate 'heritage islands'. Nevertheless, at the same time, this data does reveal that other possible interpretations and meanings than those revolving around the national level of scale, should not be easily overlooked.

#### 4.2.4 'Testing' the framework 3: the assumed (future) development of heritage as an urban identity generator

The final segment of the questionnaire arguably forms its most significant part, as it revolves around the degree to which the respondents recognize (and agree with) the theoretical conjecture and its hypotheses as presented in the final part of Chapter two. First, a brief description of Gospodini's framework was presented, reducing it to its core elements. Next, the respondents were asked to give their view on the contemporary (and future) position of built cultural heritage as an urban identity generator, in a general sense as well as when it comes to their own specific city.

Generally speaking, heritage is considered as becoming more important as an urban identity generator (in a general sense). The average score given to the question 'to what extent do you believe that built cultural heritage is losing some of its ability to develop and maintain a unique urban identity, compared to the ability of modern, innovative design schemes and 'iconic' urban projects fulfill this role?' was 5.1 (1 = Cultural heritage is (becoming) less important; 7 = Cultural heritage is (becoming) more important).

However, as mentioned in the introduction, it is important here not to consider the surveyed experts not as a uniform sample, but to make a distinction between those respondents representing the (policy) field of 'heritage management', and those working in other domains. Therefore, an independent samples T-test was conducted in order to gain an insight in the (prospected) position of heritage as an urban identity generator according to the two groups. Table 4.8 shows the result of this procedure (1 = representatives of the heritage field, N = 38; 2 = Representatives of other fields, e.g. city marketing and spatial urban development; N = 44). There indeed exists a statistically significant difference between the scores given by the representatives of the heritage field (M = 5,39, SD = 1,08) and those given by the remainder of the surveyed respondents (M = 4,82, SD = 1,27);  $t(80) = 2,36$ ,  $p = .021$ .

Group Statistics

	Field	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
HeritageIdentity	1,00	38	5,3947	1,07903	,17504
	2,00	44	4,8182	1,12628	,16979

Independent Samples Test										
		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
HeritageIdentity	Equal variances assumed	,245	,622	2,357	80	,021	,57656	,24464	,08971	1,06340
	Equal variances not assumed			2,364	79,116	,021	,57656	,24386	,09117	1,06194

**Table 4.8: Statistical analysis of the difference in the assumed general importance of heritage as an identity generator between respondents from the field of heritage and those representing other fields.**

Although statistically significant, the difference between the two surveyed groups is still not overly substantial. With this, this segment of the data provides no support for the hypothesis of the degrading ability of heritage to function as an urban identity generator in a general sense, as both of the included groups refute this conjecture. In contrast, this data can even be considered evidence in favor of the more traditional view that heritage is actually gaining relevance in this regard (a kind of anthology of the descriptions given by the respondents on the degree to and way in which this also manifests itself in their own specific city will be presented below, simultaneously with the answers provided to the survey's final question).

The final question posed to the respondents revolved around what they would consider the most opportune option for fostering a unique, 'sustainable' long-term identity for 'their city' and why: (1) the realization of a prestigious and iconic 'flagship project', a modern and innovative architectural highlight in the city or (2) the improvement of the monuments care within the city (e.g. by means of restoration and/or conversion ('herbestemming') projects). Obviously, (as also some of the respondents were right to point out) these options are not mutually exclusive. However, by posing this question the respondents were confronted with and asked to reflect on what could be seen as a kind of provoking thought-experiment on what the two rather conceptual 'discourses' on the value of built cultural heritage might look like in practice. Of the 82 respondents, 56 selected the option of improving the city's heritage care, while the remaining 26 selected the option of developing an innovative urban design scheme.

In some instances, rather practical considerations seem to stand at the heart of the choice made by the city's representatives. For instance, proponents of constructing an innovative urban design scheme often simply based their choice on the lack of monuments in their city (e.g. Emmen, Alphen aan de Rijn) and/or they deem further improvements of heritage management practices unnecessary given their current effectiveness (which is the case for respondents from Nijmegen, Breda, Groningen, Den Haag, amongst others). The same is true for some of the choices made for improving the city's heritage care (for instance, the somewhat deteriorating state of a specific Nijmegen iconic monument is mentioned as a reason for why city's heritage care activities could be improved). Others do focus on the meaning of heritage as providing their city with a form of distinctiveness compared to other

cities. This is for instance the case for a city marketer from Venlo (arguing that heritage values are becoming more important now that inner cities are increasingly resembling each other) and Hilversum.

Also a number of respondents that have decided to select the innovative design scheme have done on the basis of the distinctiveness argument. For instance, a representative describes Ede as a municipality currently somewhat lacking a clear identity, while it is argued that “people also remember a city for its iconic buildings.” A similar argument was made by respondents from Enschede (thereby making a comparison with the competing nearby ‘Hanzesteden’, known for their cultural heritage), as well as a policy employee in the field of spatial planning from Tilburg, who considers the realization of an innovative design scheme as providing the city with a form of distinctiveness it is currently lacking. A policy advisor from Leeuwarden, actually working in the field of heritage and monuments care, brings to the fore an interesting argument that is not mentioned once by any other of the surveyed experts: “[Innovative design provides a better means] for being distinctive. A lot of other cities (also) have an historic urban core, which makes it rather difficult to be distinguishable on this basis.” One respondent from Breda stated, and this shows the multilayered character of the identity notion, that he would prefer an innovative design scheme as the city “could also use a new identity.” Also a number of respondents representing what might be considered ‘heritage centres’ (Utrecht, Dordrecht, Den Bosch) would select the innovative design scheme on the basis that it would add something ‘new and contrasting’ to what the city already has’, which is regarded especially important in the light of city marketing activities.

Other respondents express their doubts about the (long-term) value of innovative urban design schemes. For instance, whereas in Chapter two the role of the architect was mentioned as potentially influencing the success or failure of such a project, a policy advisor in the field of heritage from Leiden brings to the fore that “in The Netherlands, there are numerous iconic flagship buildings which don’t fit their surroundings [...]. Even Frank Gehry and Rem Koolhaas are no guarantee for success.” Particularly interesting in this regard, especially given that Gospodini’s framework is argued to be applicable to Europe specifically, is the following rather skeptical comment on ‘the fleeting value’ of innovative urban design schemes, coming from an advisor on spatial urban development and heritage, also from Leiden:

In my view [...] such prestigious buildings/flagship projects lose their value very rapidly. The number of successful examples of such projects, even on a worldwide scale, is very limited [...]. Especially given the international competition, a European city hardly has any changes in this regard. This is not where our strength lies. A strong positioning of the historical identity,

combined with a clever and challenging modern use, is a unique opportunity only available for this continent to make use of.

Some respondents argue that (remainders of) built cultural heritage is (are) becoming a more their dimension of their city's identity because it has been, to a certain extent, demolished, neglected or left unused in the past. This line of reasoning is brought to the fore by respondents from e.g. Ede, Tilburg, Enschede, Hengelo (with a specific focus on industrial heritage) and Rotterdam (arguably the most multicultural and with that globalized city of The Netherlands), which, according to a respondent, has been "so oriented towards building new constructions after the war that we are only now realizing the importance of our heritage again." And: "In Rotterdam, the heritage is, in a way, a 'rising phenomenon'; people are discovering that Rotterdam has its own history that is also physically visible [...]. This, for instance, becomes apparent from the increasing public attention for archeological excavations." Also important in this regard is a remark made by a respondent from Eindhoven, who states that "cultural heritage is often still seen as merely revolving around objects from the 19<sup>th</sup> century and before, and also in Eindhoven, up to quite recently, there was relatively little attention for the importance of industrial heritage." This indeed also seems the pitfall into which Gospodini stepped, as her inquiry did not pay explicit attention to the potential identity generating power of more recent forms of heritage.

Unfortunately, despite a description of the conceptual conjecture, merely few respondents made a direct reference to any of the sub-hypotheses of Gospodini's framework that revolve around heritage or innovative design schemes as (no longer) offering options for a form of 'spatial membership' for multiple societal groups or as forming the basis for a form of 'urban pride' or 'social solidarity through space' within the contemporary society and its specific features (the 'Lefebvrian' approach to urban monumental spaces one could state). On the other hand, this might also be considered an interesting observation: regardless of the degree of validity and the potential value of Gospodini's conclusions, it seems there exists a significant discrepancy between two trains of thought on the nature of the interplay between the urban identities and the role played by the built urban environment in that regard. It would seem to be a challenging endeavor to overcome this gap between these viewpoints and make urban policy makers (those eventually responsible for '(re-)building' and 'managing' urban identities) think about particular elements of the built environment in terms of 'urban identity generators (potentially) subject to interpretation differences as a result of contemporary post-modernization, globalization and individualization processes'. It could even be observed that among some of the respondents, such a conceptualization is considered rather far-fetched and too distanced from daily practical policy issues.

Nevertheless, there are a number of respondents that do seem to hint at some of these hypotheses of Gospodini's conjecture. They thereby support her finding that, in general, cultural heritage still is regarded highly important by a city's inhabitants, while they seem to actually refute her observation that this to a declining degree the case for a city's visitors. For instance, a respondent from Almere noted that "the inhabitants of Almere attach great value to the presence of the cultural heritage in the city". Another respondent, representing Rotterdam, argued that "the craving for something new is making way for the appreciation of what the city already possesses." A Nijmegen policy maker defended his choice for the improvement of heritage management efforts by stating that "in the eyes of the urban inhabitants, the historic objects and structures are considered the most important" and that "in an increasingly globalized world, a recognizable identity of the local living surroundings is of great importance", implying that it is first and foremost built heritage that can foster such as recognizable identity. Next, there is an alderman from Delft who explicitly refers to the crypts of the royal family as well as the 'Nieuwe Kerk' as *national* icons (i.e. carriers of a national identity) that keep attracting large amounts of visitors, while another emphasizes the involvement of the inhabitants of Delft in heritage issues. This latter point is also brought to the fore by an heritage policy employee from Den Bosch. Also, a respondent from Alkmaar states: "The 'colder' a society gets [which might be considered a different way of the describing the process of individualization], the more people relate to the(ir) pasts." As one Den Bosch respondent notes:

The presence of built cultural heritage is, to an increasing extent, a motive for people to visit the city and also contributes positively to the establishment climate of the city [...]. Attention for cultural historic urban elements also contributes to inhabitants developing a feeling of connectedness with and a sense of being proud of their city. Amongst others, this manifests itself in the interest in several historic events, such as the 'Open Monuments Day', the 'Week of the History' as well as the presence of numerous cultural historic organizations in the city.

Another good example comes from a city marketer in Maastricht, who states:

I think that, and this is the case for Maastricht as well as other cities, because of the forces of globalization [...] people increasingly start to look for and try to hold on to their own identities. In addition, thanks to this globalization, people are more and more opening up towards other cultures and influences. Both developments I feel are important, but the holding on to ones on identity I consider slightly more important. This is reflected in the fact that

local inhabitants make a strong case for maintaining their local heritage (physical as well as intangible).

And one respondent from Den Haag noted:

A lot of attempts [at developing an innovative design scheme] have already been undertaken, some have also been realized [...]. However, these projects hardly receive any appreciation from the city's inhabitants. Also, they do not form a reason for tourists to visit the city, and they also won't be in the future. Therefore, it would be better to focus on and strengthen the [historical] identity of the city. For a number of other cities (Almere, Rotterdam), however, it might work.

Coming from a similar angle (focusing on contemporary design schemes), a respondent from Leiden describes that "attempts to develop modern icons have failed (up to now) and have caused more internal division than urban pride. On the other hand, the (political) attention for heritage has grown significantly." Finally, a respondent from Groningen can be quoted, who states that "tourists come to Groningen especially for its heritage. The activity of the 'historic inner city walk' is getting increasingly popular. The atmosphere in the historic streets of the inner city of Groningen is valued especially well by the visitors."

Of course, these are just a few examples based on individual views, but they nevertheless quite clearly clash with, for instance, Gospodini's conclusion that "in the post-modern era, tourists and visitors seem equally, or even more, interested in seeking their own new experiences in the city's innovative architectural and urban forms than in what has been selected to be preserved and exhibited as built heritage" (2004, p. 243), as well as with the hypothesis that built heritage would be, to a certain degree, losing its ability to develop a form of urban solidarity or pride. Also not much comments were made resonating with Gospodini's observation that "innovative design of space appears to be a key factor of economic development in all categories and groups of cities: metropolitan cities, larger cities, smaller cities, cities in the core and cities in the periphery (economic and/or geographical) of Europe" (2004, p. 234).

On the other hand, although they only form a very small minority, also a number of respondents in favor of developing an innovative urban design scheme make use of an argumentation close to Gospodini's line of reasoning. For instance, a respondent from Breda states that he would select the development of a flagship project given their often 'appealing' character. In general however, the city's physical legacy of its past is, to an increasing degree, considered not as a burden, but as an anchor of authenticity in a globalizing era, providing a fruitful means for (identity) development.

#### 4.2.5 'Testing' the framework 4: heritage standardization

In the survey, no particular question revolved around the topic of 'heritage standardization'. Although the fact that none of the respondents explicitly mentioned this development as possibly affecting the ability of heritage to function as an urban identity generator might be considered an indication for its (lack of) impact, it seems instrumental to gain some more insight into the degree to which this might be (or become) a relevant factor in the Dutch context. To this end, although it forms somewhat of a methodological sidestep, two Dutch heritage conservation specialists (prof. W. Denslagen from the University of Utrecht and prof. D.J. De Vries from the University of Leiden and the Dutch National Heritage Agency) were contacted and asked to shed their light on the matter.

First, according to Ashworth, "[t]he transfer of [best heritage conservation] policies, practices and techniques [via international networks, institutions and educational curricula] tends to reduce rather than increase local distinctiveness and place identity" (in Gospodini, 2004, p. 231). While Denslagen acknowledges the existence of international guidelines, he deems their influence to be modest at most: "In the Netherlands, the influence of international institutions and their charters on the actual practices of heritage management is limited. In my view, trendsetting architects and the personal preferences of their clients are more important" (personal communication, February 5, 2013).

For De Vries, 'best policies and practices' play a somewhat more profound role than Denslagen argues: "Indeed, norms and guidelines for and the education of (restoration) architects are getting increasingly uniform. This is a development identifiable on a national, and within not too long potentially also on a European or global scale" (personal communication, February 12, 2013).

On the basis of the above, both of these authorities in the field tend to agree with Ashworth when he postulates that in particular instances

restoration, conservation, renewal and revitalization schemes in European cities convey messages more about the dominant attitudes on built heritage held at the time of their realization rather than about the old structures themselves and/or the historic period in which they were first developed. (Gospodini, 2004, p. 231).

As De Vries states: "It is inevitable that what is restored or replaced always is the carrier of a younger era. This will remain the case, even if 'authentic' materials and conservation techniques are used." Nevertheless, De Vries simultaneously emphasizes that the impact of this development should not be overstated:

On the other hand, this doesn't mean that a local identity is easily affected by contemporary heritage practices. There exists a local 'language', a local foundation and a unique urban morphology [...]. We can see in which region we are by simply looking at particular materials [...]. Monuments care revolves around keeping this distinguishable character intact. For instance, in the Netherlands we prefer to re-use old roof tiles, while in Germany the norm is to replace them with prefabricated ones [...]. In addition, it should be mentioned that (whether or not intentional) standardization is not a new phenomenon. Also the norms prescribed by the classical 'norm books' were highly detailed and dominant. For instance, the 19<sup>th</sup> century witnessed an unprecedented rise in more or less uniform [iron building] principles, facilitated by [the spread of] magazines and other printed documents. (personal communication, February 12, 2013)

And:

As long as the built 'foundation' is respected and is used as a directive to what is added, small parts may change but not the [outlook of the] object as a whole (only maybe in the very long term). (idem)

Also, De Vries he emphasizes that "heritage standardization is much less noticeable to the general public than to a limited number of specialists" (idem). For Denslagen, "the statement that heritage conservation and restoration lead to rigid cityscapes is false, unless the practice is rigid as well", which, he argues, has happened only in very specific cases (personal communication, February 5, 2013). These latter comments can be considered to reflect the observations made above, with the respondents (still) considering built heritage to be a chief identity marker, with none of them explicitly referring to standardization as a factor of 'identity affecting' importance.

In the remainder of this chapter, I will look at a number of other relevant heritage developments, opportunities and threats, identified by earlier (Dutch) heritage research and/or (implicitly) mentioned by the respondents, possibly as a first step towards further refining the conceptual framework on the contemporary position of built cultural heritage as an urban identity generator.

#### **4.2.6 Moving beyond the framework 1: 'import heritage'**

Multiculturalism was mentioned in the framework as one of the reasons why built cultural heritage might be losing (part of) its urban identity generating ability: newcomers (i.e. immigrants and their offspring), it is argued, find it difficult to relate to and 'appropriate' such spaces, given the history they are argued to represent (i.e. 'the grand narrative' of single-dimensional national identities).

Innovative design, given its 'undetermined nature', it is argued, could serve as a kind of replacement, an alternative that leaves room for multiple types of interpretations. Unfortunately, in the survey, the respondents did not explicitly address the degree to which this, in their view, is also the case for their city (nor did Gospodini focus explicitly on this specific urban group in her survey). However, in this light it is interesting



**Figure 4.1: Chinese-Buddhist temple at the Zeedijk in Amsterdam (2000). (Source of picture: lamsterdam, n.d.).**

to at least mention the (in the Dutch context) "growing demand of newcomers to see their own nostalgic architectural forms to be realized within the[ir] cityscape" [own translation], as identified by e.g. Jansen (2004) (see e.g. Figure 4.1). With this, it might not (only) be contemporary, innovative design, but, perhaps first and foremost, their own traditional architectural forms, serving as a kind of 'surrogate heritage', to which these groups (want to) turn in the quest for place identity.

#### **4.2.7 Moving beyond the framework 2: urban solidarity and pride as rooted in favorable economic development**

Gospodini's framework hypothesizes that economic development, one of the means through which a kind of 'social urban solidarity and pride' might be fostered, stems first and foremost from heritage as a tourist asset. Multiple inquiries as recently conducted in the Dutch context, have shown that tourist expenditures indeed (still) make a significant contribution to what might be called heritage's 'external value' (as opposed to what is considered to be its intrinsic aesthetic, scientific and cultural-historic value). However, these inquiries have made clear that, and a number of the respondents also (implicitly) referred to this, also through a number of other mechanisms the economic value of heritage and its surroundings might increase profoundly (see e.g. Bade en Smid, 2008, Witteveen + Bos, 2004). For instance, according to Rouwendal (n.d.), houses that have been given a monumental status have a significantly higher market value than those without this label (with the difference sometimes being more than twenty percent), while also a (limited) spill-over effect to a city's near surroundings has been identified. As Table 4.9 illustrates, heritage (ensembles) can be considered amenity, for which a 'willingness to pay' exists, making it an important point of consideration within locational decisions among households as well as companies (especially those in the 'creative sector', following Jane Jacobs's idea that 'new industries need old buildings') (Rouwendal, n.d.). On the basis of multiple case studies, it is argued that the financial costs of conserving heritage are often, through a multiplier-effect, outweighed by the cash flows they generate (idem; Bade & Smid, 2008). If we apply

Gospodini's hypothesis on the way in which tourism contributes to the fostering of a form of social urban solidarity, rooted in favorable economic developments, the same mechanism might also be argued to be applicable in other ways: the presence of monuments as well as the listing as such as contributing to higher values of houses and heritage as an valuable amenity for (certain types of) companies. With this, it seems that built heritage still can be, perhaps even more than ever, considered a key asset for economic (urban) development. On this basis, Figure 2.4, which questions the contemporary ability of heritage to function as such, may be in itself questioned when it comes to the Dutch context. Given its ability to attract tourists and businesses and increase real-estate values, it is rather doubtful to state that heritage has lost its ability to foster 'urban solidarity, commonness and pride' by means of economic mechanisms, especially vis-à-vis the assumed ability of innovative design to do so, given the answers provided by the survey's respondents.

Although obviously the value of heritage hardly can be fully determined by simply subjecting monuments to a cost-benefit analysis, and it might, in some cases, be questioned who actually benefits of the economic opportunities heritage has to offer, it seems a very much useful endeavor to take into account and also explicitly bring to the fore the conclusions of researches such as these in policy decisions on how (future) heritage is dealt with ('shovel or spatula'), not in the least those revolving around fostering urban identities.

	<b>Amsterdam</b>	<b>Almere</b>	<b>Utrecht</b>	<b>Nieuwegein</b>
<b>Standardized house price (euros)</b>	€312 539	€162 834	€250 317	€206 176
<b>Predicted house price (euros)</b>	€243 194	€156 458	€225 270	€183 769
<b>Adjusted equilibrium - No cultural heritage</b>				
<b>Δ</b>	- € 69 345	€ -6 376	€ -25 047	€ -22 407
<b>%</b>	-22%	-4%	-10%	-11%

**Table 4.9: Willingness to pay': monuments in large 'heritage cities' and their economic 'spillover effect' (Source: J. Rouwendal, n.d.).**

#### **4.2.8 Moving beyond the framework 3: heritage privatization, putting the fostering of urban identities at risk?**

A development that could possibly have a more profound impact on the identity-defining ability of heritage within the Dutch context than the standardization of cultural heritage concerns its privatization. Above, the (altering) ability of monuments to stand at the basis of urban identities was first and foremost conceptualized in terms of their architectural forms. Less attention is paid to

functional characteristics of heritage (as well as of innovative design for that matter) and the (very much related) question of ownership. Importantly however, according to Palumbo (2006), a trend of what can be called 'heritage désétatisation' can be identified in multiple European countries: in an attempt to cut expenditures, the responsibility for heritage becomes decentralized, or, if this turns out not be possible, heritage is sold to a private party altogether. As Palumbo argues, when heritage is sold, no longer maintained by the state and sometimes even completely withdrawn from the public domain, this might have a profound impact on the ability of these moments to foster a feeling of collective ownership among the inhabitants of a city.

Seeking to conceptualize (the implications of) this development, he makes a distinction between two heritage approaches: the market approach ('the exploitation of heritage') and the social approach ('the use of heritage'). Although private ownership does not automatically imply that an 'exploitation approach' is practiced, he does argue that privatization can have significance consequences for the ability of heritage as fostering social cohesion, a sense of community. He argues that for cultural heritage to be sustainable, it requires the active involvement of the local community in its development, conservation, management and protection:

Altogether these [heritage] buildings and sites form the form the character of [...] towns and cultural landscapes, and their existence as an integrated system transforms these buildings into 'heritage' and gives communities a cultural landscape in which they identify themselves. It may be argued that it is not the change of ownership that modifies the physical structure of a town; however, if the change of ownership is also associated with radical change of use and the commercialization of public spaces, the effect can be disruptive for the sociocultural and physical structure of the town [...]. (2006, p. 36).

For this reason, he claims that

the privatization of heritage is a risky business, that may have some short-term economic advantage for the state and the private sector [...], but in the long term it may weaken or destroy the trust that citizens have in the state as the steward of the public good. (idem)

Table 4.10 provides an overview the key differences between the two approaches:

	<b>Market approach: Cultural heritage 'exploitation'</b>	<b>Social approach: Cultural heritage 'use'</b>
<b>Economy</b>	Seeks immediate economic return	Does not consider economic value as most important
<b>Values</b>	Marketing of limited set of values, favoring those that can be easily sold to the public, such as aesthetic value	All values shape the significance of the site, with high importance given to local interpretations and feelings about this heritage
<b>Context</b>	Considers the site an isolated entity	Considers the site part of a cultural continuum with its surroundings
<b>Management</b>	Considers the site an isolated entity, a monument that has little relationship with its surroundings	Balances use and conservation
<b>Main objective</b>	Tourism	Public good
<b>Local community</b>	Local community is in service to cultural heritage exploitation	Local community participates in conservation
<b>Effects</b>	Exploitation degrades the cultural resource	Use adds value to the resource
<b>Sustainability</b>	Nonsustainable	Sustainable

**Table 4.10: Two approaches to cultural heritage (Source: G. Palumbo, 2006).**

Although its effects should not be overstated, also in the Dutch context heritage privatization is becoming a trend of growing importance. Most noteworthy in this regard is that in 2011, minister Donner announced the government's intention to explore the possibilities of selling a number of monuments that are in possession of the National Building Agency (Rijksgebouwendienst) but that are not (or no longer) needed or suited to house one of the government's departments (including memorials, castles and churches). Recently, minister Blok confirmed the newly appointed government's ambition to further pursue this initial intention as presented by the previous government. Although it will first be attempted to decentralize the management of the buildings to lower governmental levels and also the possibility of realizing a so-called 'heritage trust' might be explored (in which the heritage objects are placed 'at a distance' from the state, where it can profit from public as well as private investments), it is also not ruled out that they will eventually be sold to market parties (potentially also by means of what have already been labeled as 'package deals') (Blok, 2012).

This plan has instigated quite a large amount of protest within the Dutch heritage sector. For instance, twelve heritage organizations have written a joint letter to the minister, in which they express their concerns (Erfgoedorganisatie Heemschut, 2013):

In our view, our national government should maintain the responsibility for the totality of the monuments that are currently in its possession. The majority of these monuments forms a inextricable and highly important part of the Dutch identity and our national history. The view that monuments will be sufficiently protected by means of the heritage of the monuments law, regardless of who is the owner, is false; the law does not contain a obligation to conserve for owners of a monument [own translation].

And:

We feel that, when the monuments in possession of the state will be disposed in the way currently envisioned by the minister, the ownership of this heritage will become fragmented. One segment, consisting of the monuments that are financially viable, will be exploited, while the remainder will be neglected or become private property [own translation].

Although a definite list has not (yet) been published at the moment of writing, it is expected that a substantial share of the monuments that the state seeks to dispose will be rather difficult to make financially profitable, an observation that has made heritage organizations question what efforts eventually will be made to safeguard their continued existence (idem).

Although the National Building Agency has declared to do 'everything in its power' to keep the monuments open and accessible, at this point it is, at least theoretically, not to be ruled out that they will be transformed into private property if no (semi-)government actor steps in (RTV-NH, 2012). On this basis, as the citation above, as well as Palumbo's overview reveal, it can be brought to the fore that, as a result, sufficient conservation and management may no longer be guaranteed. This, in turn, could harm the degree to which particular groups are able to 'appropriate', relate to and make use of these objects and spaces, which, as we have seen before, is one of the ways in which heritage can foster an urban identity.

It should be emphasized that not of the monuments in question are in situated in urban settlements, the number of possibly affected objects is rather limited (at least for the time being), and privatization obviously does not *a priori* mean seclusion and non-sustainability (as a matter of fact, the vast majority of Dutch national monuments is in private hands). Also, often privatization is only allowed when some kind of agreements are made with the buying party regarding the (new) functional characteristics and the conservation of the monument in question. Nevertheless, developments such as these should be scrutinized carefully, as they might, through mechanisms as identified by the twelve heritage organizations and Palumbo (2006), also have a substantial negative effect on the ability of these objects as standing at the basis of local (urban) pride, solidarity and, ultimately, participatory citizenship, social cohesion and identity in particular affected locales.

#### 4.2.9 Moving beyond the framework 4: built heritage vs. innovative urban design, a false dichotomy?

There is one more issue that needs to be addressed before an answer to the main research question will be formulated. In 'DeLandian' terms, it could be argued that built heritage is often treated as a kind of reified, essential category. This, for instance, manifests itself also in the structure of Gospodini's survey: although not illogical from a methodological point of view, she presents her respondents with a list of ten built elements, five of which belong to the 'heritage' category, the remaining five are classified as 'innovative design'. Although it is acknowledged that heritage may acquire new functional characteristics over time, these new functions are still considered to take place in more or less the same physical setting that has been given to us from the past (whether or not have been subject to certain conservation practices). With this, built heritage is treated as being one side of a taxonomic dichotomy, with the other pole consisting of what are labeled innovative urban design schemes. However, looking back at Table 4.7, it can be noted that the respondents have also mentioned a number of urban elements that not only have a monumental status, but that simultaneously, one could say, also contain elements of Gospodini's definition of innovative urban design schemes (i.e. remarkable, experimental contemporary schemata which contradict or shift the morphological patterns and the existing, dominant architectural structure characterizing the city's landscape). On this basis, in line with the main goal of the research, I would like to bring to the fore a kind of 'third way' (a different type of 'third space' one might even say), an alternative to considering the modernist invention that is heritage on the one and (post-modern) innovative design schemes on the other hand as opposing, almost incompatible poles of the urban identity generating spectrum. In order to do so, I will first introduce the notion of 'meta-modernism'. (It should be emphasized that the following observations are made by a (future) geographer using the perspective of how particular elements of the built urban morphology might contribute to the fostering of distinctive urban identities, explicitly not by an architect or architectural historian with a significant degree of knowledge on the classification of architectural forms).

In her article, Gospodini assumed, as if it were a given, that the whole of the contemporary European (urban) society can be labelled as 'post-modern', with the (ongoing) trend of post-modernization having a deterrent effect on the urban identity-generating power of built cultural heritage. Gospodini's post-modernity premise leaves little or no room for considering built cultural heritage to still function as an effective urban identity generator, especially given its presumed one-dimensional characteristics: heritage serves as the carrier, the manifestation of a modernist 'grand narrative', that of the 'culturally bound nation-state' and the identity it tries to impose via carefully selected urban forms. As Hernández i Martí writes in this regard:

Heritage is established as a product of the reflexive conscience of modernism and, as it succeeds and legitimizes the achievements of modernity, it generates a modernized vision, i.e. homologated and normalized, of past traditional culture, one of the reasons being that heritage can testify and reinforce the appropriateness of the project of modernity. This is the reason why cultural heritage is not only a modern creation but also a modernist one, embedded in the modern myth of the civilization process. (2006, p. 103)

This, indeed, does not resonate with what are described to be the contemporary post-modern societies based on notions such as globalization, individualization, differentiation and multiculturalism, notions that inherently clash with the modernist project. Could it then be possible, looking at the contradicting research findings as presented in this thesis, that Gospodini's presumption of the contemporary relevance of the post-modern discourse already is somewhat out-dated, surpassed by a new reality?

Some would argue that this is indeed very much the case. According to these scholars, the era of post-modernism is giving way to (or has, to a certain degree, already been superseded by) what they have labelled 'post-postmodernism', or 'metamodernism' (van den Akker & Vermeulen, 2011):

The postmodern years of plenty, pastiche, and parataxis are over. In fact, if we are to believe the many academics, critics, and pundits whose books and essays describe the decline and demise of the postmodern, they have been over for quite a while now. (2010, p. 1)

And, quoting Hutcheon:

The postmodern moment has passed, even if its discursive strategies and its ideological critique continue to live on – as do those of modernism – in our contemporary twenty-first century world [...]. Post-postmodernism needs a new label of its own. (2011, p. 9)

Within this new discourse, there are, it is argued, again opportunities for 'big stories', albeit they are narratives that are open towards doubt, self-criticism, not carrying the aggression and arrogance of dogmatic (modernist) convictions (van den Akker & Vermeulen, 2011):

If the modernist attitude towards grand narratives, absolute truths and idealism can be described as fanatic, enthusiastic or naïve and the post-modern as apathetic, ironic or cynical, then the metamodern attitude be

described as a moderate fanaticism, a pragmatic idealism or an informed naivety [own translation]. (p. 19)

Metamodernism, it is stated, currently “find[s] its clearest expression in an emergent neoromantic sensibility” (van den Akker & Vermeulen, 2010, p. 8), which has been expressed in a wide variety of art forms and a broad diversity of styles, across media and surfaces”, one of them being architecture.

Interestingly, the architectural forms dubbed ‘metamodern’ are mostly known for ‘oscillating’ between opposing poles such as nature and culture, familiarity and unfamiliarity and the finite and the infinite. Although not explicitly mentioned by van den Akker & Vermeulen, one might also add the concept pair of history-future to this list, especially since they argue that “[m]etamodern neoromanticism [...] should be interpreted as the opening up of new lands in situ of the old one” (van den Akker & Vermeulen, 2010, p. 12).

If we take this interpretation literally, it seems metamodernism might also provide some useful insights into the contemporary (and future) position of the built environment as an urban identity generator. Here, we can also return to Gospodini (2004, p. 243), who with the eye on European integration, advises to develop “design policies and strategies—drawn by local governments, central governments and the EU—supporting innovative architectural and urban design that [are able to] facilitate the process of integration in the European cities into a global (unified) urban network.” In her eyes, such policies and strategies

[w]ould contribute to an iconography of integration, since innovative design schemes may add to the internationalization of local urban landscapes while at the same time they—as place identity generators—may complement and not replace local, regional and national identities. In other words, they may produce ‘glocalized’ urban landscapes [...] or landscapes [that can be described] as a combination of ‘a mixture through history’ and ‘a focus of a wider geography’, i.e. a landscape that simultaneously expresses both the specificity of place as well as the links with the world beyond. (p. 244)

Still, however, this citation seems to reveal a belief in heritage and innovative design as two separate (albeit not antagonistic) categories. This perspective does not preclude integrating heritage and contemporary design in one particular urban settlement, but it seeks to do so more in a way as also brought to the fore by Rouwendal (in Schattenberg, 2012). He argues that cities should refrain from making a choice between being either ‘old or modern’: instead, he postulates that “heritage should come alive, be given a place in modern cities” [own translation] (idem). In this light, he describes Amsterdam as the ‘ideal heritage city’, since it contains a well-conserved urban core, while simultaneously possessing a number of modern

high-rise districts. In most cities, explicitly those with an historic urban core, this indeed seems the safest, most opportune and perhaps even only feasible way to integrate heritage (old) and innovative design.

But what, then, could a genuinely metamodernist alternative look like, without having to recourse to thinking in terms of separate 'old' and 'modern' spatial districts? If we move one step further along the 'integration continuum', one could mention examples such as the 18 Septemberplein in Eindhoven, where (not completely without controversy and resistance) the Blob, a futuristic looking five-storey glass and steel building designed by award winning Italian architect Massimiliano Fuksas has been located in very close proximity to the monumental Lichttoren (see Figure 4.2, top left), a former industrial complex. With this, the square might be considered as kind of 'metamodernist ensemble'.

Finally, there even examples where the distinction between heritage and what could be seen as contemporary design becomes blurred at the level of individual objects. This might e.g. take place in the framework of expansion (see Figure 4.2 top and below right) or 'conversion (or 'redevelopment') projects' ('herbestemming') (Figure 4.2 below left). The latter is used increasingly frequently as a means for preventing the vacancy or even demolition of a wide variety of monuments (such as factories, churches, town halls, army barracks etc.) in The Netherlands, with e.g. also a Dutch National Redevelopment Programme currently being implemented (Nationaal Programma Herbestemming, 2010). Also many of the survey's respondents mentioned this development as an highly opportune way for maintaining a city's cultural-historic urban values.

Especially interesting in this regard is that conversion is also mentioned in relation to of contemporary architecture by a number of respondents. For instance, a respondent from Maastricht mentioned the 'Kruisherenhotel' as a manifestation (even as a example of 'best practices') of the ways in which (also ancient) heritage and contemporary architecture can be combined and their boundaries blurred, 'deconstructed'. With this, one could state that via such strategies heritage 'stays alive' not only by the new functions it has been assigned, but also by means of its visual outlook.



**Figure 4.2: Innovative design 'in situ' of monumental heritage spaces.**

**Top left: The Blob (2010) in front of the Lichttoren (1927). Source of picture: Thesis author (2012).**

**Top right: The Stedelijk Museum in Amsterdam (1895/2012). Source of picture: John Lewis Marshall and Jannes Linders (2012).**

**Below left: Entrance of the Kruissherenhotel in Maastricht (15<sup>th</sup> century/2005). Source of picture: M. Wagenaar/Wikipedia (2007).**

**Below right: The Van Abbemuseum in Eindhoven (1936/2003). Source of picture: Wikipedia (2008).**

Again, these are observations made by a geographer, not an architectural historian, so the illustrations presented here might not form school examples of what (post-modern) contemporary and innovative design entail, and it will immediately be acknowledged that they are of a somewhat different calibre than the 'avant-garde' Bibao examples as given by Gospodini. Nevertheless, in my view they still resonate quite well with the definition of such design schemes as provided in Chapter two. It may therefore be argued that examples such as these show that hybrid combinations of built heritage (monuments) and more experimental, contemporary and innovative forms of architecture ('eye catchers'), albeit sometimes controversial, could have the ability to create (public) urban spaces that can provide cities with a form of 'historical morphological *eigenheit* (respecting cultural-historic values and thus providing an answer to the contemporary quest for sincerity, meaning and direction as identified by the majority of the respondents). Simultaneously, in line with Gospodini, these differentiated urban forms, as components of 'glocalized urban landscapes containing icons of integration', have the ability to offer a contemporary form of 'common spatial membership' and act as the more accessible and less

'sterile' 'monumental spaces' of our time, serving as what Gospodini (2004, p. 227) calls "a new of species [marketable] landmarks" (a description she reserves for 'regular' innovative design schemes). With this, they could be seen as oscillating between the 'contemporary modernist as well as post-modernist tendencies', as identified by those adhering to the metamodernist school, without locating 'old' and 'new' in separate urban districts.

Clearly, there are a number of aesthetical and practical restrictions to be taken into account (e.g. when it comes to financial issues as well as matters of permissions related to a historic building's or site's monumental status) and obviously only a very limited number of urban districts and heritage objects would be suited for such experimental redevelopments or adjustments, not in the least given the often historical outlook of the surroundings in which they are embedded. This is obviously especially the case for historic cities or 'heritage centres' (see e.g. Denslagen, in Heddema, 2006, on how such integrated architectural urban forms may be criticized). Subsequently, especially at the level of individual buildings, it will be acknowledged that such thought experiments are often more interesting from a conceptual point of view than feasible from a practical one. On the other hand, even detailed, small-scaled and well-designed innovative adjustments, which very well could leave the cultural-historic features of a monument intact, might contribute to avoiding historical districts from becoming 'open-air museums' and to transforming familiar places into more unfamiliar places of 'post-modern inclusion', i.e. places offering a divergent range of interpretations for multiple societal groups (see again e.g. the Kruisherhotel in Figure 4.2).

Also, although obviously dependent on the scale of the project, generally speaking, it could be argued that when developed in the framework of a heritage redevelopment project, such hybrid forms form a more financially feasible way for municipalities to create some kind of contemporary urban design than developing one completely from scratch, especially those with an abundance of (disused) heritage objects. Also, by using heritage (or any kind of already existing structure for that matter) as a kind of basic foundation for (subtle) innovative design, the risks of creating a 'cathedral in the desert' (see Paragraph 2.3) could be argued to be significantly lowered.

## 5. Conclusion

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Identity is one of the essential goals for the future of a good environment. People should feel that some part of the environment belongs to them, individually and collectively, some part for which they care and are responsible, whether they own it or not. (Oktay, 2002, p. 261)

In essence, this thesis has tried to address the question what elements of especially the built urban environment, according to a selected 'pool of experts', provide Dutch cities with their distinctive identity, both now and in the future; what it is that transforms urban spaces into urban places one could say. Although urban identity research has developed into a well-established branch of study within (urban) geography, addressing the subject matter from a wide range of (theoretical) perspectives, relatively few studies have focussed on the specific (perceived) role played by built cultural heritage (ensembles) compared to innovative urban design schemes, not in the least within the Dutch context. With this, this thesis might be considered to serve as a kind of baseline measurement, a first venture into still rather uncharted territory, paving the way for and pointing towards multiple opportunities for further complementing inquiries at the crossroads between human geography, heritage studies, spatial planning, architecture and the practice of 'identity management'. For this reason, the conclusions as presented below should be considered as no more than preliminary and indicative.

In its most extremist interpretation, Gospodini's theoretical conjecture, presented in Chapter two, could be considered as heralding the end of heritage as an urban identity generator. Heritage, it is first argued, is beginning to lose its traditionally unique features as a result of, amongst others, common restoration and urban conservation activities (based on dominant national and international schools of practice), which are causing conserved urban forms to be subject to process of standardization. This would obviously negatively affect what can be considered the first ('Lynchian') component of the 'urban identity' notion, i.e. identities as providing cities with a form of distinctiveness vis-à-vis to other (competing) urban settlements. Second, heritage is considered to be too single-dimensional and therefore less meaningful within the post-modern contemporary European society characterized by processes of individualization, differentiation and globalization. In addition, on this basis it is hypothesized that heritage loses its ability to foster a form of spatial membership', as well as a kind of 'urban pride', which it is traditionally able to provide on the basis of the prospects of economic urban development.

In order to develop an initial means of testing this hypothesis within the Dutch context, the following research question was developed:

To what extent is built cultural heritage, according to Dutch urban policy makers and professionals working in the fields of spatial and economic urban development, city marketing and heritage management, (still) able to function as an urban identity generator within the contemporary globalized and 'post-modernized' Dutch society, especially compared to the assumed ability of innovative urban design schemes to do so, and what does this imply for the future of built cultural heritage as a place-identity generator?

After an exploration of the general role played by the physical urban morphology for urban identities, an analysis of the specific role played by built heritage was conducted. In general, the 82 surveyed 'experts' tend to refute (the hypotheses underlying) Gospodini's theoretical framework. As a matter of fact, heritage (not in the least also those more recent forms not explicitly addressed by Gospodini, such as military and industrial relics of the past) is considered to become more important for fostering urban identities: the city's cultural historical components are seen as 'mirrors of the past, of who we were and are', providing cities with a form of *eigenheit* and authenticity. With this, the vast majority of the respondents seem to agree with Scheffler et al. (2007), who state that "monuments act as irreplaceable focal points stimulating the process of forming and preserving the city's overall identity." In addition, also a number of the sub-elements of Gospodini's conjecture have received more resistance than support. Although heritage standardization forms an issue of importance, it seems overstated to claim that it would genuinely affect the city's *couleur locale*. Also, heritage is also first and foremost considered the manifestation of an urban identity (as opposed to the carrier of a national one, making it less of a closed and perhaps also single-dimensional category than hypothesized). In addition, given the answers of the respondents, the hypothesis that urban solidarities are more difficult to be formed on the basis of a city's heritage qualities seems to be considered invalid for the Dutch context, or at least premature (it must, however, be acknowledged that no explicit differentiation between types of social groups has been made in the analysis, see below).

Besides looking at the (changing) position of built heritage, also the phenomenon of 'innovative urban design schemes' has been addressed, brought to the fore by Gospodini as potentially overtaking built heritage as a (the) key urban identity defining component of a city's spatial morphology. Although it is obviously difficult to develop a singular, general answer, such projects tend not to have an overly positive image amongst Dutch urban policy makers. They are, for instance, considered to be of fleeting value (if any) and of dividing cities into proponents and opponents, i.e. actually undermining social urban solidarity, cohesion and pride. This does not mean that they are not considered of value at all: even in, for instance, the oldest city of the Netherlands: one respondent from Maastricht noted how the city has, during the last fifty years, attempted to "integrate forms of renewing [i.e.

innovative] architecture in the city's heritage elements, in order to prevent the city from developing the character of an open-air museum."

In general terms, however, the Dutch respondents seem rather skeptical about Gospodini's conclusions: on the basis of their own personal views as well as, perhaps more importantly, their experiences in the field, heritage is actually considered to gain importance as an 'identity marker' and, in general terms, seems to be safeguarded for the future as a place identity generator (also on the basis of other inquiries into the potential economic value of heritage in the Dutch context), whereas the development of innovative urban design schemes (not in the least given the current economic climate) is considered rather inopportune.

One could mention a number of (practical) reasons for why these research results seem to clash. A possible explanation would obviously be that among urban policy makers, the described 'post-modern trends' have not been properly reflected upon, and therefore also not yet incorporated within the ideas of the surveyed policy makers on the contemporary position of heritage (keeping in mind it also was one of the objectives of this thesis to confront relevant policy makers with this hypothesized altering position of built cultural heritage). However, also the empirical, practical observations of the respondents, as described in the previous chapter, seem to clash with Gospodini's conjecture. Another explanation could obviously be the incompatibility of this research contexts, with one being conducted in the Dutch, and one in the Basque context. On the other hand, it can be brought to the fore that Gospodini argues that her framework is applicable to the whole of Europe. It seems that more inquiries will remain necessary, focussing on (bridging the potential discrepancies between) perceptions of a variety of urban actors, most notably policy makers, inhabitants and tourists (also see Chapter six).

Despite the results of the inquiry as conducted in the framework of this thesis, Gospodini's conclusions are clearly still of great importance. Especially her initial findings on the differences between perceptions of different groups of respondents (e.g. inhabitants with low and high incomes and levels of education, tourists) are of significant theoretical as well as practical value, for instance in the light of 'urban image management' activities and the different groups they target. Also some of the respondents acknowledged that contemporary design schemes might, for specific municipalities, be quite opportune. In this light, I have proposed to also explore the possibilities of (very selectively) realizing what might be called 'meta-modernist hybrid spaces', in which the often reified dichotomy between built heritage and innovative design becomes blurred. In terms of van den Akker & Vermeulen, such urban elements could be considered as oscillating between the modern and the post-modern, opening up new, creative lands in situ of the old ones, without disregarding their cultural- historical values.

Obviously, combining old en new architectural and morphological (urban) forms is anything but a revolutionary new idea. For example, on the website of the

'Knowledge and Project bank redevelopment', already over 150 Dutch examples of successful redevelopment projects can be found, some of which, perhaps with a bit of fantasy, could also be placed under the denominator of 'innovative urban design scheme' (Kennis- en Project Bank Herbestemming, 2012). Nevertheless, from the more scientific-conceptual perspective of how they (as well as other hybrid urban morphological elements) might (not) function as 'effective contemporary urban identity generators', it can be argued that a profound knowledge lacuna still exists. In this light, the very brief exploration as presented in Paragraph 4.2.9 forms an initial attempt to position (combinations of) cultural heritage and innovative urban design in a conceptual framework of metamodernism.

As some of the respondents stated, it is first and foremost a whole of urban morphological forms that determines (the physical dimension of) urban identities. This focus on conglomerations of buildings (rather than on the urban identity defining ability of individual objects, the approach as also used by Gospodini) seems especially relevant in this light, also given that a genuine integration of monumental and contemporary architectural forms at the level of individual objects often is, although interesting in theory, considered not practically feasible and/or desired.

Finally, it should be mentioned that developing an urban identity on the basis of merely an aesthetic (whether or not innovative and experimental) outlook alone serves only one dimension of creating an urban identity; that is, the 'Lynchian understanding' of an urban identity as simply that what makes it unique, morphologically different from other urban settlements. Gospodini (2004, p. 234-235) is right when she states that "irrespective of the particular functions and activities accommodated in space, innovative design of space (whether buildings, or public open spaces) can make urban morphology in itself and of itself a sightseeing, a tourism/economic resource." However, it is evident that also the functional characteristics of the built environment (whether heritage, contemporary design or 'hybrid') and the degree to which it is simply openly accessible should be considered when the goal is also to foster a true kind of 'Lefebvrian' inclusiveness, a genuine common spatial urban membership one might say. As e.g. Scheffler et. al. (2007) postulate, "identity building based on cultural heritage is only successful when it is designed in an integrated way involving local actors. In particular, in the area of raising awareness, inhabitants and property owners have to be involved, building people's sense of identity, ownership and pride related to the place." In this light, it must be mentioned that heritage privatization, although it should not be rejected *a priori* (obviously, the vast majority of heritage that is in private hands is clearly not exploited in a non-sustainable way), might have a negative impact on the ability of a specific number of monuments to evoke a feeling of 'public ownership' and, ultimately, serve as the carrier of a local identity.

## 6. Evaluation and recommendations

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As any research, also the one presented in this thesis has its shortcomings. This chapter will briefly address some of the most prominent limitations, whilst also a limited number of (many possible) practical as well as theoretical recommendations will be brought to the fore.

First, a critical remark revolving around the issue of defining the notion of 'urban identity' is in place. During the first segment of the survey, it was predominantly explained in what could be seen a more or less traditional 'Lynchian' way: identity as that what provides cities with 'otherness', 'uniqueness', a 'distinctive character' or *eigenheit* one could say, which also played a key role within Gospodini's approach to the concept. However, in hindsight, and this also relates to the remark as made at the end of Paragraph 4.2.2, arguably more emphasis could have been placed on the second dimension of urban identities as highlighted by Gospodini, revolving around the (assumed) ability of different types of individuals and collectives to relate to either heritage or innovative urban design schemes, to 'appropriate them', make them their own. Although the respondents were pointed towards this component of the concept by means of the description of the theory and it not remained completely overlooked, a higher level of what could be called 'comparative validity' might have been reached when the dimension focusing on the degree to which these elements are able to create a form of 'social urban solidarity' and 'spatial membership' was brought to the fore more explicitly (on the other hand, as already mentioned in Chapter four, this 'issue' did yield an interesting insight into the discrepancy between the complex conceptualization of the interplay between urban identities and particular elements of the built environment as presented by Gospodini, and the rather straightforward interpretation applied by the majority of the respondents).

Second, the decision made to focus on the views of a number of municipal employees knowledgeable on the subject matters of built heritage and urban spaces and identities should be addressed. This choice was rooted in the idea that they are simultaneously experts on these topics (with which they would be able to provide certain insights into e.g. the future of built heritage and the identity of 'their city' that e.g. inhabitants or inhabitants would not be able to provide) as well as 'regular individuals' with personal attitudes towards their city's built morphology. In addition, it is (at least to a certain extent) on the basis of their views on the (future) position of heritage in society that urban policy decisions are made (e.g. on the role of heritage within city marketing practices). However, given that these experts are representatives of certain municipalities and their policy decisions, socially desirable or politically correct answers might pose a threat to the value of (a segment of) the research conclusions. This, for instance, is likely to have been the case when the

respondents were asked to determine the distinctiveness of their city and describe its identity, with a vast majority painting a remarkably positive picture, while only a very limited number of respondents pointed out that their city might also contain some less favourable aspects. Surveying e.g. urban inhabitants might yield a different image, with which this also forms one of the recommendations for further inquiries (see below). Also, this means that only general insights, based on individual perceptions from a limited number of 'specialists' have been obtained, whereas Gospodini's inquiry provides a more detailed account of how different social groups actually perceive the built environment. Again, this makes both of the inquiries not completely comparable, despite a number of crossovers. Therefore, as mentioned, they should be considered more as complementing, not competing each other.

Third, as already noted in Chapter three, a number of critical remarks should be placed regarding the response of the survey. The total number of respondents turned out to be slightly lower than was expected (and hoped), whilst also the division of the respondents over the different municipalities was somewhat unbalanced, making it difficult to draw well-supported conclusions on individual municipalities (hence the remark that the conclusions of this thesis should be considered merely indicative).

In this light, as also described in the introduction and the previous chapter, this initial research into the identity-generating capacity of built cultural heritage, could not only form a baseline research into the view of such 'experts' on the position of built cultural heritage as an urban identity generator. It can also be complemented with and form a starting-point for inquiries focussing on a single Dutch municipality and its inhabitants and visitors. These studies, in a similar fashion to Gospodini's Bilbao research, would focus on how these target groups actually perceive the built cultural heritage, innovative urban design schemes as well as what I have labelled 'hybrid metamodern urban spaces' as effective urban identity generators. The questionnaire, which can be used as a kind of tool for comparative analysis, could be modified to be applicable in case studies (also) focussing on other groups of respondents.

The second possible recommendation consists of the following. In Paragraph 2.2.2, a brief overview was given of the notion of the heritage city, as coined by Ashworth and Tunbridge, and an initial analysis has been conducted to assess the relation between the size of Dutch municipalities and the presence of built cultural heritage. Also, in Chapter four, it was mentioned that 22 municipalities have been labelled 'historic/monumental city' at least once, and that these could potentially be (some of the) Dutch examples of 'heritage centres'. However, as Graham et al., (2000) state, not every 'old' or 'historic' city actually is or becomes a genuine heritage city (which has its specific historical 'way of becoming', a somewhat characteristic 'line of flight' one could say). With their model, Graham et al. provide an interesting

means of gaining more insight into the historical development of 'old cities', and into the question why some of these cities have turned into (Dutch) heritage centres, whilst others have not. In a very much DeLandian train of thought, this analytical framework thus focuses on the contingent and complex historical social, spatial and economic (de-) territorializing processes which have lead old cities (as assemblages) to become what they are now; that is, heritage cities or not. On this basis, a question for further (comparative) research could then be the following, providing a possible starting-point for a kind of Foucauldian-inspired 'urban genealogy' with a specific focus on ('tracing' and deconstructing) the contingent processes surrounding the position of built cultural heritage: what have been the critical (perhaps individual) local decisions, events, discourses and circumstances that have made a particular Dutch city to (not) become a heritage city? By (again) using city-specific case studies, Graham's et al. framework would provide a new and encompassing means of understanding and explaining both the historical development of older Dutch cities as a whole, as well as at the specific role played by built heritage within this process.

Third, it is, also (perhaps even especially) from a geographical perspective, highly interesting take a critical look at how the privatization of cultural heritage will be given form in the near future, and what its consequences will be. Will the management of the monuments in question be decentralized to provinces or municipalities, or will they, as some parties fear at the moment of writing, be sold 'on the market' to private actors? And how will this affect these monuments as open, accessible (urban) spaces and their ability to foster a sense of 'common ownership'?

Fourth, I would like to mention the interesting and highly topical field of study dealing with the relation between population decline (an already well-studied topic within the discipline of geography) and built cultural heritage. Although interest in this field of research is growing, it is still in a rather early stage of conceptual development (Kennis- en Projectbank Herbestemming, n.d.). Obviously, population decline forms a significant threat to the continued use and, subsequently, the survival of many types of heritage objects in the affected regions. On the other hand, in light of this particular research, it might also be useful to explore the degree to which built cultural heritage, but e.g. also 'cultural landscapes', can form a useful means in helping (the mostly) peripheral Dutch areas in dealing with this challenging demographic development. According to Rouwendal (in Schattenberg, 2012), this might very well be the case. Addressing the city of Heerlen as one of multiple possible examples of settlements currently dealing with population decline, he states: "Heerlen is currently considered unattractive. Heritage can change this. [The city] possesses some interesting heritage, but it should, [in the light of its (prospected) population development], bring this to the fore more explicitly" [own translation].

A fifth and final recommendation relates to the position of immaterial heritage as an urban identity generator. Whereas this thesis has almost exclusively

focussed on the position of a city's built environment, the position of immaterial cultural heritage has remained largely unexplored. However, as also a number of respondents commented, it is exactly the identity defining role played by this intangible heritage that is receiving an increasing amount of attention from a variety of actors. Not only at the level of organizations such as the aforementioned UNESCO (in the form of the 'Convention for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage', 2003), but (arguably also as a result) also at the national and sub-national level. For instance, 2012 has been labeled as the Dutch 'Year of Intangible Heritage', with the aim of 'creating awareness for the 'large diversity of cultural heritage as can be found in The Netherlands' (Dutch Centre for Immaterial Heritage, 2012). Also, since rather recently, a national inventory of immaterial heritage has been developed (idem), which will contain those traditions that are considered important enough to be safeguarded in order to be passed on from generation to generation.

As Table 4.2 indicated, intangible heritage can also serve as a strong carrier of urban identities (scoring well over 4 on a 7-point scale, in some individual cases even 6 or higher). With this, it could sometimes even differentiate cities from each other to a stronger degree than built heritage is able to do. As one of the respondents stated: "Identity can be first and foremost be found in humans, not so much in buildings." In order to develop a more comprehensive overview of heritage as an urban identity generator, it would be necessary to also take a more detailed look at the extent to which the contemporary societal developments as summarized by Gospodini (when relevant) affect its position as such. Also, from a more practical (economic) perspective, it might also be worthwhile for Dutch cities to, in the slipstream of the current 'immaterial heritage wave' (Frijhoff, 2007), look at the possibilities to safeguard and possibly also 'market' their urban traditions more prominently than they might have done hitherto.

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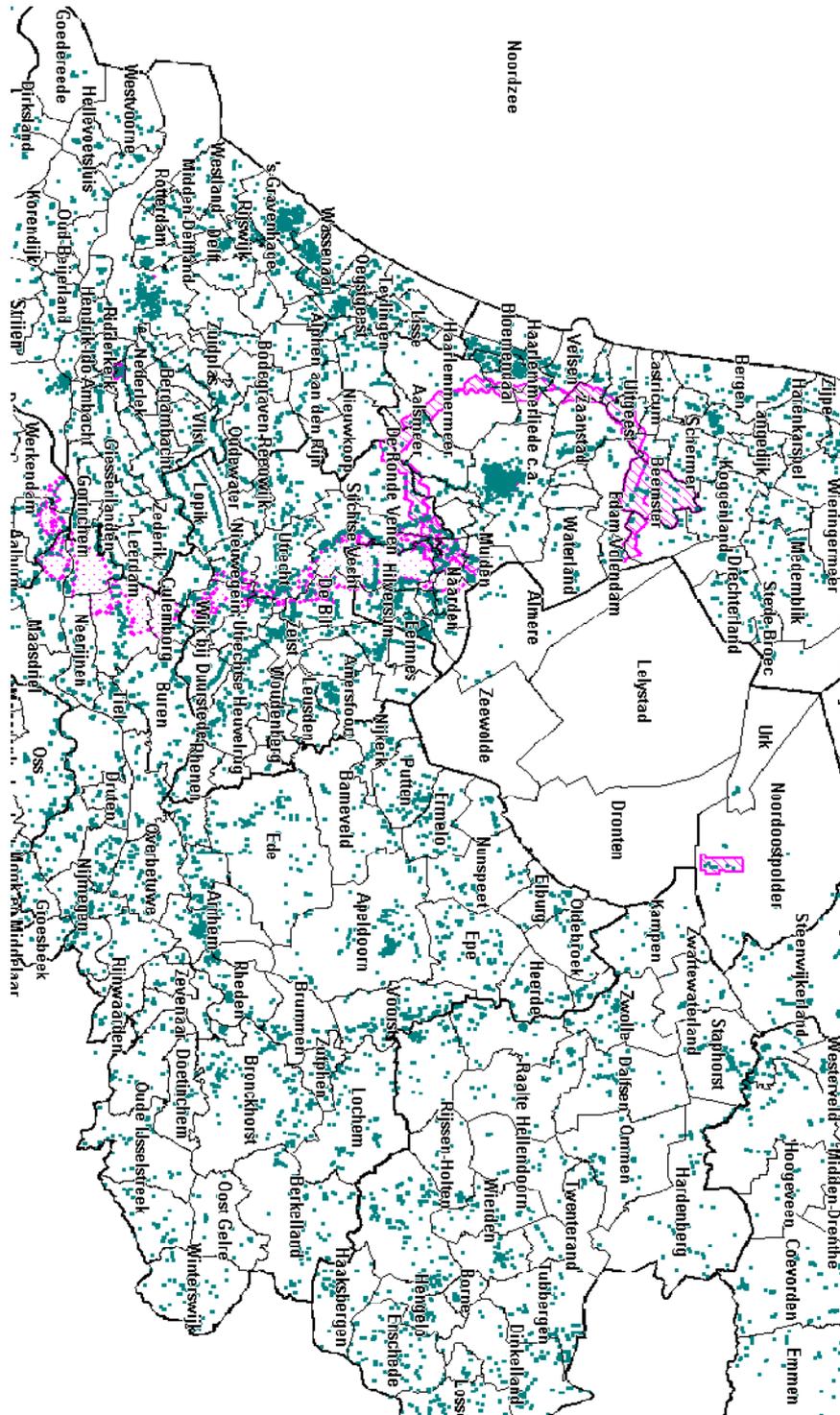
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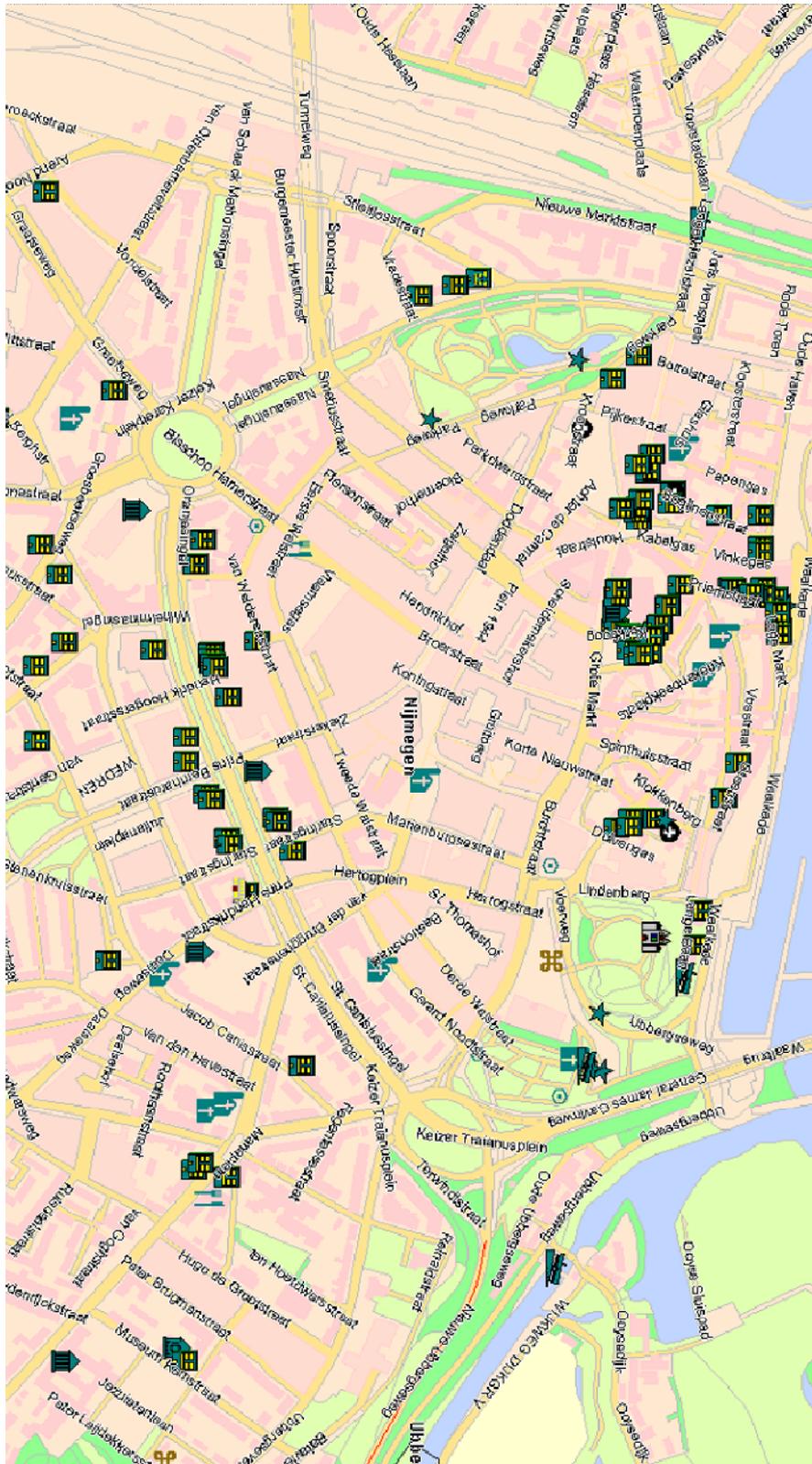
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# Appendices

Appendix A: Spatial distribution of Dutch national monuments in the centre of The Netherlands. (Source: Dutch National Heritage Agency, 2012)



Appendix B: National monuments in the city-centre of Nijmegen. (Source: Dutch National Heritage Agency, 2012)



### *Appendix C: The questionnaire (translated version)*

Dear Respondent,

The following questionnaire is part of a research into the importance of the built morphology of Dutch cities for the fostering of distinctive urban identities. More specifically, it is aimed to develop an overview of the (possibly altering) position of built cultural heritage as a so-called 'urban identity generator', especially compared to the role played by 'innovative urban design schemes'. The research is conducted on behalf of the Dutch Agency for Cultural Heritage in Amersfoort, in cooperation with the Radboud University in Nijmegen (the department of Geography, Spatial Planning and Environmental Sciences). The research population consists of urban (municipal) policy makers and professionals from fields such as heritage management, (spatial) urban development, and tourism and city marketing, working for the (about) 30 largest Dutch municipalities. Given that you are also fall in this category, it would be very much appreciated if you could take a few minutes of your time to fill out the questionnaire, and, in this way, represent your municipality in the research.

The questionnaire contains a number of closed as well as open questions. You might consider some questions to be somewhat unrelated to your specific field and/or expertise. There are, however, no wrong answers; the survey solely revolves around your vision on the topics as they are addressed.

Among the respondents, a copy of the Bosatlas of the History of The Netherlands will be allotted. The results will be processed anonymously. If you have any questions regarding the questionnaire, you can contact [rvanderlugt@student.ru.nl](mailto:rvanderlugt@student.ru.nl).

Thank you very much for your willingness to participate in the inquiry!

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1.

**For which municipality do you work?\***

2.

**In what policy field do you work, and what function do you fulfill within your municipality?\***

The following questions revolve around the core city of your municipality.

3.

How would you describe the identity, the distinctiveness of your city in at most 100 words?

4.

Which of the following characterizations do you feel are applicable to your city? (multiple answers possible)

- |  |   |   |
|--|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> City of architecture              | <input type="checkbox"/> Historic/monumental city | <input type="checkbox"/> Student city                   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> City of government and/or justice | <input type="checkbox"/> Industrial city          | <input type="checkbox"/> Technology and innovation city |
| <input type="checkbox"/> City of culture                   | <input type="checkbox"/> International city       | <input type="checkbox"/> Tourist city                   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sustainable/green city            | <input type="checkbox"/> Knowledge/education city | <input type="checkbox"/> Shopping city                  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Event city                        | <input type="checkbox"/> City of fashion          | <input type="checkbox"/> City to live in                |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Harbor city                       | <input type="checkbox"/> City of sports           | <input type="checkbox"/> City of business and services  |

5.

To what extent do you believe your city possesses an identity that is clearly distinguishable from those of other Dutch cities? The identity of my city is...

Not (or hardly) distinguishable         Highly distinguishable

6.

A characteristic urban mentality

Not (or hardly) important         Highly important

7.

The composition of the city's population

Not (or hardly) important         Highly important

8.

**A local dialect**

Not (or hardly) important         Highly important

9.

**Other urban-specific forms of immaterial heritage (such as urban traditions, handicrafts etc.)**

Not (or hardly) important         Highly important

10.

**The rivalry with another city**

Not (or hardly) important         Highly important

11.

**The city's spatial location (as a central or peripheral city)**

Not (or hardly) important         Highly important

12.

**The city's natural characteristics (e.g. located at a river)**

Not (or hardly) important         Highly important

13.

**The presence of a historic urban core**

Not (or hardly) important         Highly important

14.

**(Other) protected 'urban sights'**

Not (or hardly) important         Highly important

15.

**Religious buildings (e.g. churches, chapels, mosques, cathedrals)**

Not (or hardly) important         Highly important

16.

**Remarkable bridges**

Not (or hardly) important         Highly important

17.

**Mills**

Not (or hardly) important         Highly important

18.

**Parks and public gardens**

Not (or hardly) important         Highly important

19.

**Canals and (inner)harbors**

Not (or hardly) important         Highly important

20.

**Squares**

Not (or hardly) important         Highly important

21.

**Remarkable (historic or recent) architecture of public buildings (such as stations, libraries)**

Not (or hardly) important         Highly important

22.

**Remarkable (historic or recent) architecture of commercial buildings**

Not (or hardly) important         Highly important

23.

**Urban districts with remarkable patterns/architectonic properties**

Not (or hardly) important         Highly important

24.

**Art objects in public spaces (including memorial monuments)**

Not (or hardly) important         Highly important

25.

**Other landmarks (such as remarkable stadiums, theaters, museums, towers)**

Not (or hardly) important         Highly important

26.

**Archeological sites**

Not (or hardly) important         Highly important

27.

**A characteristic 'skyline'**

Not (or hardly) important        Highly important

**Looking at the general built urban structure of your city, how identity defining would you consider the following elements?**

28.

**Historical objects (in the form of national and municipal monuments of at least 50 years as well as protected 'urban sights')**

Not (or hardly) important        Highly important

29.

**Remarkable/innovative forms of recent architecture (small-scaled or in the form of larger urban 'flagship projects')**

Not (or hardly) important        Highly important

Looking at the way your city is being 'sold' (in the form of city marketing), how important is the built urban environment when it comes to presenting your city as attractive towards the following target groups?

30.

**In city marketing activities aimed at attracting new inhabitants:**

The built urban structure hardly plays a role        The built urban structure plays a key role

31.

**In city marketing activities aimed at attracting visitors/tourists:**

The built urban structure         hardly plays a role

The built urban structure plays a key role

32.

**To what extent do you feel the physical characterizes of your city should play a more important role within the city marketing activities of your city? The physical characteristics are currently being...**

Fully underdisplayed        Fully overdisplayed

**Please read the following text and then answer the last questions of the survey.**

Within the domain of the spatial sciences, a discussion can be identified revolving around the question to what degree cultural heritage, within the contemporary globalized and 'post-modern' society, is still able to stand at the basis of recognizable, distinguishable and unique urban identities.

On the one hand there is the view that, as a result of the ever-increasing force of economic and cultural globalization within in today's times, people are increasingly holding on to their (local) pasts, and, with that, attach more meaning to their cultural heritage than ever before. In addition, according to these voices, cultural heritage forms an important, perhaps even growing touristic attraction. This, it is hypothesized, would result in urban inhabitants developing a sense of local pride: the urban past as a means of safeguarding and strengthening both the economic position as well as the identity of the city.

Other scholars claim that, as a result of individualization and cultural diversification, cultural heritage is actually losing much of its traditional meaning. Newcomers find it difficult to identify with what is presented as cultural heritage, given that, it is argued, this heritage offers merely one possible interpretation, which relates to the nation-state and its history. Also, it is argued that heritage management is becoming more and more standardized (on the basis of 'best practices'), which might cause heritage to lose some of its unique features.

On the other hand, they state, so-called 'innovative urban design schemes' (characterized by often post-modern architectural forms), do offer multiple possible interpretations, which would cause these components of a city's built environment to (to a certain degree) take over the role played by built cultural heritage as an urban identity generator. In addition, it are, to an increasing extent, these innovative design schemes which will bring a city the best economic prospects, e.g. in the light of city marketing activities (the Guggenheim Museum in Bilbao would be a prime example).

33.

**At which level of scale do your consider the built cultural heritage of your city to be of importance?**

I consider the built cultural heritage of my city to mainly be a part/manifestation of an urban identity

I consider the built cultural heritage to mainly be a part/manifestation of a national identity

**To what extent do you believe that built cultural heritage is losing some of its ability to develop and maintain a unique urban identity, compared to the ability of modern, innovative design schemes and 'iconic' urban projects fulfill this role?**

34.

**In a general sense:**

Cultural heritage is (becoming) less important

Cultural heritage is (becoming) more important

35.

**For your city specifically:**

Cultural heritage is (becoming) less important

Cultural heritage is (becoming) more important

36.

**Why do you feel this is the case for your city, why do you feel this is the case, and, how does development manifests itself?**

37.

**Which buildings (old or new) or other physical urban elements do you consider to be the most 'identity defining' for your city? (5 names maximum)**

38.

**You have just been introduced to the view that states that built cultural heritage might be losing (some of) its capacity to function as a means to**

develop and maintaining unique urban identities, and have also expressed your own opinion.

If your municipality would have the (financial) resources, which of the following two (in practice obviously not mutually exclusive options) would you select with the eye on fostering a unique, sustainable long-term identity for your city?

The realization of a prestigious and iconic 'flagship project', a modern and innovative architectural highlight in your city

The improvement of the monuments care within your city (e.g. by means of restoration and/or conversion ('herbestemming') projects)

39.

Why would you pick this option?

40.

Do you have any additional comments that might be of interest for the research?

41.

Thank you very much for filling out the survey. If you are interested in the outcomes of the research (and want to have the chance to win the Bosatlas of the History of The Netherlands), you can leave your email address below.

*Appendix D: Survey explanation mail (as sent to specific urban policy makers. A modified version was sent to general municipal email addresses and policy departments)*

Dear Mr./Mrs....

You receive this email in the light of an inquiry into urban identities, which I am conducting on behalf of the Radboud University in Nijmegen (department of Geography, Spatial Planning and Environmental Sciences) and The Netherlands Cultural Heritage Agency in Amersfoort. By conducting this research, an attempt is made to gain more insight into identity constructions of Dutch cities, the way in which they (can) differentiate themselves from their 'competitors', and what role a city's physical environment has to play and might be playing within the future. Special attention is paid to the (possibly changing) ability of built cultural heritage to generate and maintain a distinctive urban identity within the contemporary Dutch context, in order to, in addition, make a modest contribution to improving built cultural heritage policies.

In this regard, I am conducting a survey among municipal policy makers and professionals in over 30 of the biggest Dutch municipalities. Policy makers responsible for and professionals working in a variety of domains such as heritage management (monument care), architecture, spatial planning and development and city marketing and tourism are considered the most relevant respondents for the enquiry.

Undoubtedly you will have a busy agenda, but I would still like to ask you kindly to take some minutes of your time to fill out the survey, and, in this way, make a contribution to the research on behalf of your municipality. In addition, as I seek to include as many respondents as possible (also from each contacted municipality), it would very much be appreciated if you would be able to send me a number of e-mail addresses of some of your colleagues who could be relevant for and interested in the inquiry. You can send these to [rvanderlugt@student.ru.nl](mailto:rvanderlugt@student.ru.nl).

Your contribution will be very much appreciated, whilst the results of the research could also be of interest and use for you and/or your municipality (at the end of the survey you can enter your e-mail address in case you are interested in the final report).

**Among the respondents, a copy of the Bosatlas of the History of The Netherlands will be allotted.**

You can reach the questionnaire via this link:

**[www.thesistools.nl/stedelijkeidentiteiten](http://www.thesistools.nl/stedelijkeidentiteiten)**

The survey can be filled out until 15 September.

Thank you very much for your cooperation.

Kind regards,

Ruud van der Lugt.

*Appendix E: Number of inhabitants and national monuments per included municipality. (Source: Statistics Netherlands, 2011; Dutch National Heritage Agency, 2012)*

<b>Municipality</b>	<b>Number of inhabitants</b>	<b>Number of national monuments</b>
Amsterdam	779.808	7.508
Rotterdam	610.386	620
Den Haag	495.083	1.165
Utrecht	311.367	1.519
Eindhoven	216.036	151
Tilburg	206.240	325
Almere	190.655	15
Groningen	189.991	678
Breda	174.599	549
Nijmegen	164.223	263
Enschede	157.838	152
Apeldoorn	156.199	211
Haarlem	150.670	1.179
Arnhem	148.070	550
Zaanstad	146.940	279
Amersfoort	146.592	462
H'meer	143.374	21
Den Bosch	140.786	542
Zoetermeer	121.911	16
Zwolle	120.355	483
Maastricht	119.664	1.683
Dordrecht	118.810	882
Leiden	117.915	1.242
Emmen	109.259	116
Ede	108.285	220
Venlo	99.793	211
Delft	97.690	695
Leeuwarden	94.838	653
Alkmaar	93.936	399
Helmond	88.560	74
Hilversum	84.984	222
Hengelo	80.747	74
Alphen a/d Rijn	72.680	74