



**Cover artwork:** Andy Warhol *Three Brillo Boxes* (1964). Philadelphia Museum of Art, Philadelphia. Andy Warhol (August 6, 1928 - February 22, 1987) was an American artist who became a central figure in the movement known as pop art. After a successful career as a commercial illustrator, Warhol became famous worldwide for his work as a painter; an avant-garde filmmaker, a record producer, an author and a public figure (Wikipedia, 2007).

# **ATTRACTIVE CITIES**

**Culture, economy and urban change**

**Bram Plouvier**

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Human Geography  
Supervisor: prof. dr. Frans Boekema  
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## Superman

I drive my car to supermarket,  
The way I take is superhigh,  
A superlot is where I park it,  
And Super Suds are what I buy.

Supersalesmen sell me tonic -  
Super-Tone-O, for Relief.  
The planes I ride are supersonic.  
In trains, I like the Super Chief.

Supercilious men and women  
Call me superficial - me,  
Who so superbly learned to swim in  
Supercolossality.

Superphosphate-fed foods feed me;  
Superservice keeps me new.  
Who would dare to supersede me,  
Super-super-superwho?

(John Updike, 1954)

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## PREFACE

This research project was inspired by a longstanding personal interest in spectacular urban development projects. More than many other cultural products of mankind, architecture speaks to my imagination. Whenever I go on holidays I return with tons of pictures of buildings, streets, bridges and towers. Living in two middle sized Dutch cities, Breda and Nijmegen, I was able to closely witness their development. In both cities the most important changes have taken place in their inner cities.

Breda has constructed a new theatre, a casino and large apartment buildings on a former military terrain in the city centre. Now, they are bringing water back into the city by digging up a former canal that was filled up some thirty years ago. In the centre of Nijmegen, a new street and adjacent cultural centre have been constructed (Mariënborg). This street contains two levels of stores, and above the stores one finds, again, apartment buildings. Then there is the plan, that is yet to be realised, to revitalise a square (Plein '44) that was created after World War II. This project will again add more stores and apartment buildings to the city centre. Each of these cities is heavily investing in their centre creating cultural facilities, retail and expensive housing.

When working on a video documentary on the rebuilding of a medieval tower (Donjon) in the centre of Nijmegen, I became interested in the political aspects of urban development. I saw how such a project had the potential to strongly divide people over the aesthetic of the building, its usefulness and the desirability of change. What interested me was how different parties involved in the discussion were mobilising images of the city in their justification or condemnation of the project. The power of architecture to speak to the imagination can easily be used to promote the goals of those who have the power to mobilise it.

I was lucky to be given the opportunity to experience the practice of retail planning and research during an internship at BRO (*Bureau Ruimtelijke Ordening*). I want to thank all the people there for this interesting experience and their hospitality. My gratitude goes out especially to Marije Drost, my supervisor during my stay at BRO, for the time she took to answer all my questions.

I also want to thank Frans Boekema, my supervisor at the Radboud University, for his patience. Most of all I would like to thank my friends: Michiel for listening to all my complaints, Harold for drinking uncountable cups of coffee with me, Vincent for persistently asking me whether "it" was finished yet, Suzanne for all her love and support, and all others who made my time being a student worthwhile. And of course I should not forget to thank my parents, brother and sisters for supporting me through all these years of study.

Nijmegen, 20 August 2007

# SUMMARY

## *Introduction*

There seems to be a tendency in urban development towards enhancing the attractiveness of city spaces. The common critique of this tendency is that it increases the uniformity of city spaces that are meant to be attractive. This negative evaluation of uniform cities has inspired interventions that aim to increase differences between city centres. However, these interventions in the urban environment also tend to increase uniformity, because they have to meet the expectations of the public.

This research project aims to generate insight in the development of city spaces towards diversity or uniformity, the powers of such urban spaces and the role of inner city redevelopment projects in this development, in order to enable stakeholders to measure the consequences of such interventions in the urban environment.

## *Architecture or revolution*

The rapid development of industry caused great social inequality. On the one hand industrial cities showed the tremendous achievements of mankind that promised a better future for everyone while on the other hand they showed the social misery that was the result of the capitalist economy. Although Arnhem was not an industrial city in the classical sense, the conditions of its working class population did not do under for that of larger cities.

The double face of the industrial city formed the basis for a radical social movement that believed that the conflict of interest between capital and labour eventually had to lead to a revolution in which working class would seize power over the state. In reaction to the revolutionary threat and growing public health concerns, the elite tried to seek pragmatic solutions for the problems of the working class without having to change the way wealth and power was distributed. These solutions tried to bring order and discipline into the working class neighbourhoods. These strategies were based on the assumption that social order can be created by organising individuals in space. The first public housing initiatives were the laboratories in which these strategies were perfected.

After World War II Arnhem faced a tremendous rebuilding task and therefore formed a convenient testing ground for modern planning. After the war the municipal government published an ambitious rebuilding and expansion plan that was influenced by the work of Le Corbusier. For Le Corbusier, the architect was to create a new social order in the industrial city by making sure that everyone would benefit from industrialisation. This vision was highly compatible with the post-war rebuilding spirit as it shared its strong belief that social change could be positively effected by government policies.

The long period of economic growth following World War II brought the compromise between capital and labour envisioned by Le Corbusier closer to reality. Mass production became the standard for industrial production in Western Europe and the United States after World War II, as it provided a way to mediate the interests of capital and labour. Both classes could benefit from mass consumption as it gave labour access to the joys of modern life and capital was able to make its profit without having to fear social unrest.

### ***Developing diversity***

The globalisation of circuits of capital has changed the structure of the world economy, causing adaptation problems. After an initial pessimism over deindustrialisation and loss of population in major cities, scientist and policy makers have shifted their emphasis from the problems of cities to their opportunities. This development can be linked to a fundamental change in advanced economies towards a consumer society. This development has brought culture and everyday life into the realm of capitalist (re)production. Culture has increasingly taken on an industrial logic with the standardisation of cultural products. But just as culture has become commercialised, commerce has been culturalised. Artists incorporate their identities, wishes and desires into these cultural products. Consumers distinguish themselves by collecting these products as well as knowledge about them as a symbolic capital.

This development has important implications for urban development strategies. The diversity of city life is the raw material from which cultural products are formed. The city provides a breeding ground for the invention of new products. The cultural development strategies increasingly amount to attracting the producers and consumers of cultural products: creative professionals and conspicuous consumers. This is done by creating working places, building luxurious housing, improving the quality of public space in the city centre, stimulation the development of attractions and events and, last but not least, the promotion of all these activities through city marketing. In this symbolic economy the images that are being attached to a city (or any other "commodity") become more important than their substance.

This is clearly shown in the practice of physical upgrading of the urban environment. In Musiskwartier, the redevelopment project studied here, the creation of diversity in terms of visual elements is combined with large scale retailing and luxury housing. The projects designers claim that the project is a reaction to nameless modernism as it creates a "sense of place" and "identity" by carefully fitting the project into the rest of the city. However, the project can still be regarded as an attempt of local governments and property investors to determine the living environment of people. Projecting the image of diversity on this urban space serves to enhance the profitability of the project. It also hides the fact that any form of diversity that does not fit into the profit motif, such as affordable housing, has been discarded from the project.

### ***Conclusion***

Contemporary urban development practices that revolve around the concept of attractiveness are essentially a continuation of the architectural practices that developed in the wake of the industrial city. In the industrial city architecture and planning contributed to capital accumulation by designing the living environment of workers. Today, in what we might call the post-industrial city, urban development is based on the creation of difference as an attraction. Although this gives the illusion of individual choice, even today our living environment is being determined by the government in cooperation with the market. The result is more than acceptable for those parts of the population that are desirable for their talents or their money, but it is likely to be less convenient for those who are poor and low-educated. They lose their rights to live in the desirable parts of cities, even if these were their neighborhoods for years. Architecture and other forms of cultural expression act as a smokescreen that effectively hides a government that no longer wishes, or is no



longer able, to carry out its core tasks. Local government would do well to guard the collective interests of urban (re)development with vigilance.



# 1 INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 The attractive city

*Bataviastad*<sup>1</sup>, a factory outlet centre near Lelystad, is built to resemble a picturesque fortified town. Together with the Batavia shipyard, where replicas of seventeenth century ships are being built, the centre is a popular destination for sightseers. The centre has been quite successful: since its inauguration in 2001, more than 8.5 million visitors have already past the city gate. This success has resulted in plans to expand the centre in the near future. This expansion, that will add 12.000 square meters of additional retail space, will almost double the existing retail space of 14.500 square meters. What makes all these people visit this shopping city? Is it just the brand name goods that are being sold at lower prices there? Why then, did the developers of the centre make such an effort to provide the stores with a "historical" décor?

This "city" is designed just for shopping. The buildings and streets are designed for this goal; they've never had a different function. Which makes one wonder why the centre was built to resemble an old city? Surely, it would have been easier to build a more standard shopping mall instead. Apparently, its developers believed that people do not just visit a shopping centre for the products it has to offer. Potential visitors also expect the shopping environment to be enjoyable. So *Bataviastad* is more than a shopping mall with a cultural attraction (the shipyard), it is a cultural attraction in itself. In a sense, when passing through the gate, visitors leave the normal world behind and enter an illusionary world that is inspired on Dutch cities of old. The city was designed to appeal to people who wish to see "something out of the ordinary". By using historical architectural elements that are characteristic for Dutch cities an ambience is created that is at once surprising and familiar. This ambience is also being projected onto the planned expansion of the centre. This expansion will be partly modelled after the *Begijnenhofjes*<sup>2</sup> that can be found in several historical Dutch cities. The expansion will also reach the *Markermeer*<sup>3</sup>. There a boulevard is planned which will enable visitors to stroll past the waterfront. A great effort is being made to ensure that the experience of the visitor is as pleasant as possible.

Just as important for this pleasant experience is the absence of any elements of city life that might irritate shoppers. Shopping malls like *Bataviastad* "have swallowed up public outdoor space and transformed it into a private indoor space where special rules apply" (Hulsman, 2001, translated by author). These rules are intended to please the consuming visitor. Practically, this means that any activity that might interfere with the shopping activity is banned from these spaces. The fortifications of *Bataviastad* are more than decorative after all. Contrary to ordinary cities, this town is closed after opening hours. In this city there are no homeless people, drug addicts, loitering youths or protesters. The negative effects the shoppers bring along themselves are also minimised. Visitors leave their car on the free parking lots outside the gate, leaving the city free of pollution and congestion.

Of course, all this attention given to the way the environment is experienced is no coincidence. The Dutch retail business can be characterised as an elimination market. This means that the amount of stores continues to grow, while the total consumer expenditure is dwindling. New retail ventures can only gain market share

by luring customers away from their competitors. Retailers have to do anything within their power to attract customers and persuade them to buy their goods. This is especially true for *Bataviastad* that, due to its peripheral location, has to attract customers over great distances. The pleasant environment for shopping is meant to attract these customers. *Bataviastad* does not have the advantage of a central location that an inner city has. Its accessibility for automobiles, on the other hand, is a lot better than that of an average inner city.

Due to the automobile, centrality is no longer a guarantee for sufficient customers. As a result centrally located shopping areas, such as inner cities, are also forced to compete with other cities and peripheral shopping centres. This competition increasingly revolves around the experience aspect of shopping. Experts believe that shopping is not limited to the actual purchase and consumption of commodities, but that the visual consumption of those commodities and the shopping environment are also part of the activity (Spierings, 2006, p. 92). This means that shopping as an activity in itself – looking at, touching and smelling the products that are laid out – is of value to the consumer. This idea was first developed by marketing experts, who argued that in today's economy experiences have become more important as commodities than physical products (cf. Pine & Gilmore, 1999). According to their argument, in most cases, consumers attach higher value to the experience of buying a product than to the product itself.

From the 1990s onwards, several cities have invested in the public spaces of their inner cities. Shopping streets were closed off for traffic and upgraded with new, high quality pavement (Hulsman, 2001). The storefronts, street furniture and other physical elements of these shopping streets were also upgraded. Like in *Bataviastad*, historical elements were used to increase the attractiveness of these streets. These elements were of course readily available in most city centres, which made increasing their attractiveness relatively painless. The attention for a pleasant experience of urban space is especially evident in areas that have been redeveloped. These projects are often characterised by their traditionalist architecture, human scale and their attentiveness towards human behaviour. In general, the user (visitor, consumer) seems to stand at the centre of attention in these urban development projects. This attentiveness towards the individual is also visible in the larger role surveillance plays in shopping and nightlife. In many cities, the surveillance of the streets has been enhanced using cameras and security guards. These recent development in city centres can be defined in one sentence as the upgrading of "both the functional and the physical form of city centres [...] by the local authorities, property actors and (the organisation of city centre) retailers to enable the consumption space to compete for the travelling purchasing power of (mobile) shopping flâneurs" (Spierings, 2006, p. 107).

The attempts to enhance the experience of urban (shopping) spaces could be seen as a brave effort of local retailers to keep their businesses viable in a highly competitive market. Assisted by the local authorities and property investors they are struggling to create a high-quality shopping area for visitors from the city itself and its surrounding region. Furthermore, the entrepreneurs are also creating much-needed employment. In contradiction to this heroic view of the retailing sector, there are also commentators that strike a different note. As a result of retail business scaling-up, rents in the main shopping streets have skyrocketed, driving most of the independent shops out of the city centre. Branch-stores occupied these streets as they were better equipped to pay such high rents. The independent retail entrepreneurs used to live above their own stores. To maximise the available retail

floor space, the new owners have removed the staircases that led to the upper floors of these buildings. In most shopping streets in the Netherlands the floors above the shops are therefore no longer in use. There is either not enough space at the rear end of these building to build alternative entrances, or the owners are simply not willing to invest in these adjustments. With the independent retailers, a typical type of dwelling has also largely disappeared from the Dutch city centres. Critics say that, as a result of this depopulation, inner cities have become lifeless and boring after closing hours. They also argue that the lack of people living above the stores has had a negative effect on public security in these streets. Moreover, the physical adjustment of city centres is said to have increased their uniformity. In every city the visitor finds the same wall-to-wall pavement. Original elements, that gave the streets their unique character, were removed.

But perhaps its too easy to simply blame the big retail companies for buying out traditional retailers and making all inner cities look alike. Chain stores are successful because people like what they have to offer. Who would still want to visit the grocer, butcher and baker all separately, when one visit to the supermarket also does it? When visiting the inner city, the public expects to see the usual chain stores. They expect to find the brand name stores that can be found in any other city. Moreover, visitors expect to be able park their car in the direct vicinity of the shopping district, which itself is kept free of cars. With their wishes and expectation, consumers contribute to the uniformity of city centres. Consumers even appreciate uniformity to a certain extent; it's comforting to know what to expect.

Besides that, the changes we see in the inner cities are part of much larger structural changes in the economy. Today, almost all sectors of production function through economies of scale and the mass production of standardised goods. Combined with improved means of communication and transportation, these economies now operate at a global level. In the past, clothing was made to measure by a tailor. Standardisation has made the mass production of clothes possible. The workshops in which clothing is produced are mostly located in low-wage countries. Standardisation and mass production did not only make these commodities cheaper, but also more similar. The same goes for the stores and the shopping districts in which these products are being sold. Standardisation and mass production have made these spaces look more alike.

However, experts do agree with the critics that too much uniformity is undesirable. Their argument is that in a competitive the retail market, shopping districts need to diversify (Spierings, 2006, p. 91). Apparently they assume that people are more attracted to places with an identity of their own, places that really differ from other places. The experience of place is important and should be unique to a certain extent. The main idea is, that people prefer to live and do their shopping in places with a specific character; places that offer some form of spectacle. What sets these places apart from others isn't just the number of parking spaces available or the number of shops, it's also those features such as the architecture of the area, events that take place there and the (historical) story it tells to its visitors.

Local authorities, property actors and retailers have a hard time choosing to which of these contradicting signals they will attach more value. Should they strive to get more renowned brands in the inner city or more characteristic shops? Are they to promote living above stores, or should they allow retailers to expand their businesses to these upper floors? Is money better spent on a street event or on security guards? What makes a city attractive anyway? That is the central question here. Of course the answer depends on how we define attractiveness. In most cases,

the use of the word “attractive” betrays an economic motive: something has to be made attractive in order for it to be, directly or indirectly, profitable. As such, shopping centres or city parks are usually not designed to be attractive to the homeless. Seen in this way the question of attractiveness should also raise the question of the social justice of (interventions in) this urban environment. After all, what is attractive to some isn’t necessarily attractive to others. Attraction a certain group often means repelling another. As a consequence making an urban space attractive always implies imposing some sort of selection. The justice in such a selection can and should be questioned.

## **1.2 Central goal and research questions**

### **1.2.1 Central goal**

In the introduction a few examples of recent developments in Dutch cities were reviewed. It was argued that there seems to be a tendency in urban development towards enhancing the attractiveness of city spaces. The common critique of this tendency is that it increases the uniformity of city spaces that are meant to be attractive. This negative evaluation of uniform cities has inspired interventions that aim to increase differences between city centres. However, this cultivated diversity seems to be largely aesthetic and often highly selective in character. In order to address the question of the attractiveness of cities in a critical and thorough manner, this research will try to uncover processes that work in and through the city, its visual form and its representations creating either diversity or uniformity. Insight in these processes will help entrepreneurs, property owners, inhabitants, local authorities and other stakeholders to measure the consequences of interventions in the urban environment. The central goal of this research project can be stated as follows:

*This research project aims to generate insight in the development of city spaces towards diversity or uniformity, the powers of such urban spaces and the role of inner city redevelopment projects in this development, in order to enable stakeholders to measure the consequences of such interventions in the urban environment.*

This research project does not aim to find a definition of attractiveness, nor does it aim to determine what makes cities attractive, because attractiveness is believed to be a matter of taste and, as we all know, there is no accounting for tastes. Instead the focus is on what makes city spaces develop towards uniformity or diversity, as the discussion on the attractiveness of cities seems to revolve around these tendencies. The project also involves uncovering the powers of these (diverse or uniform) urban spaces: the power to influence peoples actions, thoughts and way of life. Narrowing the focus a bit further towards current practices in urban development, the project will examine how inner city development projects create and work with these urban spaces of diversity or uniformity and their powers. These questions will be answered by studying the available literature on urban development. The insights gathered from the literature are then compared to a real case of urban development: that of Arnhem, a city in the East of the Netherlands. This comparison will hopefully shed more light on the current practices of urban development.

### 1.2.2 Societal relevance

Why is this research project relevant? First of all because it addresses a set of practices that are increasingly determining how (inner) cities in the Netherlands look and function today. These practices are best summarised by the term “cultural strategies of development”. These strategies are based on the idea that (due to the declining importance of manufacturing industries) culture and cultural products have become increasingly important in the economy.

[C]ultural strategies of redevelopment ... reflect the growing importance, in all mature urban centres, of a symbolic economy based on such abstract products as financial instruments, information and “culture” – i.e. art, food, fashion, music and tourism. The symbolic economy is based on the interrelated production of such cultural symbols as these and the spaces in which they are created and consumed – including offices, housing, restaurants, museums and even the streets.

(Zukin, 1998, p. 826)

To ensure their position within the economy, cities can employ various strategies of cultural development, such as: organising or sponsoring events, development and management of commercial and cultural facilities and city marketing and/or (re)development.

All of these strategies are in fact interventions that are aimed at making the city attractive to a certain group of people. The kind of people that these strategies are aimed at may range from those working in creative professions to shoppers from the city region. What binds these groups is the potentially positive effect their presence will have on the local economy. Development strategies such as these are usually valued positively as they embrace the diversity in local society; build on a local history, culture and way of life; and support valued groups in society (such as artists, artisans, etc.). These strategies are however often very selective in terms of who or what they will support – as was already mentioned in the introduction – and the criterion for selection is usually, direct or indirect, profitability.

Of course, there is nothing essentially wrong with wishing to be profitable. But I would argue that cities, and the lives of people taking place there, are about more than just making a profit. Local governments, who are mostly involved in strategies to increase the attractiveness of their cities, often point to the effects that selective measures can have for society as a whole. They will for instance argue that making the city attractive for high-income groups will also increase employment for low-income groups. This is of course a valid argument. Strategies such as these, however selective they are, could provide development chances for various groups including those that do not *directly* benefit from them. But it goes without saying that the positive phrasing of increasing “attractiveness”, putting urban space to “better use” or creating an exciting environment for “everyone” hides most of these implicit choices and arguments from direct inspection. It is this rationale that this research project helps to uncover.

This project does not aim to provide a ready-made solution for the development of attractive cities. Instead, it aims to unpack this attractive city and analyse its workings. This is relevant because it will provide insight in the mechanisms that are at work “behind the stage”. This will hopefully bring more clarity to the discussion

on inner city redevelopment and enable those involved with new ways to defend or promote their cause.

### 1.2.3 Scientific relevance

Most theories of urban development have a background in political economy. The founding of cities as well as their continued existence is ascribed to the workings of economical forces. The first cities developed in places where different lines of transport met because these places were suitable for the trading of goods. Cities grew in size, because modern industry required the concentration of large numbers of workers near the factories. These are just a few examples of statements that explain changes in the form and function of cities by pointing to the complex interrelations between production factors: land, labour and capital. They show a strong emphasis on needs: cities grew as people needed a place to live and industries developed as capital "needed" to accumulate. The shifting emphasis in all matters urban from functional needs to experiences poses a challenge to this theoretical perspective. The way cities work can no longer be explained by solely thinking in terms of peoples needs, but involves the consideration of identities, dreams, pleasures and frustrations.

These aspects of city life were originally only being studied in the field of Anthropology. Anthropologists have been engaged in studying the way people live, shop, use the streets and spend their leisure time. However, these studies usually have a narrow focus, exploring only a single phenomenon in depth. As a result, the knowledge generated by this type of research is often too fragmented to answer broader questions of urban development. This broader, more inclusive perspective is needed for two reasons. First of all because, taken together, these cultural phenomena have important material effects that influence society at large. The cultural development and marketing strategies that are being applied to cities work on these material effects. And second, urban development strategies are highly contextual. They make use and build on existing elements of local culture and identities in trying to create a positive "sense of place". The activities of people and the urban forms concerned in these strategies should therefore be studied in their context.

In the study of urban consumption a perspective has emerged that combines elements of the above (Miles & Paddison, 1998). These scholars reject the idea of the city as the locus of production, in which consumption is only an afterthought. Instead they focus on consumption as a formative activity in social life. It is through consumption that people construct their identities, build their cultures and create a sense of place. In a sense the uniform (one size fits all) perspective of modern urban theorist was replaced by an "attempt to highlight the multi-faceted relationships between cities and consumption" (Miles & Paddison, 1998, p. 822) that embraced the diversity of city life. In their perspective, the city is also linked to the economy as a site of wealth accumulation, but this link runs through consumption instead of production. In a sense diversity of the city has become an asset and is actively being developed.

Through urban development the ideas and theories about the city are always translated back into the cities form. This research project hopes to show how the different theoretical perspectives on the city are made visible and work within current city spaces.



### 1.3 Approach towards urban research

This research project takes a specific approach toward urban research. This approach, as well as its methodological consequences, will be explained in this paragraph. The basic assumption in this research project is that it is not possible to make a perfect distinction between the city as a visual object (architecture, urban features) and the city as a discursive concept (shopping district, suburb, slum). This distinction seems self-evident: the first city – the visual object – is generally conceived as the *real* city whereas the second city – the discursive concept – is conceived as an idea or image *attached to* that real city. But this argument rests only on the assertion of the self-evidence that a certain environment is a city:

To ourselves and to each other, we represent a complex environment which rarely has clear edges or boundaries as “a city” or “a town” or perhaps “a neighbourhood”. While we may happily speak of the “reality” of the city as a thing or form, they are the result of a cultural act of classification. We classify an environment as a city, and then “reify” [...] that city as a “thing”. The notion of “the city”, *the city itself, is a representation.*

(Shields, 1996, p. 227)

This means that the ways in which the city is given meaning in official documents, the media and everyday life is part of what *is* the city. In other words: how people think of the city codetermines what the city is.

A short example will serve to clarify the approach presented here. Think of a shopping district. A shopping district is a clear example of a representation (a cultural classification) of urban space that is usually thought of as “real”. When reading this urban space as a concept, it will most likely be interpreted as a place where people are supposed to shop. That’s logical. That means that people are expected to be looking at the goods in the windows, comparing them. This requires walking at a slow speed, strolling through the streets. Non compliance to this dominant mode of using the streets is not appreciated. Driving, cycling or running through these streets is likely to be considered inappropriate and may even be forbidden. This situation is reflected in the language used in politics, planning and business investment. Here, the situation in the streets is translated into terms like “walking routes”, “roaming environments” and “gateways”. This language reinforces the way in which this urban space is used as it may form the basis to ban motorised traffic in the area or hire security guards that will prevent “inappropriate” behaviour, like cycling or skateboarding. But the language used by city hall, an investor, or a community action group can also change the situation.

It is therefore not always possible to determine what came first: the situation or the language. The example shows that there is “an important reciprocity between language and “reality””: language simultaneously reflects reality (“the way things are”) and *constructs (construes)* it to be a certain way” (Gee, 2005, p. 97). This is called reflexivity, in the sense of language and context being like two mirrors facing each other and endlessly reflecting their own images between each other. This observation has important consequences for the way research is to be conducted:

Rather than discard the urban because of its spatial hybridity; rather than disapprove of representations because of their treacherous selective vision of the city, we need to construct multi-dimensional analyses which, rather

than imposing monological coherence and closure, allow parallel and conflicting representations to coexist in analysis.

(Shields, 1996, p. 245)

The main point that Rob Shields is making here is that, instead of taking our perception of the city as an unproblematic truth or reality, we should realise that there are always several sides to an observation. Any analysis of the city should therefore focus on the multiple realities and representations of the city and how they mutually reinforce each other and come in conflict with each other. It is with this phrase in mind that this research project is conducted.

## 1.4 Structure of the report

Summing-up, this research project aims to uncover what makes cities or urban spaces gravitate towards diversity or uniformity, what the powers are of such (diverse or uniform) urban spaces, and how inner city redevelopment projects create and work with these urban spaces of diversity or uniformity. These sub questions are addressed in the following chapters.

Chapter two explores the relation between the rapid development of modern cities and the economic transformations of the Industrial Revolution: how did modern city spaces develop and what made them gravitate towards diversity or uniformity? This chapter shows that social struggle played an important role in the development of the industrial city. We will see that the creation of uniformity is intimately connected with securing the social order in the industrial city.

The third chapter examines how at the turn of the twentieth century, transportation and communication technologies effectively change the global economy. It shows how the economic importance of images rapidly increased, turning the diversity of the city into an asset that has an important role in the accumulation of capital. We will see how development projects create (and work with) diversity and uniformity to ensure their profitability.

In the fourth and final chapter the question of the attractiveness of cities will be reassessed based on a discussion of the project's findings.

## Notes

<sup>1</sup> Bataviastad (Batavia city) is named after the Batavia, the name of the first historical ship that was rebuilt in the shipyard.

<sup>2</sup> Also known as a Béguinage, "a collection of small buildings used by the Beguines, which were several lay sisterhoods of the Roman Catholic Church, founded in the 13<sup>th</sup> century in the Low Countries, of religious women who sought to serve god without retiring from the world. [... It usually] comprises a courtyard surrounded by small dwellings [...] often encircled by a wall and secluded from the town proper by one or two gates." (Wikipedia 2007)

<sup>3</sup> The Markermeer is a 700 km<sup>2</sup> lake in the centre of the Netherlands. The lake used to be part of the IJsselmeer, but was separated from it with a dike as part of a land-reclaiming project that was never finished.

Truly, the air in Europe is pregnant with the spirit of transformation. Communist intentions brew in the deepest layers of society; a bit higher a democratic sense is fermenting; and above that the constitutional ground is shaking. Will it be strengthened by purposeful reform, or does one wish to wait until it bursts and lets through democracy, or disastrous communism? – Consider well what thou will do, men of rule! Consider well, heads of dynasties: the Hour comes; Reform, or Revolution!<sup>1</sup>

(Arnhemse Courant 1848 cited in Schouten, 1976, p. 49)

## 2 ARCHITECTURE OR REVOLUTION

**This chapter explores the relation between the rapid development of modern cities and the economic transformations of the Industrial Revolution. We will see why these industrial cities were characterised by great inequality and struggle between social classes and how this struggle led to a compromise in which the city played an important role.**

### 2.1 Introduction

The Industrial Revolution that started in 18<sup>th</sup> century Britain gave rise to an industrial urbanism that precedes the development of contemporary cities in many aspects. Revolutionary changes in production led to a rapid development of industry and subsequent urbanisation. Over a relatively short period of time, the organisation of manufacturing production changed from an economy rooted in home-based craftsmanship to an economy in which workers were brought together to work in large factories. These changes in the organisation of production had profound effects on society at large. These effects became especially visible in the “great cities” of that time such as London and Manchester in Great Britain and Paris in France. These great cities showed the double face of industrial society.

On the one hand these cities – with their impressive cast iron constructions, electrical lights and steam engines – showed the enormous progress that was made in terms of knowledge and techniques of production. The constant development of industry was shown off at world exhibitions held in those cities. These innovations also found their way onto the streets. The department stores used large plate glass windows to show goods from all over the world to the public on the streets. At night the electric lights turned these windows into a spectacle never seen before. Constructions of steel and glass were used to cover passageways creating an indoor shopping street that was the precursor of the modern shopping mall. These dream worlds of capitalism served a growing number of people who had made their fortune in the industries.

On the other hand the city showed the poverty and misery of those who had to get by selling their labour in the factories. The concentration of manufacturing activities in cities had spurred urbanisation causing alarming problems. Without any form of co-ordination the medieval city was expanded to accommodate the growing numbers of peasants that came to the city to work in the factories. The great number of people seeking employment in the cities created a nearly infinite demand for housing space. Without any rules to govern the housing market, every piece of

available land in the working class neighbourhoods was being built on. Existing houses were overpopulated and courtyards behind these houses were filled up with new construction. While those who could afford it moved to the countryside, the workers lived next to the factories in the city. Notorious is the description by Friedrich Engels of the dreadful living conditions in the working class neighbourhoods of Manchester:

Right and left a multitude of covered passages lead from the main street into numerous courts, and he who turns in thither gets into a filth and disgusting grime the equal is not to be found – especially in the courts which lead down to the Irk<sup>2</sup> and which contain unqualifiedly the most horrible dwelling I have yet beheld. In one of these courts there stands, directly at the entrance, at the end of the covered passage, a privy [toilet] without a door, so dirty that the inhabitants can pass into and out of the court only by passing through foul pools of stagnant urine and excrement.

(1996, p. 51)

Bad sanitation and overbuilding caused several public health problems. Water was polluted as a result of the absence of a proper sewage system. The courtyards and passages were too narrowly constructed to allow sufficient fresh air to enter the dwellings. The health problems caused by overbuilding were further aggravated by pollution caused by the industrial activities that took place near the working class quarters.

These great contrasts were not only found in the great industrial cities of the nineteenth century; it was a general condition of city life. It was also present in the city of Arnhem, which will be our primary site of investigation. Arnhem, located in the east of the Netherlands, is surrounded by one of the most interesting natural environments of the Netherlands. The city lies on the banks of the Lower Rhine and is built on the hills that lead up from the river towards a woody environment. Historically, this natural environment has made the city a popular residence for the upper classes. The levelling of the city wall and the subsequent expansion of the city into the surrounding scenic area made Arnhem into a favourite place of residence or leisure destination for those who could afford it.

Besides being a city of luxury, it was also (in)famous for being one of birthplaces of the labour movement in the Netherlands. It had the dubious honour to be brought under the attention of the King in a report of a commission of the Royal Institute of Engineers in 1853 that was appointed with the task to study the living conditions of the working class. These conditions were of a harmful nature that was not surpassed by those in larger cities in the Netherlands. (Lavooij, 1990, p. 39) The problems observed were of the same nature as those in other cities: the working class was living in neighbourhoods in which no attention was given to proper sanitation and uncontrolled building had produced dwellings that were too small, allowed for poor circulation of fresh air and were insufficiently accessible to light.

These two faces of the modern city uncover a fundamental contradiction in liberal capitalist society. The contradiction between the enlightenment ideal of equal rights and a gradual improvement of well-being for everyone and an economic system that is based on the accumulation of profit for the few and which requires an unreserved pursuit of self-interest. Two strategies have evolved that deal with this contradiction in the city. Le Corbusier named these two strategies

“architecture or revolution” (See paragraph 2.5). The first aims to solve the worst problems of the city while keeping the power relations in society in place. The second solution is a radical one that aims to replace the existing power relations with new ones that should result in a more equal outcome. The development of Arnhem will serve to illustrate how and to what effect both strategies have been enacted. This requires a brief introduction to the urban development of Arnhem during the nineteenth century. After that, both the radical and the pragmatic solutions to the urban problems will be discussed; we will see how these solutions were used to impose order and discipline on the city and its inhabitants. Next we will see how this quest for order is further consolidated with the rebuilding of the city centre of Arnhem after World War II. Finally we will see how the emphasis in urban development changes as a result of the development towards an industrial society of mass production.

## 2.2 Arnhem in the nineteenth century

There are three partly simultaneous developments that have determined the urban development of Arnhem during the nineteenth century, these are: the levelling of the city’s fortifications, the construction of several railroads and the increasing popularity of the natural environment of Arnhem as a residence for the upper class. The way the municipality dealt with these developments had an important impact on the development of the city.

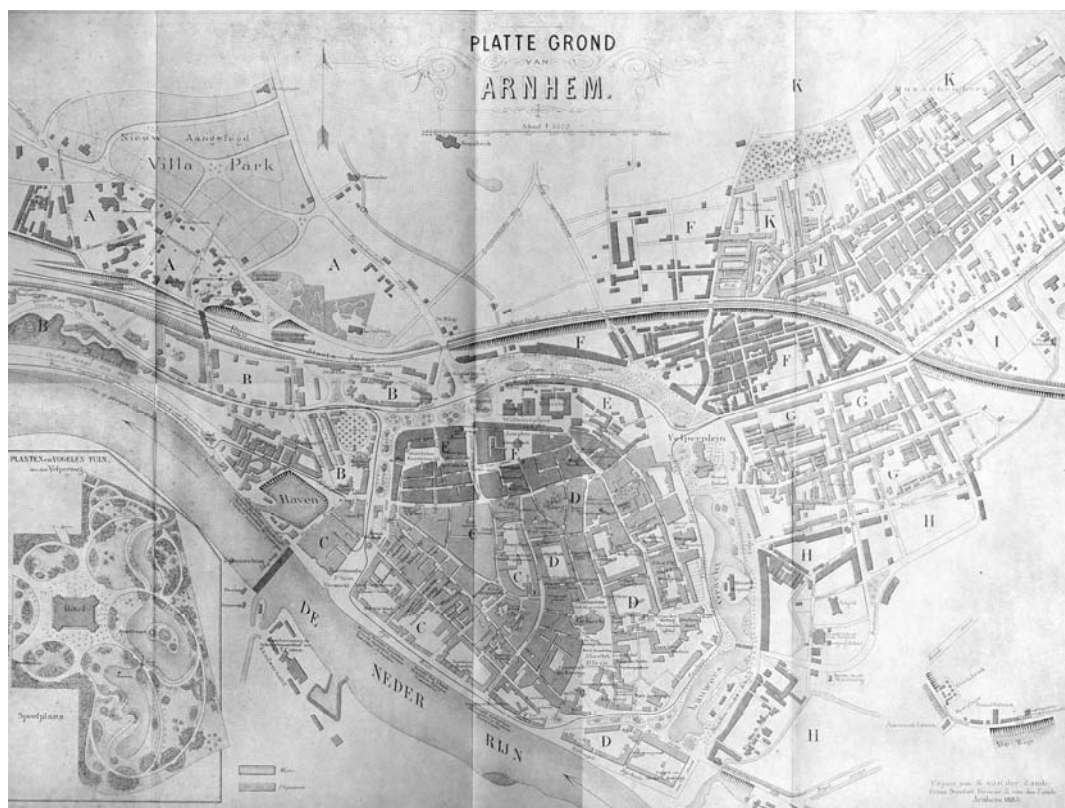


Figure 1: Map of Arnhem in the nineteenth century (Van Laar, 1966)

During the nineteenth century, fortified towns gradually became less important as defensive structures as they were rendered obsolete by advances in artillery. Consequently, the national government started to pass the ownership of these fortification over to the local governments. Most of the fortified towns had grown in population and were happy to rid themselves of this pressing straitjacket. In 1808

Arnhem was permitted to level the outer ramparts for the construction of a landscape park (Van Laar, 1966, p. 9). In 1829 the main wall is also turned over to the city. The municipality soon started breaking down the wall to construct a boulevard with several adjacent plots on the ground that had been freed up. These plots were sold under a number of provisions: the design of the face of the building, the colour of the plaster and the "well-being" of the future owner had to be approved by the municipal authorities (Van Laar, 1966, p. 10). On these plots free standing villas were built during the next two centuries. These buildings formed the outer front of the city; from these building one had a free view on the surroundings.

The carefully constructed connection of the city with its natural surroundings, by means of the landscape park, was spoilt by the construction of the Rhine railway (Amsterdam - Arnhem) in 1845. The municipality had opted for a trajectory that ran along the Rhine as they expected that this would stimulate trade (Van Laar, 1966, p. 11). However, the national government decided that the hills above Arnhem formed a more suitable trajectory. The extension of this line towards Germany ran along the northern side of town and was elevated to prevent equal level crossings with road traffic (Van Laar, 1966, p. 11). The city was now basically locked in by the railroads and had somewhat lost its visual relation with the surrounding environment.

The first expansion of the city had concentrated on creating opportunities for the settlement of the upper classes in the city and the municipality was determined to maintain that course. The employment that was generated by the levelling of the fortifications and the building of houses had drawn many workers to the city. The municipality paid no attention to their accommodation resulting in a explosion of slum building. In 1849 the city architect, H.J. Heuvelink, was ordered to design a new expansion plan. This plan had to correct two "undesirable" developments that had taken place in the city: the elevated extension of the railway to Germany and the abundant slum building in the city (Lavooij, 1990, pp. 31-32). The plan meant an expansion of the city toward the south, to the waterfront, where a quay was constructed, and towards northeast where a second boulevard was constructed on the outer circumference of the former city walls. The first expansion had been built adjacent to the old city centre facing outwards. This new expansion was to hide the railway and the slums from view and was therefore facing towards the centre. The landscaped area on the grounds of the former fortifications was now walled in between the inner and outer boulevards.

While the expansion plan of Heuvelink successful created the preconditions for the settlement of the upper classes in Arnhem, his plan proved to be disastrous for the living conditions of the working class. The plan saw to the construction of a grid structure of roads between the old city and the waterfront and between the outer boulevards and the elevated railway. These new roads were meant to rationalise the uncontrolled slum building in the area, but in fact they only encouraged this practice (Lavooij, 1990, p. 34). The municipality had no legal ground on which to regulate land use, because it did not own the grounds between the newly constructed roads; it had only acquired the land required to build the roads themselves. Soon the entire area was built up by petty contractors, connecting the houses to the road with narrow alleys.

In the eighteenth century Arnhem already had a relatively large upper class population. The city was the centre of the aristocracy of Gelre<sup>3</sup>, whose civil servants also lived in the city (Van Laar, 1966, p. 9). The efforts of the city authorities to create an attractive living environment for the upper class had its effect. The city became known as a city of luxury. The railroads made it easier for those earning

their living in the west of the country to occupy summer residences in the Arnhem. Many who had made their fortune in the industry or the colonies put up residence in the city.

### 2.3 Revolution

The sheer difference between the lives of the "leisure class" and those of the working class raises the question as to what caused this unfavourable situation of the working class. On the surface, the reason was simply that the wage of the average worker was insufficient to pay for the expenses of himself and his family. A survey, held in Arnhem in 1870, showed that a worker needed f9,- to make ends meet, while the average wage was a mere f6,60. Brugmans (1975, pp. 139-143) sums up the forces that were putting pressure on the wages of the working class, the main ones being:

- the growing population that caused the supply of labour to be bigger than the demand for labour;
- the liberal political economy, which stated that wages were to be determined by the abstract market forces of supply and demand;
- the lack of labour protest: the worker was "to uneducated, to underfed also, to even think of pressuring his employer" (Brugmans, 1975, p. 142);
- the incompetence of the average worker: considerably higher wages were given to labourers that *did* have a useful skills;
- and the high taxes on primary necessities of life.

There is a clear difference between the dominant utilitarian philosophy promoted by politicians and business elites, which insisted that market exchange would create the best result for everyone, and the actual economic reality. In reality, industries were profiting from the low wages while the working class suffered. Friedrich Engels was one of the writers and activists that made a strong political statement against the liberal politics of that time, which they saw as the cause of the problems of the working class. In this society, Engels states, "people regard each other only as useful objects; each exploits the other, and the end of it all is, that the stronger treads the weaker under foot, and that the powerful few, the capitalists, seize everything for themselves, while to the weak many, the poor, scarcely a bare existence remains" (1996, p. 48). It was in the great industrial cities that the "social state" of this society was most visible:

Everywhere barbarous indifference, hard egotism on the one hand, and nameless misery on the other, everywhere social warfare, [...] everywhere reciprocal plundering under the protection of the law, and all so shameless, so openly avowed that one shrinks before the consequences of our social state as they manifest themselves here undisguised, and can only wonder how the crazy fabric still holds together.

(Engels, 1996, p. 48)

If people were able to build great cities and create enough wealth for some to live luxurious lives, how could it be possible that others were ignored even the most basic means of existence? How were the people of the more prosperous part of society able to ignore the problems that were so painfully visible? The questions raised by Engels and others formed the basis for a broad social movement that was concerned with the negative effects of the Industrial Revolution. This movement

countered the belief of classical economics that eventually everyone would profit in a capitalist economy. Instead, they argued that inequality was a necessary outcome of the capitalist production system.

The ideas of Engels and others found their scientific foundation in the work of Karl Marx who provided a theory of capitalist society that accounted for its contradictions and inequalities. This theory makes the ontological assumption that production is the basis for all human existence. Here, production is broadly defined as "any human activity of formation and transformation of nature" (Swyngedouw, 2000, p. 44). Industrial production requires the bringing together of a certain combination of tools, machines, technology and labourers with specific skills and attitudes. Thus, seen this way, industries do not only produce goods that can be sold on the market, but also "produce" cities, workers and social relations. This means that the problems that were found in the cities of the nineteenth century cannot be understood by exclusively looking at phenomena such as overbuilding and bad sanitation. Instead, according to Marx, these phenomena are a direct result of the unequal relations of production, such as those that existed between factory owners and workers.

In other words, the organisation of society – its rules, common knowledge and institutions – should in the first instance be seen as the result of the logic of the economy and only in a second or later instance as the result of ideas, knowledge, human will or choice. In Marx's terms, the economic base determines the political and ideological superstructure. The common focus on everyday forms of knowledge and ideals effectively hides the unequal economic relations from inspection. The economic base determines the superstructure (politics, culture, ideology) and is, at the same time, hidden from direct sight by this superstructure. For example: in capitalist society (as opposed to feudal society) people are equal for the law, yet great differences exist because of differences in economic opportunity. Inequality between social groups still exists, but it is no longer part of the official ideology and thereby hidden from direct view. Oppression is replaced by exploitation. Marxists believe that this obscurity is a necessary aspect of capitalist society. This particular combination of base and superstructure forms the Marxist model of the capitalist mode of production.

The capitalist mode of production is "characterised by a fundamental social division between those owning the means of production (capitalists), and those only owning their labor, which they need to sell as labor force to capitalists in order to secure their own short- and medium-term survival" (Swyngedouw, 2000, p. 44). What distinguishes the capitalist mode of production from feudal one is that it is driven by capital accumulation (making a profit). The capitalists pay their workers less than the product of their labour is worth when exchanged on the market. This surplus capital is reinvested in tools and factories and the minimum reproductive needs of the workers, in order to make more profit. So, the organisation of the forces of production (labour, technology and knowledge) comes with a certain set of social relations that are divided along class-lines. These contradictory social relations form the economic base and are the driving forces behind capitalist society.

Scientific Marxism does not only aim to explain the origins of unevenness in society, but also intends to change this society. This wish to move beyond the present into a different future is what lends Marxism its historical perspective. The main method used to analyse the development of society in time is dialectics, which is the analysis of contradictions and tensions that drive history forward (Peet, 1998, p. 79). Whereas earlier dialectical thinkers, most notably Hegel, explained the



development of society as the result of advancing human self-consciousness, for Marx, production and social organisation have explanatory primacy (Peet, 1998, p. 81). According to Marx, the contradictions between the forces of capital and labour would drive history to its logical conclusion: the working class was to seize power of the state in order to create a communist society without classes and property. It was seen as the task of Marxist analysis to make the "real" economic conditions of life visible by separating them from "ideology" to help the working class emancipate itself. A radical change of the mode of production, a revolution, was seen as the only way forward.

To promote this radical change the *International Workingmen's Association*, also called the *First International*, was founded in 1864 in London under the guidance of Marx himself. This association aimed to unite workers all over the world in their struggle against capital. This movement did not, however, take much hold in the Netherlands. The Dutch workers were cautious and objected to the anti-religious leanings of the association (Van Laar, 1966, p. 49). Branches of the International were only established in Amsterdam, The Hague and Utrecht. Soon the organisation became internally divided over the course that had to be followed, one part being in favour of gaining influence through the political system and the other part in favour of action outside of the parliamentary system.

The first labour associations in the Netherlands had been mainly attempts to provide some form of collective social security. Members of these associations received support in case they fell ill and most of these associations also provided support for the elderly. These activities were financed with the contributions of members. Arnhem was one of the first cities in which labour became organised. The two most important labour associations in Arnhem were called *Hoop op gerechtigheid* (Hope for justice) and simply *Arnhem*. The latter operated under the protection of the employers, which explains their anti-revolutionary point of view:

A violent ending of the wage issue leads to nothing but the severing of the relation between capital and labour, and as both forces cannot do without each other, a gradual solution is the only rational one.<sup>4</sup>

(Cited in Van Laar, 1966, p. 55)

And although *Hoop op gerechtigheid* was led solely by workers it also had a law-abiding character. The activism of the association was limited to regular requests for higher wages, which were only granted a few times. Strikes and walkouts were almost non-existent.

It took until the last decade of the nineteenth century before socialism took some hold in Arnhem. Van Laar (1966, p. 66) ascribes this reluctance to the patriarchal relations that most workers had with their employers. This is perhaps the result of the small size of most businesses in Arnhem. In The *Sociaal Democratische Bond* (Social Democratic Alliance) acquired a building in Arnhem and started publishing a newspaper. Both the newspaper and the building were called *Voorwaarts* (Forward). Members of the alliance were regularly detained for their writings in this newspaper. Despite their fearless writing these socialists did not achieve much of their goals. The pragmatic and law-abiding labour associations proved to be more enduring. After the pope's encyclical letter on the labour issue entitled *Rerum Novarum*, catholic worker associations that were based on co-operation between workers and employers became more influential. The overall

attitude of the labour movement in the Netherlands can be characterised as conservative and docile. Working conditions were gradually improved without radically changing the political, economic and religious structure of society. The strategies that contributed to this result are discussed in the next section.

## 2.4 Architecture

The work of political writers, such as Friedrich Engels, and writers of the social realist tradition in literature, such as Charles Dickens, brought the dreadful living and working conditions of the urban working class to the attention of the public. The growing awareness of these conditions – that instigated both compassion for the poor and fear of revolution – prompted efforts to find pragmatic solutions to some of the more pressing urban problems. These efforts lead to the institutionalisation of professions such as medicine, education, and urban planning and architecture. Laws were drafted and government institutions were erected around these professions. This variety of public policies, institutions, and governance mechanisms that were intended to mitigate the “failures of the market” had, and still have, the city as their main field of work.

This development was also visible in Arnhem of the nineteenth century. The urban development efforts of the municipal government were primarily directed towards making the city visually attractive and thereby turning the city into an investment object. These efforts resulted in the green boulevards and landscape parks for which Arnhem is still known today. Unfortunately, the abundant slum building, with which the city was confronted, posed a threat to the ambitions of turning Arnhem into a city of luxury. The two most pronounced threats were a possible revolt of the working class population and the risk of spreading of diseases. Both would make the city lose its attractiveness as a place of residence for the upper classes. Its healthy, green and non-industrial environment was the city’s main selling point.

Besides the risk of revolution, the regular occurrence of epidemics had also raised the concerns of the ruling classes. From experience with epidemics, people had learned more about the circumstances under which diseases could spread. And although they still had limited knowledge of the ways in which epidemics were actually able to spread across the population, it had become clear that the working class was especially susceptible to infectious diseases. As these diseases did not stop at class boundaries, the living conditions of the working class posed a threat to the health of the ruling class. This was probably the main reason why the nineteenth century saw the development of all kinds of profession that were somehow concerned with the well-being of the general public. In medicine new insights led to a better understanding of the working of the human body and its pathologies. These experts gradually discovered that the occurrence of certain diseases could be significantly reduced when people, for instance, had access to clean drinking water and proper sanitation. This knowledge was reason for the crown to order a commission of engineers to look into the living conditions of the working class. That this was not simply a humanitarian mission should come to no surprise. Especially if we take the writings of the commission into account:

The dwelling of the working man is not rarely a place of terror for those more civilised, where the uncleanness is sometimes unsurpassed, the atmosphere ruined by everything that is being heaped up and conducted

there, where vice has its cradle, and where the centres of diseases originate, whose influence expands on all sides to affect all classes and lets the scourge of destruction go round into the houses of those more civilised.<sup>5</sup>

(K.I.V.I., 1855)



Figure 2: Langstraat around 1900 (Van Laar, 1966)

The writings of these experts suggest that they saw the city itself as a diseased body that needed treatment. Their descriptions of the working class quarters show clear analogies to the anatomy and physiology of the human body. One of the illnesses the commission identified in one of the working class slums near the river in Arnhem was a lack of circulation:

Because the street [Langstraat] runs along a curve, and has a considerable length, but above all because it is extremely narrow, almost no circulation of air takes place, so that the different emanations of human and animal excrements, of substances from the stream, of decaying entities etc. accumulate without a draught carrying of these harmful mixtures through the air.<sup>6</sup>

(K.I.V.I., 1855)

They seem to be suggesting that the street is like artery that is too narrow to properly support the surrounding tissue. A lack of hygiene also threatens the city:

By way of its side alleys the Langstraat receives water from higher parts of the city; it is furthermore crossed at numerous points by a brook which, running through a larger part of the city, takes along many filthy and stinking objects that have been thrown into it. [...] On many points of the street one encounters bigger and smaller dunghills and trashcans in which the inhabitants also discard their excrements, which stay there for a long time.<sup>7</sup>

(K.I.V.I., 1855)

Talking about these areas using medical and physiological metaphors effectively naturalises the state that these areas and its inhabitants are in. These areas are pictured as diseased parts of the urban body that need to be cured by the intervention of experts. This “cure” was not a more equal distribution of wealth and power, but the regulation of the dangerous classes.

The emergence of new forms of knowledge in the social and physical sciences used by experts to improve the well-being of large groups of people through planned intervention was a totally new phenomenon. It was a direct reaction to the conditions of life in the early modern city and the threat they posed to the ruling classes. In a prime example of denial the governing elites portrayed the urban poor as the cause of the urban disorder, ignoring the source of this disorder – the uneven development of industrial capitalism. This denial was coupled with an inappropriate feeling of benevolence; the working class was not seen as the supplier of labour but as a class that needed to be supported (Lavooij, 1990, p. 43).

The same attitude towards the working class is present in the “Plan for the expansion of the city of Arnhem” by Heuvelink, the city architect:

This expansion aims to clean up the remaining old parts of the city’s defences, behind which the less affluent classes have taken up residence and increasingly continue to do so.<sup>8</sup>

(Cited in Lavooij, 1990, p. 31)

Heuvelink’s plan did not only hide the slums near the river from direct view but also attempted to bring order to the area by extending several roads towards the waterfront, cutting through the Weerdjes and the Langstraat creating a grid structure of streets. According to Heuvelink these new streets would “result in a more straight alignment of the houses thereby enhancing accessibility, ventilation and public health”<sup>9</sup> (Cited in Lavooij, 1990, p. 33). The commission of engineers lauded this intervention by stating that the construction of streets that intersected with the Langstraat would enhance the air circulation and therefore would soon solve the problems they had described.

This was one of the first attempts in Arnhem to solve the urban disorder, produced by capitalism. The city architect assumed that constructing the roads according to an orderly, geometrical structure would lead to more orderly behaviour (in this case the construction of qualitatively better houses). This already shows the common belief of enlightenment thinkers that social behaviour can be conditioned by means of built space. Experts from disciplines such as architecture and what will later become urban planning start to search for forms, particularly built forms, that could be used to regulate modern society. These efforts are based on the belief in

the possibility of the control and management of individuals through a “distribution of individuals in space” (Foucault, 1979, p. 141). The ultimate goal of these disciplinary practices is efficiency, which is defined as the best result for all parties – both labour and capital. On the basis of these ideas the city is developed into a rational form for controlling behaviour. Before these principles for the control and management of individuals in space evolved into the contemporary practice of urban planning they were first tested and refined with the provision of public housing.

Initially public housing was the work of philanthropic associations. In 1853 the first association for public housing was founded in Arnhem. This association was called *de Commissie* (the Commission) and was superseded by a new association called *Openbaar Belang* (Public Interest) in 1892 (Lavooij, 1990, p. 47). These two organisations were pioneers in the provision of public housing. The houses they initially built were small ( $\pm 25 \text{ m}^2$ ) and consisted out one room with a box bed. The houses had no toilets, but there were public toilets outdoors. A water pump was present and the houses allowed for sufficient access of light and fresh air. These houses were a tremendous improvement compared to those in the slums and rents were affordable. After an expropriation law was passed, the municipality started large slum clearance project in co-operation with the public housing associations. This project dealt with a neighbourhood called *Klarendal* that lies on the northern side of the city behind the elevated railway. At first the clearing of slum housing in this area only increased the problems as there was no alternative housing available for the people that were forced to leave their houses. To solve this problem the housing association built a new neighbourhood, called *Lombok*, on the western edge of the city. After the initial need for housing was fulfilled, the association set forth the clearing process in Klarendal. When these projects were finished, the associating owned a total of 563 houses (Lavooij, 1990, p. 49).

Besides building affordable housing for the working class, the housing association also wished to raise the “cultural level” of their tenants. Lavooij (1990, pp. 50-51) sums up several of their attempts at uplifting their tenants. These efforts were first of all directed at the appearance of the houses and gardens. Regular maintenance had to ensure that their appearance remained orderly and clean. Tenants were also stimulated to contribute to the uplifting of their own living environment. Annually the association gave away a small prize for the best kept garden. The administration nevertheless had to conclude “that great determination would be needed to arouse any concern for the tidiness of their environment in the majority of the inhabitants”<sup>10</sup> (Cited in Lavooij, 1990, p. 52). Besides rewarding tenants who behaved orderly and decent, the administration did not hesitate to give immediate notice to those who didn’t. The efforts of the association clearly show the belief that social behaviour could be conditioned by means of built space. The clean and orderly houses and gardens were expected to discourage the unruly behaviours, which the elite associated with the working class.

The numerous reports, manifestos and pleas that argued for state intervention in public housing finally led to the passing of the *Woningwet* (Housing Law) in 1901 by the liberal cabinet of Borgesius. With this law the practices of the first public housing association were consolidated. Surprisingly for that matter, the same law marks the end of the housing association *Openbaar Belang* in Arnhem. The administration believed that housing that was to comply with the rules in the *Woningwet* would become so expensive that the working class wouldn’t be able to afford the rent (Lavooij, 1990, p. 49). The rules that above all “frustrated” the work

of the housing association were the municipal building regulations. The *Woningwet* had assigned municipalities with the task of drafting and enforcing regulations for the building of houses. This meant that plans for the building of new houses had to be approved by the municipality and that they could declare existing housing unfit for human habitation. The law furthermore gave the municipality the right to expropriate houses and grounds for the development of public housing. On the other hand the national government assisted the municipalities and "accepted" housing associations in their responsibilities by providing financial support in the form of low-interest loans and subsidies.

The law expected cities of a certain size to draft an expansion plan that would guide the future provision of public housing. In Arnhem this requirement was fulfilled with the expansion plan of 1904. However, the plan was never approved by the provincial government because they expected the plan to indicate in more detail the future uses of the different areas (Lavooij, 1990, p. 73). The plan consisted only of a street pattern that was even limited to the main streets in the areas designated for the private development of houses. The liberal municipal authorities regarded the designation of uses as a far too drastic interference in what they saw as private affairs. Despite the disapproval several elements of the plan were realised in the following years. In 1917 a new expansion plan was drafted that described both past developments and several new ones (Lavooij, 1990, p. 79). The most significant development was the creation of an industrial zone on the eastern side of the city. The plan for an industrial zone was conceived after the state railway company decided to construct a railway yard near the Rhine for the transfer of goods. Most of the elements of this expansion plan were carried out, including the construction of the industrial zone, although this plan never got through the official procedure too. In 1927 another plan was developed by an external firm, but this third plan had the same fate as the previous plans as a result of delays and even more conflicts.

Reflecting on the 100 years' anniversary of the *Woningwet*, de Vreeze (2001) nevertheless argues that no other law has had such a tremendous impact on the lives of the population and the appearance of city and countryside in the Netherlands. The reason that this particular law has survived all this time is the fact that it has always provided a basis on which institutions that are involved in the provision of public housing could rely for financial support. These efforts have gradually shifted their emphasis over time to adapt to the changing needs of society, but the *Woningwet* continued to provide a sustainable legal framework for urban development and spatial planning. The passing of this law marks the temporary highpoint in the pursuit of order and discipline through urban development. So far we have seen that this pursuit developed both as a pragmatic reaction to the threat of revolutionary social change and as a result of a growing belief in the possibilities of making individuals more efficient through the application of disciplinary practices. In the next section we will jump to the post World War II rebuilding effort that marks the second highpoint in this pursuit.

## **2.5 Post-war reconstruction: towards a new urban order**

Arnhem became infamous after World War II because of Operation Market Garden. The main objective of this operation was to secure several bridges over the main rivers in the German-occupied Netherlands that would allow Allied forces to cross the Rhine, which formed the last natural barrier to the capturing of Germany. The Rhine Bridge in Arnhem was last of the bridges that needed to be secured. On 17

September 1944 British paratroopers landed near Arnhem. They fought their way to the bridge and were able to hold it for a couple of days despite fierce German resistance. Unfortunately, the advance of the relieving troops was delayed, forcing the airborne troops to give up their position and retreat back across the Rhine, suffering tremendous casualties.

During this operation and the final liberation of Arnhem large parts of the city were destroyed. Vredenberg (2004, pp. 9-10) sums up this trail of destruction. Before the airborne troops landed in Arnhem a number of military targets in the city were bombed. Especially the attack on the barracks near *Willemsplein* caused considerable damage to the surrounding city. In the advance towards the bridge and the following siege, many more buildings on south-eastern part of the city centre were destroyed. After the Germans had regained control over the bridge, on 24 September, they ordered an evacuation of the city that was now located on the frontline. In the following month the city was systematically plundered by the German occupier. On 4 November the abandoned city was again heavily hit by an air strike on the Rhine bridge. Finally, during the liberation of Arnhem, in April 1945, the eastern side of the city was heavily shelled. When the inhabitants of Arnhem returned after the liberation, they found large parts of their city, especially the south-eastern part of the city centre, completely destroyed.

These events left the authorities with the tremendous task of rebuilding the city. At first this task was largely co-ordinated by the national government. The great extent of the war damage and the poor financial state of the government asked for a strict co-ordination of the rebuilding efforts. The first efforts made were aimed at the most urgent problems and consisted of clearing the debris, restoring vital communication and transportation systems and building temporary housing, stores, churches, etc. In the meantime the municipal authorities had started to think about the future development of the city, for which they had set up the "Department for the city plan", *Bureau Stadsplan*. However, in all matters concerning the rebuilding effort, the municipality had to report to the national government. For that purpose, the national government appointed J.A. van der Laan, a town planner from Leiden, as supervisor of the planning process (Vredenberg, 2004, p. 14). Van der Laan was assisted by P.A. van Leupen from Amsterdam. These men respectively represented the traditionalist and the modernist strands in post-war architecture in the Netherlands. The traditionalist strand can be characterised by its attention towards the past, which is shown in the efforts made by its supporters to preserve or reconstruct original city structures and their use of historical ornamentation. Contrary to the traditionalists, the modernists can be characterised by their preoccupation with the future and progressive change.

To understand the spirit of this modernist movement, it is best to briefly consider the life and work of one of its greatest exponents: Le Corbusier<sup>11</sup>. The main theme of his life and work is the loss of the natural order of artisan communities as a result of industrialisation and the search for new forms of order in the "Machine Age". Growing up in the famous Swiss artisan community of watchmakers, Le Corbusier saw how the craft industry and the intricate social structure supporting it were gradually destroyed by industrialisation. Despite this experience Le Corbusier did not intend to resist the disruptive influences of technological change. He "had seen enough of technology to be convinced that it was inevitable" (Fishman, 1977, p. 174). His self-assigned mission was not to save the artisan communities, but to find ways to make industrial society become as harmonious and orderly as an artisan community.

He locates the source of the social disorder of his time in the contrast between the new world of the factory that is as functional, orderly and precise as a machine itself and the old world of the city that was still in a pre-mechanical state. As we have seen, this old city forms a hostile environment for the average citizen. According to Le Corbusier, this was modern exploitation: the workers in the factory “each day make use of the brilliant and effective tools that the age has provided, but they are not permitted to use them for themselves” (Cited in Fishman, 1977, p. 187). He saw it as the task of the architect to create a new social order. The architect was to create a city in which man, nature and machine were reconciled. In this city industrialisation would serve every citizen in his daily life and the worker would see that “things have changed; and changed for the *better*” (Cited in Fishman, 1977, p. 187).

Le Corbusier took a scientific approach to the task of designing this city (Fishman, 1977, p. 190). He saw himself as a scientist, working on the construction of rigorous theories in his laboratory. He was looking for universal truths, separated from contingent circumstances that would be applicable to all modern societies. He planned an ideal type of an industrial city, which expressed these general truths in graphic terms. He called this plan the “Contemporary City for Three Million People”. He started the planning process with an analysis of the generic city, its elements and processes. By analogy to the planning of a factory these elements and processes were classified and spatially separated. Finally these spatially separated parts were connected as efficiently as possible. He argued that the neighbourhood as a spatial unity of work, leisure and community life no longer existed. The contact between people had become more diffused across space, making transportation a very important element of the city. “Le Corbusier believed that the city existed for interchange: the most rapid possible exchange of ideas, information, talents, joys ...” (Fishman, 1977, p. 191).

The influence of Le Corbusier is highly visible in the post-war urban planning in Arnhem. The town planning scheme, which was finished in 1950, was developed by a team consisting of both designers and researchers (Vredenberg, 2004, p. 17). The research element was new as the previous expansion plans had all been drawn exclusively by architects. The town planning scheme includes several thematic “surveys”. The term survey was originally introduced by the *Congres Internationaux d'Architecture Moderne* (CIAM) and was also used in the new towns built in Britain after World War II (Vredenberg, 2004, p. 17). Le Corbusier was one of the initiators of CIAM in 1928, which became the official representation of the modernist movement in architecture. The surveys provided the basis for the plan of the rebuilt city centre and the (future) expansion of the city. Using the knowledge gained from research the planners tried to predict the future development of the city in order to be able to guide and control this development. They saw their plan as the blueprint by which Arnhem would get its final form (Vredenberg, 2004, p. 17).

The content of the plan also suggests the legacy of the ideas of Le Corbusier. Despite the moderating influence of Van der Laan, the supervisor, the modernists got the upper hand in the reconstruction of the city centre. They wanted to bring order to what they perceived as the messy functional structure of the city centre. The main functions of the existing quarters were identified and formed the basis for a more “rational” spatial ordering of functions: the civic centre in the Southeast, around the market square, the business centre in the Southwest, and the shopping centre in the North of the inner city (Vredenberg, 2004, p. 21). The inner city was no longer seen as a obvious place of residence by the planners. This idea was connected



to the idea that the neighbourhood no longer existed. The increasing use of automobiles had transformed the social structure of the city; the social networks that people developed were no longer spatially bound but based on mutual interests (Vredenberg, 2004, p. 18). Planners argued that this development required a strong city centre and a well developed transportation network. The development of this transportation network proved to be difficult in Arnhem. A ring road around the city centre would have to be built in the hilly terrain above the city, which turned out to be too expensive (Vredenberg, 2004, p. 23). It was inevitable that through traffic had to pass over the cities boulevards. Several ambitious traffic plans were thought up, including the construction of tunnels, but most of these plans didn't leave the drawing table.

Besides its scientific and technical character, the work of Le Corbusier also introduced a new aesthetic in architecture. He was convinced that buildings had to be analysed into a small number of standardised components, so that they could cheaply be mass-produced. These uniform components imposed a necessary uniformity on the buildings, but Le Corbusier believed that this limitation would become the basis of a new form of beauty (Fishman, 1977, p. 180). Although the details of building would be uniform, the architect could achieve variation in the general effect. The symmetry, the straight lines and angles of his designs symbolise the "victory of reason over chance, of planning over anarchic individualism, of social order over discord." These principles are visible in his favourite building type, the skyscraper. In skyscrapers uniform housing units are combined into an imposing building. The skyscraper also allowed the architect to "reconcile the seeming opposites of urban design: density and open space" (Fishman, 1977, p. 192). They provide space for greenery while maintaining the high densities that characterise city life. They allow the urban planner to replace narrow streets, with their messy and complex structure, with the orderly structure of uniform buildings that would be visually pleasing in their general effect.

Again we can identify echoes of Le Corbusier in the development of post-war Arnhem. The town planning scheme explicitly states the desirability of high-rise building in the city:

Our Commission is of the opinion that, from the point of view of visual urban development, a more sizeable design of Arnhem wouldn't be inappropriate considering its present character, its size and its significance for the region.<sup>12</sup>

(Cited in Vredenberg, 2004, p. 25)

In the city centre apartment buildings, six to eight stories high, were foreseen. For the planners the benefits of these buildings were beyond dispute. Without further research it was assumed that there would be sufficient demand for this type of housing. In the decade following the war, no high-rise buildings of this size were constructed in the city centre. The supervisor was opposed to buildings that would break with the historical structure of the city centre. Modern buildings were only constructed in those parts of the city that were completely destroyed. The civic centre was especially suitable for the construction of large, free-standing government buildings that conformed to the modernist aesthetic. In those areas that had survived the war, the occasional gaps were mostly filled with traditionalist architecture.

In the following years the grip of the national government on the rebuilding effort was gradually weakened and as a result, by the middle of the nineteen fifties, the supervisor had lost his influence. Under the guidance of his assistant, Van Leupen, the municipal planners no longer respected the historical structure of the inner city (Vredenberg, 2004, p. 27). Along the Boulevard (*Jansbuitensingel*) nineteenth century houses were replaced with high-rise building. The main motif for this urban renewal was the general effect of the city: "in quantity, in size and in height." High-rise buildings added to the standing of Arnhem as a city, was the opinion of the municipal planners. An opinion that was not shared by the majority of the population and as result the systematic replacement of buildings was limited to a small row of housing on the *Jansbuitensingel*.

For Le Corbusier, the social limitations with which his plans were confronted – such as "the laws of property that divided the city into thousands of tiny individual holdings; the fragmentation of governmental authority; the forms that the city of the past had imposed on the present; the citizens who clung to their old cities" – became a life long obsession (Fishman, 1977, p. 206). He was convinced that the solution for social disorder lay in the centralisation of society. He envisions a society that would be led by great bureaucracies, an elite of technically trained managers were to rationalise the production and distribution of goods (Fishman, 1977, p. 195). Only this way social disorder could be ended by satisfying the demands of the working class for higher wages and better living conditions. The dehumanising effects of eight hours of factory work would be overcome by eight hours of leisure. The city was to be the realm of freedom and creativity for those who spent their working hours taking orders. Thus, the problems of work were to be solved in the realm of leisure. Again we see social conflict being solved by bringing a certain order to the built environment.

## **2.6 Mass production and mass consumption**

As it turned out, the fate of the working class was truly improved, the moment their consumption became important to the accumulation of capital. In the past the working class had always been regarded as the suppliers of labour. Their employers only had to provide them with the basic means for their survival. Architects and other experts were there to ensure that they stayed healthy and kept quiet. This situation changed when standardisation of products and production processes allowed industries to produce greater amounts of products at a lower price. The organisation of production was characterised by a mass production of consumer goods – under economies of scale – in large vertically integrated factories. Mass production was coupled with mass consumption – enabled by relatively high wages and readily available credit facilities – making workers not only important as producers but also as consumers. To some extent this proved that Le Corbusier's vision of an industrial society that would serve everyone could be realised.

Thus, as it seems, the course of history took another direction from what Marx predicted. As it turned out "capitalism proved [to be] remarkably robust as a socioeconomic and cultural system in the face of the alleged inevitability of crises" (Swyngedouw, 2000). Since the fall of the communist block, symbolised by the breaking down of the Berlin Wall in 1989, capitalism remains unchallenged. The countries that formed the centre of the capitalist block – the United States, Western Europe and Japan – are the wealthiest countries of the world. In these countries, the industrial economy of mass production did eventually lift the larger part of the

population out of poverty. Should we conclude that the relative wealth that industrial capitalism has brought to some parts of the world invalidates the ideas that inequality is a necessary outcome of this capitalist production system? In his early work, Manuel Castells (1977) argues that this relative wealth is the result of the attempts to solve the social problems of the modern city. These solutions are however unsustainable, because they are an expression of capitalist social relations and are thus prone to crisis.

He argues that the technocrats in charge of urban development projects fail to grasp or control the transition from a "rural" to an "urban" culture and its implications such as alienation, crime and resistance to social change (Castells & Sheridan, 1977, p. 73). The reason for this failure lies in the fact that they explain urban problems from an ecological perspective. Technological development is said to cause the rapid centralisation of production and simultaneous urbanisation. The specific ecological form of the city, the living environment, is seen as a quasi-natural cause for changes in the behaviour of its inhabitants, for the birth of urban culture and urban problems. The ecological form of a settlement is expressed in physical terms such size, density and diversity. This ecological perspective informs the ideal cities drawn by urban planners and architects. The alternating of built areas with greenery reduces the size of the built environment and lowers population densities. Strict zoning regulations ensure the spatial separation of function in homogeneous areas, thereby reducing the intermingling of diverse activities in urban space. The city itself is seen as the cause of all problems; thus, the solutions proposed by urban planners actually aim to deurbanise the city. Instead, the city should be regarded as an expression of capitalist social relations (Castells & Sheridan, 1977, p. 83).

In other words: the capital-labour relation, which is central to the capitalist mode of production, explains the development of cities. The initial development of cities can be explained as the spatial concentration of capital. To be more specific, Castells states that of the three forms of capital identified by Marx – money-capital, commodity capital and productive capital – only the latter is still spatially specific as the first two are delocalised and are able to move on a global scale (1977, p. 443). This means that the only form of capital that is of real interest to the study of cities is productive capital. The circulation of productive capital involves the reproduction of labour power and the reproduction of the means of production. The reproduction of the means of production goes beyond the level of the individual firm in advanced capitalism as technological interdependencies and external economies have become increasingly important (Castells & Sheridan, 1977, p. 444). In other words: we can no longer assume that the production of a commodity will take place in just one firm that is bound to one particular place. As a result the reproduction of the means of production usually surpasses the level of the urban. This means that an urban area cannot be defined in the last instance in terms of the reproduction of the means of production. Factories do not make cities.

The process of reproduction of labour power, on the other hand, is what defines everyday life in Marxist economics. The spatial setting for the everyday life of the workforce is the city. It is here that these people live their lives and reproduce themselves. Thus, it is the "reproduction of labour power" that defines an urban area or unit (Castells & Sheridan, 1977, p. 445). Of course, many other activities also take place in cities, but according to this line of argument only the reproduction of labour power is a necessary for the existence of a city. According to Castells the city is nothing more than the expression of the reproduction of labour power. This reproduction of labour power depends on consumption: people need to be able to

“consume” a place to live, health care, education, transportation, etc. Castells differentiates between two broad types of processes in the reproduction of labour power: individual and collective consumption. The ensemble of consumption/reproduction of labour power/social relations is structured at the level of collective consumption. He argues that, though both processes are articulated in space, collective consumption dominates, and thus structures, the process as a whole. He concludes that we “can, therefore, retranslate in terms of the collective reproduction [...] of labour power most of the realities connoted by the term urban and analyse the urban units and processes linked with them as units of the collective reproduction of labour power in the capitalist mode of production” (Castells & Sheridan, 1977, p. 445).

The argument that Castells is making, is that collective consumption is necessary for capitalist (re)production. In order to accumulate capital, the reproduction of the labour power must be ensured. And an essential element of the reproduction of labour power, besides the minimal survival of labour force, is the preserving of social order and discipline. As we have seen social order is best achieved through interventions in the city. The role of cities in the reproduction of labour power explains the efforts made by local governments to provide for housing, healthcare and transportation from an economical perspective. The state was said to contain and manage the tensions that exist within capitalism. It supported mass production and consumption in several ways: by countering cyclical swings in the economy through macroeconomic policies, by providing welfare and regional development assistance to reduce unevenness and by providing goods poorly provided for by the market. Castells was nevertheless convinced that the limits of capital accumulation within this configuration would soon be reached, effectively exhausting the need for any form of collective consumption, setting off crisis and revolution. He accurately foresaw the crises of collective consumption that would take place in the following decades, but somewhat overestimated the effects it would have. But his main argument – cities are all about consumption – is still important today as it connects urban problems to the logics of capitalism and establishes the notion that cities are important motors of national economies.

## 2.7 Synthesis

In this chapter we have seen how the rapid development of industry caused great social inequality. On the one hand industrial cities showed the tremendous achievements of mankind that promised a better future for everyone while on the other hand they showed the social misery that was the result of the capitalist economy. Although Arnhem was not an industrial city in the classical sense, the conditions of its working class population did not do under for that of larger cities. The double face of the industrial city formed the basis for a radical social movement that found its scientific foundation in the work of Karl Marx.

Central to Marx’s theory of capitalist production is the fundamental social division of labour between those owning the means of production and those owning only their labour. The conflict of interest between capital and labour would eventually lead to crisis and a revolution in which working class would seize power over the state. Nevertheless, the labour movements in the Netherlands can be characterised as mostly anti-revolutionary and consensus oriented. In reaction to the revolutionary threat and growing public health concerns, the elite tried to seek pragmatic solutions for the problems of the working class without having to change

the way wealth and power was distributed. These solutions tried to bring order and discipline into the working class neighbourhoods. The strategies were based on the assumption that social order can be created by organising individuals in space. The first public housing initiatives were the laboratories in which these strategies were perfected. The passing of the Housing Law in 1901 institutionalises these efforts and marks the beginning of the planning discipline in the Netherlands.

We have seen that the greatest exponent of the modern planning discipline, Le Corbusier, had an equally grand ambition. For him, the architect was to create a new social order in the industrial city by making sure that everyone would benefit from industrialisation. After World War II Arnhem faced a tremendous rebuilding task and therefore formed a convenient testing ground for modern planning. After the war the municipal government published an ambitious rebuilding and expansion plan. Le Corbusier's vision was highly compatible with the post-war rebuilding spirit as it shared its strong belief that social change could be positively effected by government policies. This explains the eagerness with which post-war planners adopted his ideas in their practice. He used a "scientific" method: first analyse the urban area, then divide according to certain categories of use and finally connecting these uses with an efficient transportation system.

The long period of economic growth following World War II brought the compromise between capital and labour envisioned by Le Corbusier – in which industrialisation would finally serve every citizen – closer to reality. Although not in the same way as he had envisioned. Mass production became the standard for industrial production in Western Europe and the United States after World War II, as it provided a way to mediate the interests of capital and labour. Both classes could benefit from mass consumption as it gave labour access to the joys of modern life and capital was able to make its profit without having to fear social unrest. Labour unions got an institutional status; they became official communication partners of government and employers. The "collective" goods that the government provided for were designed to serve the interests of all. The struggle over the access to certain goods became part of politics, all sorts of interest groups seeking to get their needs satisfied by the government. These collective goods are mostly part of the city; the city is therefore the place where the capital labour compromise is negotiated.

This chapter has shown that the development of the modern city is bound with the development of industrial capitalism and its associated social problems. The uniformity of the modern city thus reflects its economic logic: it is the direct result of increased use of mass production techniques and the planner's efforts to create orderly cities.

## Notes

<sup>1</sup> Original citation: 'Waarlijk, de lucht in Europa is zwanger van omwentelingsgeest. Communistische bedoelingen broeijen in de diepste lagen der maatschappij; wat hooger gist democratische zin; en daarboven dreunt de constitutionele bodem. Zal deze worden bevestigd door doelmatige hervormingen, of wil men wachten dat hij scheure en zich opene tot doorlating der democratie, dan wel van het heilloos communisme? – Bedenkt wel wat gij doet, mannen des bestuurs! Bedenkt het wel, hoofden van dynastiën: de Ure komt; Hervorming, of Revolutie!'

<sup>2</sup> River running through the center of Manchester.

<sup>3</sup> Gelre was a Duchy in the Low Countries. Today, the Dutch province Gelderland takes up the larger part of its former territory, that used to extend into Germany and Limburg.

<sup>4</sup> Original citation: 'Eene gewelddadige ontkenning van het vraagstuk der arbeidersloonen leidt tot niets, dan tot verbreking van het verband tusschen kapitaal en arbeid, en daar deze beide magten elkander niet kunnen missen, is eene geleidelijke oplossing de eenig rationele.'

<sup>5</sup> Original citation: 'De woning van den werkman is niet zelden eene plaats van schrik voor den meer beschaafde, waar de onreinheid soms ten top stijgt, de dampkring verpest is door alles wat opeengestapeld en verrigt wordt, waar de zedenloosheid hare wieg en bakermat vindt, en waar de brandpunten ontstaan van ziekten, wier invloed zich wijd rondom verspreidt om alle standen aan te tasten en de gesel der verwoesting te doen rondgaan tot in de huizen der meer beschaafden.'

<sup>6</sup> Original citation: Doordien de straat in eene bogt loopt, eene aanmerkelijke lengte heeft, maar bovenal doordien zij zeer naauw is, heeft hier bijna niet de minste circulatie van lucht plaats, zoodat de verschillende uitwasemingen der ex- en secrementen van menschen en dieren, van de stoffen uit de beek, van rottende zelfstandigheden enz. zich verzamelen en ophoopen, zonder dat deze schadelijke mengselen bij de lucht door de togt worden weggevoerd.

<sup>7</sup> Original citation: 'De Langstraat ontvangt door kleine zijstegen de afwatering van het hoogere gedeelte der stad; daarenboven stroomt er op veel punten eene beek onder door, die, door een groot gedeelte van de stad loopende, vele vuile en stinkende zelfstandigheden en excrementen, die er in geworpen worden, mede voert. [...] Op vele plaatsen van de straat treft men grootere en kleine mesthopen en vuilnisbakken aan, waarin ook de excrementen der bewoners worden geworpen en die daar langen tijd blijven liggen.'

<sup>8</sup> Original citation: 'Deze uitleg heeft ten doel de opruiming van de nog bestaande oude gedeelte der vestingwerken, waar achter de mingevoerde stand zich heeft gevestigd en aanhoudend meer en meer vestigt'

<sup>9</sup> Original citation: 'de woningen meer in gelijke lijnen worden daargesteld, de gemakkelijke toegang en doorsnijding meer lucht en doortogt en voor de gezondheid bevorderend zal zijn'

<sup>10</sup> Original citation: 'dat er heel wat volharding nodig zal zijn om het gros van de bewoners tot eenige belangstelling in het net uitzien hunner omgeving op te wekken'

<sup>11</sup> Le Corbusier (Charles-Édouard Jeanneret) was born on October 6, 1887 as the son of a watchcase engraver in La Chaux-de-Fonds, one of the most prosperous handicraft communities left in Europe. While he was destined to become an artisan himself, Le Corbusier developed himself into perhaps the most influential architect of the modernist movement.

<sup>12</sup> Original citation: In visueel-stedenbouwkundig opzicht is onze Commissie van oordeel, dat een wat forsere vormgeving van Arnhem, gezien zijn huidige karakter, zijn grootte en zijn regionale betekenis, niet zou misstaan.

In these worlds, every stroller may image himself to be a director, though all strollers are the objects of direction. That direction is, as their own used to be, unobstructive and invisible (though unlike theirs seldom inconsequential), so that the baits feel like desires, pressures like intentions, seduction like decision-making; in the shopping malls, in life as shopping-to-stroll and strolling-to-shop, dependence dissolves into freedom, and freedom seeks dependence.

(Bauman, 1997, p. 27)

### 3 DEVELOPING DIVERSITY

**At the turn of the twentieth century, transportation and communication technologies effectively change the global economy, forcing cities to rediscover their worth. The new media rapidly increased the economic importance of images, giving rise to a symbolic economy. In such an economy, not only the urban form is important, but also the images of the urban. We will see how this development extends the domain of social struggle beyond the urban form, the streets and squares of the city into the realm of these images.**

#### 3.1 Introduction

“Who now reads Marx?” Lash and Urry (1994, p. 1) ask in the introduction to their book entitled *Economies of signs and space*, for “is there any writer now more dated, more of a “dinosaur” than Marx?” Not only has communism, the only existing alternative to industrial capitalism, failed to deliver what the early socialists had hoped for, the type of industrial capitalism to which it formed a reaction has also changed. As we have seen, states used to have considerable control over capitalism through laws, control over financial markets and the provision of public goods. Those who opposed capitalism could try to capture that state all together or pressure it to change its policies. Today, the economy has shifted towards a more global level as companies have found ways to shift production to places where labour is cheaper. Capital is allowed to move over the globe more freely than ever before and mergers and buyouts have transferred the ownership of companies from local elites to global capital. Local governments can point to the pressures of this globalisation when people ask for higher wages or better public amenities. These developments have instigated anxieties in many people who fear that they are losing grip on their means of existence.

However, this experience of capitalism is by no means new. It was famously described by no other than Marx himself:

Constant revolutionising of production, uninterrupted disturbance of all social conditions, everlasting uncertainty and agitation distinguish the bourgeois epoch from all earlier ones. All fixed, fast-frozen relations, with their train of ancient and venerable prejudices and opinions are swept away, all new-formed ones become antiquated before they can ossify. All that is solid melts into air, all that is holy is profaned, and man is at last compelled

to face with sober senses, his real conditions of life, and its relations with his kind.

(Marx & Engels, 1965, p. 34)

According to Lash and Urry this analysis of how with modernity “everything that is solid melts in to air” is very relevant today. According to them this is a whole “other” Marx, who is “not so much the theorist of industrial capitalism, more the first analyst of modernity”. He characterises modernity, as we can read from the quote, as a constant development, in which nothing remains stable and has any permanent worth.

Especially his analysis of the circulation of capital, which drives this constant renewal, has “much to contribute to the analysis of those changes in the social structure that seem to be sweeping all before us as we approach the turn of the twenty-first century” (Lash & Urry, 1994, p. 1). We have already touched upon these circuits – commodity-capital, money-capital and production-capital – when we discussed collective consumption. As opposed to the static explanation of industrial capitalism in terms of class struggle, circuits of capital allow for a more dynamic explanation of the capitalist economy. In the words of Lash and Urry (1994, p. 1): “If production takes place at one time and one place, circulation allows that production to vary – as commodities are cast adrift and acquire mobility to flow through changing spaces at shifting times.” This idea allows for a constant reconfiguration of economies as capital accumulates in certain times and spaces and is extracted from others. Lash and Urry divide these spatial and temporal configurations of the circuits of capital in three broadly distinct periods.

During the first period, which they call “liberal capitalism” the circuits of capital operate largely at the locality or region. This is period in which Engels was walking through Manchester. In the second, termed “organised capitalism”, circuits flow most significantly on a national level. Here we can recognise the period of nationally regulated economies in which cities were largely defined by collective consumption. In the third and latest period, which we are living through now, that of “disorganised capitalism”, circulation takes place on an international scale:

At the end of the twentieth century circuits of commodities, productive capital and money qualitatively stretch to become international in terms of increases in global trade, foreign direct investment and global movements of finance. [...] This transformed political economy is both “post-Fordist”, in that it succeeded the era of mass production and mass consumption, and postmodern. [...] And in the shift from organized to disorganized capitalism, the various subjects and objects of the capitalist political economy circulate not only along routes of greater and greater distance, but also – especially with the rise and increasing capacities of electronic networks – at ever greater *velocity*.

(Lash & Urry, 1994, p. 2)

This transformation towards a global economy has shifted industrial production away from the “advanced” capitalist nations to less-developed parts of the world where labour is cheaper. Industrial decline caused companies that were important employers in their communities to go out of business or to downsize and outsource



parts of their activities. As the importance of industrial production declined, the amount of public money spent on collective consumption was also drastically reduced. The progressive development of transport and telecommunication infrastructures has led some theorists to assert that cities would gradually disappear as “their chief *raison d’être* – face to face contact – would become substituted by electronic networks and spaces” (Amin & Graham, 1997, p. 412). In this view the world becomes a “global village” in which spatial proximity is no longer a factor of importance.

Contemporary geographers have reacted to this position by concretising Marx’s analyses of the circulation of capital and pointing out that “circulation takes place in real, substantial geographical and social spaces” (Lash & Urry, 1994, p. 1). They assert that successful circulation of capital depends on “the organisation in space and the movements of goods, money, commodities and people” (Swyngedouw, 2000, p. 47). First of all, the need to invest in factories and machines causes the agglomeration of production activities because – in order to generate economies of scale – production needs to be concentrated in certain places. In these places an increasing percentage of the available labour pool is integrated into capitalist production. This requires the education and socialisation of this potential workforce. Expansion of production eventually leads to scarcity on the labour market, giving workers the opportunity to demand higher wages. The spatial organisation of production eventually leads to crisis as these spatial structures start to act as barriers to further accumulation (Harvey, 1975).

The opening up of the world through advances in transportation and communication has two important effects. First of all it effectively enables international competition for markets. This means that firms are less able to claim their home markets as they were during the period of organised capitalism. If other firms are able to produce equal products, or equivalent substitutes, at a lower price, consumers are likely to choose these products, thereby diminishing the turnover for the original manufacturer. When some firm invents a new consumer product it has less time than before to capitalise on this invention before other firms are able to produce an equivalent to the new product.

Secondly, capital is increasingly free to circulate across the globe. Since zero or low profits are not an option, capital demands that firms continuously increase productivity, expand the resource base, diminish capital circulation times, lower the costs and/or expand the market (Swyngedouw, 2000, p. 48). When new markets are sought that allow more productive investment, existing centres of accumulation lose their strength and value. This interplay between geographical expansion and concentration, which leads to geographically *uneven development*, is a necessary outcome of the capitalist economy.

The key argument made by geographers and scientists from other disciplines is that the decline of industrial activities in cities of the western world is part of a constant restructuring of the economy and not a sign of the decreasing need of spatial proximity for economic, social and cultural activities. This restructuring does not simply imply a shift of production towards those places in the world that are “less developed” that presumably provide better opportunities for accumulation. There are several “new” ways in which cities are important in the global economy. Authors such as Saskia Sassen have pointed to the importance of large metropolises as key centres of command and control. “The main argument here is that the dispersal of the productive capacity of transnational corporations (TNCs) over increasingly global distances requires a parallel territorial concentration of high-level

headquarters' functions at the apex of the global urban hierarchy" (Amin & Graham, 1997, p. 413).

Others, such as Micheal Storper, note that "certain privileged metropolitan areas, which offer the localization and external economies most appropriate to support flexibly organized industrial districts of small, innovative firms, have managed to re-industrialised successfully since the 1980s" (Amin & Graham, 1997, p. 415). The central idea here is that the faster and more widespread circulation of capital requires firms to be able to adapt to new market conditions very quickly, which is only possible when they specialise their production and co-operate closely with other firms to produce end-products. These industries of flexible specialisation are located in urban areas because of "the increasingly central importance of reflexive knowledge inputs and services" for this type of production (Amin & Graham, 1997, p. 414). As working with knowledge above all else requires people, the inhabitants of cities form an important knowledge base for production.

Surprisingly perhaps, since the end of the 1990s, cities have gained even more importance in the academic and public discussion as an environment where creativity and innovation can flourish (cf. Florida, 2002). Cities are stimulating because of their density, cultural diversity and vitality. Concepts such as "creative cities" or "fun shopping" have taken on hegemonic properties in the discourse of real estate developers and government officials. Their efforts to create city spaces that are entertaining and attractive point to the increasing importance of consumption (instead of production), creativity and culture for urban economies.

### **3.2 The question of supply and demand**

Although the transformation towards a more global economy initially led some experts to believe that cities had lost their dominant role as centres of economic, social and cultural life, others have pointed out that cities are still important as centres of command and control, as clusters of knowledge intensive production and as breeding grounds for creativity and innovation. The "creative destruction", brought about by changing circuits of capital, did not just deprive cities of their industrial activities but also created new opportunities by which cities could ensure their livelihood. In other words: the optimistic thinking about the future of cities is not just the result of a new empirical reality of economic globalisation but also of a different reading of that reality. Both academic and political discussions about the future of cities seem to have shifted their emphasis from the social problems of cities to the opportunities they generate for the (economic) development of their inhabitants (cf. VROM-raad, 2006).

The policy framework for the economic development of Arnhem, entitled *Arnhem aantrekkelijke stad* (Arnhem attractive city), shares this confidence in the "resurgence" of cities:

Whereas, during the eighties, cities lagged behind in terms of economic growth and the creation of employment, since a couple of years this trend has been reversed. Across the whole spectrum cities are growing faster than the national average. Cities have rediscovered their traditional role as centres of economic growth, art, culture and enterprise. This is also apparent in Arnhem.<sup>1</sup>

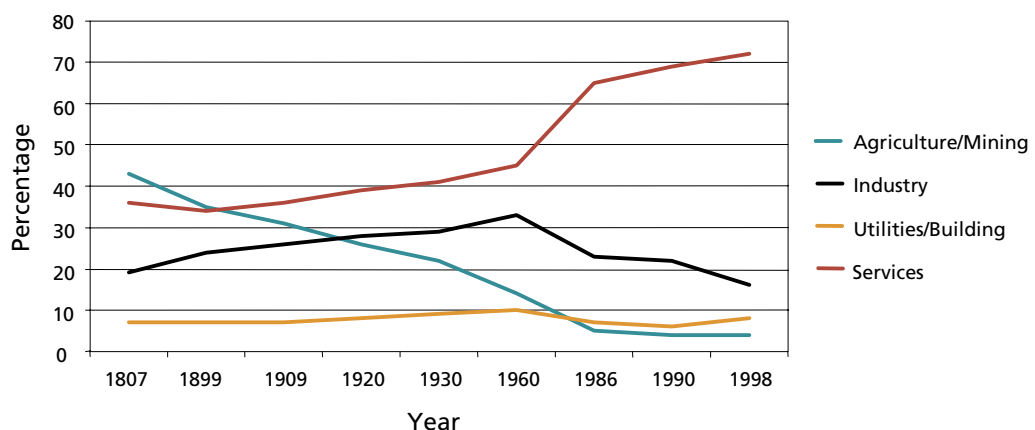
(De Fockert, 2002, p. 7)

The policy framework shows that the ideas with regard to the development of the city and the economic “reality” of the city are mutually reinforcing. Any decline or resurgence in a cities’ economy influences the strategies and concepts applied to the economic development of that city. The other way around, new strategies and concepts may obviously have an effect on economic reality. However, for the purpose of clarity, this section will first discuss how the globalisation of the economy affected the Netherlands, focussing on the changes in the economic “reality”. The development of the Netherlands will be discussed to see whether we are witnessing a break or the continuation of the past. This involves the inspection of the development of supply and demand in specific areas of the urban economy, such as manufacturing, housing and retailing. In the following sections we will turn our attention to the strategies and concepts that are linked with this development, in order to find some explanations for the phenomena introduced here.

### 3.2.1 (De)industrialisation

Deindustrialisation of Western countries is commonly explained as an inevitable result of technological progress. Automation has made industry less labour intensive as more and more tasks can be done more efficiently using machines. Industrial production that is still hard to automate has been relocated to countries where labour is cheaper. The developments in transportation and communication technology have broken the spatial relation between production and distribution as goods could easily be transported over large distances. This enabled capital to roam freely across the earth’s surface looking for those places that offered the best return on investment. This meant that countries that traditionally belonged to the core of the world economy became less suitable for industrial activities. Ironically, it were the relatively high wages of factory workers, which they had secured through their social struggle, that became the main reason for the relocation of industries. If we look at the development of the employment structure in the Netherlands (see Figure 3) over the last 200 years, the process of deindustrialisation is clearly visible.

Figure 3: Development of the employment structure in the Netherlands (Schenk & Theeuwes, 2002)



At the beginning of the nineteenth century most people are still employed in agriculture. During the nineteenth century and the first half of the twentieth century, agriculture’s share of total employment gradually declines. At the same time the shares of industry and services increases at an equal pace. During this period the majority of the employment in services consisted of household servants. This type of employment declined throughout the first half of the twentieth century

due to the increasing use of electrical household equipment (De Rijk, 1999). This decline is not visible in the statistics as the employment that was lost, was replaced by other form of employment in services. After the 1960s, the growth of industrial employment changes into a decline, that is accounted for by an even faster growth of service sector employment. By the end of the 1990s the employment in industry has dropped below twenty percent, while the employment in services is at a soaring seventy percent. The figures seem to show a classic case of deindustrialisation.

However, Schenk and Teeuwes (2002, pp. 13-14) argue that deindustrialisation is partly a statistical artefact. National statistical agencies count the number of employees per sector on the basis of international classification systems for business sectors. These classifications are based on the production techniques that were in use the moment these classification systems were designed. As these classifications always lag behind process and product innovations, the statistics generated seldom offer an accurate representation of reality. The rapid change in the employment structure after the 1960s can partly be attributed to such an artefact (Schenk & Theeuwes, 2002, p. 14). It reflects the growing tendency of manufacturing industries to outsource parts of their production process to other sectors of the economy, especially to the service sector. As classification systems were not updated to reflect this behaviour a large part of the employment attributed to the service may arguably still belong to the industrial sector.

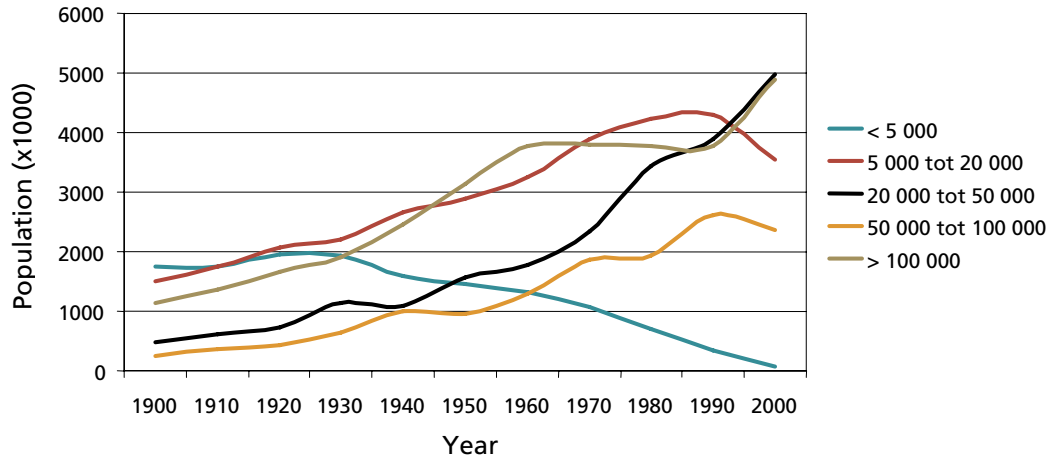
The growth of what is called "strategic business services" in terms of employment and added value makes up for what is lost in traditional industrial activities. The main conclusion to be drawn from these facts is that the decline of traditional industrial activities does not imply that the cities and countries of the Western world are losing their hegemonic position in the world economy. These facts do however uncover important changes in the structure of employment. The shift away from material production towards the business services results in a increasing demand for high-skilled labour and a decreasing demand for low-skilled labour. This shift of employment towards and knowledge intensive and management related work reflects the sustained importance of core region and cities for the world economy. The policy framework for the economic development of Arnhem, *Arnhem aantrekkelijke stad*, recognises that "the economy increasingly revolves around the availability and application of knowledge" and concludes that cities "that want to be economically successful need to be attractive for highly educated knowledge workers and be able to bind these groups" (De Fockert, 2002, p. 7).

### 3.2.2 (Sub)urbanisation

Another result of the increased possibilities of transport is suburbanisation. If suburbanisation is interpreted as the migration of inhabitants out of the (central) city to its surroundings, it has a long history. It was already common in the eighteenth and nineteenth century for the elite to have residences in the countryside or on the edge of cities. However, suburbanisation did not become a widespread phenomenon in the Netherlands until the 1960s. The increasing (auto)mobility enabled "ordinary" people to live outside of the city and commute to their job in the city. At first the phenomenon was limited to the large cities in the western part of the country, but during the 1960s smaller cities also started to lose their population to surrounding municipalities. In the largest cities of the Netherlands – Amsterdam, Rotterdam, The Hague and Utrecht – suburbanisation

caused an absolute decline in their population size (see Figure 4). This initial population decline slowed down in the following decades and by the 1980s it was already transformed into growth again. Smaller cities show only a minor sag in their population growth during the same period.

Figure 4: Population development for municipalities of different size in the Netherlands (CBS, 2007)



In the Netherlands, most cities have been able to hold on to their population or have regained population. Partly, the departing population has been replaced by an influx of immigrants from abroad who found relatively cheap residence and many of their peers in the city. It is however evident that government policy had a strong hand in the slowing down of the suburbanisation process. The concentration of urban development is one of the main points of interest of Dutch spatial planning policy (WRR, 1998). Spatial planning policies have ensured that house-building has predominantly taken place on locations adjoining existing places. In the cities themselves elaborate programs were set up to improve the building stock and strengthen their social, cultural and economic structure.

Table 1: "Demand for living space"<sup>2</sup> in different "living environments"<sup>3</sup> (VROM, 2004)

	lives there	wants to live there	total demand	supply
<i>downtown</i>				
1998	451,300	232,528	683,828	
2002	457,118	188,430	645,548	519,818
<i>uptown</i>				
1998	2,082,744	338,926	2,421,670	
2002	2,133,144	412,322	2,545,466	2,557,504
<i>suburb</i>				
1998	696,142	180,977	877,118	
2002	731,828	197,302	929,130	845,956
<i>village</i>				
1998	1,812,786	277,421	2,037,731	
2002	1,844,526	224,945	2,069,471	2,072,325
<i>countryside</i>				
1998	561,577	91,943	653,520	
2002	579,981	119,991	699,973	631,274

It is generally assumed that people moving out of the city are looking for a green and quiet living environment away from the hustle and bustle of city life. Seen this way, suburbanisation is also a move away from the poor living environments that were described in the previous chapter. Especially families with children mostly prefer to live outside of the city. Apart from the results of all the policy measures to prevent cities from falling apart, there also seems to be an autonomous reurbanisation trend. As we can see in Table 1, the total demand for downtown living space exceeded the total supply by 24% in 2002. A growing number of people seems to prefer to live in the city. Research has shown that this group even includes a considerable number of families with children.

Karsten et. al. (2006) distinguish three reasons why some families with children choose to live in the city, these are time-space advantages, social networks and the identity of the city dweller. Combining work and childcare requires clever time management, especially for families in which both parents work. In order to minimise the time lost with commuting some families choose to live in the city. The social network in which these people are involved are also an important argument for living in the city. These networks are path dependent to a certain extent and are useful in sharing the burden of child rearing and sometimes also as a resource for business relations. Finally, now that the suburban living ideal has become within the reach of most families, living in the cities has become a way for some people to distinguish themselves. All in all, it seems to have become fashionable again to live in the city. This means that of all the distinguished living environments, downtown has the greatest (re)development potential today.

### **3.2.3 Development of the retail sector**

Retail is the dominant function in today's inner cities in the Netherlands. Any discussion of the changing economic "reality" of these city centres should therefore pay attention to the development of the retail sector in the Netherlands. The aftermath of World War II forms a decisive period for the development of the retail sector in the Netherlands. As with urban development in general, the development of retail conformed to the need to carefully allocate the scarce resources and the strong belief in benefits of normative planning (the scientific methods of Le Corbusier and co). "Central place theory" was used as a planning concept in which supply and demand were attuned to each other. This planning policy provided for a hierarchy of retail locations. Low level locations were expected to provide basic goods that were needed on a day-to-day basis, such as food. Higher level location would provide for goods that were less often needed and therefore had a greater reach. The goal of this policy was to ensure a fair system for the distribution of consumer goods: everyone was to have a store within a reasonable distance from home.

By the end of the 1950s the first effects of the economic advancement start to reveal themselves (Evers, Van Hoorn, & Van Oort, 2005, p. 32). The average spending power grows, increasing the demand for both household and luxury goods. The growing (auto)mobility enlarges the action radius of the average consumer considerably. As a result the competition among retail locations increases as their market areas start to overlap. At the same time a number of innovations take place in the retail sector. Self service (and the related advent of the supermarket) is perhaps the most influential of these innovations. The success of this formula lies in

its ability to create economies of scale that allows for cheaper goods by selling in larger quantities. This up-scaling of retail businesses put pressure on the retail hierarchy as supermarkets started to look for locations outside of the cities, with lower land prices and better automobile accessibility.

Although the growing prosperity of the Netherlands soon rendered this planning practice obsolete, the planning concept proved to be rather resilient to change. The main reason for this resilience was the fear for a loss of vitality of city centres (Buursink, 1996). The established order had invested heavily in the city centres and wanted to protect these investments. This fear of disinvestment was primarily prompted by the impoverishment, caused by strong suburbanisation, observed in American inner cities. In response to the advent of peripheral retail businesses the establishment of retail businesses outside of the “existing retail structure” was banned except for a few trades that had special space requirements (Evers et al., 2005, p. 33). This restrictive policy did not put a halt to retail up-scaling. In order to adapt to the inflexible spatial system “retail activities have moved upward through the hierarchy” (Borchert, 1995, p. 335). This upward movement has rendered most of the lowest level retail locations uneconomic and has put pressure on the highest level locations (which are typically the inner cities). Although some of the planning regulations for peripheral retail activities have recently been relaxed, the new regulations still attempt to protect the existing (hierarchical) retail structure, although pressure for change is mounting (Evers et al., 2005, p. 39).

One of the most pronounced developments in the retail landscape of the Netherlands is the increasing number of chain stores in the average inner city (Van de Wiel & Needham, 1996, p. 58). Again, the pursuit of economies of scale is the reason behind this development. Chain stores sell large quantities of standardised products in multiple locations. The centralisation of purchasing, distribution, marketing and management allows them to be more profitable than independent retailers. The strict retail planning tends to strengthen the competitive advantages that chain stores have over independent retailers. As we have seen, the up-scaling of retail takes place within the prescribed hierarchical structure. The demand for retail space is therefore higher in the top of the hierarchy: the inner cities. The increasing rent prices in inner cities are undermining the position of local retailers as they are less able to take advantage of economies of scale. As the rents increased with the demand for retail space, these retailers were initially forced to relocate from the main shopping streets to the secondary shopping streets. Their places were taken by chain stores. Especially in cities with a small inner city this succession may even spread into the secondary shopping streets.

The increasing share of chain stores is a highly visible development as new store owners will usually change the appearance, the interior decoration and the goods for sale. What is less visible, but perhaps more interesting, especially with regard to the discussion of the globalisation of the economy, is the ownership of the real estate that these store owners rent. The data collected by Needham and Van de Wiel (1996) suggests that retail real estate has increased in popularity as an investment object for institutional investors during the last decades of the previous century. The percentage of retail spaces owned by regionally based natural persons declined, while the percentage of retail spaces owned by non-regional legal bodies has increased (see Table 2). This development is more pronounced when the main shopping streets are considered separately. This suggests that retail real estate has developed into an interesting investment object for institutional investors, in other words, for national and global capital.

The strict retail policy in the Netherlands has artificially created a high demand for retail space in the inner city. Although this policy has kept city centres economically viable, it has probably contributed to the current dominance of chain stores in Dutch inner cities. The stable and high demand for retail property has turned it into a popular, low-risk investment object.

Table 2: Store ownership in 1970 and 1994 (Van de Wiel & Needham, 1996)

	regional natural person		non-regional legal body	
	1970	1994	1970	1994
Arnhem	41%	25%	24%	34%
Nijmegen	45%	31%	25%	35%
Apeldoorn	61%	51%	17%	26%
Tilburg	40%	26%	33%	54%
Kampen	72%	57%	9%	17%
Zutphen	64%	42%	13%	21%

### 3.3 Consumer society

Mass production of industrial goods has enabled more social groups than ever before to participate in consumption above the basic level of subsistence. This observation has led many to believe that we are living in a so-called “consumer society” in which the consumption of luxury goods is no longer limited to the happy few. This increasing wealth has allowed many to buy a house in the suburbs, a car, a television set, computers and other luxury goods. The rationalisation of production also allowed workers more free time, both through shorter working hours and more days off. This has tremendously increased the time people spend on leisure time pursuits such as travelling, watching all sorts of cultural performances and visiting events.

Historically, the emergence of this consumer society can be traced back to the early days of industrial capitalism. When the development of industry and colonisation brought new, exotic goods to cities like Paris and London new consumption patterns developed. The new entrepreneurial classes bought goods to show of their wealth and success. According to Veblen (1970) this “new leisure class” tried to mimic the consumption practices of the upper classes. The advent of mass production and mass consumption is said to have made these forms of leisure consumption available to a much larger part of society. Of course, this “democratisation” of consumption is limited in its scope as it neglects those that live on the margins of advanced capitalist economies and those in the Third World for whom consumption is still a matter of life and death. However, mass consumption is thought to have had profound effects on our society in general and cities in particular.

This democratisation of consumption was what Le Corbusier had in mind when he planned his “Contemporary City for Three Million People”. In this ideal society, industrialisation would eventually serve every citizen and allow them to live a leisure-full life. Even though this consumer society was much more limited in scope than his ideal society, where it emerged, it seemed to bring Le Corbusier’s ideal close to reality. The post-war period was characterised by a strong belief in the future. In this future there was no place for war and deprivation. Every citizen was to have equal opportunities to participate in society. The well-being of each and every



citizen was seen as a collective responsibility. It is during this period that the Netherlands – as well as other European countries – develop into a welfare state. The belief in the future and the possibility of social change (effected through government policy) was supported by the long period of economic growth that followed the second world war.

Some authors question whether the birth of this consumer society brought people more freedom and happiness. Instead, they argued that consumer society provided greater opportunities to control and manipulate people. The expansion of production around the turn of the century, made possible by scientific management and “Fordist” production techniques, was said to necessitate “the construction of new markets and the “education” of the publics to become consumers through advertising and other media” (Featherstone, 1991, p. 41). The main argument here, developed in the work of Theodor Adorno and Max Horkheimer (1947), is that the increasing opportunities for consumption result in people becoming ever more controlled and manipulated by the logic of the capitalist economy. Culture and everyday life have become things that can be made and sold, just like an industrial product. This means that the areas of leisure, private life, and personal expression and desire have become subjected to the discipline and control that is part of capitalism. “Leisure time pursuits, the arts and culture in general become filtered through the culture industry; reception becomes dictated by exchange value as the higher purposes and values of culture succumb to the logic of the production process and the market” (Featherstone, 1991, p. 14).

We must be aware that this vision on the culture industry was conceived in a time in which several changes, that had a tremendous impact on everyday life, followed rapidly upon each other. Besides the increasing number of luxury goods being brought to the market, new media, such as radio and television, were gaining an increasing presence and importance in everyday life. Adorno and Horkheimer saw the Nazi party in Germany making maximum use of the new media technologies to spread their political propaganda. When they fled to the United States they saw the same techniques being used to produce and distribute commercial culture in the form of movies, jazz and magazines. They made a connection between these observations and “developed an argument in which the domination and manipulation of people (who are thought of as undifferentiated “masses”) was explicitly connected to the production and dissemination of a particular form of homogeneous culture (characterized as “mass culture”)” (Negus, 1997, p. 71).

So, Adorno and Horkheimer did more besides highlighting that culture had become industrialised, they also explained how this process changed the way in which cultural items were created and consumed. They argued that this culture industry had created a mass culture “in which cultural production had become a routine, standardized repetitive operation that produced undemanding cultural commodities which in turn resulted in a type of consumption that was also standardized, distracted and passive” (Negus, 1997, p. 70). In this mass culture artists create their works following a fixed formula, leading to a high degree of standardisation. Hollywood movies and popular hit songs often reveal such forms of standardisation. However, no movie or popular song is ever the same. This “originality” of standardised cultural products was said to be the result of little more than superficial differences, once critically inspected (Negus, 1997, p. 75). Adorno and Horkheimer referred to such differences as pseudo individuality. They equated the differences between popular songs with the differences between keys, that are mass-produced in millions and whose uniqueness lies only in very minor

modifications. What is commonly perceived as individual taste is conceived as a mere illusion that is the result of manipulation by market forces.

But Adorno and Horkheimer did not only argue that culture had become standardised and had lost all of its unique qualities, “they also suggested that this resulted in a particular type of consumption in which few demands were made of the listener, viewer or reader” (Negus, 1997, p. 76). This is said to encourage consumers to reject anything that is not familiar. Adorno and Horkheimer thus argue that the industrial producers of culture – the record companies, recording studios, etc. – dominate both the creative artists as well as the audience. Although the ideas of Adorno and Horkheimer have been criticised for their apparent elitism, their concerns – that culture will increasingly become standardised, repetitive and formula-based as it is increasingly subjected to the structural control of industrial capitalist production – echo the current anxieties about cultural production (Negus, 1997, pp. 77-83).

### **3.4 Aestheticisation of everyday life**

In the previous section, we saw that areas of everyday life and culture, that for the most part used to stand outside of the economy, have increasingly become part of the exchange system. The rationalisation and standardisation of production also reduces the importance of the use value of commodities. It becomes increasingly difficult to know what the “real” value of a product is outside the exchange system. We know that a particular brand of soap costs more money than the other brands, but can we be sure that it will wash any better? As a result, commodities become free to take on a wide range of cultural associations and illusions. Products get their symbolic value especially through advertising, by attaching “images of romance, exotica, desire, beauty, fulfilment, communality, scientific progress and the good life to mundane consumer products such as soap, washing machines, motor cars and alcoholic drinks” (Featherstone, 1991, p. 14). In practice, we base our consumption decisions on these images. In a way, these ordinary products that we use on a day to day basis have become cultural products.

During the 1960s a new generation of artists emerged who were opposed to the elitist idea of art as an activity that should be at the forefront of the development of society. In a reaction to this elitist art form, these new artists – think of Andy Warhol and Pop Art – started to use ordinary consumer objects to produce an experience that did not presuppose any knowledge on the part of the viewer. This movement did not only give rise to the acceptance of the use of consumer products in works of art; it also caused an opposite movement of artists working in industrial design, advertising and architecture. The distinction between ‘low’ and ‘high’ art became more and more blurred as a result. It is in this sense that Featherstone (1991, pp. 66-68) speaks of an “aestheticisation of everyday life”.

With his analysis of the aestheticisation of everyday life Featherstone provides an account of cultural production and consumption that allows for much more complexity and less predictability than those we have seen so far. He does not simply state that the aestheticisation of everyday is the result of the dominant forces of cultural production, but awards an important role to artists who consciously protested against the elitist character of high culture. This points to an important conclusion: as any hegemonic power the culture industry is dependent on the mobilisation of fresh talent and new symbols. These artists and a wide range of cultural intermediaries translate between the (cultural) commodities and the

identities of individuals, social groups or geographical communities to which they are sold. Through these people, trends that emerge on the street are picked up and filtered through the media and the production system returning to the same and other streets as products of every kind. This way, rap music could for instance make its way from the “black” ghettos into the “white” suburbs.

Of course, this “aestheticisation of everyday life” is also coupled with changes in consumer culture. It is conceptualised in a way that builds on a sociological perspective in which consumption is seen as a “major factor in creating rather than simply reflection social stratification” (Fine & Leopold, 1993, p. 68). This leads to two important observations. First, that symbolic aspects of commodities have a certain use-value in that they fulfil a need for social distinction. And, second, that consumption should be seen as a formative activity, rather than a passive activity that reflects the organisation of production. This allows for a more insightful analysis of the democratisation of consumption. At first, consumerism is preserved for the elites; their access to certain goods distinguishes them from lower social groups. When spending power increases, these commodities become accessible to people of other social classes, who start to emulate the consumption patterns of the elite. For the elite to keep distinguishing itself, they need to keep developing new consumption patterns. This means that the higher social classes have to keep gathering symbolic capital in order to maintain class distances.

Symbolic capital is what Bourdieu (1977, p. 197) defines as “the collection of luxury goods attesting the taste and distinction of the owner”. Symbolic capital is transformed money capital that “produces its proper effect inasmuch, and only inasmuch, as it conceals the fact that it originates in “material” forms of capital.” This transformation of money capital into symbolic capital (consumption of cultural commodities), and its reverse transformation (production), is mediated by people working in creative professions. These “cultural intermediaries” do not only produce the cultural products that are sold through the market, they also educate the cultural consumer. As writers in lifestyle magazines, newspapers and books they form a “critical infrastructure” they are crucial to the accumulation of symbolic capital.

The accumulation of symbolic capital through consumption ensures social polarisation; consumption reflects economic and social position. Featherstone (1991) argues that the success of capitalist economies has caused consumption cultures to become more and more specialised, undermining fixed identity groups and social classes, allowing individuals to construct their own identities through consumption choices. This development has increasingly blurred the traditional dividing lines of society (along class, gender, ethnicity, sexuality and age):

[I]ndividual men and women express their complex social identities by combining markers of gender, ethnicity, social class and – for want of a better word – cultural style. Many of these markers are created in, and diffused from, cities: on the streets, in advertising offices and photography studios, on MTV. Many of the people who create these markers live in the cities, too. They are the artists, new media designers, feminists, gays, single parents and immigrants – some of the most visible protagonists of “urban lifestyles”.

(Zukin, 1998, p. 835)

The diverse identities of people form the input for the production of cultural products that feed back into the formation of these identity groups as symbolic capital.

Once the original idea of class-distinction is extended to just distinction (on the basis of any social marker or interest), symbolic capital becomes a useful concept to analyse cultural production and consumption. Standardisation of cultural products is necessary to ensure accumulation, but reduces the value of these products as symbolic capital. This provides a demand for diversification into products that are non-standard. The products that are the result of diversification are again candidates to be sold to a broader audience through a process of standardisation and mass production. Thus, standardisation and diversification are mutually reinforcing. This observation points back to the general logic of capital, the cyclical process of accumulation and devalorisation.

### **3.5 Cultural development strategies**

The general idea that diversity can be used for product innovation and accumulation of capital has been translated into urban development strategies. These strategies provide an answer to the economic and social crises of post-industrial cities by making “the most of the diversity, difference and intersection traditionally offered by cities” (Amin and Graham 1997, pp. 411). This has resulted in a growing recognition of the benefits of living in the city (centres), not only for those working in the creative sector, but also for the affluent and culture-minded members of society. This “urban renaissance” is attributed to the density, cultural diversity and vitality of city centres that brings together a whole variety of activities in a limited space. The people that are attracted by this type of urbanity are believed to be able to capitalise on this diversity, thereby generating economic growth. Seen this way, the strategies aimed at increase the density, diversity and vitality of city neighbourhoods have a broad goal: they should be able to lift these cities out of decline by providing the breeding ground for new forms of capital accumulation.

According to Zukin (1995, p. 7) the building of cities has always depended on the ability to use culture “to manipulate symbolic languages of exclusion and entitlement”. Architecture, for example, creates a visual order in cities that reflects decisions about what should be visible and what shouldn’t (think of Le Corbusier’s visual order). This image – projected by business districts, parks, museums and theatres – helps to “sell” the city to investors and tourists. However, with the disappearance of local manufacturing industries and the crisis in government finance, a whole new form of “symbolic economy” has emerged:

What is new about the symbolic economy since the 1970s is its symbiosis of image and product, the scope and scale of selling images on a national and even a global level, and the role of the symbolic economy in speaking for, or representing, the city.

(Zukin 1995, p. 8)

What Zukin is pointing to is the increasing number of spectacular project that are being undertaken to stimulate urban economies by putting cities “on the map”. We may think of several examples such as city marketing campaigns (I ♥ NY), street festivals (Berlin’s love parade) and spectacular architecture (Guggenheim museum, Bilbao). With companies shifting production to far away countries and wealthy

inhabitants moving to the suburbs, local governments, fearing capital disinvestment, increasingly resort to stimulating consumption in order to boost their economies (Zukin, 1998, p. 825).

In Arnhem, policy makers assume that cities used to distinguish themselves as centres of production but now are sought after as centres of consumption (De Fockert, 2002, p. 23). Therefore, the municipal authorities here make every effort to secure the future position of the city as a centre of consumption. According to the policy document, Arnhem is trying to become a "complete city". A complete city is a city that is "economically vital ... in which everyone participates and no one is left behind". This ideal image of the city reflects the wish to be economically strong (enable capital accumulation) and in the meantime maintain the social cohesion in society. It is not hard to image that economic vitality and social cohesion will not always go as well together as the term "complete city" may make us believe. The ambition to become a complete city reminds of the capital-labour compromise of the past. Better participation (in work) makes the economy grow and also improves the lives of those who participate. The main difference with that compromise is the social groups involved. The democratisation of consumption has effectively blurred the boundaries of the working class. While the basic relation between labour and capital still exists and operates according to largely the same logic as before, most "workers" no longer identify themselves as part of a working class. The efforts to prevent social disorder have therefore shifted their attention towards other groups, particularly immigrant groups.

Policy makers want to strengthened the economic vitality of Arnhem by "attracting households with higher incomes" as they are believed to "strengthen the social and economic basis of the city and enlarge its economic potential" (De Fockert, 2002, p. 36). This shows a shift in emphasis in the economic policy of the city from stimulating trade and the settlement of major industry in town to improving the attractiveness for certain groups of people. The people the city is seeking to attract can be divided in two groups: the creative professionals and the (conspicuous) consumers. Attracting creative professionals is assumed to stimulate the development of creative and knowledge intensive economic activities. The assumption here is that for creative professionals, work follows living, because this group demands an interesting living environment and is able to create a livelihood for itself there. These economic activities are sought after as it is believed that, once established, they will not be easily relocated to other countries or regions. The policy framework states that "interactions" form the basis for the ability of these creative professionals to create their own livelihood (De Fockert, 2002, p. 23). Getting in contact with other professionals and exchanging knowledge helps them develop their skills and generate innovative ideas. The high density of cities is said to enlarge the chance that these interactions take place.

The consumer group is sought after for its spending power. This group consists of two sub groups: those who seek to live in the city and those who only visit it. The first group is mostly looking for an interesting living environment. As we have seen in paragraph 3.2.2 city centres are popular (again) as a living environment. We have already come across a number of reasons why people would want to live in the city: it offers time-space advantages as many activities are located in cities, it offers specific social networks (interactions) and it allows people to distinguish themselves from others. Now the ideal of suburban living has become attainable for a large number of people, it can become important to distinguish oneself, by choosing to live in the city (Karsten et al., 2006, p. 29). An urban living space has become a form

of symbolic capital. The second group is looking for a pleasant experience. In the introductory chapter, we came across several reasons for the popularity of cities as places for consumption. Due to the large number of inhabitants and their diverse taste, cities are able to deliver a host of different commodities in diverse areas such as food, fashion, culture and entertainment. The city itself is also an object of consumption: the level of quality of the environment in the city and its accessibility both contribute to its success or failure as a place and object of consumption.

What kind of strategies or measures have the municipal authorities in Arnhem taken to attract these favoured individuals? Arnhem's academy of arts is renowned in the Netherlands, especially for its fashion designers. Therefore, attracting creative professionals amounted to keeping them in the city as most of these fashion designers and other artists left for the larger cities in the Netherlands after their graduation. In order to keep these people in the city, several initiatives have been taken to create working spaces for starting artists and other creative professionals. An example of such an initiative is an organisation called *Het Hoofdkwartier* (Headquarters). This organisation provides starting professionals from the creative sector a low-rent working space and meeting place. A spin-off project, in cooperation with a housing association, is renting vacant retail space in the *Klarendal* neighbourhood to fashion designers. This provides them with a cheap studio and the possibility to show their work to the outside world using the shop-windows. The housing association and the municipality hope that this project will increase the standing of this (former) working class neighbourhood, which will in turn increase real estate prices. Besides these specific projects the municipality has also made the creation of working spaces in centrally located residential neighbourhoods into a planning objective. New urban development projects, such as the reconstruction of the waterfront, include such working spaces for creative professionals. Given the fact that most of the cities unemployed are poorly educated, helping out highly educated creative professionals might seem a strange strategy. However, the authorities believe that this strategy will in fact solve the problems of the less educated work force, because they expect that the attraction of knowledge intensive activities will produce a spin off effect that will generate employment for the bottom of the labour market.

The municipality is also seeking to provide more opportunities for affluent people to live in the city centre. The majority of the urban development projects being carried out in the city centre and the surrounding neighbourhoods are, at least partly, made up of luxurious residences. The largest development planned so far is a plan for the city's waterfront called *Rijnboog*. The area that this plan aims to reconstruct largely corresponds to the area near the river where the slums were located in the nineteenth century. After the war, this area was rebuilt as part of the reconstruction of the city centre. The character of this area is a typical example of the modernist aesthetic with its broad streets and large buildings that contrast with the narrow streets of the inner city. This aesthetic cannot count on much approval these days. The alderman of spatial planning writes in his foreword to the plan that it will rid the area of the "scars of the post-war rebuilding" and therefore seems to suggest that the rebuilding was more harmful to the city than the destruction of war itself.

This urban renewal project has become highly controversial as large parts of the public and opposition parties are opposed to the plan. To give the inhabitants of Arnhem a chance to have some influence on the project that will drastically change this part of the inner city, a "preferendum" was held. This preferendum is a

referendum in which the population can state its preference for one three variants of the harbour that is projected at the centre of the project. The turnout of this referendum stuck at 10 percent. A poll taken after the referendum revealed that most absentees had wanted to be able to choose between “yes” and “no”. Despite this victory for the opposition, the local government is determined to move along with the plan.

Today the area contains 1230 houses, 500 of these houses will be demolished and 1200 new houses will be built, increasing the building stock with 700 extra houses (De Solà-Morales, 2004, p. 34). The increase of the building stock comes solely from an increase in the number of middle to highly expensive houses. The amount of public housing remains the same: today there are 560 of these houses, a total of 250 will be demolished and another 250 will be built anew, leaving the total number at 560. In other words: the relative amount of public housing in the planning area will decline. In the terms of the municipal planners this is called “mirror-wise building”, which means that high income housing is built in areas with low income housing and the other way around in order to obtain an optimal mix of richer and poorer inhabitants. This practice is a form of social engineering that is based on the assumption that the settlement of people with higher incomes and a higher social status will bring social order to a troubled neighbourhood. The television documentary programme *Zembla* (2007) reaches a different conclusion: the problems of poor neighbourhoods are not being solved, they are being relocated. The problem is the poverty of the inhabitants and the policy simply relocates the poorest inhabitant to other parts of the city. The public housing is being demolished and private sector housing comes in its place. Even when old public housing is replaced by new public housing the new houses are modernised and thus become more expensive. The neighbourhoods to which these people are relocated are not the more expensive neighbourhoods in town, as prescribed by the mirror metaphor, but usually the least popular neighbourhoods that lie away from the city centre.

A more autonomous development, although strongly supported by the municipal government, is taking place in *Spijkerkwartier*, a neighbourhood that was known for prostitution and drug-related problems. This neighbourhood has a mixed building stock of both town houses and old working class housing. It was largely abandoned by its more privileged population as a result of suburbanisation. Their place was taken by, predominantly Turkish, immigrants. During the 1970s prostitution and drug trade flourished and gave *Spijkerkwartier* national notoriety. However, as a result activism of inhabitants the liveability of the neighbourhood has gradually increased. In 1997 the municipality banned prostitution from the neighbourhood. The municipality withdrew the permits of the sex entrepreneurs and, after a protracted legal fight, the brothels were closed on the 4<sup>th</sup> of January 2006 (NRC Handelsblad, 2006). The municipality has acquired most of the buildings that were in use as brothels and is selling them for residential use. Real estate agents are buying these houses as they expect their value to increase.

Finally the city is trying to become a more desirable destination for shopping and tourism. According to a senior official of the municipal authorities the city at least has to be clean, intact and safe; these are the basic conditions for a city to be attractive for shopping and tourism (and this also goes for working and living).<sup>4</sup> The centre is the city’s living room, it is where it welcomes its guests, and must therefore be kept in good order. The municipality contributes to this goal by pursuing a higher quality for the public works in these areas. Street pavement and street furniture are of an extra high quality in the inner city itself and along the walking routes towards

the inner city. The safety in the city centre is guarded over with 60 camera's spread out over the inner cities entertainment district. Another way to add to the city's attractiveness is to create certain extra value by providing cultural facilities, regular events and an interesting mix of chain stores and special shops. The municipality cooperates with other parties concerned (retail businesses and real estate owners) in keeping the cities shopping areas attractive. For this purpose a inner city management foundation was established in 2003. In this foundation the municipal authorities and private parties work together to make the "product" Arnhem as valuable as possible.

In terms of leisure, the city has a rich history. Arnhem became a popular residence for the rich during the eighteenth and nineteenth century because of its spectacular surroundings. In 1918 a folk museum was established in Arnhem followed by a zoo in 1923, which both have developed themselves into nation-wide attractions. These leisure destinations are located on the North edge of Arnhem in the woody areas that are part of the National Park *Hoge Veluwe*. Recently Arnhem has also won a bid for the location of a new Museum of National History and left behind its larger and more centrally located competitors: Amsterdam and The Hague.

With a marketing campaign entitled "*Arnhemse Meisjes? ... Made in Arnhem*" the city is trying to show of its successes. *Arnhemse Meisjes* literally means girls from Arnhem, but it is actually a hint at a local type of biscuits with the same name. The promotion campaign shows well-known companies and people from Arnhem to show all these things come from Arnhem. In this campaign Arnhem portrayed itself as a source of creativity, inspiration and trend-setting innovation. The companies and people that are brought to the attention of the public are by no means new – some have been in Arnhem for over a century – but, as Adorno and Horkheimer have shown, production and consumption increasingly revolves around the symbolic value of products. The initiative for this campaign came after research had shown that the image that people in the Netherlands have of Arnhem does not correspond with the cities ambitious development plans. The focus on attracting creative professionals and (visiting or settling) consumers is reflected in the campaign as tries to emphasise both the creativity of people and businesses in Arnhem and the pleasurable activities they bring to the city (theatres, attractions, nightlife, etc.).

For Harvey (1989), the reason for cities to take on an active role in their own development, instead of leaving it to private parties, lies in the fact that national governments are no longer able to control international circuits of capital. Investments are more and more the result of negotiations between local authorities and international suppliers of capital. Local governments are forced to step outside of their role of mediator between and capital and labour, and have to start actively attracting capital investments. It is in this sense that Harvey (1989) speaks of a shift in governance from "managerialism to entrepreneurialism". These strategies (upgrading city centres, organising events, etc.) are as much aimed at attracting consumers from outside the city as they are at holding on to consumers from within the city (Spierings, 2006, p. 102). The intra-urban competition operates as an "external coercive power" in the sense that those cities who, for instance, chose not to renew their shopping centre will most probably lose consumers to a neighbouring city that did (Harvey, 1989, p. 10). That is why, according to Harvey (1989, p. 12), most of the strategies aimed at stimulating the local economy "amount to a subsidy for affluent consumers, corporations, and powerful command functions to stay in town at the expense of local collective consumption for the working class and poor".



This may actually stimulate the circulation of capital, instead of binding it to the locality, as these subsidies reduce the costs of relocating activities.

As the production of goods proved to be strongly susceptible to relocation, urban entrepreneurial strategies usually focus on the kind of services that are highly localised and have a rapid turnover time (Harvey, 1989, p. 13). Stimulating local entrepreneurs is also a strategy that intends to ground capital accumulation in the locality. The idea is to generate new ways to accumulate using the creativity and knowledge of local people. Typical examples of activities that are being stimulated are tourism and the production and consumption of spectacles and all kinds of events. Using the cities local culture, diversity is generated, that is supposed to attract consumer and enable the accumulation of capital. The rationale is that capital accumulation that rest on certain place specific aspects cannot easily take place elsewhere. Reusing old industrial buildings to create an interesting setting for parties, concerts, or a market for regional products is a typical example of this type of urban development. However, when a local way of life or culture is used as an input for the production of cultural products it usually becomes detached from its original context. The former use of such a building becomes no more than an interesting décor or image on which the new activity is projected. Such décor can be found in many cities and used in a similar way. This shows that the rise of urban entrepreneurialism is strongly linked to the growing dominance of "image over substance".

### **3.6 Developing the attractive city**

This section will take a closer look at inner city redevelopment project, to see how these projects create and work with urban diversity and uniformity. There are many examples of inner city redevelopment in the Netherlands, but this section will focus on a recently realised redevelopment project in Arnhem named Musiskwartier. At the edge of the city centre, on a piece of "degenerated" urban space behind the V&D<sup>5</sup> department store, a living- and shopping area has arisen. Apart from a few monumental buildings the area has been entirely rebuilt from scratch. However, the casual visitor probably won't notice all these changes as the new buildings have been designed to blend perfectly into the existing urban fabric. The buildings have a traditional look that was created by using historical elements and paying close attention to the structure of the city surrounding the project area.

This redevelopment project can to a large extent be regarded as representative for the practice of inner city redevelopment in the Netherlands. This is first of all because it concerns the redevelopment of an area of the inner city that has been slowly degenerating during the last decades. The area was a messy and badly integrated into the rest of city in terms of shopping, despite the presence of a large department store. The area around the V&D was known as "the silent corner"; it was the turning point for people strolling through the city. The area was rigorously rearranged, leaving only a few of the original building intact. The project adds 32.000 square meters of new retail space to the inner city of Arnhem and provides the city with a quarter more stores. The project thus aims to upgrade both the functional and the physical form of (a part of) the city centre.

Second, the project aims to bind the spending power of consumers from outside of the city that are thought to have become increasingly mobile. In the Gelderlander<sup>6</sup> (2006, p. 35), the alderman of Economic Affairs explains that the project "just as the area around the railway station, [should] function as an entrance

to the inner city for the general public". And although the shops in the area are aimed at the "general public", the 64 apartments realised in the area aim at a more exclusive public as they are prices from "normal to exorbitant" (De Gelderlander, 2006, p. 33). In other words, with this development the city is trying to compete for the travelling purchasing power of shoppers and home-owners.



Figure 5: Artist impression of Musiskwartier (AM real estate)

Third, special attention was dedicated to the integration of the area into the walking routes of the city. The deliberate attention towards the behaviour of shoppers and the related historical style of the buildings, show that the area was designed to optimise the "shopping experience". About this, the manager of the project tells the Gelderlander:

Urban development is the building of emotions. Western Europe doesn't know hunger. That's why the choice where to buy, is determined by emotion. [...] Different ridge heights, a building that sticks out, a slight bend in the road instead of dead straight. Buildings that form a unity together, but who nevertheless slightly different from one another. It's almost a soft science, half-philosophical. But behaviour of the consumer can be traced, steered.

(De Gelderlander, 2006, p. 19)

The project clearly aims to create an attractive urban environment (for shopping) by introducing diversity into the (physical form of the) urban landscape.

And finally, the project received the same criticism as other inner city redevelopment projects got. The project dedicates much attention to the physical aspects of the (shopping) environment, but the stores that were located in the area are not quite as distinguishing. "The new shopping centres functioning mainly depends on a concentration of strong brands for the general public", according to Baptist Brayé, the CEO of Locatus – the largest supplier retail information in the Netherlands (De Gelderlander, 2006, p. 17). "The packing is pretty, the contents is a

bit disappointing." The project lies at the heart of the discussion on the attractiveness of urban spaces. To some it is a model for a "new urbanism" in which diversity and sense of place are central elements, to others it is "yet another boring shopping centre".

The project is also illustrative for the development of the retail sector itself. The area that has now been thoroughly restructured was in its glory days the spectacular entrance to the city. There stood the department stores of V&D and C&A, built according to the most modern architectural principles: they were gigantic in size, straight-angled and functional. During the 1950s and 60s these companies were in the prime of their existence. Through up-scaling and rationalisation these department stores were able to sell their goods at lower prices than the average independent retailers. Department stores offered all sorts of different products, organised conveniently under one roof. For their customers shopping was a one-stop experience. They could park their car in the garage and find all the products they needed available in the climate controlled environment of the department stores.

Thirty years later, plans are being made to restructure the area, in which the V&D department store is cut down in size and the C&A only returns as a normal size fashion store. People have started shopping to construct their identity. Small stores with distinct formula are better able to cater to their wish to distinguish themselves. The birth of the chain stores ends the hegemonic position of the department store. The most important advantage of the chain store lies in fact that it combines the principles of mass production and consumption with the ideal of individuality. This is done by subcontracting production to large workshops while having several different brands that correspond to different "lifestyles" that are being sold in separate stores creating the illusion of diversity. The creation of lifestyles to go with the products is heavily supported by the marketing departments of these companies.

It was with this in mind that the holding companies behind the V&D (Vendex KBB) and C&A (Rodamco) department stores decided that their stores in Arnhem needed to be resized. The decision to cut down in size left an interesting piece of land to develop in one of the most expensive parts of the inner city of Arnhem. It is not exactly clear who was first to come up with the idea to jointly develop this land, but in co-operation with Multi, a real estate development company based in Gouda, the development project was initiated. After these initial plans were made in 1993 it took 13 years before the project was finally realised in 2006. The reason for this long period is the complex ownership structure of the land included in the project.

According an architect involved in the conceptual design of the area the breaking down of the box-like department stores shows the "failure of modernism".<sup>7</sup> Modernist town planning is based on a scientific ideal, a universal philosophy that could be applied anywhere. This can be pleasing for those who know how to appreciate it, but "ordinary" people do not want this kind of uniformity, they want their urban environment to have an identity, they want to feel that they belong to a "tribe", they want a place they can call their own. The city has to be a like "a chain of recognisable and tangibly intimate places".<sup>8</sup> With Musiskwartier the architects have tried to – as they put it – strengthen the identity of Arnhem by developing it in the context of the historical inner city.

What is of course most important for the developing partners is to make this area into a sustainable and profitable investment object. Calculating the profitability of each design was an integral part of the development process. The designers were thus able to create a shopping district that undeniably fits perfectly into the existing urban structure and makes use of existing elements of this urban area. The building

heights are adjusted to the scale of the rest of the inner city and monumental buildings have seamlessly been integrated in the new building. Musiskwartier further resembles the rest of the inner city in its mixed use of space, combining retail venues around ground level with living above the stores. Even the automobile, the most unavoidable element of modern life, has been hidden from direct sight by means of underground parking facilities.

These efforts to stay true to the historical character of the inner city of course serve an economic purpose. The expensive apartments, the high-rents of the chain stores and the parking spaces have to deliver this added value. The number of stores present in the area before and after Musiskwartier was realised, see Table 3, show an increase in the overall number of stores. The increase in the number of stores amounts to a total increase 32.000 m<sup>2</sup> of added retail space. Relatively, the increase in the number of vacancies is most remarkable, followed by the increase in the number of chain stores. It is probably to early to conclude that the high number of vacancies is a permanent effect of the new development. The number of chain stores, however, is likely to stay high in the future, or even increase, as the area is intended to become part of the core of the shopping district in Arnhem.

Table 3: Number of retail spaces according to occupation<sup>9</sup>

Year	2000	2007
Chain stores	16	45 (+181%)
Independent retailers	51	46 (-10%)
Vacancies	2	13 (+550%)
Total	69	104 (+51%)

Most of the customers of these chain stores are passers-by, which makes the routing of the pedestrians a vital aspect of the design of the area. The plan intends to lead shoppers away from the main route that runs along the *Roggestraat* and instead lure some of them through the *Dwingelstraat* to the shops around *Brouwersplein*. The city as “a chain of recognisable and tangibly intimate places” is meant to lead the consumer past as many shops as possible. The municipal authorities stay on top of the trends in consumer behaviour with an annual “inner city monitor”. The monitors counts the number of visitors to the inner city and question them about several aspects of the inner city. In the 2006 monitor, the first effects of Musiskwartier on the walking routes of visitors should be visible. In Figure 3 the number of people leaving the city each 10 minutes is given for all 17 exit points and for three years: 2002, 2004 and 2006. With the completion of Musiskwartier the inner city has gained one exit, called *Brouwersplein*, which forms the entrance to Musiskwartier’s parking lot. The *Roggestraat* has always been an important exit/entrance to the shopping district; the main walking route of most shoppers runs along this street towards the *Ketelstraat* and *Vijzelstraat* (Sleiderink, 2007, p. 10). In the newest monitor the people coming out of the *Dwingelstraat*, that leads from the centre of the Musiskwartier area to the beginning of the *Roggestraat*, are counted together with the people coming out of the *Roggestraat*. Since these two streets haven’t been counted separately it is not possible to tell with certainty that the increase of people exiting there is coming out of the new shopping area. An article in the newspaper actually suggests that the number of consumers that walk across *Brouwersplein* is less than was expected (Van Zetten, 2007). Retailers report that they haven’t been able to arrive at their targets sales yet.

Most of them are nevertheless confident that this situation will improve as more and more consumers discover the new shopping streets.

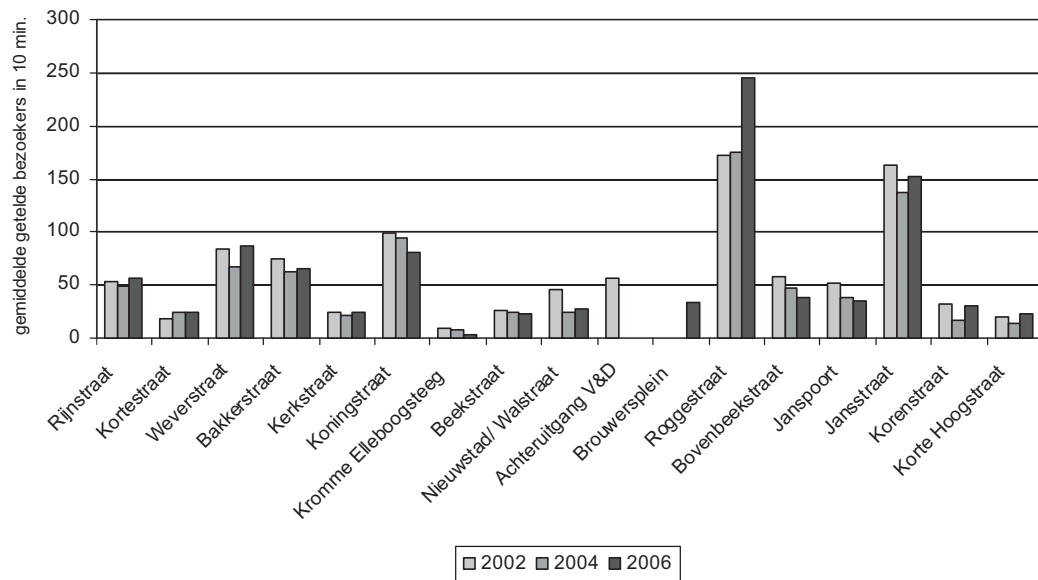


Figure 6: Number of people leaving the inner city of Arnhem at different exits (Sleiderink, 2007)

The new formed urban space is the bait that is used to lure the consumer into the shops. For this purpose the urban environment has been given an identity. The original elements of the area (monumental buildings, structure of the medieval city) are no longer seen as debit items, instead, they are used as assets to create a unique “experience” of place. For example, the monumental building of the grocery empire of the Gruyter family is used as an entrance to a passageway that leads from the main axis of the shopping district to the centre of Musiskwartier. This passage is lined by small shops that have the typical look and feel of the arcades of the past. By reverting to old images of the urban, the architects were able to create an environment that is both new and familiar to the visitor. Although the packing refers to the past, the retailing businesses run within this package conform to the most modern standards. Here lies the real genius of this urban design: behind the pedestrian area with its contextual architecture a full-scale modern shopping centre lies hidden. Parking spaces and dispatch entrances are hidden from direct sight. The larger stores, that extend far into the building blocks, are given facades that obey the small scale of the inner city. The plan clearly shows the dominance of image over substance. The economic logic asks for standardisation and large scales. On the other hand planning experts and architects assume that consumers are attracted to individuality and small scales. Musiskwartier solves this contradiction by projecting an image of individuality, uniqueness and small scale onto what is in fact a standardised and large scale shopping mall.

The fact that the whole project seems to represent “something that it is not” is the source of most of the criticism it received. The most important critic of the project was the so-called *welstandscommissie*, a municipal commission employed to enforce the regulations regarding the external appearance of buildings. This commission has an advisory role in the approval of building permits. The language used by the *welstandscommissie* in their public reports is quite telling. They frequently comment on the plans being “to monumental”, “to grand”, “unfitting in the scale of the urban structure”, “to design-like and pretentious” and ask the architects to design something “a little more Dutch, more elegant and less

pompous" in form.<sup>10</sup> The architect believes that the commission did not approve with the plan because most of their members have a strong preference for modernist architecture.<sup>11</sup> That is why, according to the architect, the commission regarded any design that has a leaning toward historicism or ornamentation with suspicion.

Closer inspection of the reports of the commission shows that their argument is perhaps based on more than a mere difference in the approach to urban planning and design. They are, for instance, opposed to the height of the proposed buildings. The commission wanted to designate the levels above ground level for residential use to create a strong relation between the street and the apartments. This is supposed to enhance the social control of the street and thus increase safety in the area, especially after opening hours. The arguments the commission brings to bear in defence of their demands, constantly refer to the existing structure of the inner city. The arguments given by the commission are for the most part compatible to the contextual approach that the architects take towards questions of urban design. This discussion strengthens the idea that the contextual approach taken towards urban design is governed by economic motives. Increasing the height of the buildings and maximising the percentage of space allocated to commercial use, increases the profitability of the project. The municipal authorities are commonly implicated in these efforts to maximise profits, selling land at the highest possible price. Seen from this angle, the commission ran into resistance on the part of the development company as soon as they tried to turn the image of "contextual urban development" put forward by the designers into substance!

### **3.7 Synthesis**

In this chapter we have seen how the globalisation of circuits of capital has affected cities in the world in general and the Netherlands in particular. After an initial pessimism over deindustrialisation and loss of population in major cities, scientist and policy makers have shifted their emphasis from the problems of cities to their opportunities. This resurgence of cities in public discussion takes place simultaneously with a reevaluation of the city as a place to live and work. This chapter has shown that this development can be linked to a more fundamental development of advanced economies into a consumer society. This development has brought culture and everyday life into the realm of capitalist (re)production. Culture has increasingly taken on an industrial logic with the standardisation of cultural products and pseudo-individuality. But just as culture has become commercialised, commerce has been culturalised. Artists incorporate their identities, wishes and desires into these cultural products. Consumers distinguish themselves by collecting these products as well as knowledge about them as symbolic capital.

This development has important implications for urban development strategies. The diversity of city life is the raw material from which cultural products are formed. The city provides a breeding ground for the invention of new products. The cultural development strategies increasingly amount to attracting the producers and consumers of cultural products: creative professionals and conspicuous consumers. This is done by creating working places, building luxurious housing, improving the quality of public space in the city centre, stimulation the development of attractions and events and, last but not least, the promotion of all these activities through city marketing. In this symbolic economy the images that are being attached to a city (or any other "commodity") become more important than their substance. This is clearly

shown in the practice of physical upgrading of the urban environment. Here, the creation of diversity in terms of visual elements is combined with large scale retailing and luxury housing. The “sense of place” or “identity” that is being projected onto this urban space is intended to increase the profitability of the development project. However, for developers to succeed in popularising a (re)developed area as a place to live or shop, they must pay close attention to the needs and desires of their future customers. This type of development project is therefore perhaps more likely to fulfil the wishes of those live and shop there.

Cultural development strategies may, from the point of view of the consumers and the developers, certainly be the most logical and the most rewarding way of approaching urban (re)development. However, these strategies are not unlikely to threaten the social order of society as they strongly favour a small group of talented and/or wealthy individuals. Local government would do well to guard the collective interests of urban (re)development with vigilance. Although attracting talent and money can be a viable development strategy, it does not free us from the need to distribute the access to talent and money across the population to a certain extent.

## Notes

<sup>1</sup> Original citation: “Bleven in de jaren tachtig de grote steden qua economische groei en werkgelegenheidscreatie systematisch achter bij de rest van Nederland, sinds een aantal jaren is het beeld omgekeerd. Over de hele linie groeien de steden sneller dan het nationale gemiddeld. De steden hebben hun traditionele rol als centra van economische groei, kunst, cultuur en ondernemerschap hervonden. Ook in Arnhem is dat zichtbaar.”

<sup>2</sup> “Demand for living space” (*woningbehoefte*): sum of the demand for living space of all households living in a area or neighbourhood who are not inclined to move (‘lives there’) plus those households who are inclined to move and are looking for a residence in that particular area (‘wants to live there’) (VROM 2004, p. 266).

<sup>3</sup> “Living environment” (*woonmilieu*): a typology developed distinguish living environments on the basis of a number of dimensions, namely: a) density, b) accessibility, c) mixed-use and d) building quality (VROM 2004, p. 268-269). On the basis of these indicators 5 living environments are being distinguished:

1. Downtown (centrum-stedelijk): (historical) inner cities, new urban centres, centres of new cities
2. Uptown (buiten-centrum): dense and mono-functional living environments located around the city centre
3. Suburb (groen-stedelijk): mono-functional living environment with a design that is spacious and green
4. Village (centrum dorps): old and new rural centres
5. Countryside (landelijk wonen): very low density of building in a predominantly green area with very little amenities

<sup>4</sup> Interview, 1 May 2007.

<sup>5</sup> V&D stands for Vroom and Dreesman, which is a well-known department store. The redevelopment area lies between two streets named Beekstraat and Walstraat.

<sup>6</sup> The Gelderlander is a regional newspaper that is circulated mainly in the Gelderland province of the Netherlands.

<sup>7</sup> Interview, 8 May 2007.

<sup>8</sup> Interview, 8 May 2007. Original quote: “een aanschakeling van herkenbare en voelbaar intieme plekken.

<sup>9</sup> The data for the year 2000 were obtained from Locatus, a commercial database for retail information. The data for 2007 were obtained from the commercial register on the website of the Chamber of Commerce ([www.kvk.nl](http://www.kvk.nl)) and from observations by the author.

<sup>10</sup> Report of a meeting of the commission for “welstand” and monuments of Arnhem: 10 January 2001, 21 februari 2001 and 9 May 2001.

<sup>11</sup> Interview, 8 May 2007.



The *right to the city* cannot be conceived of as a simple visiting right or as a return to traditional cities. It can only be formulated as a transformed and renewed *right to urban life*.

(Lefebvre, 1996)

## 4 CONCLUSION

The sweeping changes in the social and economic structure that the world has witnessed in the last decades have proved to be hard to capture in scientific concepts. Several of these labels – globalisation, deindustrialisation, post-Fordism or post-industrialism (to name but a few) – gained credit at some point, only to be abandoned again later. Every time a concept seems to get to grips with this development it is confronted with new realities that escape conceptualisation. During the 1980s social scientists were concerned with deindustrialisation causing economic decline and often social unrest in the manufacturing centres of the world. Deindustrialisation was initially explained as an inevitable result of the lowering of the costs of transportation and communication which enabled companies to relocate their production to those places that allowed for the lowest production costs. Some theorist even foresaw a gradual withering away of cities as the lowering of transportation costs would make space irrelevant. However, contrary to the general trend, some cities and regions were able to reverse economic decline into growth. These cities made money in a whole new way: their success was no longer based on manual labour in factories but on creative brainwork. A new division of labour was taking shape that is best described as the global subcontracting of manufacturing activities. The large vertically integrated firm was replaced by an international network of smaller firms which, by working together, were able to produce the same products more efficiently and with much more flexibility. These success stories proved that cities did not have to be passive victims of globalisation, but that they could take matters into their own hands.

Encouraged by this spirit, cities all over the world have felt increasingly compelled to find ways to strengthen their position in this “knowledge economy”. As people with special talents and knowledge are the most important asset for an economy based on knowledge production, attracting and holding on to these “knowledge workers” has become top priority of policy makers and local business elites. When it comes to urban development, increasing the “attractiveness” of the city has become the most important strategy in this competition for knowledge workers. The practice of enhancing the attractiveness of cities is thus based on an economic motive; the ultimate goal is to make the city more profitable. Although there is a general agreement that increasing the attractiveness of the city will have a positive effect on its economic development, there is less consensus about what constitutes attractiveness. Experts frequently argue that the residential and commercial districts in our cities are too uniform in appearance and contents to be attractive. From this point of view, increasing the attractiveness of the city requires the creation of diversity in the form and function of city spaces. This logic requires cities to distinguish themselves from other cities with spectacular architecture, events, promotion, etc. At the same time, being attractive is explained as meeting certain

standards, in other words: being more uniform. Every shopping district has to be a pedestrian area; it has to have cheap parking space nearby; and all the well known stores have to be there in order for it to be attractive.

A close inspection of the history of modern cities uncovers the source of this contradiction. This history starts with the birth of the industrial city. Over a relatively short period of time, the organisation of manufacturing production changed from an economy rooted in home-based craftsmanship to an economy in which workers were brought together to work in large factories. This change in the organisation of production allowed for the production of more goods at cheaper prices. This seemed to promise a gradual improvement of life for everyone. Through mass production, the prices of product could drop to a level where they became affordable to a larger part of society. Here we find a direct economic cause for uniformity: the mass production of goods requires a standardisation in design.

The cities of the industrial age showed the tremendous achievements of mankind, but they were also characterised by great inequality as wealth accumulated in the hands of those owning the means of production, leaving only a bare existence to those who had only their labour to sell. In reaction to this radical inequality, a protest movement developed that wanted to change the way society was organised. On top of this revolutionary threat, these cities were also frequently plagued by epidemics that often originated from the working class quarters and also affected the health of the ruling classes. As a reaction to what was perceived as urban disorder, the ruling class became active in improving the living conditions of the working class. The efforts to improve these living conditions were not only based on charity, but aimed to regulate society. This practice was based on the assumption that built forms could be used to manage individuals by distributing them in space.

These early attempts at urban planning were perfected in the work of Le Corbusier. He saw it as the task of the architect to reconcile man, machine and nature in the industrial age. Using careful planning cities could be organised in such a way that everyone benefited from the achievements of the industrial society. With Le Corbusier planning and architecture developed into a standardised, scientific, method to bring order to the city, that could be applied anywhere. This standardisation of the urban environment had the power to supply most people with the goods they needed, whilst supporting the accumulation of capital. This practice of creating a universal visual order in the city has contributed to the uniformity of current city spaces. The ideas of Le Corbusier gained momentum after World War II in the Netherlands. The fact that many cities had to be rebuilt provided an excellent opportunity to start from a clean slate.

Uniformity is thus an important element of modernity and is strongly connected with the development of the industrial city. The "Fordist" organization of production, characterized by the mass production of consumer goods in large vertically integrated factories, is coupled with mass consumption, making workers not only important as producers but also as consumers. The relation between capital and labour is regulated by the welfare state so that the continuation of both production and consumption is ensured. Uniformity is an expression of the economic logic of industrial society and its related pursuit of social order and discipline.

As a result of the development of industrial society, by the end of the twentieth century more and more people were able to consume more than just the basic necessities for their survival. As a result, capitalist (re)production expanded into

culture and everyday life seeking paths to further accumulation. For the majority of people in the Western world, consumption was no longer limited to the basic necessities for survival, but included all sorts of luxury goods and leisure time pursuits. However, this “democratisation of consumption” did not lead to more freedom, but instead resulted in people becoming even more controlled by the logic of capitalism. The production and consumption of culture has become as standardised as normal industrial production. As a result of this development, we are today no longer able to know the value of a product outside of the exchange system. As a result products can take on a wide range of cultural association and illusions. In a way, ordinary consumption goods have therefore become cultural products.

The commodification of culture is coupled with a culturalisation of commodities. Artists and creative professionals play an important role in mediating between consumers (with their distinct identities, culture and way of life) and abstract market forces. The cultural aspects of consumption give products a new form of use value: social distinction. Consumption becomes a formative process as people construct their own identities by distinguishing themselves from other by gathering symbolic capital through their consumption. So, although standardisation is a necessarily requirement for mass production (and capital accumulation through economies of scale), it actually reduces the value of products as a means of distinction. The need for distinction produces demand for products that are non-standard. As a result, producers have to diversify their products.

The diversity of cities is the raw material for (cultural) products. That is why urban development strategies actively make use of the diversity of cities or even try to create diversity. These strategies are aimed at attracting creative professionals and affluent consumers. It is assumed that the professionals need a diverse environment, with many different sources of inspiration, to create their products. Consumers are looking for the same environment, or the products it has to offer, to distinguish themselves. To attract these groups cheap working spaces are created for creative professionals. For the affluent consumers luxurious housing is developed (especially in the city centre), gentrification is stimulated, shopping areas are enhanced, events and attractions are developed. All these activities are meant to put a city “on the map” and are therefore brought to the attention of the public through marketing.

In these cultural development strategies, the local government is strongly involved. In the global economy, local authorities increasingly have to attract capital investments by themselves as national government are less able to control capital movements. These strategies work as an external coercive power, as those who do not employ them lose investments to others who did. These strategies try to tie capital investment to the locality by supporting local entrepreneurs or building on elements of the local culture or way of life. However, many localities have comparable cultural assets that could be developed in a similar way. It is therefore likely that such strategies will only provide a short term solution as they can easily be copied. For all their enthusiasm for the opportunities that cities provide, the message of these strategies is essentially a negative one. There is absolutely no faith in the possibility of radical reform to be found in these strategies. The social foundations of the world are seen as fixed and there are no ways to change these structures. This leaves no room for a future in which wealth and opportunities are more equally distributed among the cities inhabitants. Cities have no choice but to stay ahead of their competition.

The emphasis on the positive development opportunities of the city has lowered the concerns for a more equal distribution of wealth and power in urban development. The diversity of cities that is being created by cultural development project often has a highly symbolic character. The building housing of for high income households in poor neighbourhoods is represented as the creation of an optimal (diverse) mix of inhabitants. The opposite movement – building housing for the poor in wealthy neighbourhood – does not take place. Harsh competition makes it easier to concentrate on those groups that are potentially profitable than on those that are in need of support. This decision is justified by referring to assumed, but often unproven, spin off effects of supporting the affluent parts of society.

This unequal attention is further aggravated by the tendency to value image over substance. Just as the manipulation of images has become much more important for selling products, it also provides policy makers with a short(er) route to success. This is shown by the controversy surrounding the “preferendum” on the Rijnboog haven in Arnhem. The realisation of this urban redevelopment plan is a public-private partnership, which means that a content of the plan is predominantly determined by the municipal authorities and the private parties (investors, real estate developers). The local government, which owes its influence to its control over planning regulations, should mediate between the public interest and the interest of capital investors (both those investing money and those owning land in the area). This requires the careful negotiation of the different interests of different groups of stakeholders, which can be a tedious process. Instead the municipal government tried to win popular support for the plan by letting people choose between three versions of what is essentially the same harbour. The choice presented to the public effectively hides that fact that the plan is based on speculation and the wish of officials to put Arnhem “on the map”. Judged by the result of the referendum, this strategy proved to be unsuccessful, as the population of Arnhem did not believe that their vote would make any difference.

Urban redevelopment projects show the same selective approach to diversity that is guided by the profit motive. Musiskwartier is representative for other redevelopment projects being carried out in the Netherlands. The project enhances the physical form and functional structure of a run-down area of the inner city in order to enable the city centre to compete for the spending power of regional consumers. The project is also illustrative for the development of the retail sector itself as it is an example of the replacement of large department stores by smaller chain stores. These stores have been able to combine mass production and consumption of consumer goods with the creation of distinct, brand-based, identities.

The project is presented as an alternative to the nameless designs of modern urban spaces. Instead of this “scientific” universality, the area is designed to fit into the surrounding urban area, giving it a distinct identity and “sense of place”. This effort to create a new urban space that still fits into the context of the existing city is meant to turn this urban space into a profitable investment object. This profit is to be delivered by turning this area to new uses that pay of more than the original uses: in this case this means developing chain stores and luxurious apartments. In order to make these chain stores work, the area is designed to optimise the walking routes so that they lead the visitor past the shop. The carefully constructed identity of the area is used as a bait to lure shoppers from the region and people looking for a unique apartment into the city centre.

The friendly scale of the project, the modest dimensions of the facades, hides a full-scale modern shopping centre from direct sight. This way, the façade serves a double purpose: not only does it provide the retail companies with a friendly face with which they can welcome their consumers, but it also hides the power that real estate investments have to change the urban landscape from direct sight. In other words: the friendly façade ensures the wide-spread acceptance of the project as a pleasant addition to the city. Elements of the surrounding city that do not fit the profit motif (such as affordable housing) did not make their way into the project. Creating an attractive city involves building on the diverse elements that make up this city (its people, buildings and businesses) but not without carefully selecting what is to be included and what is not. This selectiveness is also apparent in the project's public spaces. Although the streets are technically public, the design of these streets is so heavily directed toward shopping that seems to rule out any other activity from taking place there. There are almost no places to sit down, except at the lunchroom of V&D. In the narrow streets lined with shops one has no choice but to keep moving with the crowd.

Contemporary urban development practices that revolve around the concept of attractiveness are essentially a continuation of the architectural practices that developed in the wake of the industrial city. In the industrial city architecture and planning contributed to capital accumulation by designing the living environment of workers. Today, in what we might call the post-industrial city, urban development is based on the creation of difference as an attraction. Although this gives the illusion of individual choice, even today our living environment is being determined by the government in cooperation with the market. The result is perhaps more than acceptable for those parts of the population that are desirable for their talents or their money, but it is likely to be less convenient for those who are poor and low-educated. They lose their rights to live in the desirable parts of cities, even if these were their neighborhoods for years. Architecture and other forms of cultural expression act as a smokescreen that effectively hides a government that no longer wishes, or is no longer able, to carry out its core tasks. Local government would do well to guard the collective interests of urban (re)development with vigilance.

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## INTERVIEWS

The following people were interviewed in the course of this research project:

- Dr. B. Spierings, Assistant Professor Urban Geography at the Utrecht University
- Drs. G. Haenen, Senior official at the municipal government of Arnhem
- Ir. Willem-Joost de Vries, project architect (and senior partner) at T+T Design in Gouda