



**GEOGRAPHIES OF (UN)EASE:**  
Embodying Racial Stigma  
in Public Space

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## Abstract

Combining insights from stigma, postcolonial and geography studies, this article examines how Moroccan-Dutch men perceive their embodiment of stigma and what coping strategies they employ in public space. Understanding racial stigma in public space requires a new approach that is more attentive to the racialized body, how it interacts with other bodies and how it is spatially situated. This exploratory study conducted twelve semi-structured walking interviews in Rotterdam. Our findings reveal that the men are aware of how their bodies are read as different and the suspicion that comes with it. We theorize that double consciousness could be considered the embodied state of stigma that triggers both mental and bodily alertness to their environment. Simultaneously, it also seems to be double consciousness that makes the men more vulnerable to stigmatization in the streets. Besides other bodies, spatial and temporal factors (whiteness/diversity, day/night, outdoor/indoor culture, quietness/liveliness, rest/movement and familiarity/unfamiliarity) incite alertness. These factors are closely intertwined with the figure of the stranger and thus the embodiment of these men. Furthermore, we have mapped the men's geography of (unease). It confirms that stigma is spatially situated and spaces of ease play a pivotal role in their everyday lives. Therefore, we propose shifting from a language of fear to a language of (un)ease. Moreover, the main coping strategies utilized were ignoring, avoiding, reforming and contesting. In contrast to previous studies, the men did not seem to only opt for conflict avoidant strategies. The spatial and bodily coping techniques revealed that what seems docile, could also be interpreted as unyielding. We conclude that racial stigma in public space has fostered discomfort in the men, but more and more Dutch-Moroccan men dare to cross social and spatial boundaries.

### Keywords

Racial stigma, (Inter)embodiment, double consciousness, spatialization of stigma, coping strategies

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## Introduction

Suddenly, I heard screaming in the streets. A Moroccan-Dutch teenage boy was chased by a white man. "Stop him! Stop him!", he yelled, while simultaneously swearing. Other white men joined the chase. For them it was clear who was the perpetrator and who was the victim. I wondered whether people would respond similarly when a white man was chased by another white man. Would he also be considered scum instantly? Would his body be subject to the same violence? Or would there be more doubt about who is in the wrong?

Scholars reveal that the bodies of Moroccan-Dutch men are indeed read differently. They have stigmatized bodies that are considered strange and suspect, and therefore incite fear (Ahmed, 2000; England & Simon, 2010). In contrast, the white bodies are frequently considered bodies-at-home and therefore naturally feel at ease and in place. Hence, how bodies are read influences how they can move and be in space (Ahmed, 2007; Butler, 1988). By researching the everyday experiences of men of colour, the social borders and restrictions of spaces can become visible (Listerborn, 2016; Hancock, Blanchard & Chapuis, 2018; Fiske, 1998; de Koning, 2009). Furthermore, learning about their spatial and bodily coping techniques provide insights into the different realities people face and how racial inequality is manifested in space. Therefore, my research question is: How do Moroccan-Dutch men perceive the(ir) embodiment of stigma and what coping strategies do they employ in public space?

In order to answer this question, I conducted walking interviews, because this allowed for contextualization of the research. The Moroccan-Dutch men have been selected, because they are the most disfavoured group in Dutch society, even after controlling for socioeconomic characteristics (Liebig & Windmaier, 2009).

This study make two key contributions to stigmatization and geography literature. This paper extends the work on stigma, a discrediting attribute leading to rejection in society (Goffman, 1963), by situating it in public space and emphasizing its embodiment. The main focus of current studies lays on the coping strategies people employ (most) in institutional settings and the social contexts that trigger some strategies over others (Fleming, Lamont & Welburn, 2012; Bouabid, 2018). Thereby, frequently bodily and spatial components of stigma are overlooked. The geography literature has been more attentive to these dimensions, however, there is still a gap in how being feared is perceived by the young men of colour who are primarily stigmatized as dangerous (England & Simon, 2010; Madge, 1997; Pain, 2001; Shirlow & Pain, 2003; Valentine, 1992; Day, 2006). Feminist geographers have produced ample research on the role of fear in women's geographies. However, underemphasized is how women's fear controlled their own use of public space, but also that of the racialized other's - who are often banished from public space as a result (Herbert & Beckett, 2010; van den Berg & Chevalier, 2017). In order to examine the other side of the

equation, this study addresses racialized others' perceptions in public space. We discovered that (1) in public space the men frequently are in a state of double consciousness (Dubois, 1903/1984), both mentally and physically, (2) stigma can be triggered and constrained by spatial-temporal factors, (3) a geography of (un)ease is more fitting to study stigma than a geography of fear and (4) the bodily and spatial coping techniques reveal the importance of motivations in distinguishing coping strategies.

## Theoretical Framework

### Race as stigma

In this paper, we treat race as stigma. Stigma derives from a Greek term referencing “bodily signs that were designed to expose something unusual and bad about the moral status of the signifier” (Goffman, 1963, p. 11). By this definition, the body is a visual marker through which one determined the character of the one being read. Goffman (1963) attempted to generalise stigma to also encompass invisible attributes, redefining it as “an attribute that is deeply discrediting” (p. 3) able to reduce a whole person to a discounted, tainted one. The process of stigmatization dehumanises and excludes people from full social acceptance. What makes an attribute discrediting is always dependent upon the relationships between people: What is defined as abnormal is always dependent upon what is considered normal by ‘normal’ people.

People who are discredited often face a spoiled identity; there is a conflict between how they see themselves and how the outside world sees them (Goffman, 1963). In order to deal with this conflict and the negative interactions they have, people who are stigmatised use strategies to manage their sense of self when they feel they are being mistreated. Over time, through processes of socialisation, the stigmatised is able to see oneself through the eyes of the ‘normal’ and thereby comes to know where one stands in “the order of normal-stigma positionalities” (Tyler, 2018, p. 750; Goffman, 1963). Awareness of the normal’s perspective allows for their judgements to be felt and even internalised. This is reminiscent of Dubois’ (1903/1984) and Fanon’s (1952/2008) work on double consciousness<sup>1</sup> that describes how black people look at oneself from the other’s perspective, feeling fragmented in one’s identity and the mental conflict that ensues. Yet, they considered double consciousness an unilateral, maladaptive survival technique (Moore, 2005; Black, 2007).

Goffman’s pioneering work (1963) has been criticized on several grounds. Firstly, his relational understanding was divorced from power relations on the macro and micro levels (Tyler, 2018). Parker and Aggleton (2003) extend stigma with the concept of ‘stigma power’, which highlights the structural violence and social control stigma can exert. Secondly, while Goffman

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<sup>1</sup> Fanon (1952/2008) and Dubois’ (1903/1984) descriptions of double consciousness do not contain contrasting definitions.

(1963) professed neutrality, he was not neutral at all (Tyler, 2018). He adopted the authorial perspective of the normal, thereby missing experiences and coping mechanisms of the stigmatised (Hunt, 1966; Tyler, 2018). For instance, Kusow's (2004) work showcases how the stigmatized can actually reject stigma and even "impose their own stigma on members of the majority group" (p. 194). Thirdly, Goffman's norms led to the normalisation of stigma and the violence it entails. He recommended acceptance, instead of resistance, of the social norms and thereby the situation as it is by the stigmatised (Goffman, 1963). Lastly, Goffman and other stigma researchers have generally ignored how stigmatization is historically specific. According to Tyler and Slater (2018) there should be more attention to history (time), geography (place) and political-economic conditions, and how these influence the shape of stigma in everyday contexts. Therefore, we have been attentive to the men's geographies and the affects (of (un)ease) that guide them.

The concept of racial stigma is useful for this research. Firstly, because it is attentive to how race "is seen in or on the body" (Howarth, 2006, p. 443), thereby it accentuates the embodiment of race we are interested in. Secondly, the relational approach underlying stigma is necessary for understanding the weight public interactions can have on the stigmatised sense of self and how stigmatization is enforced upon the stigmatised. Thirdly, stigmatization contributes to our understanding of the norms that dictate the ways in which bodies are allowed to be and the subsequent coping strategies the men opt for. Next, I will focus upon stigma's embodiment and confinement to space.

### **The embodiment of stigma: the stranger**

When considering embodiment, we often focus on the bodily experience in its individuality and thus assume bodily independence. Yet, the experiences with other bodies are actually the experiences that transform my body into 'my' body, as these reveal the particularity of own (Merleau-Ponty, 1968/2002, Ahmed, 2000). Initially, the stigma of race is specifically linked to the body of the stigmatised<sup>2</sup> (Howarth, 2006), making race seem biological and real. Yet, race actually concerns the interactions between people and the reduction and distinguishing of the other through the visual marker of the skin. Skin colour renders other bodily features invisible, and comes with stereotypical assumptions about their character<sup>34</sup> (Anderson, 2012, 2015). As the stigma of race illustrates, there needs to be a relational understanding of racial embodiment that places more emphasis on the sociality of the body and how it is affected by, and interacting

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<sup>2</sup> Race is a social construct, but seems biological because we associate it with the colour of our skin (Sternberg, Grigorenko & Kidd, 2005).

<sup>3</sup> For instance, it is harder for people to distinguish faces of other races, compared to their own (Michel, Rossion, Han, Chung & Caldara, 2006).

<sup>4</sup> Consider the following racial stereotypes often typecast in movies: the violent Muslim, the hyper sexual, criminal black man and the nerdy Asian (Shaheen, 2003; Yuen, 2016).

with, others (Ahmed, 2000). Consequently, Ahmed (2000) proposes the term inter-embodiment to emphasise that the lived experience of embodiment is always the “social experience of dwelling with other bodies” (47). Researchers should consider how much space bodies allow each other, the physical-emotional reactions (e.g. disgust) that bodies can incite in each other and how bodies are touched by other bodies in the absence of physical contact (Ahmed, 2000).

Therefore, one needs to take into account the social histories that are inscribed onto our bodies. Histories like colonialism have a deep impact on the world; they orientate bodies in specific directions and allow some bodies to take up more space than others (Ahmed, 2007). Some bodies appear marked and others unmarked (Ahmed, 2000). Stigma only addresses the bodies of the marked, and therefore negates that the bodies that seem unmarked, white bodies, are marked as well, namely by privilege and a history of domination. Fanon (1952/2008) describes how his bodily schema was negated by the historical-racial schema that had become internalised. The weight of the white man’s eyes objectified his body and the consciousness of his perceptions restricted how his own body could be in the world. The people of colour’s lived experience is always embedded in relation to the white man, therefore they are sensitive to his signals. Double consciousness reveals the condition of the stigmatised and that there is a “normatively shared understanding of who stigmatises whom“ (Kusow, 2014, 194) that allows stigma to exert social control.

In public spaces, one body arguably needs to be socially controlled: the body of the stranger. The figure of the stranger is imagined as unknowable. This conceals the forms of social exclusion that the figure of the stranger prompts, as the stranger is actually a familiar figure (Ahmed, 2000). The stranger is recognised as a stranger instead of not being recognised at all. What makes the stranger recognisable is the bodily integrity its figure possesses. Colonialism systemically transformed white bodies into the norm and expelled other beings from its zone of living, thereby reducing bodies of colour to strange bodies that are out of place (Ahmed, 2007). The ‘normals’ distinguish between strange and non-strange bodies in their environment. It is in this close proximity to each other that the strange body is able to be reified as strange. Furthermore, the body of the stranger is seen as the dirty, uncontrollable and dangerous body that has already contaminated the safe space of home before and is therefore considered a threat to the homogenous community (Ahmed, 2007)<sup>5</sup>. Consequently, the ‘good, normal citizens’ continuously suspect the stranger to protect their community. Hence, the stranger danger that is associated with the body of the racialized other obstructs social encounters and bolsters social boundaries.

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<sup>5</sup> Orientalism shows that the body of the stranger can also be connected to desire (Said, 1978). Women have often been eroticized, because they were deemed exotic. However, the bodies of men are more associated with threat, be it sexual or otherwise.

### **The spatialization of stigma: white, black and neutral**

The social boundaries that stranger danger upholds translate into spaces and how we imagine them to be. Spaces are often framed as safe or unsafe. What makes these spaces safe or unsafe is, however, dependent upon the body one has and how it is gendered, raced, classed and sexed (England & Simon, 2010; Madge, 1997). This is often overlooked because the imagination of the white subject has become the hegemonic imagination of (un)safety<sup>6</sup>. Anderson (2015) shows that people of colour have a different outlook on safe space. They identify white spaces which are characterised by “their overwhelming presence of white people and their absence of black people” (p. 13) and reinforcement of “a normative sensibility in settings in which black people are typically absent, not expected, or marginalized when present” (p. 10). The social boundaries of these spaces are felt. When they are transgressed, people of colour face constant scrutiny, uncertainty about one’s status and being put back in their ‘rightful’ place by both citizens and the police. The assumption is that all black people come from the ghetto. The black man needs to prove he is not in order to receive trust and proper treatment (Anderson, 2012). However, this trust is easily overturned, which makes the white space an unpredictable space for people of colour.

The ghetto is typically seen as black space (Anderson, 2015). Black space comes with space-focused stereotypes: they are assumed to be impoverished, crime-ridden and dirty (Bonam, Bergsieker & Eberhardt, 2016). These, in turn, negatively influence how people connect to, evaluate and protect these spaces. Although, these spaces are frequently ruled by the code of the streets, it is also a place where people of colour do not have to continuously adjust; where their double consciousness does not take over (Dubois, 1903/1984; Fanon, 1952/2008). Nonetheless, the stigmatised body of the ‘stranger’ rarely fully escapes scrutiny. The stigmatised “have to be continuously policed, controlled or excluded to minimise threat” (Howarth, 2006, 5; Hancock, Blanchard & Chapuis, 2017). According to Çankaya (2015), the police fulfils the symbolic role of border guard in the production of white spaces in the city through racial profiling. Men with a minority or migration background frequently face unwarranted arrests and are thereby excluded from public spaces.

In order to capture more of the in-betweens, we need to ask whether there are spaces that feel unclaimed and relatively open despite not being one’s ‘own’ space. Spaces that feel neutral, like the cosmopolitan canopy, described by Anderson (2004), where a diversity of strangers encounter and humanize each other. Jones et al. (2015) researched the appeal of semi-public places such as McDonalds to a broad range of consumers. Such spaces are frequently bland

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<sup>6</sup> For instance, in the Netherlands, the neighbourhoods with a higher degree of diversity are generally considered more unsafe (Jennissen, Engbersen, Bokhorst & Bovens, 2018). This does not only relate to the higher poverty rate of these neighbourhoods, it also has to do with the abundance of strange bodies located in these places which form a threat to the white subject whom is normally dominant.



spaces, which through their standard formula become well known, regardless of specific location. According to the study, this very blandness allowed the spaces to be reconfigured as an available space for people of diverse backgrounds, as they seem familiar and ordinary. This puts people at ease and allows them to move under the radar of fear. These type of places enable a type of civil inattention in which cultural difference is “acknowledged and accommodated with superficial levels of engagement but without avoidance or sanction” (p. 658). What Jones et al. (2015) present is an example of how spaces can be unclaimed and how strangers can come to dwell in close proximity without feelings of fear, hostility and avoidance. In this research, we should thus be aware that there are also relatively neutral spaces that guide the geographies of the participants.

Hence, the geography of fear, driven by feelings of (un)safety, does not cover the whole story. The discourse of stranger danger that comes with it establishes dichotomies between safe and unsafe, vulnerable and dangerous, suspects and innocents. This troubles our understanding of people’s geographies. Firstly, we tend to solely focus on the geography of the white and ‘vulnerable’ female subject, thereby we neglect how this fear of the racialized other can actually “lead to exclusion from public space of those who are seen as threatening” (England & Simon, 2010, p. 203). Secondly, fear and safety are extreme emotions, lacking in-betweens and thus subtlety to understand everyday interactions. Lastly, the geography of fear has been attuned to female subjects, however, it cannot be said to resonate with masculine subjects as well, who generally seem to reject vulnerability more (Connell, 1995). In my understanding, (un)ease concerns the level of comfortableness one feels in a space, both mentally (how relaxed can one be) and bodily (how in or out of place does one feel). Thereby, (un)ease covers a broader spectrum of emotions. With unease, we can both speak of fear and feeling like a misfit. With ease, we can both speak of feeling at home and feeling fine. Hence, we propose to speak of a geography of (un)ease, so we can avoid divisive language and be attentive to the nuances in race relations in people’s everyday lives.

### **Coping strategies**

The main focus of stigmatization literature is on coping strategies. Bouabid (2018) has provided us with an overview of strategies synthesised from Goffman (1963), Bouw & Nelissen (1988), Simpson & Yinger (1985) and Lemert (1951, 1967) that are employed: passing (trying to pass as ‘normal’ in order to take advantage of the ‘normal’ status), contestation (emphasizing one’s own roots and contesting prejudice), avoidance (avoidance of the ‘normals’), ignoring (denying or ignoring discrimination in order to deflect conflict or show one’s immunity), exploiting (using one’s migration background to exploit others), conforming (conforming to avoid discrimination or to advance oneself), reforming (attempting to change the system of discrimination by working with

'normals') and internalising (people who are frequently exposed to stigma and therefore start to internalise stigma as part of themselves). Whereas reforming and contestation strategies attempt to challenge stigmatization, passing, avoidance, ignoring, exploiting and conforming are generally conflict-deflecting strategies. In the thesis, I will distinguish between coping strategies and the more concrete coping techniques that fall under them<sup>7</sup>.

According to Bouabid (2018), Moroccan-Dutch men are resourceful in how they use "specific or different combinations of coping techniques or strategies in different stigmatising situations" (p. 361). The two most influential factors are the situation the stigmatization takes place in and the life stage of the stigmatised. Generally speaking, the men resort to relatively mild and compliant coping strategies (ignoring and selectively conforming). These are mostly employed because of pragmatic reasons: resistance is often counterproductive, retreating is difficult when one gets older and can result in missing out on the 'good' that mixed contacts can offer<sup>8</sup>. The strategies that were not employed at all were total retreat, total conformation and internalising. We extend Bouabid's (2018) research by researching bodily and spatial coping techniques.

The mental strategies that are researched are frequently situated in settings like work or school where there is interpersonal contact through language (for instance Fleming, Lamont & Welburn, 2012). Yet, this research is situated in public space, in this setting the body, how it is positioned and how it occupies space impacts the everyday experience of stigma. From the geography literature, we have managed to dissect several spatial techniques: (1) the avoidance of spaces, (2) being extra territorial in one's own neighbourhood, (3) attempting to claim more space, (4) learning to navigate neighbourhoods similar to one's own and (5) appropriating central areas in the city through consumption (Fiske, 1998; Hancock, Blanchard & Chapuis, 2017). These are in line with avoidance, contestation and reformation strategies (Boudabid, 2018). Especially the tactics in which one attempts to claim or traverse space is not without difficulties, as this means overstepping one's boundaries (Oppenchain, 2011). These techniques illustrate that stigmatization also impacts how one can move through space. "Spaces are claimed, or 'owned' not so much by inhabiting what is already there, but by moving within, or passing through" (Ahmed, 2000, p. 32). To my knowledge, bodily coping techniques have been underemphasized in the literature<sup>9</sup>, therefore we will now address the incorporation of both spatial and bodily elements in the methodology.

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<sup>7</sup> For instance, the technique of changing your name to hide your racial stigma is used under the strategy of passing and covering (Goffman, 1963).

<sup>8</sup> Men retreat and resist less as they age (Bouabid, 2018).

<sup>9</sup> One coping technique that could be considered is alternating between language dialects (e.g. DeBose, 1992).

## Methods

This exploratory, qualitative study investigates how Moroccan-Dutch men perceive the embodiment of racial stigma and how they cope with stigmatization in public space. As the focus is the embodiment and spatialization of stigma, the data was collected through semi-structured walking interviews. “Walking interviews entail researchers and participants talking while walking together” (King & Woodroffe, 2017, p. 1). Whereas the semi-structured interview allows for in-depth questioning and interactivity with the interviewee, the walking interview situates the interview in the actual context to which it applies and thereby allows for interactivity with the environment (Boeije, 2009; Mack, Woodsong, MacQueen, Guest & Namey, 2005; Cerwonka & Malkki, 2007). Besides, the walking interview has been developed to broaden our understanding of space and the mobility of humans through space, thereby it could aid in understanding how we are constituted in different spaces (King & Woodroffe, 2017).

Walking interviews are either more researcher or participant driven, depending upon who decides the route (Kusenbach, 2003). We decided to first meet at a location in Rotterdam where the participant felt at ease. The first quarter of the interview took place here, addressing their description of ease. Subsequently, we would walk to a less diverse space nearby, which was pre-selected based on the population statistics of the Rotterdam neighbourhoods<sup>10</sup> (see appendix 3). By asking questions about white spaces in the environments itself and being attentive to bodily changes, we gained insight into geographies of unease. Hence, we did not execute a natural go-along type of interview, however, we did provide the participants some autonomy. The advantages of the walking interview for the project were: (1) the opportunity to show rather than describe for the participants, (2) the potential of extra understanding for the researcher from hearing the lived experience in its actual space and (3) the possible synchronisation of bodies with different positionalities<sup>11</sup> (Clark & Emmel, 2010; Brown & Durrheim, 2009).

The study draws upon data collected from interviews with twelve Moroccan-Dutch men (aged between 18-35) that have either lived or studied in Rotterdam (see figure 1). This group has been selected, because they are the most stigmatised and feared group in Dutch society due to their Moroccan ethnicity, male gender and young age (Liebig & Windmaier, 2009; Day, 2006). Moreover, the city of Rotterdam belongs to the most ethnically diverse cities in the Netherlands and has frequently initiated policy initiatives burdensome for minority groups (van den Berg, 2017). The

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<sup>10</sup> We looked at the relative amount of white people and people of colour in the neighborhoods close to the location we were meeting.

<sup>11</sup> My own positionality of being a mixed-race woman differs from that of the research group. I considered it important to be attentive to my own position, as it can influence the process and research outcome (Jones, Bunce, Evans, Gibbs & Hein, 2008). The walking interview was considered an advantageous tool in bridging the gap. It allowed my body to move with the body of my research participant. This synchronisation seemed to allow for more empathy.

sample was heterogeneous with respect to class and education, because we wanted to focus on the similarities between these men's lived experiences. A purposive sampling strategy was utilised, as the participants were recruited according to predetermined criteria. After recruiting the first participants, snowball sampling was utilised for recruiting more participants (Mack et al., 2005)<sup>12</sup>.

In the interviews, we addressed (inter)embodiment by asking how the men feel when at (un)ease, what kind of interactions they have with others and how they perceive their body is read. The spatiality of stigma was incorporated by asking after the men's spaces and places of (un)ease, how they differentiate between these spaces, where the affective differences come from and the spaces where they have been stigmatized. The coping strategies were integrated in our questions after stigmatizing situations, how they coped with it and how they deal with spaces of unease (see appendix 1 for the interview guide). The audio recordings of the interviews were transcribed, after which three coding processes took place: open coding, axial coding and selective coding (Boeije, 2009). Firstly, I marked potential elements of interest in the interview transcripts and researcher notes. Secondly, in open coding, I summarized the fragments in as few words as possible. These

<sup>12</sup> This sampling method has been chosen, because it could diminish the hurdles interviewees can feel to be interviewed (Mack et al. 2005).

	Pseudonym	Occupation	Age	Neighbourhood in which one grew up	Diverse or white neighbourhood
1	Baariq	University Student Medicine and Philosophy Master	23	Prinsenland	White
2	Omar	Dancer	33	Charlois	Diverse
3	Saeed	PhD	28	Feyenoord	Diverse
4	Dalil	HBO Student - Social Studies (teacher)  High School teacher	26	Spangen	Diverse
5	Jasim	Musician Burger King employee Student	20	Ommoord	White
6	Sami	Social youth worker	33	Roosendaal	Diverse
7	Faiz	University Bachelor Communication  Primark manager	29	Den Haag	White
8	Ahsan	Entrepreneur Teacher at HBO	25	Oud Krimpen	White
9	Khaled	HBO Student - Social Studies (teacher)	23	Crooswijk	Diverse
10	Fikri	University student in business administration, econometrics, tax law	21	Rotterdam Noord	Diverse
11	Zeyn	University Student Medicine Research Master	22	Rotterdam-Oost Alexander (Harderwijk & Enschede)	White
12	Yousri	HBO Student Engineering	24	Rotterdam-Zuid	Diverse

*Figure 1.* Participant data. This figure contains the interviewee's profession/education, age, neighbourhood in which they grew up in and its level of diversity.

codes were implemented in our coding tree (see appendix 4) to identify the connections between concepts. Thirdly, I distinguished between the main categories and subcategories. Lastly, I refined the codes with my conceptual grasp and restructured the themes to better my understanding of the interrelationships. Hence, the codes were mainly researcher derived (Braun & Clarke, 2013).

## Results

The results are divided into four sections. Firstly, we present how the men's difference becomes known through the interactions with other bodies and what the accompanying unease does to them. Secondly, we show how stigma translates into space and, vice versa, how space-time can influence if and how stigma is felt. Thirdly, we reveal the type of interactions that take place in public space and how the space influences the nature of these interactions. Lastly, we unveil how the men cope with stigmatization by dissecting bodily and spatial coping techniques.

### (Inter)embodiment

#### Having a strange, different body

The meaning of one's own body derives from dwelling with other bodies. It is from these other bodies that one comes to perceive one's own body as strange and/or different. With many of the participants, this difference becomes noticeable through comparison. "That is the strange thing. I can wear the exact same coat as a Dutch man, but only I will receive weird looks, the Dutch man will not. (Faiz)" It is also in this process that one develops double consciousness, as one starts to consider how one's own body that always felt normal to you, is perceived by others as abnormal (Dubois, 1903/1984). The majority of the participants revealed their double conscious sensibility in their concerns about how their bodies are perceived, how certain types of clothing come across on their body (fur coats, busy patterns, branded clothing) and whether they stand out or not.

Because I am the misfit, that is just noticeable, curls, black hair, way of talking, I am more in the spotlight and that is why you have to watch out with what you are doing, you can easily be misunderstood. (Fikri)

From this quote, it is noticeable that Fikri is not only aware of having a different body, but also of the discourse or assumptions that come along with it. The experiences of the men showcase that people frequently assume that they are (1) at "the bottom of the social ladder" (Khaled), (2) a possible criminal (Dalil) and (3) hyper-sexual beings (Faiz).

### **Interactions with other bodies**

From the dwelling with other bodies, the men became aware of their difference. Yet, what drives their daily lives are the emotions involved when interacting with these other bodies. These interactions influence how at ease or at unease one feels in certain spaces. For the majority of the men, being able to be at ease has to do with a lack of certain interactions: one can feel at ease “when one does not stand out” (Khaled), when “one does not feel the gazes” (Dalil) directed to one’s body, when one is not being paid extra attention to, “when one is not searched for” (Sami). At the same time, being completely ignored, avoided or retreated from also incites an unease, because it indirectly indicates that one was noticed. Hence, the body is indeed a social body (Ahmed, 2000).

Sometimes we were walking down the streets and there was a woman walking passed us with a backpack. It was hanging on her right side. You are walking behind her and you just see, live, how she moves it to her front and holds on to it. And then you think to yourself: why? That creates a feeling that we are inferior compared to the rest. You do not trust us. Or you automatically start walking on the other side of the road. Those are the signals that are picked up, even though they are small signals, those are signals that we certainly understand. (Khaled)

This mainly connects to the notion of civil inattention (Goffman, 1963). One feels at ease when one receives no more or no less attention than the other bodies in the space one is moving through. Therefore, both “people minding their own business” (Faiz) and the “possibility of having spontaneous interactions with strangers” (Sami) feels comfortable. This quote also reveals the sensibility these men have for the signals in their environment. Many of the men report feeling the grudge, fear or suspicion of others, even though few to no words have been spoken. Due to the implicit communication in these interactions, “you can hardly prove or demonstrate [stigmatization]. It is very often just a feeling that you get from something” (Saeed). Being at ease, therefore, also has to do with knowing what to expect and being familiar with the people and environment around you. In other words, with being well integrated (Anderson, 2015).

Another type of interaction significant in the men’s daily lives is how their body is read when being in a group of similar bodies. The men sense that they are perceived as extra dangerous or suspicious when hanging out with other men of colour. In these group formations, they are most frequently harassed by the police (in line with Çankaya, 2015). These kind of experiences incite a double consciousness not only about one’s own body, but also about how one comes across when standing with other, ‘different’ bodies (Fanon, 1952/2008). In some, this even led to fear: “As a result of the halts with the mobile unit, I am on my guard with whom I am standing, with whom I

am talking. I'm afraid of that." (Sami). He is hinting at the experience of becoming a possible suspect or victim when one is near the 'wrong' bodies for too long.

Naturally, the (un)ease that is incited by the interactions with other bodies have an impact on one's own body. Being at ease is often noticeable in the way one can sit or move, one can "sit laidback" (Zeyn), "move smoother" (Dalil) and walk in "a more peaceful pace" (Baariq). Yet, most apparent for the men, is when they are not at ease. Many describe a state of alertness in which they are extra attentive to the environment they are in and the possible scenarios that can unfold:

I am extra conscious of my environment and who is standing everywhere. Just in case something happens, then I know where it could be coming from. I don't know, it is a sort of feeling of alertness or something. (Saeed)

In this state of alertness, there is not only awareness of the environment, but also of their own body. Most of the men notice how their mimicry becomes more serious, how they start to walk much quicker and how they can have sweaty hands or bodily ticks.

### **Accustomization to dwelling with other bodies**

To be considered a strange body is not an experience characterising all the participants' early lives. The majority grew up in a multicultural neighbourhood. To be able to identify with the bodies they dwelt with allowed the participants to blend in and feel at home. Sometimes, these environments postponed mixed contacts and the accompanying stigmatization.

Nobody asked me where I was actually from and it wasn't a thing anyway. Scientific education is just a lot whiter, just a lot, a lot whiter, and then you do get the question: hey, where are you from? And even if you say: yes, Rotterdam. They will say: but where are you really from and then you will have to explain it and so on. That really felt like I was left out. (Saeed)

In contrast, four participants actually grew up in relatively white neighbourhoods. Generally, these men seem to overcome being 'different' in white spaces at a younger age. On the one hand, this could be explained by their habituation to being different and having had enough positive experiences with bodies unlike their own. On the other hand, these men also seem to be more accustomed to behaving differently in dissimilar social contexts. Some of the men, who were raised in diverse environments, were struggling to maintain their sense of authenticity in white spaces and mixed contacts, because they feel they are acting, instead of being themselves.

## Space & embodiment

### Space, time and space-time

These interactions with other bodies do not take place in a vacuum; space and time are important factors for inciting (un)ease and influencing how (un)ease is expressed and felt. In the following, we will discuss the intertwined elements of time (day/night), space (quietness/liveliness, whiteness/diversity) and space-time (rest/movement, familiarity/unfamiliarity).

Firstly, the time of day is an important factor in how one perceives others and oneself. Whereas daylight makes everyone visible and thereby less suspect, “at night everything looks more threatening, as everything you see looks a little scary.” (Dalil) The night also changes how suspect the men themselves feel: “What I notice myself during the evening is that I have the idea that people think that I want to hurt them or something.” (Ahsan) The night is a condition that fosters feelings of unease: one easily becomes more alert about one’s own body and suspecting of others’.

Secondly, the time of day is intertwined with the liveliness/quietness of a space, as it is associated with how many people roam the streets:

“People are more wary at night. You just notice that because there are less people in the streets. So it is much easier to keep an eye on everyone. When you are with 300 during the day, you cannot keep an eye on all of them. So then you just have to let go, then it is just easy to let go of everyone.” (Faiz)

Faiz describes how it becomes easier to keep track of everyone around you when the streets are quiet which naturally causes more suspicion. Furthermore, many of the men describe how white neighbourhoods lack the “liveliness” that they are used to in their own more diverse neighbourhoods. A few of the men describe how they are more accustomed to an active street life:

“[In Morocco], the people are just outside. It is kind of ingrained in our culture. My father was from the first generation. I am from the second generation. And that was still in my system. Outside, a big family, you have a car. Every now and then we were also outside with different cars. And you know, in this country, in the Netherlands, it is just strange when you are outside after 10 o’clock. We often felt watched in the streets.” (Sami)

In diverse neighbourhoods the whole community generally seems to be outdoors more than in white districts. The lack of liveliness and the silence experienced in white neighborhoods, is probably one of its most intimidating features. Especially when quietness seems to trigger more



suspicion in people. Furthermore, the men also distinguish between white, diverse (black) and neutral spaces. Naturally, a white neighbourhood is a white neighborhood due to the amount of white bodies that dwell there (Anderson, 2015). It is especially the amount of white bodies that can make the men feel uncomfortable, as this makes them not only stand out, but also stand out as the strange body among the other bodies. Some of the men describe a similar impact of places that are too homogeneously Arab:

I myself am a Moroccan, but I do not like places where there are only Moroccans. The same I have with the Dutch and the Turkish. I love a mix, then there is just a completely different atmosphere, more relaxed. That is the only criteria I have that places just have to be mixed. (Faiz)

In contrast, diverse and neutral spaces are mostly able to give the men a sense of being under the radar: "I feel at ease here [Rotterdam Central Station] because I am anonymous. The moment that I am in a place where, yeah, the major portion of people is fair or white, then I often feel looked at or I feel uncomfortable." (Dalil) The blandness and business of neutral spaces allow the men to go unnoticed and therefore experience more freedom in their expressions (Jones et al. 2015). The diverse spaces are the spaces where the men feel at home and are reflected in other bodies, therefore they also do not stand out and thus experience few social controls (Ahmed, 2000). Coincidentally, the white spaces are not only more homogenous in the type of bodies that dwell there. Saeed describes how white spaces are also more homogenous in their architecture and socio-economic class. This makes many of the white spaces uncomfortable, because they represent an elitist, exclusionary space.

Thirdly, there is a difference between white spaces and other spaces in the movement or lack of movement through space that the men are allowed (Ahmed, 2000). In white neighbourhoods, most of the men are able to feel calm when they are on the move. A sense of unease arises when one has to stay put:

Because the longer you are staying somewhere, the more you give people the chance to confirm something: they are chilling for a very long time, what are they doing? If I walk past a neighbourhood a few times, people can start to think: he is checking houses to break into. It all has to do with each other. Time is just a way for people to take action for that, because if I stay there super long, then they have the chance to call the police. And if I am still there, because I am there too long, then I will have to deal with that. While if I am there momentarily and I then leave, I will probably have nothing to do with it. (Sami)

It is noticeable how time and movement are intertwined in this fragment. A lack of movement means spending more time in one place, this in turn, makes Sami feel highly suspect. Apparently, the Moroccan man is not allowed to take up white space for too long; the outdoors is not a place where one should be. If he does, he can expect to be surveilled and subsequently harassed by the authorities, similar to the black men in Fiske's (1998) article. In the more diverse spaces, staying put is allowed and one of the prime modes of being there.

Furthermore, (un)familiarity with a space is an important factor for feeling at ease. White spaces generally seem more intimidating because these spaces and the rules of conduct are unknown. Entering these spaces can feel "like a threshold" (Zeyn) that one needs to overstep. As in Oppenheim's study (2011), these boundaries lead some men to rarely go somewhere that they never went before, because the familiar feels the most comfortable:

"If I for instance would suggest to [my Moroccan friends to] go to a completely different place, then they would already have a certain, maybe aversion to it, without having even tried it once, because they do not know what they should expect." (Faiz)

In line with Jones et al. (2015), restaurant chains (e.g. Starbucks) with standard, predictable formulas are accessible for the men, no matter the location, because they come with clear expectations. Nevertheless, the factor of (un)familiarity is a timely factor. Over time, some of the men reported becoming habituated to the uncomfortable white spaces, especially because they have spent more time in these spaces and the accompanying social rules.

### **(Un)comfortable places**

Hitherto, spatial and temporal factors have been discussed that influence the (un)ease most of the men feel and help identify whether a space is white, neutral or diverse. These factors translate into actual places in Rotterdam. The majority of the men report having felt uncomfortable in certain districts in the past. Whereas some are still unable to feel comfortable in these places, others feel differences in comfort, but are able to feel reasonably comfortable everywhere. Consequently, the geography of ease is more pronounced, because it has been mentioned more than the geography of unease. In figure 2, we have mapped the men's geography of (un)ease, showing that the west of Rotterdam is considered an area of ease, the centre a neutral area and the eastern periphery area of unease. The districts of ease have in common their diversity, both in terms of populace and mixed income housing. The districts of unease are more homogenous in population (white) and class.

The spaces the men most frequently occupy in these districts shift over time. In their youth,

most of the men gathered at parks, squares and soccer fields. Nowadays, they mostly meet at semi-public spaces, restaurants and shisha lounges, or gather privately in homes or cars. In the districts of ease, there are also places of unease. The spots of unease are mostly identified through (1) their stigmatising history, (2) level of whiteness and (3) exposing architecture. Terraces and upmarket restaurants in particular are considered uncomfortable.

The walking interviews revealed a similar pattern. The meeting places selected by the interviewees were most commonly semi-public franchised cafes or restaurants situated in districts of ease (see appendix 2). These were often situated in spaces familiar to the interviewee; they either go to work, live close-by or had positive experiences there. From these places of ease, we walked towards whiter spaces in the districts. Yet, because the geography of unease is located in the periphery, it was hard to reach the most uncomfortable spaces. Moreover, the presence of the female researcher diminished the men's unease of the spaces we visited:

I would never enter these kind of places (cafe in a white neighborhood). There are places that when I enter, I would already get very strange gazes, because I look differently. Though, I am walking with you now. That does make it different. Maybe I belong a bit more now. But if I would walk with a friend who looks like me, then you do have the feeling like what are we doing here. (Dalil)

The researcher gave purpose to the men's presence in these white spaces and the female body made Dalil feel as if his body was read differently. In all of the interviews, I used a fluffy microphone, which could have functioned as a visual marker of legitimacy. Thereby, the interactions with other people could be interpreted differently; the gazes seem born out of curiosity.

Most of the men walked in a firm pace. The walking around in the interviews seemed to put them at ease. Firstly, it was noticeable that the men became more laidback. Some started to ask questions back, turning the interview into a conversation. Secondly, the unease became noticeable when we couldn't move around. During the rain stop, Sami immediately became alert and more uncomfortable. He made less eye contact with the researcher and started to watch the environment. The walking interviews reveal that the geography of (un)ease is moderated by whether one can move through space and with whom one is moving through it.

### **Interactions in public space**

Space and time influence how stigma is felt and what form interactions can take. While the semi-public space is an open space catering for sociality, the streets form a space of fleetness and little interaction:

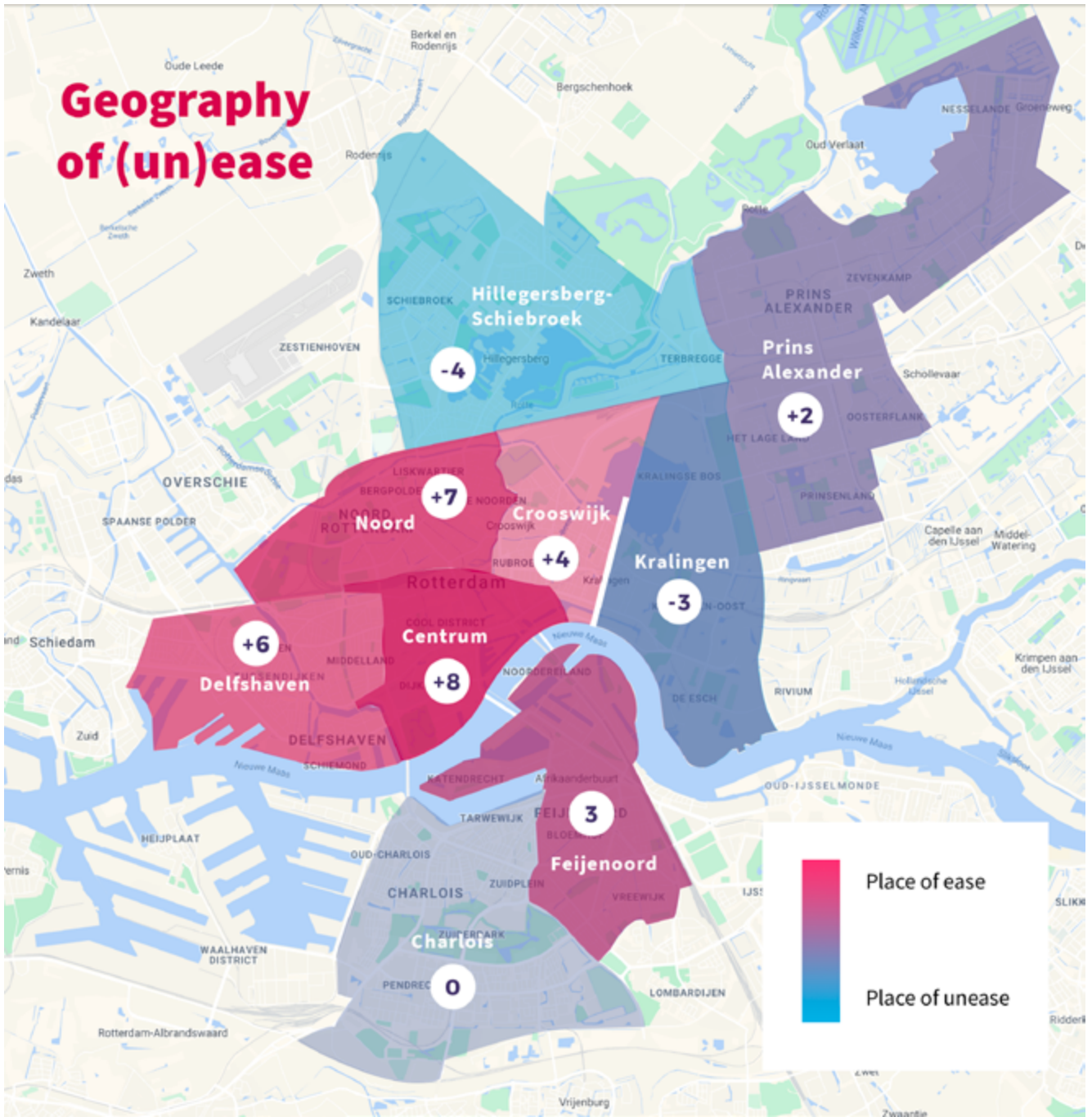


Figure 2. Map of Rotterdam: Geography of (un)ease. This figure shows a map of Rotterdam with the districts relevant to the interviewees with numbers indicating the balance of how many men have labelled the district (un)comfortable.

If I am in the club, then I love to meet new people, in the streets that doesn't happen just like that. It is a bit strange. In the club people come together, they want to have a good time with each other. Then you just start a conversation. (Zeyn)

In contrast, the interactions that strangers seek with the men in the streets are frequently more confrontational. Many of the men have been confronted with statements such as “what do you do in this country?” (Khaled), “Moroccan cunt” (Baariq) and “you are all the same” (Sami). Some have also endured more physical bullying:

It is mainly just people in the streets, people who sit in their cars who throw eggs on me. People calling me hatebeard or beard monkey from the car. It also happens that somebody shouts something. Especially when they are on the bike or in the car, because they can continue driving. (Dalil)

The fleeting nature of these interactions does not grant much response time. While some of the men are able to initiate conversation, most are forced to give more superficial responses. These are mostly humorous or agitated. Subsequently, the strangers distance themselves, because “they are afraid of confrontation” (Khaled). Interestingly, many of these type of encounters occurred in the more diverse neighbourhoods. In whiter neighbourhoods, citizens do not seem to opt for direct confrontations, instead they call the police. Jasim describes how the police were called about him many times in his own white neighbourhood by people who he knew, but that didn’t know him. This illustrates that the men can remain strangers in their own dwellings (Ahmed, 2007). Only when in the company of white friends, do white spaces seem to become more accessible. It is in their presence that they can gain legitimate entry and focus on the safety of the group they are in.

Police interactions constitute the most uncomfortable public interactions. Most of the men have dealt with police halts and/or preventive searches, some even on a daily or weekly basis. In these type of interactions, many of the men have endured bullying from the police officers who ignore or stall basic procedures and try to incite emotional responses. In some cases, this went further and led to unjust detainment, illegal searches and physical abuse:

Because they thought that we were involved in an act of vandalism or something, we were stopped. We didn’t have an ID on us, because I was 15, so we had to go with them. Then they left us for 6 hours and I wasn’t allowed to call my parents, so they didn’t know anything. It was evening by now. You are really sitting apart, it is really the cell and you hear all kinds of crazy noises of drunk people who are screaming and hitting the wall. That was quite shocking for me. (Zeyn)

The impact of these experiences is significant, many feel “vulnerable” (Dalil), “ashamed” (Ahsan) and “a loss of dignity” (Jasim). The authoritative power of the police makes most men chose for

conflict-deflecting coping strategies. This is, however, every time “a deliberation [whether to fight injustice or say nothing] that you have to make for yourself” (Khaled).

## Coping strategies

### Spatial and bodily coping techniques

Stigmatising interactions incite coping mechanisms. The understanding of previously identified coping strategies can be expanded by highlighting their bodily and spatial components. In this study, the men opted for strategies of conforming/passing, ignoring, contestation, reforming, and avoidance. Some of the lines between these strategies became blurred (conforming/passing, ignoring/contesting), as it was the motivation behind the technique that transforms it into a strategy.

Firstly, the strategy of conforming/passing could be identified in the men’s bodily adjustments of their language, clothing and facial expressions. The men adjust their language to a more generally accepted civilised Dutch accent (similar to Debose, 1992), attempt to comfort the other by smiling and dress differently to prevent stigma. Sami for instance removed his fur collar in order to avoid looking suspicious. Furthermore, many of the men conform to the spatial preferences of their white friends, because they want to avoid making them uncomfortable. A technique of coping in these uncomfortable places, is gathering white bodies, as these render one’s own body less suspect. Thereby, one can gain access to spaces that one normally cannot enter.

Secondly, the men try to come across as normal in the places of unease. On the one hand, this can be considered a technique of passing. On the other hand, it also concerns ignoring:

If I walk somewhere, then the point is you should not show that you are uncomfortable. If you are walking in the ghetto or in a rich neighbourhood, it will work against you anyway. If you just walk there and act as if you have just been there for years, then you will incite less quickly the suspicion in people that you don’t belong. (Faiz)

In Faiz’ attempt to come across as normal, he aims to be inattentive to his environment. This allows him to not be touched by others.

Thirdly, the techniques of resistance/contestation could be said to be closely intertwined with ignoring. Spatially, the men ignore the social boundaries they feel when entering a space that would normally incite unease. Through habituation the body can become accustomed to these spaces:

Keep going back, because the more often you go back to something that you don't particularly want or makes you feel uncomfortable, the quicker it becomes a habituation. (Jasim)

Yet, the bodily techniques of contestation are quite different from ignoring, as they mostly involve claiming space. Jasim does this by walking "alpha", maintaining eye contact and standing his ground. In some cases, humour is also used to show the other is wrong: "What is he doing? Is he going to steal the bike?' Sometimes I just make it a joke and I am messing around with the bike for extra long" (Zeyn).

Fourthly, the strategy of reforming is closely aligned. Some men actively seek out places where they "are so different from others" (Baariq) and try to contest stigma with the help of their white friends:

I take [my best friend] somewhere. We then come in, and you just see people do not understand the image [of the two together]. People do not understand that image and we just feel completely at ease, we just think 'You have to get to know us'. (Baariq)

Lastly, there were a multitude of avoidance/withdrawal techniques. The bodily techniques were avoiding eye contact, moving faster and looking angry. These are "a sort of way to create distance between yourself and the other, the group, that makes you feel uncomfortable, because if I look angry it is a sort of signal to leave me alone." (Saeed). Spatially, the men avoid specific places and districts, retreat from uncomfortable places and move from place to place in order to avoid stigmatization. Avoidance cannot only be identified in what the men actively avoid, but also in what spaces and places they actively seek out. Khaled reported a period in which he and his friends would only seek out migrant places, "even if that meant walking an extra kilometre to find a Turkish baker". In conclusion, the coping techniques utilised in public space are often more silent and impromptu. Strategies that require long interactions are often not viable options<sup>13</sup>.

### **Motivations behind coping strategies**

The bodily and spatial coping techniques illustrate the importance of motivation for differentiating coping strategies. For instance, while almost all of the men report wanting to "prove the other wrong", it can have a very different meaning. Whereas in reformation and contestation strategies, the men prove the other wrong in their ignorance, bias or even racism, in conforming the men aim to prove the other wrong in thinking "you are one of those bad Moroccans" as you are "one of the good guys" (Sami).

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<sup>13</sup> For instance, preaching under reformation.

The motivations for choosing a strategy can also reveal a different nature of the strategy itself. Ignoring, which is mostly seen as a conflict avoidant strategy, has contrasting motivations. Firstly, there is a sense of superiority: the men “don’t want contact with someone who stares at [them] like that” (Dalil) and the men believe they “mean more to society than they do anyway” (Khaled). Secondly, ignoring can be an emotional shield, because then one does not have to deal with it. Thirdly, idealism can cause the negation of stigmatization. Omar described how his “religion rejects racist statements ... if you live according to that, then there is no racism. We do not have racism in us.” Through his religious convictions, he is able to ignore others and the racism they potentially bring. Lastly, ignoring can also be state of more silent resistance, a form of unapologeticness. Instead of explaining oneself to the other, one allows oneself to just be as one is and not compensate or act differently because one is Moroccan. Thus one forces the other to just deal with it.

The motivation of unapologeticness sheds a different light on the strategy of ignoring and thereby also on the finding of Bouabid (2018) that men resort to relatively compliant coping strategies. Most of the men in the sample have moved on from avoidance, militancy and conformation to reformation and ignoring strategies. It is as if they have adopted an unapologetic stance: they feel calmer, are more outspoken when stigmatization occurs and attempt to not feel the need to prove themselves. They do not seek out confrontation, but also do not shy away from being as they are, which can also be considered a rebellious act because one refuses to conform to techniques that will comfort the other.

### **Intersections**

The coping techniques the men utilised varied depending on the social context at hand, but also on the gender, age and class of both themselves and the ‘other’.

Firstly, the men’s sense of masculinity influenced what coping strategies they opted for. Most of the men ignore their vulnerability, as they have been taught that fear and victimhood are not an option. Also the more stern bodily techniques underlying both avoidance and contestation strategies are borrowed from machismo street culture. Furthermore, the gender of the other is important for what kind of coping strategy the men chose. The men generally empathise with women and their fears at night and deem these more legitimate than that of men. Sometimes, this leads to dilemmas: does one conform to make the woman feel better or does one continue one’s own ways? In most cases, the men chose to conform and distance themselves to make the woman feel safer. In interactions with elderly people the men show a similar propensity for ignoring and conforming strategies.

Secondly, in line with Bouabid (2018), the men’s preferred coping strategies shift over time.



In puberty, many men, suffered the most from their spoiled identity (Goffman, 1963). In this period, the most extreme coping techniques were utilised. For example, completely denying one's Moroccan roots in order to pass or withdrawing from society and completely avoiding places. Over time, the preferred coping techniques and strategies have become less extreme.

Thirdly, a shared or higher socio-economic status helps the men feel more at ease. The higher educated men tend to adopt contestation and reformation techniques more frequently. They overstep the boundaries of white districts with the idea that they are not so different from the people living there. Additionally, their class is frequently reflected in their clothing and thus leads to less stigmatization in these higher class environments.

## Discussion & Conclusion

Before elaborating, we found that the men are perceptive of their stigma, how it is seen on the body, and as a consequence are extra alert. Stigma can be triggered and constrained by spatial-temporal factors, but generally, the interactions in public space and the subsequent coping techniques are more superficial and less conflict avoidant. We contributed to the stigmatization and geography literature by showcasing how stigma is enacted and coped with physically and spatially and revealing the importance of (un)ease opposed to fear in the geographies of racialized men. The answer to the question of how Moroccan-Dutch men perceive the embodiment of stigma and cope with racial stigma in public space is fourfold.

Firstly, this study shows that stigma is embodied through the men's double consciousness (Dubois, 1903/1984; Fanon, 1952/2008). This is a reflection on both their psyche and embodiment: they frequently adopt the perspective of the other mentally and find themselves in a heightened state of alertness physically. The men are extra aware of their environments, the bodies that dwell in them and the scenarios that could unfold. While reading bodily behaviours, they instantly dissect the possible meanings these could entail. My results show that through inter-embodiment, the social experience of dwelling with other bodies, the men become aware of their stigma and, in turn, stigma influences the way inter-embodiment is interpreted (Ahmed, 2000). The men's double consciousness makes them more susceptible and therefore seemingly vulnerably to bodily cues around them, as Kusow (2014) explains the awareness of being stigmatized allows stigma to exert social control.

Secondly, my research reveals that double consciousness, which we now consider the embodied state of stigma, is also triggered by spatial and temporal factors: whiteness/diversity, day/night, outdoor/indoor culture, quietness/liveliness, rest/movement and familiarity/unfamiliarity. The contextualization of stigma reveals that stigma is not only generated by other people, but also by different environments. Thereby, we are confirming Ahmed's (2007) account that spaces

are not neutral and can take exclusionary shapes. We theorize that these factors are connected to the figure of the stranger, the one who stands out and is identifiable as strange and suspect (Ahmed, 2007). Consider how white spaces make one's non-white body stand out, how the dark makes the men seem darker and thus more suspect, how the indoor culture of white spaces make the streets quieter and thereby more observable for the strange and how in rest the men cannot escape scrutiny and therefore their 'strangeness' becomes more identifiable. Hence, these spatial and temporal factors seem to connect back to the embodiment of stigma.

Thirdly, we mapped the geography of (un)ease, which confirmed that racial stigma is spatially situated (Anderson, 2015; Hancock, Blanchard & Chapuis, 2017). In line with Jones et al. (2005), the most pronounced factors for distinguishing whether a public space was comfortable were civil inattention, diversity and familiarity. In these instances, the men's stigma was not felt, as they did not stand out as a strange body in the environment (Ahmed, 2000). It was notable that almost all of the men had a strong, similar geography of ease, but a less pronounced geography of unease. This mainly has to do with the men's coping strategies. For instance, the men who use an avoidance strategy have a much clearer geography of unease than the men who ignore or try to overstep boundaries. For the latter, habituation can result in these boundaries disappearing and spaces of unease may even transform into spaces of relative ease. This leads to a less contrasting geography, as some areas are simply extra comfortable compared to others. Hence shifting from a language of fear to a language of (un)ease seems to offer the nuance necessary to understand people's everyday lives.

Fourthly, in my research the main coping strategies utilized in public space were ignoring, avoiding, reforming and contesting. Contrary to the findings of Bouabid (2018), the men do not only opt for conflict avoidant strategies. Most of them attempt to be less conforming. This differing conclusion probably stems from the disparate motivations underlying ignoring. In line with Bouabid (2018), some motives can be considered relatively compliant. Yet, others, superiority and unapologeticness, seem to be techniques to embrace one's own identity. Besides, when one incorporates the spatial and bodily techniques of ignoring, this strategy can even be considered a form of resistance. Thereby my study reveals that contesting and ignoring are more intertwined than one would expect. Furthermore, the coping strategies employed in public space were influenced by the body one is interacting with and the classed body one has oneself. In interactions with women and elderly most of the men choose to conform to put the other at ease. The imaginary of the vulnerable women or elder seems to be internalized, which causes the men to empathize more with women than to debunk their fears. Furthermore, the men who grew up in white neighborhoods and/or are higher educated generally seem to opt more frequently for reformation and contestation strategies. This result is, however, inconclusive.

Naturally, there is room to further our understanding. Firstly, how are stigmatization and double consciousness related. For instance, is double consciousness a state incited by stigma, a survival technique (Moore, 2005), or a precondition for stigma to be felt? Secondly, what is the weight of spatial and temporal factors in provoking stigma and are these also influential in non-racial stigmatization. Thirdly, what is the role of positive affect in the geographies of people and its decisiveness compared to negative affect? Fourthly, how do the positionalities (race, gender, age, class) of the 'others' influence the coping strategies opted for, how much weight do these carry in the men's decision making process and do some of these positionalities have more weight than others? Lastly, how does the classed body mediate the perceptions of the raced body in public space?

Furthermore, the walking interview method, was beneficial for contextualising the research and putting the men at ease. Firstly, the research took place in the public spaces it examined, in some cases this triggered memories of experiences the men had in these or similar spaces. Moreover, these spaces also aided the men in their descriptions of mental and bodily (un) ease. For the researcher, it was useful to actually see what the men mean. Secondly, by starting at a place of ease and subsequently walking together, the atmosphere seemed to become more laid-back. In the act of walking, both interviewee and researcher naturally adjust their tempo to each other, thereby becoming in sync<sup>1415</sup>. Hence, future research could benefit highly from this walking interview method.

The limitation of this research is that embodiment is hard to measure directly, especially when one's positionality differs from that of the interviewee. Consequently, we researched the men's perceptions of their embodiment. This, however, is affected by the coping strategies the men utilize and the reflective character of the men. Future research could attempt to perform an ethnography with participant observation or conduct walking interviews with camera to document the interactions with other bodies.

To come back to our story, the Moroccan-Dutch teenage boy who was chased by the white men was in all likelihood assumed to be the villain, because of how he looked. In many spaces that he cannot avoid, he will be seen as different, out of place and therefore suspect. From a young age, these men face social boundaries and develop coping strategies to remain sane. It is promising, however, to see that more and more Moroccan-Dutch men contest the social and spatial boundaries presented to them and thereby try to change the racial inequalities of spaces.

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<sup>14</sup> Moreover, walking is also a movement through space, this allows the interviewees to escape the close scrutiny they are normally used to when standing still in space for too long.

<sup>15</sup> What also contributed was that the men still had some autonomy in picking the meet-up location. In some cases, they decided the return route too.

## Appendix 1: Interview Guide

Van te voren zal er met de onderzoeksparticipanten worden afgesproken om af te spreken op een plek waar zij zich op hun gemak (chill) voelen. Dit is nuttig om een vertrouwensband te wekken, maar ook om als input te gebruiken voor het gesprek.

### Introductie

- Ontzettend bedankt voor je tijd!
- Introductie: Fijn je in het echt te ontmoeten. Ik ben Joia de Jong, student aan de Erasmus Universiteit.
- Doel van het onderzoek: Voor mijn research master aan de Erasmus Universiteit doe ik onderzoek naar hoe stigmatisering/racisme jonge Marokkaans-Nederlandse mannen beïnvloed in hun alledaagse leven. En vooral wat hun ervaringen zijn als ze door de stad (Rotterdam) lopen. Door mijn eigen mixed background ben ik bezig met thema's zoals ongelijkheid, racisme en privilege. Een van de doelen is dan ook om inzicht te krijgen hoe stigmatisering/racisme zich uit op straat en hoe privilege een rol speelt in de publieke ruimte. Ik vond het belangrijk om te focussen op hoe je over straat kan en wat je daar ervaart, omdat ik denk dat juist daar stigma/racisme een ontzettend grote invloed heeft.
- Voordat we beginnen is het belangrijk om je te laten weten dat alles wat je zegt vertrouwelijk is. Dus je hoeft je geen zorgen te maken. Je persoonlijke gegevens zullen niet aan andere partijen verstrekt worden en alleen door mij anoniem verwerkt worden.
- Zou je misschien dit toestemmingsformulier kunnen ondertekenen?
- Dat gezegd te hebben, zou je het erg vinden als ik het interview opneem met mijn mobiele telefoon? Het is voornamelijk voor mij zelf omdat ik zeker wil weten dat ik alles begrepen heb en niet gemist heb van wat je hebt gezegd. Maar ook om te zien wat er nu gebeurt op straat als wij rondlopen. Later wanneer ik de antwoorden verwerkt heb, zal ik de opnames vernietigen.
- Over je antwoorden, alsjeblieft deel gewoon je mening. Er is geen goed of fout, waar of onwaar. Ik ben vooral benieuwd naar jouw eigen mening horen.
- Het interview duurt ongeveer een uur, het kan minder lang of langer zijn, je kan het altijd aangeven als je ermee wilt stoppen. Het plan is om hier even kort kennis te maken en dat we zometeen zoals eerder besproken samen gaan lopen.
- Heb je nog vragen voor we beginnen?
- Om te beginnen wil ik je vragen naar jouw jeugd en waar je bent opgegroeid.

## 1. Safe space

Vraag	Thema
Waar ben je opgegroeid?	Home space
Wat voor buurt was het?	Home space
Hoe was het om daar op te groeien?	Positive / negative associations
Waar sprak jij meestal af met je vrienden?	Safe space
Van te voren had ik je gevraagd om op een plek af te spreken waar jij je chill / op je gemak voelt. Wat maakt deze plek voor jou zo?	Safe space / body at ease
Wat betekent de straat voor jou?	Role of public space in life participant
Wat betekent de stad Rotterdam voor jou?	Role of the city in life participant
Op wat voor plekken voel jij je op je gemak?	Body at ease
Hoe uit zicht dat op je gemak voelen?  Probes: mentaal, sociaal, psychisch, fysiek - Merk je dat ook fysiek? - Bijvoorbeeld dat je andere routes neemt, anders gaat lopen, je opluchting kan voelen?	Body at ease, safe space, embodiment
Heb je in het algemeen het gevoel dat je erbij hoort in deze stad?	In place / at ease / sense of belonging

## 2. Spatial and mental strategies

Vraag	Thema
We hebben afgesproken om hier af te spreken. Hoe heb je deze keuze gemaakt?  Probe: Is dit een plek waar je normaal gesproken ook afspreekt? Probe: Zou je hier ook met vrienden afspreken?	Inleiding vraag afwegingen
Hoe bepaal of beslis je op welke plek je wilt afspreken? Probe: Heb jij bepaalde afwegingen als je ergens naar toe gaat of als je ergens afspreekt?	Spatial strategies / geographies
Wat zijn die afwegingen?	Spatial strategies / geographies
Verschilt het of je met een witte of niet-witte vriend(in) afspreekt wat die afwegingen zijn? Waar je afspreekt?	Unclaimed spaces / claimed spaces
Als je je ergens niet op je gemak voelt, hoe ga je daar dan mee om?	Coping strategies
En hoe merk je dit fysiek? (vragen als andere vraag aansloeg)	Embodiment

Doe je bepaalde dingen om je wel op je gemak te voelen?	Coping strategies
In het dagelijks leven, vermijd jij bepaalde plekken of zoek jij bepaalde plekken juist meer op?	Spatial strategies

### 3. White space

Vraag	Thema
Voel je je meer op je gemak op diversere plekken? Hoe heb je dit gemerkt?	Body at ease
Wat zijn diversere plekken voor jou? Hoe herken je die meestal?	Unclaimed spaces (?)
Hoe voel jij je op wittere plekken? En hoe herken je deze?	White spaces

### 4. Feelings of (un)safety and unease

Vraag	Thema
Ben jij wel eens bang om erop uit te gaan?  Probe: Bijvoorbeeld doordat je onterecht politiegeweld misschien te verduren kan krijgen, de interacties met andere mensen op straat?	Geography of fear
Heb je wel eens ervaringen van racisme op straat gehad? Zo niet, situaties waar je ongemakkelijk van werd?	Racism / unease in public space
Zou je deze situaties kunnen beschrijven?  Probe: Als het er te veel zijn om op te noemen, zijn er verschillen in de ervaringen die je hebt gehad? Bepaald typen ervaringen?	Racism / unease in public space
Zijn dit vaak emotionele-lichamelijke reacties van andere mensen? Bijvoorbeeld, afgunst, haat, angst?	Embodiment racist
Hoe ga je hier mee om in het moment?  Probe: Bijv. wordt je emotioneel? Sluit je je af?	Coping strategies
Is het veranderd hoe je ermee omgaat over tijd?	Coping strategies over time
Hoe ga je ermee om nadat het gebeurd is?	Impact racism / unease
Wat voor impact heeft het op je?	Impact racism / unease

Voel je je kwetsbaar als dit je is overkomen?	Masculinity / racism
Probe: En kan je dat dan uiten in je omgeving?	

## 5. The known stranger

Vraag	Thema
Wat denk jij dat mensen over jou denken als je over straat loopt?	Stranger Danger
Heb jij wel eens het gevoel dat je verdacht wordt van iets?	Stranger Danger
Hoe merk je dat?	Stranger Danger
Hoe ga je ermee om als je verdacht wordt?	Coping with stranger danger
Probe: Bijvoorbeeld toon je sociaal wenselijk gedrag dat je meer gaat lachen naar de ander/je terugtrekt/extra beleefd of probeer je juist door te gaan met wat je aan het doen was?	
Ligt het eraan wie je verdacht, hoe je ermee om gaat?	Situational coping with stranger danger / Masculinity-femininity interaction
Probe: Bijvoorbeeld vrouw of man? Als jij een vrouw angstig ziet doen, ga je er dan anders mee om? Dan wanneer je een man dat ziet doen?	
Sta je af en toe voor een dilemma in dit soort scenarios? Wat gaat er dan door je hoofd?	Fear of women / masculinity / third consciousness
Uit onderzoek is gebleken dat vrouwen erg angstig zijn in de publieke ruimte vooral voor mannen met een niet-witte etniciteit. Heb je dit wel eens gevoeld?	Masculinity / fear racialised other
Probe: Zo ja, hoe voelt het om gevreesd te worden?	

## 6. Future (afsluitend)

Vraag	Thema
Wat zou ervoor zorgen dat jij je meer op je gemak zou voelen in de publieke ruimte?	At ease
Hoe kunnen witte mensen hieraan bijdragen?	Whiteness / at ease
Hoe zie je de toekomst in?	Hope future

## Afsluitend

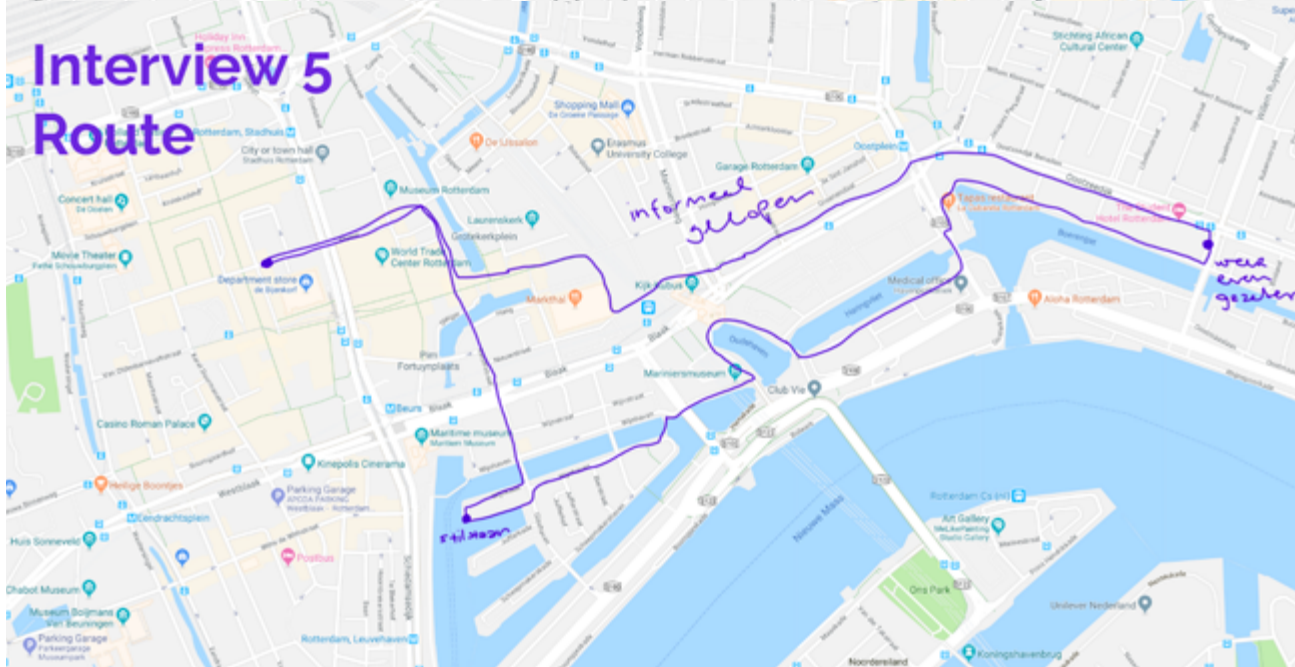
- Bedankt voor al je antwoorden!.
- Is er iets dat je zou willen toevoegen aan het interview?
- Zou je de onderzoeksresultaten willen ontvangen?

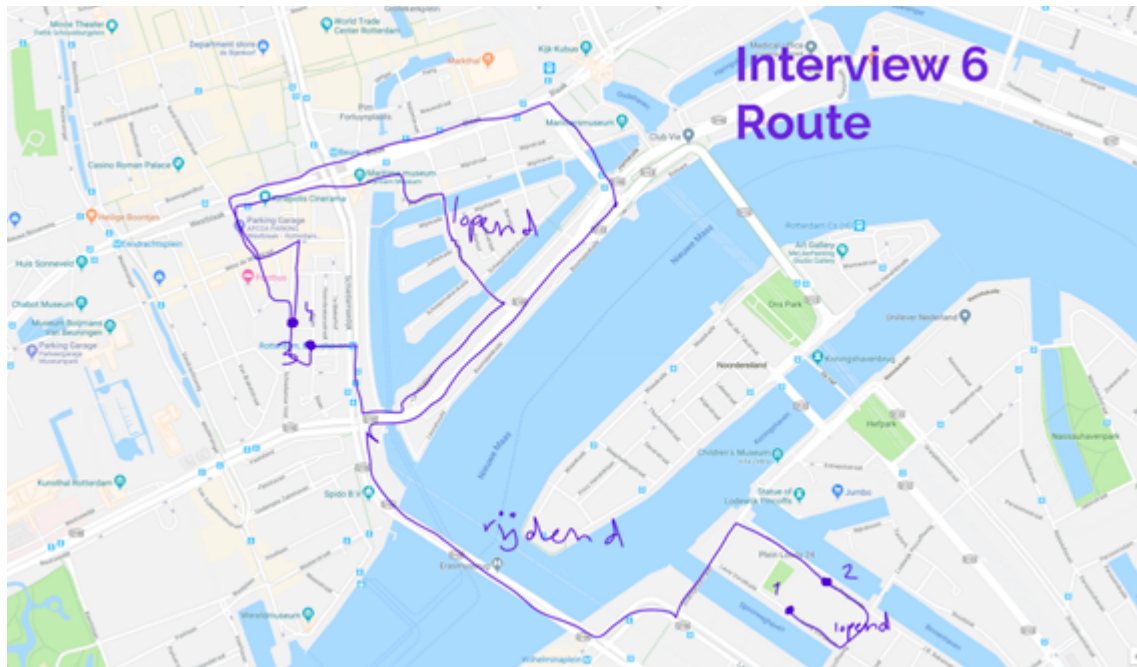
## Appendix 2: Walking Routes & Meeting Places

Interview 2 and 7 weren't walking interviews. Interviewee 2 did not felt comfortable walking around. Interview 7 could not be conducted outside due to weather circumstances. The interviews lasted between 55 minutes and 2,5 hours.

	Pseudonym	Occupation	Age	Neighbourhood in which one grew up	Diverse or white neighbourhood
1	Baariq	University Student Medicine and Philosophy Master	23	Prinsenland	White
2	Omar	Dancer	33	Charlois	Diverse
3	Saeed	PhD	28	Feyenoord	Diverse
4	Dalil	HBO Student - Social Studies (teacher)  High School teacher	26	Spangen	Diverse
5	Jasim	Musician Burger King employee Student	20	Ommoord	White
6	Sami	Social youth worker	33	Roosendaal	Diverse
7	Faiz	University Bachelor Communication  Primark manager	29	Den Haag	White
8	Ahsan	Entrepreneur Teacher at HBO	25	Oud Krimpen	White
9	Khaled	HBO Student - Social Studies (teacher)	23	Crooswijk	Diverse
10	Fikri	University student in business administration, econometrics, tax law	21	Rotterdam Noord	Diverse
11	Zeyn	University Student Medicine Research Master	22	Rotterdam-Oost Alexander (Harderwijk & Enschede)	White
12	Yousri	HBO Student Engineering	24	Rotterdam-Zuid	Diverse









## Appendix 3: Municipality data

12/12/2018 <https://rotterdam.buurtmonitor.nl/jive/PrintWs.aspx?widthMm=190&heightMm=128&workspaceGuid=9082e307-6632-47e3-a3be-9e5710cc849...>

Bevolking per 1 januari (2006-2018) 2018 - Buurten

	Autochtoon	Surinamers	Antillianen	Turken	Marokkanen	Kaapverdianen	Ov. Europese Unie	Overig westers	Overig niet-westers	Onbekend	zz. onbekend
Afrikaanderwijk	1.264	1.074	434	2.532	1.373	216	344	261	1.212		
Agniesebuurt	1.412	456	232	466	584	128	304	188	401		
Bedrijvenpark Noord_West	8						1		1		
Bedrijventerrein Schieveen											
Bergpolder	4.644	427	192	301	365	134	810	431	683		
Beverwaard	4.707	2.224	1.099	584	444	287	667	502	1.532		
Blijdorp	7.202	301	126	103	114	82	958	613	715		
Blijdorpsepolder	60	7	19	8	14	1	4	4	5		
Bloemhof	3.239	1.424	803	3.389	1.583	279	1.352	390	1.553		
Bospolder	1.431	750	188	1.396	1.292	665	531	222	572		
Botlek											
Carnisse	3.833	1.061	675	708	533	246	2.590	451	1.257		
Charlois Zuidrand	358	26	10	10	6	3	31	15	12		
Cool	2.554	413	192	217	323	113	711	477	855		
Cs Kwartier	402	49	42	15	7	12	123	108	219		
De Esch	2.209	385	194	203	195	137	333	239	591		
Delfshaven	2.700	653	545	430	513	358	625	345	734		
Dijkzicht	334	43	97	10	3	3	58	36	108		
Dorp	6.618	90	88	55	52	20	546	195	192		
Eemhaven	15							2			
Europoort	1						1				
Feijenoord	1.255	856	429	1.856	1.330	306	294	241	922		
Groot IJsselmonde	15.411	2.346	1.719	1.932	1.212	320	1.692	1.113	2.707		
Heijplaat	900	45	116	54	35	7	136	38	68		
Het Lage Land	6.606	792	281	314	257	118	695	622	1.162		
Hillegersberg Noord	5.632	282	103	119	244	56	558	447	402		
Hillegersberg Zuid	6.098	178	67	97	78	39	683	401	376		
Hillesluis	1.978	1.280	591	3.364	1.747	303	1.000	287	1.350		
Hoogvliet Noord	6.578	1.643	909	655	314	213	795	557	969		
Hoogvliet Zuid	15.013	1.454	1.142	407	242	221	1.197	930	1.357		
Katendrecht	2.184	442	270	176	384	90	269	191	789		
Kleinpolder	3.517	733	216	740	906	303	377	363	555		
Kop van Zuid	1.246	117	162	105	67	26	278	221	475		
Kop van Zuid - Entrepot	2.735	774	318	870	1.022	215	531	521	976		
Kralingen West	7.349	1.296	305	1.016	1.661	358	1.333	909	1.624		

<https://rotterdam.buurtmonitor.nl/jive/PrintWs.aspx?widthMm=190&heightMm=128&workspaceGuid=9082e307-6632-47e3-a3be-9e5710cc849d&ps=7964>

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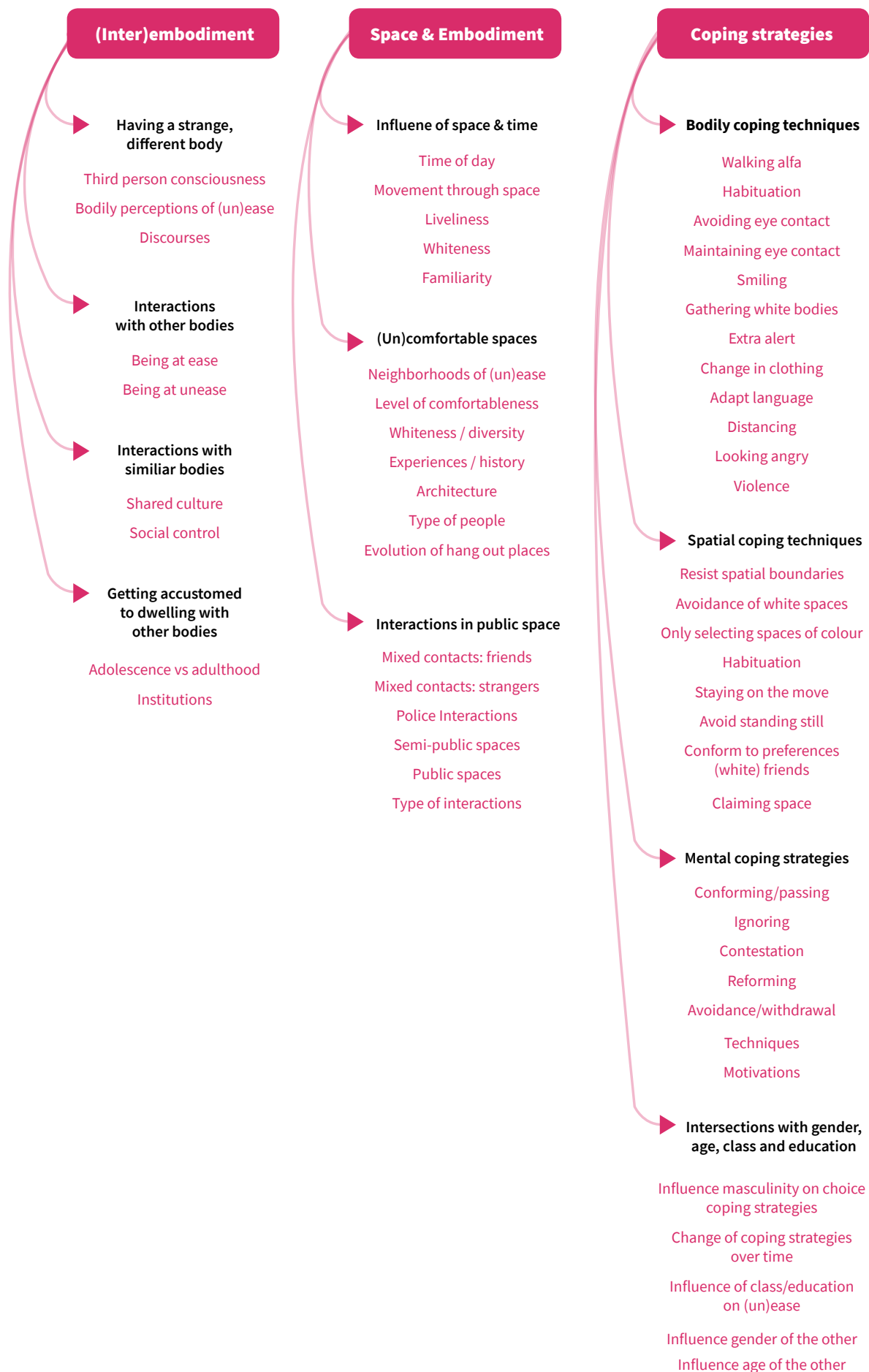
	Autochtoon	Surinamers	Antillianen	Turken	Marokkanen	Kaapverdianen	Ov. Europese Unie	Overig westers	Overig niet- westers	Onbekend	zz. onbekend
Kralingen Oost	5.170	146	77	70	80	20	1.093	658	752		
Kralingse Bos	97	1			1		2	4	1		
Kralingseveer	1.288	50	37	24	13	17	70	59	73		
Landzicht	352	5	1		1	1	13	6	3		
Liskwartier	4.096	532	146	568	714	192	519	379	441		
Lombardijen	6.004	1.185	913	1.393	957	301	1.019	512	1.604		
Maasvlakte											
Middelland	4.981	988	291	1.005	819	688	1.183	721	1.229		
Molenlaankwartier	6.392	76	59	33	28	9	654	522	331		
Nesselande	8.905	1.079	188	233	202	109	574	474	872		
Nieuw Crooswijk	1.487	195	65	184	533	101	198	157	237		
Nieuw Mathenesse	6		1	5		1	2	1			
Nieuwe Werk	1.111	47	62	16	14	3	215	131	119		
Nieuwe Westen	6.303	1.781	548	2.527	2.806	1.396	1.595	797	1.680		
Noord Kethel	54						2	2	1		
Noordereiland	1.900	188	63	210	159	64	308	178	288		
Noordzeeweg											
Ommoord	17.804	1.507	528	427	627	264	1.365	1.058	1.978		
Onbekend											
Oosterflank	5.639	1.395	327	350	419	245	521	583	1.064		
Oud Charlois	5.166	1.294	761	1.311	944	372	1.912	520	1.381		
Oud Crooswijk	2.570	759	259	1.090	1.730	276	418	343	816		
Oud IJsselmonde	3.521	507	152	219	151	60	380	254	464		
Oud Mathenesse	2.273	717	233	495	385	518	1.419	282	767		
Oude Noorden	6.034	1.528	488	2.140	2.732	592	1.161	886	1.531		
Oude Westen	2.803	1.122	263	956	1.299	556	685	483	1.213		
Overschie	4.964	341	107	132	230	75	491	225	294		
Pendrecht	3.518	1.714	1.063	1.450	1.146	258	882	648	1.687		
Pernis	3.934	141	95	35	33	16	297	147	147		
Prinsenland	6.392	835	228	302	243	147	525	438	795		
Provenierswijk	2.004	331	249	423	353	109	381	298	456		
Rijnpoort	59	1					3	1			
Rivium											
Rozenburg	9.727	195	262	276	75	26	899	442	517		
Rubroek	3.685	654	199	490	986	209	691	501	913		
s Gravenland	5.532	534	144	194	159	68	526	511	597		
Schiebroek	10.275	834	515	603	1.228	177	862	715	1.450		
Schiemond	1.809	563	203	558	695	399	365	242	434		
Schieveen	311	5	1	1	1		10	9	9		

	Autochtoon	Surinamers	Antillianen	Turken	Marokkanen	Kaapverdianen	Ov. Europese Unie	Overig westers	Overig niet- westers	Onbekend	zz. onbekend
Spaanse Polder	78	4				1	14	4	4		
Spangen	1.900	1.145	320	2.010	1.918	943	683	299	955		
Stadsdriehoek	8.241	909	562	435	456	203	1.818	1.365	2.036		
Strand en Duin	2.105	20	10	5	6	1	118	50	44		
Struisenburg	2.464	150	101	73	140	18	1.175	578	846		
Tarwewijk	2.627	1.541	1.040	1.475	1.044	382	2.214	364	1.614		
Terbregge	2.551	178	26	61	72	27	196	198	161		
Tussendijken	1.528	715	224	1.208	1.281	543	676	265	675		
Vondelingenplaat											
Vreewijk	7.727	1.165	726	773	860	142	928	502	1.224		
Waalhaven	6										
Waalhaven Zuid	8		1	1			2		1		
Wielewaal	314	31	12	11	8	3	29	10	21		
Witte Dorp	212	54	9	107	97	34	19	20	36		
Zestienhoven	2.194	139	35	77	54	11	164	134	187		
Zevenkamp	9.102	2.142	602	459	497	327	839	739	1.314		
Zuiderpark	931	70	61	29	17	7	71	29	66		
Zuidplein	589	118	35	85	57	12	110	78	165		
Zuidwijk	5.398	1.325	964	1.021	963	215	749	640	1.418		

Eenheid: aantal personen

Bron: Basisregistratie Personen (BRP), Bewerking door OBI

## Appendix 4: Coding tree



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