Mothering the post-industrial city: Family and gender in urban re-generation

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CONCLUSION

GENERATIONS AS URBAN POLICY INSTRUMENTS

Rotterdam heeft haast. De stad vecht zich dood om op iets te lijken wat er nog niet is.
Wilfried de Jong[1]

What happens in parenting guidance practices between mothers and professionals and how does this relate to a deindustrialising city? That is the central question of this dissertation. In this conclusion, I answer this question and highlight the main themes: 1) the logics of urban re-generation in a deindustrialising city 2) policy practice as a coproduction and 3) the elective affinity between the production of reflexive and communicative subject-positions in parenting guidance and the twenty-first century vocational ethic. These three themes are related to many scholarly debates. In this conclusion, I would like to draw special attention to three debates and the way in which this dissertation is positioned in them: 1) on contemporary forms of paternalism, 2) on the feminisation of labour markets and 3) on questions of class in times of deindustrialisation and the remains of Fordism.

The sweet and sour of prospects

After decades of industrial expansion and decades of post-World War II reconstruction, Rotterdam now is insecure about its future. It seeks ways to depart its industrial past and become something other than a harbour city. But what should it become then? The writer Wilfried de Jong captured this in the phrase above that translates as: "Rotterdam is in a hurry. The city fights itself to death mimicking something yet inexistent". Rotterdam indeed "mimics something inexistent". Despite the hotly debated plans for urban renewal, marketing campaigns and "urban visions", there is much insecurity about what Rotterdam should and can become. Rotterdam aims to develop a post-industrial economy, but what exactly is this? Linda McDowell (1991: 400) noted how the adjective "post" "reflects uncertainty about the new order – the extent and direction of change is still unclear and incomplete." Rotterdam is not alone is this insecurity. Other harbour cities and former industrial economies are struggling to move beyond this past too. Marseille, Glasgow, Genoa and Antwerp are developing spatial, economic, cultural and social strategies to become something new too. Rotterdam serves as a case study of the larger phenomenon of deindustrialising cities.

In this dissertation I have grasped part of this "fight" and its consequences for families in terms of urban re-generation. This concept refers to practices that are based on the idea that *generations* can be *policy instruments*. Re-generation is to renew the city by either investing in the children (the next generation) of the current population or replacing the current population of children by better suited children. Urban re-generation efforts are to create a new and economically successful urban milieu. In it, families and generations are policy tools and mothers form a particular target group. The concept urban re-generation supplements regeneration as it is

often studied in the field of urban studies.

When we think of what the future the post-industrial city might be like, much is indeed insecure. The interactive service economy, though, is likely to remain crucial, creating jobs in which communicative and reflexive skills are imperative. This growth is also much desired by the Rotterdam administration. Rotterdam imagines a future population that is prepared for this type of employment. Rotterdam's administration has indicated time and again that the demographics of the city's current population are among its main concerns. It aims to change the current population into one more "balanced": including higher-educated parents with children. This imagined population is to fit the economy of the future. Part of imagining this future population is investing in today's childrearing practices. Parenting guidance policies are a form of urban re-generation. They are one way in which Rotterdam tries to depart from the industrial city of the past.

Mothering the post-industrial city may potentially mean many things. In this dissertation, I have proposed to see parenting guidance policy practices in relation to imagining successful urban futures; to see mothering and policies aimed at transforming mothering practices in the light of a deindustrialising city. In doing so, I combine strands of research that are usually dealt with separately. I have researched a particular social policy practice in depth and related this to developments in the urban environment and the rise of the interactive service economy. Parenting guidance practices are designed to be an environment in which mothers can learn to mother the responsible, successful and democratic citizens of the future. In this dissertation, I have shown that what is, actually, produced in parenting guidance practices is a set of subject-positions that resemble the post-industrial vocational ethic: reflexive and communicative. Reflexive and communicative mothering, it seems, is what mothering a post-industrial city entails.

When doing my fieldwork in 2009 and 2010, I came across many imagined futures for Rotterdam and many policy measures to accomplish it. One of the most poignant examples of such an imagined future was when in Afrikaanderwijk (a poor borough in the South of Rotterdam) I noticed an enormous banner that said: "The Afrikaanderwijk in 2020. A neighbourhood to be proud of." (*De Afrikaanderwijk in 2020. Een wijk om trots op te zijn.*) The banner was to present the plans of the local government and social housing associations to regenerate this part of the city to its inhabitants. It is a perfect example of the sweet and sour of prospects. There is a tragic in this banner. It promises investments, housing improvements and better playgrounds. But it also communicates that in 2009 (the year I saw the banner there), Afrikaanderwijk was not a neighbourhood to be proud of. It would be so only after more than ten years of investments, and the "dispersion" (*verspreiding*: an emic Rotterdam administration term) of those that live in Afrikaanderwijk now. In other words: the promise is that Afrikaanderwijk will be a neighbourhood to be proud of when a portion of the current inhabitants leaves. In other instances, the Rotterdam

administration, its social housing associations, businesses and other actors in the field of local government, communicate similar messages: Rotterdam today is *not yet* the vibrant and successful city it wants to be. The Rotterdam population is *not yet* the higher-educated group of autonomous individuals that work in the creative and service sectors. And policy plans set out to change this so that we can taste the sweet in the future. On the basis of my research in parenting guidance practices, I have shown in this thesis that one of the routes Rotterdam uses towards this successful future is interventions in the private lives of those considered not yet autonomous citizens.

Policy as coproduction

So what exactly happens in parenting guidance practices? This was the basic question I asked when starting this research. I was interested in what happens to policy ambitions once they are translated to actual practices. Much research into contemporary social and urban policy making ends with analyses of the design of policy and policy texts (and I am guilty as charged when it comes to earlier work). And indeed, analyses of the logics of policy making are quite relevant in their own right. But I have shown in this dissertation that policy can undergo dramatic translations and metamorphoses. Policy in action often is something dramatically different from policy design. What happens in a parent room in Feyenoord, or a flat in IJsselmonde quite probably is something entirely different from what the ones designing policy had in mind.

The most important reason for this is that policy is always a coproduction. This is so because 1) those involved in the design and execution of policy *translate* goals and instruments and 2) because those that are targeted by policy coproduce it in *transactions* with policy executors. I have illustrated the first point in chapter 4 with a series of "chains of translations". The concept of "chains of translations" is an analytic tool to show how definitions of policy goals made in one location end up in practices. As it happens, much policy strives for a certain measure of normalcy. "The normal" was an important category in policy making and policy execution in the practices that I studied. And so I traced chains of translations of "the normal". From this analysis, a particular classed and culturist norm surfaced: "normal" parenting was defined as particular middle class food practices and sex education practices that were considered particularly "Dutch". On the basis of this analysis, it would be tempting to overstate government: to point to the coherency in the norms and the exclusion and symbolic violence that they entail. But my analysis shows how complex policy execution is. The production and communication of norms and definitions of "the normal" in policy is no coordinated effort but rather a messy practice. I have illustrated this with a collection of examples of how professionals undermine the norms that they are meant to communicate and examples of dramatic transformations of policy goals through translations.

The second reason why policy is always a coproduction is that policy is the end result of

transactions between those that execute it and those that are targeted by it. In the case of this dissertation: parenting guidance practices are transactions between professionals in the field of pedagogical advice and participating mothers in Rotterdam. In a way, the end of a chain of translations is only the beginning. In my research, it formed the input of practices that I studied. For example, the end result of a chain of translations of policies that were meant to stimulate good sex education was the idea that parenting guidance courses should be a platform for talk about sex, and the idea that mothers should talk to and with their children about sex. But whether or not mothers do, indeed, take part in these discussions in the context of a parenting guidance course is, of course, up to them. Likewise, to influence mothering practices through a year-round series of guidance meetings (such as those of Bureau Frontlijn), these meetings have to take place and a mother needs to be willing to discuss her everyday practices. Professionals are thus, at times, relatively powerless and policy is *mediated* in transactions with mothers.

Reflection, communication and a twenty-first century vocational ethic

In the practices in which I participated, there was much laughter, conflict and fierce discussion. The logic of the ones executing the policies was examined and challenged by jokes, particularisations and mirroring mediations. But that does not mean that the practices were unproductive, or sites of conflict only. There was much cooperation too. Even – and especially – in moments of massive disagreement, mothers and professionals produced something together. In my analysis, I focused on this coproduction in transactions between mothers and professionals. I used an analytical framework that was based on theories of ritual to show the ritual-like characteristics of what we did in parenting guidance practices. In between mothers and professionals, a production of *reflexive and communicative subject-positions* took place. I define subject-positions as "ways of doing, being (...) and thinking" (Starfield, 2002: 125) that become available in transactions. The production of reflexive and communicative subject-positions is the common theme of the parenting guidance practices as I researched them. Through *repetitive* transactions of the particular *forms* egalitarian talk, negotiation, debate, evaluation and observation, we opened up the possibility of being communicative and reflexive in the transaction. No matter the substance of the discussion or negotiation, the point was that we engaged in a *negotiation* or *talked* in an egalitarian fashion. Negotiating meanings or mirroring logics mediated policy in the sense that it changed what the policy executors set out to do. But these mediations *contributed* to the common theme of reflection and communication. For example: by negotiating the particular meaning of the idea of marriage, a mother could mediate the logic of a particular meeting that a professional teacher had designed. On first sight, it may be tempting to read this as a form of resistance or at least serious disagreement. But the interesting point is that through participating in a negotiation,

the mother and professional coproduce the possibility of being reflexive and communicative: they coproduce reflexive and communicative subject-positions. Phrased differently yet: they practice *being* and *doing* communicative and reflexive.

I do not consider these subject-positions to be necessarily durable. That is to say that I considered them only in the context of the transaction that I studied. I am concerned with the *local practice of coproduction*: the transactions in which those involved create something new. I am not concerned with the transformational power of policy. I have not researched it, but more importantly: my focus on transactions is based on the idea that each transaction requires participants to be and act differently, changing the subjectivities of those involved. The participants in parenting guidance practices may coproduce reflexive and communicative subject-positions, but that is not to say that they will practice reflexivity and communication at home because of it. This is true for teachers, mothers *and* me. The chaos of everyday family life, the power balances within the household, the balance between parenting and paid labour, structural conditions such as poverty and the behaviours of the children are possible important ingredients of future transactions for the ones participating in parenting guidance. And these ingredients will require them/us to be and act in certain ways within these future transactions. But within the transactions that I studied – for the time and place being – the participants coproduced reflexive and communicative subject-positions and used them.

So what does this production of subject-positions in debate exercises and discussions have to do with the re-generating city and its post-industrial future? How does this reflexivity and communication relate to the issue of Rotterdam departing from its industrial past and imagining new urban futures? In this dissertation I have argued that these questions are related, but not causally. I have used the Weberian notion of "elective affinity" to point to the "meaningful connection" between the production of reflexive and communicative subject-positions and a twenty-first century vocational ethic. The concept "elective affinity" is especially suitable in an era in which so many social relations are highly complex (Engbersen, 2001). The logic in parenting guidance resembles the logic in interactive service work in important respects, but that is not to say that this resemblance is in any way the result of a direct relationship between the two logics. The concept of *affinity* makes a certain *relatedness* visible without pointing to a direct relation. Without being causally related, the presence of the two does do something (rather like a chemical reaction).

In this dissertation, I have zoomed in on practices in Pendrecht, Feyenoord, Kralingen and other places and analysed in much detail transactions taking place in the context of parenting guidance there. If we zoom out again, we can see that these practices do not take place in isolation. They are related to larger social processes. In this dissertation, I have analysed them in the context of a re-generating city. The practices are located in the beginning of the twenty-first century in a place

"fighting" to become something "yet inexistent". Industrial production is moved elsewhere and available jobs and careers require a different set of skills, dispositions and sensibilities than did the jobs in the harbour and related industries. To be more precise: available jobs are far more likely to be in the interactive service sector than in industry and manufacturing. Employers in the interactive services are likely to look for employees that display reflexive and communicative dispositions and are able and willing to do certain kinds of emotional labour. This description of ideal employees bears much resemblance to what I found was the main product of parenting guidance practices.

The ones involved in the practices (mostly) did not have interactive services or twenty-first century employment in mind. The teachers of parenting courses were not primarily interested in the service sector employment of the next generation Rotterdammers. And even though the mothers were at times concerned about the labour market prospects of their children, this was hardly the reason they participated in the classes. Rather, they were interested in a morning chat with a cup of coffee, some tips about opening up a conversation with their adolescent child or ways to protect their children from the harm done by bullying or other dangers. Professionals were after bringing a basic sense of order to family life in certain neighbourhoods (as with Frontlijn) or supporting mothers in their autonomy and daily decision-making. New interactive service employment was not a dominant framework for those participating in parenting guidance practices. Instead, the dominant framework for policy makers and executors was, rather, one of autonomy and "authoritative parenting". But there is a meaningful connection nonetheless: the "ways of being and doing" in parenting guidance practices and interactive service employment do resemble each other. Or: there are interlocking logics to work in the twenty-first century and what parenting guidance policies produced.

Egalitarian paternalism

The policy interventions that I researched are positioned in a Dutch history of paternalism and urban planning. Paternalism provides a repertoire for them. Mothers, professionals, managers and policy makers alike thought of government interventions into mothering practices as obvious. For them, its importance needed very little explanation, it was considered self-evident and matter-of-fact. The redesign of the city and the spatial distribution of inhabitants, too, are based in repertoires of paternalism and engineering. In paternalism, state or (semi-)private actors give support in exchange for influence in the private sphere (cf. Mead, 1998). And indeed, Bureau Frontlijn and Social Work provide support to mothers and families on a range of topics and problems: financial, bureaucratic, social. In this relationship of support, Frontlijn and Social Work aim to intervene in – very private – mothering practices. Moreover, parenting guidance practices in Rotterdam are meant to "upgrade" certain groups of inhabitants and therefore fit the term

"civilising offensives"[2]. But today's paternalist strategies differ from nineteenth and twentieth century paternalism in important respects as well. The 1960s and 1970s anti-paternalism critique has left its mark and 1950s paternalism is no longer possible. On the basis of my research into (what could be called) paternalist practices, I distinguish at least two changes in paternalism. Or rather: two new characteristics of contemporary paternalist policies.

First, today's paternalism is selectively targeted at lower-educated poor urban populations that are considered "not-yet-autonomous". In the 1980s and 90s, paternalism became a negative reference point for policy, after 1960s and 70s critiques had attacked its lack of respect for the autonomy of individual citizens. Government became increasingly focused on the facilitation of citizens and less involved in directing private lives. But in the new millennium, paternalism has become en vogue again. New forms of paternalism find public support because they are very selectively targeted: at *other people*. As I have argued in chapter 1 (and in my article with Jan Willem Duyvendak, Van den Berg & Duyvendak, 2012), the 'paradox of paternalism' (the idea that the government should intervene, yet people should remain autonomous subjects), is in part solved by implementing paternalist policies for very specific groups of citizens who are considered "not yet" autonomous (cf. Schinkel & Van Houdt, 2010). Professionals set out to help them to become autonomous individuals. And in practice, these new paternalisms are most prevalent in the city. My research supplements scholarly discussions of the criminalisation and penalisation of the poor (see for example, Wacquant, 2001; 2008; 2009; De Koster et al., 2008). Like in the United States (Wacquant, 2008; Low & Smith, 2006) and elsewhere (MacLeod, 2002; Swanson, 2007; Watt, 2006), urban safety policies and repressive strategies have proliferated in the Netherlands too (Schuilenburg, 2012; Van Swaaningen, 2005; Van Houdt & Schinkel, forthcoming). But in the Netherlands, paternalist strategies supplement these punitive measures. To paraphrase Bourdieu (1999): the right hand of the state is supplemented by its left hand.

Second, today's paternalism is distinctly *egalitarian* in its form. The term paternalism is often associated with top-down use of power and hierarchical relations. And in the research for this dissertation, I encountered many professionals, managers and policy makers that set out to change the mothering practices in Rotterdam's poor neighbourhoods. Almost without exception were they after a durable change in these practices and, as a consequence, changing the futures and – using an emic term – "opportunities" (*kansen*) of today's Rotterdam youth. But at the same time, most professionals and executors of policy did not advise mothers as much as I expected them too. Nor did they denounce the mothers' practices or set out to intervene in any hierarchical or top-down manner. Given Rotterdam's ambitions for change, one would expect a much more directive tone and set of strategies. But instead, street-level policy makers and executors set out to talk with mothers in an egalitarian fashion and debate issues in game-like settings. Even if

they meant to be more directive (as in some instances in the case of Bureau Frontlijn), they often ended up in an egalitarian transaction nonetheless. This was not just because professionals were uneasy in a role of authority and power. They were, indeed, at times rather embarrassed and uncomfortable in this role. But more importantly, their egalitarian ways fit ideologies of democracy and autonomy. If paternalism is to help citizens become autonomous, being more directive and using top-down interventions would have been ideologically inconsistent. The goal of contemporary paternalist interventions is the production of autonomous citizens, to help the "not-yet-autonomous" become free, responsible and autonomous individuals. As a consequence of this goal, the interventions were of a paradoxical egalitarian form: on the one hand aiming to change private lives, on the other hand distinctly egalitarian. Egalitarian paternalism seems to be a contradiction in terms. After all: how can the aim to influence citizen's private lives be based on egalitarianism? Is such an aim not inherently hierarchical? Parenting guidance practices are government interventions into private lives. In this sense, they infringed on citizens' autonomy. But the interventions underscored autonomy and equality as important values and were aimed at precisely the production of autonomy. This translated to *egalitarian forms* of intervention such as talk, debate and negotiation. Egalitarian paternalism is both paradoxical and subtle: its form is egalitarian, its goal paternalist. But this paternalism is to produce more autonomy and equality in the end. Egalitarian paternalism is a second way of solving the paradox of paternalism. It consists of interventions in private lives, but in an egalitarian fashion, underscoring citizens' autonomy in order to produce it for the "not-yet-autonomous".

Feminising the urban? Gender as urban strategy

Higher-educated "pink collar" women are explicitly targeted by entrepreneurial "city marketing" and "urban planning" strategies. To understand these efforts, I have used the term *genderfication*. In the case of "La City '08", this meant a departure from a history of masculine imagery of muscled manual labourers, high-rise buildings and industrial waterfronts, to a "pink collar economy", professional women and consumption based economy through feminine imagery in mythmaking.

Scholars have suggested that in today's labour market, gender performances can be strategic instruments for individual employees (McDowell, 1997; Adkins, 2002). A certain ability to reflexively play with gender performances – to have some mobility when it comes to gender – seems to be important in contemporary economies. My research shows how gender is not only a strategy for individual employees in twenty-first century labour markets. It can be a strategy for cities to support the emergence of a post-industrial economy too. Employees rely on gendered performances for labour market success in highly competitive contexts. And so do cities. In interurban competition, gender matters. This dissertation offers a contribution to discussions about the "feminisation" of

labour markets and possible new configurations of (gendered) power by showing how gender matters in entrepreneurial urban strategies and "on the ground" urban policy practices.

On first sight, Rotterdam aims at "feminisation": a feminine gender performance. The "La City '08" festival is the most obvious example of such a strategic gendered move, but the genderfication apparent in the plans for the "child friendly city" is, indeed, also based on a certain gendered logic that opens up possibilities for women. The logic prefers dual earning middle class families as urban inhabitants. And while not intentional, the parenting guidance practices that I studied showed a feminisation of sorts too. In these practices, reflexivity, communication and emotion management was practiced and reflexive and communicative subject-positions were produced. Many would define reflection and communication as feminine performances (see for example McDowell, 1997; 2009; see for an overview of "feminisation" approaches Adkins, 2002). Because these showed resemblance to what I have termed a twenty-first century vocational ethic, it relates to a possible (desired) "feminisation" of Rotterdam's labour market too. Based on these three cases, I could defend that Rotterdam is, in fact, feminising and leaving behind its masculine heritage. And by doing so, is departing from an industrial past. But that conclusion would be too one-sided. Rotterdam indeed aims to genderfy and re-generate. It aims to become more feminine and more middle class, leaving behind its industrial heritage by producing space for those more affluent, and for those less macho. But when looking more closely, a rather more complicated picture surfaces. As I have argued in chapter 2, the mythmaking of "La City" was not merely "feminisation", but, rather, part of quite *masculine entrepreneurialism*. "La City" used the masculine repertoire of "doing and daring" and "tradition-braking" to cross-dress: to correct the hyper-masculine mythology by creating a hyper-feminine counterpoint. Rotterdam, then, is a muscleman in pink stilettos. In this case, Rotterdam used gender as a quite flexible strategy to highlight not only the "feminine side" of Rotterdam, but, importantly, its desire for a consumption-based economy and middle class inhabitants.

The efforts for a "child friendly city" are forms of genderfication and may be interpreted as part of a feminising city as well. Here too, gender is part of an urban strategy. However, it is not as clear-cut as the term "feminisation" suggests. The "child friendly city" plans are to produce space for a specific gendered order. The modernist planning of the post-World War II period is now largely considered a problem or even hindrance for development and growth. This modernist planning was patriarchal in its separation of the sexes through the separation of private and public life based on the clear gender roles of Fordism. The "child friendly city" plans aim to change precisely this patriarchal and gendered order: it aims to mix public and private uses of the city. Day care facilities and attracting dual-earning families are at the core of the plans. What Rotterdam aims for is not just more families and children, but in fact women, children and men that subscribe to

certain specific norms about raising children and dividing labour. But in the attachment to the *nuclear family*, part of the patriarchal ideal of Fordism is transported into the new genderfied prospect city. In the "child friendly city" case, gender is a strategic instrument, but not one used for gender equality or feminisation per se.

It may be tempting to see the production of reflexive and communicative subject positions in parenting guidance practices as a feminisation of sorts too. After all, the twenty-first century vocational ethic with which I argued an elective affinity exists is often considered more "feminine" than the vocational ethic in Fordist times. Some authors even speak of a "feminisation" of labour markets, as I mentioned already above. One could argue that the "style" of parenting propagated in the courses is not only "authoritative", but also more "feminine" than is the "authoritarian" model. But I think that however much feminisation can be identified in the cases I studied, there is much continuity with the past when it comes to gender configurations, too. Importantly, *mothers* are the ones addresses primarily by the policy practices that I studied. Sometimes explicitly and intently, like in the case of Bureau Frontlijn. Sometimes more implicit when mothers are addressed as primarily responsible as a result of the scheduling of courses (during the day, when mothers are not expected to work in paid labour) and other contextual factors. Paternalist policies have historically often been executed by women and targeted at women. It seems that contemporary parenting guidance is organised in much the same way and on the basis of (at least in part) a gendered division of labour that is reminiscent of Fordist times.

The rhetorics of a "sea change" (Harvey, 1989) or revolution from Fordism to post-Fordism notwithstanding, there is indeed much continuity when it comes to gender and gender roles. In the cases I researched, mothers are held responsible for the private sphere and are not expected to work outside the home. Fathers are much more rarely addressed as responsible parents. The nuclear family is the norm for new urban planning and city marketing may attempt to depart muscles, but uses them nonetheless. Much of the gender configurations of Fordism remain. The rhetorics of change are sometimes put to work strategically in government, like in the case of "La City" or "the child friendly city". In these cases, a break with post-World War II industrial Rotterdam is forced to make room for a new services-based economy. In these cases, discontinuity is rhetorically emphasised. My analysis of policy, myth making and genderfication practices shows that this discontinuity should not be exaggerated and that when it is, it should be critically questioned. In the case of Rotterdam, discontinuity-talk (about gender, age, "opportunities" or otherwise) is to make room for a new economy that is to end the economic hardship that resulted from deindustrialisation. And with this new economy, new class conflicts emerge.

So where does all of this leave fathers? If interactive service employment values feminine dispositions and the state looks at mothers for childrearing, what role do fathers have? Could it

be that women have easier access to labour market positions in care work, housekeeping, and childcare and this leaves fathers jobless while the state bypasses them as authority figure in the family? Have we moved so very beyond "father and Ford" (McDowell, 1991) that urban fathers are left behind? As I have suggested in chapter 6, there may be certain "redundant masculinities" (McDowell, 2003) in the post-industrial city. Especially "working class" male "youth" is considered a problem in contemporary Rotterdam (and other urban areas) and this might have to do with the changing labour market in which there is no longer any room for certain masculinities. Interestingly and tragically perhaps, social policy aimed at enhancing parenting practices are quite exclusionary focused on mothers. There are some efforts to create parenting guidance practices for fathers (see for example Van der Zwaard & Kreuk, 2012), but the vast majority is targeted at mothers. Notwithstanding the gender-neutral term parenting guidance practices, I only seldom encountered fathers in my field work. Despite the emancipatory goals of Dutch and Rotterdam governments, mothers are expected to be at home during the day and willing to participate in parenting guidance (Van den Berg & Duyvendak, 2012). In other national contexts, fathers are sometimes much more explicitly targeted by the state. In the United Kingdom, for example, "fathers' involvement" was much higher on the agenda of both social services and politics, to the point where social services were required to "dad-proof" policies (Featherstone, 2010: 213). I have argued in the first chapter that one of the repertoires used today in policy-making is a strong domestic motherhood ideology. Together with emancipatory goals of professionals and feminist repertoires in contemporary policy making (Van den Berg & Duyvendak, 2012), this mix of motherhood ideals and feminist goals can explain at least in part why so much parenting guidance is focused on mothers and fathers are only secondarily targeted.

The "afterlife" of Industrial Rotterdam

Rotterdammers like to claim that in the Netherlands, money is "made in Rotterdam" and "spent in Amsterdam". But quite some time has passed since this was true. Amsterdam's economy has had much less trouble adjusting to post-industrialism than has Rotterdam. In general, urban economies that were in large part dependent on industry in the recent past have a much harder time adjusting than cities that already had strong service sectors before the 1960s and 1970s (Van der Waal, 2009). Rotterdam is transitioning towards a post-industrial economy, but much slower than, again, Amsterdam (Van der Waal, 2009; Burgers & Musterd, 2002). As a consequence, the service sector is not compensating the loss of jobs in the harbour-related industries. Jobs for lower-educated Rotterdammers thus effectively disappear. And new employment opportunities are far more likely to be created for those higher-educated. Rotterdam may desire a post-industrial economy and a growth of service sector jobs for the lower-educated, but as of yet, it is not as

successful as it would like to be, and the current economic crisis is now exacerbating this problem.

Rotterdam has taken up its role as an entrepreneur and has designed many strategies to combat economic hardship, some of which form the core of my empirical material. In this last part of the conclusion, I would like to draw attention to what could be called new class conflicts and what role mothering practices play in them. I have written of Rotterdam as a "blue collar" city and of "working classes". But today, class may not be defined as much by type of work as before. Those previously termed "working classes" are now in fact not always working. If Rotterdam does not succeed in establishing a successful service sector with employment for lower-educated citizens, many will remain unemployed. If Rotterdam does succeed and jobs in interactive services make up for the loss of jobs in industry, these jobs are likely to be rather precarious, for instance in the hotel and catering business. What it means to "work", therefore, is changing. The term "working class" and even more so "blue collar" stems from a Fordist era, as do much sociological considerations of class (Watt, 2006). Now, new configurations of class are emerging and as a consequence, so do new class conflicts.

Andrea Muehlebach (2011) showed what "remaining Fordist affects" can produce. She argues that instead of highlighting the break between Fordism and post-Fordism (or post-modernity, post-industrialism et cetera), insights into the meaning of work and the state may arise if we look at *what remains* of Fordism. Paid labour afforded citizens a sense of belonging in Fordism. Now that much industrial labour has left Western Europe, many yearn for this lost sense of belonging. This yearning is a source for state-interventions that ask citizens to do unpaid labour: care work, volunteering, mothering. In Rotterdam and other places, citizens unable to find employment in the current labour market are asked or obliged to do such unpaid "volunteering" labour. Often termed "activation", policies that require those dependent on state support to work as "volunteer" proliferate (Kampen, 2010). Legitimate and illegitimate forms of "activity" thus surface and once citizens are no longer in paid employment, their lives and "activities" are assessed by local governments in such a vein. What remains of the industrial age in Rotterdam is a focus on "hard work" as an important characteristic of Rotterdammers. The narrative of the "blue collar worker" with "rolled up sleeves" has an "afterlife" (Muehlebach, 2011: 62), so to speak. It is not only used to legitimate entrepreneurial government strategies (as I have argued in this dissertation), but may well serve to create new distinctions between "undeserving" and "deserving poor" (compare M. Katz, 1989; Engbersen, [1990]2006), "potent" and "impotent" citizens (compare Piven & Cloward, 1976), "working class" and "marginalised". These new distinctions have shown to legitimate new (egalitarian paternalist) state interventions (as recent research projects suggest, see for example Tonkens & De Wilde, 2012; Kampen et al., 2012). Is it possible to belong to "hardworking" Rotterdam without having paid employment? If living in certain areas is becoming more and more expensive

due to state-led gentrification and being unemployed thus effectively means displacement? How is paid employment substituted with other forms of "activity" that enable this belonging? What forms of "activity" make citizens "deserving"? My dissertation does not provide a full answer to these important and timely questions. But I expect that one of the forms of legitimate "activity" is mothering the next generation of urbanites: of *mothering post-industrial Rotterdam*.

Mothering post-industrial Rotterdam means mothering subjects for the future (still to be fully established) service economy. But I would like to suggest one more possible meaning. Building on the insights of Walkerdine and Lucey's inspiring study of mothering practices and ideals in 1989, I suggest that mothering post-industrial Rotterdam entails the creation of a "fiction of harmony" (101). Parenting guidance practices in Rotterdam focus on discussing "authoritative" or "democratic" parenting. The policy practices explicitly aim to leave behind "authoritarian" parenting practices that are associated with "working classes" and "allochthonous" by discussing, negotiating and debating parenting with mothers. In this "democratic" or "authoritative" upbringing, mothers and children are to see themselves as responsible individuals, autonomous and free. Walkerdine and Lucey wrote of "Democracy in the kitchen", of working class and middle class mothering practices and how they are respectively pathologised and idealised and explicitly linked to the ideal of "democracy" and the fear of "authoritarianism". They argued that an upbringing based on democratic values of freedom and autonomy is to make conflict disappear within both the home and society. Middle class mothering, in their view, is to create a household without fights and overt power display. This style of mothering is to prepare children not only for middle class life but also for democratic ideals and to create a lack of class-consciousness. "[D]emocracy is ensured by the removal from consciousness of any sense of oppression, powerlessness, division or exploitation" (ibid.). The Rotterdam parenting guidance practices that I researched teach "authoritative" parenting in a time and place of economic hardship and unemployment. The problems in Rotterdam families that are the result of this economic hardship were, however, seldom addressed. Issues of future employment of children, educational choices, revanchist spatial strategies meant to "disperse" young people and poor inhabitants were not among the subjects discussed in the practices in which I participated. Parenting guidance is not geared towards preparing mothers to deal with these pressing issues. New class conflicts emerge in the twenty-first century service-based economy. New configurations of inequality come with new modes of production. But these were not topics of debate, discussion or advice. Instead how to parent "authoritatively", using no overt power but democratic means for everyday family life in order to mother a next generation of autonomous individuals was. Parenting guidance asks mother to present their children with a fiction of harmony in a city where "opportunity poor" indeed have very little "opportunities" and unemployment for life is a real threat.