Chapter 3
Setting the Stage: Being Successful and Negotiating New (Mainstream) Identities

Jens Schneider, Ali Konyali, Ismintha Waldring, and Reinhilde Pulinx

3.1 Introduction

> Success […]. An origin-alien Late-German does not infrequently react rather stroppily to this ascription – why? He senses that he is almost accused of betrayal: of the culture of the homeland of his parents. He knows about the implications – burned and disfigured is the gifted worker's child; another possibility can and must not be there. – Feridun Zaimoğlu[1]

> I hear it said of somebody that he is leading a double life. I think to myself: Just two? – Leon Wieseltier[2]

In 2017, in Schorndorf, a mid-size town near Stuttgart in the south of Germany, a huge crowd of young people were getting drunk and having fun at the town's annual

[1] "Erfolg […]. Ein herkunftsfremder Spätdeutscher reagiert nicht selten unwirsch ob dieser Zuschreibung – wieso? Er ahnt, dass man ihn fast des Verrats beschuldigt: an der Kultur der Heimat seiner Eltern. Er weiß um die Implikation – verätzt und entstellt ist das begabte Arbeiterkind, eine andere Möglichkeit kann und darf es nicht geben." (In: Ezli & Staupe, 2014: 77, translation JS).

[2] https://newrepublic.com/article/92857/against-identity

J. Schneider (✉)
Universität Osnabrück, Osnabrück, Germany
e-mail: jens.schneider@uni-osnabrueck.de

A. Konyali
Deutsches Zentrum für Integrations- und Migrationsforschung (DeZIM), Berlin, Germany
e-mail: konyali@dezim-institut.de

I. Waldring
Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam, Amsterdam, The Netherlands
e-mail: i.e.waldring@vu.nl

R. Pulinx
Erasmus-Universiteit Rotterdam, Rotterdam, The Netherlands
e-mail: pulinx@essb.eur.nl

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summer feast. The celebrations were well underway when police forces started to aggressively search the crowd and arrest some of the teenagers, leading to a major riot when the crowd, in defence of their peers, attacked the police. In an initial press statement, the police blamed young refugees for having sexually harassed girls at the feast in the afternoon and justified their intervention in the partying crowd by saying that it had a 'high share of young men with a migration background', while searching for the perpetrators. Immediately, press and politicians drew parallels with the mass attacks on women in Cologne on New Year's Eve 2016/17. But after more inquiries had been made in the days that followed, a different picture began to emerge: first, just one girl had said that two young male refugees had made a pass at her that afternoon, but she reported that they had never been aggressive or harassing. Second, the two young men had no connection to the party, which was mainly attended by pupils from the local grammar school who were celebrating their final graduation with generous alcohol consumption (in line with a longstanding local tradition). Interestingly, neither the police, journalists nor local politicians took any notice of the fact that the noticeable presence of youngsters 'with a migration background' in the crowd was simply because of the high share of children from immigrant families among the local population in this age group, and thus also among the graduates of the local *Gymnasium*. Nor did any of them draw the conclusion that graduating from *Gymnasium* and participating in the party's drinking culture were not only proof of these youngsters' 'successful integration', but also of their identification with local mainstream culture. Similar observations could be made in the aftermath of riots among party people in downtown Frankfurt and Stuttgart in 2020 in reaction to police action and arrests. Neither the police nor politicians and the media questioned whether alcohol consumption is really a valid indicator of 'integration problems', especially among young people with a Muslim family background. It also almost went unnoticed that, considering the fact that in both cities well above half of the local population below the age of 21 has at least one immigrant parent or grandparent,[3] it would have been rather surprising if the group of 'foreign-looking' youngsters had *not* represented a significant share of the partying crowd.

In the Netherlands, we can also see a continued inability in people *without* a migration background as well as Dutch institutions to view people with a 'migration background' as being equally 'Dutch'. Recently, this has come to the fore in numerous incidents of ethnic profiling which has led to systemic inequality and discrimination against people who 'look different'. In 2020, Amnesty International reported on ethnic profiling by the Dutch police and how this is linked to their use of 'risk models'. At the beginning of 2021, a large-scale scandal at the national tax office in which ethnic profiling had been used for at least 7 years to unjustly discriminate against citizens with dual nationality led to the demission of the Dutch government, which was forced to acknowledge that the discrimination had been systemic. Yet, in spite of this acknowledgment, another case of explicit ethnic profiling was

[3] Local statistics, compiled by the authors.

judicially approved in 2021 after several citizens and civil society organizations initiated court proceedings against the Dutch military police. The court ruled that it was not discriminatory for the military police to select people of colour for stop-and-search practices during border controls. In reaction to this decision, the claimants stated that '[r]acial profiling is harmful because it contributes to stigmatizing non-white citizens. The Court has now ruled that non-white Dutch citizens may continue to be singled out as potentially "non-Dutch" just because of the colour of their skin.' One of the claimants, a city councillor from Eindhoven born in Congo, had been selected for a check as he returned to the Netherlands on a flight from another European city in part because "he didn't look Dutch". Not only was the court sentence painful for him personally, it also misjudged the fact that as ethnic and racial diversity has been part and parcel of the Netherlands and its population for quite some time, non-white people can be just as 'Dutch' as white people.

It would seem that the *generational dynamics* of immigration are not yet widely understood by the public debate in any European country. Sixty years after the first Turkish labour migration to Western Europe, mainstream discourses still tend to overemphasize 'foreignness' and 'difference' when referring to the native-born offspring of immigrant or bi-cultural families, oblivious to the fact that they represent between 80% and 90% of young people who statistically figure as 'persons with a migration background' in most countries and cities in Western and Northern Europe (cf. Schneider, 2018). It could rightfully be questioned whether the concept of 'integration', at least in its common understanding, even applies here at all: to a large extent, the rioting youth mentioned above are not only native-born, but are also the children of native-born parents, i.e. of the second generation of immigrant families to whom this book is dedicated.

It is probable that the anger that fuelled this aggression against the police is partly derived from the fact that many of these third-generation migrants have to deal with 'mainstream institutions' whose ideas about 'migration', 'integration' and 'society' seem to have got stuck somewhere in the 1980s or 1990s, the time when their parents were going to school or starting out on their careers, and had to fight hard to be valued for their talents or achievements rather than judged by their names or physical appearance. The children of the various groups of early 'guest worker' migrants were pioneers as they were the first to introduce elements of ethno-cultural diversification to almost all relevant social institutions – from kindergarten to their professional fields. Since then, other groups and waves of immigrants have arrived and sent their children to school, the total population has become much more diverse, and contacts across ethno-national origins – including the population of non-immigrant background – have become the rule in classrooms, relationships, and many professional fields. Yet, much of the public discourse around migration, integration and diversity in Europe continues to propagate a quite different impression.

3.1.1 Belonging and Identification

Identity formation always involves and "requires some element of choice" (cf. Woodward, 2004: 6) at the individual level. Yet, this choice is limited by how society sees and defines the similarities and differences between those who are perceived as part of a common 'We' and those who are 'They'. Since these mainstream definitions basically follow old, established 'racial' and ethno-national categorizations in which 'descent' is an important identifier of national belonging (Schneider, 2001, 2002a), this interaction between the social and personal level in processes of identification points to a double bind: whatever migrants and even their children do and achieve, most of them do not become 'invisible', in the sense that they continue to look 'different' and to have 'foreign' names in the eyes of mainstream self-definitions. Social participation in and identification with the mainstream is thus not a mere matter of choice on their part, but also requires openness and the possibility of access, aspects that imply a responsibility on the part of mainstream society.

Questions of identity and belonging thus always have two sides: (a) How do individuals position themselves in relation to socially relevant categories? And (b) What categories are in use in a given society, how are these filled with social meaning, and what functions do they fulfil in the social structure and the maintenance of specific power relations? The past decade in particular has seen an unprecedented pervasiveness of right-wing populism all over Europe, and its ingrained overemphasis on 'migration' as a supposed 'threat' to national identity.[4] At the same time, in an almost parallel development, the demographic situation has taken the opposite direction: European urban populations have never been as diverse, and there have never been more well-educated and professionally successful members of diverse immigrant and bi-cultural backgrounds. These people are diversifying mainstream society organizations from within and contributing to the normalization of 'having a background'. In general, religious and ethno-cultural diversity are increasingly understood as being an integral part of today's mainstream (cf. Alba & Nee, 2003).

This chapter looks at feelings of belonging and strategies of self-positioning among 'second- generation' people of Turkish descent in top-level professions in Europe, all of them 'pioneers' with regard to their parents, who have very low levels of formal education, but also with regard to their professional fields as they are frequently among the first persons of immigrant working-class origin to enter these

[4] The former German Minister of Home Affairs Horst Seehofer expressed this almost ideal-typically when he declared migration to be 'the mother of all problems' (see e.g. https://rp-online.de/politik/deutschland/horst-seehofer-lehnt-stichtagsregelung-fuer-fluechtlinge-als-fachkraefte-ab_aid-32736207); similar sentiments and statements are to be found in the political and public discourses of Sweden, Belgium and the Netherlands, leading to a problematization of both migrants *and* their native-born offspring. For a more recent example, see the ways in which the refugees at the Belarus-EU border are discursively represented as a 'threat to the integrity of the European Union', as if families stranded in the border zone are every bit as dangerous as illegal drugs or weapons.

occupations. What have been the effects of social mobility and professional careers on their identities and their relationship to both their native country, but also to their parents' country of origin? On the other side, what has been the influence of their access to and presence in these occupations, which figure among the most influential professional fields in our societies? This chapter analyses belonging and identification with regard to three aspects that are especially characteristic of upwardly socially mobile individuals from immigrant families:

– being well-trained professionals with legitimate professional self-confidence and an understanding of success
– being *middle-class*, at least in economic or material terms (and against a background of upward social mobility in relation to their parents and 'milieu of origin')
– being *second generation*, i.e. being raised in a country and city to which their parents migrated from Turkey.

The chapter analyses these three aspects on the basis of the exemplary cases of four respondents from the Pathways to Success/ELITES-projects in Belgium, the Netherlands, Sweden and Germany. The description of their trajectories is situated in the specific professional and local/national contexts in which their careers and strategic self-positionings are taking place. By this, the chapter also aims to 'prepare the stage' for the analyses in the subsequent chapters that focus more broadly and specifically on careers in specific professional sectors.

3.2 Theoretical Considerations

Identity is one of the key concepts in scholarly work on the incorporation of immigrants and their offspring into society. In dominant assimilation theories since Milton Gordon (1964), identification with the host country has not only been one of the four dimensions of processes of incorporation and acculturation, but even its culmination point. And although assimilation and integration theories have been under critical revision in the past two decades, questioning the oversimplifications in their schematic models in particular (cf. Crul & Vermeulen, 2003, Schneider & Crul, 2010), identity and feelings of belonging are still quite commonly looked at through an analytical lens based on a linear juxtaposition of 'either-or' or 'from-to' – as expressed, for example, in analyses of 'national vs. ethnic identity' (e.g. Berry, 1997, 2003) or 'ethnic retention vs. assimilation' (e.g. Ersanilli & Koopmans, 2009). Most studies on the relationship between labour market integration and identity measure the effects of success in the workplace on 'levels of acculturation' and feelings of belonging to the 'host society', a concept also applied to the second generation (e.g. Constant & Zimmermann, 2012).

The long-lasting prevalence of this type of static approach to identity and belonging is partly due to methodological constraints in the quantitative measurement of identity aspects. At the same time, this is, to a large extent, also the way in which

immigrant integration and adaptation is understood by the dominant social and political discourse in the home countries of most researchers which, in our view, may have supported a certain lack of critical reflection on the categorizations that are often used in migration research (cf. Dahinden, 2016). However, other researchers have also put an emphasis on the *ambiguities* and situational context-dependency of expressed feelings of belonging (e.g. Duemmler, 2015; Duemmler & Dahinden, 2016; Schneider, 2010; Wessendorf, 2010, 2014). The concept of 'hybridity', for example, stresses the *simultaneousness* of belonging to and identification with different socio-cultural references (Baumann, 1995, 1996; Hall, 2017; Schneider, 2010; Schneider et al., 2012a, b; Schneider & Lang 2014). Native-born children/grandchildren of immigrants and members of cultural minorities grow up constantly balancing out their sense of belonging to the wider place *of home* (i.e. neighbourhood, school, city, country) and their attachment to the culture(s) *at home* in their families (cf. Schneider et al. 2012a; Schneider & Lang, 2014).

However, the concept of 'hybridity' also raises questions: are children of immigrants, belonging to the second generation, best described as being *in-between* two cultures, or *across* them (cf. Waldring et al., 2018)? How do we define the 'difference' between two cultures, and what about 'commonalities'? To make things even more complicated: does this involve only *two* cultures, and what about the intersections with other relevant categories of belonging, such as gender, social class, profession, sexual orientation, and life style preferences, and their cultural aspects and relevance *within* 'mega-categories' of belonging, such as *ethnos* and Nation? 'Hybridity' is not a static attribute, but rather the description of an ongoing *process,*[5] which raises further questions: when do hybrid cultural practices lead to the development of a 'new culture' (as any 'culture' is the result of cultural adoptions), whereby they cease to be hybrid – and when do we stop insisting on identifying and separating these different components?

Some of the terms that were developed in research on migration and integration are being examined more critically today than they were a decade or two ago. This applies especially to 'migration background' which has evolved from being a complex statistical item to become a simplistic social category that, at least potentially, perpetuates the projection of older static juxtapositions that have become increasingly inadequate (e.g. the German *Deutsche-Ausländer* or the Dutch *autochtoon-allochtoon* dichotomies) well into the future (cf. Mannitz & Schneider, 2014). It overemphasizes the element of 'immigrant origin', especially because (a) it may statistically root in only one grandparent having been born in another nation-state (and for the statistics it does not make any difference, if that grandparent came from Austria to Germany or from Ghana to the Netherlands, but for the social category this difference is crucial!); (b) it does not take into account the actual cultural and/or identificational relevance for the individuals concerned. To a certain degree, this also applies to the term 'second generation', because it emphasizes the attribute

[5] See Slootman (2018) for an account of different phases of changing identifications in the socialization and coming of age of members of the second generation in the Netherlands.

'child of immigrants' of native-born individuals which is reflected, for example, in the widely used oxymoron 'second-generation migrants' (cf. Schneider, 2016). At the same time, parental origin, language and everyday culture can be empirically evidenced as an important reference point for identification and cultural tastes and preferences among many native-born children of immigrants (e.g. Schneider et al., 2012a, b).

Feelings of belonging are never simply an individual choice, but also depend on their being accepted by the surrounding world and by the group to which such belonging is proclaimed.[6] Second-generation individuals may feel most comfortable when they can feel as much 'Turkish', for example, as 'German' or 'Swedish' or 'Dutch'; yet, they also know that exclusive claims of belonging (and identification) can be addressed to them at any moment – be it, for example, by the Turkish premier Erdoğan, demanding that they 'resist assimilation', or when politicians argue against dual citizenship on the presumption that people entitled to two passports will have 'divided loyalties'. Families may expect their children to feel loyalty and affection to the parents' home culture and language (and disapprove of marital relationships with persons from other ethno-national backgrounds or religious beliefs), but they also want the same children to achieve professional success in mainstream institutions – which obviously requires certain levels of adaptation and incorporation in these.

Another relevant theoretical question is the wider social and societal effect of an increased participation of persons who seem to disrupt or even jeopardize the accustomed homogeneity among the members of a social organization. This has long been a broadly-discussed issue with regard to women in leadership positions, especially in politics and large corporations, and has expanded in recent years to include other categories of 'difference'. As always when the topic comes down to sharing power and influence, this is not without conflict and debate. El-Mafaalani calls this the 'integration paradox' (2018): if children of immigrants become successful and move out of the 'niches' where their parents made a living, this is likely to produce rising levels of conflict because broader sections of the mainstream society, especially in the higher and better paid ranks, begin to 'discover' them as competitors for the same jobs and leading positions, for clients/customers for their products or services, and for houses or apartments.[7] Once again, it is the 'guest worker' second

[6] 'Identity' as a term and concept contains an inherent contradiction or ambiguity: it establishes the individual's uniqueness and Self as different from all other individuals, but also its belonging to groups/categories and being 'the same' – which is the literal meaning of the Latin root *idem* – as anyone else in a specific category. Identity is based on belonging to different groups, and the fact that belonging always requires these two sides is an element that can be found back across the different definitions of 'identity' in the various social science disciplines that are interested more in the social aspects of identification than its individual psychological aspects (see e.g. Devereux, 1978; Tajfel, 2010; Baumann, 1995; cf. Barth, 1969). Unfortunately, like 'culture', 'identity' belongs to those terms that are taken for granted in much social research and used without further differentiation.

[7] See also Oliver (2010) and Steinman (2019) on higher perceptions of discrimination among highly-educated immigrants. In socio-psychological literature, the 'integration paradox' can also

generation that has had the main pioneering role in these processes of – individually – finding access to these jobs and positions and – socially – taking the first steps towards making various professional fields more diverse and heterogeneous.

The following parts of this chapter analyse three fundamental mechanisms of identity construction:

(a) Identities operate with definitional boundaries that include certain kinds of people and exclude others on the basis of specific criteria and (ascribed) attributes.
(b) Identities are defined – and negotiated – in a process that involves at least three parties: the wider society, the 'group' whose boundaries are defined, and the respective individuals. We will look particularly at the tensions that arise from conflicting definitions between these three parties.
(c) Individual identities always consist of a series of distinct categories of belonging at different levels, and it is the specific combination of belongings that makes an individual unique and different from other individuals. In general, categories can operate in all kinds of combinations, some of which are socially uncritical – one can have a local *and* a national identity; one can be middle-aged, heterosexual, a lawyer, from Stockholm, and feel European all at the same time without being contested from any side – while other combinations are more complicated and conflictive – e.g. being neither male nor female, being openly gay and 'Turkish' (cf. Manavoglu, 2013), or feeling 'Kurdish' *and* 'Turkish' *and* 'Dutch' at the same time.

3.3 Examples from Four Countries

In the following, we will present four biographical accounts and narratives that were selected from a total of several hundred individual narratives across the different national samples (see Chap. 2 for details) for their 'prototypical' representation of identifications, belonging and strategies of self-positioning (Borneman, 1992: 47; Schneider, 2002b).[8] They were chosen for representing similarities as much as differences: there are different professions and job statuses – an independent lawyer, a

refer to the measurable effect that highly-educated and professionally successful second-generation individuals decide *not* to identify with their country of birth and become 'disengaged' with their home society (see Verkuyten, 2016 for an overview and empirical evidence from the Netherlands).

[8] With the concept of 'prototypicality' (as opposed to 'representativity') we follow the anthropologist John Borneman who introduced the term to refer to a choice of cases that represent a specific *range* of meaningful social practices in a specific historical context rather than a mean or 'typical' position in the field: "For this study, the individual life is interesting not because of its statistical typicality, but because of its prototypicality for a generation. There are particular individual life constructions that are better examples of the generational category, that is, prototypes, than are others [...]. Two principles informed my selection of individuals for life constructions: (1) to illustrate the range of practices rather than the mean, mode, or ideal-typical practice, and (2) to reveal the historical and cultural specificity of practices rather than to disclose a set of universal timeless, 'necessary and sufficient' conditions for membership in a category" (Borneman, 1992: 47).

public school teacher, an employed banker, and a person working in the media who is partly employed and partly an entrepreneur; they share a similar age (32–40) and the experience of intergenerational social mobility in relation to parents who came from Turkey with comparatively low levels of education.

The presentation of the cases does not follow an ideal of a fixed format, nor does it always place the same emphasis on the same aspects. It should rather be understood as an 'interpretive narration' and a 'thick description' (Clifford Geertz) that aims to illustrate the different layers of belonging and self-identification in different contexts and how they correspond to or 'interrelate' with each other. This also includes the *intersections* between the three aspects of identity mentioned above: being native to the country to which their parents migrated, being a highly-skilled professional, and having gained a middle-class status. Although we do not aim to distance ourselves from the predominant body of quantitative literature on social mobility and 'integration', we do follow the critique of Bertaux and Thompson (1997) that we need a better understanding of the subjective contexts in which social mobility processes occur and how individual trajectories and mobility pathways reflect and respond to structural factors.

3.3.1 A Lawyer in Berlin

Eray Dogruel[9] is an independent lawyer in Berlin. At the time of the interview, he was 40 years old and sharing an office, located near West Berlin's famous central boulevard Kurfürstendamm with other lawyers, all of them of non-immigrant German background. He shares an apartment with his partner – an architect – and her three adolescent children.

Eray Dogruel was born and raised in another large city in Germany to low-educated parents whom he describes as being liberal-minded and emotionally supportive. The family lived in a mixed area with working-class and lower middle-class families, many of whom were also of Turkish origin. His parents were active in a local parents' association which operated an intercultural kindergarten where he met Thomas, who is still his best friend to this day.

Three moments stand out in his educational trajectory: first, he spent primary education in a so-called 'Turkish class' consisting exclusively of children from families originating in Turkey; second, after obtaining his secondary school diploma from a middle vocational school (*Realschule*), he was accepted for upper secondary education at a *Gymnasium* (academic track). He describes this new school environment as being so elitist and hostile towards him and the handful of other kids from an immigrant and/or working-class family background that, after 1 year and at the initiative of Thomas' parents, he changed to a comprehensive school (*Gesamtschule*) to obtain his university access diploma there. The third distinct moment in his

[9] All respondents' names cited in this chapter are pseudonyms.

educational career came when Eray had nearly completed his Law studies: he decided to take a break and start working full-time as a barkeeper and waiter, a move that took him deep into the excesses of nightlife. After 2 years of this, he returned to his studies and passed his finals.

Straight away, he decided to leave his home city and follow Thomas to Berlin where he started the usual two-year trainee period for law professions (*Referendariat*). But what was more important for Eray was that moving to Berlin meant that he could finally start living – as he puts it – the "typical life of students". He moved into a shared student flat and became part of the 'leftish-alternative' milieu that is characteristic of certain areas of Berlin. In these areas, this student milieu in West Berlin generally co-existed with large shares of immigrant populations with Turkish families being the largest group. Despite this, he never got really involved with the local Turkish community in his area.

Eray associated his experiences with stigmatization and stereotyping – both at the *Gymnasium* in upper secondary education and in many subsequent incidents that could be interpreted in an ambiguous manner to say the least – with being of Turkish descent. As he felt completely at home in Berlin's leftish-alternative milieu, he never felt any *need* to resort to his ethnic or family background. He feels German by birth, passport and socialization, but he is also very clear about the fact that he as an individual cannot freely decide as to his identity:

> In the end, nobody gives a shit about what you feel yourself; it is the mainstream that decides what you are. So, you simply parrot as what you've been identified: If they identify me as a Turk, then I am a Turk. And that's how you are socialized. It is socially not accepted when a Turkish-originating person says, 'I am German'.

At the same time, his Turkish background and language skills became of central importance *professionally*: once Eray realized that his final grades in Law were not good enough to become a judge, state attorney or corporate lawyer, he had to assess his chances for building up a clientele as an independent lawyer:

> The only thing I could do was become a lawyer, and so I started looking for a place in a shared office. At that time, I lived in Kreuzberg and I thought that I should use my unique selling point in a somehow economically reasonable manner. So, you look for your clients where there is some likelihood that they come to you. […] I mean, you have to be realistic: as a Turkish lawyer you only get Turkish clients. There is no Hans Müller going to pass by and ring my bell. No non-Turk will ever go to a Turkish lawyer.

Eray Dogruel strategically developed his Turkish background and language skills into a 'unique selling point' among the host of independent lawyers in the city. But it was also very fortunate from his point of view that, first, he found a place in a *mixed* law firm (and not a 'purely Turkish' one), and, second, that at a certain point they decided to relocate to Charlottenburg, a more upmarket and centrally located district of Berlin, because it made it possible to 'blur' the line of separation between his Turkish clientele – which also appreciates having a so-called

'Ku'damm-lawyer'[10] as part of their social prestige – and, for example, non-Turkish clients who have business relations with companies in Turkey.

Most respondents in the German sample did not find it difficult to clearly separate the roles they play in their professional and their private lives. However, they would most commonly consider themselves as 'Turkish' in their private lives. If they ever considered themselves as 'German', it was in relation to their work (in the sense of stereotypes surrounding 'work ethos' etc.). By contrast, in Eray Dogruel's case, it is the other way round: he professionally enacts and performs 'the Turkish lawyer', while being 'Turkish' hardly features in his private life. He had to become a 'Turkish lawyer' in order to gain a foothold in his profession, but since then he has worked hard to extend his range of clients. Being part of a mixed law firm has helped a lot in this regard, and, according to Eray, the issue for his partners is never a person's 'background', but their skills and competences in a specific field of law. From his point of view, being addressed as a 'Turk' in all kinds of situations outside his office is particularly annoying.

3.3.2 An Editor in Ghent

Acun Arslan is editor-in-chief at a broadcasting company in Belgium, but he also edits and publishes books. At the time of the interview, he was 34 years old. Acun was born and grew up in a small village in Flanders which only had a few other immigrant families. Today, he lives and works in Ghent with his partner, who is of non-immigrant Flemish background. At the time of the interview, they were expecting their first child.

Acun Arslan's father came to Belgium in 1975 to work in the Flemish coal mines and his mother followed 2 years later. For his parents it was important for their children to do well at school and obtain a good job:

> I think my parents realized that they belonged to a lower social class and they wanted their children to move up. I think they wanted us to become a lawyer or a doctor. They could not provide us with academic support, but they understood that it was very important to obtain good grades at school. So, they always wanted to know our grades. They always checked our school diary and invested a lot in good communication with our teachers and the school.

Both his parents are low-educated, but his mother in particular constantly underlined the importance of a good education, not least because she would have liked to have gone to secondary education, but instead had had to help out at home and work in the fields. His parents were also convinced that a mixed environment and the neighbourhood with Flemish families would be important and did not want their children to be confined to the Turkish community. According to Arslan, it was a

[10] *'Ku'damm'* is the popular abbreviation of Kurfürstendamm, the above-mentioned main shopping boulevard in former West-Berlin, and used here to refer to an area with many prestigious, upper-class law firms.

combination of personal ambition and the fact that there were only a few children with a migrant background at his schools that made his educational success possible: his perseverance allowed him to ask teachers for the support his parents could not provide, and because teachers had to deal with only a few children like him, they were quite supportive. Arslan also does not remember any particular hostilities or a separation between Muslims and Catholics in the village: "You could say that we were equal."

He went to university and obtained a master degree in Social and Political Science. Three months after graduating, Arslan got his current job at the broadcasting company. When he entered this central mainstream institution 11 years ago, he was one of the very first people with a visible migrant background and he clearly remembers the initial uneasiness among his 'white Flemish' colleagues:

> They tried to be friendly, but did not know how to act when I was there. It took them a few months to realize that I was just one of them.

Next to this job, he started to write novels – and discovered that his work apparently fell in-between established categories on the literature market: as a native-born Fleming he wanted to write about Flemish society, but his Turkish name almost automatically pushed him into the category of 'immigrant literature':

> At first, I tried to get my work published through the existing publishers. But they gave me the advice to not debut with the work I presented. They said it was good material for a second or third book, but not as a debut novel. These reactions confused me, and then I understood: Look at the titles of debut novels written by authors with a migrant background. They all talk about lambs and sheep, family chronicles, returning to their home country. But I write about Western society.

After a while, he gave up on finding a publisher and decided to start his own publishing house – both for his own books and to explicitly promote authors of immigrant background whose books did not deal with 'typical migrant topics':

> I do consider this as a wakeup call. I want them to write about things that are important to them. They have to stop writing these exotic stories that will surely please the Flemish public.

Acun Arslan sees himself, but also people like him in general, more as part of wider Belgian society than of the Turkish community. At the same time, he finds that both the wider mainstream society *and* the 'Turkish community' tend to overemphasize family origin as the main identifier. This produces interesting contradictions:

> Today, my circle of friends remains predominantly white. From time to time, I have friends with a Turkish background, but mostly they are not highly-educated. But the level of education is not important when making or choosing friends, they do have to have the same vision on society. What I mean is that the individual is the starting point. The individual has the right to choose the community he or she wants to belong to, there shouldn't be any pressure from the community towards the individual. Yes, you could consider me as someone living outside the Turkish community – if we believe that there is something like a 'Turkish community'. […] I want to make clear that they [the Turkish youth] live in Belgium. They live here and they are no longer Turkish. They are born and raised here. Of course, everyone has his roots. But just because certain community members ask you to act in a certain manner, that doesn't mean that you have to conform to this. […] You have to break free from your community in order to be able to function in that community later on.

Acun Arslan's social environment today is quite homogeneously highly-educated and predominantly of non-immigrant background. But his experience with trying to find a publisher for his novels shows that stereotypes about 'Turks' and other 'immigrants' (or 'ethnic minority' members) are difficult to avoid. And this also applies to the widely taken-for-granted difference between 'Turkishness' and 'Flemishness' which, for Acun Arslan, does not correspond to either his childhood and youth socialization or to his current social and professional life.

The final sentence in the above quote reveals the multiple layers of contradictions that are involved: even if something like a 'Turkish community' could be reasonably defined and addressed, persons belonging to the 'second generation' should free themselves from the *automatism* of submitting to 'Turkishness' (with all its 'baggage' of cultural meanings and political implications). This would allow them to return to it later, but from a different position, that of a self-declared belonging to Belgian or Flemish society in which family roots are *one* among many important aspects. This is also the explanation for his seemingly contradictory commitment towards publishing 'second-generation writers': Flemish publishers expect these writers to write about migration-related topics, but Arslan's publishing house offers them an opportunity to publish on any topic they want.

Acun Arslan had the opportunity to experience mainstream Belgian society as being more inclusive than exclusive: in the village, in school and – after a short period of irritation – also at his workplace. This is in stark contrast to Eray Dogruel, whose school experience included segregated classes and/or being denied equal opportunities on the sole basis of institutionalized stereotypes regarding immigrant children. Eray Dogruel escaped from this mainly by making use of the intercultural social capital that his parents had built up by engaging in an intercultural association. Starting a new life in a new city allowed him to choose an alternative pathway that avoided the clear 'either…or'-ascriptions to which Acun Arslan responds with a strong emphasis on the individual as the only relevant 'unit for categorization' as a strategy to bypass the widespread stigmatization of the 'second generation' as 'immigrants' within Belgian or Flemish society.

Other respondents made other choices, and one option is also to engage more actively in 'being Turkish' or 'being Muslim' as much in one's private as in professional life – for example, by engaging in explicitly 'Turkish' or 'Muslim' academic networks or by acting as the protagonists of generational change in Turkish associations.

3.3.3 A Banker in Stockholm

At the time of the interview, Esra Topal had been working for a big Swedish bank in the centre of Stockholm for almost 15 years. She was 40 years old, the same age as her husband who is also of Turkish descent and works as an industrial diver. The couple had two young daughters and lived in a mixed suburb of Stockholm which

has a lot of working-class families, but also several middle-class professionals who work in the IT sector in the area.

Esra Topal was born and raised in the Swedish capital. Although she feels strongly connected to the city, this feeling is not as strong towards Sweden in general:

> I mean in Sweden I would definitely not move to another place than Stockholm. Because, I don't know, I wouldn't. I could not feel at home at any other place, I think.

Her father came to Sweden in 1963 and her mother followed 7 years later. Both had only completed primary education and had spent their working life in Sweden doing low-skilled factory jobs. Esra vividly recalls how much her parents wanted her to study and how this led to conflicts because all she wanted was to become a professional basketball player in Turkey. It was her Turkish language teacher from primary school, who later also became her first basketball coach, whom she identifies as being the most important key person at that time:

> He changed my perspective. Like: 'nothing is impossible'. I mean, for example, when playing, we were often smaller than the players in the other teams, but we would still win. This shows how it all depends on us.

Straight after finishing secondary school, Esra moved to Turkey in order to start her professional sports career. But shortly after her arrival, an injury put paid to her dreams of becoming a professional basketball player. She returned to Sweden and started working as a shop assistant, followed by other jobs in a call-centre, a tourist office, and finally in a travel agency where she stayed for about 5 years. She then saw an advertisement for her current position in the bank in the newspaper and was so determined to at least have a shot at it that "I called them a hundred times – until they said 'okay, okay we promise, we will contact you for a job interview'." She did not really expect to get the job as she did not have a higher education degree, but a friend she knew had obtained a job in another bank under similar conditions. Esra was hired and the skills she had obtained from her previous working experience allowed her to move from fund administration through diversity management into her current position as a project manager. She is not yet in a leading position, but she was selected by her superiors to take part in an internal leadership training program. For many years, her parents were not happy about her professional life and, to her great regret, her father passed away before she got the job in the bank and could have shown him how successful she had become despite everything.

Although Esra's professional environment is almost exclusively 'white', she has never felt that her Turkish name or background are a problem or disadvantage. On the contrary, she even sees the 'explicitness' of her background as an asset, because "no one here is like me" (cf. Konyali, 2014) and there is currently a general trend in the corporate sector to promote more diversity, also in leadership positions. She has even experienced demand for her specific language skills and cultural familiarity:

> My supervisor had scheduled a meeting with the board of directors [of a professional association], but he could not go there, so instead I went [...]. Now, of course, they also knew that I'm Turkish and they immediately approached me saying that 'on the 16th of June,

> some people from Turkey will come. Esra, wouldn't you like to join in?' 'Of course', I said, 'I will join in!'

Yet, at the same time, she also admits that there is discrimination at her place of work, although interestingly mainly in the sense that "difference is something like a non-issue", meaning that, although difference can play a negative role in organizations, it is avoided as a topic to talk about and reflect upon. This is the typical problem of ambiguity: difference can be an asset when Esra *and* the bank see a possibility to capitalize on her specific language skills or the – mostly symbolic – representation of diversity in the organization. But, when having a 'background' is not an asset, being perceived as 'different' or even as 'Other' can be a problem of exclusion or a 'glass ceiling' in the regular course of a career. In this regard, Esra Topal gains her self-confidence and pride from her 'self-made career' and the fact that after her dream of becoming a professional basketball player was shattered, she had to work her way up through different jobs and professions and make it into the bank without having educational credentials and social capital. It also motivates her to actively pursue her professional career – be it within the bank or, if that should prove to be difficult, by starting a small firm on her own.

Despite her attempt to make a career in Turkey and her underlining of her 'Turkishness' in her professional profile, Esra is rather reluctant to consider herself as part of the 'Turkish community'. She participated in some associations in the past, but withdrew as soon as things started to get "too exclusively Turkish" for her taste. Similar to the case of Eray Dogruel, 'being Turkish' is something that Esra Topal 'cannot avoid' in her professional life, so actively making it part of her 'professional Self' (or her 'unique selling-point' in the bank) means keeping agency in her own hands and not waiting to be 'pushed into it' by someone else's remarks or reactions. Even her move to Turkey after school was prompted by a pragmatic decision to try out a specific career option and profit from her language skills and family networks, rather than any particular feeling of connectedness or identification with her parents' home country.

3.3.4 A Teacher in Rotterdam

Azize Kaya lives in Rotterdam. At the time of the interview, she was 32 years old and working as a teacher at a secondary school in Leiden, a university town not far from Rotterdam. Her husband is also of Turkish descent and works as a baggage handler at Schiphol Airport. They have an infant son.

Similar to Esra Topal, it was primarily Azize's mother who strongly encouraged Azize and her sisters to attain a good level of education. She had always regretted not having had the opportunity to go to school for more than a few years as this had made her dependent on her husband who would not allow her to work or enjoy an independent social life. Azize's mother wanted her daughters to be independent, which meant finding a good job and making their own money. This is why, even as

a young girl, Azize was determined to succeed at school and become a professional.

After finishing secondary school, she at first wanted to study Psychology, but her school-leaving certificate did not allow her direct access to university. Instead, she chose to do a BA in Social Welfare which, after 1 year, would allow her to change to Psychology. However, during her first year, while doing an internship in a primary school, Azize discovered that she liked teaching and seemingly also had a talent for it:

> In one of these internships, I was assisting IT lessons for 5th and 6th graders. And, well, this guy was giving these classes and I thought: 'I can do that a lot better', because the kids weren't paying attention and he was using very difficult words and therefore the kids couldn't keep their attention. And these kids were just sitting there with an attitude like: 'Yeah, I'm here because my mom sent me here'. You know, that's what they were transmitting. And I just realized that I could do a lot better, and it was like I was taking over these classes, which made me think: 'Why shouldn't I become a teacher?'

So, instead of studying Psychology she decided to go to Teacher Training College, where she chose English as her main subject. But she also wanted to study something that would provide her with good opportunities in case she would "return to Turkey" someday. It seems noteworthy that she had considered this option, as in the interview she did not appear to be very involved with any Turkish people besides her own family. Her closer friends are from a range of diverse ethnic-minority backgrounds and share a common profession: they are all teachers. Azize does not participate in any activities or organizations with special links to Turkey or the Turkish community. While she was studying to become a teacher, she participated in a Turkish-run mentoring organization, but this was motivated by the teaching aspect, not the organization's ethnic background:

> I kind of ended up there, because there were some fellow students in the Teacher College who were active there, and they said: 'we need some more people'. Yeah, well, I went to take a look and I took the job, and it was fun, so I did that for a while.

Azize Kaya got her first job as a teacher while she was still studying. She has therefore never experienced unemployment or the usual uncertainties of recent graduates. At the same time, the fact that she was already working as a teacher before graduation also meant that the final examination phase at Teacher Training College was quite stressful, and she had to rely on support from her colleagues and the school management. The fact that they kept pushing her to finish her studies enforced her sense of belonging and loyalty to the school where, at the time of the interview, she had been working for approximately 10 years.

Her sense of belonging and feeling very much at home there, despite the fact that there are very few other colleagues with a migrant or ethnic minority-background and that the school environment itself is rather middle-class, also goes back to an incident some years ago. When standing in for another teacher, the pupils of this particular class explicitly rejected and challenged her because of her background. This attitude was even supported by some of their parents. During this difficult time,

the principal stood firmly on her side, suggesting that the parents either had to conform and accept her as the teacher or they would have to change to another school.

On the other hand, it also fills her with satisfaction that she is regarded as a role model especially by the few girls at her school from different ethnic minority backgrounds:

> (There are) ethnic minority kids here who realize: 'Wow, you can be a teacher here!', because there's an ethnic minority teacher in their classroom. […] I don't work in Rotterdam, and the school in which I work is not a 'black' school. Looking around the classroom, ethnic minority kids are a numerical minority and I do notice a 'click' with them, especially with the girls with a Turkish, Moroccan or Afghan background. They want to connect with me after class to tell their stories or to ask questions.

In contrast to her school and work, Azize Kaya does not feel fully comfortable in the city of Leiden where her school is located. Leiden is far less ethnically mixed than her hometown, Rotterdam, and for her the incident in the substitute class reflected an attitude that she continues to encounter in negative remarks when, for example, shopping in the city centre:

> When I do grocery shopping in Rotterdam, the vendor is often from an ethnic minority-background, so if that person is being unfriendly… well, actually I haven't experienced that yet. […] [By contrast, the vendors in Leiden] will be very snappy, for instance, by making a remark that I'm supposed to pay for the groceries. Then I think to myself: 'Of course, I have to pay for the groceries. That's only logical!' I don't know why they would make such a remark, and I try not to dwell on it. I forget these things really quickly, but they do make me feel that I don't want to be in Leiden, I'm happy to be here [in Rotterdam].

Azize Kaya's sense of belonging is not linked to her specific 'ethnic' or migrant background, not even to 'Turkishness' in a broader cultural sense, but to ethnocultural diversity in general and the respect and acceptance of cultural difference as such – which also produces the immediate sense of solidarity with the minority pupils at her school. Her circle of friends is diverse, and so is the neighbourhood where she feels most at home and experiences a strong sense of community. When relatives, friends and neighbours ask her to help their children with homework, she considers this a normal and natural thing to do, given the fact that she is a teacher and likes helping people out. For her, being successful and having fulfilled the dream and ambition that her mother expressed for her daughters does not translate into an ambition to become part of a mainstream 'Dutch' middle-class that, in her experience and perspective, "is not ready yet" to accept someone like her as "just one of them".

Azize Kaya's situation differs from the other cases, especially as in order to be successful in her profession, she never needed a 'unique selling-point' connected to her background or linguistic competences. She obtained her current position neither *because of* nor *despite* her family background, and it is thus also not a central part of her self-image as a teacher. The single negative experience of being rejected by pupils and parents in one particular class was more than counterbalanced by the fact that the school principal unconditionally backed her in front of the pupils and parents. Yet, the rising numbers of pupils of immigrant origin in her school is slowly changing the self-perception of her background and its potential for her profession:

the regular experience of being seen as a role model for girls of diverse 'ethnic' backgrounds is not only gratifying, but also an indication that, at least for an increasing number of her pupils, her background *is*, in fact, relevant – and in this sense a 'unique selling-point' among her colleagues. This experience might make her become a 'pioneer' of more diversity in the teaching staff of her school.

As regards her sense of belonging, the professional environment nevertheless plays an ambiguous role, because of the fact that the area in which the school is located is dominated by middle-class families of non-immigrant background, many of which seem to have rather negative opinions about immigrants and their native-born children. This makes it difficult for her to identify with her school as part of a local community. In her neighbourhood in her hometown Rotterdam, this feels completely different. Similar to Eray Dogruel in Berlin, she has found a social milieu as 'home base' in which backgrounds like hers are not only not a problem, but rather the norm and the basis for a collective sense of local belonging that cuts across ethnic and other types of boundaries.

3.4 Navigating Challenges

3.4.1 Being Second Generation

As stated above, this chapter analyses the effects of social mobility processes on the three different aspects of identification listed above: the ambition to be a good professional, having become middle-class by education and income, and being born into an immigrant family. What role do these aspects play in the individual 'identity fabric'? How are these aspects balanced out against each other in light of a social discourse that generally imposes constraints on the free choice of options in this regard (cf. Woodward, 2004)?

Being the child of parents who left their home to move to another country is a special condition and starting-point for making your way through the educational system and into a socially recognized position in society – even if you are native-born or arrived at a very early age. In general, their parents' decision to migrate merits respect because it required bravery and endurance, a sentiment that was very frequently expressed by our respondents. Moreover, by far most of our educationally successful respondents perceived their parents as supportive, motivating and believing in the capabilities and success of their children (Rezai, 2017), despite the fact that they often could not support them academically (e.g. with homework). All this has produced a deep sense of loyalty towards their parents, their family and, at least to a certain degree, to the geographical and cultural origins of their parents. On the other hand, managing their school careers for themselves has made our respondents independent and self-reliant from quite an early age – an important ingredient for their later success.

As regards questions of identity, *being second generation* – we believe that the term is sensible and appropriate in this context – means constantly balancing parental wishes for professional success, and loyalty to one's family and cultural upbringing on the one hand with one's personal sense of belonging and home as a consequence of local socialization and professional success on the other hand. Becoming successful is very frequently the fulfilment of the parents' 'migration project' and their dreams and hopes for their children – but it can be accompanied by fears that their children will become estranged from their family and origin. For the children, these parental expectations may feel like a 'burden' (cf. Konyali, 2014), and balancing this out can feel like navigating 'two worlds', an image quite frequently used by our respondents (cf. Schneider & Lang, 2014; Waldring et al., 2018). In general, our respondents did not seem to find it a too complicated task as they have been doing this from early childhood, developing tools for constantly switching and translating between different cultural and social realities of which languages are only the most manifest differences.

But 'second generation' in this context also means being forced to position oneself in relation to the two *ethno-national labels* that are represented by one's parents' country of origin and one's own country of birth. The problem is not that these individuals find it difficult to belong to two 'cultural worlds' at the same time, but that these labels are generally (a) considered to be mutually exclusive, and (b) associated with many cultural stereotypes. The case descriptions above demonstrate strong and unquestioned identification with the societies in which our respondents grew up, particularly with regard to the local level (Konyali & Keskiner, 2018; Schneider et al., 2012b). They also demonstrate different strategies for positioning themselves in relation to diverse kinds of socio-cultural expectations – e.g. 'at home' and 'at work' (and in the corresponding social contexts). In fact, there are many indications in our empirical material that *social* background and identity are of similar importance as the family's 'ethno-national origin'.

3.4.2 Being Middle-Class

Therefore, *having become middle-class* is a second important key to understanding the challenges facing successful and socially upwardly mobile children of immigrants – and which they share to a large extent with their upwardly mobile peers from working-class families of *non*-immigrant background. For both groups, 'middle-class' is, in the first place, a function to their level of education, income and professional activity. Their income offers them a much broader range of socio-economic possibilities than their parents had, especially in relation to housing and choice of neighbourhood. Since the familial and social origins (and their childhood memories) link them to the working-class, there are two inherent contradictions to solve: (a) how to maintain bonds with people and neighbourhoods to which their current professional everyday life offers hardly any connection and in which their acquired cultural and social capital is 'out of place'; (b) how to find a place and feel

at home in social environments that are not only new to them, but which also, almost by definition, have not been particularly open to socio-cultural diversity so far.

Many of our respondents were 'pioneers' of ethnic and cultural diversification not only in their professional fields, but also in their middle-class neighbourhoods. An above-average income allows choices, but also produces a 'choice dilemma': they can, for example, opt for an owner-occupied single family house with a back garden, but in many cases this means living in a widely 'white' neighbourhood that might not be a very welcoming environment (Lang & Schneider, 2017). Some respondents therefore set their priorities differently: Azize Kaya decided to stay in the diverse working and lower middle-class neighbourhood where she had grown up, while Eray Dogruel opted for a highly diverse, but also widely gentrified 'alternative left-wing' inner-city neighbourhood where people do not seem to care too much about ethno-national backgrounds and self-definitions. Other respondents, however, decided differently and gave priority to the typical symbols of middle-class life by buying a single-family house in the suburbs. Social contacts between the neighbours might generally not be as intensive as in inner city areas, but our respondents reported subtle to openly hostile reactions to them by their 'white' environment. For these respondents, intensive family and/or 'ethno-cultural' or religious networks sometimes compensate for the lack of social connections in their middle-class suburbs (see also Mayorga-Gallo, 2014).

3.4.3 Being a Good Professional

This makes the third aspect – *professional identity* – an even more important 'cornerstone' in our respondents' fabric of belonging. Of course, professional environments are generally by no means spaces without 'Othering', or even discriminatory practices which can range from stereotyping remarks from colleagues to one's professionalism or qualifications being questioned on the basis of one's migrant, 'ethnic' or religious background. Typical examples include casting doubts upon the suitability of a lawyer in a corporate law firm to take care of a particular case or the 'impartiality' of a teacher when dealing with immigrant parents (Waldring et al., 2015). Respondents also reported 'glass-ceiling effects' in their career prospects and blamed stereotypes or racist discrimination based on their background, physical appearance or names for this. Yet, at the same time, in the professional fields in which we sampled our respondents in the four countries, professional performance seemed to be by and large more important for professional recognition than one's 'background', religion or family origin (Waldring et al., 2014).

This picture may be somewhat idealized, because our sampling looked for those who had *succeeded* in making it into professional positions and not for those who were never granted this access or who dropped out because the working environment was too hostile. But, according to our respondents, a good professional performance can provide high levels of recognition which is also backed by a central meritocratic argument: it is not pleasant when colleagues or clients make a fuss

about them being 'Turks' or 'Muslims', but reason and right rest with those who demand to be measured by their professional performance and not their 'background' (Konyali & Crul, 2017).

This is not to say that the specific cultural capital connected to family origin is not relevant. As shown above, language skills, cultural knowledge and/or social relations connected to family background can play a role, and respondents actually make use of them as a potential 'unique selling point' on the job market, especially, when setting up their own businesses (Konyali, 2014). As Konyali and Crul (2017: 63) concluded:

> …the value of ethnicity as an individual resource across professional contexts is dependent on the organizational importance that is attached to individual difference. (…) Being successful in balancing making use of ethnic capital on the one hand and avoiding being stigmatized or pigeonholed on the other hand is an important reflexive quality our respondents needed to develop to be able to position themselves successfully as professionals in their sectors.

It makes a major difference whether your background can serve as an 'extra' that helps to advance your career, or if it becomes the reason for being confined to some sort of 'ethnic niche'. At the same time, the cases above (and other chapters in this volume) also show that it helps to see this as a *strategic process that develops over time*: Eray Dogruel felt that he did not have much choice but to begin his professional life as a 'Turkish lawyer', but this was no more than a stepping-stone towards becoming a lawyer for Berlin's new diverse business world; Esra Topal had never put any particular emphasis on her Turkish background, but was happy to make use of it when it offered her the opportunity to boost her career at the bank she had been working for; Acun Arslan clearly separates the two fields of his professional activities: his 'migrant background' is not supposed to be of any relevance to his job at a Belgian broadcasting company, but it was the starting point for setting up a publishing house for 'second-generation literature'; Azize Kaya became a teacher, because she liked teaching and was good at it – she was also not recruited because of her 'migrant background' or Turkish language skills. Yet, as her middle-class school became increasingly diverse, she slowly grew into becoming a role model for girls from immigrant families, and this had an effect on how she perceives herself and the role her background plays in her profession. This strategy works because it reverses the argument of exclusion and provides a good argument for demanding recognition on the basis of professional performance, not personal attributes – even when, in practice, this offers no protection against stereotyping and Othering.

Finally, bringing aspects of the 'ethnic' background into one's professional activities also offers the possibility to reconcile the two characteristic aspects of a 'second-generation experience' mentioned above: feeling 'at home' in the mainstream while remaining loyal to one's family origins. A teacher of Turkish background does not make a special connection to pupils and families of Turkish background because she feels 'Turkish' – which is simply not relevant here –, but because it *makes sense* and fills a gap within the teaching staff at her school. The 'Turkish lawyer' has predominantly Turkish clients, because it was the most efficient strategy for starting his business, but not because it gives him a special sense

of socio-cultural belonging. The publisher specialized in 'second-generation literature' because he wanted to give authors the opportunity to *escape* the confines of the expectations related to their 'background' and the concept of 'migrant literature', a contradiction that is due to the context, not to identifications.

3.4.4 Similarities in Professional Fields Across Countries

The analysis of the three categories of belonging reveals quite a degree of complexity and differences across the four presented examples. At the same time, there is a high level of *consonance* across the cases and contexts when considering two aspects. The first aspect is the low relevance of country-differences, which is particularly striking when we consider the frequently demonstrated large differences across countries, especially in educational systems and the ways in which the transition to the labour market is organized (Crul et al. 2012b; Crul & Schneider, 2010). We presume that this is partly due to the fact that differences in education have the most impact in secondary education, while higher education brings a lot of convergence again. This is certainly true for the legal profession and its social prestige, despite broad differences between judicial systems. This also applies to other sectors, albeit probably to a lesser degree: becoming a teacher or a banker may require different formal qualifications and institutional trajectories in different countries, but the jobs themselves, their social prestige, 'corporate cultures' and career development within them show quite similar characteristics across European countries.

At the same time, the 'second-generation experience' is, in principle, also very similar: the starting position in immigrant families from Turkey, in which parents overwhelmingly had very low educational capital, but relatively stable industrial jobs and similar ambitions. The latter is described as an important positive factor for successful educational and professional trajectories in all the national Pathways projects.[11] The numbers of second-generation individuals who succeeded in secondary education are very different when comparing Sweden and Belgium, the Netherlands and Germany (see Crul et al., 2012a), but the challenges of (and obstacles to) finding one's pathway into professional positions and the following steps nevertheless seem to have been quite similar.

[11] In this regard, it is particularly interesting how frequently mothers in particular were reported to have transferred their own frustrated educational dreams to their daughters.

3.4.5 The Pragmatic Dimensions of Self-Definitions

The second aspect of consonance across countries in the overall sample refers to ways of 'negotiating' the two big 'ethno-national' categories of identification that are constantly being forced on immigrant children in terms of mutual exclusiveness: being 'Turkish' and being 'Belgian', 'Dutch', 'German' or 'Swedish'. As described above, research on immigrant children's identities has tended to juxtapose these two categories and presuppose some sort of linear opposition between 'ethnic' and 'national' identification which, at least in theory, offers two extreme options: (a) pursuing 'total assimilation' into the non-immigrant 'white' part of society, combined with a denial of (the relevance of) their 'ethnic' background; (b) declaring exclusive belonging to the 'ethnic community' and maintaining social and professional relations only within this community.

While these two options may appear coherent and probably even 'attractive' because they seem to show fewer incoherencies, very few respondents in the overall sample adhered to them. On the contrary, 'hybrid' identifications that are neither 'coherent' nor univocal are a much better reflection of what is characteristic of the 'second- generation experience' in all four countries mentioned in the case studies above. Less exclusively defined identifications offer more 'liquid' options (cf. Bauman, 2000; Spyrou, 2019) for self-positionings that can be adapted to a wide range of situations and contexts. In this way, 'being Turkish' may be an obvious self-ascription while *simultaneously* being of practically no everyday significance.

The portraits above illustrate that there needs to be no direct correlation between social practice and identities: Esra Topal wanted to play basketball in Turkey without ever really having felt the need to be part of 'the Turkish community' in Sweden. Acun Arslan denies the relevance of his family background as a category of wider relevance, but he publishes books written by second-generation authors (not restricted to those of Turkish background) to let them express their individual voice. Being contradictory and leaving things open or undefined could be interpreted as a sort of 'discursive clumsiness', but it can also be seen as a particularly creative way of widening the space for situation- and context-specific self-definitions. Eray Dogruel sharply analyses (and somewhat suffers from) the fact that his actual possibilities for *self*-defining his identity reveals a depressing lack of options (Woodward, 2004), but he has created a private and professional environment for himself that makes this almost irrelevant in his everyday work and private life. In Azize Kaya's case it is the combination of a protective working environment and the 'comfort' of a diverse local community that provides sufficient ground for unambiguously feeling 'at home'.

This is also relevant in the negotiations around professional identities. By far most of the respondents in the Pathways projects in the different countries are successful in 'non-ethnic' mainstream institutions or organizations. Yet, local and national contextual factors can make a difference here – to mention just two examples: becoming a 'Turkish lawyer' is only an option if there is a sufficiently large community to provide clients – which is certainly the case in most German cities

and even smaller towns, but not necessarily all over Norway; teachers in the Netherlands can actually opt to work for a 'Turkish' or 'Muslim School', while this option is much more limited for teachers in Germany and Sweden. Yet, at the same time, the 'Turkish lawyer' in Berlin can only perform his tasks efficiently, if he is, above all, a *good lawyer* who wins court cases or successfully facilitates deals between Turkish and non-Turkish business partners; teachers at Dutch 'Muslim Schools' still have to teach the national curriculum, and they do this so that their pupils can become successful in mainstream Dutch society, not within some 'ethnic niche'.

However, there is an interesting tension here: on the one hand, and as mentioned above, the respondents' background and 'cultural intimacy' (Michael Herzfeld) with language and communication can serve as a special additional qualification to cater for a specific clientele – as a lawyer for clients of Turkish background, as a teacher who knows the pupils' home language, as a publisher for second-generation literature and so on. On the other hand, this only works because their clientele is also part of the mainstream society, e.g. as pupils in mainstream schools, as entrepreneurs on the domestic market, or as authors within a national or regional literary context. And they themselves also acquired their formal and specific qualifications as *mainstream* professionals: they went to regular schools and regular higher education institutions, and made their transition into their professions via mainstream pathways.[12]

The general political and media discourse in all European countries presupposes a mutual incompatibility between the two major 'ethno-national' labels that – especially – second-generation individuals are connected to.[13] A very common strategy among our respondents to deal with this presumed 'incompatibility' was to distinguish between a 'private Turkish' and a public or professional 'national' Self. We interpret this as a way to reconcile both aspects and to more easily allow the claim of being the sole author of one's self-definitions.

3.4.6 Intersections

Obviously, the question of belonging and place is not limited to 'ethnic' and/or 'national' identities. Since all our respondents are 'social climbers', there are issues that are more a question of social than cultural background. As Sennett and Cobb (1977) described, 'social climbers' never remain unaffected by the fact that their social mobility is almost automatically accompanied by changes of habitus in the Bourdieu'an sense (1984). Their predominantly middle-class working

[12] This also applies to those rather few respondents who studied specializations connected to their 'ethno-cultural' background, such as the Turkish language or Islamic Theology in the case of teacher students.

[13] It should be kept in mind that first-generation immigrants also generally develop a dual sense of belonging over time, if they stay for decades and have family relations in both countries.

environments and financial possibilities exert an influence on their cultural preferences and social networks. At the same time, living a typical middle-class life and life-style is the visible fulfilment of the dream of success that in many cases had inspired their parents' migration decision and their own educational ambitions. This leads to a number of 'bridging' strategies and efforts directed in particular towards their parents and other family members (cf. Schneider & Lang, 2014), which may include a preference for staying in their local home communities or, at least, preferring mixed neighbourhoods over predominantly 'white' ones (Lang & Schneider, 2017) – which is actually contrary to what substantial parts of the urban and migration literature had expected for a long time (cf. Tran et al., 2012). Several 'second-generation social climbers' whom we interviewed, as the example of Azize Kaya above illustrates, also engage in activities that 'serve' the community or 'pay back' for their own 'privilege' of having made it (cf. Rezai et al., 2015).

A rather surprising absence in the portraits and the analysis above is *religion*. There is empirical evidence for a correlation between religious feelings in the second generation of Turkish origin and school segregation, social exclusion, and a lack of career opportunities (Çelik, 2015; Crul et al., 2013; Phalet et al., 2012). Yet, the exact mechanisms behind this correlation are not clear: does religiosity have a hampering effect on educational ambitions which makes the successful less likely to be religious? Or is it the other way around: people with fewer educational opportunities and professional career perspectives in society are more likely to seek comfort in religious belief and practices, or to continue family traditions in this regard? There are, of course, also numerous religious persons who become successful and there are successful individuals who are actively engaged in the leadership of religious associations also in the group of respondents of Turkish origin in the Pathways projects in the different countries. Moreover, the described statistical correlation is not equally expressive in all countries, as the underlying issue is regularly not a binary opposition between religious and not religious, but rather between different degrees of religiosity. At the same time, 'visible religiosity' in particular may influence possibilities for entering specific professional fields and career development within them: women who wear headscarves, for example, will still find it harder to find a teaching position in a secular state school or to be accepted into a corporate law firm with a rigid dress code, than they would if their religious beliefs were only made visible by an avoidance of alcohol and ham sandwiches (see also Lettinga & Saharso, 2014). Probably because of this diversity of reasons, religion was not a major issue in the interviews in all four countries – although contacting religious associations had been part of the sampling strategy in several countries: in Germany, for example, a network of Muslim academics of mostly Turkish background helped us to find and contact potential interviewees, and some respondents, especially in the Netherlands, had connections to the so-called 'Gülen-movement' which is particularly engaged in the fields of education, business and interreligious dialogue.

Another intersectional category of interest is *gender*. Once again, we can see a discrepancy here: on the one hand, there are mainstream expectations that it is more difficult for girls to free themselves from family pressure to marry and become mothers rather than pursuing a long educational pathway in order to gain access to

a high-profile professional career. On the other hand, for quite some years, girls have been overrepresented in educational tracks that result in better qualifications and they also obtain better grades than their male peers (Crul & Schneider, 2009). It is certainly true that in conservative and traditionalist families, young women are under more pressure than men of the same age to stay close to the family and fulfil social expectations regarding gender roles. This forces them to be even more inventive and creative in developing strategies of bridging and compromise, such as studying at a university near their home town and living with their parents until graduation; marrying early, but postponing pregnancy; choosing a partner from the community, but with similar ambitions and viewpoints about professional ambitions – to mention just a few examples. We can also observe that the higher-educated daughters in our samples were often the younger siblings, profiting not only from elder sisters and brothers who had followed a more traditional pathway, but also from their help with school matters and sometimes even financial support during their studies. Finally, as mentioned above, we can also observe a special relationship between a number of our successful female respondents and their mothers who unconditionally support their daughters' careers, because that was their dream when they were young – a dream that was either forbidden to them or beyond their financial means.

3.5 Conclusions

Context and situational factors play a central role in identity constructions because, as observed above, definitions of belonging depend as much on external ascriptions as on self-definitions and how their 'legitimacy' is perceived in social interaction. This is what makes Othering so daunting for those affected by it: it represents not only a moment of exclusion, but also a demonstration of powerlessness with regard to one's very self-definitions. These moments can moreover potentially occur at almost any time and place, thus also in places and situations which belong to the 'core parts' of a person's social life – such as school, the neighbourhood and the workplace.

Some of our respondents were fortunate enough to grow up in a village or neighbourhood and attend schools in which their 'ethnic background' was not entirely irrelevant, but was also not seen as an issue or problem. Some of them have been lucky enough to find a workplace where their 'background' is either not relevant or, if an issue was ever made of it, management and/or colleagues provided explicit backing and solidarity – as in the case of Azize Kaya. Heavy and traumatic experiences of discrimination are clearly exceptional in the wider sample across countries, but this may indicate two different things: it could mean that such experiences are indeed rather exceptional, but it could also be an effect of 'sampling on the dependent variable', in the sense that it is difficult to achieve success if the institutional and psychological hurdles erected by social discrimination are insurmountable. What we can say on the basis of the sample is that, however positive or unburdened

our respondents' biographical experiences have been, their 'background' is never *not* an issue – the main question is whether they manage to 'keep the agency' with them and make it an asset rather than a disadvantage.

Another element of convergence across the different national contexts and idiosyncrasies in Europe is that mainstream discourses are still basically centred around the juxtaposition of 'natives' vs. 'migrants'. This juxtaposition fundamentally entails an underlying 'habitus of monoculturalism'[14] that entails a deep scepticism towards hybrid forms of cultural expressions and 'interculture' (Terkessidis, 2010). This position sees the influences of several cultures and languages as a 'zero-sum game' which converts bilingual or even multi-lingual backgrounds into a problem rather than a precondition for effective communication in increasingly diverse societies (cf. Schneider, 2001; Crul et al., 2013). The juxtaposition only works on the basis of an *ethnic* definition of national belonging, i.e. putting *descent* as the prime principle for defining a person's belonging to the Nation and making use of visible (and culturally stereotyped) criteria – especially names, 'race' and (religious) dress codes. The main problem of these definitions of *Self and Other* in the 'imagination of national community' (Anderson, 2006) is the denial of a dynamic of demographic, cultural and political change. It is this denial that ensures that labels such as 'migration background' have an exclusionary effect on the *majority* of urban youth in the vast majority of larger Western European cities even today. Second-generation professionals may fully identify with the society they were born into, they may speak the national and local language just like anyone else, and they may fully subscribe to everyday youth, leisure or corporate culture – but it will never be enough to guarantee full belonging and institutional protection against racism and discrimination.[15]

The common thread in the four portraits above is that they represent a range of individual strategies (cf. Waldring et al., 2018) for navigating the very similar challenges of 'potential Othering' and claiming a place and environment where they can belong and feel at home. Most of them experience this as largely unproblematic in their everyday lives, not least because they have learned to deal with this from an early age onwards. Yet, this empirical experience does not have a 'language': there are no well-established discursive conventions that would adequately express the simultaneousness and/or hybridity of actual feelings of belonging in the second or even third generation.[16]

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[14] We borrow this slightly amended expression from Ingrid Gogolin's pioneering study on the "monolingual habitus" of German schools (Gogolin, 2008).

[15] Today, this discourse about the "immigrant threat" (Lucassen, 2005; cf. Chavez, 2013) even extends to immigration countries such as the USA, Australia or Brazil which used to have a much more pragmatic and 'relaxed' attitude towards immigration and the demographic normality of 'hyphenated identities' (Çağlar, 1997). The corresponding rhetoric basically follows the ethno-nationalist model of right-wing populism in Europe (see also Hirsch, 2018 for the British case).

[16] Cf. Waldring et al., 2014; it is important to note that much of this also applies to the quite stereotypical representations of 'Turkishness'. Respondents make use of the label 'Turkish', but this label offers practically no room for hybrid or hyphenated definitions. Therefore, there is very frequently an emphasis on the heterogeneity within the population of origin in Turkey and a distanc-

Some respondents therefore engage in narratives that emphasize their success and pathway mainly as an *individual achievement* (Konyali & Keskiner, 2018) – which is true in several regards: without a strong personality and personal determination it used to be very difficult for children from working-class families to make their way into higher education and well-paid professional jobs; moreover, many respondents look back on their hard work and the need to be self-reliant from a very early age onwards. The narrative of individual achievement suggests that they are equipped with the necessary means for overcoming any obstacles and difficulties they may encounter in the future, which is certainly a very valid and useful basic stance. But it also tends to ignore the systemic and structural mechanisms behind the relative exceptionality of their success stories and – not in the least – the considerable degree of luck or coincidence involved, especially with regard to the important role of 'key persons', such as relatives, neighbours, or teachers who took care of them at crucial transition points.

As the following chapters show, the professional sector-specific 'socialization mechanisms' exert an interesting mediating role as it is in the workplace that the co-existence and situation-specific relevance of 'ethnic' and social backgrounds can best be observed. And it is in work relationships where the paradoxical ambiguity of these background factors – being relevant, but also irrelevant at the same time – have best developed a productive relationship. Our respondents want to be judged upon their professional performance, but they do not mind making use of their 'second-generation specific' cultural and social capital if it helps them to advance. Sometimes, this relationship to their background seems rather instrumental and functional to their aim to succeed, but it can also be a way to reconcile or bring together the 'two worlds' that they grew up in and which social and media discourses still represent as being widely separated.

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