

Chapter 6

Identifications in Social Contexts.

‘I Am... Who I Am...’



Why do second-generation Moroccan-Dutch and Turkish-Dutch climbers identify as they do in various situations? How do social contexts and feelings of belonging affect their ethnic and national self-identifications, both in coethnic and in interethnic contexts?

The discussion in Chap. 5 about the ethnic (and national) identifications of the higher-educated second-generation Moroccan Dutch and Turkish Dutch showed that the participants in some parts of the interview reflect on their identification as autonomous and static. However, when participants tell their life stories—when relating anecdotes and recounting situations—their identifications are far from static and autonomous, but are related to the context. This chapter explores how the participants come to identify in certain ways in specific situations. Based on the in-depth interviews, this chapter explores the positioning of the second-generation climbers in various contexts. How do they reflect on their relations with social others? How do external demands and ascriptions influence feelings of belonging? How are these feelings of belonging related to their self-identification in specific contexts? I compare the participants’ stories to the stories of social climbers with ethnic-Dutch backgrounds in other studies (Brands 1992; Matthys 2010). This comparison sheds light on the relevance of ‘ethnicity’ as an interpretative frame for the ethnic-minority climbers.

As discussed in Chap. 3, interviews are reconstructions, in hindsight, in a particular context and interview setting. What can be explored is not what ‘really’ happened, but how interview participants recount their experiences during the interview. For some themes, the fact that stories are reconstructions requires extra reflection. This is less the case for themes that involve less interpretational work, such as for example, themes that are more factual or less personally or politically charged.

Social contexts of ethnic minorities are often divided into ‘ingroup’ (coethnic people) and ‘outgroup’ (ethnic-majority people and people with other ethnic-minority backgrounds). As I explained in Chap. 2, these labels suggest that rela-

tions with coethnics are strong and are characterized by agreement and consonance, while interethnic relations are weak and characterized by difference and dissonance. Although I do not adopt the assumptions that coethnic relations are necessarily consonant and interethnic relations are necessarily dissonant, the structure of the chapter reflects the divide between ethnic 'ingroup' (coethnic contexts) and ethnic 'outgroup' (interethnic contexts, which are dominated by ethnic-majority people). One of this chapter's goals of is to explore whether these terms are valuable for understanding the participants' experiences.

The empirical data suggest another relevant divide: that between one's childhood and one's adulthood. I discuss these contexts and phases separately, starting with the coethnic spheres in the participants' youth, in which parents appear to play the biggest role (Sect. 6.1). The second section focuses on the interethnic spheres in their youth: their school and neighborhood (Sect. 6.2). I proceed to consider relations with coethnics in their adult lives (Sect. 6.3). The fourth and largest section shows how the participants move in interethnic settings in their adult lives (Sect. 6.4). I discuss how the participants perceive the 'Dutch' climate in general and how they position themselves in concrete social interactions at their daily work places.

In all four sections, I first describe how the participants experienced their social relations, followed by a discussion of the most common individual responses to situations of dissonance. When the stance of the individual and the social other diverge, the individual needs to deal with this dissonance; for example, when the other has divergent behavioral standards or when the other ascribes a certain label against one's will. Based on the empirical data, I identify four responses that vary in balance between meeting one's autonomous wishes and meeting one's need for belonging and acceptance. These responses or strategies are: conforming, convincing, concealing, and contesting.

The chapter has two concluding sections. One contains a reflection on the impact of various dimensions (Sect. 6.5). I show how social mobility, ethnic background, gender, generation, and religion seem to influence one's positioning and identification in social contexts. The last section discusses the results and their implications (Sect. 6.6). I show the relevance of acknowledging both external pressures and individual agency. I furthermore argue that thinking in ethnic 'ingroup' and 'outgroup' is misleading and that the analytical toolkit as described in Chap. 2 lacks a valuable conceptual tool.

6.1 Coethnic Sphere in Youth. Parents and Others

Three categories of coethnic actors emerged from the stories about the participants' childhoods: parents, a local coethnic community, and coethnic peers, including siblings.

Social Relations

Parents

As we have seen in Esra's story in Chap. 1, Esra recounted a strict upbringing. Her parents placed high priority on education and their children's development, which is why they moved to another neighborhood when the children entered primary school. Homework was prioritized over household tasks. Esra recalls that her father once stood up for her education and challenged other Turkish fathers, who were more protective of their daughters and did not allow them to pursue higher education. At the same time, her parents were not involved in school and school choice in more practical ways. Her father envisioned her to be a doctor, but also would not allow her to live by herself or attend a university of her choosing. This was so inconceivable that she knew better than to ask. Esra's alternative preference was a university at a distance that allowed her to stay at home. This university was not the one that her father had in mind, which was the nearest, so this still formed a challenge. She took up this challenge, and after endless attempts to make him understand the benefits of her choice, she finally got her father on board. She also convinced him to allow her to marry the partner of her choice.

Looking back, Esra experienced her youth as oppressing because she was not allowed to participate in social events. This forced her to grow up in relative isolation. When she sought permission to go on a visit or trip, this was denied. One time she forcefully confronted her mother, and was finally allowed to go on this school trip—but ultimately her mother's lack of support led Esra miss the event. Sometimes, Esra's actions were clandestine, such as visiting the cinema during school hours. Her marriage formed a means to escape this strict control.

Most participants describe relatively strict upbringings, even though not all parents were as rigid as Esra's. There is a spectrum, ranging from Esra's and Imane's oppressing childhoods to the more permissive upbringings of Hind (who was allowed to go to school parties) and Berkant (who was encouraged by his parents to participate in all kinds of social events). None of the parents were indifferent; all employed some kinds of control (which might have been crucial for the achieved social mobility, as suggested by Portes et al. 2009).¹ The stories paint pictures of relatively strict parents with stringent ideas about how their children should behave. Often, this was framed in terms of being a 'good' 'Moroccan', 'Turk' or 'Muslim'.

The participants explain that parental demands to behave as a good 'Moroccan', 'Turk' or 'Muslim', were combined with high expectations of their children's educational and professional careers. With a few exceptions, the participants' parents urged their children—including their daughters—to attain high education levels. Parents valued education and expressed high expectations regarding their children's future professions as they had migrated to the Netherlands primarily with this in mind. Many parents envisioned their children becoming doctors or lawyers. Parents pro-

¹That having stern parents is crucial for upward mobility is disputed by Stepick and Stepick (2010). In reference to Nicholas, Stepick and Dutton Stepick (2008), they argue that not only upwardly mobile immigrant children have strict parents, but that children across the entire achievement spectrum do so.

vided financial support for books, and many relieved their children of household chores or paid work that interfered with homework.

However, most parents did not offer additional support. Their knowledge of the education system was inadequate to guide their children. Their meager Dutch language abilities discouraged many parents from meeting teachers for regular updates about their children. Other parents, particularly fathers—whose language skills often surpassed those of the mothers—were too busy working to be involved in school issues. Many parents prevented their children from attending universities that required leaving the home and living somewhere else. This restriction applied to many (but not all) female participants as well as to some of the male participants.

Parental strictness was not only about explicit permission and prohibition. Karim experienced pressure from his parents in a more indirect, but no less influential way. He did not comply with their norms for behaving in a certain way, as a 'good Muslim' and 'good Moroccan'—that is, regular praying, visiting the mosque, abstaining from having intimate relationships, and participating in social events outside the family or school setting. He felt that his behavior led to parental disappointment and rejection:

Like I just said, many Moroccans did not see me as Moroccan. They think I'm TOO alternative. They think I'm totally lost, 'satanic' (...). So, my father urged me: 'You need to visit the mosque more frequently, you should cut your hair, you should wear neat clothes, etcetera, etcetera'. Well... I didn't do that. The reaction I got was: 'If you don't do that, you are not a real Moroccan', you know. And you're not a good Muslim. So, that made me think: Why would I even try being a good Muslim and a good Moroccan? I cannot... kind of... live up to it ANYWAY... (Karim)

Not all participants labeled the stringent rules of their youth as dissonant and oppressive. Aysel was taken out of school as a teenager to help her mother at home, but as she looks back, she emphasizes that she never experienced this as limiting or coercive. In those days, she explained that she considered this as simply 'self-evident': it was something that you 'just did', as the oldest daughter who was going to marry and have children either way. Like Aysel, Bouchra was raised in a rather orthodox religious family, but she does not describe the strict rules during her youth as oppressive. Reflecting on her youth, she explained that she did not have any wishes that conflicted with the group norms, so she did not experience any social pressure. For example, she never felt the interest to go to a discotheque. However, Bouchra did not fully internalize the rules, as she mentions that this conformism was partly a 'coping strategy'. Her use of this term implies that there is a less intrinsic and more instrumental side to her conformism—the desire for warmth and acceptance from her parents and other coethnics.

These critical reflections should not lead us to underestimate participants' emotional bonds with their parents. In their stories, the participants often mentioned the emotional responsibility they had always felt towards their parents, even though their life worlds were miles apart. Many participants had sensed the hardships their parents had endured through their migration trajectory. They were close to their parents, as they had always helped their parents navigate the unfamiliar Dutch society they had entered. All participants witnessed their parents' diligence and sacrifices—all for the futures of their children. They explain that they felt a responsibility to succeed and

not to fail in return. They wanted to make their parents proud and not disappoint them. (That these memories are possibly influenced by the participants' current knowledge and bond with their parents, does not change the relevance of these stories about their former and/or current bonds with their parents.) Agius Vallejo and Lee, who observe a similar attitude among Latino Americans, call such stories the 'immigrant narrative of struggle and sacrifice' (2009, p. 19). Bouchra concisely illustrates this point:

My parents made so many sacrifices for us that I kept thinking: I don't want it to be in vain.
(Bouchra)

Siblings and Coethnic Peers

Childhood relations with coethnic peers and siblings were recounted in more positive terms than relations with parents and the coethnic community. Many participants assigned their siblings an important role, both in practical and emotional terms. They mentioned their siblings as friends and role models, offering support and friendly competition. A few participants grew up in families whose primary social environment was the coethnic community. For them, coethnic children were their closest friends (only Esra mentioned she did not feel closely connected to them). This was generally the case in Turkish-Dutch families. Moroccan-Dutch families apparently were not part of equally cohesive communities. For the Moroccan-Dutch participants, coethnic peers were either absent in their youth (as their neighborhoods and schools were then still largely dominated by the ethnic majority) or coethnic peers were part of the general category of classmates and neighbors. Most Moroccan-Dutch participants did not feel a special connection to them. On only a few occasions, they mentioned coethnic peers as special friends who understood the ethnic-minority situation and formed a buffer from discrimination.

Coethnic Community

The broader coethnic community did not emerge prominently from the interviews. Coethnic adults were mentioned occasionally, mostly in an indirect and negative way. Karim tells that his parents transmitted to their children the norms and pressures of their acquaintances from the mosque. Esra recalled that her father's friends disapproved of the fact that she was allowed to study. Ahmed's parents endured fierce pressure from coethnics when Ahmed left town to study in another city. Some participants remember the local coethnic community as a supportive home. Bouchra describes the coethnic community as a 'stable bastion' consisting of people who shared her norms and habits, providing warmth and trust. Adem explains that 'Turkish' people simply had always comprised his direct social environment.

Reflection and Responses (To Parental Expectations)

Contrary to the connotation of 'ethnic ingroup', participants' relations with coethnics in their childhood and youth appear far from only consonant. Relations with parents and coethnics were not described solely in terms of agreement and belonging, but in a mix of consonant and dissonant terms. This ambiguity parallels other studies on second-generation Moroccan Dutch and Turkish Dutch, such as Buitelaar (2009) and De Jong (2012). Even though all participants' stories radiated love and respect for

parents, disagreement was a major theme. The participants' stories suggest that they sometimes felt some sort of struggle to belong, to be accepted by parents and other coethnics. They felt the (sometimes pressing) demand to succeed in educational and professional terms, which needed balancing with being a good 'Moroccan', 'Turk' or 'Muslim'. Parents shaped the possibilities for their children by explicitly promoting or prohibiting certain behaviors, but also by granting or withholding esteem and appreciation. Parental influence was also more indirect when children, out of love or respect, adapted their behaviors to protect their parents from disappointment or the scorn of other coethnics.

Most people will likely recall tensions and ambiguities in their relations with their parents during their childhood. However, these stories indicate that, in line with the Bourdieu's thinking, social climbers experience particular challenges that spring from their social mobility. The parental encouragement to succeed is paralleled with a fear that the children will be alienated from their family. This experience is also described by native Dutch social climbers, who formulate alienation in terms of class instead of ethnicity (Matthys 2010, p. 85). Lower-class ethnic-Dutch parents emphasize the value of working class skills and morals and warn their children against 'unrealistic' expectations. As a parent of one of Matthys' respondents put it—'you can't make a silk purse out of a sow's ear' (*'als je voor een dubbeltje geboren wordt, dan word je nooit een kwartje'*) (ibid., p. 98). The participants refer to the feared alienation primarily in ethnic terms. They were pressured to stay 'good' Moroccans, Turks, or Muslims, and to avoid becoming 'too Dutch'.

For the participants, the challenges do not only stem from their social mobility. Already from a young age, before the process of educational mobility, they had to navigate multiple fields. Being children of Moroccan and Turkish immigrants who were unfamiliar with Dutch language and society and who were slightly fearful of the pull of Dutch culture for their children, they continuously shifted between the field of their parental home and the field of the school and the neighborhood, where the children had different lifestyles. They experienced extra-wide gaps between parental norms and the norms that were common in the outside world, and between parental wishes and parental resources. In addition, the participants felt a relatively strong sense of responsibility towards their parents to succeed because of the immigration experience and the immigrant narrative of struggle and sacrifice.

When divergent behavioral preferences exist between children and parents and other coethnics, this situation of dissonance requires a response. The stories demonstrate various ways of dealing with their personal preferences and the diverging parental expectations. Participants recount various approaches for dealing with the mix of parental encouragements, demands, and prohibitions in combination with their own feelings of respect, responsibility, and love. The stories show that how individuals act in situations of dissonance not only depends on their own autonomous preference and the preferences of the social other, but also on feelings of belonging and the appreciation of the social bond. The need for recognition—regarded by Bourdieu as a principal human driver—also emerges as an important driver from the participants' stories. From the interviews, four kinds of responses emerge, which I label 'conform', 'convince', 'conceal', and 'contest'. These are characterized by

varying balances between one's own autonomous preferences and the wish to preserve social bonds. These strategies are very similar to the strategies Van der Hoek identifies among adolescent second-generation Moroccan-Dutch and Turkish-Dutch women: acceptance, communication, deceit, and rebellion (2006, p. 78).

(1) *Conform*. One way to react to dissonance is to conform to the stance of the other. Conformism is a way to avoid conflict, which can threaten the social relation. One can fully internalize the other's stance, resolving the entire disagreement,² but conformism can also entail one's obedience in terms of behavior. An example is when Esra decided that she would not even ask if she could study at a university that would require her to live away from the family because this seemed futile. Bouchra also referred to a strategy of conformism when she referred to sharing the norms of her coethnics as partly a 'coping strategy'. Apparently, in these cases, feelings of belonging are more important than the participants' personal wishes. When one wants to protect social relations and avoid threats to one's acceptance and belonging, conformism is the safest response.

(2) *Convince*. Here people try and convince the other by explanation. This was Esra's approach when she persisted in explaining her preferences for a specific university and for a specific husband to her father. Convincing was Aysel's main approach during a later stage of her life when she already had children and started pursuing a professional career. The bond with her family was important to Aysel and her main aim during her path of social mobility was to keep her family close and to prevent alienation. This wish made her continuously try to make them understand and to 'take them along' in her trajectory of personal development. As other studies with a stronger focus on the adolescent period show, the fear among parents and others that social mobility leads to alienation or immoral behavior can be eased by explicit ethnic or religious identifications (De Jong 2012; De Koning 2008; Ketner 2010). Such identifications, both in terms of label and behavior, can convince parents and other coethnics that the child is a good 'Moroccan', 'Turk' or 'Muslim'. This reassurance that the child is doing fine can increase trust and expand the child's freedom. The strategy of convincing is another approach to avoid confrontations and to protect social relations and belonging.

(3) *Conceal*. Another way to pursue one's independent wishes is to hide the behavior that the other does not appreciate. This happened when Esra pretended to go to school and secretly visited the cinema, and when Hind did not tell her parents that she was seeing a boyfriend. According to De Jong, Moroccan-Dutch students often use this strategy, which is based on the apparently broadly accepted principle in Moroccan-Dutch families that 'what you don't know does not exist' (2012, p. 107). In this approach, one does not comply with the wishes of the other, but nonetheless tries to avoid conflict. However, the risk of being exposed forms a possible threat to one's belonging.

²Buitelaar (2009: 205, 209) shows that internalization, even though it might resolve tension with social others, can result in internal friction, as internalization can result in a moral dilemma and mixed feelings.

(4) *Contest*. One can opt for open conflict and contest the other's view by assertively pressing one's point or by openly choosing one's own path. This approach is most risky in terms of belonging. One runs the risk of disapproval and rejection, as we saw in Karim's quote above. Another example is Ahmed, who decided to go live in another city against the wishes of his parents, who actually adapted to this situation quite quickly. A participant in Buitelaar's study illustrates the possible consequences of this approach. After this participant finished her studies, she went to live on her own to enhance her job prospects—apparently against her father's will: 'I had to hand in my keys. From then on, I was simply a visitor who had to ring the doorbell. He emphasized that he didn't want to see me again' (2009, pp. 208–209, translation MS).

These four strategies for dealing with dissonance vary in levels of autonomy and belonging. The strategies are characterized by varying balances between fulfillment of one's personal ambitions on the one hand and the protection of one's social bonds on the other. Pektaş-Weber (2006) and Buitelaar (2009) observe searches for a similar balance among Muslim and Moroccan-Dutch women. This range of strategies shows that behavioral expectations of others, even when these others are parents, do not necessarily deprive individuals of personal agency. Even in the face of authoritative parents or a cohesive community, individuals often still have various responses at their disposal.

6.2 Interethnic Sphere in Youth. School and Neighborhood

School and neighborhood were the main interethnic spheres in which the participants moved during childhood. We will see that, just like in the coethnic sphere, the social relations in these environments cannot be solely characterized by either dissonance or consonance. We will also see that in situations of dissonance, or exclusion, one response seemed to dominate among the participants: try to conceal the dimension of difference.

Social Relations

In all interviews, the impact of feeling like an outsider among ethnic-majority peers was a striking theme. At the time, when the participants grew up, their schools and neighborhoods were still dominated by the ethnic majority. Their ethnic-minority backgrounds made most participants feel somewhat 'different' from their ethnic-Dutch peers in a negative way. Most recall that feeling like an outsider fostered shame and a lack of self-confidence. Some explain that this experience strengthened their ambition.

In many cases, participants felt different as a result of active exclusion. Some were severely bullied. Others were occasionally labeled as the Other, for example when neighborhood children called them names. Many participants voiced their frustration about differential treatment at the end of primary school. Children of Moroccan and Turkish immigrants often received a lower secondary school placement advising

than equal-performing ethnic-majority peers. Even though this did not apply to the majority of the participants, it was frequently mentioned in an agitated manner, suggesting that these practices had a big impact.

Feeling different was not always solely the result of active exclusion. Many participants describe how they felt different and isolated because their parents did not allow them to join in social events such as school outings or because they were not allowed to invite friends to their homes. Some felt different because their ethnic-Dutch peers did not share their life worlds. Imane explained that every year when she had to introduce herself at the start of the new school year, she felt utterly ashamed to say that she had no fewer than eight siblings. In addition, she felt an unbridgeable gap because of her aberrant clothes, bags, and books, and because she did not share her classmates' experiences of going out and having dates. Feeling different also related to differences in personal development; for instance, as a child Said was very conscious of his disadvantage regarding the knowledge and cultural capital that was relevant at school. Some had internalized negative images about Moroccans and Turks, as the following (completely anonymized) quotes show:

At primary school, I somehow understood that, well... yes, that Moroccan and Turkish parents were illiterate, etcetera. So, I remember being VERY surprised to find out that my mother actually was able to read! Because I thought: 'What -?! You can't read, can you?!' How silly that was! Just because I had heard somewhere (not at home...) that, well, people from Morocco or Turkey cannot read and write.

You just start to wonder, because you don't see any examples, you're the first generation that attends school, you have no one preceding you – I literally remember that I wondered: 'Are those Turkish actually stupid? Are the others just right? Is it really possible that they are just right about this?' ...That you even start to CONSIDER these things!!

Not all stories are characterized by exclusion and non-belonging. Participants attending 'white' schools did not always feel different from their environment. Said, who was conscious of his disadvantaged position in primary school, reflects on his secondary school period in different ways. He says he did not feel different from his ethnic-Dutch peers in secondary school. Ahmed had always identified as very 'white' because of his 'white' environments. Aysel explained that the current issue of integration and 'foreigners' (*alloctonen*) was simply not relevant in her youth. She was just Aysel, a Turkish girl; that was all, nothing more. Hind stated that she never felt out of place; she had always had many friends of various ethnic backgrounds. She even had more friends with ethnic-Dutch backgrounds than with ethnic-minority backgrounds, partly because she had more personal freedom than most ethnic-minority girls in her surroundings. These memories are probably affected by time and place. It is hard to know what the participants really felt at that time. Nevertheless, we can conclude that in their current reconstructions, being-different forms a large theme and is attributed to various causes (more or less explicit mechanisms of exclusion). At the same time, participants have memories that are not characterized by difference.

Some participants attended schools or lived in neighborhoods with (some) children with other ethnic-minority backgrounds. A few participants mention that sharing an ethnic-minority background created an extra bond. Imane not only felt close to the Moroccan-Dutch girls, but also to Turkish-Dutch girls as they understood at least

some of her situation and protected each other against discrimination. For a while, Hind was close with a girl who was a Jehovah's Witness. It was convenient that this girl's parents were slightly stricter than other parents, just like Hind's parents. For example, they had slightly earlier curfews than most of their classmates and thus left school parties together. In many other cases, peers with other ethnic-minority backgrounds were mentioned as 'just other friends', such as Hind's Surinamese and Belgian friends.

Reflection and Responses (To 'Othering' in School or Neighborhood)

The stories reveal that, contrary to the general use of 'ethnic outgroup', interethnic social relations are not solely characterized by dissonance. Not all participants always felt different in their schools and neighborhoods, which were dominated by ethnic Dutch. Many of the participants had friends in school with ethnic-Dutch backgrounds or other ethnic-minority backgrounds. However, as we read, feeling different was a prominent theme in many accounts of primary and secondary school periods. The stories show that exclusion, either in implicit or explicit ways, often is a very negative and impactful experience. It is related to feelings of loneliness and a lack of self-confidence, as will be further discussed in Chap. 7. The stories parallel the stories of ethnic-majority climbers, who also often felt different from their classmates because of their aberrant clothes, housing, patterns of expenditure, language use, and human and cultural capital (Brands 1992).

A common reaction to dissonance in the form of feeling excluded was a response of concealing. Many participants mention that during their youth they tried to conceal the dimension of difference and hide their ethnic background. They described how they felt a deep wish to belong, to be regarded as 'normal'. They longed to be accepted as one of 'us' by their classmates and not be treated as the Other, the permanent outsider. One participant's response was to de-emphasize her Moroccan background in order to be as 'Dutch' as possible. Many participants employed such an approach in their schools and neighborhoods to avoid standing out, doing their utter best to adapt and fit in. This is also illustrated by Mustapha's quote:

At primary school, you are just busy trying to fit in. Trying to avoid standing out in a negative way – or in a positive way. That really hurt. – Yes, actually, you have always learned about your cultural background – to actually hide it somehow. (Mustapha)

This response is also observed in other immigrant groups, such as second-generation Asian Americans and Chinese British, who out of shame distanced themselves from, or even rejected, their ethnic backgrounds during their childhood and youth (Min and Kim 2000; Song 2003, pp. 211–212).

6.3 Coethnic Sphere at Present. Parents and the Next Generation

Moving to their present lives, we will see that how the participants reflect on their coethnic relationships differs from the accounts of their childhoods. The section on their peers is only brief, as this theme will be further developed in Chap. 7.

Social Relations

Parents

The participants' accounts of the current relationships with their parents focus less on dissonance than their childhood memories. Berkant strongly emphasized his appreciation of his bond with his parents. He explained how he values and loves them and how he continuously works on bridging the gap, which of course still exists. In his communication with them, he adapts to their language and worldview. After all, he is familiar with their life world, whereas they are unfamiliar with many aspects of his life. He explained that out of love, respect, and consideration, he does not confront them with issues they will never understand and therefore avoids discussing certain themes, such as his spending patterns or perspective on religion.

In the interviews, many participants raised the importance of the bonds with their parents. Most spoke lovingly about their parents. Some participants described their fathers or mothers as role models because of their endurance, strength, and solidarity with family members or their perceptiveness. This respect and appreciation is also why most participants would not say they had 'outgrown' their parents. They did not describe their parents as less intelligent or less skilled, avoiding the suggestion that parents exemplify shortcomings and failure. This might also be why several participants challenged the regular meaning of 'success' as having a high education and a high status job: to contest the implicit suggestion that people with lower education levels are failures. This is probably why Aysel reacted cynically to her selection for my study because of her higher education level, and this might be why she nuanced the relevance of education:

Apparently, I am some sort of Golden Calf. Am I? ... Did you approach your target group like: these are people who won a Golden Calf...?!!

(...) but there are also many others who are VERY capable and VERY smart – My illiterate mother, she has no diplomas... but in some respects she is much smarter than I am. Much wiser. (Aysel)

Many noted that their parents had changed over time. Esra's younger siblings had 'entirely different' parents than Esra while she was growing up. They had two 'Dutch' parents who allowed them to join in school trips. Her sister was even allowed to have a relationship with a Dutch boyfriend. Aysel's parents, who made Aysel quit school to help at home, became the biggest advocates of education for their grandchildren. Parents had become more progressive, partly as a result of the struggles with their older children and the conclusion that their children's lives had turned out well, partly because of the evaporation of the prospect of return, and partly because of the increased importance of educational qualifications.

Coethnic Community

Participants occasionally mentioned the broader coethnic community. A few participants mentioned that successful coethnics are treated with suspicion by 'the coethnic community'. People such as Rotterdam mayor Aboutaleb or rapper Ali B are cited as examples. Ethnic-minority people in prestigious positions are often not taken seriously by coethnics, as they are considered too good, too slick or too Dutch. Thus, for social climbers, the balance can be intricate, as they risk alienation or ostracism from coethnics.

While some participants seem to walk a tightrope to protect their belonging as 'successful' Moroccan Dutch or Turkish Dutch, other participants seem less inclined to adapt their behavior in order to protect their belonging among coethnics. These participants keep a certain distance to 'the coethnic community' in anticipation of receiving contempt triggered by their 'too Dutch' lifestyle or out of fear that gossip will reach their parents. These participants expect that coethnics are less modern and have nothing in common with them. Karim feels a disconnection that makes him distance himself from other Moroccan Dutch or Muslims. Aside from Karim, I primarily encountered this attitude in interviews with (some) female participants. A possible explanation is the stricter behavioral norms for women, which makes women more likely to deviate from what is considered appropriate behavior. See the telling quote of a completely anonymized female participant:

At that time, I was kind of allergic to anything Moroccan. There was this group [of Moroccan-Dutch students] – that I always avoided. I feared they would be narrow-minded and would denounce me; for example because I smoked, and because I fell for Dutch boys – and that they would pass on information about me to my parents. The Moroccan community is only a small world. I still have that, actually. I don't like this close involvement. I prefer to live more anonymously, more individually.

Not all reflections on the coethnic community were negative. Some participants described that at a later age they felt an increasing need to strengthen and develop their bonds with their ethnic background and with coethnics. They started to miss something that felt essential to them—the 'ethnic part' of themselves. This is an important theme in the interviews, which will be further discussed in Chap. 7.

Some explained that their coethnic orientation shaped their societal engagement. As the situation of the coethnic next generation is still characterized by inequality and negative ethnic stereotypes are still widespread, participants regard it as their responsibility to 'give back' and help bridge the gaps. They do voluntary work with coethnic youth, support their nieces and nephews, work in diversity management, start social initiatives, and contribute to public discussions on integration.

Coethnic Peers

Coethnic peers play a large role in the adult lives of most participants. Most have many close friends who share their ethnic background. These friends also share the participants' high education level. These coethnic, co-educated friendships form an important theme, which is further explored in Chap. 7. Siblings were only mentioned sporadically in the context of the participants' adult lives.

Reflection and Responses (and an Increased Wish to Belong)

That the participants' reflections on coethnic relationships in their current lives focused more on consonance and belonging does not mean that their worldviews and normative stances are aligned with those of their parents. Rather, the participants highly value their relationships with their parents. Much effort is taken to secure and nurture these bonds and bridge disagreements. Out of love and consideration for their parents, participants evade confrontations and discussions on divergent stances ('concealing' the dissonance), or participants conform to their parents' wishes when these are about less-essential topics, for example visiting family at religious holidays. Some participants try—to some extent—to take their parents along in their lives ('convince'). For important issues, the main strategies employed were concealing and convincing instead of conformism and confrontation, which were the strategies participants mentioned more in the context of their youth. This shift seems to be a result of their increased independence and their respect and love for their parents.

These accounts contrast with the accounts of ethnic-majority climbers. In both Dutch and international literature on the social mobility of ethnic-majority climbers (see Brands 1992; Lubrano 2004; Matthys 2010) alienation from parents and family is a major theme. In their process of social mobility, climbers outgrow their parents and 'leave' them 'behind'. One of Brands' participants described melancholically:

Some people come to equal footing with their parents, despite occasional conflicts. They can really fight. They can really have a conflict. Whereas people like me outgrow our parents, and are not even capable of having a fight anymore. There is no way back. We are not even allowed to have conflicts anymore. Even a bad relationship is beyond reach. It becomes a non-relation. (Brands 1992, p. 295, translation MS)

Interestingly, alienation from parents was not a major theme in my interviews. Although in nearly all cases there was a huge distance between the participants' life worlds and those of their parents, the participants did not describe their relationships in terms of alienation and 'leaving behind'. A possible explanation is that they did not want to speak negatively about their parents. Another explanation is that participants did not have much to say about alienation, simply because the gap with their parents has always been self-evident. As children of immigrants, they have never known otherwise; ever since they could remember, there was a gap between their life worlds and those of their parents. They had always been more socially adept than their parents, who often needed support from their Dutch-speaking children to navigate their ways through Dutch society. When I asked Berkant to reflect on this interpretation, he explained:

Yes that's true. Actually, we only continue the situation we have known since our youth. For example, when my parents joined me at school and asked ME what the teacher said. Then you were the interpreter for your parents. The relationship with your parents had always been kind of weird. From very early on, your parents were not able to help you with your homework, with your issues, they just wouldn't understand. (Berkant)

This suggests that for the second-generation immigrant climbers, the gap with their parents is not primarily a consequence of their social mobility but of their migration

history. All over the world, many immigrant children, particularly those with low-capital backgrounds, act as intermediaries for their parents from early childhood because their parents have a larger distance to society than their children (Orellana 2001; Suárez-Orozco and Suárez-Orozco 2001; Pels and De Haan 2003). Some participants even felt that their high education level and social achievements helped reduce their alienation from their parents. Their success gave them 'extra credits' and helped bridge the existing gap. Their achievements increased their parents' trust and led to an increased acceptance of their identities and their choices, contributing to a closer bond and to more leeway. In other words: their educational and professional credentials formed symbolic capital in the coethnic field. Hicham's quote illustrates this:

Look, they [my parents] saw that, since I was young, I have been concerned with issues of identity. And, since I was very young, I have also been an active Muslim. In combination with success at school, and in society, etcetera, this leads to extra praise, to let's say extra credits. This shows them that you behave differently and make different choices, while being very open about it. There is no pressure on me to change things because – especially now, but also ten years ago – they see me as someone equal to them. I think this is rather unique. Nevertheless, I see this happening more and more among the higher educated; that societal success gives you the credit that enables you to shape your identity in the ways you want. (Hicham)

Even though feelings of esteem, loyalty and gratitude are also present in the stories of ethnic-majority climbers (Matthys 2010), the stories of the minority climbers seem to radiate more esteem and pride. This could be related to the 'immigrant narrative of struggle and sacrifice' that I mentioned before; see Berkant's quote:

(...) this made me feel guilty – well... maybe that's too strong... but it gave me feelings of – well... – um – INCREDIBLE loyalty towards your parents, because, they have been tremendously DEDICATED to you. (...) I admired their attitudes; because as people without much education, who have not visited many countries – that they have this mentality to go for it and get the best out of it... That must have been really hard! Been really difficult! (Berkant)

For many participants, the bonds with their parents, coethnics and the broader coethnic community seem stronger than in their childhoods. Many of their current best friends have a coethnic background (and a high education level). Several participants are actively involved in activities that intend to support the next generation and help improve the image of Moroccan Dutch and Turkish Dutch in the Netherlands. However, relations with the coethnic community are not only described in consonant terms. Participants feel that many coethnics are less modern and experience a considerable risk of being accused of acting 'too Dutch'.

Literature on ethnic minorities helps us to further understand the complexity of belonging among coethnics. It explains why belonging to a minority community often requires a conformism that can be uncomfortable at times and why community membership simultaneously presents many benefits. It is not just ethnic majorities that think in essentialist stereotypes: ethnic-minority groups do too as thinking in stereotypes promotes intra-group cohesion and solidarity, particularly when ethnic-minority groups feel threatened (Branscombe et al. 1999; Song 2003).

These stereotypes function as behavioral scripts and as bases for judgments of ‘ethnic authenticity’ (Carter 2003). Anyone who does not comply with the norms risks being accused of ‘acting white’ (see e.g. Waters 1994) or being a ‘coconut’ (being ‘white’ on the inside), leading to condemnation or even ostracism: a denial of belonging. These scripts are often gendered and often contain downward leveling norms (Portes 1998). When the scripts are strict and there are high levels of social control, they can be very restricting, particularly when they do not correspond with the preferences of the individual or when they hamper one’s social mobility. At the same time, adherence to these scripts can provide a sense of belonging, social acceptance, unity and membership, and can offer access to family support and other resources through extrafamilial networks. It can be pleasant if you have a claim to distinctive ways of talking, dressing, interacting, eating (Song 2003, pp. 41, 54–55). Belonging to a coethnic community can contribute to a sense of self-determination and security about who you are.

6.4 Interethnic Sphere at Present. General Climate and Work

The interethnic sphere is an important sphere. This is where the impact of the Dutch integration debate is felt most. The moments when participants showed agitation and frustration were the moments when they reflected on their positions in broader society. These reflections often contained confusing ambiguities. Therefore, this section about the interethnic sphere in the participants’ current lives is the longest section of this chapter. I first describe how the participants reflect on ‘the general debate’, which they learn through the media. I then focus on how they reflect on their direct interactions with interethnic others, such as colleagues. How do the participants feel and position themselves? Just like in the discussions of the other spheres, we see also here that relationships are not only consonant or dissonant, but that how participants reflect on their positions and relationships is more nuanced. This complexity leads to puzzling paradoxes, which I try to disentangle and which appear crucial for understanding the positioning and identification of the participants in interethnic settings. This discussion uncovers the important mechanism of categorization resistance. In the second half of this section, I show that in situations of dissonance and exclusion the same four strategies I described earlier can be employed: contest, conceal, convince and conform.

The General Debate

All participants explicitly label the Dutch integration debate as exclusionary. In Chap. 4 we saw that in spite of the multiplicity of voices in politics and the media, a widespread culturalist image of ‘Moroccans’, ‘Turks’ and ‘Muslims’ has emerged. This is exactly how the participants speak about the dominant discourse, which they perceive as offensive to people with Moroccan, Turkish, or Islamic backgrounds, pushing them into second-class status. They feel that Moroccan Dutch and Turk-

ish Dutch are portrayed as subordinate and as incapable and unwilling to fit into Dutch society. The participants feel subjected to intrusive and unlawful demands. Their perception is that over time, accelerated by the events of 9/11 and the murder of Dutch columnist Van Gogh, the tone has grown increasingly harsh, and there is increasingly less tolerance for multiple identifications. They experience an imposed 'mono-identity', as one of the participants called it, and find the exclusionary discourse worrying. It pushes people away, as Karim describes:

But it happens – when you hear people speak, on television or anything, about: 'The perpetrator is a Moroccan', then... I DO feel addressed, yes. Because I know... they also talk about... about ME, you know. WITHOUT even knowing me, knowing who I am, or where I grew up... When THEY say: 'Moroccans should be treated differently', I am – for THEM I am Moroccan, you know. They will look at me like: 'You have Moroccan parents. Well, yes, you also went to university, and did so and so'. But this does not matter! It doesn't matter a fuck! ... When you have Moroccan parents, you should... – you know – ...you should integrate. You should speak the language. You should do this, you should do that, you know. And oh dear, when you... – You should be thankful in the first place, you know – thankful that you live in the Netherlands, because after all: 'We are such a civilized country. We only try to educate you, backward Moroccans, so that you will hopefully, once, also reach some level of civilization'. (Karim)

This quote illustrates that participants not only experience the debate as a rejection of their ethnic category but also as a denial of their personal belonging in the Netherlands (see also Slootman and Duyvendak 2016). They expressed their frustration with the labeling of entire social categories as problem groups. They are convinced that they do not fit the problematized definitions of Moroccan Dutch and Turkish Dutch, but they nevertheless feel addressed by these polarizing expressions. This feels extremely unjust and implies that they are not accepted as full-fledged citizens—and that they never will be, whatever they do and whatever they achieve. Based on these experiences, it is easy to understand how, as I indicated in Chap. 4, the political side of belonging influences the personal side of belonging. Politics of exclusion affect the extent to which people feel at home.

Despite the exclusionary tone of the debate as experienced by the participants, overt discrimination by random strangers did not surface as a major theme in the interviews. Only a few instances were mentioned. When this occurred, it fed anger and frustration and confirmed the idea that there is a negative social climate for immigrants and their children. Hicham describes such a moment:

(...) when you call home and your mother tells you she's been scolded and spit at, then something breaks inside. Like: Shit, please tell me this is NOT true... (Hicham)

Social Relations with Familiar Social Others

Interactions with others who are not strangers, such as colleagues, were described far more positively. Most participants described the context of their direct work (and other) environments in terms of belonging. They mentioned that they feel accepted and do not feel different in general:

(...) at my work, I just feel like a consultant. (Aysel)

For ME... I felt that everybody around me was the same... or similar. I didn't think that others had a totally... totally different life, or so. (...) I think, I easily feel at home anywhere. (...) I ALWAYS belong. (Hind)

My friends are very white. That's just a consequence of my education – As the saying goes: 'what you touch shall defile you' – It's that simple. (Ahmed)

Most stressed the fact that they never experienced discrimination in their professional careers. One participant mentioned she had to apply for a job extremely often, despite her excellent resume. However, she then immediately nuanced the interpretation that this is an example of discrimination.

Most participants have many friends with ethnic-Dutch backgrounds and various ethnic-minority backgrounds; which is a theme that will be further explored in Chap. 7.

Despite the clear emphasis on consonance and belonging, the participants' accounts also contained numerous ambiguities. In the interviews, either spontaneously or in response to my probes, 'feeling different' popped up frequently, albeit in more implicit, anecdotal ways. Below, Said talks about the relevance of his ethnic background for his professional work setting; it is revealing. Does Said feel different because of his Moroccan background or not? Does his ethnicity matter at all or is it insignificant? Does he want it to matter, or is it annoying when his ethnic background is deemed relevant?

Said: The fact that you are Moroccan does play a role, actually. I recently attended a training in London, where, two or three times, I discussed the fact that I am Moroccan. I actually highlight it all the [time] – I am just PROUD of it (laughs apologetically but affirmatively). I find it important to – I WANT to show that you can be both Moroccan and successful. I want to, very deliberately, show that these two CAN be combined. Whenever I can, I also say I am a Muslim. Whenever I can I say I celebrate the Ramadan. And whenever I can I say I regularly pray. And whenever I can I say that I... whatever – that I visit Morocco every year, for example. So, you know, I just try to make people realize: Wait, there's something wrong in that picture... To SHOW the right picture and to show that in your mind you are too black-and-white.

Said: This is very funny. It's weird. Recently, the course leader said to me at a leadership training: 'But YOU are the story! – you know. That you survive between all these partners, these solid, assertive, Dutch guys...!' This made me wonder: 'Is this really the case?' – Well, on the one hand it is true. He said: 'Was it difficult for you, to reach –' 'No', I said, 'not at ALL!' Well, but then... when you ask the same question to a woman... Yes, then it's also difficult. When you are just DIFFERENT from the average accountant. White. Bold. Grey. That you survive between them... That means something. Apparently. At the same time, many women leave the company when they have surpassed the managers' level. You see? So... is that culture then...? I'm not really like: culture... – Is this all about culture? I wanted to say: there are also many – well, ethnic Dutch who don't make it here.

Marieke: Do YOU feel different?

Said: No, I feel – That is the THING! That's why it kind of surprised me that this guy said: 'YOU are the story'. – WHAT: you are the story?? I've never had any problems or anything, here. Do I feel different? Well, no. I don't feel different at all, no. But sometimes.... Very occasionally, you can feel it. But that was in 2001, with those attacks. When people asked you: what do YOU think about these bombings? Which made me think: well, what do I think about these bombings? Yes, then you're suddenly labeled differently, because then, suddenly, you ARE this Muslim. THEN you find out – on such occasions, THEN you find

yourself thinking: Wait... I MIGHT think that I'm just a regular... well... just a regular consultant. But others obviously just see you as THAT woman. Or THAT girl. Or... THAT Moroccan for that matter. Or, whatever. That happens sometimes. That's just part of reality.

Marieke: But apparently, you do not experience this very often, because you refer to 2001. However, you also mentioned that recent training.... That you were addressed in such a way.

Said: Yes, exactly... Yes, but that is not in a negative way, because, obviously, this guy only had positive intentions.

Said: Recently, with a distant colleague – That's the thing... there is really no – This guy, he made some sort of 'joke', about Moroccans. Well, it was kind of funny – Well no, I actually didn't even like the joke (laughs). But I mean, those things happen regularly. So, I responded with a joke. Later, when I met him again, again he made a similar joke. So I jokingly said: 'Jeezz... you KEEP making the wrong jokes!' (laughs). Later, I spoke to him over the phone, about a Moroccan-Dutch colleague, who had been an entrepreneur. This guy says: 'Ha ha ha! He sure ran a shawarma place...!' (...) But for the rest, it was just a nice guy. He just doesn't understand that – well – that he makes the wrong jokes. You know, it's not always discrimination, but people just don't get it...

As I discuss below, this account is confusing because of its apparent incongruities regarding the role of ethnic background and regarding feelings of belonging and differential treatment. Many of the participants' accounts were puzzling because, like Said, they frequently seemed to contradict themselves. This surprised me, as all participants were highly reflective, particularly about topics of ethnicity and exclusion, which made it likely that they would notice (and solve) real contradictions themselves.

The analysis of the ambiguities in Said's interview and in the other interviews revealed four interesting paradoxes that appeared crucial for understanding the role of minority ethnicity in interethnic situations.

- Paradox 1: Ethnic difference, but not 'different';
- Paradox 2: Exclusion, but no 'discrimination';
- Paradox 3: Ethnic self-identification, but aversion to ethnic ascription;
- Paradox 4: Awareness, but nevertheless employment of essentialist language.

Paradox 1. Ethnic difference, but not 'different'. Said emphasized that he does not feel different from his ethnic-Dutch colleagues, which seems to imply that his ethnic background does not play a role in his professional context. At the same time, his ethnic identity appears highly relevant, as he frequently seizes the opportunity in his 'white' working environment to highlight his ethnic and religious background. This is not as incongruous as it seems. Bringing forward his Moroccan and Muslim background does not necessarily mean he is dissimilar from his ethnic-Dutch colleagues. Rather, it seems that it is the similarity in particular that makes him stress his ethnic identity and religion. Because his professional status makes him similar to his colleagues and accepted, he can show that being (partly) Moroccan and being Muslim does not matter in relevant ways. His success enables him to show that being 'Moroccan' as well as a practicing Muslim does not preclude a person from being a successful professional, fitting into the professional environment, and being oriented towards Dutch society. It makes him the right person to challenge the widespread negative stereotypes about 'Moroccans' and Muslims. The fact that he has 'proven'

himself and achieved a relatively secure financial and social status allows him to feel more confident about his ethnic-minority identity.

Paradox 2. Exclusion, but no 'discrimination'. Said's reflections on differential treatment are equally puzzling. Does he regularly experience exclusionary practices or not? At first glance, it seems Said does not experience discrimination. He did not label his colleague's bad jokes and the remark 'YOU are the success story' as discrimination. He emphasized that the bad joke was 'not discrimination' and that the course leader had only positive intentions. To illustrate that he was sometimes treated differently, he gave no recent examples and fell back on a memory from 2001. Closer inspection reveals another interpretation. After the statement that the bad joke was not discrimination, Said proceeds with a 'but', implying a reassessment. Furthermore, how he challenged the course leader's remark that his trajectory exemplified a Moroccan success story indicates that this 'compliment' invoked his resistance. The way that Said spoke about these occasions suggests that he would rather not be singled out. Being singled out is exclusionary, even if intentions are positive. Various other interviews illustrated how complex it can be to interpret the relevance of one's ethnic background for the situation at hand and to label situations as discriminatory. For example, being asked if she remembered an instance of discrimination, Hind mentioned that she once was singled out for a check for explosives at the airport. However, she immediately nuanced her interpretation of the anecdote as discrimination by giving a counterexample about something similar happening to an ethnic-Dutch colleague. Furthermore, what is felt as exclusion can differ between persons, as the following contrast between Karim and Hind shows. Karim explained that he always feels terribly excluded when he is invited for drinks. He hates receptions. He feels out of place and does not know how to behave, which he attributes to his Moroccan upbringing and the fact that he—'unlike the Dutch'—does not drink alcohol. He sees having drinks as an utterly 'Dutch' practice and perceives such an invitation as a 'test' to prove his Dutchness. Just like Karim, Hind does not drink alcohol, but she indicated that this has never been an issue for her. It did not stop her from attending parties and receptions or participating in a student sorority, and she emphasized she never felt like an outsider because of this.

These examples show that (1) being singled out can be a negative experience in itself, even if the intention of the other is positive, and (2) it can be difficult to give meaning to such instances of subtle Othering and label them as discrimination. The relevance of an ethnic-minority background can be complex for minority individuals to interpret. Do you feel singled out? Is there real evidence of exclusion? Is it deliberate? What do you gain by interpreting the situation as exclusion? Dealing with subtle practices of Othering can be difficult because situations are often not clear-cut examples of overt exclusion. It can be hard to assess if a situation really is an instance of discrimination or if it is something that could happen to anyone. Such a situation is even more ambiguous when the other person does not have negative intentions. The fact that the anti-racist discourse is marginalized in the Netherlands might also complicate the interpretation of exclusionary practices. We read in Chap. 4 that raising issues of discrimination often arouses criticism or offensiveness. In addition to the fuzziness of a situation and the political marginalization of the anti-

racist discourse, there are also psychological and social reasons for not labeling a situation as discrimination, such as a need to protect and enhance self-esteem and a desire to believe that the system is just and that one is treated fairly (Major and O'Brien 2005, p. 401). One might furthermore refrain from labeling a situation as discrimination to avoid being seen as 'overly sensitive', a 'complainer', or a 'victim'. It can feel inappropriate to complain when others offer a compliment or 'just' make a joke, even though such treatments can be annoying—or ambiguous at the least.

That said, not all occasions are equally ambiguous, and not all participants are equally hesitant to label situations as exclusionary. Esra, for example, showed no reservation in labeling more implicit practices of Othering as exclusionary:

You stand out. The first thing people ask you – Like after September 11th, the first thing my colleague asked the next morning: 'Do you have any family in the United States?' All she wants is to talk about THAT... That really makes you realize that – I am not a Muslim... I'm not even raised as one. I KNOW I have my roots in a Muslim community, but I am not even religious myself. – And those attacks were carried out by Saudis... And then they ask ME... – That really is just an attempt to start a conversation. That makes me think: 'Halloooo... there's 12 or 14 million other people around here who possibly have family in the US...' Well, that just shows that you always... ARE... different. (Esra)

Paradox 3. Ethnic self-identification, but aversion to ethnic ascription. The previous points relate to another puzzling aspect in Said's story: the contrast between ethnicity in Said's own communication towards others and ethnicity in others' communication towards him. He explained that he frequently highlights his ethnic identity and religion at his work place to disprove negative stereotypes. At the same time, when others refer to his ethnic background (for example in the 'success-story compliment'), he explicitly questions and nuances the relevance of his background. Apparently, it feels different when one self-identifies in certain terms than when one is externally identified in these terms by someone else.

Participants are clearly reluctant to accept being addressed by others in terms of their minority identities, whether expressed in ethnic or religious terms. Instances of what I call 'categorization resistance' pop up frequently in all interviews, independent of one's self-identification. Participants are critical of instances of being singled out based on their ethnic background or religion. They question the role of ethnic background when they feel 'culture' is automatically taken as the primary explanation of a social phenomenon. They stress the irrelevance of ethnic background and religion in particular occasions. More than once in the interviews, their choices for coethnic or co-religious friends or partners are labeled as 'coincidental'. There are various ways in which participants try to counterbalance the persistent focus on ethnicity.

What causes this categorization resistance? How can we understand participants' reluctance to accept being addressed by others in terms of their minority backgrounds, even when they themselves stress the importance of their ethnic backgrounds? Social psychologists Branscombe et al. (1999, p. 36) explain that being categorized against one's will—what they call 'categorization threat'—can lead to depression and can actually harm the performances of people, particularly when corresponding group images are negative and connected to assumptions of poor ability (see also Ellemers et al. 2002; Major and O'Brien 2005; Meyer 2003). Ellemers and colleagues offer

three explanations for the frustration caused by external categorization that are useful for explaining the categorization resistance of the participants in my study. Their explanations are (1) one is pre-judged in terms of one's category membership instead of seen as a unique individual and judged on personal characteristics and merits; (2) the particular categorization is irrelevant to the actual situation, or one feels that additional categorizations should also be taken into account; and, (3) a lack of personal control when others impose a certain categorization. I show that these explanations also underlie the categorization resistance encountered in my interviews. In addition, I suggest a related fourth explanation.

A main reason for categorization resistance in the interviews is *prejudgment*. Participants prefer to be seen as holistic, multifaceted persons with various individual strengths and weaknesses and not be reduced to the singular image that accompanies the label 'Moroccan', 'Turk', 'Muslim' or 'foreigner'. See for example Karim's quote:

There's no one who appreciates me for who I AM... And now [as successful minorities] we simply have changed into new stereotypes – just like before, you know. We are still not people. (...) this ethnic identity suddenly becomes your real identity, you know. (Karim)

It is particularly disturbing to be reduced to a singular image when a label is connected to negative stereotypes (Goffman 1990 [1963]), as is the case in the Netherlands, where the labels 'Moroccan', 'Turk' and 'Muslim' have negative connotations and are all used in opposition to being Dutch. These labels are used to label minorities as outsiders and to emphasize their supposed affiliation with co-categorical others. Such prejudgments happen, for example, when participants are asked what they 'as Moroccans' think of a 'Moroccan' thief or how they 'as Muslims' see the terrorist attacks of 9/11. Rejecting the label is a way to reject accompanying insinuations and expectations and to resist being equated with an entire category.

The second reason for categorization resistance in the interviews is *inaccuracy* (resembling the second explanation of Ellemers and colleagues). In Dutch politics and media, 'culture' and 'religion' are often taken as explanations for a wide range of social problems such as criminality, obnoxious street youth, gender inequality, and homophobia. Participants seem to be aware of this mechanical culturalist view, this 'ethnic lens'. As it tends to obscure more relevant social mechanisms, participants counter this ethnic lens. They carefully consider whether particular events really can be explained by ethnic background and religion (and really need to be labeled 'Moroccan' or 'Islamic') or if other social mechanisms offer more accurate explanations. Remember Emir's critical reflection on the relevance of (ethnic-minority) culture in explaining failings and successes in his professional field:

(...) is that culture then...? I'm not really like: culture... – Is this all about culture? (Said)

The third reason for categorization resistance is *denial of agency*. The previous explanations for categorization resistance do not explain why participants resist external identification when they assert their identifications in the same terms. Ellemers and colleagues provide an insightful explanation: the reduction of individual agency. The external ascription of a specific label deprives individuals of the freedom to

present themselves as they want to, which can feel highly uncomfortable. Categorization resistance can be an effort to resist external coercion and maintain control over one's own image and position.

The fourth reason for categorization resistance, which I add to the three explanations of Ellemers and colleagues, is *denial of belonging*. This is related to the first and the third points, but I think it needs to be mentioned separately. A strong downside of external identification is that you are appointed the position of the Other and thus are not classified as one of 'us'. This denial of belonging not only occurs when one is labeled as 'Moroccan' by ethnic Dutch but also when one is labeled as being 'too Dutch' by Moroccan Dutch. Categorization resistance can be a reaction to exclusion, an effort to claim one's belonging.³

Paradox 4. Awareness, but nevertheless employment of essentialist language. After the discussion of the third paradox of categorization resistance, we come to the last paradox in the interviews: the use of ethnic labels. All participants (except two, who occasionally used 'Moroccan Dutch'/'Turkish Dutch') employed the labels 'Moroccan', 'Turkish' and 'Dutch' in reference to other people without considering it problematic. This is surprising, considering the participants' awareness of the overly simplistic and polarizing use of ethnic categories in the dominant discourse and their resistance to being pushed into ethnic categories. My own, sometimes slightly awkward, attempts in the interviews to refer to 'Moroccan Dutch', 'Turkish Dutch', 'Dutch with a Moroccan or Turkish background' and 'children of immigrants' did not affect this use. (I subsequently decided to adopt the terminology of each participant.) The participants even applied these straight ethnic labels to themselves, while at other moments in the interview they disputed the applicability of the same labeling. The following quotes of Aysel and Ahmed illustrate the ambiguous language use:

Marieke: Because... – What is for you... – Because you say: I am Turkish... – Are you... more Turkish than Dutch...? Or can't I say such a thing...?

Aysel: No, I think – Well, that somehow depends on – In Turkey I feel more Dutch, and in the Netherlands I feel more Turkish; let's phrase it THIS way.

(...)

Marieke: And about being Dutch... Do you think – when you just speak for yourself – that your jobs and education have made you more or less Dutch?

Aysel: These questions are really not the questions that occupy my mind. It's not important. (...) I simply don't consider such issues! These are not the questions – It is NOT interesting: Am I more Turkish or Dutch?

Ahmed: You really shouldn't ask me: do you feel more Dutch or Moroccan. That's really nonsense.

(...)

Ahmed: (...) if I had to place my identification on a scale with two extremes, I think I would be at the very Dutch end.

³Branscombe, Ellemers and colleagues call this denial of belonging 'acceptance threat'. However, they only apply acceptance threat to the context of the ethnic 'ingroup', and they do not recognize this as an aspect of categorization threat, also applying to interethnic contexts (Branscombe et al. 1999).

Why do the participants apply these labels in essentialist ways if they are conscious of the constructed character and of the possibly harmful implications of doing so? The mixing of more essentialized and de-essentialized terms appears to be a broader phenomenon. Among the various immigrant communities in the Southall neighborhood of London that he studied, Baumann notices a similar mixing of reifying and de-essentializing language, which he calls ‘double discursive competence’ (1996). The Southall people alternately employed a ‘dominant’ discourse, in which ethnic categories were equated with social groups and each group was identified with a reified culture, and a ‘demotic’ discourse, which had developed among the people themselves and was used to renegotiate ‘culture’ and ‘community’ (ibid., p. 188). The Southallians reified and at the same time undid their reifications (Baumann 1999, p. 140). Baumann offers various explanations for this double discursive competence that can help us understand the double discursive competence of the Moroccan-Dutch and Turkish-Dutch participants. The explanations that are most applicable in my case are the psychological tendency and the political and social currency. As we have read in Chap. 2, people have a general tendency to categorize in order to make sense of the world (1996, p. 193). This means that participants use reified language because this partly reflects how they perceive the world. In addition, the participants do not have an alternative language at their disposal for communicating with others. Reified ethnic categories are dominant ingredients of the language available for making sense of the world. As Baumann explains in the Southall case, the essentialist discourse is the ‘hegemonic language’, favored by dominant institutions and agents, which therefore forms the ‘currency’ within which ethnic minorities must deal with the establishment (ibid., p. 192). This means that the language used in the general discourses, both among ethnic majorities as well as among ethnic minorities, makes it nearly impossible for the participants not to think and talk in the straight categories ‘Moroccan’, ‘Turkish’, and ‘Dutch’.

The critical awareness of the essentialization of ethnic categories does not extend to culture in the same way. Whereas the participants seem to acknowledge that ‘the Moroccan’ or ‘the Turk’ does not exist, we saw in Chap. 5 that they speak in unreflective terms about what is typically ‘Dutch’ (e.g. individuality, professionalism) and what is typically ‘Moroccan’ or ‘Turkish’ (e.g. hospitality, emotionality, social connectedness). Baumann presents a similar observation: ‘In the parlance of most Southallians, the meaning of *culture* is not nearly as negotiable as the meaning of community (...) Most Southallians are in most contexts hesitant to use the word *culture* in its de-essentialized sense’ (1996, p. 196, italics in original). Baumann explains that the definition of an ethnic group relies on what is seen as its culture. Applying this to my case, I would say that participants do not deconstruct culture like they sometimes do with identifications because in order to expose varieties and changes in identifications, they need anchored concepts to compose their argument. You can only claim you are ‘*partly* Moroccan’ when ‘Moroccan’ has a fixed meaning. Apparently, it is hard to deconstruct multiple concepts at the same time.

Reflection and Responses (to Subtle Practices of 'Othering')

How participants feel and identify in social settings, such as their work places, is a complex issue. Although they emphasize their belonging in their professional environments, their stories contain many examples of subtle practices of exclusion (see also Waldring et al. 2014). Being labeled as 'Moroccan' or 'Turkish' is disturbing for various reasons. These exclusionary instances of Othering excite categorization resistance because they reduce individuals to a singular identity, suggest a prioritization of cultural explanations, deny personal agency, and emphasize the individual's non-belonging to the context at hand or to the Netherlands in general.

Interestingly, ethnic-Dutch climbers also describe feelings of insecurity about their belonging in their middle-class work environments. Ethnic-Dutch climbers feel different from their colleagues because they perceive a gap in social and cultural capital, communication, presentation, and knowledge (Brands 1992; Matthys 2010); in other words, their habitus is not aligned with the professional field. These climbers feel especially rejected when middle-class others are ignorant about life worlds that are different from their own, as this confirms the middle-class standards being the undisputed norm from which they deviate (Matthys 2010, p. 334). The ethnic-Dutch climbers interpret their lack of belonging in terms of a habitus mismatch as a consequence of their working-class background. This contrasts with the stories of the ethnic-minority participants in two ways. Firstly, despite their working-class background, the participants less explicitly attribute their compromised belonging to a habitus mismatch, but more to exclusionary labeling. It could be that this theme was insufficiently discussed in the interview, or that this reflects mechanisms of external attribution, or that the exclusionary effect of the labeling indeed overshadows the habitus mismatch. Possibly, for the minority climbers, the switching between fields has become second nature, thus reducing the effect of a habitus mismatch. As we will see in Chap. 7, the participants indeed have developed a reflexive habitus (Reay et al. 2009; Sweetman 2003) or a 'chameleon habitus' (Abrahams and Ingram 2013). Secondly, when participants explicitly mention a habitus mismatch, like Karim in the context of receptions, they attribute their discomfort to their ethnic background rather than to their class background.

A set of responses to unwanted external categorization emerges from the interviews, paralleling the responses I described before (conform, convince, conceal, and contest, which I discuss here in reverse order).⁴ These responses roughly resemble the responses to unwanted categorization identified by Ellemers and colleagues (Branscombe et al. 1999; Ellemers et al. 2002), which are (1) challenging the presumed stereotypical relation between category membership and behavior (similar to 'convincing' and 'contesting'), (2) 'disidentification' with the category of the ascription (concealing), and (3) strengthening one's identification with the category of the external ascription (conforming).

(1) *Contest: challenge the external categorization.* One way to respond to unwanted external categorization is to explicitly challenge or deny the exclusively

⁴I suggest that this classification of approaches can be applied to any situation of dissonance as it is based on how the gap between two diverging stances is bridged.

ethnic identification. This can be done by refusing the ethnic label—as we have seen in the discussion of ‘categorization resistance’. Another way is to explicitly emphasize one’s Dutchness. Such claims of Dutchness occur in the interview with Adem who underlines the indisputability of his Dutchness in what seems to be a reaction to the implicit suggestion that he is not Dutch:

Marieke: When I ask you: ‘Are you Dutch?’ What would you say?

Adem: Um.... I am – Well... That JUST depends on what you call Dutch, doesn’t it??

Marieke: What do YOU call Dutch?

Adem: I feel I do MORE than enough for THIS country, more than the average Dutch person. And I would defend this country MORE than enough. And I DO. So, when THIS is the condition for being Dutch, I am Dutch for one thousand percent. (Adem)

Another way to challenge the supposed singular character of identification is by challenging the stereotypical idea that identification as Dutch and Moroccan/Turkish are mutually exclusive by stressing one’s ‘bi-culturality’ and explaining the value of ‘bi-culturality’.

I feel REALLY blessed in that respect. I really feel blessed that I have two countries where I can live, and that I feel at home in both countries. That’s a REAL privilege. (Berkant)

(2) *Conceal: avoid external categorization by disidentification.* Another set of responses aims to entirely avoid the unwanted external categorization as ethnic. To avoid being Othered, some try to hide or de-emphasize their minority identity in order to ‘pass’ for a member of a different category. We have seen that these strategies were common for many participants during their childhood when they wanted to downplay or even conceal their ethnicities. Yet, as we saw in the discussion on categorization resistance, in their adulthood, participants sometimes refrain from labeling themselves as Turkish or Moroccan. Karim’s quote shows that he made a deliberate move from emphasizing to de-emphasizing his minority identity:

Karim: After a while, I was done with being a minority. Just like my friend. (...) We felt that we became like stereotypes... instead of real people...

Marieke: And then you kind of ‘undid’ your minority status?

Karim: Then, I undid my minority status. Um... yes, over time I did so.⁵

A way to de-emphasize one’s ethnic identity is to designate the ethnic categorization as irrelevant to the situation at hand by stressing other dimensions, such as one’s professional identity, as we have already seen with Aysel:

⁵Literally, the conversation was:

Karim: Ik was op een gegeven moment klaar met het allochtoon zijn. En [die vriend] ook, zeg maar. Die ging gek genoeg ook door dezelfde fases als die ik ging. (...) Want hij voelde ook dat we op een gegeven moment stereotypen werden, zeg maar, in plaats van echte mensen...

Marieke: En toen ben je minder ‘allochtoon’ geworden?

Karim: Toen ben ik minder allochtoon geworden. Ehm, ja steeds minder eigenlijk.

– In Turkey I feel more Dutch, and in the Netherlands I feel more Turkish; let's phrase it THIS way. But at my work, I just feel like a consultant. (Aysel)

Another approach for designating the ethnic categorization as irrelevant is pointing to one's individuality, emphasizing the futility of categorizing people:

Well... you just switch somewhat, you know. You want – At some moments you really strive to belong. Then you want to be EITHER Dutch OR really Moroccan. At other moments, you feel extremely rebellious and you think: 'You know what? NEVER MIND! I am who I am. I just don't care. It's a bit of a compromise...' (Karim)

Well... I'm not like a standard employee or anything. I somewhat divert from the standard. But that's fine. They have to take me as I am (...). I am Moroccan and Dutch. I am who I am, I cannot separate these things. (Imane)

(3) *Convince: challenge the applied stereotype.* Others take up the challenge. They try to influence the debate and change the widespread negative stereotypes. They publish articles, start social initiatives, or enter 'white' bulwarks to bridge the gap between the ethnic minority and the rest of society. They try and 'convince' the audience that the stereotypical assumptions are untrue and misleading. To show that negative stereotypes of the ethnic group are too negative and simplistic and certainly do not apply to all members of the specific category, it is crucial to highlight both one's ethnic-minority background *and* one's success (measured against dominant standards). This is why—as we have read—Said accentuates his 'Moroccan' and 'Muslim' side whenever he can in order to show that these characteristics can, indeed, be combined with achieving success. This strategy of showing socially-desired behavior to change negative stereotypes appears to be common. It is the most commonly applied behavior by the Moroccan-Dutch students in the study by De Jong (2012, p. 79); Ketner's Moroccan-Dutch respondents also frequently employ this approach (2010).

Another way to challenge negative stereotypes is to 'play' with stereotypical images. The aim is to trigger critical reflection and make the audience reconsider their simplistic assumptions by behaving in stereotypical ways with a twist...:

I remember, once – I was with friends in the train at peak hour, the train was packed – that we started to speak Dutch with such awful, faltering accents. ON PURPOSE, just to shock people. And meanwhile, we just said incredibly smart things, you know (both laughing). To trigger people, so they think: 'Huh??' You know. Just to, kind of, annoy them. To make them REALIZE: 'There's something wrong here... These kids are saying really intelligent stuff. But with an awful accent.' On purpose! (Said)

This is how I also interpret Said's sudden remark at the end of what had been a pleasant interview:

Well, what do you think of my Dutch?? Isn't it flawless?? (Said)

His remark amazed me and made me feel extremely uncomfortable, as it never occurred to me that as a higher-educated person with a high status job he would not speak Dutch well, and I would never have wanted to give him this impression. This remark might be seen as a cynical way to make me aware of the absurd presumptions he often encounters.

(4) *Conform: increase identification with the category of ascription.* The variety of responses demonstrates that individuals often have agency over how they identify in many situations. However, even though external categorizations do not completely pin people down, individual agency is not unlimited. The influence of external categorizations can be extreme and often cannot be ignored. When external categorizations occur, they need to be dealt with in one way or the other. Categorizations can be overwhelming, and attempts to challenge these might simply seem futile. Individuals do not always feel the freedom or have the energy to challenge them. In these cases, conforming to these ascribed categorizations—at least in how one presents oneself—might seem like the best option. It is a way to protect one's self-esteem (Ellemers et al. 2002). Consequently, participants sometimes present themselves according to the ascribed ethnic label, even if they do not entirely feel this way. This is also observed in other studies (see for example De Jong 2012; Eijberts 2013; Omlo 2011; Van der Welle 2011). Ahmed explains:

Actually, now I think about it... Nine out of ten times I am not addressed as Dutch, but as Moroccan [by ethnic Dutch], whereas inside I feel like a Dutch Moroccan, both. (...) Look, I actually do not call myself Dutch, because you are not seen as Dutch. (Ahmed)

The pressure to identify in a certain way can also lead to an increased identification with the ethnic or religious identity on a deeper level, for example, when focusing on being Turkish, Moroccan, or Muslim makes one more conscious of one's ethnic-minority identity and religion. Rumbaut calls this a 'reactive ethnicity' (2008). This is also what De Koning (2008) and Ketner (2009, 2010) notice in relation to religious identification among Moroccan-Dutch youth. The social importance of ethnicity (or religion) may lead one to further explore these identities, and it can make these identifications more salient, as Hicham's quote illustrates:

Before, people were much less aware of their being Moroccan or Muslim, they possessed multiple identities. It was more dynamic; it was just how you felt at a particular moment. In the afternoon, at the snack bar with your peers, you use slang, while in the evening with your mom, you speak Berber. Currently, it happens that one identity becomes more and more prominent. That you are Moroccan or Muslim becomes imprinted as the most prominent identity. I feel pushed into this identity, by people questioning me about it, or write about it in the papers, and those who study the second and third generation, whatever. That makes me think about my identity and wonder: 'What actually IS my identity?' Then I suddenly have to make decisions, whereas, before, my identity was like: it all fits together. (...) Now it seems like some sort of a make-or-breakpoint. It is almost like: 'Take it or leave it, it belongs with me and it's important to me'. Things that you were not aware of, previously, become more and more important. (Hicham)

External pressure can also lead to an increased association with a coethnic or co-religious community. Bouchra explained that as a result of her experiences of exclusion from Dutch society, she only feels truly welcomed and accepted by the worldwide Islamic community (Ummah).

On an even deeper level, being categorized as 'Moroccan' or 'Turkish' and as 'non-Dutch' can lead to the internalization of this view and to a weakening identification as Dutch. When people do not feel accepted for who they are, this might lead to a reconsideration of their belonging in Dutch society and doubts about whether their

future is in the Netherlands. Will they and their children really be happy here? Aysel's feelings of belonging changed over time:

(...) For a long while, I thought: 'We are Dutch... This society is ours...'. Fortuyn's murder sort of – I started to realize: 'You are an immigrant and you will remain one, FOREVER. Whatever happens'. (...) So I told my children: 'You might THINK that you can be like Jan or Piet [which are typically Dutch names], but you should really know: If you're involved in something – in the bus, or on a street corner – you are much more likely to be seen as a troublemaker than Piet or Jan... Always be aware of your position in a society.' (Aysel)

Sometimes, the idea that one is 'Moroccan' and therefore is not Dutch is even too internalised to be problematized, as Hind's quote illustrates:

I KNOW I'm darker and everything, but I am not fully aware of it myself... (laughs). Sometimes, when I am abroad, I happen to say: 'I'm Dutch'. Then they respond with: 'Are you DUTCH??' 'Um, no, sorry, sorry, sorry, I am Moroccan...' (laughs). You know... that I just forget for a moment... (Hind)

The occurrence of this response of 'conforming', when ethnic labeling by others leads individuals to apply the label to themselves or even to further strengthen their broader coethnic orientation, shows the reverse (or perverse) effect of the culturalist and emotive integration discourse. The consistent labeling of immigrants and their offspring as the ethnic Other often leads them to identify as such. This then forms yet another reason for exclusion, as all citizens are required to feel Dutch and identify as Dutch in order to belong (see also Slootman and Duyvendak 2015). Other studies show that feelings of exclusion hamper national identification (Ersanilli 2009; Georgiadis and Manning 2013). This illustrates how the personal side of belonging is affected by politics of belonging (see also Slootman and Duyvendak 2018).

6.5 The Role of Education, Ethnic Background, Gender and Religion

Obviously, no individual and no context is the same. Nevertheless, the interviews reveal trends that are indicative of the roles that social mobility, ethnic background, gender, generation, and religion play in various cases. Based on the empirical material presented in this chapter, I will show that social mobility affects social bonds and responses in unexpected ways. Furthermore, I will point to parallels with the experiences of ethnic-majority climbers which show that experiences that are recounted in comparable terms are interpreted in different interpretive frameworks. I will also briefly touch upon the roles of gender, ethnic background, and generation. The section concludes with a note on the meaning of religion in the context of ethnicity and ethnic identification.

Social Mobility. Refuting Common Assumptions

In the participants' stories, high education levels and a middle-class status appear to shape the participants' belonging and their self-identifications in particular ways.

Their social mobility makes the participants feel that they have proven themselves as valuable individuals, citizens, and ethnic-minority citizens in particular (see also Buitelaar 2009, p. 53). They have proven themselves to themselves, their families, and society at-large. Achieving a higher education level and a middle-class status seem to enhance belonging, creating special opportunities, both in coethnic and interethnic contexts. It serves as symbolic capital.

As explained in the theoretical chapter, Chap. 2, straight-line integration theories predict that socioeconomic advancement of ethnic minorities generally leads to weaker ethnic identification and a growing gap with coethnics. This chapter offers no support for this view. The participants do not account for an unequivocally widening gap with coethnics due to their social mobility. For them, as (the eldest) children of Moroccan and Turkish immigrants, a gap between their own life worlds and those of their parents had always been a given. Ever since they were young, they had been more oriented towards and familiar with Dutch society than their parents, regardless of their rising education levels. Contrary to the projections based on classical integration theories, but also contrary to experiences of ethnic-Dutch social climbers, the participants' social advancement did not seem to further widen the gap with their parents. Instead, their educational achievements helped to somewhat bridge the gap. Their achievements made their parents proud and increased their parents' trust in them. It even helped to slightly increase the freedom their parents allowed them. In other words, their social mobility can be seen to contribute to their belonging among coethnics. (This is particularly true for the relations with parents, as participants sometimes confronted suspicion from other coethnics.) Additionally, as we have seen—and as I further discuss in Chap. 7—processes of social mobility did not generally result in a weak ethnic identification or a distancing from coethnics. Instead, many participants spoke of an increasing ethnic identification during their process of mobility and had many coethnic (and higher-educated) friends.

With respect to interethnic contexts, in line with classic integration theories, it is widely assumed that higher education leads to assimilation and belonging. Moroccan-Dutch students hope that climbing the social ladder will finally result in their being acknowledged as valuable citizens (De Jong 2012). However, the idea that social mobility makes ethnic-minority backgrounds irrelevant needs nuancing. First of all, the interviews show that attaining higher education levels does not prevent feelings of exclusion. Most participants regularly experience subtle practices of Othering. Interpreting and responding to these practices is complicated, but they nevertheless feel exclusionary. This is particularly frustrating because the participants themselves do not feel different from others, such as their colleagues, in any aspect relevant to the situation at hand. They feel Dutch and are skilled professionals. Despite these experiences of dissonance, the participants primarily reflect on their daily interethnic interactions in terms of belonging.⁶

⁶This differs from findings of other studies, such as the study of De Jong (2012). The Moroccan Dutch students in her study often feel insecure in their daily interactions with ethnic Dutch, as they assume that most of the ethnic Dutch agree with Wilders' view and have negative associations with 'Moroccans'.

Secondly, it appears that having a high education level enhances the need and widens the opportunity for the participants to articulate their ethnic-minority background in interethnic settings. As social climbers, the participants are in a particular position that enables them to challenge negative stereotypes, to disprove them. Their successful position (measured against dominant social standards) makes them appointed persons to challenge negative stereotypes and show that being 'Moroccan', 'Turkish', or 'Muslim' does not preclude social mobility and full participation in society. Their position as social climbers increases the chances that they are heard and taken seriously. It not only instills in them some sort of responsibility to highlight their ethnic identity, but also *enables* them to highlight their ethnic identity. Given the acceptance based on their achieved positions, the minority climbers can accentuate their 'deviant' characteristic without immediately threatening their position of belonging. This leads many ethnic-minority members to sometimes highlight their ethnic background, not despite but *because of* their positions as social climbers, because of the accumulated symbolic capital.

Ethnic Background. Exposing an Ethnic Lens

The comparison with ethnic-majority climbers made throughout the chapter reveals many interesting parallels. Both types of stories demonstrate struggles with belonging in two fields, the home field and the middle-class professional field. As children, ethnic-majority climbers also felt the ambiguous pressures from their parents to succeed, on the one hand, but stay close and not become alienated on the other hand. They have to deal with a similar gap between their life worlds and the life worlds of their parents. And like many of the ethnic-minority climbers, ethnic-majority climbers often feel out of place in their school and work settings. In these struggles of belonging, educational success is a means of achieving belonging for ethnic-majority climbers too. For example, educational achievements form a way of proving both to their classmates and to themselves that they indeed belong at a higher educational institution (Brands 1992, p. 119). Again in their later lives, professional achievements help counter the uncomfortable perception that one is seen as an intruder (1992, p. 233). Another interesting parallel is the unease that is felt at receptions. Recall that for Karim, being invited to receptions felt like an outright confrontation with his Moroccan 'foreignness'. At these 'typically Dutch' receptions, he felt completely out of place, which he attributed to his Moroccan upbringing. The ethnic-Dutch climbers in Matthys' study (2010, p. 221, 327) also feel uncomfortable at receptions. They feel awkward and incapable of having informal conversations because of their unfamiliarity with the prevalent communication codes at receptions.

Apparently, minority climbers and majority climbers have many experiences in common that result from their trajectory of social mobility into the majority-dominated middle-class field. However, while majority climbers attribute these experiences to their working-class background, minority climbers—who also have a working-class background—attribute these experiences to their ethnic-minority background. While the similarities with the majority climbers suggest that their experiences result, at least partly, from their working-class background, their frame of interpretation is ethnic. This demonstrates the dominance of the ethnic frame or

‘ethnic lens’. The participants have a worldview in which ethnic background is a primary marker, a worldview that mirrors the dominant discourse.

Gender and Ethnic Background. The Relevance of Generation

Besides education level, what role do other dimensions play in experiences of belonging and practices of identification of second-generation climbers? Gender and the specific ethnic background (having Moroccan or Turkish parents) do not seem to influence the stories regarding the themes discussed in this chapter. The parallel occurrence of consonance and dissonance, both in coethnic as well as in interethnic settings, applies to both men and women and to participants with Moroccan and Turkish backgrounds. Regardless of gender and ethnic background, they aim for belonging in the various situations, and they have the same choice of approaches for responding to dissonance. In addition, the role of social mobility does not seem different for participants in these various categories.

This does not mean that gender and the specific ethnic-minority background do not matter. The gendered images of a typical ‘Moroccan’ or ‘Turk’ do influence the experiences of second-generation climbers. Many participants mentioned that female siblings have less freedom than male siblings or receive less encouragement in their educational paths. However, when we look at individual cases, the picture is more complex. Yes, the strictest upbringings were those of women, but some men were also raised relatively strictly. There were also women who experienced relatively greater freedom, just like some of the male participants. The small sample and the observed variation does not allow me to draw straightforward conclusions about the role of gender. Nevertheless, considering the different stereotypes of Moroccan/Turkish/Muslim women and men in the dominant integration discourse (respectively as subordinate victims and abusive perpetrators), it is surprising that gender does not pop up in the interviews as a major theme in interethnic contexts. Only Bouchra refers to the gendered prejudices she encounters.

Comparing the Moroccan-Dutch with the Turkish-Dutch participants, I observe two differences in support of the literature describing the Turkish Dutch as generally more cohesive than Moroccan Dutch and in support of the results of Chap. 5 (that ethnic identification on average is more profound for Turkish Dutch). Turkish-Dutch participants grew up in close connection with children of befriended Turkish families. This contrasts with the stories of Moroccan-Dutch participants, who did not report on such close coethnic family relations even though their parents did seem to have connections with other coethnic parents. Nevertheless, a frequent interaction among Turkish-Dutch children does not automatically imply that these children were also close friends (as Esra related), nor that their presence fully alleviated the burdens of discrimination (Berkant). Furthermore, there is a difference in the use of the parental language, as the Turkish-Dutch participants spoke their parental language much more frequently (both with siblings as well as with Turkish-Dutch peers) than the Moroccan Dutch. This is in line with observations in other studies; see Chap. 4.

Actually, it seems that generation matters more than gender and ethnic background. Many of the participants’ experiences are characteristic of their growing up shortly after the moment of migration: witnessing their parents’ hardships and

sacrifices, the looming expectation of return to Morocco and Turkey, the parental inexperience in Dutch society and the lack of support, the relative strictness of their parents; but also the dominance of ethnic Dutch in their schools and neighborhoods (particularly at the higher education levels) and the lack of successful coethnic role models in Dutch society. The centrality of these immigration experiences distinguishes the 'early' second generation from the 'later' second generation. The latter was born roughly ten years later, in the 1980s, and grew up long after the moment of migration, when their parents had become more progressive. The later second generation also was more likely to grow up in environments with larger shares of coethnics and peers with other ethnic-minority backgrounds, and had coethnic role models. This generation also grew up in a different 'Zeitgeist', as over the years the tone of the integration debate gradually harshened.

Religion. Commenting on a Conflation of Religion and Ethnicity

In line with the high correlation between ethnic and religious identification in the TIES data presented in Chap. 5, religious identification was often mentioned during the interviews in the same breath as ethnic identification. This was to be expected as in both the coethnic context and in broader society, the concepts of religion and ethnicity are closely intertwined. In the dominant integration discourse, ethnicity and religion are generally conflated; for example in the argument that 'Moroccans' and 'Turks' do not belong in the Netherlands because of their Islamic cultures. Since ethnic and the religious labels are used in comparable ways to denote Otherness, the second-generation climbers need to challenge both stereotypes at the same time.

Also in coethnic contexts, ethnic and religious concepts are closely intertwined. Being a 'good' Moroccan or Turk often means that one is also a 'good' Muslim. This means that for many respondents, being-a-Muslim strongly contributes to belonging among coethnics; it is a way to establish 'ethnic authenticity' and functions as symbolic capital. Ketner lucidly describes how this works for adolescents with Moroccan backgrounds (2009, 2010). She describes how Islam for them is not only a source of ideological inspiration but also an instrument that they use in negotiations with their parents. By showing that they are good Muslims and/or arguing that certain values are propagated in Islam (such as education, individual autonomy, and participation in Dutch society), the adolescents manage to acquire more personal freedom and carve out their own routes and identities without incurring alienation from their parents.

6.6 Summary and Reflection

The answer to the question why the second-generation Moroccan and Turkish climbers identify as they do is partly to respond to the social situation at hand. How others see and approach them affects the participants' feelings of belonging and therefore affects how they position themselves in particular situations. Hence, how individuals present themselves in particular situations is not based only on a 'cognitive component' (the individual's independent, autonomous preferences and affilia-

tions). The interviews show that there is also a ‘strategic component’ based on interactions with the social other, the ‘audience’ (see Barreto et al. 2003; Goffman 1959). Disagreement, either about behavioral preferences or about labels of identification, forms a possible threat to the individual’s acceptance by that particular audience, to one’s belonging. Individuals have a range of responses at their disposal. These responses—contesting, concealing, convincing and conforming—vary in terms of how an individual balances one’s autonomous preferences with one’s belonging. These strategies can also be described in terms of boundary work (Slootman, unpublished paper). Although external demands and ascriptions can be fierce, and personal agency can be severely limited, individuals rarely completely lack agency.

Consequently, even when people conform to the stance of the other, this does not necessarily reflect a complete lack of agency. Conformism can involve the careful deliberation of various choices. Individuals can deliberately *choose to conform* and refrain from pursuing one’s autonomous ambitions in order to protect social bonds, for example out of love or respect or a desire to belong and avoid conflict.

However, the acknowledgement of individual agency, and the conclusion that, in Song’s words (2003), minority individuals also have ‘ethnic options’, should not lead us to overestimate the individual agency and underestimate the influence of external actors. When the image of ‘victim’ shifts to the image of ‘resilient actor’, the responsibility for social oppression shifts from society to the individual, and failures to cope with inequality are seen as personal rather than societal failings (Meyer 2003, p. 23). As is clear from this chapter, individuals are not free to choose whether or not to be subject to external pressures, whether from coethnics or others. The dominant system of classification and hierarchies—which determines the range of ethnic and national categories that is available to individuals and the accompanying degrees of stigma or advantage—can be quite restricted and constraining (Nagel 1994). In particular, the dominant integration discourse is felt as extremely exclusionary and insulting. Participants often feel judged ‘as Moroccans’ and ‘as Turks’ and measured by specific yardsticks. It is important to realize how social others limit and shape the individual’s options by granting or withholding appreciation, acceptance, and the permission to belong. It would be unjust to hold the minority individual (entirely) responsible for their experiences and expressions of non-belonging, as feelings of belonging are strongly affected by politics of belonging. This is why the assimilationist discourse has reverse effects.

The findings show the inappropriateness of thinking in terms of ethnic ‘ingroup’ (characterized by consonance and belonging) and ethnic ‘outgroup’ (characterized by dissonance and non-belonging). We have seen that in both kinds of settings, strategies are needed to achieve belonging. It appears untrue that there is a need for belonging only among coethnics and not among interethnics, as implied by thinking in terms of ethnic ‘ingroup’ and ethnic ‘outgroup’. In both kinds of settings, individuals strive to belong. Nor is it true that belonging among coethnics is self-evident and among interethnics is always disputed. Belonging among coethnics often needs to be negotiated, and in many interethnic situations, participants feel they belong. This theme of interethnic consonance will be further explored in Chap. 7. Nor is it true that ethnic background shapes experiences and dispositions in such a way that it is

justified to think in internally homogenous and externally bounded ethnic groups. Other characteristics such as social mobility, gender, and generation also affect the experiences of second-generation Moroccan Dutch and Turkish Dutch, and shape the position of individuals in the various fields in which they maneuver. Besides the broader trends, it is important to acknowledge variations between individuals and even between contexts. All these findings warn against any form of 'groupist' thinking and against thinking in terms of a consonant ethnic 'ingroup' and a dissonant ethnic 'outgroup'.

The fact that coethnic relationships are not always consonant shows that minority individuals are not seamlessly immersed in homogeneous coethnic communities. Ethnic-minority individuals are exposed to behavioral and other identificational expectations by coethnics, on which one's belonging as a respected member partially depends. In order to be able to recognize these mechanisms, it is important to consistently separate the individual level and the collective level. Often, the individual and the collective levels are confused, both in empirical literature on ethnic minorities—where the focus is on the group level—and in more conceptual arguments. This is illustrated by the use of 'internal' and 'external' identification by Jenkins (2008). This is an important case, as Jenkins provides a structured analysis of the 'ethnic identity', and his use of 'internal' and 'external' identification is very common. Even though Jenkins criticizes the 'misleading' conflation of collective identity and individual identity (2008, p. 55), he fails to consistently apply this distinction himself. Jenkins describes internal identification as 'an individual process or a collective, group process'. He describes external identification solely on the group level, as categorizations 'of "us" by "them"', and of "them" by "us"' (2008, p. 55, 171). With these definitions, he ignores a specific process of identification: the external identification of the individual by people of their 'own' (coethnic) category. Even though Jenkins states that he does not regard the individual and the group as one and the same, by using 'internal definition' for self-definition on both levels, he suggests that the identification of the individual is equal to the identification of 'the group'. He thereby infers that consonance exists among coethnics, at least in terms of identification. This confusion of minority individuals and entire minority categories occurs in many studies (see also Brubaker and Cooper 2000).

I solve this confusion of individuals and categories by using 'internal' identification (or 'self-identification') exclusively in reference to the individual level. I use 'external identification' (or 'labeling' or 'categorization') for all kinds of identity ascriptions by social others, whether these are coethnics or not. Consequently, this social other needs to be explicitly specified. In this way, we avoid the implicit assumption that a minority individual only (and always) feels unwanted identificational pressure in interethnic contexts and only (and always) feels alignment, acceptance, and support in coethnic contexts. Again, this view challenges the use of 'ingroup' and 'outgroup' in relation to ethnic categories.

References

- Abrahams, J., & Ingram, N. (2013). The chameleon habitus: Exploring local students' negotiations of multiple fields. *Sociological Research Online*, 18(4), 1–14.
- Agius Vallejo, J., & Lee, J. (2009). Brown picket fences: The immigrant narrative and 'giving back' among the Mexican-origin middle class. *Ethnicities*, 9(1), 5–31.
- Barreto, M., Spears, R., Ellemers, N., & Shahinper, K. (2003). Who wants to know? The effect of audience on identity expression among minority group members. *The British Journal of Social Psychology*, 42, 299–318.
- Baumann, G. (1996). *Contesting culture: Discourses of identity in multi-ethnic London*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Baumann, G. (1999). *The multicultural riddle: Rethinking national, ethnic, and religious identities*. London: Routledge.
- Brands, J. (1992). *Die hoeft nooit meer wat te leren: levensverhalen van academici met laaggeschoolde ouders*. Nijmegen: Sun.
- Branscombe, N., Ellemers, N., Spears, R., & Doosje, B. (1999). The context and content of social identity threat. In N. Ellemers, R. Spears, & B. Doosje (Eds.), *Social identity: Context, commitment, content* (pp. 35–58). Oxford: Blackwell Publishing.
- Brubaker, R., & Cooper, F. (2000). Beyond "identity". *Theory and Society*, 29(1), 1–47.
- Buitelaar, M. (2009). *Van huis uit Marokkaans. Levensverhalen van hoogopgeleide migranten-dochters*. Amsterdam: Bulaaq.
- Carter, P. (2003). "Black" cultural capital, status positioning, and schooling conflicts for low-income African American youth. *Social Problems*, 50(1), 136–155.
- De Jong, M. (2012). *Ik ben die Marokkaan niet! Onderzoek naar identiteitsvorming van Marokkaans-Nederlandse hbo-studenten*. Amsterdam: VU Uitgeverij.
- De Koning, M. (2008). *Zoeken naar een "zuivere" islam: geloofsbeleving en identiteitsvorming van jonge Marokkaans-Nederlandse moslims*. Amsterdam: Bert Bakker.
- Eijberts, M. (2013). *Migrant women shout it out loud: The integration/participation strategies and sense of home of first- and second generation women of Moroccan and Turkish descent. Academic Dissertation*. Amsterdam: VU University Press.
- Ellemers, N., Spears, R., & Doosje, B. (2002). Self and social identity. *Annual Review of Psychology*, 53(1), 161–186.
- Ersanilli, E. (2009). Identificatie van Turkse migranten jongeren in Nederland. *Frankrijk en Duitsland. Migrantenstudies*, 25(1), 42–58.
- Georgiadis, A., & Manning, A. (2013). One nation under a groove? Understanding national identity. *Journal of Economic Behavior & Organization*, 93, 166–185.
- Goffman, E. (1959). *The presentation of self in everyday life*. New York: Anchor Books.
- Goffman, E. (1990 [1963]). *Stigma: Notes on the Management of Spoiled Identity*. Londen: Penguin Books.
- Jenkins, R. (2008). *Rethinking ethnicity. Arguments and explorations* (2nd ed.). London: Sage.
- Ketner, S. (2009). "Ik denk niet in culturen... ik denk eigenlijk meer in mijn geloof". Waarom jongeren van Marokkaanse afkomst in Nederland de moslimidentiteit zo sterk benadrukken. *Migrantenstudies*, 1, 73–87.
- Ketner, S. (2010). *Marokkaanse wortels, Nederlandse grond. Jonge moslims over opgroeien in Nederland*. Verwey-Jonker Instituut: Utrecht.
- Lubrano, A. (2004). *Limbo: Blue-collar roots, white-collar dreams*. Hoboken, NJ: Wiley.
- Major, B., & O'Brien, L. (2005). The social psychology of stigma. *Annual Review of Psychology*, 56, 393–421.
- Matthys, M. (2010). *Doorzetters: een onderzoek naar de betekenis van de arbeidersafkomst voor de levensloop en loopbaan van universitair afgestudeerden*. Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press.

- Meyer, I. (2003). Prejudice, social stress, and mental health in lesbian, gay, and bisexual populations: Conceptual Issues and research evidence. *Psychological Bulletin*, 129(5), 674–697.
- Min, P., & Kim, R. (2000). Formation of ethnic and racial identities: Narratives by young Asian-American professionals. *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 23(4), 735–760.
- Nagel, J. (1994). Constructing ethnicity: Creating and recreating ethnic identity and culture. *Social Problems*, 41(1), 152–176.
- Nicholas, T., Stepick, A., & Dutton Stepick, C. (2008). 'Here's your diploma, Mom!' Family obligation and multiple pathways to success. *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, 620, 237–252.
- Omlo, J. (2011). *Integratie én uit de gratie? Perspectieven van Marokkaans-Nederlandse jongvolwassenen*. Academic dissertation. Amsterdam: University of Amsterdam.
- Orellana, M. F. (2001). The work kids do: Mexican and central American immigrant children's contributions to households and schools in California. *Harvard Educational Review*, 71(3), 366–389.
- Pektaş-Weber, C. (2006). *Moslima's: emancipatie achter de dijken*. Amsterdam: Bulaaq.
- Pels, T., & De Haan, M. (2003). *Continuity and change in Moroccan socialization: A review of the literature on socialization in Morocco and among Moroccan families in the Netherlands*. Utrecht: Verwey-Jonker Instituut, University of Utrecht.
- Portes, A. (1998). Social capital: Its origins and applications in modern sociology. *Annual Review of Sociology*, 24(1), 1–24.
- Portes, A., Fernández-Kelly, P., & Haller, W. (2009). The adaptation of the immigrant second generation in America: Theoretical overview and recent evidence. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, 35(7), 1077–1104.
- Reay, D., Crozier, G., & Clayton, J. (2009). 'Strangers in paradise'? Working-class students in elite universities. *Sociology*, 43(6), 1103–1121.
- Rumbaut, R. (2008). Reaping what you sew: immigration, youth, and reactive ethnicity. *Applied Development Science*, 12(2), 108–111.
- Slootman, M., & Duyvendak, J. W. (2015). Feeling Dutch: the culturalization and emotionalization of citizenship and second-generation belonging in the Netherlands. In N. Foner & P. Simon (Eds.), *Fear, anxiety, and national identity: immigration and belonging in North America and Western Europe* (pp. 147–168). New York: Russell Sage Foundation.
- Slootman, M., & Duyvendak, J. W. (2016). Politics of belonging, from national to personal: The political framing of "Dutch" identity and ethnic minority citizens. In N. Stokes-Dupass & R. Fruja (Eds.), *Citizenship, belonging, and nation-states in the twenty-first century* (pp. 55–83). London: Palgrave.
- Slootman, M., & Duyvendak, J. W. (2018). The politics of belonging: Religiosity and identification among second-generation Moroccan Dutch. In M. Bozogmehr & P. Kasnitz (Eds.), *Growing up Muslim in Europe and the United States* (pp. 111–129). New York: Routledge.
- Song, M. (2003). *Choosing ethnic identity*. Cambridge, UK: Polity Press.
- Stepick, A., & Stepick, C. (2010). The complexities and confusions of segmented assimilation. *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 33(7), 1149–1168.
- Suárez-Orozco, C., & Suárez-Orozco, M. (2001). *Children of immigration*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Sweetman, P. (2003). Twenty-first century disease? Habitual reflexivity or the reflexive habitus. *Sociological Review*, 51(4), 528–549.
- Van der Hoek, J. (2006). De tienertijd. In T. Pels & M. de Gruijter (Eds.), *Emancipatie van de tweede generatie. Keuzen en kansen in de levensloop van jonge moeders van Marokkaanse en Turkse afkomst*. Assen: Van Gorcum.
- Van der Welle, I. (2011). *Flexibele burgers? Amsterdamse jongvolwassenen over lokale en nationale identiteiten*. Academic dissertation. Amsterdam: University of Amsterdam.

- Waldring, I. E., Crul, M. R. J., & Ghorashi, H. (2014). The fine art of boundary sensitivity. Successful second generation Turks and Moroccans in the Netherlands. *New Diversities*, 16(1), 71–87.
- Waters, M. (1994). Ethnic and Racial Identities of Second generation Black Immigrants in New York City. *International Migration Review*, 28(4), 795–820.

Open Access This chapter is licensed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>), which permits use, sharing, adaptation, distribution and reproduction in any medium or format, as long as you give appropriate credit to the original author(s) and the source, provide a link to the Creative Commons license and indicate if changes were made.

The images or other third party material in this chapter are included in the chapter's Creative Commons license, unless indicated otherwise in a credit line to the material. If material is not included in the chapter's Creative Commons license and your intended use is not permitted by statutory regulation or exceeds the permitted use, you will need to obtain permission directly from the copyright holder.

