Being one of the few

Professionally successful descendants of migrants from Turkey

Een van de weinigen zijn
Professioneel succesvolle nakomelingen van migranten uit Turkije

Dissertation

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(1942-2015)

Prologue

"If we would have stayed in Turkey, we would have been either dead or in jail"
(Ali Konyali sr., my grandfather).

My grandfather never forgot the date when he applied to become a labour migrant with Germany as his destination: it was June 25, 1969. After working for a wood-planing factory for two years, he switched to metal plating, before he became an employee of a local factory supplying pharmaceutical and laboratory technology in Göttingen in 1979, he worked there until 1995, when he went for early retirement due to his health condition. My grandmother had followed him to Germany, a few months after his arrival, also in the year 1969. She has worked in a factory that is manufacturing electric tubes for 35 years. Whereas my aunt was born in Göttingen, Germany, where she finished training as a cashier, my father joined his parents at the age of 11, in 1975. He went to the *Hauptschule[1]* and completed vocational training in car refinishing. Later on, he started working in the same company as my grandfather, where he is still counting down the days until his retirement.

The hope to improve life chances of future generations was decisive in my grandparents' motivation. I remember that money was often an issue in my family. More than once have I witnessed situations in which my father especially was blamed for not living up to his parents' expectations. Although my grandmother is illiterate she is still very conscious about financial matters. My grandfather told me that my father "could have done better". I often felt a trench between my father and his parents. He was accusing them for leaving him behind in Turkey, they were trying to make him understand that this was necessary for them to enable a better way of living. I personally was never confronted with the accusations my father had to cope with upon his arrival in Germany. Being the oldest grandson, I enjoyed a lot of freedoms based on the fact that my school results were good. It seemed that the hopes of my grandparents were passed on from my father to me.

Growing up in Germany as a descendant of migrants from Turkey, I was among the first in my immediate familial environment to receive the *Abitur[2]* and get the chance to go to a university. I became a social scientist. Looking back, I try to figure out the 'keys' to my achievements. The

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[1] Lowest level of secondary education in Germany. It ranks below Realschule and Gymnasium.
[2] The so-called Abitur is a certificate given to pupils in Germany who pass their final exams at the end of their higher secondary education. It formally enables them to attend university.

fact that it could be considered a success in itself I did not realize throughout my trajectory. Frankly speaking, I was not aware of the exceptionality about my educational and professional pathway until I started being interested in occupational achievement stories as a job. The fact that my first real job was at a university meant a huge relief for the worries of my family. It seemed that I had successfully managed to avoid ending up in jobs that would be a challenge to my body.

In contrast to what my grandparents did and my parents are still doing, I am sitting in an office, reading texts, thinking, writing and presenting ideas and arguments. The exact content of my work was never really clear to my grandparents, nor to my parents. But it also did not matter to them with regard to the intergenerational mobility project that started with the migration from Turkey to Germany. The hard, manual labour seems to have paid off after all. Today I know that I have accomplished something that is still exceptional. I would say that I merely adapted myself to institutional demands. I have listened to my teachers and I ended up obtaining the *Abitur*, as 'one of the few'.

My grandfather remembered how he was checked 'like a horse' before he could start working in Germany. They wanted to see how healthy he was for conducting the hard low-skilled manual labour. One could say that he was conceived primarily as human capital capable of doing the hard work but not as a human being with his own needs, wishes and hopes. His Turkish language capabilities, his opinions and everything that went beyond his bodily functions seemed to not have any worth for his employer. Almost half a decade later we are at a moment in time where the so-called failed integration of descendants of migrants from Turkey is continuously being debated. However, some things have changed. Some of the children of the former labour migrants enter positions that their parents and grandparents could not occupy. They have achieved an astonishing social mobility. Their exceptional narratives and experiences are the central theme of this dissertation.

1. Twisting the focus on social mobility

1.1. Understanding unexpected achievements

Contemporary capitalism justifies increasing labour market liberalization through emphasizing the value of individual success based on merit and strive. Accordingly, it is one's own responsibility to be 'employable' in this individualistic outlook on life chances (Boltanski & Chiapello, 2005). Successful people, those who profit the most from the status quo, tend to reproduce this narrative of success (cf. Hochschild, 1996). This makes structural inequalities invisible by considering everybody as capable of becoming successful as long as one puts oneself to do it. Research into inequalities on the other hand shows that the social position of individuals is determined by different forms of capital that enable them to successfully participate in mainstream institutions. Therefore, I treat structure and agency as complementary in this thesis. According to Bourdieu (1977), structure is permanently internalized and collectively shared by agents in their habitus. Therefore, the social order is difficult to change. Social mobility requires individual adaptation to institutional arrangements to be successful (cf. Schneider & Lang, 2014).

When conceptualizing exceptional individual success as a complicated and multifaceted process, one is faced with the risk of resorting to relativism. Meritocracy is often taken for granted. The uncontested trust into the impartiality of institutional arrangements bears the danger of blaming those who cannot adapt to this system for simply 'not having what it takes' or 'not doing enough'. Explaining exceptional cases in this way can lead to the individualization of success and failure that is based on the false assumption of equal chances (Lewis, 1993). Therefore, I aim in this dissertation to show how achievement narratives are intertwined with the 'practice' of achieving success. To this end I propose the following guiding research questions: *What consequences does having a potentially disadvantageous individual background have for the experience of exceptionally steep upward mobility? How do individuals from disadvantaged groups negotiate their individual background while developing their professional selves?* In order to answer these questions, I will focus on cases of 'unlikely' success, exemplified by descendants of migrants from Turkey in leading professional positions across four European countries (Germany, France, Sweden, and the Netherlands).

Comparative research on upward social mobility among migrant children is still scarce with few notable exceptions (Heath, Rothon, & Kilpi, 2008; Crul, Schneider, & Lelie, 2012). However, the issue has been addressed on the national level in various European research

projects. For instance, Maurice Crul has done several projects on successful children of migrants from Turkey and Morocco in the Netherlands (e.g. Crul, 1994; Crul, 2000; Crul, et al., 2008). In Germany, upward social mobility processes of the educationally successful Turkish second generation were studied by Andreas Pott (2002). In France, Emanuelle Santelli (2001) studied descendants of migrants from Algeria in order to understand how these children managed their educational and occupational success in spite of their parents who were non-qualified migrant workers. Keskiner (2013) analysed the significance of national institutional arrangements for the development of different forms of capital among the Turkish second generation in France and the Netherlands. In Sweden, a group of researchers studied how transnational social networks contribute to the occupational success of second generation youth (Olsson, et al., 2007).

Put together, these studies attest to the importance of studying the national context to explain differences in outcome. Descendants of migrants from Turkey stand out compared to other groups in terms of the degree of difficulties they faced in European countries (Heath, Rothon, & Kilpi, 2008; Crul, Schneider, & Lelie, 2012). Group disadvantage can play a role in various ways and at different stages when trying to move up the social ladder. The disadvantages seem to be most noticeable with regard to educational attainments (Kristen & Granato, 2007; Crul, et al., 2012). Whereas some authors argue that there is a particular 'Turkish' disadvantage due to so-called ethnic penalties (cf. Seibert & Solga, 2005), others consider the socioeconomic background, the lack of host-country specific capital such as language efficiency or the composition of social networks as determining factors for their disadvantage (Kristen & Granato, 2007; Kalter, 2006; Ali & Fokkema, 2015).

National institutional arrangements can be seen as the particular opportunity structures that shape a given professional context (cf. Schneider & Lang, 2016). One could therefore claim that they determine the margins that are available for individuals to improve their social position. For example, there is historically a close link between citizenship and educational systems. One could argue that whereas contemporary education increasingly takes into account the cultural pluralism of societies, previously "the project of schooling served primarily to uphold the existing power structures within the nation-state" (Mitchell, 2003, p. 390). Individuals from disadvantaged groups who manage to adapt to the institutional arrangement that hold them back, often experience 'being one of the few'. That is to say, they accomplish something exceptional, while this exceptionality in itself hints at the existence of structural

inequality. Therefore, I conceptualize in this dissertation the steep upward mobility as an outcome that is a result of overcoming several structural obstacles (Crul, et al., 2017).

1.2. Studying the exceptions to the rule: the ELITES project

Sociological definitions of the elite hint at the ability to identify actors that are capable to affect outcomes in a given field. In his classical study on the US American power elite, Mills (1956) acknowledged the challenge to clearly demarcate the meaning of the term since "by lowering the line, we could define the elite out of existence; by raising it, we could make the elite a very small circle indeed" (p. 18). The political scientist and anthropologist John C. Scott (2008) calls for a clarification of the social group of elites while he deems it necessary to distinguish between class, status and elite positions since the latter may reflect the former two (p. 34). Elite power seems to be manifested in cultural rules and material exchanges. Whereas according to Bourdieu (1984), elites are dominant players having field specific dominance, some argue that an elite position implies at least having the potential to affect outcomes beyond the subject's principal domain since social elites move between different fields (cf. Zald & Lounsbury, 2010; Greenwood, 2008).

Elites are intermediaries of social processes, while they take part in the construction of a majority of 'others' against which they distinguish themselves. Contemporary elites are perceived as dynamic and 'mobile' whereas it is argued that elite formation itself has complex, local specifications that need to be analysed in order to find out who they are, what roles they have, and how they gain access to elite positions (Savage & Williams, 2008, p. 2). Acknowledging the impact of financialization on present day social relations, elites can be regarded both as causes and a product of this ongoing process, "a group of intermediaries whose power rests on being able to forge connections and bridge gaps" (ibid. p. 4). Elites are actively constructing a majority of 'others' against which they distinguish themselves (Shore, 2002, p. 4).

With regard to elite formation among descendants of migrants, Fennema and Tillie (1999) have conducted pioneering work on the first political elite of immigrant background in the Netherlands. They have also put ethnic civic communities and immigrant policies into an international comparative perspective (2004). More relevant comparative research was done on the topic of Turkish organisations in Berlin and Amsterdam (Vermeulen & Berger, 2008). In addition, Jens Schneider (2001) conceptualized 'discursive elites' and their role in the

participation of new groups in key institutions in Germany. Other researchers investigated political elites and emerging leaders of immigrant descent in France (Wihtol de Wenden, 1988). In Sweden, Catarina Lundqvist (2010) examined the occupational choices of migrants and their descendants. Lessard-Phillips, Fibbi and Wanner (2012) have made clear that especially descendants of migrants from Turkey are hardly represented in high-status positions.

The exceptionality of individual success against the background of a group disadvantage becomes even more obvious if one looks at the absence of 'newcomers' in so-called 'elite' positions. Gatekeepers are crucial in opening up the participation of new groups in key institutions. This is evidenced by the enduring inequalities found in hiring practices (Raad, 2015). Exceptional individuals, from an otherwise disadvantaged group, might themselves become a resource for others with a similar starting position, once they achieve upward mobility. Consequently, they might function as 'door-openers' through formal and informal networks, professional associations and concrete practices at work.

1.3. Research design

The research sample of the ELITES project is the potential upcoming elite in three occupational fields (law, education and corporate business). Without claiming that by interviewing professionals in leading positions, we have interviewed a clearly demarcated exclusive group of people. The individuals we talked to are still relatively young but very ambitious. Of course, one could argue that these individuals are not really an elite in the traditional sense of the term (cf. Mills, 1956; Harvey & Maclean, 2008). This is also because many of them are defined 'ethnically' as the succeeding chapters will discuss in more detail. Since they managed an astonishing steep upward mobility and thereby moved into new social spheres already, it is to be expected that some of them might move even 'higher', thereby accessing positions that challenge the reproduction of the very inequalities that they have experienced throughout their careers. Therefore, we consider our respondents as the potential upcoming elite in their professional field.

The findings of this dissertation are based on in-depth interviews conducted with high-status professionals who are descendants of migrants from Turkey. For this purpose, a total of 54 corporate business professionals of Turkish descent were interviewed in Stockholm, Berlin, Frankfurt, Paris and the Randstad area (Rotterdam, Amsterdam and The Hague). More specifically, professionals in the field of business services are the primary objects of this project.

The sample of this project includes professionals who are active in financial intermediation, mainly banking, as well as professionals offering so-called knowledge intensive business services such as consulting or auditing. The fact that the business sector is fragmented and diverse was a challenge for this research project. It was difficult to distinguish professionals in comparable positions across four countries in this major field. However, selecting a single industry or sub-sector right from the beginning of the fieldwork would have neglected the intertwined character of corporate business professions.

We interviewed more male than female business professionals. Due to the over-representation of males in high-ranking business positions (cf. Oakley, 2000), we decided not to even this out by interviewing more female professionals. We aimed to interview people with at least five years of professional experience in the field of professional business services. The majority of respondents were therefore between 30 and 45 years old at the time of the interview. Moreover, a majority of respondents have been working in the field of professional business services for around ten years or more. We deliberately selected people from low-educated families, but we could not access this information on respondents' parents in all cases, so there are some exceptions to this as well. But in general, most of the respondents have parents who had not been educated past primary school level. In contrast to this, the respondents had usually accomplished a much higher level of education.

Most of the interviewed business professionals were university graduates, whereas there were a few with only a high school diploma. The respondents hold different types of positions, although most of the respondents work in higher managerial jobs. The age difference among respondents is a good explanatory factor for the variations here, so that it is likely that the younger professionals may still move up into higher positions with more responsibilities. It is important to point out that not all of the 54 conducted interviews are equally represented in the analyses. The methods sections of each chapter offer information on the sub-samples, respectively. However, all conducted interviews were part of the knowledge generating process on the professional field and the pathways and experiences therein.

Analyzing the content of these interviews meant to infer phenomena through a close reading of relatively small amounts of textual matter and also the re-articulation (interpretation) of given texts into new narratives (Krippendorf, 2004). These narratives are of course to a certain extent also shaped by my own socially and culturally conditioned understandings, which is why I chose to place a personal account at the beginning of this dissertation. I will return to this

account in the concluding chapter that discusses the implications of my findings. Whereas interviews from the other fields of the ELITES project were employed for a comparative perspective in chapter four, this dissertation mainly examines the emergence of newcomers in leading positions in the field of professional business services.

1.4. Theorizing newcomers in leading professional positions

The children of guest-workers from Turkey are among the most disadvantaged groups in their respective societies with regard to education, access to the labour market, and occupational attainments (Heath, Rothon, & Kilpi, 2008). Often the experienced disadvantage is explained by making reference to their low socio-economic background (cf. Van Tubergen & Van de Werfhorst, 2007). Several theoretical approaches try to explain the gradual decrease of differences over time in terms of an assimilation to overcome boundaries established by the dominant majority (Portes & Zhou, 1993; Alba & Nee, 1997). Another strand of literature focuses on the drive that is transferred on children by their parents. Accordingly, their success is motivated through their parents' struggle and sacrifice (Kao & Tienda, 1995; Louie, 2012). Several studies in European countries have confirmed this argument by explicating the importance parents give to education as a means for social mobility (e.g. Rezai, et al., 2015; Schnell, 2015; Keskiner, 2015).

Recent studies have attested to the importance of both national and local contexts for second generation success (Crul & Schneider, 2010; Crul, Schneider, & Lelie, 2012). However, relationships in professional contexts are not immune to power-relations in the society at large. Even though, a few individuals manage to surpass the structural barriers and emancipate themselves in the labour market, they cannot prevent being perceived as a member of a marginalized ethnic group for which social boundaries remain an obstacle to overcome (Alba, 2009). In this dissertation, I examine narratives and experiences of individuals from a disadvantaged group in leading positions of an occupational field that is placed in a predominantly international context. In order to achieve their steep upward mobility, these newcomers have to learn how to deal with their group disadvantage, while they are also required to adapt to the professional demands of this context.

1.4.1. Learning to deal with group disadvantage

While acquiring the skills necessary to succeed in a specific professional context, individuals are socialized into distinct professional identities through dominant discourses and practices. But professional identity is also situated and subjective (Forester, 2012). Subjective experiences in the end determine what kind of professional identity individuals take on. This is in line with Lave and Wenger (1991) who introduced the concept of situated learning in order to understand the interactions that constitute learning and experience. Accordingly, the meaning of being a good business professional is negotiated throughout their career trajectories. People can learn to deal with their disadvantage also by making use of the possibilities their ethnic background offers (Waldring, Crul, & Ghorashi, 2014).

In fact, structural disadvantages perish only slowly while often taking a huge personal toll from the individuals who try to overcome them. Therefore, it is important to contrast narratives and experiences, since they are in a dialectical relationship with each other. Narratives are after all, nothing but a reflection on experiences presented as a coherent line of thought. The one dimensional and linear way success often is portrayed often hides the hardships encountered along the way (Friedman, 2014). By asking them to reflect on their experiences, the respondents identified several factors related to their parental background that played a role throughout their pathways. Many argued that they had to overcome these obstacles themselves since their parents could not help them in an instrumental manner:

> We were all lonely rangers, we have done a lot of things on our own. We were always the first one. I was the first Turk in elementary school, in high school, in college, in the department where I was working. I've always been the first. (male, CEO of an IT-company, Amsterdam)

> There was no role model or mentor there who showed the way, who could have said, pay attention to this or that, try internships in your areas, or someone who could have opened doors here and there. And then, one had to work hard to make it on one's own. This entailed that one looked a little at what other fellow students did, whose parents were academics. It was just like that. That proved to be a very promising strategy. (male, regional head of finance in a multinational service firm, Frankfurt)

The only thing most parents could do was to provide them with emotional support and give them some financial help during their studies or at the beginning of their careers (cf. Rezai. et al., 2015). The respondents grew up learning to cope with their disadvantaged starting position, which was often also seen as an additionally motivating factor to 'make it'.

The vocabulary of the free market and its business world contains a perspective which, once absorbed by social agents, helps to shape practices. These practices in turn reproduce the

conditions that give rise to that vocabulary in the first place. The prime example of this is the way success and failure are framed in neoliberal achievement narratives. Individuals who can be considered successful in a field, make sense of their unique life experiences and interactions with others in order to explain their success against all odds. The implicit tautology of the narratives (i.e. I am successful because I had what was needed to become successful), hints at how social inequalities are reproduced through the story of the exception to the rule. Because, if one follows the train of thought that explains success through success, a lack of it among disadvantaged groups can only be explained by referring to the fact that this outcome is caused first and foremost by these individuals themselves. Such an achievement narrative emphasizes personal characteristics and individual agency while marginalizing the importance of structural factors. This outlook can stigmatize failure and those individuals who suffer from it, while it can perpetuate existing inequalities (Lewis, 1993; Jost & Banaji, 1994; Jost, Banaji, & Nosek, 2004).

1.4.2. Adapting to professional demands in an international context

Individual pathways of corporate business professionals take place in national contexts. This is also the level in which they are continuously confronted with exclusionary practices (Kristen, 2002; Crul, 2015; Schnell, 2014; Crul, et al., 2012). At the same time, the interviewed professionals live and reside in local often superdiverse and international contexts which also shape their occupational field and vice versa (Crul, Schneider, & Lelie, 2013). This context can offer the means for a counter-discourse as well as enable individuals to follow alternative pathways into leading positions. The original disadvantage that stems from individual background characteristics can sometimes be turned into an advantage, so it enables their inclusion in high-status positions of the labour market. This ambiguous situation is a core element of the respondents' achievement narrative and social mobility experience.

Based on collective negotiations of common discourse and practices, professional identity construction is not necessarily dependent on the categorization of individuals into ethnic groups. One could even argue that professionalism necessitates the minimization of individual differences. However, this does not mean that it is blind towards them as the acceptance of cultural diversity is a necessary condition for conducting professional work. An individual's 'cultural background' is not meant to pose an impediment which reinforces the belief in equal opportunities, meaning that the personal background is to be ignored and only current performances should be acknowledged. This is especially the case in the business sector which

is structurally more open towards newcomers (Kupferberg, 2003). Such a professional context provides a framework in which individual differences can be employed as an occasional asset for individual professional identity development. Individuals thereby are able to turn alleged cultural differences that often cause group disadvantage into individual advantage by presenting it as an evidence of competence that increases their 'employability' (Boltanski & Chiapello, 2005).

Emancipating oneself in the labour market does not mean that one is immune towards marginalization as the experiences of subtle discrimination that descendants of migrants in professional leadership positions are still faced with demonstrate (cf. Waldring, Crul, & Ghorashi, 2015). However, the respondents don't simply accept remaining in a vulnerable position, rather they position themselves as flexible professionals who are able to adapt to the demands of their professional field. The in-betweenness is not a hindrance to their success, it is a part of it as it offers an alternative repertoire of agency (cf. Ghorashi, De Boer, & Ten Holder, 2017). That is to say, while it is certainly not easy to be confronted with questions that contest one's belonging as it is often the case for descendants of migrants, having achieved an exceptional social mobility, this group can also counter these contestations by presenting themselves as good professionals who can perfectly satisfy contemporary labour market demands in the field of professional business services.

1.5. Overview of chapters[3]
This dissertation explains how individuals from disadvantaged minority groups negotiate their individual background while developing their professional selves. The results indicate that their professional identity development is the result of a dialectical interplay between their achievement narrative as exceptional individuals from a disadvantaged group and the actual experience of their steep social mobility. Their condition of in-betweenness as low-status group members in high-status positions is an important element of their professional self-conception. Many respondents in this study have to engage in the negotiation of boundaries when trying to explain their achievements. In contrast to professionals with native parentage, be they upper or

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[3] It is important to mention that this dissertation is based on four peer-reviewed publications, and therefore some sections might overlap. I have kept most of the original wording of the individual chapters which also resulted in slight differences with regard to the anonymization of the respondents throughout the dissertation. This decision was taken to ensure complete anonymity of the respondents, whereas the displayed information varies according to the subject matter of the respective chapters.

working class, the migration of their parents provides them with an additional frame of reference for their achievements. Belonging to a disadvantaged group, they have to deal with a majority of peers of a similar background who have encountered more problems throughout their careers.

The second chapter addresses the issue of exceptional achievement narratives. The main objective is to explain how occupationally successful individuals, who allegedly belong to a disadvantaged group in their respective societies, internalize and modify the dominant conception of achievement within the context of international business. However, even professionally successful children of migrants who attain high-status positions experienced national conditions that impede their opportunities. The third chapter pays particular attention to three ideal type alternative career paths, which socially mobile children of migrants from Turkey follow based on their experience of typical national conditions that hinder their advancement. Striking similarities across four European countries provide evidence for the increasing standardization of their occupational field, whereas variation lies among individual responses to structural barriers. The analysis aims to illustrate that being able to acquire a leading position in this predominantly international context is not in itself a way to surpass the impact of national conditions on career paths. The findings once more indicate how success and failure are not simply two opposite points but rather should be seen as a continuum.

With more than three million residents, Germany is the country with the largest Turkish community in the European Union. Turkish migrants and their descendants are among the most excluded minority groups in Germany. Therefore, the fourth chapter examines the choices and reflections around making use of one's ethnic background as part of one's professional capital. The underlying assumption is that on the one hand, second generation professionals want to be evaluated based on their merit only. On the other hand, their professional self is closely intertwined with their social self, and the way others see them. This often results in situations that force them to reassert their professional legitimacy because they do not want to be pigeonholed in an ethnic niche or as 'the Turkish colleague'. The chapter presents a study of this complicated process for the prospective elite among descendants of migrants from Turkey in Germany in three different occupational fields (law, education and corporate business).

The dissertation also discusses how an essential part of their professional success stories is to be very reluctant to label potentially discriminatory encounters as such in order to not portray themselves as victims. It seems that studying their 'contested belonging' provides another entry

at their experiences as newcomers in leading professional positions. Therefore, chapter five examines how descendants of migrants from Turkey who occupy leading positions in the field of professional business services deal with their feelings of belonging against the background of their steep upward mobility. Their attitude towards place attachment and spatial mobility illustrate their constant struggle to be accepted, while their in-betweenness becomes an important element of their professional self. The conclusion will revisit the findings of this dissertation while it will also provide a discussion of its implications.

2. Turning disadvantage into advantage: achievement narratives[4]

This chapter explores how descendants of migrants from Turkey present their professional achievements within the framework of struggle and success, while they try to avoid victimization. Their narratives emphasize the benefits of being exceptional and different in the competitive context of the corporate business sector, with its emphasis on innovative performance. In the face of group disadvantage, they differentiate themselves from other descendants of migrants from Turkey (with less successful careers) by stressing the role of personal characteristics and individual achievements. This is a common feature in the respondents' narratives in all three sites.

2.1. Introduction

Children of migrants from Turkey are among the most disadvantaged groups across Western Europe in regard to education, access to the labour market, and occupational attainments (Heath, Rothon, & Kilpi, 2008, p. 228). However, some manage considerable occupational achievements in spite of their potentially disadvantageous background. Classical approaches in migration research suggest explaining this phenomenon by looking at the decrease of ethnic and socio-economic differences over time in terms of assimilation to boundaries established by the dominant majority (Portes & Zhou, 1993; Alba & Nee, 1997). According to Neckerman, Carter and Lee (1999), individuals can make strategic use of a set of cultural elements usually associated with a minority group in order to accomplish economic mobility in the context of group disadvantage. The idea of second generation advantage (Kasinitz, Mollenkopf, & Waters, 2004; Kasinitz, et al., 2008) emphasizes the drive to become successful among immigrant parents and their children, arguing that the second generation is better equipped to function in a multi-ethnic and diverse environment.

While recent contributions emphasize the importance of considering institutional variations across different national contexts with regard to differing outcomes (Crul & Schneider, 2010; Crul, Schneider, & Lelie, 2012), existing approaches to intergenerational social mobility usually do not focus on narratives of personal success or failure. Literature on intergenerational social mobility of children of migrants often theorize integration as a reachable endpoint by putting emphasis on educational and occupational performances, while there is a lack of studies investigating the consequences of these subjective experiences. Therefore, the central research

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[4] This chapter is based on an article that was published as: Konyali, A. (2014). Turning disadvantage into advantage: Achievement narratives of descendants of migrants from Turkey in the corporate business sector. *New Diversities*, *16*(1), 107-121.

question of this chapter is: *How do successful adult children of migrants from Turkey narrate their occupational achievements?* With the heterogeneity of the Turkish[5] second generation in Western Europe in mind, this chapter addresses exceptional achievement narratives of persons whose lower educated parents migrated from Turkey to Germany, France and Sweden.

As part of the ELITES project that is researching successful[6] children of migrants from Turkey across four countries (Germany, France, Sweden and the Netherlands), this research in particular examines achievement narratives based on empirical data gathered through 18 qualitative interviews with corporate business professionals[7] in the metropolitan areas of Frankfurt (am Main), Paris and Stockholm. The main objective of this paper is to examine how occupationally successful individuals, who allegedly belong to a disadvantaged group in their respective societies, internalize and modify the dominant conception of achievement within the context of international business.

Many respondents in this study have to engage in the negotiation of boundaries when trying to explain their achievements. Being in comparable positions to the businesspeople in Lamont's study on the French and American upper-middle class, they could also be regarded as men and women of considerable power who "frame other people's lives in countless ways as they conceive, advise, hire, promote, select and allocate" (Lamont, 1992, p. 13). However, in contrast to professionals with native parentage, be they upper or working class, the migration of their parents provides them with an additional frame of reference for their achievements. Belonging to a disadvantaged group, they have to deal with a majority of peers of a similar background who have encountered more problems throughout their careers.

According to Mills (1959), the sociological imagination should take into account both individual lives as well as societal histories while trying to understand how they relate to each other. The ability to shift one's perspective is essential in order to elucidate the links between the 'personal troubles' of individuals and 'structural issues'. The importance of an approach

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[5] It should be noted that 'Turkish' does not claim to objectify the alleged ethnic belonging of individuals. Therefore, it should also not be perceived as an imposed homogenization of this group's diversity, but as a conceptual simplification to identify the parents' country of origin.

[6] The often interchangeably employed concepts of success and achievement both include a strong normative element since societal discourses as well as distinct opportunity structures shape their construction. Whereas the notion of achievement indicates the role of performance and agency, success (as well as failure) rather refers to a condition.

[7] Professionalism is a concept identifying symbolic resources (re)producing occupational orders based on expertise and craftsmanship (Schinkel and Noordegraaf 2011). The term 'professionals' as it is used here denotes that most of the persons involved have followed specialized training, although the business sector seems rather open towards newcomers and career changers due to its emphasis on innovation and performance.

that focuses on individual narratives lies in its ability to provide insights to the complex and sometimes contradictory subjectivities on the interweaving of identities, educational pathways and occupational achievements. Findings that are based on individuals' own representations and understandings of these relations could shed light on the wider implications of these narratives.

2.2. Theoretical framework

In order to understand how corporate business professionals whose parents migrated from Turkey frame their achievement narratives, a theoretical framework is presented in three interrelated sections: The first section briefly describes how group disadvantage can affect life chances of individuals; the subsequent section briefly discusses how (perceived) individual difference can be beneficial within the context of international business; the final section conceptualizes achievement ideology as a meritocratic perspective that might downplay structural inequalities by explaining success and failure as an outcome determined by individual agency.

2.2.1. Exceptional individuals from a disadvantaged group

The construction of identities is a contingent process of assignment and assertion, which in turn leads to social dispositions and agendas. The categorization of individuals into groups often influences their trajectories, and while one can occupy different positions in a variety of groups at the same time, both individual and collective identities are defined by making use of external 'others'. 'Construction sites' such as politics, labour markets, residential space, social institutions, culture, and daily experience can affect the salience of identities (Cornell & Hartmann, 2007). The co-occurrence of labelling, stereotyping, separation, status loss, and discrimination leads to the stigmatization of groups, which affects life chances of individuals. That is to say, when people construct categories and link them to stereotypical beliefs, individuals might have to deal with a devalued, or 'spoiled' social identity (Link & Phelan, 2001, pp. 363-365; Goffman, 1963).

Recent comparative research confirms that children of migrants from Turkey are facing higher risks of unemployment, often report unfavourable treatment experiences while job-seeking, and they have a lower proportion among professionals and executives (Lessard-Phillips, Fibbi, & Wanner, 2012, pp. 170, 190, 192). More specifically, in Germany, there is a widespread

perception of sociocultural 'integration deficits' of the Turkish second generation which is disadvantaged in terms of employment, income levels and returns from education concerning occupational attainment (Worbs, 2003; Kalter & Granato, 2007). In France, there are persistent difficulties for the Turkish second generation to enter the job market in general and, more precisely, in acquiring high-status occupations (Simon, 2003; Silberman, Alba, & Fournier, 2007). In Sweden, unemployment rates are consistently higher for children of migrants than for their native parentage peers. Again, the Turkish second-generation has lower probabilities of employment and lower levels of earnings (Westin, 2003; Behrenz, Hammarstedt, & Månsson, 2007).

Salient labels are dependent on the context and not everyone has to cope with the same consequences of an ascribed group identity. Nevertheless, it can be argued that when entering into professional careers and climbing up the social ladder, the so-called second generation is embracing new roles while simultaneously challenging their marginalization based on ascribed group identity. Therefore, achievements of individuals who allegedly belong to subordinate groups can be subject to a 'politics of exceptionality' (Cuádraz, 2006). Instead of considering their achievement in relation to institutional processes and structural opportunities, they are seen as individual exceptions to the usual pathways of group members. The following section discusses to what extent perceived difference can help individuals to advance in spite of group disadvantage.

2.2.2. Diversity within the context of international business

The notion of diversity within the context of international business is twofold: The entrance of minority group members into leading positions implies equal opportunity for individuals regardless of their background. However, there is also the potential for individuals to make use of their perceived difference by presenting themselves or being perceived as having an inherent competence within the context of international business, due to their immigrant background. Their perceived difference is not only to be tolerated by employers, clients and colleagues alike, but this 'cultural background' has the potential to enhance their individual careers.

In contemporary neoliberal 'knowledge economies', information is the essential commodity (Castells, 2000). This allows for both competitiveness and achievement to be presented as resulting from individual competences. Boltanski and Chiapello (2005) identify that the new spirit of contemporary capitalism justifies occurring transformations in the labour market with

a new value system, highly influenced by multinational companies that emphasize the need for individual agency in post-industrial economies. The project-based nature of occupational positions makes career development dependent on individual characteristics which define one's 'employability' (Boltanski & Chiapello 2005, p. 185).

A neoliberal market framework promotes a drive of individual success in order to benefit from the possibilities of a global economy. In such an environment, profit is the main criterion for evaluating products and services (Bourdieu, 1998, p. 128), whereas cultural competence can become a strategic device for individual benefits. So that, for instance, people who are supposedly able to operate in different cultural worlds because they are aware of relevant differences while doing business, can make use of diversity for competitive advantage in the global marketplace (Mitchell, 2003). This is in line with Boli and Elliott (2008) who argue that the contemporary emphasis on diversity masks the individualization of cultural differences, which turns the self-directed, egalitarian, empowered individual into the most meaningful and valued social entity.

2.2.3. Achievement ideology: Justifying the status quo

While Bourdieu (1977) thinks there is a strong reproductive bias built into structures, Giddens (1979) claims that structures are both medium and outcome of practices that constitute social systems. Following these conceptions, Sewell Jr. (1992, p. 19) came up with a theory of structure, defining it as "sets of mutually sustaining schemas and resources that empower and constrain social action and that tend to be reproduced by that social action". This implies a concept of agency as a constituent of structure, while an agent is capable of exerting some degree of control over social relations. However, individuals can access different kinds and amounts of resources for transformative action, depending on their social positions (Sewell Jr., 1992, pp. 20-21).

Neoliberal thought normatively associates achievement with exemplary individuals (Ong, 2006; Demerath, 2009). When corporate business professionals regard the principles of the market as the legitimate regulatory mechanism of their activities, structural inequalities become part of the meritocratic system, in which individuals are accountable for different outcomes. Individual achievements of subordinate group members can also be conceptualized as the result of a resistance with subversive potential (Carter, 2009). However, a system justification perspective seems applicable in order to understand why members of disadvantaged groups

accommodate and rationalize the status quo, thereby both internalizing and perpetuating inherent inequalities (Jost & Banaji, 1994; Jost, Banaji, & Nosek, 2004).

A system justification perspective enables one to perceive individual differences as determinants of inequalities. The mechanism at work is comparable to the 'American Dream' narrative; it is available for everyone, but the very fact that it exists is only due to the obliteration of the impossibility that everyone can simultaneously live the dream (Žižek, 2002, p. 64). As a result, "the gratification of the upwardly mobile" can be complemented by "the pacification of the deeply poor", who might then believe that they have to turn things around themselves or remain accountable for their own failures (Hochschild, 1996, p. 87). There is a general consensus among psychological literature stating that individuals tend to assume more personal responsibility for success than for failure. They also interpret and explain outcomes in ways that have favourable implications for the self (Mezulis, et al., 2004). Whereas social science literature rarely theorizes the implications of presenting someone as an achiever, social psychological literature enables a more thorough understanding of the how and why people present themselves strategically, depending on the context and the social position they occupy (see Jones & Pittman, 1982; Goffman, 1959).

Individuals usually interpret achievement against the backdrop of previous experience. Indeed, according to system justification theory, people tend to justify the way things are, especially if their experiences tell them that change is hardly possible. One way to do this is by using stereotypes to differentiate between themselves and others while taking their own achievements as an evaluative standard. This naturalizes and appropriates inequality by emphasizing the role of individual characteristics (Jost, Banaji, & Nosek, 2004, p. 889).
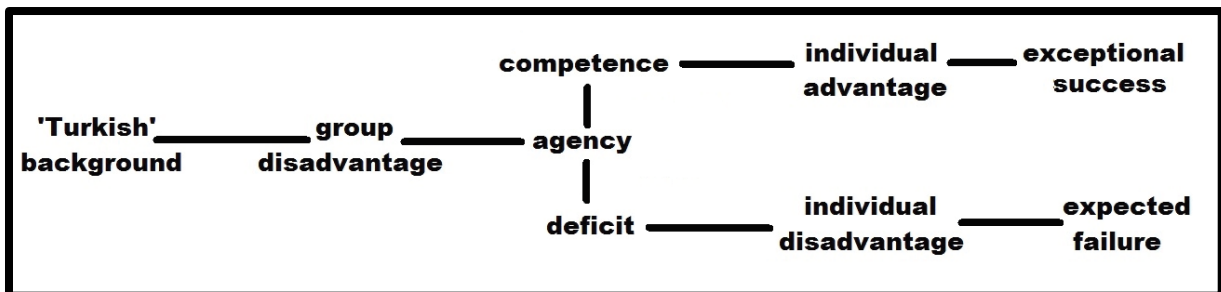

Figure 1. Turning disadvantage into advantage according to achievement ideology.

Figure 1 shows how, according to achievement ideology, even potentially disadvantageous background characteristics, such as having parents who migrated from Turkey, can be transformed into perceived competence and individual advantage subsequently. As agency paves the way for both success and failure, those who fail to turn things around are responsible for the fact that they have to cope with constant disadvantages caused by their background.

2.3. Method

2.3.1. Data collection

Professionals whose lower educated parents migrated from Turkey are the primary sample of this research project. Data was collected by conducting qualitative in-depth interviews in the metropolitan areas of Frankfurt, Paris and Stockholm. Whereas Paris and Stockholm are the capital cities as well as the economic and financial centres of France and Sweden, respectively, Frankfurt can be considered the financial capital of Germany, accommodating several major financial institutions and commercial banks. According to Sassen (2000), Paris and Frankfurt are two central nodes in a network of global cities binding international finance and business centres. The 2012 classification of the GaWC (13 January 2014) inventory of world cities places Frankfurt, Paris and Stockholm in the 'alpha' category of global cities.

Data collection started with a mapping of professionals in leading positions of the corporate business sector in each setting to make sure we would be able to talk to people in comparable positions. The final selection of respondents was based on at least one of the following criteria: (1) persons having organizational and managerial or employee responsibilities within a company; (2) persons who are working in a senior position in a smaller service firm (including owners and self-employed professionals); (3) persons who are in a specialist or expert position within a company. These criteria account for the diversity of professions in financial and professional services that are interrelated, as professionals can switch between (sub-) sectors and positions.

The initial aim was to talk to professionals with at least three years of relevant work experience, which resulted in differences within the sample, as some professionals were more experienced or in more senior positions than others. Since snowballing was employed, this fieldwork might leave out some professionals who fit the criteria but who were either not as 'visible' or whose social networks were not accessible. Respondents across these three sites work in knowledge and capital-intensive service positions with an emphasis on financial and professional services.

There are three typical characteristics for the professions in the sample: First, they have an inherent international character. Second, there is quite some diversity concerning educational and professional pathways. Third, they are relatively prestigious, although they are not so much based on high educational credentials (as compared to traditional professions such as law and medicine).

Interviewers collected information on their career trajectories, asking questions about their family background, social networks, their sense of belonging, as well as their work ethic and career goals. They were loosely structured; in other words, semi-standardized. Each interviewee helped structure the conversation with answers and comments, although the same set of key questions was used for each interview (Fielding & Thomas, 2008, p. 247). In addition, respondents could raise their own issues so that, on average, the interviews took around 1 ½ hours. The interviews were conducted in German or Turkish (Frankfurt), French or Turkish (Paris) and English or Turkish (Stockholm). While the author of this chapter conducted all interviews in Frankfurt and Stockholm, two trained researchers collected data in Paris. Anonymity of all respondents was guaranteed beforehand, so that delicate information could also be accessed in an atmosphere of a frank discussion.

2.3.2. Overview of sample

The core empirical material in this paper consists of 18 corporate business professionals (12 male, 6 female) in Frankfurt, Paris and Stockholm (4 males and 2 females in each setting). Turkey concluded labour recruitment agreements with Germany in 1961 (revised in 1964), with France in 1965, and with Sweden in 1967 (Akgündüz, 2007, p. 96). Respondents' birth years and their parents' year of migration roughly reflect the post-World War II labour recruitment patterns from Turkey to Germany, Sweden and France (see Figure 2). The fact that the oldest average sample is based in Stockholm, in contrast to the youngest sample in Paris, can be explained by the following reasons: First of all, the sample includes respondents who migrated with their parents at a young age (sometimes referred to as the 1.5 generation) as well as some whose parents reached their destination country as refugees. Secondly, Turkish labour migration to Sweden mainly consisted of independently arranged migration which also occurred before the recruitment agreement. Finally, it was only after 1970 that France started recruiting migrants from Turkey on larger scale (Akgündüz, 2007, pp. 94-111).

Table 1. Overview of respondents' year of birth and their parents' year of migration

	Frankfurt	**Paris**	**Stockholm**
Respondents' year of birth	1968-1976	1971-1986	1962-1973
Parents' year of migration[8]	1962-1973	1971-1988	1963-1971

In most cases, both parents of the respondents were born in Turkey and migrated to Germany, France or Sweden between the late 60s and early 80s. The majority of them conducted low-skilled manual labour upon migration, while only a few managed to set up their own businesses. Generally raised in their parents' destination country, some respondents also spent (parts of) their early childhood in Turkey before they were reunited with their migrant parents. While the sample also includes individuals, who attended secondary school and followed vocational training, most respondents obtained a university degree, predominantly within the subject areas of economics and finance.

The respondents' work experience in the area of professional and financial services falls within a range of 3 to more than 20 years, with most professionals having more than 10 years of experience. A majority of them were employed at a multinational company at some point in their career. Professional pathways illustrate the intertwined character of corporate business services. Whereas some worked their way up within a single company over many years, others changed their employer as well as their area of expertise more frequently. Likewise, some respondents left their employee position in a multinational company after several years in order to start up or work for a smaller company.

2.3.3. Method of analysis

Since the aim of this paper is to explore individual achievement narratives, the collected data was analysed according to an issue-focused approach as described by Weiss (1994). This enables a focus on dominant tendencies while also taking into account nuances and alternative perspectives. Moreover, it allows empirical material to challenge theoretical preconceptions and vice versa. These four interrelated analytic processes are involved in this approach: coding, sorting, local integration, and inclusive integration. Coding links the data to theoretical pre-

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[8] These are the years when one of the parents first entered the destination country. Usually the respondents' mothers followed (up to a few years) later, as recruited labour migrants or in terms of family reunification.

conceptualizations. This was done using the qualitative data analysis software *Atlas.ti,* which was also employed to sort the interview material subsequently. Once the material was sorted, it was locally integrated by summing up and interpreting relevant sequences. Finally, inclusive integration "knits into a single coherent story the otherwise isolated areas of analysis that result from local integration" (Weiss, 1994, p. 160). That is to say, the researcher created a sociological account of the issue as a whole by connecting analytical sequences.

2.4. Analysis

In accordance with the theoretical framework presented above, the first analytical sub-section considers how respondents talk about the role their parents' migration played in their educational pathways. The second aspect focuses on how they narrate their professional position and the way it is connected to having parents who migrated from Turkey. The final section explains to what extent their achievement narratives help them to exclusively differentiate themselves as exceptional individuals from a disadvantaged group.

2.4.1. 'I had to make it': Benefit and burden of an intergenerational drive to achieve

Professionally successful descendants of migrants often present their educational pathways as a continuation of their parents' migration project, which was driven by the desire to improve life prospects. In the narratives, one observes the crucial role that parents played in stressing that education was the key to success in their destination countries:

> My dad always told me, always do everything that you want, but study, and if you need to redo your studies, then redo your studies, but study; I think that at that moment I saw the value of studying more. (Mr. Güven[9], Paris)

> And that was actually her greatest wish that what she [his mother] could not achieve, that we do that. That we go to school, that was the most important thing actually, that we are successful, we go our own way, become independent. (Mr. Altay, Frankfurt)

Whereas some parents intervened more actively in critical moments, others simply conveyed the message that education was crucial and a primary reason for the struggle and sacrifices they were enduring upon migration:

> Our parents were always triggering us. That is very important. Like 'look, these things are difficult, focus on studying and developing yourselves and work in better jobs'. (Mr. Şahin, Stockholm)

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[9] Respondents' names were changed in order to maintain their anonymity.

There was a clear demand to strive for educational and subsequently occupational achievement, and respondents often identified an unequal starting position as a result of their parents' migration. They indicated that the unequal starting position might have been caused by the fact that their parents were not highly educated, since parental support was mostly of an emotional kind. Nevertheless, they emphasized the crucial role of supportive parents as the basis for their subsequent achievements, thereby making explicit the link between their parents' migration project and their individual pathways:

> (…) that we study here, study abroad, that we speak multiple languages, that we are internationally trained (…), these are all achievements of my parents at the end of the day. (Mr. Kaya, Frankfurt)

Whereas respondents from Frankfurt mentioned that they experienced difficulties predominantly in the early years of their educational pathways (sometimes due to spending parts of it in Turkey), respondents in Paris stated how they found out about the importance of a grande école degree to access a leading position in the corporate business sector. Those who could not attend elite business schools had to take longer routes to meet the requirements in order to advance in the labour market. Respondents in Stockholm who attended university also stated they had difficulties to adapt, especially in the beginning. However, across settings, respondents emphasized that they had the will to become competitive, helping to level the playing field:

> We saw everything for the first time. Compared to the others, we were not competitive in the first couple of years of education. But as the years passed, one's own efforts and desire entered the picture and we started to become competitive. Their [referring to his native parentage peers] level of knowledge remained the same, but working hard, we[10] moved vigorously. A distinction began to be seen during the last year of college, I started to take the lead. (Mr. Toprak, Paris)

Ms. Suna (Frankfurt) attended a Turkish class within the German school system first; she remembered that the main point of it was to prepare her to return to Turkey. She claimed that her parents did not play a major role in her educational pathway. The fact that she went to the lower level of secondary schools in Germany was never questioned by them: "because the children of the neighbours also went there". Ms. Göksu (Stockholm), who did not attend university, remembered that her parents did not prioritize education either:

> They did not know the language, they were working in factories, and they did not spent time with their kids. So, the only thing they thought was to earn money to make ends meet. (…) That's why that what the first generation has done,

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[10] In contrast to his reference to his native parentage peers, the context of the interview does not help clarifying whether the respondent also refers to his peers with a similar parental background, or whether he uses 'we' as a rhetorical means in informal Turkish language to talk about himself.

blocked us a bit. They did not tell us that education is very important and therefore, we did not mind.

Ms. Onur (Paris) also had to deal with rather moderate parental support, even though they accepted her career plans. She said that, even as a young child, she had a drive to do something exceptional, but her mother told her: "okay, do, but don't do too much". The following statement seems to summarize the alternative view on the role immigrant parents played in their children's pathway:

> Our mother and our father came here and they felt a lot of pain. It is as if that pain, even if they did not want it, maybe they were doing this without knowing, constantly felt like a burden on you. (…). Constantly it is like their story; their pain is on your back.

Although the small sample size does not allow for further generalizations, in contrast to most of the predominantly male respondents, some female respondents' drive to achieve also originates in an individual will to challenge parental expectations: "It was really me and my will to do it more than anything else" (Ms. Altın, Paris). In contrast, most male respondents present themselves as the embodiment of an intergenerational drive to improve life chances. One could argue that 'making it' while having parents who migrated from Turkey means that a general pattern of overcoming disadvantage is part of the individual achievement narrative across sites. Existing differences in institutional arrangements certainly caused nuances in their narratives, to the extent that they identified different issues as obstacles. However, what the so-called second generation corporate professionals have in common is that they internalized their parents' migration project, which stimulated a drive to climb up the social ladder, in spite of all these obstacles.

2.4.2. 'I made it because of who I am': Turning disadvantage into advantage

Talking about how they managed to get to their current professional position, some pointed out the importance of turning their potential disadvantage – that arises out of their alleged belonging to a disadvantaged group – into an advantage:

> Actually, my mentality, my way of thinking is like that. So, no matter what kind of difficulties there are, it is necessary to turn it into an advantage somehow. (Mr. Şahin, Stockholm)

Most respondents emphasized that perceived difference can be considered a valuable attribute that one can make use of professionally. They pointed out that there is an inherent advantage to persons who grew up in two cultures because of the multiple viewpoints they have. Considering themselves as "different people, more openminded" (Mr. Toprak, Paris), they assert knowing

"both cultures" (Mr. Gündoğan, Stockholm), and they reflect on the role their background played in their professional pathway as "an advantage, because it was somehow interesting" (Mr. Altay, Frankfurt). However, it is also important to avoid being stigmatized and not being perceived as an 'average foreigner', Mr. Güçlü (Stockholm) argued. Stating that "not everyone can do this, because this is really people management", Ms. Cengiz (Frankfurt) conceives her abilities in providing services as given since she has a Turkish background.

Others make use of their alleged differences by taking over business responsibilities that are, for instance, related to Turkey, or have to do with their migration background in general. Such as Ms. Topal (Stockholm), who used to be the diversity manager in her company: "(…) where I work, there is no one like me. So, it's a plus. So, it literally adds colour (laughs)". Most of the professionals consider using their exceptional attributes to their advantage in near future, if they have not done this already. Mr. Beyazıt (Frankfurt) or Mr. Aydın (Stockholm) especially focused on emphasizing their 'Turkish' background on the labour market in order to get to their positions. It seems that especially professionals with broader managing responsibilities that involve frequent interpersonal encounters can profit from an ascribed cultural competence, as they underline the importance of showing an advanced understanding towards their clients.

Interestingly, the tendency of professionals to emphasize difference as something valuable is also mirrored in the way they deal with potentially discriminatory encounters, saying that there is a value in dialogue and constantly explaining oneself to people, instead of being offended right away:

> Then suddenly, people understand you. Suddenly persons who were unsympathetic, who were unsympathetic to others and who were perhaps discriminatory for others, suddenly, they are sympathetic. (Mr. Beyazıt, Frankfurt)

> With time, you also need to understand the other a little bit. You got to be a little relaxed. Not to be aggressive. There's no reason to get into a discussion. (…) But I have a few attributes, my religion, I have Turkish roots, these seem interesting to them, if you market it like this, it is going to be good. (Mr. Toprak, Paris).

Some respondents presented a more cautious picture of the role alleged differences play in people's pathways. For instance, Mr. Eren (Frankfurt), was more reluctant in directly ascribing what he called "a multicultural competence" to persons with a migration background; he makes it also dependent on their educational credentials:

> Otherwise the cases of failed integration would not exist, I would say. (…) But in case of an academic with a migration background, I would say that he has that. Yes, prejudging I would suppose that he in any case has that.

Mr. Uzun (Paris) said that for a long time he has omitted the fact that he speaks Turkish on his CV when applying for jobs:

> Afterwards when I started at the company, I have never hidden my origins but at the very start, at least, I did not want to be excluded directly because they saw 'Turkish' written down.

There were also some professionals in each city that felt openly discriminated against by certain statements from colleagues or clients at work. Mr. Gündoğan (Stockholm) argues that "sometimes you actually need to speak the local language better than the natives". Mr. Kaya (Frankfurt) could not adapt to the organizational culture within other companies in Germany, which is why he started his own. The female respondents' narratives also seem generally less determined to attribute advantage to their background. Reflecting on her pathway, Ms. Onur (Paris) said that her background in Turkey often seemed interesting to potential employers, but she still sees it as a cause of disadvantage, which requires her to be more driven than others: "you are constantly running behind. The gap is closing but you are still in the back". Even these alternative views implicitly conceptualize achievement as primarily determined by individual agency, which is in line with an achievement ideology present in their stories, as the following section will show.

2.4.3. 'If I can make it, every one of us can make it': Achievement ideology

The achievement narratives present stories that both praise and blame individual actions. They emphasize that in spite of all obstacles, everyone can make it:

> I think that people will have to realize that everything is possible. Everything is possible, we have to stop looking at things negatively and start looking at things in an optimistic way. (Mr. Güven, Paris)

Admitting there might be some truth to discrimination, most see individual responsibility as the main factor for achievement and underachievement. For instance, stating that she is not typically Turkish, Ms. Cengiz (Frankfurt) argued that a lot of persons with a migration background fail to make something out of their capabilities:

> This is my experience, yes, I've started to deliberate relatively early on about what I want to be. (…) I believe that people don't do this sufficiently and I also think that parents can provide little support, because they themselves have this immigrant background.

When they talk about the reasons for the failure of others with a similar background, they deny virtue to persons whose labour market performance is deemed inferior:

> They always look at it from a short-term perspective: 'how can I make money tomorrow?' If you think about the short-term at the age of eighteen, the best

> thing of course is to work in a restaurant, but what will happen in the long term? If they cannot think about this, their mothers and fathers have to They also don't. (Mr. Toprak, Paris)

> I mean I see this with Turks, which often annoys me. Looking for an easy route, the short cut. It is just not always the short cut, sometimes you simply have to work hard, right? This is how it is. (Mr. Altay, Frankfurt)

Respondents often see themselves as an illustration of how far one can get as long as one is willing and has a goal. In turn, when asked about reasons for higher unemployment among young people with a migration background, they argued that they do not do enough:

> [Inequality of chances] is maybe 3% or 5%, let it be 10% of the reasons, but the remaining 90% are provided by other reasons and one of the biggest reasons is, we need to do much more, we have to send thirty instead of three applications. Or we have to send 300 instead of 30 applications. (Mr. Beyazıt, Frankfurt)

> Whereas they have all elements in their hands, all the things that they could do, they do not even realize this. (…) young people lack a strategic job searching. If you really want to work, you will find it. So I believe. (Ms. Onur, Paris)

Mr. Şahin (Stockholm) points out that there's a need for positive examples that show that it is possible. This was the reason for him to follow what he calls an 'idealistic career' next to his professional one. He founded an association focusing on Turkish youth in Sweden:

> We said that everything is a struggle. We made it, you can also make it. This reasoning we tried to inject. And this to an extent worked out. Because after I finished university, this generation, most of these persons, let me not say most, but about half of them started studying at the university. This means, if there are positive examples it works.

It was also often expressed that hard work alone is not enough and that one needs support, luck and resilience, but Mr. Erdinç (Paris) is one of the few who explicitly mentioned the role of unequal conditions caused by more structural constraints: (…) [w]hen you don't have the knowledge you don't know where to go". This, however, did not lead him to conclude with less emphasis on individual agency than other respondents: "if you work, if you inform yourself, you can be everything that you want". His belief in individual agency was also nurtured by a religiously driven work ethic: "Allah gives to those who work".

A few other respondents also acknowledged reasons for individual frustration, even though there might be the will to succeed. Such as Mr. Eren (Frankfurt), who mentioned the segregation of classes according to ethnic groups when he went to primary school. Accordingly, he states that 90% of pupils with a Turkish migration background went to the lowest secondary school category in Germany. Obstacles and frustration due to being perceived as 'different' play a prominent role in Mr. Uzun's (Paris) reflections, as well. He suspects a 'glass ceiling' that kept him from moving further upward:

> I tell myself I comply with all the criteria; I have done everything that I needed to do, what is there still left to do? I say, what is the last criterion that I don't have?

He wondered whether this is the same discriminatory criterion that causes persons with 'different' names to apply more often in order to get a job interview. This did not prevent him from thinking that his case illustrates how one can manage to achieve one's goals "despite all those obstacles".

Most respondents tell a story in which they stick out as exceptional individuals from a disadvantaged group. The discourse is shaped by an achievement ideology in which performance is evaluated from an agency-driven perspective, which often results in the differentiation of others with less exceptional career. They argue that personal characteristics explain why they made it while others did not.

2.5. Conclusion

While there is a lack of European sociological literature on narratives of personal success and failure, some U.S. American research confirms that people tend to explain their own success as well as others' failure through individual agency (cf. Hochschild, 1996). The primary motive of this chapter was to examine occupational achievement narratives of adult children of migrants from Turkey in the corporate business sector across three sites. Upwardly mobile children of migrants from Turkey present their own trajectories as a continuation of their parents' migration project which played a crucial role in stimulating their drive to achieve. They also take parental experiences as an additional frame of reference to evaluate their own position. Accordingly, achievement not only occurs in spite of whom they are, but is primarily caused by their self-conception, paired with an adaptive and optimistic stance towards difficulties they face.

Their narratives display similarities with some nuanced differences across contexts. In all three settings respondents have to cope with a group disadvantage. They are aware of this when they tell their exceptional story, as they always emphasize how they managed to overcome this disadvantage. In Germany, respondents especially underline the lack of resources in the early years of their educational pathways. In France, the grandes écoles still seem extraordinarily important in offering a shortcut into the labour market. The standardized compulsory primary education and generally high quality of universities in Sweden is why respondents do not identify access to institutions as a problem, but rather the adjustment to requirements. Once,

however, they manage to adapt themselves to these requirements, their success becomes evidence of a functioning system. In addition, an increasingly internationalized corporate business sector seems to contribute to a comparable Turkish second-generation experience that is rather similar across settings. That is to say, since they managed to bypass structural obstacles provided by local and national contexts, they themselves became part of a professional context whose dominant discourse is shaped by an achievement ideology which seems rather similar across settings.

Respondents clearly demonstrate an awareness of existing constraints and they were confronted with difficulties foremost in their educational pathways, but they also emphasize that ambition, opportunism and hard work can overcome these challenges. Their proven ability to adapt themselves to difficult situations strengthens their belief in and their justification of the status quo. Unwilling to simply accept an inferior position in society based on a disadvantaged group identity, they even attribute part of their achievements to it. Some of them even make professional use of their perceived difference, literally turning group disadvantage into individual advantage, making it a strong case for their own 'employability' and a main reason for their exceptional success (Boltanski & Chiapello, 2005, p. 185). This becomes obvious in the ways in which they deal with potentially discriminatory encounters, as well, as they avoid critically confronting and exposing these controversial experiences as such. Moreover, they are even critical towards those that do feel offended. For them, being different thus not only refers to being different compared to the majority population, but also being different from others with a similar background (cf. Cuádraz, 2006).

Their justification of the status quo happens at the expense of the already disadvantaged group (Jost & Banaji, 1994). When referring to the reasons why others do not manage similar achievements, they also put the blame for 'failure' on the individual level, pointing out the deficits of others. Thereby, they not only demand that other children of migrants be as resilient and proactive, but they also expect other parents to be as supportive and motivating as their own. This might, in turn, strengthen the stigmatization of an already disadvantaged group (Link & Phelan, 2001), while the counter-narrative, in which society needs to provide equal chances, was hardly found. However, although the small sample size does not allow for further conclusions concerning a gendered pattern, it is noteworthy that female respondents appeared to have a less resolute narrative on their own success and others' failure than their male counterparts.

There is a general tendency to stick to the narrative of achievement ideology that states that chances will come your way if you try hard enough. Even those corporate business professionals that feel a certain responsibility towards others from a similar background do this by once more stressing the necessity of individuals to invest in their goals. One could also argue that respondents are left with no other way to explain their achievements. Even if they are aware of their exceptionality, they might not really believe (anymore) that structural changes in the society are going to happen soon or should realistically be expected. So, it seems they can almost not dismiss individual factors to make sense of their own position. Nevertheless, they thereby accommodate and rationalize the status quo by both internalizing and perpetuating its inherent inequalities (Jost, Banaji, & Nosek, 2004).

Given that the selection of respondents was based on a certain professional position, the so-called 'dependent variable', one could argue that a comparative perspective is secondary to this chapter's argument. Nevertheless, it is remarkable that the narrative on the necessity to turn disadvantage into advantage was found in a similar fashion in all three cities. The similarities of achievement narratives across sites confirm the influence of a neoliberal emphasis on individual agency in post-industrial economies (Boltanski & Chiapello, 2005). Still, findings from this research cannot be easily generalized to other professional contexts, as they are based on a specific sample of corporate business professionals. Because of this, research conducted in other areas, such as law or education, may yield different outcomes. In the research that may follow, including a group of native descent in comparable professional positions, as well as focusing on institutional differences concerning issues – such as labour market entry or the role of social networks in professional pathways – might further our knowledge on the role of group disadvantage in individual career trajectories.

3. International opportunities on the way up: alternative career paths[11]

This chapter examines the career paths of descendants of labour migrants from Turkey in the field of professional business services. The findings show how respondents reflect on their professional career as a process constituted through personal interactions while displaying their perceptions of restrictive national conditions that affect their professional success in this field. There seem to be three discernible "ideal type" alternative career paths for newcomers. First, the corporate career path consists of building a widely recognized "international" profile. The second alternative is a "niche" path that emerges by making use of one's individual background in order to climb up the corporate ladder. Finally, there is a path of self-employment for individuals who have experienced blocked opportunities and therefore want to become "independent" of corporate hierarchies.

3.1. Introduction

Despite the persistence of institutional barriers (Crul, Schneider, & Lelie, 2012; Heath, Rothon, & Kilpi, 2008), some children of migrants from Turkey enter leading positions in European labour markets and achieve steep intergenerational social mobility. Contemporary research on career paths and perspectives indicates that ongoing social changes contribute to an increasing standardization on the one hand, and an emphasis on the importance of building a "boundaryless career" on the other (Arthur & Rousseau, 1996). These careers are dynamic and prone to change, emphasizing the importance of individual agency in order to initiate challenging transitions. Broadly speaking, the business sector is one of the primary settings where one can encounter these "boundaryless" paths.

Business professionals nowadays almost necessarily have to be capable of working in an international context since the increasing integration of economies entails a continuous movement of migrants, ideas, knowledge, information and skills (Favell, Feldblum, & Smith, 2007). Especially persons employed in corporate settings usually have to follow specialized training that equips them for their increasingly standardized capital- and knowledge- intensive service jobs. Zikic, Bonache, and Cerdin (2010) distinguished three dominant career orientations of qualified migrants − embracing, adaptive and resisting − each with its own distinct patterns of motivation, identity and coping. Similar to their analytical approach that they base on subjective interpretations of objective barriers, this chapter identifies three "ideal

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[11] This chapter is based on an article that was published as: Konyali, A. (2017). International opportunities on the way up: alternative career paths of descendants of migrants from Turkey in the field of professional business services. *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, *40*(2), 264-282.

type" alternative career paths for children of lower educated migrants from Turkey who occupy leading positions in the field of professional business services.

The empirical data consist of qualitative in-depth interviews with descendants of migrants from Turkey in four countries (France, Germany, the Netherlands and Sweden). The aim is to answer the following research question: How are obstacles towards upward mobility reflected in ideal type career paths of business service professionals with lower educated migrant parents? According to Weber (1978), ideal types are crucial sociological definitions that allow an understanding of complex correlations through rational simplification. The main practical purpose of the ideal type is that one is able to abstract certain distinct phenomena from the realm of complex societal reality and thus it enables one to scientifically describe "a form of social action that is rarely or never found by itself" (Collins & Makowsky, 2005, p. 113).

Zhou et al. (2008) propose a subject-centred approach in order to methodologically underline processes by identifying key choices at specific points during individual careers. They argue that this turns both "success" and "failure" into rather vague sequences. This is not to say that the author of this chapter assumes a direct correspondence between the attitude and behaviour of respondents. In fact, the analysis targets an explanation of their meaning making within the interview situation while placing their perceptions within wider institutional contexts and the processes of change therein (Lamont & Swidler, 2014). The subsequent theoretical framework conceptualizes the role of group disadvantage, institutional barriers and professional standardization on career paths. This is followed by a description of the methods, which precedes the presentation and discussion of the main findings. Finally, the chapter concludes with a deliberation on the wider implications concerning the emergence of newcomers in leading professional positions.

3.2. Theoretical framework

Institutional arrangements structure connections between social origin and educational attainment as well as between educational attainment and labour market positions. In their classical study, Lipset and Bendix (1991, pp. 1-2) define social mobility as "the process by which individuals move from one position to another in society – positions which by general consent have been given specific hierarchical values". Stratified societies have to cope with a limitation of mobility as agents who occupy high-status positions generally try to preserve their privileges for members of their own group. Although this "reproductive bias" makes it difficult

for newcomers to get ahead and establish themselves, it cannot eliminate the occurrence of social mobility due to inevitable structural changes in demand and supply. According to Bourdieu (1984), people can counteract these reproductive tendencies only as an outcome of interactions between specific rules of the field, individual habitus and capital.

Bourdieu (1990) further developed a theory of practice according to which individual actions in the field follow an instinct of common sense. He asserts that contingent experiences determine differences among individuals who share similar social and economic conditions. Social agents act according to their "feel for the game" that is inscribed in their habitus and they develop strategies that are adapted to their needs. That is to say, children of migrants face structural challenges that threaten to obstruct their economic success in their respective societies. In achieving upward social mobility they experience situations to which they, as newcomers, have to adapt in order to achieve their goals (also see Keskiner & Crul, 2017). As it will be explained in more detail later on, this study argues that professional business services is a field in which ongoing professional standardization might lead to alternative career opportunities.

3.2.1. National conditions: group disadvantage and institutional barriers

The national institutional context and a potential group disadvantage play a role at different stages of the career development of descendants of migrants from Turkey (cf. Crul, Keskiner, & Lelie, 2017). One prominent way these national conditions shape individual careers is through the education system: In France, knowledge on the different possibilities when moving into higher education is crucial in order to make appropriate choices. Therefore, immigrant parents' low educational levels can pose an obstacle for the educational career of their children especially in post-secondary and tertiary education (Crul, Schneider, & Lelie, 2012). In the Netherlands, only about a third of the Turkish second-generation youth gets a recommendation for an academic track. The alternative through the "long route" in which pupils start in lower vocational education in order to reach higher education, takes up to three years longer than the direct route (Crul & Heering, 2008). Likewise, studies demonstrate that in Germany a disproportionately high amount of migrant children receive a recommendation for the lowest level of secondary education (Kristen, 2002).

Furthermore, various studies have documented that descendants of migrants from Turkey have to cope with the consequences of group disadvantage when entering the labour market. To give

a few specific examples from the four countries: in France, descendants of migrants from Turkey are segregated in specific occupational sectors and women in particular do not hold high-status occupations (Silberman & Fournier, 2007). In Sweden, young people whose parents were born in Turkey are less likely to have a job that fits their qualifications than young people without a migration background (Behtoui, 2013). Thus, in spite of higher levels of education when compared to Germany, France and the Netherlands, Behtoui (2015) identifies a restricted access to social capital for descendants of migrants, which limits their social mobility opportunities. Recent research in the Netherlands underlined the difficulties experienced when trying to gain access to the labour market by portraying the subtle discrimination during the job application process for second-generation Turkish and Moroccan professionals (Waldring, Crul, & Ghorashi, 2015). In Germany, children of migrants from Turkey also have lower returns from education with regard to occupational attainment (Kalter & Granato, 2007).

On the one hand, national institutional arrangements can create and reinforce structural disadvantages that have consequences for individual life chances. On the other hand, skill and credential thresholds characterize the private sector (Waldinger 1994). Social networks can help individuals to compensate for a lack of instrumental resources in their immediate environment. "Significant others", as Granovetter (1973; 1983) calls them, can literally provide one with what is needed to become a successful professional in a specific area of work. Coleman (1988, p. 98) defines social capital as a particular kind of resource consisting of social ties that facilitate action. However, social capital can also constrain actions through closure. Although this is necessary to create cohesive trustworthiness, it can also lead to the exclusion of certain persons from entering a social network.

Bourdieu (1986) defines capital as accumulated labour that can be either materialized or embodied since it exists in three different forms (economic, cultural and social). He sees economic capital at the root of all the other types of capital, but states that the latter two forms in particular contribute to the reproduction of social structure by being a transformed and disguised form of the former:

> As an instrument of reproduction capable of disguising its own function, the scope of the educational system tends to increase, and together with this increase is the unification of the market in social qualifications which gives rights to occupy rare positions. (Bourdieu, 1986, pp. 254–55)

That is to say, education, connections and titles can turn individual improvement and useful personal contacts into markers of distinction that could be valuable on the labour market. However, these forms of capital are merely potential resources for the achievement of social

mobility. Their convertibility into economic capital is dependent on individual interactions with structural conditions.

Whereas traditionally, institutional arrangements were under the control of the nation-state, increasingly private actors such as transnationally operating companies influence individual trajectories. According to Merton (1968), social structure can limit individual access to economic success through institutionalized means. Those lower on the socio-economic ladder are particularly vulnerable due to their relatively disadvantaged starting point. Furthermore, not only formal and open discrimination, but also informal or everyday practices and routines put newcomers (be they migrants, their descendants or women) at a disadvantage in professional contexts. Liu-Farrer (2011) underlines this by showing how an ethnic occupational niche might be the only way for some individuals to overcome barriers. However, the ongoing international standardization might lead to the emergence of alternative ways in which individuals can adapt to conditions that could hinder their professional success.

3.2.2. International opportunities: professional standardization and alternative career paths

Examining mobility pathways in different countries enables a better understanding of structural conditions in contemporary processes of social mobility (Crul & Schneider, 2010). However, Lamont and Thévenot (2000, p. 10) state a valid warning for researchers who make comparisons at a national level:

> […] generalizations concerning national differences can be dangerous as they are bound to lead one to overlook variations and the specificity of structured contexts in which people use principles of evaluation. They can also lead one to confirm a view of differences as national character traits attributed to almost all the citizens of a country and expressed in a heterogeneous range of situations.

Multinational corporations on the free market and the homogenization of values, ideas and practices (Ong, 2006) are increasingly challenging the authority of the nation-state over individual trajectories. The subjects of the privatization agenda that is inherent to neoliberalism are oriented towards individual success through increasingly uniform means in order to benefit from the global economy and its de-nationalized opportunity structures (Calhoun, 2002).

This process is also visible in the standardization of careers in the field of professional business services with its mobile professionals that often operate transnationally. Favell, Feldblum, and Smith (2007, p. 21) argue, "nonspatially located forms of capital have essentially interchangeable values in different locations". These forms of capital can sometimes turn into

tools of resilience for individual performances after an individual has been exposed to factors that put this performance at risk (Hall & Lamont, 2013). As it was argued in the previous section, social structure can limit individual access to economic success through institutionalized means (Merton, 1968). However, through pursuing goals by new and alternative means, individuals may bypass structural constraints that decrease the likelihood of their success.

When the second generation acquires middle-class status, they might employ a common set of cultural elements responsive to distinct problems that accompany their situation (Neckerman, Carter, & Lee, 1999). For example, they might mobilize "middle-class ethnic capital" to create professional associations in ethnic communities that provide valuable business skills, networks, and social capital to co-ethnics (Vallejo, 2009). Recent research on the Mexican second generation has shown how, in order to make occupational gains, they have to activate resources in mobility-promoting ways given the demographic, economic and social characteristics of their community. These resources include parental support, advice and guidance from extra-familial mentors, as well as their bilingualism (Morando, 2013).

Kupferberg (2003, p. 102) proposes that the business world might be open to newcomers and change, since it:

> […] thrives on and values innovative business concepts, [and] is generally indifferent to national cultures and gender roles. As an institution, the business world has incorporated the tension between the established and newcomers into its own structure, which explains its dynamic nature.

While acquiring the skills necessary to succeed in a specific professional context, individuals socialize into distinct roles through discourse and practice. In addition to the similarities caused by professional socialization, there are normative pressures to conform through the standardization of educational credentials and inter-organizational networks (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983). However, a full-fledged standardization of procedures in professional work environments seems rather unlikely due to the significance of soft skills and interpersonal relations, which might even reproduce existing group disadvantage (Moss & Tilly, 1996). The fact that employers eventually have to evaluate the "employability" of an applicant reinforces the view that "newcomer" career paths are hardly independent of socially constructed barriers (Salaff, Greve, & Ping, 2002).

Research indicates that professional prestige and privilege can be denied to persons with stigmatized identities (Slay & Smith, 2011). Thus, group disadvantage could reinforce itself, so

that individuals can be subjects of blocked opportunities in spite of objectively fitting the job criteria and having the right credentials. This is why business ownership often seems as a last resort for immigrants and their descendants (Raijman & Tienda, 2000; Sanders & Nee, 1996). It can enable individuals to follow a path that circumvents barriers such as the infamous "glass ceiling". Moreover, the importance of networking as a career management strategy shows that "the burden of responsibility for one's career has shifted from the organization to the individual, with the notion of employability becoming one's career goal" (Forret & Dougherty, 2004). Work relationships are strategically chosen means to career mobility as well as career-defining ends, while negative relationships may be as consequential as helpful ties (Gersick, Dutton, & Bartunek, 2000).

The following section presents a brief overview of the methods employed for this study. The subsequent analytical section shows how ongoing social change, in addition to the emphasis on innovation that is inherent to the field of professional business services, can lead to career path alternatives for newcomers such as descendants of migrants from Turkey.

3.3. Method

3.3.1. Data collection

The empirical part of this chapter is based on qualitative interviews with descendants of migrants from Turkey occupying leading positions in the corporate business sector in France, Germany, the Netherlands and Sweden. The author collected all the data in Germany and Sweden, while the other researchers involved in the ELITES project and junior researchers assisted in the Netherlands and France. This ensured that interviews could be conducted in the national language if respondents were not able or willing to do the interview in English or Turkish. The final selection of respondents was based on at least one of the following criteria: (1) persons with organizational and managerial or employee responsibilities within a company; (2) persons working in a senior position in a smaller service firm (including owners and self-employed professionals) and (3) persons occupying a specialist or expert position within a company.

The mapping of more prominent professionals in each setting preceded the use of the snowball technique to finalize the collection of data. The semi-standardized qualitative interviews collected information about career paths, how their family background had influenced their

work, their social networks and their sense of belonging to their place of work and residence. Moreover, each interviewee helped to further structure the conversation with his or her answers and comments, although the same set of key questions was used for each interview (Gomm 2008). Respondents were also permitted to raise their own issues. The request to record the interviews was explicit and verbatim transcriptions were made afterwards. The anonymity of all respondents was guaranteed beforehand, and this allowed them to share delicate information and engage in a frank discussion.

3.3.2. Overview of the sample

As mentioned earlier, the positions of interviewed professionals in the corporate business sector are diverse. In order to ensure better comparability, the decision was taken to focus on the corporate sector's non-legal business service professions. However, no further limitations were imposed for two reasons: first, the emerging business service elite of Turkish descent is still small and a more restricted definition might have missed key people. Secondly, preliminary analyses showed that the people in this broad category do not differ much in terms of their pathways, the boundaries they needed to cross and the obstacles they had to overcome to attain this position.

The diversity of professions in professional business services, as well as the close interrelatedness of jobs in this field, with professionals often switching between sectors, subsectors and positions, necessitated a decrease of the sample for the sake of securing a feasible in-depth analytical comparison of interviews. Crul, Keskiner, and Lelie (2017) discuss and embed the sample of this research project in more detail. The core empirical material in this paper consists of twenty-one corporate business professionals (seventeen men and four women) in the metropolitan areas of Frankfurt, Paris, Stockholm and Randstad (a region in the Netherlands comprising the four large metropolitan areas of Amsterdam, Rotterdam, The Hague and Utrecht). Table 2 gives an indication of the professional titles they held by providing an anonymous overview.

Table 2. Respondents' year of birth and professional title

Place of residence	Year of birth	Professional title
Frankfurt	1968 – 1976	Director of Finance; Internetworking Consultant; Head of Bank; Senior Specialist; Audit Partner; Recruitment Consultant
Paris	1969 – 1983	Portfolio Manager; Senior Analyst; Product Engineer; Sales Manager; Application Manager
Stockholm	1965 – 1973	Senior Advisor; Management Consultant; Business consultant; Project Manager; Senior Specialist
Randstad	1969 – 1983	Senior Manager; Senior Consultant; Company Owner; Business Consultant; Director of Finance

Usually, both parents of the respondents had been born in Turkey and migrated to their country of destination between the late 1960s and early 1980s. After their migration, an overwhelming majority of these parents occupied low-skilled manual jobs in the respective labour markets. In fact, only a small minority of the interviewed persons had parents who had managed to start their own businesses after their migration. Twelve out of twenty-one respondents were born and raised in their parents' destination country, although three of them were brought to Turkey for at least a part of their primary school education. All of the nine respondents who were born in Turkey joined their parents before reaching primary school age. Most respondents acquired a higher education degree broadly centring on the subject areas of business, economics and finance. However, the collected data also contain three individuals (one in Frankfurt, and two in Stockholm) who only have a secondary school degree. Respondents' total work experience in the area of professional business services falls within a range of five to more than twenty years, with most professionals having more than ten years of experience.

3.4. Analysis

The following analysis examines individual career trajectories in four countries with regard to the experiences of descendants of migrants from Turkey. The analytical approach of this chapter assumes an increasing standardization of career paths in the field of professional business services. In general, careers can be seen as individual projections about occupational status and

prospects (Hughes, 1964). External events might disturb career plans to the extent they could be subjectively perceived as individual turning points (Strauss, 1959). This could necessitate a reorientation or re-evaluation of career paths (Zikic, Bonache, & Cerdin, 2010). The resulting alternative pathways can be considered as successful attempts at contributing to, or even remaking the mainstream. In accordance with the central research question of this chapter, the following analytical sections present three ideal type career paths in the field of professional business services that emerge against the background of experienced obstacles: building an international profile; carving out a professional niche; becoming independent from corporate hierarchies.

3.4.1. Building an international profile

The first ideal type consists of a career path that aims at building an international profile that is internationally accepted and recognized. As it was discussed in the previous theoretical framework (cf. section "International opportunities: professional standardization and alternative career paths"), the ongoing internationalization in the business world leads to the emergence of standardized career paths across national borders. This creates opportunities especially for those individuals that experienced disadvantages within a national context due to their individual background. Indeed, respondents mentioned difficult periods especially in their early educational career as well as when entering the labour market. Coming of age, they learnt to deal with difficult situations:

> I was part of those people that did not really know that well the French educational system by then. Nowadays, if someone is good at high school, the university is not the best anymore to get education from, it is better to get into a preparatory programme [classes préparatoires[12]]. (Mr. Uzun, France)

Nevertheless, they adapted themselves to the specificities of national institutional arrangements that potentially reinforced their group disadvantage. This self-confidence is visible in the following statement:

> Until recently, I had a German customer, a German CEO, now he was replaced by someone from Britain and then they asked me whether the fact that I do not have a German contact person anymore is a problem for me. My answer was: "I made it as a Turk in Germany, then I guess I will manage with a few British people". (Mr. Eren, Germany)

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[12] He refers to the *classes préparatoires aux grandes écoles (CPGE)*. These preparatory classes consist of at least two intensive years of training with the foremost aim to prepare undergraduate students for the enrolment in one of the *grandes écoles*.

In general, their career narratives stress that one needs to be capable of recognizing potential opportunities in order to get where one wants to be professionally. Many respondents highlighted the importance of individual skills. There were hardly any differences in respondents' accounts with this regard. A predominant theme was the necessity of a drive to be good at what one is doing. In addition, in spite of the emphasis on having the right credentials, so-called soft skills as opposed to mere formal and technical knowledge were deemed essential to get ahead in the corporate business sector.

There are many subsectors in the field of professional business services. In general, one can state that there are several career options from finance to banking and consulting, and many of these jobs need advanced degrees or specialization. Due to the competence-oriented and innovation-driven nature of these jobs, they seem open to newcomers regardless of individual background characteristics (Kupferberg, 2003). For the professionals who managed to end up in a leading position, the national context had mainly played a role in their past, and was predominantly important during their educational careers. Most professionals argued that the ongoing internationalization of the field works in their favour. Their underlying assumption was that in an international field, the focus would lie more on their professional competences than on their personal background:

> I had a lot of energy and all that international character also suited me, I grew up in the Netherlands which is quite monotonous. And then in the international arena, I was suddenly in a multicultural area where ethnicity is no longer important, and I felt like a fish in water. (Mr. Gencer, The Netherlands)

It seems that the best way to overcome national conditions to their success was to work for an internationally operating firm, or to push for an agenda at work that enables them to build an international profile. Many respondents tried to find work in an international context early on in their careers. They stated that people are simply more used to cultural differences in internationally operating companies. They also noticed that hierarchies are less rigid and more permeable, thereby offering more possibilities for individual development:

> One has to say that this company really works a lot different culturally. They have an open culture. I knew that I would feel comfortable there. (Mr. Bilkent, Germany)

They perceive the international arena quite literally as a "saving" ground that protects them from earlier experienced restrictive national conditions.

It seems that their professional success literally seems capable to move them beyond national conditions. Entering their jobs and subsequently moving up into leading positions, they

experience the importance of interpersonal relations. Since most of their superiors or colleagues were members of the majority population – and they themselves are "one of the few exceptions" throughout their careers, they have to adapt themselves to this social world. The international context plays an important role in their achievement narratives and their rejection of victimization (Konyali, 2014). They can rationalize their situation by linking experienced obstacles to a restrictive national context, but they also persisted and "made it" on an international level. Building an internationally recognized profile seems to be the ultimate evidence for a successful passage through and beyond national career impediments.

3.4.2. Carving out a professional niche

The second ideal type illustrates how some individuals adapt to dominant social structure by carving out an ethnic or migrant niche as a career path towards labour market integration. It is an often-employed strategy to overcome obstacles, exclusionary rules and structures imposed by established groups (Liu-Farrer, 2011). Migrant entrepreneurship can lead to "altered rules of entry and promotion in ways that reduce[s] access to a new set of outsiders" (Waldinger, 1994, p. 28). Here I will show how such a professional niche can provide opportunities for business service professionals. They can present themselves as possessing an inherent competence by doing business with Turkey or Turkish clients within corporate settings and thereby take over leading positions and high-status business responsibilities (Konyali, 2014).

This second ideal type career path in the field consists of following the alternative of working closely within the national context to carve out a niche for themselves based on their individual background characteristics and the specificities of the labour market. The opportunity to represent their company in Turkey was a viable career alternative for some of my respondents. Some respondents grasped the opportunity, for example, when the company announced it had plans to expand to the Turkish market. Respondents therefore made use of a competitive advantage over other applicants, who do not speak the Turkish language or know the country as well as they might do:

> And they asked me if I wanted to go abroad. […] They had taken over a Turkish bank and since I am of Turkish descent and I know the bank well, they thought I could be a good link in that. I left with my family and stayed in Turkey for four years. […] By the end I was managing 1200 men. (Mr. Kule, The Netherlands)

> [After my studies] I had difficulties finding a job. I decided to go to Turkey for a while. Once I returned, I received a call from the French branch of a Turkish bank. I had applied before leaving, but only a year afterwards did they call me

and this is how I started. (Mr. Öztekin, France)

Another respondent noticed that the background of having migrant parents from Turkey helped her to advance professionally in spite of not having a university degree. After a couple of temporary jobs for which speaking the Turkish language was essential, she established herself in a bank by occupying the position of a diversity manager. At the time of the interview, she was participating in an internal leadership programme provided by her company for which her superiors had selected her. Like other respondents, she was very conscious of her rather extraordinary pathway to a leading position in the field, while she also saw herself as an indication of an ongoing change:

> No matter where you look in the bank, there aren't many people with a foreign background. […] However, I feel that there has been an obvious change going on for the past few years. […] And it is going to change even more. (Ms. Topal, Sweden)

Respondents in this ideal type are innovative within the available margins while making use of opportunities. They do this by employing individual background characteristics as cultural competences in order to cater to a specific clientele, or they shift the focus of their activities towards the market in Turkey. This opens up new career possibilities. The emphasis on individual attributes stands in contrast to the increasing standardization of required professional capital that characterized the ideal type career path that was presented in the previous section. It seems that they rely more on individual attributes and less on their credentials:

> Of course the education one obtains is very important in life, but I think above all, and this also goes for you, more than the education you receive, you should know what you want in life. If you know what you want, then education is only your decoration, let me tell you that. No one, neither in my banking career, nor in my previous positions, no one has asked me so far whether I studied at university. I mean they did not ask about my academic career. I work at this bank for thirteen years. About half of these 13 years, I have worked in a professional context where the people I talk to are important persons. The meetings are materially very heavy meetings, but thanks to Allah, my head functions well. This means it works. It is not necessary to graduate from university, or to be an academic. Because in the end, even if you are working in a bank, from a certain position onwards you have to act as an entrepreneur. (Mr. Beyazıt, Germany)

Many respondents recall being "lonely rangers" in various instances. Often, they built up their own network with people who sometimes in a very literal sense taught them about what they need in order to become a successful professional in their area of work. Thereby they often distinguished among so-called internal and external networks. Whereas the former is important to move up within one's current company, the latter are personal references based on the work one delivers that can be useful when one decides to change to another employer, or when one

wants to become self-employed.

3.4.3. Becoming independent from corporate hierarchies

The third ideal type is becoming independent from corporate hierarchies. The sections above illustrated once again that having the professional expertise, suitable credentials, and soft skills and significant others are key factors in corporate settings. In these cases, being successful means to climb up the corporate ladder by building an international profile or a professional niche based on individual background resources. However, success can also come about by seeking new opportunities in case of blocked ones. Self-employment is a typical route to upward mobility for individuals who are confronted with limited opportunities. Although it is often perceived as inferior to professional employment in a corporate environment, self-employment can result in substantial economic mobility (Sanders & Nee, 1996). Moreover, it can also be a means to come to terms with the frustration and discontent that minority group members might experience in corporate settings. Facing barriers to their advancement, they often become independent in order to make up for a lack of recognition and appreciation (Heilman & Chen, 2003).

Indeed, looking at the interviewed respondents, they often linked the plan to become independent to the experience of blocked opportunities. On the one hand, these obstacles are a generic aspect of hierarchies in the corporate environment. On the other hand, respondents also associate them with their ethnic background and the resulting group disadvantage. This is illustrated by Mr. Kaya who tried developing an international profile early in his career by spending a period of his studies abroad, at a time when it was not common to do so in Germany. This made it easier for him to enter the labour market in an international company, which simplified subsequent job application procedures: "that is to say, you then enter a certain circle, where your origins are not so relevant anymore". His career has been shaped by changing positions and companies. After three different jobs in three years, he was recruited to a big company where he stayed for five years. In the end, he also left this company and decided to start his own small firm:

> It is quite clear that you must adapt to the existing culture. And here in Germany that is just the dominant German culture. And if that is not the case or if one has difficulties with it, even if unintended, because there were times, although it has never been my intention, when I just had difficulties integrating.
>
> […]

> Actually, I have the feeling that I am confronted with less rejection being self-employed or working as an independent consultant than as an employee within an organization. First, I am freer. Second, the clients definitely accept me. I do not think it would make a big difference if my name was let's say Markus Hoffmann. (Mr. Kaya, Germany)

Working in small firms with a few colleagues, and self-employment are other recurrent alternative paths we came across in our respondents' stories. Several people in the sample had done so at different stages of their career. While some professionals had been very successful in managerial positions at multinational companies before entering a smaller firm or starting their own company, others used self-employment as a stepping-stone to prove themselves on the labour market, before being headhunted by larger companies. Furthermore, self-employment means setting up an independent business rather than working for an employer, which has both advantages and disadvantages. For example, it means that one is solely responsible for how work is performed, which also entails a certain degree of risk due to the freedom it provides with regard to structuring one's work:

> I was tired of [being an employee] and wanted to run my own business. This business is what I believe in and I think I want to do this. There are advantages to running your own business and your own company. Success actually depends on how you do your work. (Mr. Dost, Sweden)

Thus, instances where difficulties caused individuals to leave corporate settings in order to seek new opportunities, once again indicate that individual success does not necessarily lead to the disappearance of group disadvantage and institutional barriers at the national level. In fact, if professional achievements depend on "soft skills" and being accepted by "significant others" it is often an indication of structural barriers that can potentially interfere with successful professionalism.

3.5. Conclusion

This chapter paid particular attention to three ideal type alternative career paths, which socially mobile children of migrants from Turkey follow based on their experience of typical national conditions that hinder their advancement. Striking similarities across four countries provide evidence for the increasing standardization of the field, whereas variation lies among individual responses to structural barriers. The analysis has shown that being able to acquire a leading position in this predominantly international context is not in itself a way to surpass the impact of national conditions on career paths. There are three distinct alternative career paths across settings to overcome this (see Table 3). The findings once more indicate how success and failure

are not simply two opposite points but rather should be seen as a continuum. It seems that even professionally successful children of migrants who attain high-status positions experienced national conditions that impede their opportunities.

Table 3. Three ideal type alternative career paths

Career path	Perceived impact of national conditions
Alternative 1: Building an international profile	Entering the field and climbing up the corporate ladder in spite of difficulties that are related to the national context → Working in international companies as a way to avoid further impact of national conditions on individual career paths. Credentials provide evidence for professional competence.
Alternative 2: Carving out a professional niche	Experiencing initial difficulties that are related to the national context when entering the field or climbing up the corporate ladder → Carving out a niche is a way to navigate through national conditions in corporate environments by making use of individual background resources.
Alternative 3: Becoming independent from corporate hierarchies	Blocked by obstacles that are related to the national context which prevents them from climbing the corporate ladder → Working successfully in this field by becoming independent from corporate hierarchies through working in smaller firms or becoming self-employed.

The three alternatives are ideal types. That is to say, individuals often experience several transitional career stages. Furthermore, when looking at single cases, one can see that various elements of the different ideal types may overlap. For instance, the "niche" career path might eventually be considered just another way of entering position that enables one to build an international profile. Likewise, the "independent" path could be seen as an instance of failure that provides the counterfactual to the other two alternative career paths that take place in corporate settings. However, whereas some international professionals in the field founded their own firm before being "headhunted" by other companies, others had enjoyed considerable success in the corporate environment before deciding to become independent.

Studying an under-researched group of newcomers such as descendants of migrants from Turkey in leading professional positions, provides valuable insights into how even "successful" individuals experience structural barriers and the impact of national conditions. Although, as Schinkel (2007; 2013) argues, they cannot logically be "outside" of their societies as the

dominant integration paradigm conceptualizes them, migrants and their descendants are continuously confronted with discrimination and exclusion. Nonetheless, the presented ideal type career paths are consistent with the embracing and adaptive career orientations identified by Zikic, Bonache, and Cerdin (2010). That is to say, their reflections on their career paths and prospects were overwhelmingly positive, whereas there was no compelling evidence of a lack of motivation to adapt in the face of obstacles. One might argue that this is simply caused by a self-imposed methodological limitation due to "selecting on the dependent variable" (cf. Crul, et al., 2017). However, this seems only part of the story, as it is more convincing to view their embracing and adaptive attitudes as part of their overall perseverance in seeking opportunities.

4. Professionals made in Germany: employing a Turkish migration background in high-status positions[13]

This chapter emphasises the experiences of the prospective elite among the second generation in Germany by analysing empirical data collected through in-depth interviews across three occupational fields (law, education and corporate business). In spite of their disadvantaged background, some children of lower educated migrant parents from Turkey managed to occupy prestigious leadership positions. Many use their ethnic capital in creative and strategic ways to seek opportunities and obtain access to leading positions. They are now embracing new professional roles and have moved into new social circles due to their steep upward mobility. However, they still have to contend with the fact that their individual mobility stands in contrast to the low-status of the group to which they belong.

4.1. Introduction

Even though the Turkish presence has been part of everyday life in Germany's metropolitan areas for many decades, there is still a continuous public demand for their integration based on assumed cultural differences. Against the background of a negative discursive context and in spite of their disadvantageous Turkish migration background (Crul, Schneider, & Lelie, 2012; Heath, Rothon, & Kilpi, 2008), some children of migrants from Turkey have made considerable achievements in Western European labour markets. Whereas extensive research focuses on the recurrent 'failed integration' thesis, professionally successful descendants have received less attention. However, the so-called second generation is entering 'the mainstream' as defined by Alba and Nee (2009). Climbing toward leading positions, they are embracing new roles and enter new social environments due to their steep upward mobility (Crul & Schneider, 2010, p. 1253).

Those very successful individuals are of course still so-called exceptions to the rule since their individual mobility stands in stark contrast to the overall group disadvantage of people whose background originates from Turkish migration into Germany. Therefore, this chapter aims to examine to what extent this contrast is mirrored in their self-conception; we want to examine the choices and reflections around making use of one's ethnic background as part of one's professional capital. The underlying assumption is that on the one hand, these professionals want to be evaluated only according to their merit. On the other hand, their professional selves

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[13] This chapter is based on an article co-authored by Maurice Crul. That article was published as: Konyali, A., & Crul, M. (2017). Professionals Made in Germany: Employing a Turkish Migration Background in High-Status Positions. *Social Inclusion*, 5(1), 55-65.

are closely intertwined with their social selves, and the way others see them. This often results in situations that require them to reassert their professional legitimacy because they do not want to be pigeonholed within an ethnic niche or as 'the Turkish colleague'.

We will study this complicated process for the prospective elite among the second generation in Germany in three different occupational fields (law, education and corporate business). The two research questions of the chapter are: *1) What does it mean to acquire a high-status professional position in Germany by employing the fact that one belongs to a low-status group? and 2) How does this differ across occupational fields?* Thereby, this chapter will provide an understanding of the patterns which emerge when individuals from a disadvantaged background attain privileged positions by examining the relationship between motivation, recognition and self-perception regarding their career. The data was collected through in-depth interviews with professionals who have lower educated migrant parents. In the following section, we will theorize the consequences of the exceptionally steep individual social mobility and its relationship with social status and group belonging. At the same time, we will discuss to what extent ethnic background resources can be instrumental for one's professional capital. This theoretical framework forms the basis for analysing the professionals' self-conceptions. In the conclusion, we will recapitulate the findings but also debate their implications for the theoretical debate on this issue.

4.2. Theoretical framework

4.2.1. Ethnicity and low-status group belonging

Ethnicity is a concept that distinguishes groups of people from each other, whereas the significance and implications of ethnic identities varies across space and time. Social contexts shape ethnic groups as much as these groups shape them. Human interaction, assignment and assertion construct ethnic identities. They are not fixed and static but changeable, contingent, and diverse (Cornell & Hartmann, 2007). Barth (1969) defines ethnic groups as self-perpetuating, culture-bearing units that are distinguishable from others (p. 296). Thereby, ethnic identity becomes an imperative characteristic which defines peoples' identities and their societal positions (p. 304). Barth's definition emphasises the importance of circumstances by considering the persistent organizational relevance of ethnic identities, even if actual cultural differences might decrease over time (p. 318). This is in line with Brubaker's (2004) definition

of ethnicity as a perspective on the world. Challenging the 'groupist' tone in most theorizations on ethnicity, he propagates a focus on processes that are triggered by the 'ethnic lens'. Our conception of ethnicity in this chapter will follow Brubaker's emphasis on process in relation to social mobility.

According to various studies, descendants of low skilled migrant parents from Turkey can be seen as the most disadvantaged group when it comes to the educational achievement of children of migrants in Germany (cf. Crul, 2015; Schnell, 2014). Therefore, the German case provides a good illustration of how, for pupils from a migrant background, any disadvantages that may be caused by their parents' migration are combined with those which arise from social class affiliation. The first critical turning point having an effect on children's future in Germany is the transfer from primary school to one of the three levels of secondary education. Ample evidence shows that this decision does not solely depend on individual performance, but also on teachers' recommendations, parents' level of commitment and local education policy. Studies demonstrate that the proportion of *Hauptschule* recommendations for migrant children is disproportionately higher (Kristen, 2002).

Children of migrants from Turkey tend to have higher ambitions than their peers which seem to be stimulated by the desire to be socially mobile (Salikutluk, 2016; Schneider, Crul, & Van Praag 2014). This desire is also reflected by their parents' aspirations concerning their children's educational goals (Relikowski, Yilmaz, & Blossfeld, 2012). Notwithstanding, only a very small minority of this group attends a *Gymnasium* (high school) and has thereby the opportunity to receive access to higher education (Crul, et al., 2012).

The effect of a potential disadvantage for children of migrants from Turkey is also visible in terms of there being a longer transition phase from leaving school to entering the labour market, while they also receive lower returns from education concerning occupational attainment (Kalter & Granato, 2007). For several reasons, there are a number of sectors of the labour market which contain very few people with a background of Turkish migration in Germany (Sürig & Wilmes, 2015, pp. 82-86). Only a minority of this group enters highly skilled positions in the labour market. Thus, in spite of the fact that considerable intergenerational progress has been observed, this generation still experiences disadvantages in terms of employment and income (Kalter & Granato, 2007; Worbs, 2003). These overall findings make individuals who have experienced steep upward mobility an exception to the rule.

Institutional arrangements in Germany tend to favour social reproduction which endangers the

social mobility of members of the second generation (Worbs, 2003). Even when controlling for formal educational qualifications, descendants of migrants from Turkey remain disadvantaged, which can be attributed to specific labour market discrimination (cf. Seibert & Solga, 2005; also see Waldring, Crul, & Ghorashi, 2015, for a study on the Netherlands). However, there might be other potential causes of the specific 'Turkish' disadvantage within Germany. First, descendants of migrants from Turkey lack resources, such as instrumental parental support, to a greater degree than other groups. In addition, the ethnic composition of their friendship networks and the fact that they commonly lack language proficiency only further weakens their position (Kalter, 2006). Second-generation Turkish men, in particular, experience higher unemployment, lower re-employment, and higher income-mobility risks at the beginning of their careers due to a lack of country-specific resources which tends to compound their initial disadvantage (Hartmann, 2016b).

The persistence of inequalities is a phenomenon that is not independent of contextual circumstances. Viewing ethnicity as irrelevant because of a statistical insignificance would ignore "the potential causality between ethnicity and social class" (Van de Werfhorst & Van Tubergen, 2007, p. 434). In our qualitative study, we selected professional success as the dependent variable. As it was indicated above, the institutional arrangements in Germany make individual success dependent upon the availability of family resources and personal circumstances (Hartmann, 2016a; Kalter, 2006). This is what makes our respondents a very select group with exceptional occupational achievements in spite of the double disadvantage of coming from a lower class social origin and having a low-status ethnic background (cf. Crul, Keskiner, & Lelie, 2017). That is to say, one could justifiably claim that professionally successful descendants of migrants from Turkey, almost by default, can be expected to come from families that were very supportive of their children's education (Crul et al., 2012; Schnell, 2014).

In order to overcome barriers towards attaining skilled positions, highly skilled members of the second generation in Germany have to overcome disadvantages associated with their status as being from a minority throughout their career trajectories (Schittenhelm, 2011). Achieving exceptional success with a devalued social identity might leave individuals with an "inordinate ambivalence and affective dissonance" (Fordham & Ogbu, 1986, p. 951) and what Ellis Cose (1993) called the "permanent vulnerability of one's status" (p. 41). In spite of professional success, individuals could still be perceived as belonging to the inferior societal out-group. However, paradoxically for the upwardly mobile, ethnicity can also act as a useful social

resource in specific professional contexts. For those that have to deal with a restricted career entry, social and cultural capital coming from their Turkish background and Turkish language skills can become relevant as part of their compensatory strategies (Schittenhelm, 2011, p. 115).

4.2.2. Ethnicity and steep upward mobility

In order to comprehend the professional success stories of descendants of migrants from Turkey in Germany, it is necessary to take into account the relativity of structural inequalities for individual cases. This is illustrated by the exceptionality of our respondents and their success, which came about *against all odds. But how can this success be explained?*

In a previous publication, we described the so-called multiplier effect. We concluded that successful children of immigrants have to make more effort by being more active in using opportunities and loopholes in the system to be as successful as their peers of native descent (Crul, Schneider, et al., 2017). The multiplier effect describes how with each consecutive step in their career they accumulate new cultural and social capital which opens up possibilities to take the next step on the ladder, thereby multiplying their chances of success. This helps them to move up and away from less successful co-ethnics. Although descendants of Turkish immigrants have to overcome their double disadvantage (of ethnic and social origin), their background can also act as a resource which some have used to advance their careers. The reflexivity about their upwardly mobile social identity is an important cornerstone of the multiplier effect. Their starting position within a lower class and background as being a descendant of migrants motivates them and helps them to succeed, although they are aware that they continue to be seen as a representative of a disadvantaged group.

The juxtaposition of ethnic belonging and individual labour market activities is documented in the discussion about migrant entrepreneurship (see Volery, 2007). This type of research, traditionally, has given a lot of importance to ethnic and group-specific resources, arguing that specific cultural properties can enable labour market success (cf. Bonacich, 1973). Recently, there has been increased attention towards highly skilled migrants, often referred to as expats. The emphasis in these studies often lies on temporary skilled migration, knowledge transfer, spatial mobility and networking issues (see e.g. Ackers, 2005; Castles, 2002; Khoo, McDonald, Voigt-Graf, & Hugo, 2007), as well as transnational ties and the way in which they negotiate multiple identities in the context of well-connected global cities (Favell, 2008). However, in contrast to migrant entrepreneurs and highly skilled migrants, second-generation professionals

were either born or raised in the country of their parents' destination. The subjective experiences as belonging to a 'low status' minority group (rather, being perceived as such) are likely to be more influential in shaping their ideas and their narratives about professionalism.

Individuals with an unfortunate social position have to adapt in order to navigate structural constraints (Merton, 1968). Exceptional cases of upward mobility contrast with the image of an unequal and underprivileged socio-economic situation of the migrant majority. Whereas social boundaries are (re-)created through everyday interactions (Elias & Scotson, 1965), Bourdieu argues that agents embody a deep understanding of appropriate behaviour and act within the structural limits of a field. Individual success depends on the convertibility of the different forms of capital an agent possesses (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992). In other words, ethnicity can be a social boundary that impedes social mobility as well as a social resource that individuals can mobilize in the context of upward mobility processes (Pott, 2001). Through the ethnic lens, in reference to Brubaker, the upwardly mobile professionals might be seen as 'Turkish' but they do not fit the stereotype of being poorly educated and doing low-level jobs.

The steep social mobility of the exceptional group we have studied in this chapter has led to its members being able to occupy professional positions in large (international) firms and organisations. Freidson (1999) views professionalism as specialized work that requires abstract, theoretical knowledge, which "cannot be performed mechanically because…the worker must exercise considerable discretion to adapt his knowledge and skill to each circumstance in order to work successfully" (p. 119). Schinkel and Noordegraaf (2011) additionally view professionalism as a form of symbolic capital. Accordingly, its substance is constantly at stake in power-driven internal and external contexts. People adjust to their new roles by trying out 'provisional selves' as possible professional identities, while individual and situational factors shape the repertory of possibilities (Ibarra, 1999). One could argue that professionalism necessitates the minimization of individual differences, but this does not mean that it is blind to individual differences. Especially in international companies, being able to deal with people from different nationalities is considered an important professional skill. Pécoud (2002) identifies the emergence of an economic dimension of multiculturalism, which views ethnic pluralism positively, as long as it contributes to the national economy.

The perception of ethnic difference is likely to be different across professional contexts, whereas it determines especially how 'newcomers' such as individuals with a disadvantageous, lower-status background perceive themselves as professionals. Accordingly, in the business

sector, visible differences can be promoted as competitive assets. This can lead to achievement narratives of professionals who display their success as individuals who managed to turn their initial group disadvantage into an individual advantage (Konyali, 2014). Coming from a lower-class background and being of immigrant descent can also be a resource in the education and legal sectors because it can be employed in order to establish ties with a specific clientele (Rezai, 2017; Waldring, 2017).

Occupational fields offer distinct opportunity structures in terms of the employment of individual background resources (Crul, Schneider, et al., 2017). The fact that even the highly internationalized corporate business sector is not completely open to 'newcomers' is illustrated by various studies that provide further evidence to the existence of a so-called 'glass ceiling'. The education sector with its emphasis on meritocracy and emancipation is principally against making differentiations based on class and ethnicity, although it is undeniable that there is a middle-class bias among the professionals working in the field. The legal sector with its intrinsic emphasis on equality by law for all social and ethnic groups is at the same time a highly elitist profession, making it necessary for individuals to adapt to the dominant means of behaviour while conducting business. Thus, there are also different dynamics to be observed across sectors with either an emphasis on, for instance, differentiation (business) or equality (education), which can affect the role played by background characteristics.

4.3. Method

4.3.1. Data collection

The data consists of interviews conducted within three occupational fields (see Table 3, for an overview of the sample). We have selected individuals working in a professional job who work in mid-level or higher managerial positions. Apart from very few exceptions, most respondents possessed a higher education diploma. As was noted in the theoretical framework, these criteria make them a very select group of respondents. Since we deliberately selected individuals from lower educated families, most of the respondents' parents had not been educated beyond primary school level. This meant that our respondents have usually shown a steep upward mobility. Moreover, individuals were only selected if they had been born in Europe or if they had been raised there and their parents had been born in Turkey. Data was collected through qualitative in-depth interviews in the German metropolitan area of Frankfurt am Main. The

final selection of respondents in the *business* sector included professionals with organizational, managerial or employee responsibilities within a company, as well as professionals occupying a specialist or expert position. In the *legal* sector, we included lawyers who worked as associates or partners in corporate law firms, lawyers who worked independently or for smaller law firms. Finally, the respondents in the *education* field were drawn from various professional positions with educational responsibilities, including teaching, training as well as managerial positions.

Table 4. Overview of sample

	Year and country of birth	**Gender and Position**
B U I S N E S S	1975 (Germany)	Male, Regional Head of Finance in a professional service company
	1976 (Germany)	Male, CEO in banking
	1971 (Germany)	Female, Senior specialist in banking
	1968 (Germany)	Male, Senior specialist in a professional service company
	1976 (Turkey); came to Germany before she went to primary school	Female, Head of Customer Service in banking
	1974 (Germany)	Male, Independent HR Consultant
	1968 (Germany)	Male, Partner in a professional service company
E D U C A T	1977 (Germany)	Male, Head of Public Relations of an educational association
	1967 (Turkey); came to Germany before she went to primary school	Female, Head of training for secondary school teachers at the teachers' academy of the federal state
	1970 (Turkey); in Germany since the age of seven	Female, Secondary school teacher/appointed to the delegation office in the Regional Ministry of Education

I O N	1974 (Turkey); in Germany since the age of two	Female, Legal trainer at key qualifications office of university
	1982 (Germany)	Male, Chair of local educational umbrella association
	1982 (Germany)	Female, Project manager of a youth organization
	1965 (Turkey); in Germany since the age of twelve	Female, School psychologist
L A W	1978 (Germany)	Female, Independent lawyer
	1972 (Turkey); came to Frankfurt before he went to primary school.	Male, Partner in a corporate law firm
	1979 (Germany)	Male, Associate in a corporate law firm
	1972 (Germany)	Male, Independent lawyer, sharing offices in a small law firm
	1981 (Germany)	Female, Associate in a corporate law firm
	1979 (Germany)	Male, Lawyer in a corporate law firm
	1971 (Germany)	Male, Independent lawyer/owner of a small law firm
	1962 (Germany)	Female, Independent lawyer in a small law firm

4.3.2. Data analysis

The semi-standardized interviews collected information about their educational and professional pathways. In addition, respondents could raise their own issues. The anonymity of all respondents was guaranteed beforehand and the authors changed the names displayed in this chapter. For the analysis, we made use of the qualitative data analysis software *Atlas.ti*. The software enabled us to identify dominant themes based on the initial coding of the material. Subsequently, the analysis clarified how the themes related to one another (cf. Bryman, 2015). Two contrasting themes emerged: the first being the importance the respondents attach to ethnic

background resources in the respective professional contexts. This was mainly observable by examining the role of their Turkish migration background at work (cf. Section 4.4.1). The second theme was the importance others attach to this background which was analysed through their reflections on crucial interactions with significant others such as clients or colleagues (cf. Section 4.4.2).

4.4. Analysis

4.4.1. Professionals who meet the demands

Without exception, the interviewed respondents were aware of their disadvantaged starting position resulting from their belonging to a low-status group. Retrospectively, many managed to turn this disadvantage into their advantage by adapting themselves to the professional context in question. Their ability to convert their ethnic capital into a valuable professional resource is a key aspect of their upward mobility (cf. Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992; Pott, 2001). This happens in different ways across the occupational fields. One way to do so is to carve out a niche by catering to a specific clientele or taking over responsibilities that relate to Turkey.

The *business* professionals operate in a predominantly internationalized corporate setting. Making use of background resources to build a professional profile was an important part of their narratives. In the following quote, a respondent working in the banking sector explains how he lobbied his own company to focus more on Turkish-speaking clients. Partly by making use of his 'ethnic capital' and corresponding vision of expansion, he was able to climb the ladder in his company:

> It was my initiative. Before I ended up at this position, I was already quite successful within this company by focusing on the Turkish community…. I told the management that I have a concept in mind…. They found it very interesting. Because, I think when you are trying to work with Turkish people, it is important to be able to conduct that work in their mother tongue in order to show them that you share common values. That makes working with them much easier. Because it is like that, I mean in the end people want to understand and they want to be understood. This is not different in the financial sector. I have told them this very well. I have said that this is why I am so successful here and that we can spread this around the country by multiplying this concept. Eventually, they agreed and a project team was built. (Male, CEO in banking)

In other cases, the use of ethnic resources was only important in a transitional period of careers. Nevertheless, the need to employ one's background of Turkish migration for a competitive

advantage was often present. In general, business professionals assumed that having migrant parents equipped them with skills that helped them succeed in a professional context:

> I think that my migration background has given me a lot of things. I mean it provided me with certain soft skills that enabled me to work towards this position. That for sure. However, nobody said, 'he is a Turk and that is why we will promote him'. Not at all. (Male, Regional Head of Finance)

The use of background resources seems to work slightly differently for professionals within the *education* sector. Many professionals we interviewed were intrinsically motivated, having idealistic reasons for working in the field. Most of them linked it to their own background and the felt need to make a difference. Their motivation to provide education is often linked to working for a clientele with a similar background to themselves. A belief in the necessity for change and their capability to contribute to this change drives them, no matter how small the subsequent changes might still be. These ideas also shape their career plans:

> But when I applied, it seemed important to me that this post will be filled with someone who has an immigrant background and not necessarily that they take me, so it should be someone who is well qualified for this place and, uh, that was what was important to me. I just told myself that it would be a pity if I do not apply and no one else with a migration background applies. (Female, Secondary school teacher/appointed to the delegation office in the regional Ministry of Education)

The ability to recognize themselves as necessary newcomers in this field actually helped some of them to advance in their careers and to acquire their current position. But entering positions that were usually not occupied by persons with a migration background, they also have to cope with being the exception to the rule:

> I find that just I am somehow already quite exotic in my area, in my professional field. And unfortunately, some colleagues who worked here for some time already, are not used to that. So, they look at you and test you. It is not a normality, to say the least. (Female, Head of training for secondary school teachers at the teachers' academy of the federal state)

In the field of *law*, we interviewed both independent and corporate lawyers. Whereas independent lawyers usually have individual clients, corporate lawyers often advise national and international companies. Similar to the respondents in the corporate business sector, many of the lawyers seized the opportunity to specifically take over responsibilities relating to the upcoming market in Turkey and Turkish-German business clients in Germany. These efforts included building active networks in the field. This is illustrated by the fact that next to being a member of the regular German Bar Association, most lawyers we interviewed were also a member of the German-Turkish lawyers' association. In particular, independent lawyers talked

about how this gives them an inherent advantage when compared to other independent lawyers without a migration background:

> Unfortunately, I have to say that I see colleagues who have severe difficulties. Because I can offer a range of services that others cannot. I mean especially German colleagues who have language deficiencies. I have to say that my potential clientele is larger, I get more mandates, and I have more possibilities. For instance, being able to do something like a German-Turkish law firm, that makes a difference. (Female, Independent lawyer)

Similarly, corporate lawyers have been able to move their career forward by actively forging ahead with the 'Turkish' agenda and more, in general, the international agenda of their company:

> I think I made myself quite well known in the last three to four years. I am considered as one of the leading consultants overlooking Turkish transactions, both in Turkey and here in Germany. So, the work I am now performing has a quite strong connection to Turkey. Right now I am managing an acquisition in Turkey. But not only there, also in India, I am responsible as an international advisor. (Male, Partner in a corporate law firm)

Thereby they profit from the perception of others who think that they can bridge cultural barriers as trustworthy and competent professionals. Particularly for those in larger corporate firms, climbing the ladder is a crucial part of their identity as a professional, earning them respect in the company but it is also manifested in their self-perception.

The examples in this section show that 'professional selves' are not only highly affected by disadvantageous structural contexts that operate throughout their upwardly mobile career trajectory, but also by their individual background resources (cf. Ibarra, 1999). It provides them with an additional repertory for establishing themselves in a high-status position. The next section will show how our respondents cope with instances that remind them of the ambiguity that is involved when individuals experience a steep upward social mobility with the help of a background that is usually associated with low-status positions. This 'double-edged sword' is illustrated by situations and encounters that remind them of their disadvantageous background.

4.4.2. Better than 'others' but still inferior?

As we have argued in the theoretical framework of this chapter, having a Turkish background in Germany, means that one is considered as belonging to a low-status group with an inferior position in society (cf. Worbs, 2003). Most of our respondents already belong to a select group of individuals who have survived the stratified German school system that does not frequently provide the children of migrants from Turkey even the chance to reach higher education.

However, as has been illustrated, the fact that there is a large population with a Turkish migration background in Germany and the intertwined business relations between Germany and Turkey can enable individuals to employ their background to their advantage. The tension caused by the usefulness of ethnic resources on the one hand, and the potential threat it poses to the equal treatment of individuals on the other, is present in our respondents' reflections. It is striking that the three different professional contexts we researched each offer different coping mechanisms to refute questions regarding their professionalism.

Respondents in the *business* sector stated that the stigma of being of Turkish descent was a motivating factor to 'do better', whereas they also encountered instances which challenged their professionalism by problematizing their ethnic background:

> There were again and again cases of clients as well as colleagues where I would say that we were not a good match. This could have happened everywhere of course, but there were comments where I thought, 'did he now really mean to confront me with this? Was this really the person he does not like, or the Turk?' (Male, Senior specialist in a professional service company)

Coping with the fact that they belong to a low-status group plays a continuous role in their professional self-conception. They do not want to victimize themselves, which is why they hesitate to label potentially discriminatory encounters as such. However, they also do not want to deny the relevance of their ethnic and social background. The following quote shows that this asks for a constant alertness and continuous effort to be accepted as a professional in the company:

> I think that as a Turk in a German company, you have to make sure that you do not attract too much attention…. Therefore, I think it is important that you are a little more eager to succeed. One at least always thinks about having to be better than the others are. There is some truth to that. (Male, Partner in a professional service company)

Their motivation to be successful, at least partly, also seems to have its origin in their lower-class background as respondents always refer to the hard manual labour their parents conducted; a clear motivating memory to do better. They tend to display a strong individual achievement narrative in which they present their story as one of a constant search for opportunities against the background of a huge group disadvantage (also see Konyali, 2014). Although this entrepreneurial mindset does not protect them from discriminatory encounters per se, it provides them with a work ethic that is in line with the dominant self-made paradigm in the field.

The *education* sector is organized very differently. Professionals in this sector were either motivated to educate students, conduct research or move into administrative positions. They can have a sizable impact on the development of the field as well as on the planning of the educational system.

On the one hand, respondents argued that their ethnic and social background should be secondary in their professional context. On the other hand, they were aware of their exceptional position as someone with a Turkish background and they acknowledged that they are filling an important gap:

> What I am happy about is that children see, 'oh as a Turk you can also reach certain positions'. For instance, here we do not have a single Turkish school principal. In the neighbouring city, we had one…. She told me that children would go to her office to see if she can really speak Turkish. They tested her. And then they were happy, saying 'I also want to become the head of the school'. (Female, School psychologist)

Most of all, they tried to avoid being cornered as a 'special expert' on migrant children only.

There is a very explicit desire for acceptance as a professional:

> Well, this certainly changed in comparison to the founding years of this association. For example, we organized a contest and then many parents of German children were also there of course—they were saying 'you have many Turks in your association, we did not expect this!'—so they could not derive from the professionalism involved that many people with a migration background were part of the organization. (Male, Head of Public Relations of an educational association)

It seems that, in the field of education, those individuals who wish to initiate change within the educational system want to downplay the perception that they work on something meant to exclusively benefit children with a migration background. The educational professionals are very aware of the dangers of being put in the 'ethnic niche', which could damage their image of being professional and competent.

Working in the field of *law* entails again other interactions with clients and superiors and other criteria for acceptance and professionalism. Lawyers are able to solve problems or represent interests but, above all, they are responsible for the compliance with rules by individuals, groups or institutions in all domains of society. In order to become a practicing lawyer, all respondents needed to follow a thoroughly institutionalized educational pathway, including completing undergraduate and graduate degrees, examinations and licensing procedures. Simply put, they had to be willing to commit several years to studying law in order to become a professional.

This institutional set up can also become a legitimizing mechanism when their professionalism is contested:

> Having a foreign sounding name means that one has to prove oneself again and again. This started with my job interview here at this company. I was told the following: 'please tell us something about yourself, so that I can hear if your German is really as good as you claim in your application'…. There were of course others present during the job interview, and I said: 'I hope your colleague sitting next to you is an expert in employment law in order to enlighten you about the consequences of such a question'. (Female, Associate in a corporate law firm)

Consequently, there is also an observable difference among lawyers who work in corporate firms and those who are independent or work in smaller firms. Whereas the former group were motivated by their own success and individual motives, the latter often have the added ambition to provide help. However, what they have in common is their ambition to succeed in making a better living than their parents within a very prestigious professional position.

In general, we have shown that elements of individuals' ethnic background can help them move upwards in the labour market. This is not to say that they do not complicate their experiences on the 'way up' at the same time. Even individuals who are professionally successful cannot avoid the experience of discrimination and of being 'othered'. However, it seems that they are better equipped to reflect on their situation and thereby come up with coping mechanisms that help them avoid a further self-victimization (cf. Slootman, 2014).

4.5. Conclusion

In the German public discourse being 'Turkish' is a category that usually leads to the marginalization of individuals as being lower educated, doing lower level jobs and potentially forming a so-called *Parallelgesellschaft*. These generalizations are an almost daily experience for people of Turkish descent in Germany. This is not to victimize the respondents we discussed in this paper, but it is important to understand how their success was accomplished and seen by others with that societal perspective in mind. It truly happened 'against all odds', as they were not supposed to 'make it'. Their own background, being of lower educated parents from Turkey is constantly reflected in their success stories. They have all attained leading professional positions although there are important differences across occupational fields as these each offer distinct opportunity structures within the context.

The experience in the three occupational fields is different, which has an observable effect on the respondents' claim of professionalism. To begin with, in spite of many recent developments towards internationalization of education, the nation-state continues to determine the arrangements in the educational sector. In contrast to the business professionals who act within an internationally standardized context where intercultural skills are perceived as a prerequisite, educational professionals face a much more ambiguous process of recognition by their colleagues and supervisors. Individual lawyers, in turn, can employ their migration background more straightforwardly in an entrepreneurial manner. Many have started independent law offices focusing on a clientele of Turkish origin. The corporate lawyers are very similar to the business professionals who work in an increasingly international context, which further legitimizes the position they acquired.

The findings indicate that the value of ethnicity as an individual resource across professional contexts is dependent on the organizational importance that is attached to individual difference. The risk of being pigeonholed by parents and other colleagues in the educational field stands in clear contrast to the way corporate companies perceive 'diversity' amongst their staff as an asset. This is not to say that business professionals are not confronted with instances that question their professionalism, as this is certainly the case. However, for corporate professionals, these confrontations occur more on a personal level, which is easier to cope with for individuals when they look at the issue from a professional point of view. Independent lawyers' claim to professionalism and its contestation is similar to the business professionals and their entrepreneurial attitude, they do however lack the strong organizational backing and subsequent acknowledged professionalism that corporate lawyers enjoy.

With this chapter, we also demonstrated the nuances of "ethnical capital" and its relation to being a member of a low-status group. The findings of this chapter point out that employing one's individual background is a 'double-edged' phenomenon. On the one hand, our respondents clearly benefitted from the employment of their Turkish migration background. On the other hand, they also experienced encounters and situations that highlighted the dividing line between themselves and others in spite of their professional success. This underlines the cognitive dimension of ethnicity as "a way of seeing and interpreting the world" (Brubaker, 2004, p. 184). Even if one can see interactions as those displayed in the empirical material as part of the process of 'normalization', one should keep in mind the enduring impact of stigmatization based on being a member of a particular ethnic group, which can have

detrimental consequences for individuals who are not in a position to employ ethnic background resources to their advantage.

Being successful in balancing making use of ethnic capital on the one hand and avoiding being stigmatized or pigeonholed on the other hand is an important reflexive quality our respondents needed to develop to be able to position themselves successfully as professionals in their sectors. As such, the often-strategic social identity building efforts and work they needed to undertake provides a further crucial building block to understand how the theoretical concept of the multiplier effect works for this specific group that is successful against all odds (Crul et al., 2017). They often need to carve out alternative routes to leadership positions involving the use of ethnic capital resources. However, they can only do this successfully if they can simultaneously avoid, or actively counter, narratives of stigmatization. The form this takes is different across sectors, but in all cases, it is crucial for the acceptance of their professional identity among colleagues, supervisors and clients.

5. Between ambiguity and ambition: experiences of belonging and spatial mobility[14]

This chapter examines place attachment and spatial mobility intentions among highly skilled professionals who are descendants of low-skilled migrants from Turkey. The analysis reveals that respondents feel attached to the city they live and work in, but feel less attached to the country at large. Along with this ambiguity toward their home country, they are open to spatial mobility and would move to another country based on their career aspirations. They display a feeling of "in-betweenness," but they are able to turn this condition to their advantage by framing it as an inherent adaptability to the market-driven requirement to be mobile.

5.1. Introduction

The freedom of movement of capital, goods, services, and people is widely considered to be essential in the making of European societies. Mobile European citizens are "projected as the key population heralding the building of a new Europe beyond the nation-state" (Favell, 2008, p. x). Likewise, everyday life in today's globalized world is increasingly "premised upon or pervaded by market values, representations, and symbols, as time and distance are apparently shrunk by scientific-technological innovation, the hyper-mobility of financial capital, and some types of information flows" (Gill, 1995, p. 409). The inherently transnational character of many professional career paths is creating an increasing market demand for spatially and culturally flexible individuals. Multinational corporations and their highly mobile international professionals express an exclusive type of cosmopolitanism, promoting a form of diversity that in some ways contests the logic of nationalism.

Yet this market-driven promotion of diversity does not mean that the nation-state, with its often restrictive stance toward "others," has become irrelevant. The diversity that is promoted by multinational corporations sidesteps the integration debate, especially insofar as mobile professionals (usually termed "expats") are concerned. Within this context, the highly educated descendants of migrants face a unique double pressure: On the one hand, they have been subject to the integration policies of the countries to which their parents migrated and which they generally consider home (from here on this country is referred to as the "home country"). In this home country setting they are often framed as the cultural "other" due to their origins and

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[14] This chapter is based on an article co-authored by Elif Keskiner. That article was peer-reviewed and accepted for publication in an edited volume entitled *Contested Belongings: Spaces, Practices, Biographies*. Edited by Kathy Davis, Halleh Ghorashi and Peer Smets. Emerald Publishing. Forthcoming.

the majority society's demand to integrate into the national whole. On the other hand, as highly skilled professionals, they compete in settings in which diversity is increasingly considered normal, difference is considered an asset, and mobility is promoted. There is thus a conceivable tension between positioning themselves as members of the mobile elite in their professional environments and being the "other" in their home countries. This creates a condition of in-betweenness for the highly educated descendants of migrants.

Accordingly, this chapter addresses the condition of in-betweenness by examining the discourses of place attachment and potential spatial mobility among high-skilled professionals whose parents are low-educated migrants from Turkey. Many studies on the social mobility of the descendants of migrants illustrate that having a so-called low-status background can be detrimental to life chances. Children of Turkish migrants, for instance, number among the most disadvantaged groups in Western Europe with regard to education, access to the labour market, and occupational attainment (Heath, Rothon, & Kilpi, 2008). However, there is also an emerging group of individuals who manage a steep upward mobility by acquiring higher educational degrees and achieving leadership positions despite their potentially disadvantaged background (Crul, Keskiner, & Lelie, 2017; Crul, Schneider, & Lelie, 2012; Keskiner & Crul, 2017; Konyali, 2017).

The analysis in this chapter is based on data collected through in-depth interviews conducted in the framework of the ELITES project in France, Sweden, Germany, and the Netherlands. The ELITES project focuses on professionally successful descendants of migrants. This is a group that displays steep upward social mobility by overcoming specific barriers in order to attain leading positions. This chapter addresses the following question: *How can one understand place attachment and potential spatial mobility among professionally successful descendants of migrants from Turkey?*

5.2. Theoretical framework

5.2.1. Place attachment and the integration paradigm

To understand experiences of belonging among descendants of migrants, it is important to note that any awareness of place is dependent on the significance of that place for the construction of identity and memory (Corcoran, 2002; Rose, 1996). Place attachment as a concept

characterizes individuals' connections to places that are important for their feelings of belonging (Giuliani, 2003; Low & Altman, 1992). A national sense of belonging is assumed to create a shared sense of identity among citizens of a country, and it can result in migrants and their descendants being excluded as "others" (Anderson, 1983; Balibar, 1996). Whereas the experience of being alienated challenges individual feelings of belonging, such a discourse also targets people with migrant parents by contesting their belonging to what is actually their home country (Schinkel, 2013).

This becomes obvious when one considers how the concept of integration has taken center stage in public debates in many European countries (Favell, 2003). Policies on integration continue to be based on the assumption that immigrants as well as their descendants are different from the host population – indeed, the very concept of integration is arguably framed around such assumptions of difference (Hammar, 1985; Schinkel, 2013). Minority groups are assumed to have a cultural background that is irreconcilably different than the majority society's, and tensions are commonly understood within this static framework. The requirement that migrants and their descendants should integrate generally reflects a liberal consensus that culturalizes and emotionalizes group membership, and this consensus is expressed by demands for loyalty to the nation-state (Slootman & Duyvendak, 2015).

For descendants of migrants, both their parents' country of origin and their own home country, where they were born and raised, play a crucial role in their self-understanding. The manner in which they position themselves toward different localities leads to a certain reaction from members of the majority group, where any form of diversion from loyalty toward a single nation-state can be used against them. Individuals may be considered part of the inferior societal out-group even if they have fulfilled the requirement of socioeconomic integration. A devalued social identity may leave individuals with ambivalent feelings, even in cases of exceptional achievement (see Fordham & Ogbu, 1986). The multiple reference points and transnational ties that descendants of migrants have can become an insurmountable obstacle to the claims of loyalty by the majority society. The ambiguity that is created by being attached to multiple places while not being considered a full member of one's nation can result in a condition of in-betweenness.

5.2.2. Feeling 'in-between'

Descendants of migrants often have ambiguous views of home, place, belonging, and identity. This may be related to the exclusionary practices of nation-states, as discussed in the previous section. On top of this, descendants of migrants are familiar with translocal practices. Since early childhood they have been aware of their parents' longing for another "home," and they probably have had frequent journeys "home" throughout their upbringing. Wessendorf (2007) argues that the parents' country of origin becomes a complex symbol in the articulation of their identity. The imaginary construction and maintenance of a second homeland shapes individual and their transnational "ways of being" and "ways of belonging" (Levitt & Schiller, 2007). They can end up in a situation of "in-betweenness," as there is always another significant place that they could consider home.

Postcolonial theorist Homi Bhabha (2007) describes experiences of in-betweenness as "being on the border." People who live "border lives" experience ambivalence because their belonging is difficult to conceptualize in singular categories and there is always an "elsewhere" beyond their place of residence. In a similar vein Victor Turner (1995) maintains that the characteristics of "threshold people" are uncertain since they evade conventional categories by being "neither here nor there" (p. 95). Hence, in-betweenness can be experienced as a condition of liminality which can produce psychological strain because it causes difficulties in self-positioning by supposedly disabling belonging to a single place.

However, in-betweenness can also offer relief in cases of "othering." As Ghorashi, De Boer, and Ten Holder (2017) argue, this condition has the potential to offer access to an alternative repertoire of agency. It has an enabling aspect through the potential asset of being part of multiple contexts and realities simultaneously. Individuals who acquire a rather privileged position such as occupationally successful descendants of migrants can valorize their "in-betweenness" on the labour market. By working in jobs that enable them to change residence and break with home ties, they can position themselves as spatially mobile professionals who are able to live their lives beyond the nation-state container (Favell, 2008; Ghorashi, 2016).

5.2.3. The market demand for flexible professionals and spatial mobility

Transnational firms employ wandering crews of highly skilled professionals, yet these individuals cannot execute their functions entirely from afar. Human interaction is still essential for the delivery of their skills and knowledge. Global corporate networks involve highly skilled

labour forces based in financial centers, and professionals in such networks are expected to be mobile and to (re)locate between centers of business. The actual and potential mobility of these professionals is a central driving force of contemporary market structures. It enables staff to relocate and create new ties in new places. Potential spatial mobility becomes a concrete strategy to enhance one's employability. This is clearly visible in the career trajectories of individuals in privileged positions who can move freely. Hannerz (1996) suggests that transnational managerial elites are essential players in the construction of global cities. As many of these elites have hypermobile international careers, they find it relatively easy to move between places (Calhoun, 2002). They can maintain a fragmented place attachment while retaining ties with people who are like them (Bochove & Engbersen, 2015).

There is a complex relationship between the professional requirement of spatial mobility and mainstream expectations of individual place attachment. The present market demand for flexible professionals contradicts the conventional view of nation-states as the single most important aspect of a person's feeling of belonging. On the one hand, as Zygmunt Bauman (2000) argues, "nomadic elites" who are comfortable with diversity can be seen as expressing a norm to which individuals have to adapt. Such groups are constantly being re-shaped by cross-cultural encounters and through lateral connections that extend beyond nation-states and potentially span the globe (Hall, 2002). On the other hand, migrants and their descendants are continuously faced with nationalistic expectations of integration, which include unilateral loyalty and attachment. This is also true for highly educated descendants of migrants who are expected to display attachment to the host country and at the same time are faced with labour market demands to be mobile.

Contemporary professionals with a disadvantaged background have to deal with expectations of being a nomadic elite while they simultaneously risk "othering" due to alleged cultural incompatibility with mainstream conceptions of belonging. These individuals could therefore decide to emphasize their transnational practices and connections as a potential means of compensating for their experiences of structural inequality and devalued identity (Fernandez-Kelly & Schauffler, 1996; Levitt, 2001). They could turn the in-betweenness into an asset by claiming empowerment through their ability to adapt to multiple places. Thereby, they are able to increase their employability due to the neoliberal emphasis on individual flexibility that entails spatial mobility (Boltanski & Chiapello, 2005; Kakihara & Sørensen, 2004).

5.3. Method

5.3.1. Data collection

Our analysis is based on 27 in-depth interviews with descendants of migrants from Turkey, who now occupy leading positions within the corporate business sector in France, Sweden, Germany, and the Netherlands. The following metropolitan areas were chosen as research sites: Paris, Stockholm, Berlin, Frankfurt am Main, and the Randstad area in the Netherlands, encompassing the four big cities Amsterdam, Rotterdam, Utrecht, and The Hague. In each setting, we first approached the more prominent professionals whose parents had migrated from Turkey. These "vouching figures" (Weiss, 1994, p. 34) helped us to acquire some first insights before we made use of the snowball technique to finalize the collection of data.

The selection was based on respondents meeting at least one of the following criteria: (1) persons having organizational or managerial responsibilities within a company; (2) persons working in a senior position in a smaller service firm (including owners and self-employed professionals); (3) persons in a specialist or expert position within a company. In semi standardized interviews, we collected information about their career paths and their family background's role in their work, as well as their social networks and their sense of belonging to their place of work and residence. Moreover, each interviewee helped further structure the conversation through his or her answers and comments, although the same set of key questions was used for each interview (Gomm, 2008, p. 229). Respondents were permitted to raise their own issues. Anonymity was guaranteed beforehand, explicit requests were made to record the interviews, and verbatim transcriptions were subsequently made.

5.3.2. Overview of sample

The primary research subjects in this project are business service professionals whose parents are lower-skilled labour migrants from Turkey. The business sector is rather broad, and thus the types and positions of professionals in this sector are diverse. The final sample used for this chapter includes professionals active in financial intermediation (mainly banking) as well as professionals offering so-called knowledge-intensive business services such as consulting, auditing, accounting, or market research.

The majority of the interviewed professionals were male (21 out of 27). Although an increasing number of women follow careers in the professional services, it remains a highly male-dominated field of work (Kumra & Vinnicombe, 2008). The parents of our respondents were born in Turkey and had migrated to Germany, France, Sweden, or the Netherlands between the early 1960s and late 1980s. Almost all of our respondents' parents had lower levels of education with only a few exceptions who obtained an education beyond primary school. Upon migration, all performed low-status manual labour, regardless of their educational background.

The respondents' own educational credentials extended from secondary school and vocational training to university degrees. A majority were university graduates, although the business sector, especially banking, seems to be a field in which it is still possible to acquire a leading position without an academic background. There were some career changers among the respondents, illustrating that the field of corporate business services is rather open toward newcomers. Most respondents were at some point in their career either specialists or had organizational, managerial, or employee responsibilities within a company that operated internationally.

5.3.3. Data analysis

Given this study's qualitative nature, we employed an issue-focused analysis, as described by Weiss (1994), using the data analysis software *Atlas.ti*. First, responses were coded by linking them to the theoretical concepts of place(s), belonging, and mobility. Subsequently, the interview material was sorted through close study of the coded excerpts. The "local integration" that followed consisted of interpretations that resulted in "mini-theories." These are the foundations of the following analytical subsections, which focus on respondents' place attachment, spatial mobility, and, finally, imagined belonging. The ultimate aim of an issue-focused analysis is of course to reach a conclusion by answering the research question. We attempt to effect an "inclusive integration" of the research material, which "knits into a single coherent story the otherwise isolated areas of analysis that result from local integration" (Weiss, 1994, p. 160).

5.4. Analysis

5.4.1. Local attachment: "not an outsider anymore"

Given that the concept of place denotes a setting in which social relations are constituted, there is a strong relationship between place identity and personal identity (Corcoran, 2002). Despite their steep upward mobility and successful participation in the labour market, our respondents presented themselves as having an ambiguous place attachment. Remarking that the second generation is more flexible with regard to place than are their parents, respondents often emphasized that they lacked strong emotional ties to their home country. They speculated that this might be because of their family migration history. Emphasizing a strong local (as opposed to national) sense of attachment, the respondents explicitly noted a relevant difference between their city and its distinction from the wider national context:

> Q: What would have to happen for you to leave this place?
>
> A: Sweden?
>
> Q: Or Stockholm?
>
> A: I mean in Sweden I would definitely not move to any other place than Stockholm. Because, I don't know, I wouldn't. I could not feel at home in another place I think. I don't know if this is my own prejudice or not, it might be. But I have the feeling that, when I move outside of Stockholm, people seem less sympathetic toward foreigners. I don't actually know why I think that way.
>
> Q: Is this the case for places like Gothenburg or Malmö as well?
>
> A: Yes. So I go there very often. But I do not feel at home actually.
>
> Q: Well, if you would leave Stockholm, where would you go? Is it in fact possible for you to leave?
>
> A: No, it is not possible. I mean, if I go anywhere from here, then I think I would move to Turkey.
>
> (female, 40, project manager in banking, Stockholm)

They also had ambiguous feelings about their parents' country of origin, which selectively played into their discourse of belonging. A respondent from Berlin stated that it was impossible to feel completely at home, neither in Turkey nor in Germany. However, he mentioned that Berlin was a good option in this case not only because of its strong Turkish presence but also due to the visible cultural diversity in general: "I like the fact that I am not an outsider. If everybody is an outsider, you are not an outsider anymore" (male, senior manager, Berlin). Despite a strong attachment to the cities in which they work and live, our respondents were

repeatedly confronted with questions about their origins. As a result, they experienced a somewhat complex relationship of acceptance in these places:

> [I have an] ambivalent relationship [toward Germany as "home"]. Because the issue is, and I think many of us know, we are not really Turks anymore, not really Germans either. You can see this by our names and looks, right? I mean, every now and then I make this joke and it is well received: As you can see, I was born in Hamburg, right? Then they laugh, but they always also look a little disturbed. They do not know exactly what to say. Or let's take the question, "*Where are you from?*" I always like to answer saying that I'm German. "*Yes, but where are you from precisely?*" Well, from Hamburg. "*I did not mean that.*" Then they have to ask a third question, and it becomes really embarrassing. This embarrassment they have to go through when they are so curious. (male, 44, partner in accounting firm, Frankfurt)

While they often stated concretely that here and now was their "home," for many of the respondents, vagueness remained an important element when defining their place attachment:

> I feel neither French nor Turkish. I feel that I am from Paris. Paris is very different from the rest of France. When a stranger asks me where I am from, I say neither France nor Turkey, I say that I am from Paris, when a Turk asks me, I mention the small town in Turkey where my parents came from, if a French asks me, again, I say I am from Paris. (male, 30, project manager in a utility company[15], Paris)

Our respondents displayed strong feelings of belonging to the multicultural cities in which they lived and wherein they didn't feel like "others" – in contrast to their feelings regarding their "home" countries as a whole. This has to do with the fact that being professionally successful did not lead to an experience of complete acceptance, where respondents' "origins" were no longer questioned. Yet by attributing feelings of belonging to the multicultural localities where they feel more accepted, they resolve the tension created by their lack of acceptance within the national context. One could argue that this helps them resolve the ambiguity of belonging they feel toward both their national contexts and their parents' home country. The next section will show how feelings of belonging work with the dominant "employability" discourse of spatial mobility, which demands that professionals be flexible and always "on the move" (Boltanski & Chiapello, 2005).

5.4.2. Employing in-betweenness: "I might stay, I might leave"

Cresswell (2010, p. 27) argues that "we are in a new phase of mobility regulation where the means of legitimate movement is increasingly in the hands of corporations and transnational

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[15] His field of work cannot be considered as part of professional business services in the strict sense; however, due to his career trajectory through companies in the field, we decided to include him in our sample.

institutions." Driven by market demand, and by technological developments that reached their climax around the turn of the millennium, working practices have shifted to encapsulate a higher degree of locational mobility (Kakihara & Sørensen, 2004). This process is also visible in the replies of our respondents. They have attained an astonishing degree of social mobility, which often also resulted in geographical mobility – specifically, into the suburban residential neighborhoods of metropolitan areas. While some respondents displayed a strong feeling of belonging to a city, others emphasized that they had "no attachment to a place" and that they were open to moving. They lived in places that were far enough from the city center to provide a beneficial environment for their children, while remaining close enough to access the strategic advantages provided by urban metropolitan areas:

> Also because I travel so terribly much, I wanted to be close to the airport. Because if you have to travel one or two times per week, it is so nice to be home within a quarter of an hour – that is the first reason. The second is that it's a pleasant environment, it's quiet. … But I have no attachment to a place, I can move easily to a different city tomorrow. I grew up here then I moved several times within the Netherlands. I moved to Istanbul, and within Istanbul itself, I moved four times in three years, and then I came back. (male, 44, CEO of an IT company, the Netherlands)

Moreover, as business professionals who have to travel frequently as part of their jobs, they are used to the idea of being mobile. Some respondents compared their own present-day options with the mobility choices that their parents made in the past. We see that the migration choices and sacrifices their parents made for their sake continue to be a reference for them. Yet, whereas for their parents a move from rural Turkey to industrial Germany was a drastic change, respondents' present living conditions present a less marked change of living circumstances, due to their high qualifications and richer set of options:

> Principally, in order to create a similar situation for my children as my parents did for me, I would have to take the risk and move to a country like China, or a country like Malaysia. A place where I do not speak the language, where there is a booming economy. There I would have to take the risk to end up in an environment where I would not even be able to buy bread. If we would then have children there, this child would speak the language, know the culture, and then eventually this child would have similar life chances as I have now. (male, 39, self-employed business consultant, Frankfurt)

Generally, respondents presented themselves as highly flexible professionals who are willing to change location as frequently as the job requires. Theoretically at least, they are open to considering a move to "elsewhere":

Q: Will you stay here, what do you think?

A: I might stay, I might leave. (female, 30, project manager in banking, Paris)

> I must honestly say that, if I want to go to Istanbul tomorrow, I'll go again. So I'm not as attached to a location. I feel more like a world citizen. (male, 42, senior manager in banking, Randstad)

There seemed to be an omnipresent preparedness to leave should the opportunity arise. For professionals with a migrant family background, this preparedness had two main aspects. On the professional side, as mobile professionals in a highly international work environment, they wanted to be as employable and as flexible as decision-makers in the field expect them to be. But this aspect was reinforced by their already ambiguous place attachment to their home countries, which seemed to make them more suited to work in positions that demand a lot of travel and that could result in a change in place of residence if needed.

This is in line with these respondents' general inclination to actively seek opportunities. They wanted to be perceived as highly employable professionals in a competitive field where individual flexibility is crucial. One could argue that their mobility is not only an option that has become available due to their professional positions, but it is also expressed as a marker of their professional self. Mobility can be seen as an important expression of their ambitions in the field of professional business services:

> I have considered living in Istanbul as a professional, but I didn't get the position that I wanted. It was at a bank in Istanbul, a foreign bank, that opened an establishment there, an American bank, I don't know exactly what bank it was. But that didn't work. Nevertheless, it has always been in my head to have an Istanbul experience and to see what it would offer. (male, 42, project manager in IT company, Paris)

The following section concludes the analysis by presenting material that deals with respondents' imagined belonging to "elsewhere" – and especially to "global cities," like New York or Istanbul. The ability to select these places as potential destinations illustrates how their lack of strong attachment to a national locality, their flexibility in attaching themselves to multicultural cities, and their professional achievements have given them the potential to adapt to the market demand for flexible professionals.

5.4.3. Belonging to 'elsewhere': London, New York and Istanbul

Geographically, our respondents' professional pathways are located in large urban metropolitan areas, most of which can be considered "global cities." As previously mentioned, our respondents were born in, or moved to at a very young age, countries different from their parents' homes. They established themselves by acquiring professional careers and achieving a

degree of success that extended beyond what is usually expected from people who have a similar, disadvantaged background. Having surpassed expectations, they thereby fulfilled the original "migration project" of their parents. Large, "global" cities were key to this endeavour. It seemed that these global cities provided some sense of belonging, at least to the extent that our respondents did not feel alienated in them. The closeness of this attachment expressed another sharp contrast to their ambiguous connections to their home countries:

> When I left for New York at the age of 32 – I was a manager, everything had gone well so far, we thought we had managed to arrange ourselves, being Turks who live in Germany, who feel integrated. And then, I experienced how good I felt there [in New York]. For the first time, I actually did not feel like a foreigner. … I was so freaking normal there. I did not stick out, neither with my name nor with my appearance. (male, 44, partner in accounting firm, Frankfurt)

This quotation clearly depicts how feelings of belonging to "elsewhere" are linked with respondents' experience of being second generation, despite their steep upward mobility. Earnest (2007) argues that a global city "transforms or weakens the traditional institutions and capacities of the state in which it is located" (p. 138). Despite the resilience of the nation-state, major cities challenge its dominion over individual lives. Multinational corporations and the mobile professionals who staff them seem to be a major driver in this ongoing transformation. And, indeed, the places that our respondents cited as significant had a number of features in common. Apparently as a consequence of their ambiguous feelings of belonging, respondents stated that it was in places like London where they did not feel "foreign":

> I feel good in London, I do not feel like an immigrant in London, I feel like I am from there. There are many people like me and the city is welcoming. (male, 27, auditor in professional services firm, Paris)

Their reflections provided an insight into the relational aspects of place attachment (see Reeves, 2011). This concept of somehow feeling like a foreigner was recurrent in the interviews, and it is crucial for understanding how respondents' ambitions regarding spatial mobility relate to their ambiguous feelings of belonging. In addition to a strong tendency to prioritize "global cities" such as London and New York, Istanbul also seemed to be an especially viable option for career advancement. And the preference for these metropolitan global cities seems logical if we adopt Bauman's notion of nomadic elites (2000). First, cities like London and New York are "superdiverse" in the sense that the diversity of the population is part of the local identity and it is easy for newcomers to feel connected. Secondly, these global cities offer a certain economic advantage, which is also favorable for elites. Istanbul, of course, offers further points of connection, as most respondents are at ease with the Turkish language, familiar with the

country, and aware that they could draw strategic advantage from a "return" to their parents' home country.

Whereas actual migration to Turkey on professional grounds might be imaginary, Istanbul remained an important reference point. They expressed a need to become successful in Turkey's global city, although often it is not clear exactly how:

> Istanbul is high up on the list of my personal goals. Of course, I would like to work on that in collaboration with this bank. Perhaps by working with private and business clients in Turkey and then I could manage that area of work. But it could also happen within a different framework. Well, I already receive many offers from Turkey. I could have gone already. But I am currently building something here and I have not yet achieved my goal. When this is done, I will be ready. (male, 36, CEO in banking, Frankfurt)

Although Istanbul was often mentioned as an imaginary destination, the respondents also engaged in strategic considerations of moving "back" based on a comparison of living standards, stating that the job opportunities for them there would be at least comparable to what they have "here" in their parents' destination country:

> If I am among the top 10% in France in terms of my income level, perhaps better than 10%, but let's say 10% basically, in Turkey I would perhaps be among the 2–3%, perhaps top 5%. I am guessing now but more or less, the exact number is not important, the balance is important. There I would perhaps be among the elite. I mean here there are millions like me, at least hundreds. Do you know what I mean? (male, 44, senior analyst in banking, Paris)

While the romantic aspect of "return" was perceptible when they spoke about Istanbul, such a move was also strongly related to their personal career goals. Istanbul is an attractive destination insofar as it further promotes their social mobility. Moving to Istanbul would be the next step of their careers, to reach a prestigious position in a context where perhaps they would still not be "home," but they would certainly feel an attachment.

5.5. Conclusion

This chapter has analysed the place attachment and potential spatial mobility of professionals who have experienced a steep upward mobility into positions that demand for them to be spatially mobile. Examining these cases of exceptional individual achievement helped us to understand the intersection of their emotional and professional ties to places beyond the national context. By looking at their places of birth and residence and their intentions to stay or move, we have shown how their condition of in-betweenness is related to the troubled reception of cultural diversity and a sedentary bias within national discourses of belonging (Ghorashi, 2016).

In fact, second-generation professionals could even be considered as advantaged in a context where having a different background is seen as an asset since it fits the dominant conception of employable, flexible professionals. Interestingly, the very in-betweenness that challenges their belonging in national contexts can suddenly earn them prestige by providing them with options to move into higher positions.

A noticeable point is the respondents' preferences for cities that embrace cultural diversity. Their sources of belonging seem to be positioned in places that can accommodate their multiple cultural repertories. Istanbul[16] was frequently mentioned as a possible destination in the near future, although only a minority of the professionals had already worked in Istanbul or had parents who were originally from that city. Accordingly, while retaining a romantic aspect, their ambitions regarding Istanbul were framed in a more rational manner, one that was in line with their attitudes as professionals in a highly competitive field. This also confirms that, for highly educated second-generation groups, international contexts and international companies provide a point of escape from the constraints of national debates on integration. Besides Istanbul, London and New York were commonly mentioned as attractive places.

Crul and Schneider (2010) show that the second generation, as a heterogeneous group, has relatively weak national identifications, but displays strong feelings of attachment to the urban metropolitan areas. Our findings confirm that highly educated descendants of migrants, who occupy leadership positions, display similar feelings of belonging. They seemed to feel attached to the big metropolitan areas because such environments matched their own subjective sense of in-betweenness. Not only is it easy for them to feel at home "and not like a foreigner" in such places, these cities are also a good match for their ambitions as mobile business professionals. Thus, this highly international context is also a way for them to resolve the conflicts that arise when looking at their ambiguous feelings of belonging to a national context.

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[16] The interviews for this chapter were conducted during late 2012 and early 2013 (shortly before the emergence of the Gezi Park protests in Istanbul). At that time neither the financial nor the political conditions in Turkey seemed as troubled as they are currently. With respect to the heterogeneity of political views among descendants of migrants from Turkey, it is unclear whether the respondents would still consider a move to Istanbul.

6. The value of studying the exceptions

6.1. Introduction

This dissertation examined both the career narratives and pathways of descendants of labour migrants from Turkey in leading professional positions. The analyses in the four preceding chapters have shown how respondents present their stories within the narrative framework of struggle and success. More specifically, chapter two examined the achievement narratives of the respondents in order to disclose how in the face of group disadvantage, they differentiate themselves from other descendants of migrants from Turkey (with less successful careers) by stressing the role of personal characteristics and individual achievements. However, their success is by no means a straightforward achievement. Rather they have to constantly seek opportunities in order to establish themselves in leading positions. Accordingly, the third chapter displayed how restrictive national conditions led to the emergence of three ideal-type alternative career paths for these newcomers. Although this indicates that the respondents have used their ethnic capital in strategic ways to obtain access to leading positions, they still have to deal with the fact that their individual social mobility stands in contrast to the low-status of the group to which they belong.

This paradox becomes obvious in everyday interactions at work, when they have to deal with potential contestations of their professionalism. In order to point out the specificities of these processes, chapter four presented a comparison of the employment of background resources across three occupational fields (law, education and corporate business). The findings indicate that their success is also a balancing act by using the group's disadvantage to their own advantage, while simultaneously avoiding being pigeonholed as an exceptional member of an otherwise inferior 'out-group'. The previous chapter made this more evident by exploring how the respondents feel attached to the global cities they live and work in, whereas they also feel less attached to their home country at large. In contrast, their preparedness to leave for global cities like Istanbul indicates the existence of a feeling of 'in-betweenness', engendered by the combination of the ongoing threat of alienation and the market-driven requirement to be mobile. Again, the findings suggest that they strive to be in control of the narrative that explains their actions. Their preparedness to leave can also be seen as a warrant against the continuing possibility of discrimination.

It is impossible to think that a pure form of meritocracy exists while there is ample evidence for the crucial role of social origin in the social mobility process studied. The respondents of this study experienced this themselves as they had to overcome hurdles and resistance towards their professional achievements. I found, based on their narratives, that the respondents try to avoid the perception of being victims to structural conditions by any means. This even goes so far that they try to accommodate discriminatory or even racist remarks from colleagues or clients. They often mentioned how they have to do a better job in explaining themselves to others, instead of accusing them for a lack of understanding. However, they also seem to be struggling with the paradoxes that are caused by the juxtaposition of their disadvantaged background and their leading professional position.

If any field has its own means of recognition and reward mechanisms, then the acquisition of positions is always also taking place according to power relations in the field (cf. Bourdieu 1984). The naïve belief in the value of meritocracy is in itself a mechanism that can justify unequal starting positions. Such a perspective is not able to convincingly explain why certain groups remain continuously underrepresented in privileged positions. What the findings of this research imply is that the stark individualization of success and failure can on the one hand enable exceptional individuals to achieve something that is unlikely, while on the other hand this process can reproduce systemic inequalities since the likely failure of so many others seem justified through an individualistic perspective (Lewis, 1993).

The analyses reveal a complicated process that evidences a dialectical relationship between both narratives and experiences. The respondents seem to stand on the edge of being pigeonholed while owning the necessary means to avoid falling on either side of the blade. Their hard work is an undeniable reality. They struggled mostly on their own while certainly their pathways would have been different without the benevolence of significant others who offered the instrumental support that their parents were not able to give (Rezai, et al., 2015). They overcame difficulties in order to be 'one of the first' descendants of migrants from Turkey in their professional context. They are professional enough to know how to deal with the politics of this exceptionality that can potentially harm their acceptance as an equal colleague. The apparent contrast of a narrative that rationalizes disadvantage and the constant possibility of hurdles in their pathways is an integral element of their success, as the following recapitulating discussion of the dissertations' findings aims to emphasize.

6.2. Exceptional achievement as a narrative of success

The way success and failure are framed in post-industrial achievement narratives, seems that one simply has to avoid the latter to achieve the former. This is also visible when it comes to the achievement narratives of the respondents. Turning the disadvantage that stems from their parental background (lower-class migrants) – into an advantage on the labour market is essential to their narrative. It is a very individualized narrative that downplays the role of structural inequalities that reduce the likelihood of success. In fact, when reflecting on their pathways they do not deny the influence of the national context on their trajectories, however they try to emphasize the importance of individual skills and capabilities, while their background seems to provide them with extra resources to make it in an increasingly international context (cf. Nowicka, 2014).

Institutional arrangements in national contexts have the tendency to reproduce the existing social order (Bourdieu, 1977). For upwardly mobile newcomers this can mean that they have to cope with an unequal starting point. This is especially visible in terms of the comparatively low numbers of descendants of migrants from Turkey that reach higher education in the four countries (Crul, et al., 2012). Moreover, it seems as no surprise that as soon as newcomers end up in professional/managerial leading positions, they conclude that they earned it by working hard. They fit the narrative of individual success as an outcome of hard labour. In addition, they are motivated by a drive transferred to them by their parents, whose struggle and sacrifice seems to be the fertile soil of the success story of their children. It almost seems as if these persons had no other choice but to be successful in what they are doing and not getting stuck in a marginal position in society such as their parents.

Indeed, the group of descendants of lower-educated labour migrants from Turkey is easily conceivable as one of the most disadvantaged and stigmatized groups in the four countries of this study. This is also the case concerning their labour market achievements (Lessard-Phillips, Fibbi, & Wanner, 2012). Thus, the interviewed persons somehow managed to contradict the group expectation with their steep upward mobility that enabled them to occupy a position that most of their peers with a similar parental background do not even get close to. We have interviewed the exceptions that prove the rule, one could say. And when we have asked the respondents how it is possible that so many of their second-generation peers were not as successful as they were, they resorted to a narrative that presented these others as being incapable of turning the group disadvantage into their own individual advantage. Moreover, because of the dominant conception of success and failure as individual problems, successful

individuals tend to present an achievement narrative with more similarities than differences across contexts.

This leads me to conclude that the individualization of success and failure is crucial for the (re-)production of group disadvantage. That is to say, it is important to focus on intra-group inequalities that emerge when successful individuals from a disadvantaged background actively distinguish themselves from the less successful ones. As chapter two has also made clear, this runs the risk of legitimating a very problematic position, as it can bolster the status quo and thereby legitimize and perpetuate existing inequalities by blaming others for their own failure (Jost & Banaji, 1994; Jost, Banaji, & Nosek 2004). However, being able to acquire a leading position in an international context is not in itself a way to surpass the impact of national conditions on career paths. The persistency of the integration paradigm in public discourse and everyday interactions stands in contrast to the market demand for mobile and flexible professionals. This became obvious in the analyses of the career path alternatives in the field, as the next section will discuss.

6.3. Exceptional achievement as an experience of success

Most people who have overcome a situation in which they were considered inferior, will make the argument this is because of individual capabilities. It is simply not easy to explain why otherwise this success occurred. Hard work based on individual skills and capabilities was necessarily involved. However, many sportsmen, businesspeople, and others attest to the validity of the statement that failure is a moment on the road to success. Indeed, successful people most often have experienced instances of failure. What distinguishes them from others was their belief in further opportunities. They were simply reluctant to give up is one way to put it. They were resilient and unwilling to accept failure as a condition in which to remain.

Success can be considered as a condition in the eye of the beholder, a subjective evaluation of an event, or a number of events, grouped as a trajectory (Sturges, 1999; Heslin, 2005). In addition, there is a relational view of success, which contrasts it with failure in more or less absolute terms. When we talked to the respondents, most of them responded to the question of whether they consider themselves as successful with a relativizing answer stating that it depends on the definition of success. Yet, we in this study had contacted them because we considered them successful due to the professional position they occupy. We had thus selected them on the 'dependent variable' and most of them were indeed in highly skilled managerial positions with

important responsibilities. Again, this can be relativized by stating that this is 'nothing special' yet. However, if we treat the respondents as part of the group of descendants of migrants from Turkey, the so-called Turkish second generation, the picture changes.

When looking closely at their trajectories, one realizes that most often things were not as simple as suggested by the dominant narrative of success that respondents displayed. Actually, respondents have had to persevere 'against all odds'. They have had to seek opportunities in order to avoid an impact of the reproductive bias that is inherent to institutional arrangements. This bias is constantly being reproduced in everyday interactions so that newcomers have no other option but to adapt to what could be termed 'national conditions'. The visible result expresses itself in alternative career paths that consist of 'ideal type' ways in which newcomers can establish themselves in leading labour market positions.

The first ideal-type consists of an 'international' standard that can be said to provide an alternative to assimilating to the work environment of a national culture in which an individual background that is different from the majority might lead to barriers in everyday professional interactions. The second ideal type ('niche') emerges through individuals that make use of background characteristics as an asset on the labour market. These professionals occupy what could be termed niche positions. However, thereby they are able to get into leading positions in a context that enable them to further adapt to the international context. Finally, the 'independent' path is one that provides an alternative for those individuals who have had experienced blocked opportunities in the corporate environment. They evade the rigid hierarchies they have encountered in large companies by becoming self-employed or working in smaller businesses in which they see better possibilities for their career development.

The definition of success is based on internal and external expectations. At the same time, success as a desirable condition has normative implications. The dominant societal discourse and the prevailing institutional structure shape the conditions for the construction of success. Trying to understand individual experiences of upward social mobility against the background of a group disadvantage across four countries makes it possible to understand some of the underlying contingencies in stories of success and failure. The analyses of their experiences and professional pathways show that despite their individualistic narrative of success, they had to fight barriers to escape the stigma. They had to break the perpetual cycle of reproduction to be able to make their unlikely success possible (Crul, et al., 2017).

6.4. Employability of ethnic background resources as a 'double-edged sword'

As the descendant of migrants, one is constantly confronted with an 'other' that defines the standard. This other can be regarded as the embodiment of the power of the majority society. Every pathway to success is demarcated by boundaries that are drawn according to this 'standard' (cf. Waldring, Crul, & Ghorashi 2014). Any individual who displays social mobility contrary to the expectations questions the 'standard' to the extent that it challenges whether this 'standard' is also to be the norm. In other words, is there a reason that there are only white middle-class men present in so many leading positions of the corporate sector, other than that it is an outcome of long-term discriminatory practices that tend to reproduce the existing order? Indeed, there is an omnipresent case in which a group of individuals tries to challenge the normative implications of the status quo by accessing positions in which they can be considered newcomers: namely women.

And indeed, many of their experiences point towards the disadvantage thesis stating that the reproductive bias in structural arrangements prevents newcomers from entering leading positions as easily as those who are similar to people who are already occupying them (cf. Ragins, Townsend, & Mattis, 1998; Burke & McKeen, 1995). The white, middle-aged men do not only reproduce themselves, they are also taken for granted by others who try to play their game. This has to have an effect on newcomers' experiences and the way they see themselves when accessing leading positions. It seems very difficult for them to be accepted as ordinary professionals. Similar to the emerging black middle-class in the USA, the respondents negotiate external boundaries in order to maintain a consistent narrative of who they are (cf. Lacy, 2004, p. 912).

Even among professionally successful descendants of migrants, the immigrant narrative of struggle and sacrifice remains a central part of their identity (cf. Vallejo, 2012). The background resources that potentially lead to exclusion in national contexts, can become an advantage in the international context. Resources from a lower status background suddenly become part of a privileged and sought after international profile. But as the analyses also have shown, being a 'good' professional is not that straightforward, as 'newcomers' constantly run the risk of being stereotyped. They have to negotiate their position permanently as a 'balancing act' in order to avoid being pigeonholed (Schneider, Crul, & Van Praag, 2014).

They are continuously faced with the threat of being stereotyped, but their ability to deal with the constant reminders of their inferior status is of a sophisticated quality. It seems that they

want to be part of a process that leads to a truly colour-blind market based on merit and professional capacities. The fact that they consider themselves as pioneers and 'lone rangers' in several situations throughout their life, attests to this. They were always among the first 'newcomers' when one counts them as belonging to a disadvantaged group and they successfully managed to overcome this situation in their careers. Their ethnicity in this context has assumed the character of a double-edged sword. On the one hand, they had to make others believe in their capabilities in spite of their background, on the other hand their origin was most often a fundamental element of their experience of success.

6.5. Adapting to both the majority society and international employability

The business world has created its own structural conditions that are more and more independent of national contexts. Business professionals literally move beyond borders. As such, this international context can provide an alternative for those who would be considered 'newcomers' in national environments. In fact, second generation professionals can even be considered to be in an advantage in a context in which individual characteristics can be seen as an asset since the 'norm' here could be considered as not being cosmopolitan enough. Their intercultural competences can potentially earn them prestige and sometimes help to move up to higher positions.

The educational and social mobility pathways of the respondents are closely tied to their own identity formation. Moving upwards, most of them start recognizing that indeed there is a place for 'people like me'. They are business professionals in positions where they are geographically potentially very mobile. However, interestingly, in order to escape their marginalized starting position in their own home country, some of them instrumentally link themselves to their parents' home country, Turkey.

Their adaptation to the international employability paradigm is also visible in the manner in which they reflect on their place attachment, their spatial mobility and their sense of belonging. Geographically, their pathways take place in large urban metropoles or global cities. The super-diverse nature of these cities helps them to prepare for a career in an international field. This field is also a way for them to resort the conflicts that arise when looking at their ambiguous feeling of belonging towards their home countries. As the analysis in chapter five has shown, they experience an uneasiness out of the constant contestation of their belonging at the national level, but by emphasising the advantages that arise out of their adaptability to multicultural

places, they are able to turn this condition of 'in-betweenness' into their favour (cf. cf. Ghorashi, De Boer, & Ten Holder, 2017).

Global cities such as London, New York and Istanbul were mentioned as places they feel connected to, while considering a move to Istanbul seems also to be a symbol of their ambition to come to a full circle in relation to their parents' migration project. It is not always easily distinguishable whether their connection to these places is a result of their intrinsic motivation to move there, or whether it is part of their professional identity which makes them feel connected to these financial centres. Already living and working in the metropolitan areas of Paris, Frankfurt am Main and Stockholm, they naturally feel comfortable in big metropolitan areas and their multicultural character. Moving could mean a step in an international career but their displayed preparedness to leave also makes them somewhat immune to national debates on integration and the related mechanisms of exclusion.

6.6. Concluding implications: recognizing inequality after overcoming disadvantage

Examples of steep upward mobility of individuals from a disadvantaged group can embellish the structural inequality without improving the conditions that caused the disadvantage in the first place. The question one has to ask is whether educationally or professionally successful people did not merely manage to circumvent obstacles while making them invisible at the same time? We can use the cases of individual success against all odds as indicative examples of how it can be possible that so many others do not manage to contradict expectations. If instead we employ them to further distinguish them from the many cases of failure that resulted out of a similar starting position, we would end up justifying inequality and through the narrative of success, even perpetuate it. In other words, exceptional cases can attest to the prevailing existence of the contrasting rule.

The increasing individualization of social processes leads to a perspective that considers structural conditions should be overcome by personal actions and efforts and thus are an individual responsibility. Whereas professional success and failure are increasingly perceived as individual issues, the abstract 'glass ceiling' seems the only available concept to address these societal conditions. As the chapters of this dissertation demonstrate, the more success and failure are seen as 'individual issues' rather than 'societal problems' (cf. Mills, 1959), the more the experiences of discrimination that socially mobile newcomers make on their way up will remain labelled as an invisible 'glass ceiling'. The fact that it is called a glass ceiling where you

can look through but not push through of course refers to the invisibility of the mechanisms involved in the process of blocking opportunities.

This dissertation focused on successful professionals whose parents migrated from Turkey. The value of studying these exceptions is that it allows one to see how the very circumstances that allow the rare exception are the same as those that prevent this exception to become ordinary. And this fact also hints at the limits of studying exceptions. After all, one risks unintentionally approving some form of meritocratic achievement ideology by losing sight of the elephant in the room, which is part of why there are exceptions in the first place: discrimination. The individualization of success and failure makes it even more difficult to openly address (subtle) exclusionary practices (see Waldring, Crul, & Ghorashi, 2015 for a more detailed analysis of how descendants of migrants challenge discriminatory processes).

Recently the academic literature discusses what are called 'post-migrant' and 'hybrid' identities (cf. Foroutan, 2013). At the same time, public debates witness the recurrence of perspectives that are less and less receptive to liberal arguments, drawing brighter boundaries and moving away from solidarity on a wider societal level. In contrast to the scientific literature that is a step ahead in announcing that migrants and their descendants are "strangers no more" (Alba & Foner, 2015), cultural anxiety seems to dominate the lines of argumentation. Amidst all this, the integration discourse remains a discourse about deficits of the 'other' (cf. Hess, Binder, & Moser, 2009). Identities are discussed based on phenotypes and other characteristics and while there is acceptance of diversity at certain level there is also a growing tendency to express discontent with the growing diversity in society due to a potential take-over by foreign cultures.

The Front National in France, the PVV in the Netherlands, the AfD in Germany, the so-called Sweden Democrats in Sweden are forerunners of a seemingly unstoppable trend to return to old fashioned nationalism. And again, interestingly the further integration measurably progresses, the sharper the debates about cultural affiliation become. The most important field of exclusion now seems cultural incompatibility, and the bar for integration is raised each time and being considered 'fully integrated' is postponed continuously. However, migration in a globalized society should simply be regarded as the norm. Full integration will not be achieved without overcoming the dichotomy of the 'migrant' and the 'normal citizen'.

Chapter three with its 'ideal type' career path alternatives demonstrated that success and failure are not two opposite points. However, due the way success is being framed in public discourse, and the emphasis on end results in the evaluation of processes, one tends to fail to see the

process itself. Therefore, the findings of this dissertation also illustrate the need to reconsider the conceptualization of failure in assessments of performances in education and labour market careers. The so-called successful people also experience failure at times. Failure can of course be attributed to individual qualities and efforts but especially the group we studied needed to be overqualified and ambitious to come where they are. The neoliberal perspective on success in school and on the labour market and the interrelated individualization results in stigmatization of individuals whose failure is attributed to individual characteristics while making structural conditions invisible:

> As long as the tenets of the culture of inequality seem so natural and self-justifying that alternatives to them appear inconceivable, we will be bereft of the choice to forego the lonely striving mandated by the individualization of success and failure. (Lewis, 1993, p. 18)

Stigmatized individuals can get stuck in stubborn constraints that turn out to be disadvantages that influence life chances. Challenging the stigma of being 'a failure' therefore has to be aimed at fundamental structural changes, since "interventions which are directed only at one mechanism at a time ultimately fail because their effectiveness is undermined by contextual factors that remain unaffected by such a narrowly conceived intervention" (Link & Phelan 2001, p. 381). In fact, it is clear that European societies will continue to receive migrants in the foreseeable future, and thus there will be many more second generations that are likely to go through the same difficulties unless changes are enforced that aim at levelling the playing ground.

A strict assimilationist line that assumes a decrease of differences in outcome once the cultural diversity is homogenized, will only result in further alienation on all sides. Thus, I think one cannot be protective and politically correct enough towards minorities in Europe these days. Instead of constantly pigeonholing people with a different background, one should be open-minded and do the best to recognize them as what they are. This does not mean that one should take rhetoric as a substitute for appropriate action. Rather democratic principles should be central in the framing of public opinion, which then should be used as a basis for political decision-making.

Of course, full equality seems utopian since individual capabilities will never be equal throughout the society as a whole and this is probably not desirable either. However, what is necessary is an approach that aims at enabling access to disadvantaged individuals and groups while continuously acknowledging the workings of exclusion and power. Recognizing the structural forces that lead to the emergence of obstacles for individuals in their daily lives, is a

first step when looking for 'best practices'. A critical perspective on the experiences and narratives of those who 'made it' seems crucial in this regard. Any reflections on individually earned advantage have to take into account the enduring obstacles created by group disadvantage.

Epilogue

"I wish I would not have come here. In Turkey, I would have either ended up in jail, or I would have become a self-made man" (Turgut Konyali, my father).

I did not speak the German language until I entered Kindergarten at the age of four. But I never felt like a stranger in Germany. The feeling of not being understood disappeared quickly. It was mostly through observing how others were treated that I noticed that not everyone is being treated equally. For instance, I had a very good friend, a child of Croatian refugees, who did not receive a recommendation to continue at Gymnasium although he had better grades than I did. I remember how I asked a teacher about this, and she just shrugged her shoulders and said, "well, this is how it is, I suppose". I was irritated but there was nothing I could do about it, I thought. In the end, my friend continued his education at a Gymnasium nevertheless. He dropped out quickly. The teacher's seemingly arbitrary recommendation seemed justified after all.

I have also experienced encounters which made clear that others think I am different. Both during my work as a researcher as well as in private, people I hardly know have asked me about my origins. Most often they were not satisfied with "I am from Germany" as a response. They wanted to know more. I do not see these curious questions as malicious as such. But I have also encountered a teacher who seriously said that 'it is not the way we do things here in Germany'. I mean, no matter why the teacher got angry at me, whom did he refer to saying 'we'? – Was I not a part of this? And is 'here in Germany' not the place I belong to? These thoughts can easily get a grip on your self-perception and soon you become a part of 'them' because 'they' do not only stress the difference in you, 'they' resemble you.

Just like my respondents, I am not a helpless victim of my 'in-betweenness'. So far, I was able to use it in my favour on the labour market. But imagine I wouldn't have grown up with people of German descent and children of other nationalities. Or, imagine my school results would not have been acknowledged, or that my family would not have been as supportive and open-minded. I would be tempted to see myself as a victim of a society that ignores or at least marginalizes people like me. When I was following my bachelor studies, I had the opportunity to do a semester abroad. I ended up in Izmir and I remember how fellow students told their professors to summarize the English lectures in Turkish. I especially enjoyed their reaction when the professor replied that I was there and it would be unfair. They said: "Ali is one of us,

he understands perfectly." For once, it felt as if I belonged to the majority. A feeling that is difficult to describe and even more difficult to justify while claiming a progressive mind-set that transcends the idea of bright ethnic boundaries. But I cannot deny that it felt comfortable.

When you 'move up' the social ladder by fulfilling institutional demands, you do not necessarily realize how exceptional you might be. You start, as I did, by neglecting signals that point at a disadvantage. It is only by some kind of post-mobility reflection that you can reach an insight that your pathway might be a success against the odds. When I reflect on my achievements, it becomes obvious that I do so based on my pathways through the institutions, from primary school up until my current job at a university. My wellbeing seems to constitute itself based on the pride I draw from a successful passage through these, illustrating clearly how the individualization of success also speaks to the ego of a person. The fact that the pressure to achieve is also situated in a context in which the dreams and hopes of my parents play a role becomes obvious when I think about how they acted when I had to do my homework. And how they still behave towards me when I am home and have work to do. My work is a priority to them.

At the same time, a deep-seated consciousness about the importance of a disciplined work ethics is part of my personality now. I can still remember what my grandfather used to tell me when I was still a little boy: "No matter how hard you try, do not forget that they won't be happy to see you as their boss. That is why you always have to do your best." On the one hand, listening closely to my respondents, I know that he was right at least to some degree. On the other hand, my background actually enabled me to get into the position of a researcher at a university, which is very prestigious according to the reaction of my immediate social environment. It seems that the aspect that is disadvantageous for so many others, my ethnic background, helped me to overcome barriers. Although, one should note that I went abroad right after I have obtained my university entrance qualifications. My studies in Maastricht and Malmö could be seen as the starting point of my own alternative path that might have enabled me to not be confronted with exclusionary practices in Germany.

Next to my qualifications as a researcher, my Turkish background played an important role for my position as a PhD Candidate at the Erasmus University Rotterdam. For the ELITES project my Turkish language skills where important as was the fact that I was born and raised in Germany as a descendant of migrants from Turkey. In addition, I had also lived in the Netherlands and Sweden. For my current research project studying local configurations of

'Islam' and 'Muslims' at the University of Osnabrück, again my appearance, my name and my language skills were certainly considered as an asset when entering fieldwork.

One could argue that I never intended to change the rules of the game, I played it accordingly. Nevertheless, I always felt a constant pressure to achieve and feared not being good enough. This was certainly strengthened by the fact that my professional profile consists of positions that are closely linked to my individual background. As a consequence, the threat of failure becomes personal, too. When I think about how I managed to acquire my current position, I realize that others' expectations were always central to my motivation, even though I always tell myself that I did it 'my way' in a way that is more similar to my respondents' achievement narratives than I would like to admit to myself. It seems difficult to reconcile individual autonomy with a strong adaptation to structural arrangements. I question my own abilities, but I have never really questioned the necessity to achieve itself. Who am I to blame the respondents for their individualistic narratives, when their experiences provide evidence for a glass-ceiling that bends more and more, but does not break. Yet.

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Samenvatting

Het hedendaagse kapitalisme rechtvaardigt de toename van de liberalisering van de arbeidsmarkt door de waarde van individueel succes op basis van verdienste en ambitie te benadrukken (Boltanski & Chiapello, 2005). Succesvolle mensen hebben de neiging om dit perspectief te reproduceren (zie Hochschild, 1996). De veronderstelling dat iedereen met de juiste instelling en inspanning succesvol kan worden maakt structurele ongelijkheden onzichtbaar. Het onbetwiste vertrouwen in de onpartijdigheid van institutionele regelingen behelst het risico dat degenen die zich niet aan dit systeem kunnen aanpassen verweten wordt 'niet genoeg te doen' of 'niet te hebben wat er nodig is'. Gebaseerd op de valse veronderstelling van gelijke kansen kan het benadrukken van uitzonderlijke gevallen leiden tot de individualisering van succes en mislukking (Lewis, 1993).

Vergelijkend onderzoek naar opwaartse sociale mobiliteit onder de nakomelingen van migranten is nog altijd schaars met enkele uitzonderingen daargelaten (Heath, Rothon, & Kilpi 2008; Crul, Schneider, & Lelie 2012). Dit fenomeen is op nationaal niveau onderzocht in diverse Europese onderzoeksprojecten (bijvoorbeeld Crul, et al., 2008; Pott, 2002; Santelli, 2001; Olsson, et al., 2007). Samen wijzen deze studies op het belang van het bestuderen van de nationale context om verschillende uitkomsten te verklaren. In vergelijking met andere groepen ondervinden de nakomelingen van migranten uit Turkije de meeste moeilijkheden bij het bereiken van hoger onderwijs en leidende posities op de arbeidsmarkt in de onderzochte Europese landen (Heath, Rothon, & Kilpi, 2008; Crul, Schneider, & Lelie, 2012). Dit groepsnadeel kan op verschillende manieren een rol spelen bij het beklimmen van de sociale ladder.

Nationale institutionele regelingen kunnen gezien worden als bijzondere kansstructuren die een bepaalde context vormen (zie Schneider & Lang, 2016). Deze kansstructuren bepalen de marges voor individuen om hun sociale positie te verbeteren. Individuen uit kansarme groepen die erin slagen om zich aan te passen aan de institutionele regelingen die hen tegenhouden ervaren vaak 'een van de weinigen' te zijn. Dat wil zeggen dat zij iets uitzonderlijks bereiken. Deze uitzonderlijkheid impliceert op zichzelf het bestaan van structurele ongelijkheid. In dit proefschrift conceptualiseer ik daarom een steile opwaartse mobiliteit als resultaat van het overwinnen van enkele structurele obstakels (Crul, et al., 2017). Hierbij laat ik zien hoe succesverhalen verweven zijn met de 'praktijk' van het bereiken van succes middels de volgende vragen: *Welke gevolgen heeft het hebben van een potentieel nadelige individuele achtergrond voor de ervaring van uitzonderlijk sterke opwaartse mobiliteit? Hoe*

onderhandelen personen uit achtergestelde groepen hun individuele achtergrond tijdens het ontwikkelen van hun professionele zelfbeeld? Om deze vragen te beantwoorden, richtte ik mij op casussen van 'onwaarschijnlijk' succes van nakomelingen van migranten uit Turkije die in vier Europese landen (Nederland, Duitsland, Frankrijk en Zweden) vooraanstaande posities hebben binnen de professionele zakelijke dienstverlening. De bevindingen van dit proefschrift zijn gebaseerd op diepte-interviews. Hiervoor werden in totaal 54 personen van Turkse afkomst geïnterviewd in Stockholm, Berlijn, Frankfurt, Parijs en het Randstad-gebied (Rotterdam, Amsterdam, Den Haag en Utrecht).

Op basis van de geanalyseerde interviews leg ik uit hoe profesioneel succesvolle individuen die tot een kansarme groep behoren de binnen de context van het internationale bedrijfsleven dominante opvatting van prestatie internaliseren en wijzigen (Hoofdstuk 2). In hoofdstuk 3 besteed ik in het bijzonder aandacht aan de alternatieve carrièrepaden professioneel succesvolle kinderen van migranten die hen in staat stelden om ondank kansenbelemmerende nationale omstandingheden vooraanstaande posities te bereiken. Verder onderzoek ik in hoeverre hun etnische achtergrond als onderdeel van hun professionele zelf van invloed is op hun keuzes en reflecties (Hoofdstuk 4). Tot slot heb ik onderzoek gedaan naar hoe nakomelingen van migranten uit Turkije omgaan met hun gevoelens van behoren tegen de achtergrond van hun steile opwaartse mobiliteit (Hoofdstuk 5). Het laatste hoofdstuk zal de bevindingen van dit proefschrift samenvatten en tevens de implicaties ervan bespreken (Hoofdstuk 6).

Belangrijkste bevindingen per hoofdstuk

Uitzonderlijke prestatie als een verhaal van succes

Institutionele regelingen in nationale contexten hebben de neiging om de bestaande sociale orde te reproduceren (Bourdieu, 1977). De nakomelingen van laagopgeleide arbeidsmigranten uit Turkije vormen een van de meest benadeelde en gestigmatiseerde groepen in de vier landen van deze studie. Dit komt ook tot uiting in hun positie op de arbeidsmarkt (Lessard-Phillips, Fibbi, & Wanner, 2012). Voor de nakomelingen betekent dit dat ze een ongelijk uitgangspunt hadden. Hoofdstuk twee onderzoekt hoe afstammelingen van migranten uit Turkije hun professionele prestaties presenteren in het kader van strijd en succes, terwijl ze tegelijkertijd het aannemen van een slachtofferrol proberen te vermijden. De analyse laat zien dat hun verhalen de nadruk leggen op de voordelen van uitzonderlijkheid en verschil in de competitieve context van de

bedrijfsbranche. Tegen de achtergrond van het algehele groepsnadeel onderscheiden de respondenten zich bewust van andere nakomelingen van migranten uit Turkije met minder succesvolle carrières door de rol van persoonlijke karakteristieken en individuele prestaties te benadrukken.

Hun individualistische verhaal verminderde het belang van structurele ongelijkheden. De respondenten presenteren de andere nakomelingen van migranten uit Turkije met minder succesvolle carrières als niet in staat om het algehele groepsnadeel in hun eigen individuele voordeel te veranderen. In plaats daarvan benadrukten de respondenten het belang van individuele vaardigheden en mogelijkheden en dat hun achtergrond hen extra middelen biedt om succes in deze internationale context te bereiken (zie ook Nowicka, 2014). Daarnaast worden de respondenten gemotiveerd door hun ouders wiens strijd en opoffering de vruchtbare grond van het succesverhaal van hun kinderen lijkt te zijn. Het lijkt bijna alsof deze personen geen andere keuze hadden dan om succesvol te zijn in wat zij doen, omdat ze niet zoals hun ouders in een marginale positie in de maatschappij wilden vastzitten.

Uitzonderlijke prestatie als een ervaring van succes

Het proberen om individuele ervaringen van opwaartse sociale mobiliteit te begrijpen tegen de achtergrond van een groepsnadeel maakt het mogelijk om een aantal van de onderliggende gebeurtenissen te begrijpen in verhalen van succes en mislukking. Hoofdstuk drie onderzocht de carrièrepaden van afstammelingen van arbeidsmigranten uit Turkije binnen de professionele zakelijke dienstverlening. De bevindingen laten zien hoe de respondenten hun professionele carrière presenteren als een proces dat gevormd wordt door persoonlijke interacties, terwijl beperkende nationale omstandigheden hun professioneel succes beïnvloeden. De analyses van hun ervaringen en professionele trajecten tonen aan dat ze ondanks hun individualistische verhaal van succes moesten vechten tegen het stigma. Ze moesten kansen zoeken om de voortdurende cyclus van de reproductie te verbreken om hun onwaarschijnlijke succes mogelijk te maken (Crul, et al., 2017).

Er zijn drie ideaaltypen te onderscheiden van alternatieve carrièrepaden voor nieuwkomers om ondanks obstakels die voortkomen uit restrictieve nationale omstandigheden vooraanstaande arbeidsmarktposities te bereiken Het eerste alternatieve carrièrepadbestaat het uit het opbouwen van een algemeen erkend 'internationaal' profiel. Het tweede alternatieve pad is een 'niche' pad dat ontstaat door gebruik te maken van de individuele achtergrond om de bedrijfsladder te

beklimmen. Tenslotte is er een weg van werk in kleinere bedrijven of zelfstandig werk voor personen die geblokkeerde kansen hebben ervaren en daarom 'onafhankelijk' van bedrijfshiërarchieën willen worden. Gemene deler in de trajecten is dat bij de eerder vermelde succesverhalen vaak een schaduwzijde waarneembaar is. Eigenlijk moeten de respondenten 'tegen alle verwachtingen in' volhouden.

De inzetbaarheid van etnische achtergrondbronnen als tweezijdig fenomeen

Nakomelingen van migranten worden geconfronteerd met de 'ander' die de maatschappelijke standaard definieert. Elke weg naar succes wordt afgebakend door grenzen die zijn getekend volgens deze 'standaard' (zie Waldring, Crul, & Ghorashi, 2014). Iedereen die tegen de verwachting in sociale mobiliteit in laat zien, is een uitdaging voor deze 'standaard'. Hoofdstuk 4 focust op de ervaringen van de toekomstige elite onder nakomelingen van migranten uit Turkije in Duitsland, door empirische gegevens te analyseren die verzameld werden door middel van diepte-interviews binnen drie beroepssectoren (juridische sector, onderwijs en bedrijfsleven). De bevindingen hebben aangetoond dat veel professionals hun etnische achtergrond op creatieve en strategische manieren gebruiken om kansen te zoeken en toegang te krijgen tot vooraanstande posities. Ze namen nieuwe professionele rollen op zich en ze zijn in nieuwe sociale kringen gekomen door hun steile opwaartse mobiliteit. Het is echter ook duidelijk dat ze nog altijd moeten strijden tegen het feit dat hun individuele mobiliteit in contrast staat met de lage status van de groep waaraan zij behoren.

De analyses hebben ook aangetoond dat het niet zo eenvoudig is om een 'goede' professional te zijn, omdat ze als 'nieuwkomers' altijd het risico lopen gelijkgeschaald te worden aan bestaande stereotypen. Zij moeten hun positie permanent onderhandelen in een 'balancerende daad' om dit te voorkomen (Schneider, Crul, & Van Praag, 2014). Dit wil zeggen dat zij voortdurend met verwijzingen naar hun inferieure status om moeten gaan door zich te presenteren als een van de eerste 'nieuwkomers' uit een minder bevoorrechte groep toebehoort en die erin slaagde om deze situatie in hun loopbaan te overwinnen. Hun etniciteit heeft in deze context het karakter van een tweezijdig zwaard aangenomen. Enerzijds moesten ze anderen in hun capaciteiten laten geloven ondanks hun achtergrond; anderzijds was hun oorsprong meestal een fundamenteel onderdeel van hun ervaring van succes.

<u>In-betweenness als een bron van internationale inzetbaarheid</u>

De bedrijfswereld heeft zijn eigen structurele voorwaarden gecreëerd die steeds meer onafhankelijk zijn van nationale contexten. Als zodanig kan deze internationale context een alternatief bieden voor degenen die in nationale omgevingen als 'nieuwkomers' beschouwd zouden worden. Op weg 'naar boven' beginnen de meesten te erkennen dat er inderdaad plaats is voor 'mensen zoals ik'. Zij zijn zakelijke professionals in posities waar het van hen wordt verwacht dat zij geografisch zeer mobiel zijn. Interessant is dat ze zich om hun gemarginaliseerde startpositie in hun eigen thuisland te 'ontsnappen' soms op een instrumentele manier aan Turkije – het thuisland van hun ouders – koppelen. Zoals de analyse in hoofdstuk vijf heeft laten zien, ervaren ze een ongemakkelijkheid uit de constante betwisting van hun gevoel van behoren op nationaal niveau, maar door de voordelen die voortvloeien uit hun aanpasbaarheid op multiculturele plaatsen te benadrukken, kunnen ze deze eigenschap van 'in-betweenness' tot hun voordeel maken (zie ook Ghorashi, De Boer, & Ten Holder, 2017).

Het zijn steden zoals Londen, New York en Istanbul, die genoemd worden als plaatsen waar ze zich goed voelen. Het is niet altijd gemakkelijk te onderscheiden of de band met deze steden het gevolg is van hun intrinsieke motivatie om daarheen te verhuizen of dat hij onderdeel vormt van hun professionele identiteit waardoor ze zich met deze financiële centra verbonden voelen. Ze wonen en werken al in plaatsen zoals Parijs, Frankfurt am Main en Stockholm en zijn dus thuis in grote grootstedelijke gebieden met een hun multicultureel karakter. Het geval van Istanbul is speciaal voor hen, omdat Istanbul een symbool lijkt voor een volledige cirkel in relatie tot het migratieproject van hun ouders. Verhuizen naar Istanbul betekent daarom ook niet alleen een stap in een internationale carrière, maar het maakt hen ook een beetje immuun voor nationale debatten over integratie en de daarmee verband houdende mechanismen van uitsluiting. Er is daarmee altijd een andere plek waar ze tenminste theoretisch gezien naartoe zouden kunnen.

Conclusie en discussie

<u>De waarde van het bestuderen van uitzonderingen</u>

Dit proefschrift onderzocht zowel de carrièreverhalen en de trajecten van afstammelingen van arbeidsmigranten uit Turkije in vooraanstande posities op de arbeidsmarkt. Er werd aangetoond dat hun succes, in tegenstelling tot wat hun prestatieverhalen suggereren, in geen geval een

eenvoudige prestatie was. Eerder moesten ze voortdurend kansen zoeken om vooraanstande posities te verwerven. Nog steeds moeten zij omgaan met het feit dat hun individuele sociale mobiliteit in contrast staat met de lage status van de groep waar ze naar behoren. Deze paradox wordt duidelijk in de dagelijkse interacties op het werk, waarin hun professionaliteit kan worden betwist. De bevindingen wijzen erop dat hun succes ook een balancerende handeling is door het nadeel van de groep tot een eigen voordeel te maken, terwijl de respondenten tegelijkertijd proberen te vermijden als een uitzonderlijk lid van een inferieure 'out-group' gezien te worden.

Wat de bevindingen van dit onderzoek impliceren is dat in de eerste plaats de sterke individualisering van succes en mislukking het enerzijds mogelijk maakt dat buitengewone individuen iets onwaarschijnlijks realiseren, maar dat dit proces tegelijkertijd systematische ongelijkheden kan reproduceren omdat de mislukking van zoveel anderen gerechtvaardigd lijkt vanuit een individualistisch perspectief (Lewis, 1993). Het is onmogelijk om te denken dat er een zuivere vorm van meritocratie bestaat, terwijl er voldoende bewijs is voor de cruciale rol van afkomst in het onderzochte sociale mobiliteitsproces. De respondenten van deze studie hebben dit zelf ervaren, omdat ze hindernissen en weerstand tegen hun professionele prestaties hebben moeten overwinnen. De respondenten proberen het aannemen van de rol van slachtoffer van structurele omstandigheden echter te vermijden.

Bovendien blijkt uit de analyses dat er een ingewikkeld proces is dat een dialectische relatie tussen verhalen en ervaringen aantoont. Het harde werk van de respondenten is een onmiskenbare werkelijkheid. Ze worstelden meestal op alleen, terwijl hun wegen zeker anders zouden zijn zonder de welwillendheid van significante anderen die de instrumentele steun aanboden die hun ouders niet konden geven (Rezai, et al., 2015). Ze overwinnen moeilijkheden om 'een van de weinige' nakomelingen van migranten uit Turkije te zijn die in vooraanstande posities op de arbeidsmarkt weten te bereiken. Ze zijn professioneel genoeg om te weten hoe ze moeten omgaan met de politiek van deze uitzonderlijkheid die hun acceptatie als gelijke collega kan schaden. Het schijnbare contrast van een verhaal dat het nadeel rationaliseert en de constante mogelijkheid van hindernissen in hun trajecten is een integraal onderdeel van hun succes.

Erkenning van ongelijkheid na het overwinnen van nadeel

Voorbeelden van een steile opwaartse mobiliteit van personen uit een achtergestelde groep kunnen de structurele ongelijkheid verfraaien zonder de voorwaarden te verbeteren die het

nadeel in de eerste plaats hebben veroorzaakt. De vraag is of personen die succes op het gebied van werk of onderwijs weten te bereiken de obstakels die hun afkomst met zich meebrengt niet alleen omzeilen, maar ook onzichtbaar maken? We kunnen de voorbeelden van individuele succes tegen alle verwachtingen in als een indicatie gebruiken dat het, ondanks dat veel anderen daar niet in slagen, toch mogelijk is voor nakomelingen van migranten om de negatieve verwachtingen te logenstraffen. Als we succesverhalen gebruiken om ze te onderscheiden van de vele gevallen van mislukking die voortvloeien uit een soortgelijke startpositie, zouden we uiteindelijk ongelijkheid rechtvaardigen en mischien zelfs voortzetten.

De toenemende individualisering van sociale processen leidt tot een perspectief dat de structurele omstandigheden te overwinnen zijn door persoonlijke acties en inspanningen. Terwijl professioneel succes en mislukking steeds meer wordt toegeschreven aan individuen lijkt het abstracte 'glazen plafond' het enige beschikbare concept om de maatschappelijke omstandigheden te vatten. Zoals in de hoofdstukken van dit proefschrift blijkt, hoe meer mislukking wordt gezien als een 'individueel probleem' in plaats van een 'maatschappelijke probleem' (zie Mills, 1959), des te meer zullen de ervaringen van discriminatie waarmee sociaal mobiele nieuwkomers worden geconfronteerd onzichtbaar blijven. Het feit dat het een glazen plafond heet waar je door kan kijken maar niet kan doordringen, wijst op de onzichtbaarheid van de mechanismen die kansen blokkeren.

Dit proefschrift richtte zich op succesvolle professionals waarvan de ouders vanuit Turkije migreerden. De omstandigheden die de zeldzame uitzondering toestaan, zijn dezelfde omstandigheden die in de weg staan dat deze uitzondering gewoon wordt. Daarom illustreren de bevindingen van dit proefschrift ook de noodzaak om de conceptualisering van 'mislukking' in de beoordeling van prestaties op het gebied van onderwijs en arbeidsmarkt te heroverwegen. De zogenaamde succesvolle mensen ervaren soms ook falen. Falen kan natuurlijk worden toegeschreven aan gebrek aan individuele kwaliteiten en inspanningen, maar vooral de groep die ik studeerde, moest overgekwalificeerd en ambitieus worden om te komen waar ze zijn. Het individualistische perspectief op succes in school en op de arbeidsmarkt resulteert in stigmatisering van individuen van wie 'het falen' wordt toegeschreven aan individuele kenmerken, terwijl structurele omstandigheden onzichtbaar blijven (Lewis, 1993).

Natuurlijk lijkt volledige gelijkheid utopisch, omdat individuele mogelijkheden nooit in de gehele samenleving gelijk zullen zijn en dit is waarschijnlijk ook niet wenselijk. Wat echter nodig is, is een benadering die de toegang voor kansarme personen en groepen tot

vooraanstande posities toelaat, terwijl de werking van uitsluiting en macht voortdurend wordt erkend. Het herkennen van de structurele krachten die leiden tot het ontstaan van obstakels voor individuen in hun dagelijks leven, is een eerste stap bij het zoeken naar 'beste praktijken'. Een kritisch perspectief op de ervaringen en succesverhalen van degenen die het 'hebben gemaakt' lijkt op dit punt van cruciaal belang. Eventuele reflecties op individueel verdiend voordeel moeten rekening houden met de blijvende obstakels die door het nadeel van de groep worden veroorzaakt.

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Curriculum Vitae

Ali Konyali (1985, Göttingen, Germany) obtained his Master's degree in European Studies at Maastricht University with distinction (cum laude) in 2010 and in International Migration and Ethnic Relations at Malmö University, Sweden in 2011. From September 2011 until February 2012, he worked as a junior lecturer at the Department of Political Science of Maastricht University contributing to the teaching of the European Studies Bachelor programme. From February 2012 until July 2016, Ali was a doctoral researcher at the Department of Public Administration and Sociology at Erasmus University Rotterdam. He was involved in the international research project ELITES – Pathways to Success funded by the European Union's Seventh Framework programme. Ali was also employed by the IMISCOE Network Office in Rotterdam between December 2014 and June 2017. He published research articles in different international peer-reviewed journals such as the open access journal Social Inclusion or the widely read journal of Ethnic and Racial Studies. Since November 2016, Ali is working at the Institute for Migration Research and Intercultural Studies (IMIS), at the University of Osnabrück in Germany.