

A Place for Prayer, A Bar without Booze

**Agency and Boundaries in the Lives of Mosque
Attending Muslims in Groningen**

Master thesis Religion, Conflict and Globalization

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1. Introduction

As a white, middle-aged Dutchman with a Christian upbringing, I find the increasing anti-Muslim sphere in Western Europe disturbing and fascinating at the same time. In the short term, it may have negative consequences for the relations between Muslims and the rest, but at the same time, it is possible that the confronting voices of anti-Muslim politicians might lead to a break-through, as understanding each other, or not, is at least a topic now.

Some decades ago, pre-9/11, the way people of different cultural backgrounds could live together, seemed of little concern in public debate, ignoring possible problems of not fitting in and discrimination against Muslims, and feelings of losing grip over their own future with the autochthone working class, that was confronted with an increasing number of people with a different cultural background in their neighbourhood.

In Western society, mosques are the most visible representatives of Muslim religion. The building of new mosques often led to emotional reactions of autochthonous people, especially those living close to it, as happened when the Selwerd mosque in Groningen started its plans for a new building. Neighbours opposed the new mosque up to the High Court, in vain.

Mosques are in the media in a problematizing context, for instance when media discover a visit from a 'hate imam', or when mosques allegedly receive financing from Islamic countries, like Saudi Arabia and Kuwait and in some occasions, they reach the inner pages of local newspapers, when anti-Muslims attack a mosque with Molotov cocktails or pig blood.

It is interesting to see how Muslims deal with this context of (negative) attention and their experiences place in society, in the context of the social environment of their mosque.

Discrimination, real, felt and often both, limits job opportunities for non-Western migrants, even for those of the second and the third generation. Muslims seem to be more involved in their religion than before 9/11. Possible causes are more awareness of being a Muslim through globalization and Internet, experiences of being 'othered', discriminated against and 'racialized' as a Muslim (Buitelaar, 2006:11).

Also, younger generations of Muslims are more aware of their religion, as the level of education seems to increase, especially in cities worldwide. In addition, internet gives them the opportunity to acquire knowledge about Islam, enabling them to make their own choices

in how to approach religion and how to embed it in their lives.

Muslims in the West find an additional challenge in embedding their more individual chosen path of experienced religion in a culture that is at best unaware of their religion and often negative or even hostile towards visible religion from foreign cultures.

How do Muslims cope with these societal changes, how do they form their religious identity?

The objectives of the research are:

- To examine whether, and if so, in what ways, Muslims in Groningen use the mosque as a social institution with fellow Muslims, helping them to cope with daily life as a religious minority in the Netherlands.
- To gain insights in the “othering” experiences of Muslims.
- To get insight in the social interactions of Muslims, both with fellow Muslims as with (other) Dutch people.

Central research question

‘What is the role of the mosque in the identity construction of Muslims in Groningen, in a post-migrant context, in a society built on liberal and Christian traditions, where Muslims form a mainly lower-class minority that experiences negative attitudes and discrimination?’

Academic relevance

Academic literature on Muslims’ lives in Western countries is hardly scarce. Books and papers bring all sorts of insights, varying from individual experiences to ‘big’ stories on integration or the lack of it. Investigating the narratives of Muslims in the context of one specific mosque in the northern Dutch city of Groningen might bring new insights about how the mosque functions as a social centre, how anti-Muslim feelings might be focused on the mosque, how the mosque helps Muslims to cope with daily anti-Muslim experience, or how Muslims find agency in how they want to be connected to and identified by life in and around the Mosque. In a broader context, these insights might help to understand the widening gap between Muslims and other Dutch people by understanding each other’s points of view and (sub)cultures.

Another aspect that may be interesting, is the difference between Groningen, with a low percentage of Muslims, and other big cities in the West of the Netherlands, with quarters with

a majority of migrants that have separate, state-financed Islamic schools. In Groningen, Muslims are more divided among the different areas of the city and there is no single Islamic school in the wide region. One might expect differences in subcultural segregation as a consequence of these differences. On the one hand, more segregation might lead to a wider gap between Muslims and autochthone Dutch people, on the other hand, strong bonds between Muslim migrants and children of immigrants might have helped them to find a place in a new home country (Saada, 2016), feeding self-confidence, thus enable them to cope with othering experiences.

The mosque central in this research is a Sunni, multicultural community, with an exclusive Turkish board, where religion is the binding category for all attendants and nationality for its Turkish-Dutch attendants (Murat, 2016).

Self-narratives play an important role in exploring the personal experiences and views, thus rising above one-dimension approaches of Islam, exploring the intersectionality of ethnic background, religion, age, gender and other categories that make out the complexity of individual humans (Zock, 2013). Self-identification of research participants is central in the primary qualitative data collection (Smits, 2013).

Sub Questions

The research question can be divided into several components:

1. 'Role of the mosque: What is the social role of the mosque, how does this role vary between Muslims? How strong is the bond between mosque attenders?
2. 'Identity construction': How do Muslim immigrants construct their identity in a triangle of religion, ethnicity/culture of the country of origin and host country culture?
3. 'Muslims in Groningen, in a post migrant context': What is the position of Muslims as migrants, in society, in the West, in the Netherlands, in the city of Groningen?
4. 'Dutch society, built on liberal and Christian traditions': Which characteristics are particularly influencing the integration and participation of Muslims in the Netherlands?
5. 'Muslims as a mainly lower class minority': In what way plays the assumption of Muslim immigrants being part of a lower class in society a role in answering the central research question?
6. 'Negative attitudes and discrimination': What kind of experiences regarding negative

attitudes and discrimination do Muslims encounter? How do Muslims experience help from their fellow Muslims and from the mosque as a social institution, in daily life and in coping with confrontations with Muslim-unfriendly and discriminatory behaviour?

These subquestions help to structure the research. They form the basis for the research design, as well as the guideline for the actual research and analysis. The methodology as well as an account of the choices made in this thesis are described in the second chapter. The third chapter contains the literary review, exploring relevant studies on Muslims in the West and general literature on migrants in a diaspora context. The fourth chapter paints a picture of the context of Muslims in the Netherlands, zooming in on the particular situation in Groningen. Chapter 5 contains the relevant findings of the empirical research, leading to the answer to the research question, elaborated in the conclusions in the sixth and last chapter.

2. Methodology and Research Design

An old white farm, in the middle of a park, in between two quarters of Groningen, Paddepoel and Selwerd, is the home base of one of two mosques in the major city of the North. It is a quite visible representation of Islam for the neighbourhood, in contrast with the other Groningen mosque, the Turkish Eyüp Sultan Camii, founded in a former church in the Korrewegwijk, a quarter with a relatively high number of immigrants, just like Paddepoel and Selwerd. The 'white mosque' is where I start my research.

The Research Design Cycle, developed by Hennink, Hutter and Bailey, will be my guideline in developing, executing and analysing my research. The research strategy is based on grounded theory, in a structured way, as M. Hennink et al. describe in *Qualitative Research Methods* (Hennink et al., 2011).

Before starting the data collection, a literary review has been conducted, to look at research already conducted on (Muslim) migrants. After this, the context of Muslim migrants in the Netherlands and in Groningen, is presented. The primary data collection consists of two focus group interviews and an in-depth interview.

Hennink et al. methodology divides the activities required for qualitative research into three circular activities: the Design Cycle, the Ethnographic Cycle and the Analytical Cycle. (2011). These three cycles are subdivided into four activities that also form a cycle. The idea is that a design for qualitative research is a 'work in progress'. For instance, when research leads to unexpected results, the research question can be adapted; or when analysis leads to new insights, additional data collection may be required.

Design Circle

The research question has been formulated after an initial literature study. After the formulation of the research question, additional literature study was conducted. This literature study has led to the conceptual framework and to a description of the context of Muslims in the Netherlands. The way fieldwork is approached is also part of the Research Design Cycle.

Research question

In this case, I started with formulating the central research question and its sub-questions, mentioned earlier in the introduction. The original central research question was:

“What is the role of the mosque in the daily life of Muslims in the Netherlands/the West, in a post-migrant context, in a society that has been built around Christian traditions, where Muslims form a mainly lower-class minority that experiences negative attitudes and discrimination?”

Later on, based on the literature review and the outcomes of the data collection, the research question was changed to:

“What is the role of the mosque **in the identity construction** of Muslims in **Groningen**, in a post-migrant context, in a society built on **liberal and** Christian traditions, where Muslims form a mainly lower-class minority that experiences negative attitudes and discrimination?”

The following components in the research question have been adapted:

1. “... in the daily life ...” has been changed to “... in the identity construction ...”, to bring the research question in line with the actual research, in which identity theory plays an important role.
2. “... in the Netherlands/the West ...” has been changed to “... in Groningen ...” to do justice to the limited scope of the research.
3. “... on Christian traditions ...” has been changed to “...on liberal and Christian traditions ...”, because participants explicitly mentioned a gap between secular and religious people; secular people show in general little respect for religious beliefs, according to several participants. ‘Liberal’ is not synonymous to secular, but the liberal constitution of the Netherlands has a basis in secular thought, for instance in the separation of church and state.

In order to get focus within answering this research question, it has been split up in components. These are used as a structure through which the research question can be answered. The components are:

1. Role of the mosque;
2. Identity construction;
3. 'Muslims in the West, Netherlands, Groningen in a post-migrant context';
4. Dutch society, built on liberal and Christian traditions;
5. Muslims as a mainly lower class minority;
6. Negative attitudes and discrimination.

Literature and Theory and conceptual framework

The first step in the literature and theory has been to explore scientific relevant books and articles. This literature exploration can be found in the previous chapter, as well as the conceptual framework, as a starting point for the field research.

Fieldwork approach

The first step in the fieldwork approach was to identify and approach key informants of the mosque, who could help to get in contact with mosque attendants that were willing to cooperate with the researcher. In this case, a scan of my personal network did not bring any connection to the mosque administration, so it started with a 'cold acquisition' at the mosque of my first choice, Mosque Selwerd.

This mosque is not connected to any nationality. Islamitisch Centrum Groningen (Islamic Centre Groningen) is its straight forward, official name. This mosque was the starting point of my research, and my mission to talk to Muslims about their experiences in Groningen.

Muslims in Groningen appear to hold a low profile in public life. Their exposure on the Internet is limited, as is their appearance in local newspapers. Anti-Islam voices are now louder and more frequent than prior to '9/11'. The plan for a new mosque in Selwerd, led to much resistance from the local autochthone community. The objections were brought to the highest level of civil court (Raad van State), that denied all the objections, and after this decision, the new mosque could be built. The biggest holdback now is financing the building. The mosque administration organises special funding actions to raise money for this. This year In June, the mosque was in the media, being 'accused' of asking for money from financiers the Gulf states

and having used a radical imam to support the fundraising for the new mosque. The mosque administration reacted with the remark that the mosque never received money from the Gulf states. The mosque administration denied the help of the radical imam with fundraising for a new mosque. Media attention seems to follow this pattern: the mosque is accused of suspicious connections and it is forced to react in a defensive manner. Proactive use of the media seems non-existent.

The specific situation of turmoil at this mosque probably has had an influence of this group of Muslims' perspective on Dutch society, and its position in Groningen, making accessing the mosque not an easy task, as I would experience.

For starters, the mosque has a low profile on the internet. Getting in contact with the mosque was difficult. There is no website, only a Facebook page. There is a phone number, found with Google, but the phone was not answered, and after several attempts, and leaving a message on Facebook, I decided to visit the mosque.

I started on a random Wednesday afternoon. I entered the old farm through a modest classic wooden door and I entered a dark hallway with doors on both sides. The door on the right was open. Entering the room, I saw a tiny market with exotic goods. A man in djellaba stood in front of the counter, another stood behind it. "Assalaamu 'alaykum", said the man standing right next to me, frowning. I forgot the 'Wa 'alaykumu s-salaam" I learned by heart and responded with "Hello." "O sorry, hello", the man apologized, to my surprise.

I should talk to the mosque administration, the two men replied, after I told them about my research plan. They gave me a business card with the same phone number I fruitlessly had tried to call for a couple of days. "They are sitting there, if they are present", the man explained, pointing at the door across the hall. "Friday after salaah, is the best chance to catch them."

The salaah al-jumu'ah, the Friday prayer, is the most important prayer of the week for Muslims. Al-jumu'ah means literally congregation, and this word has also become the word for Friday. More particularly, this Friday prayer is the name for the congregational prayer in the early Friday afternoon.

The time I arrived, just after the prayer, the park square was filled with people, all men, dressed mostly in djellabas and other not typical Dutch clothing. They were talking animatedly; they shook hands, hugged and kissed. The president of the mosque administration was not present, they told me: "Maybe next week."

The next week, I came across an autochthone Dutch man who was in charge of the mosque's public relations. He led me in the boardroom, small and soberly furnished, with a wooden desk and a couple of loose kitchen chairs. This time, the president was present. He, and another man shook hands with me and they invited me to sit down. The president would ask some men of a group he leads to participate, he promised, after I told them about my plans for focus group interviews with two or three homogeneous groups, older and younger, men and women. "I cannot help you with the women though; we do not have much contact with them. Perhaps you could try the Turkish mosque. Many of our women go there."

After a few weeks, I asked the president if he had made any progress. "It is going to be difficult, so far I have nobody who wants to participate, but I will give it one more try."

At that time, I decided to start up my alternative plan, approaching the Turkish mosque in Groningen, that has a transparent image and, as will show, clearly cherishes and promotes this image.

The Eyup Sultan Camii Mosque, in the Korrewegwijk, is founded in a former Protestant church. As part of the Islamitische Stichting Nederland (Islamic Foundation Netherlands), the mosque is also part of the Diyanet-network, connected to the Turkish Directorate of Religious Affairs. All Muslims are welcome in this mosque, but its board is entirely Turkish.

Contacting this mosque led directly to success. President Murat answered the phone and invited me to visit the mosque to tell the administration about my research plan. Murat is feigned, as are all names in this thesis, to assure anonymity for the participants.

As with the Mosque Selwerd, I arrived at the Turkish mosque just after the salaah al-jumu'ah. The image on the parking lot in front of the former church was similar to that at the mosque in Park Selwerd: enthusiastic men, (not a single woman was in sight) talking, hugging and kissing. To my surprise, caused by prejudiced expectations, I saw people from a wide variety of ethnic backgrounds, Turkish, naturally, but also apparent Arabs and people with dark skins, probably from countries south of the Sahara.

I walked into the building and I saw a man in the middle of the attention of several other men, shaking hands, answering questions and collecting money. He was the man I was looking for: president Murat. I waited until he was done answering a question and we approached each other. We shook hands and he led me to a small room with no outside windows. The inside window was almost completely covered with a big Turkish flag and a Dutch flag, just as big.

Murat introduced me to three other Turkish-Dutch people, of the same age as he, around fifty

to sixty. He left the room and came back with the imam, a younger man with a well-groomed beard. He is here for five years, sent by the Dyanet network and his time here is almost done, he explained. He understands Dutch, but sometimes it will be necessary to translate, Murat announced.

The men were apparently open, they told me about the dozens of visits they have every year, from schools, clubs and other groups; and they were willing to help me doing my research. Politics is a sensitive subject, one of the administrators mentions, but if it is about religion, it is no problem.

I told them I would like to form three focus groups: older men, younger men and women. We tried to make appointments: older men can be found after the Friday prayer, younger men, teenagers, come together on Friday evenings and the women have a breakfast group on Fridays and an assembly on Sunday afternoons.

Ethnographic Cycle

In the Ethnographic Cycle, the actual data collection takes place. It starts with the Design of the research instrument, followed by the recruitment of participants, the data collection itself and making inferences, if needed. As a 'cycled' group of activities, adaptation in any stage can take place. Prior to the first focus group interview, I formulated preliminary deductive codes, to structure the research results. Later on, I added codes, based on the research results. These changes are an example of inferences in the ethnographic cycle, as described by Hennink et al (2011).

In the Design of the Research Instrument, focus group discussions form the main method for data collection. Since the research question can be considered exploratory, a wider range of views can be collected using a focus group discussion. Furthermore, participants can add to each other's varying experiences. After these focus group discussions, in-depth interviews would be used to elaborate on the outcome. That was the plan. However, forming of the focus groups followed its own dynamic, resulting in a data collection that started with one in-depth interview and ended with two focus group discussions. The in-depth-interview was with an elderly Turkish Dutch man, the first focus group consisted of elder man, the second focus group consisted of younger men.

The focus group discussion guide follows a funnel design (Hennink, 2011: 143). After the introduction, broad opening questions are followed by specific questions, closing questions

and post-discussion questions and remarks. See Appendix 2 for the complete guide. Since the interviewees were expected to be Dutch, the questions are formulated in Dutch.

The questions are extracted from a list of preliminary deductive codes I made upfront. These concept codes are as to expect extracted from the research question and its sub-questions:

1. Cope with daily life as religious minority
2. Use of mosque as a social institution
3. Experiences of othering
4. Social interactions with fellow Muslims (in and outside the mosque)
5. Social interactions with other Dutch people
6. Migrant-autochthone axis: first generation migrant, second generation migrant, third and further generation migrant, autochthone (converted Muslim)
7. Experiences of help from other Muslims/Mosque attendants
8. Role of mosque in past and present

The recruitment of participants started the week after I met with the mosque administration. Murat told me that I could show up after the Friday prayer, to engage with my first focus group discussion, with older Turkish-Dutch mosque attendants. I arrived just in time to preside my first group that Murat promised to assemble. Murat awaited men leaving the prayer hall. He picked out five older Turkish men and directed them to the administration room. Some of them checked their watches and moved around on their chair, their eyes rolled from one side to another. After I have finished my introduction, four of them asked to be excused because they had to get back to their work.

I was left behind with one man, mister Asuman. He had all the time that afternoon, he assured me. On the spot, the focus group discussion had become an in-depth interview. It turned out to be a good way to test the questionnaire, though. We talked for two hours. The questionnaire was dealt with and so was the political situation in the world, in Turkey and in the Middle East. "You won't write down our political discussion, right?" I promised him only to use the parts related to the research question.

Next week, I tried to do my focus group discussion for the second time. President Murat had left for Mekka, on his fifth hadj, but his fellow administrator, Berkan, welcomed me and, as Murat did, asked people who were leaving the prayer room to join us in the administrative room with the Turkish and the Dutch flag. There were now seven participants, all Turkish-

Dutch, six of them were men aged forty plus and one was a Turkish-German student, 22 years old. His Dutch was not adequate to follow the whole conversation, so I offered to translate from time to time.

Learned from my experience a week earlier, I started immediately with the questionnaire. And again, participants were eager to leave, to go back to work. Three people left after half an hour and that was just enough to finish almost the entire focus group guide.

The same evening, I got the opportunity to talk with a group of youngster, teenagers, that come together socially on Friday nights. Berkan explained that I can just walk in and ask them, though he had no idea who and how many youngsters would be there.

As I entered the mosque that evening, a young man in his twenties, Dawlat, asked why I am here. I explained that I am looking for a group of young people for my thesis research and he invited me to join his group of four. This group contained a mix of nationalities, without Turkish-Dutch participants. Dawlat (25) is a refugee from Afghanistan, who came to the Netherlands as a young boy, twenty years ago. The second participant is Aran (22), a Kurd who flew from Iraq, also twenty years ago. Dawlat and Aran are both Pharmacy students. The other two participants are also students. Supriadi (34) studies Medical science, and Bilal (27) is a Biotechnology student. Both live in Indonesia. They are here for their study and they will return to Indonesia when they have finished their study.

The composition of the 'young' group is not what I expected, the participants are older, and, more important, they are not Turkish-Dutch, which makes a comparison with the other focus group discussion and the in-depth interview less systematic. But, in the spirit of grounded theory, I decided to start the questionnaire and just see what happens. This group turned out to be dedicated to talk about their religion. Dawlat was clearly the discussion leader, as we will see in the results of the primary data collection in chapter 5.

Meanwhile, the president of Mosque Selwerd had not succeeded in forming a focus group. I decided to let go of this part of the research for now, and postponed my decision whether or not to contact this mosque again, depending on the results of the focus group discussion and the in-depth interview. The decision to whether or not form a focus group discussion of women was also postponed, after some attempts to make an appointment, failed. After the results were analysed, I decided not to expand the research, partly for time schedule reasons and partly because I found sufficient heterogeneity in the participants' contributions.

Analytical Cycle

In order to analyse the acquired data, I expanded the preliminary codes, based on the information I acquired from the two focus group discussions and the in-depth interview.

This led to fourteen codes, as shown in the table below.

Tabel 1: Codes used in the analytical phase

Nr	Code short	Code long	Deductive/ inductive	Description
1	COPING	Cope with daily life as religious minority	Deductive	Examples of coping with experiences as a religious minority in daily life.
2	MOSQUESOC	Use of mosque as a social institution	Deductive	Experiences of social functions of the Mosque
3	OTHERING	Experiences of othering	Deductive	Experiences of othering, such as discrimination, positive or negative, exclusion
4	SOCMUSLIM	Social interactions with fellow Muslims	Deductive	Social interactions with fellow Muslims, outside the mosque: work, school, neighborhood, private (circle of friends)
5	SOCOTHER	Social interactions with other (Dutch) people	Deductive	(Social) interactions with (Dutch) non-Muslims Muslims, at the mosque, and outside the mosque: work, school, neighborhood, private (circle of friends)
6	MIGHIS	Migration history	Deductive	History of migrant (if any): first generation migrant, second generation migrant, third and further generation migrant, autochthone (converted Muslim).
7	HELP	Experiences of help from other Muslims/ Mosque attendants	Deductive	Experiences of help from other Muslims/Mosque attendants
8	MOSQUEROLE	Role of mosque in past and present	Deductive	Social, institutional, educational, legal aspects of the Mosque in the life of Muslims.
9	UMMA	The Umma	Inductive	Strength of the bond between Muslims.
10	IMAGE	Image of islam in the West	Inductive	Examples of the public image of islam in the West: in media, politics, etc.
11	ID	Primary identity	Inductive	Feeling of primary identity: Country of origin, muslim, Dutch (Western)
12	IMAGEMOS	Image of the West for Muslims	Inductive	Image of Western culture, habits and politics for Muslims living in the West.
13	ALIENATION	Alienation from Dutch/Western Culture	Inductive	Not feeling at home in Dutch/Western society.
14	ISLAMAWARE	Islamization	Inductive	Growing awareness of and dedication to islam

These fourteen codes can be connected to the components subtracted from the central

adapted research question:

“What is the role of the mosque in the identity construction of Muslims in Groningen, in a post-migrant context, in a society built on liberal and Christian traditions, where Muslims form a mainly lower-class minority that experiences negative attitudes and discrimination?”

The concepts to explore, as defined earlier, lead to the concept codes in the table on the next page. This table is the operationalization of the main concepts of this study.

Tabel 2: Codes connected to the aspects of the central research question

1. Role of the mosque	2. MOSQUES: Experiences of social functions of the Mosque
	7. HELP: Experiences of help from other Muslims/Mosque attendants
	8. MOSQUEROLE: Social, institutional, educational, legal aspects of the Mosque in the life of Muslims.
2. Identity construction	4.SOCMUSLIM: Social interactions with fellow Muslims, outside the mosque: work, school, neighborhood, private (circle of friends).
	11. ID: Feeling of primary identity: Country of origin, Muslim, Dutch (Western).
	6. MIGHIS: History of migrant (if any): first generation migrant, second generation migrant, third and further generation migrant, autochthone (converted Muslim).
	9. UMMA: Strength of the bond between Muslims.
	14. ISLAMAWARE: Awareness of and dedication to islam.
3. Muslims in the West, Netherlands, Groningen	Context chapter
4. Post-migrant context	Context chapter
5. Dutch society, built on liberal and Christian traditions	5. SOCOTHER: (Social) interactions with (Dutch) non-Muslims Muslims, at the mosque, and outside the mosque: work, school, neighbourhood, private (circle of friends)
	12. IMAGEMOS: Image of Western culture, habits and politics for Muslims living in the West.
6. Muslims as a mainly lower class minority	Context chapter
7. Negative attitudes and discrimination	1. COPING: Examples of coping with experiences as a religious minority in daily life.
	3. OTHERING: Experiences of othering, such as discrimination, exclusion.
	10 IMAGE: Image of islam in the West.

	13. ALIENATION: Not feeling at home in Dutch society.
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The components '3. Muslims in the West/Netherlands/Groningen', '4. Post migrant context' and '6. Muslims as a lower class minority', will be filled in in the context chapter.

With these fourteen codes, the outcomes have been categorized and conceptualized, after which a theoretical outcome has been developed. The conclusions are mainly qualitative and can thus not be generalised. Also, due to the complexity of assembling homogeneous groups, the results cannot be broadened to all groups of Muslims in the West, in the Netherlands and since the mosque where the research took place is a Turkish one, and the only other mosque in Groningen is a mosque without ties to a specific country, the results also cannot be broadened to Muslims in the city of Groningen.

Yet, conclusions that seem broadly supported by informants will be highlighted as interesting for further research. And, as we will see in the next chapters, some specific outcomes related to mosque attendants in an average town in the West, are worth examining deeper and at other places, since they might help in understanding the consequences of othering for visible minorities in the West.

3. Literature Review

This thesis uses qualitative research as a primary source, and literary review as secondary source for analysis. In this chapter, I will explore the relevant key concepts and their literature and theories. The central research question will be explored, by dividing it into its defining components.

The role of the mosque in the context of the Netherlands

Turkish mosques in the West have wider goals than just offering a place for worship, according to M. Es (2016), who investigated Turkish mosques in the Netherlands. “[...] Turkish-Islamic organizations in the Netherlands have progressively introduced mosque-based services and activities that are often hard to categorize as ‘religious.’ [...] the portfolio of the cultural centers operating under Turkish–Dutch mosques today include music, theater, and cooking classes, homework aid for students, and even youth rooms equipped with computer game consoles.”

Es claims that mosque administrations especially organise activities for children, youth and women, [...] to ensure the survival of Turkish-Islamic organizations in the face of declining mosque attendance with the passing of the generation that established mosques from the 1970s on.” This declining mosque attendance will be addressed in the context chapter 4.

Fear of assimilation of Turkish migrants and their ascendants in the Netherlands is also at the root of this drive to organise all sorts of activities for the Turkish-Dutch. (Es, 2016: 827)

Identity construction in a post-migrant context

Identity construction in a diaspora context will play a pivotal role in the research. I will follow the postmodern definition of diaspora, as described by Anthias (1998): “[...] a condition [...] put into play through the experience of being from one place and of another, and it is identified with the idea of particular sentiments towards the homeland, whilst being formed by those of the place of settlement.” (Anthias, 1998:565). Presenting diaspora as a condition instead of a group description, helps to do justice to the complexity of migrants’ specific circumstances and feelings towards their homeland, their country of settlement and the

connection they may feel with both, as well as connections with fellow Muslims (Ummah, the worldwide Islamic community). This also gives space to evaluate individual stories, taking intersectionality into account, by considering categories like class, gender and age.

In the identity formation of Muslims in the Netherlands, transnationality and global systems are both key factors. Nina Glick Schiller (2004) defines the 'transnational' as "[...] the ongoing interconnection or flow of people, ideas, objects, and capital across the borders of nation-states, in contexts in which the state shapes but does not contain such linkages and movements." 'Global' forms a contrasting term, to be used in cases of "the world-system's phenomena that affect the planet, regardless of borders and local differences." (Glick Schiller, 2004: 449)

Transnationality and global systems can be used to explore if and to what extent the mosque attending Muslims feel connected to their country of origin (transnationality) and the global system of a Muslim community (Ummah).

Many Muslims have maintained strong subcultures, whereas parts of the dominant culture state that Muslims have not put enough effort in integrating in their new homeland. These two phenomena seem to enforce one another. Its generalizing power enforces paradigms around 'we-them'-thinking and 'othering'. As a minority, feelings of rejection empower group identities as Muslims or as part of a community which members share a country of origin.

These groups, like all social groups, experience a strong group identity, as its members experience othering by the majority subculture. Being part of a collective identity, a subculture, might help people in coping with othering experiences. "When a group of people do not see what connects them, or when they think their group identity is threatened from the outside, a clear-cut representation of the enemy enforces the internal solidarity whereas the need of this collective identity to emphasize and guard its boundaries will decrease when its members experience slack and recognition by others for their singularity."¹ (Buitelaar, 2006: 18). In other words, when members of a minority collective identity lack feelings of slack and recognition for their singularity, they will be inclined to emphasize and guard the boundaries of their collective identity. This collective identity will therewith become more

¹ Dutch text: "Als een groep mensen niet goed voor ogen heeft wat hen onderling (nog) bindt, kan een eenduidig vijandsbeeld de interne saamhorigheid versterken. Aangezien voor een positief zelfgevoel de erkenning van anderen onontbeerlijk is, zullen individuen en groepen minder sterk de behoefte hebben grenzen te benadrukken en te bewaken als ze van anderen ruimte en erkenning krijgen voor hun eigenheid." Translation by the author.

important in the daily life of these minorities.

Religious identity is especially suitable in forming a group identity, according to Buitelaar. “Through symbols and rituals, religions establish social cohesion, they canalize emotions and they create certain moods and dispositions in people, through which they experience certain projections of cosmic ordering as absolute truths.” (Buitelaar, 2006: 18)²

Another aspect that may have led to subcultural segregation is Islamic education. In the Dutch context, with state-financed religious schools, this might be an important aspect. On the other hand, strong bonds between Muslim migrants and children of migrants might have helped them to find a place in a new home country (Saada, 2016).

A society built around liberal and Christian traditions

Migrants are confronted with a growing negative attitude from the autochthone Dutch society. These autochthone Dutch inhabitants use especially migrant’s religion as a distinguishing feature and a cause for a poor integration in Dutch society. Muslim belief is presented as a threat to a liberal democratic system, whereas Judeo-Christian values are portrayed as barriers of the root values on which Western society has developed. (Ivanescu, 2016: 37).

This way, a loosely constructed alliance between liberalism and Christianity, has fortified a position as being protectors of freedom and democracy, excluding especially Muslims, who may only be included when they adapt to ‘Western values’, no matter how vague, inconsistent and differently interpreted these values may be.

Secularity appears to be the dominant force in this mechanism. (Ivanescu, 2016). Seculars seem to consider their worldview as a step forward, in a society from which religion is withdrawing. This view is short-sighted (Ivanescu, 2016). Religion is not just ‘pulling back’, a considerable group of people in the West consider themselves Christians or Muslims and to some extent and, also stimulated by the dominating secular forces, there is a growing awareness of religious belief among those who remain loyal to their faith. Secularisation on the other hand is an ongoing process, since Christianity is still declining. These processes make harsh conclusions about religious marginalisation difficult (Ivanescu, 2016: 27).

² Dutch text: “Door middel van symbolen en rituelen bewerkstelligen religies sociale cohesie, kanaliseren ze emoties en brengen bepaalde stemmingen en disposities in mensen teweeg die maken dat zij bepaalde voorstellingen van kosmische ordening ervaren als absolute waarheden.” Translation by the author.

So, secularity is a dominating power and it will remain so in the near future, but religion will also stay present as a factor to be considered. Of course, as with religious power, the secular is far from a homogeneous power (Ivanescu 2016:16).

Secularity can also be seen as a condition of the state, representing all sorts of values that are worth protecting. Especially Islam is presented as a counter-force of these values (Ivanescu, 2016). The secular nation-state has always had a rather ambiguous relationship with religion. Opposing religious influence in state affairs, nations have on the other hand used religious methods and symbols as a way to establish national pride and feelings of national solidarity. This ambiguous relationship between the secular and religion, and the pivotal value of equality brings forth a rather tricky dilemma. The nation-state considers all civilians equal, however, the Muslim population in the West is considered by some as a threat to the state that cherishes this equality as a key value. (Ivanescu, 2016: 72).

Integration is the key word for those who tend to problemise migrant issues. Newcomers should adapt to Dutch values, whatever these are, and those who are judged as putting too little effort in adapting to this integration dogma, are considered a problem for society. Statistics on high employment and delinquency help to build a case against these non-integrated Muslims, from whom Dutch society needs to be protected (Ivanescu, 2016: 76). This stigmatising image building of the large community of Muslims, leads to alienation between autochthone Dutch people and Muslims. In this research, these feelings of alienation among mosque attending Muslims will be explored.

The view on Muslim immigrants as a threat to secular society is one-sided, and the connection to a religious identity leads to oversimplifying people's personal and collective identities. Schielke (2010) introduces an alternative approach, using the term 'grand scheme' instead of religion. A grand scheme can be a religion for some people, whereas secularity in any form can be another man's grand scheme. Secularity can be removed from its throne of imagined neutrality. The research will also zoom in on the participants' feelings concerning secularity and the influence its dominance in society has on the image of Muslims.

Muslims as a mainly lower-class minority

"It is well known that immigrant people are more likely to occupy lower socioeconomic brackets, and to live in more impoverished conditions, than are non-immigrant people [e.g., Beiser, Hou, Hyman, & Tousignant, 2002]." (Schwartz, 2006: 17). This rather lump conclusion

may be statistically correct; for research purposes, a more elaborated and founded distinction between these immigrants is important.

This research is about Muslims, who are, for a vast majority, also migrants. But in the Dutch case, roughly half of all immigrants are Muslims. Many immigrants are Christians or seculars, some from Western countries, but most of them from non-Western countries, as we will see in the context chapter. Skin colour and cultural distance seem to be important categories for the most likely place in society of immigrants (Schwartz). “[I]mmigrant people of color and those less acculturated to the receiving society may be more likely to be segregated from members of the receiving society (Schwartz, 2006: 17).”

These class issues and being a visible minority might add to immigrants’ experiences of othering and discrimination. As we will see in the results of the primary data research, the Muslim participants in this research are no clear representatives of a lower socioeconomic class, though some segregation from autochthone Dutch is visible. Whether participants experience double discrimination burden, through race and class, is to be examined.

Negative attitudes, othering and discrimination

A mechanism tightly connected to discrimination is othering, the experience of considered or being created as an outsider, by people from the dominant culture. Experiences of discrimination can be seen as a negative excess of othering. Edward Said is an early postcolonial writer who mentions the mechanism of othering, pointing specifically to the construct of the Orient as other, “[...] in a reductionist, distancing and pathologizing way” (Jensen, 2011: 64). The Orient is ‘alien’, and is incorporated “[...] on a theatrical stage whose audience, managers and actors are for Europe, and only for Europe.” (Jensen, S, 2011:64).

The process of othering can have components of all sorts of categories: class, ethnicity, religion, age and gender. Populist views on immigrants use at least three of these: religion, Islam as a non-Western religion; ethnicity, Muslims who predominantly come from different cultures; and class, Muslims are overrepresented in unemployment figures and in low-education jobs. These categories are used to prescribe the subordinate group, like Muslims, in a problematising way or having inferior characteristics. (Jensen 2011: 65).

In the West, othering thus plays an important role in a harshening public discourse on immigrants.

But the subordinate group is more than a powerless victim of othering. There is agency at

stake (Jensen, 2011: 73). Immigrants and children of immigrants make choices in how to react to experiences of othering. These reactions might lead to alienation of immigrants to the society they live in. Consequence of othering can be immigrant's feelings of not belonging, and experiences of discrimination will add to these feelings.

In the Netherlands, the Sociaal en Cultureel Planbureau (Social and Cultural Planning Bureau) has done intensive research on immigration and the wellbeing of immigrants in the Netherlands. SCP is an independent, governmentally financed organization that "[...] monitors, explains and explores the social and cultural wellbeing of inhabitants of the Netherlands. (www.scp.nl/Organisatie/Wat_is_het_SCP)"³

In the SCP report 'Recognizing, naming and reporting Discrimination' ('Discriminatie herkennen, benoemen en melden', SCP, 2017), author Iris Andriessen mentions two defining elements of discrimination: "[...] A) the negative treatment of the individual (or the group) was unjust (illegitimate) and B) the negative treatment was based on social identity or group membership. If either of these conditions is not valid, one does not experience discrimination." (Major et al. 2002, cited in SCP, 2017:13)⁴.

People often only see forms of discrimination that fit their image of it. Prototypes like: "foreigners are not welcome here" or "Surinamers are lazy" will immediately be recognized as discrimination (SCP, 2017: 13). Modern forms of discrimination are subtle and often hard to recognize. Apparently positive stereotypes help to confirm a hierarchy in social groups, according to Andriessen. "Women are caring" and "Negros are athletic" are examples of these stereotypes, connecting social groups to positive qualities, that are not helpful in climbing up the social ladder, and may even function as career hindrances. The caring, supporting woman provokes a protective attitude of man, often limiting her possibilities in an organization. (SCP, 2017: 14). In identifying experiences of discrimination of the participants, it is therefore important to focus not only on the obvious discrimination experiences, but also on the less obvious ones, even those experiences that are presented as forms of positive discrimination. Migrants in a new culture will have different experiences regarding discrimination, depending on their specific circumstances. This depends on the strength of the bond people experience

³ Dutch text: "[...] "volgt, verklaart en verkent het sociaal en cultureel welzijn van inwoners in Nederland."

⁴ Dutch text: "a) de negatieve behandeling van de persoon (of de groep) was onrechtvaardig (illegitiem), en b) de negatieve behandeling was gebaseerd op sociale identiteit of groepslidmaatschap (Major et al. 2002). Als een van beide componenten ontbreekt, ervaart men geen discriminatie."

with their culture of origin. When this bond is stronger, people will more often qualify an experience as being discriminative. Awareness of a stigma of one's group will also add to the sensibility of people to feelings of othering and discrimination. Migrants might also play down these experiences, concluding that this is part of migrants' experience as they get accustomed to the way of life in their new home country (SCP, 2017:13). Thus, experiences of discrimination are personal, and they depend strongly on the characteristics of the participants. In researching, probing to the answers, is therefore important, to get a clear picture of these othering and discriminatoire experiences.

Individuals from visible minority groups, even with a strong motivation to adapt to the guest society, may encounter hindrances. They might have difficulties in getting the job they want or they could be held back in joining certain organisations. These hindrances limit the agency of migrants in coping with daily life in their new country (Schwarz, 2006: 19). Investigating the participation of the participants in autochthone organisations is a good way to see if these hindrances occur.

Collective versus individualistic cultures

Muslims in the Netherlands are with a low percentage of exceptions migrants and their descendants, from countries considered to have collectivist cultures. This bipolar distinction of cultures is somewhat simplified, since all cultures will have individualistic and collectivistic features. Still, a distinction can be made in the importance of the individual versus the importance of the group in cultures (Schwartz, 2006: 19-20). This creates a gap between an individualistic Dutch, Western culture and collectivist cultures, like Turkish and Moroccan culture. Feelings of alienation and experiences of othering, real and perceived, are probably consequences of this gap. But nuances are in place here. Especially later generation migrants might have adapted partly to the individualism in the West, and still feel at home in the collectivism of their country of origin.

With immigrant groups of the first generation, this perceived preference to collectivist behaviour might be challenged when individuals enter an individualistic culture, leading to rejecting these individual values, out of feelings of superiority of collectivist values. (Schwartz, 2006: 21).

These nuances on cultural differences are important, as is the complexity of migrants of the second and third generations, who are raised in a dominantly individualistic culture, but also

from within a collectivist subculture. Also, agency plays an important role, as well as specific circumstances like gender, age, education, competences and labour market opportunities.

Strategic versus tactic religion

Since this research will focus on everyday life of mosque attending Muslims, it is helpful to look at the role of religion. In this research, an important distinction is that of the institute, the mosque as a building and as an organisation, and that of the individual mosque attendant. The institute can be linked to 'strategic religion', linked to the powerful, trying to get a grip on those connected to the mosque. The individual is connected to 'tactical religion', enjoying the benefits of the institute, but also seeking for agency in their religious lives (Woodhead, 2006). In between these two levels, groups of believers exist, for instance discussion groups in the mosque. These groups will have elements of both strategic and tactical religion. The two focus groups of participants both had characteristics of these groups. The older group was for the greater part connected to the mosque administration, the younger group consisted of a more loose alliance of younger Muslims, attending a non-obligatoire weekly discussion group.

Conclusions

Muslims need to find their place in a Western society, with a more individualistic culture. Mosque attendants use the mosque as one of the means to fulfil religious duties and needs. The mosque is also a place to meet fellow Muslims, coping with the same challenges and experiences in everyday life, as part of a visible minority in a secular dominated society, with a strong liberal and Christian history that has left its markers in law, culture and morals. They may experience ambiguity towards the host country and in cases of second or third generation migrants, this ambiguity is probably more experienced, as their strongholds established in youth, will have components of both cultures.

Experiences of othering and discrimination, leading to fewer opportunities, influence negatively the bond migrants feel with their new home country. How all these experiences, positive and negative, in daily life and at the mosque, fit in with the formation of a meaningful life, is subject to investigation in the focus group discussions and the in-depth interview. Before we come to that, the context of the life of Muslims in the Netherlands, and particularly in Groningen, is described in the next chapter.

4. Context

Before getting into the results of the primary research, relevant aspects of the situation of Muslims in the Netherlands will be explored in this chapter. This helps to interpret the answers to the questions in the primary data collection.

Muslims in the Netherlands are for a vast majority Turkish-Dutch or Moroccan-Dutch. Participants in this research are for the greater part Turkish-Dutch. One participant was Turkish-German, two participants were Indonesian, one was Afghani-Dutch and one came at a very young age from Iraqi Kurdistan to the Netherlands.

Feelings of loyalty and connection can be quite complex with migrants, especially those of later generations. SCP did extensive research on the largest groups of Muslim migrants, Turkish- and Moroccan-Dutch (SCP, 2017). People from these groups feel both Dutch and Turkish or Moroccan, at the same time. But especially with the younger generation of these groups say they feel more and more Turkish or Moroccan through time. This being drawn to the original roots is a consequence of reactions they get from autochthone Dutch people. They are never fully accepted as Dutch, there is always the Turkish or Moroccan component. As a result, the connection they feel with their Turkish or Moroccan side is strengthened, whereas the connection to their Dutch side weakens.(SCP: 2017: 18)

Partly because of this strong identification with their Turkish or Moroccan origin, Islam related discrimination increases. This discrimination mechanism tends to work from both sides: the 'perpetrator' (autochthone) sees more Turkish or Moroccan in the 'victim' (migrant or migrant descent), leading to feelings of alienation, and the victim is more sensitive to a discriminatoire experience, because of a growing awareness of the otherness of the group he or she feels connected to (SCP, 2017: 18).

Religious strength and the Ummah

For many young Muslims, their religion is the most important identity. Exclusion and subordination on the one, negative hand and having a strong identity as Islam, on the other, positive hand, both stimulate this strengthening of Muslim identity (SCP 2017:18). This Muslim identity, being part of the world wide community of Muslims, the Ummah, goes beyond ethnicity, thus the young Muslim can transcend his or her problems with feeling Dutch in a

society that does not fully accept this identity. (SCP, 2009). But also in the case of the growing bond with their country of origin, a stronger bond with their Muslim identity will lead to more experiences of othering, partly because of a growing distance between these Muslims and the autochthone Dutch and partly because a confident Muslim might be more sensible to these experiences (SCP, 2009).

Muslims in the West, Netherlands, Groningen.

“Here, it is not like Amsterdam or Rotterdam. We don’t have entire neighbourhoods with only Muslims. So, integration goes well in Groningen.” Zooming in on this remark of one of the older participants of the focus group discussion, the first question is: how is the situation in the Netherlands, in big cities, in Groningen, regarding the presence and concentration of Muslims?

The Netherlands has experienced a unique combination of Muslim migrants, the last half century. Unlike France and Britain, that received immigrants from their former colonies in large numbers, the Netherlands did not welcome many immigrants from its largest colony, nowadays Indonesia. The first major stream of Muslim migrants came to the Netherlands in the sixties and the seventies, as guest workers, to fill in gaps in the labour market, in the strongly recovering Dutch economy after the Second World War.

The intention, at least from a Dutch perspective, was that these guest workers, mainly from the countryside of Turkey and Morocco, would eventually go back to these countries, when the labour market would be more in balance. But that never happened. Chances to build a life in the West remained better than in their countries of origin. With family reunions, the number of migrants even increased, and in the eighties of last century, it became clear that the migrants were here to stay. Until that time, Dutch politics had little interest in and attention for the integration of migrants. “It was only with the 1983 Minority Memorandum that ‘guest workers’ were defined as ‘ethnic minorities’.” (M. Es, 2017: 831).

By the time an integration policy was developed, Dutch government and society, sometimes consciously and sometimes unconsciously, made use of a typical Dutch phenomenon: pillarization (*verzuiling*) (Es, 2017: 831).

Since the late nineteenth century, Dutch society was split up into ‘pillars’, groups of people from all classes, united by religious denomination or political conviction. Catholics, Protestants (two reformed churches), socialists and liberals all formed organisations, like schools and

clubs, where they only met their fellow-thinkers. In the top of each pillar, at a political level, the elites of the pillars divided power in shifting government coalitions. This pillar-thinking became an automatism in Dutch society. When a schism in a church occurred, like in 1944, when the 'Liberated Reformed' (vrijgemaakt-gereformeerden) left the Reformed Church (which is itself a breakaway from what once was the official state church, the Dutch Reformed Church), a new pillar arose. The Liberated Reformed people started their own schools, clubs, and they founded their own political party.

Pillarisation was severely undermined by the liberalisation in the 1960s, but the mechanism has left its markings up until today. When the government finally started to develop a policy towards guest workers who would obviously not go back to their country of origin, pillarisation was the core principle of this policy. Migrants could start their own schools, they got air time at the public broadcasting networks and they could start up their own clubs. Migrants could thus maintain a separate subculture within society, with no pressure to integrate in or assimilate to their new society. Integrating was a value to be promoted, but with preservation of their original cultural identity, cherishing the richness and colorfulness of a multicultural society.

This policy changed after 2000, by influences from abroad (9/11), but domestic forces that pointed out problems due to an alleged cultural gap between Muslims and autochthones, also grew in strength. Assimilation was the new credo, focussing on newcomers, who were obliged to learn Dutch language and culture, as part of their admission procedure.

But at that time, large numbers of migrants had lived in the Netherlands without participating in Dutch social networks and without having learned the language properly.

Voices in society, problematising this cultural gap, got a foothold in politics, where the anti-Islam Freedom Party (Partij voor de Vrijheid, PVV) got a considerable amount of the seats in parliament since 2006. In 2017, the PVV became the second largest party in Dutch parliament, with 20 of the 150 seats in the Tweede Kamer (House of Representatives).

Since the eighties, Muslims also immigrated to the Netherlands from war zones like Afghanistan, Iran, Iraq, Somalia, Ethiopia and Eritrea, but Turkish and Moroccan immigration continued to be an important factor, by family reunions and weddings. Nowadays, people with a Turkish background still form the largest group of Muslims, followed by Moroccans.

4,9 percent of the Dutch population is Muslim, according to the CBS, the official statistic bureau of the Netherlands. (CBS, 2016). With 17 million inhabitants of the Netherlands, this

would mean that there are 833,000 Muslims in the Netherlands. The percentage of Muslims in the city of Groningen is 2.4 percent (CBS, 2016). Groningen has 202,667 inhabitants (CBS, 2018, april). The estimated number of Muslims in the city of Groningen is therewith just beneath five thousand. The number of people with a Turkish background in the city of Groningen is 1,496 (CBS, 2017). Half of the people who consider themselves Muslims visit the mosque on a regular basis. So, if we assume that these percentages are also relevant for the city of Groningen, 2,500 Muslims are regular mosque visitors, of whom 750 people with a Turkish background. How these numbers are divided between the two mosques in Groningen is hard to establish. It is safe to say that the majority of the mosque attending Muslims with a Turkish background will visit the Turkish mosque, but since the mosque does not have a registration of members, like you see with churches, an exact number cannot be established. An estimation, based on the hundreds of people (men) attending the friday prayer, is that the target group of the research, mosque attending men at the Turkish mosque, will consist of four hundred to six hundred people, of whom more than half are from Turkish descent.

Religious Affairs

The Turkish Eyüp Sultan Camii mosque in Groningen is part of the Diyanet network, an organisation linked to the Turkish State's Directorate of Religious Affairs. This organisation controls the majority of Turkish-Dutch mosques. (Gözaydın, 2008). As is the case in Groningen, Diyanet provides the imam for the associated mosques, in a rotating system. "These imams preach a privatized, nationalized, rationalized, and apolitical version of Islam. The Diyanet strives toward maintaining the identification of the Turkish–Dutch communities with Turkey and combating the influence of Islamist organizations." (M. Es, 2017: 832). These characteristics of Diyanet mosques can be found in Groningen's affiliate. A new imam from Turkey is presented every five year. The administration of the mosque consists entirely of Turkish (Dutch) board members, as a measure to keep the bonds with the home country Turkey alive.

"[Diyanet] has a very bureaucratic structure and carefully avoids public controversy by staying out of debates on integration. The congregations of Diyanet-affiliated mosques I worked with were careful to avoid discussing 'politics,' which was especially understood as matters related to political Islam. They exerted minimal pressure on fellow mosque visitors to participate in daily prayers as they made a great effort to attract non-pious Turkish–Dutch to mosques." (M.

ES, 2017: 833).

Here also, Groningen's Turkish mosque fits in with Es' description. Especially for young people and for women, there are many activities that stimulate a strong bond with the mosque. These activities are not exclusively for Turkish(-Dutch) people. All Muslims, and also non-Muslims as I have experienced, are welcome. Only the administration must be Turkish, as mentioned before.

Probably as a result of the apolitical approach of the Diyanet network, politics are a sensitive topic in the Turkish mosque in Groningen, as participants explicitly and implicitly made clear in the focus group discussion with the older mosque attendants and in the in-depth interview. Several participants are or were board members of the mosque. They talked a lot about the political situation in the Netherlands and in the rest of the world, they were well-informed, using news channels all over the world, also because of a mistrust of Western media, but time and time again they asked me not to use political statements in the research. Naturally, I respect their requests, with feelings of regret, to let go of the interesting results of our lively discussions during and (long) after the focus group discussions and the in-depth interview had ended.

The younger focus group consisted of men with apparently no connection to the mosque administration. These participants had no noticeable hesitation to talk about politics, and they would probably not have made an issue of me using their spicy statements. But since I already ruled out politics with the older focus group, and since the research question focuses on religion, politics has been left out almost entirely of the results.

Post-migrant context and experiences of discrimination

9/11 has been a turning point in the attitude of the autochthonous Dutch towards people from other cultures. Dutch society is less open and equalitarian, as Turkish, Moroccan and Surinam Dutch experience. They feel less accepted and they feel that they are considered 'the other' in public debate. (SCP, 2017: 18).⁵

⁵ Dutch text: "Turkse, Marokkaanse en Surinaamse Nederlanders vinden Nederland steeds minder een open en gelijkwaardig land (Andriessen 2016). Gesprekken met Turks-Nederlandse en Marokkaans-Nederlandse jongeren wijzen uit dat zij sinds 9/11 een verslechtering van het klimaat voor moslims ervaren. Moslims worden volgens hen steeds minder geaccepteerd en steeds meer als de 'ander' in het publieke debat weggezet." Translation by the author.

The following table shows data on experiences of discrimination among Turkish, Moroccan, Surinam and Antillean Dutch people in 2016 and 2015.

	2006	2015
<i>Turkish</i>	31	37
<i>Moroccan</i>	38	48
<i>Surinam</i>	33	50
<i>Antillean</i>	41	47

Table 1: Percentage of discrimination experiences, often and occasionally.

Source: SCP, 2017: 10

In nine years, people from the four main ethnic minorities in the Netherlands have experienced a growth in discrimination experiences, whereas reported discrimination has diminished since 2011 (SCP 2017:11). This apparent contradiction cannot be explained unambiguously. SCP suggests that victims are less willing to report discrimination, because of a low expectancy of measures against alleged discriminatory perpetrators or a sense of acceptance of a new status quo in society.

A remarkable exception is the reported religious discrimination, which has increased severely. 72 percent of the reported religious discrimination is from Muslims. (SCP, 2017: 11). Growing religious awareness among Muslims might be at the root of this increase, possibly combined with a lower threshold for autochthone Dutch people for abusive language towards Muslims, combined with the fast rise of social media.

Conclusions

Muslims live in a society that seems to be less tolerant to ethnic minorities. Especially religious discrimination has become an issue among Muslims.

Groningen has relatively considerable less Muslims than the Netherlands as a whole. Only 2.4 percent of Groningen's inhabitants is Muslim, nationwide this percentage is twice as high.

Ethnic minorities in Groningen are well spread over the city and there is no Islamic schools in Groningen. In the primary research, this will be an important issue: how does a less visible minority experience othering and discrimination, compared to cities in the West of the Netherlands, with higher percentages of Muslims, and special Islamic schools?

5. Coping with othering together

In this chapter, I explore the results of the two focus group discussions and the in-depth interview, thus building up an answer to the central research question:

‘What is the role of the mosque in the identity construction of Muslims in Groningen, in a post-migrant context, in a society built on liberal and christian traditions, where Muslims form a mainly lower-class minority that experiences negative attitudes and discrimination?’

All participants in the focus group discussions are male. Their ages vary from 22 to 60 years old. The participants of the ‘older’ group are all but one Turkish Dutch men between the age of forty to sixty. The exception is Omer, a Turkish-German student of 22 years old. The in-depth interview was conducted with Turkish-Dutch Asuman, 57 years old. The younger participants group contains of students from different countries of origin: Iraq’s Kurdistan, Afghanistan and Indonesia.

The educational level of the participants varies from uneducated workers via middle-class management and workers (in the older, Turkish-Dutch focus group and the in-depth interview) to (applied) university students (in the younger focus group).

Five out of seven of the participants to the older focus group are first generation immigrants, following the definition of the Dutch statistical bureau CBS (2018). They all came to the Netherlands at a young age, following their parents who came here as guest workers. One of this group was born in the Netherlands, 44 years old Demir and one in Germany, former mentioned Omer. Of the younger focus group, two participants are temporarily in the Netherlands, as students. They will return to their country of origin, Indonesia, after they have finished their study.

Role of the mosque

The Turkish mosque was founded some fifteen years ago. Before that, Turkish Muslims went to Mosque Selwerd, the first mosque in Groningen. At that time, the Turkish Muslims met at a special cultural centre, near the city centre. The main reason for starting a Turkish mosque was that the mosque in Selwerd became too crowded. The second reason was that there were some not explicated differences in views between the mosque administration and the Turkish

Muslims.

The Turkish Mosque is founded in a former church. The church room is now the prayer room. Women use a much smaller prayer room, next to the big prayer room. “Women don’t come here often to prayer”, explained a mosque attendant.

There are several additional rooms in the building, used for all sorts of activities. The mosque is open to everyone, also non-Turks, though the administration must consist of people with a Turkish background.

Aran (22) came to the Netherlands as a Kurdish refugee from Iraq, twenty years ago. Though not Turkish, he feels at home in the mosque. “Everybody is welcome. [...] here, there is only a Turkish sermon, but even though you don’t understand the Turkish part, you can still attend the prayer and still attend the education part at the mosque. So, it’s not only for Turkish people.”

Meeting fellow Muslims is one of the central functions for the mosque attendants, like Bilal, an Indonesian student in the younger focus group: “When I meet other Muslims from the other [side of the] world it’s like a big thing for me: okay I found other brothers here.” Turkish-Dutch mosques also operate as cultural and community centres. They tend to offer a wide variety of activities, next to their religious function, like cooking clubs, theater and talk groups (Es, 2016). Participants in the older focus group confirm this image for the Turkish mosque in Groningen. With enthusiasm in words and gestures, they come up with examples. “It is also [...] a meeting place for people”⁶, said Karim, a 40 years old employee at a plastic factory, participant in the older focus group. [...] [T]here are several activities, like Qur’an reading for children. [And during] Ramadan, giving food every day.⁷”, said Halil, a retired factory worker, sixty years old. “What [young people] want, the administration executes. You see, ten, twenty years ago you would not have imagined it, but it all happens nowadays: [...] sports activities and activities for the young.”⁸

This broad function distinguishes mosques in the West from mosques in Turkey, said Halil: “Coming together, celebration, praying, talking about your faith. That is a difference with Turkey or other Islamic countries. Here in Europe, there are also cultural activities [in the

⁶ Dutch text: “Het is ook een beetje een ontmoetingsplek voor de mensen.”

⁷ Dutch text: “Ja, er worden verschillende activiteiten uitgevoerd, zoals koranlezen voor kinderen, sportactiviteiten. {En tijdens] ramadan, iedere dag eten geven.”

⁸ Dutch text: “Wat [jongeren] willen, voert het bestuur uit. [...] Kijk, tien, twintig jaar geleden had je sommige dingen niet bedacht, maar vandaag de dag gebeurt het wel. [...] Sportactiviteiten en jongerenactiviteiten.”

mosque].”⁹ He added a remark about the subjects discussed in the mosque, with his index finger in the air: “No politics here; everybody has different views.” This fits in with the goal of the Diyanet network: promoting a non-political, Turkish Islam in diaspora regions.

Participants all make use of the broader function of the mosque. They all come here for prayer and for social purposes. “A little talk, meeting days...”¹⁰, said Metehan, a 58 years old process employee at a dairy factory.

“You meet everybody you want to meet”, said Berkan, an incapacitated supervisor at a paint shop, sixty years old. “Sometimes you don’t see them for a couple of months, but when you come here, you see most of them again.”¹¹

The younger group of participants is looser connected to the mosque. As non-Turkish(-Dutch) people they cannot participate in the mosque administration. Still, they are aware of the broad variety of activities. As Dawlat, the 25 years old Pharmacy student, puts it: “[Education and prayer], it’s a combination, the social parts you always get for free you know (laughs).” Supriadi, the Indonesian Medical Science student, 34 years old, added: “And when someone dies, we arrange everything, we host the body and everything.” “There is like a kindergarten.”, said Bilal, also from Indonesia, a 27 years old biotechnology student.” The mosque sometimes sells special kinds of food, Aran (22) mentioned. He is a pharmacy student: “Then it’s also kind of a supermarket.”

Committed to the young

The Turkish mosque has a way of committing the young to the mosque by organising special activities for them. This is what Woodhead considers strategic religion “The power of such bounded territorialities [like mosques] reinforces the power of their guardians” (Woodhead 2006:3), in case of the mosque, the imam and the mosque administration. Tactical religion on the one hand uses and enjoys these spaces of controlled religion, but it also “enjoys the portable, using prayer mats and books, amulets and headscarves.” (Woodhead, 2006: 34). This way, “[...] there is a constant battle between tactical appropriations of sacred space [...] and

⁹ Dutch text: “Bij elkaar komen, feest, bidden, over je geloof praten. Geen politiek hier. Iedereen heeft andere mening. Dat is een verschil met Turkije of andere islamitische landen. In Europa, hier worden ook culturele activiteiten uitgevoerd.”

¹⁰ Dutch text: “Een gesprekje, ontmoetingsdagen.”

¹¹ Dutch text: “Je ontmoet iedereen die je wil. Zo zie je een paar maanden misschien niet, maar als je hier komt, dan zie je meeste weer terug.”

strategic attempts to clear and purify these spaces.”(Woodhead, 2006: 34).

In the case of the Turkish mosque this battle between strategic and tactical religion was in no way eminent, though focussed research on this topic might prove otherwise; but the picture painted in this research was more like a mosque where the administration tried to commit Muslims, especially Turks, to the mosque, by filling in the social needs of these Muslims, and not by putting any pressure on mosque attendance. The other reason M. Es mentions as the wide variety of extra activities at the mosque fits the Turkish Mosque in Groningen better: fear of assimilation (M. Es, 2016: 827). This aspect will be dealt with later on.

Identity Construction

Transnationality and global systems (Nina Glick Schiller, 2004) play a key role in the identity construction of Muslims in the Netherlands. Being part of the Ummah, the world wide community of Muslims, as well as being part of the worldwide Turkish community for the Turkish-Dutch participants, are important identity markers.

With the Turkish-Dutch participants, pride of their background is eminent. Feeling Turkish is predominant over feeling Dutch. Asuman, the 57 years old train driver: “You can say like a hundred times I am a Dutchman, but this is not true. I am a Turk.” “But you are also a Dutchman”, I replied. “I am also a Dutchman”, he acknowledged.¹²

Omer, a Turkish-German student International Business and Management, 22 years old, feels more Turkish than German: “We agree that some people may be attracted to your home country, like Turkey and I feel like it, because I love my country and my city, and I feel like Turkey is my home, because I have my roots there. I am born in Germany and I have lived there for nineteen years. My parents still stay in Germany. My German seems better than my Turkish, but still, I feel Turkish and I think most of my culture, cultural part is Turkish, just a little part is German.”

The Turkish identity is a source of pride for the older participants, for instance when they talk about a successful integration, thanks to their Turkish mentality. “[...W]e Turks have a whole different mentality, economically”, said Asuman, participant in the in-depth interview. “When you look at whole Europe, not just the Netherlands, Turks have become employers. And we

¹² Dutch texts: “Je kan wel honderd keer zeggen van ik ben Nederlander, maar dat is niet waar. Ik ben Turk.”; “(Maar je bent ook Nederlander.”; Ik ben ook Nederlander.”

value studying very much, for our children, to enable them to get a good education and that they end up in good positions. That is very important to us.”¹³

Asuman also takes pride in the contribution of immigrants to Dutch society: “[...] look how rich the Netherlands have become, with colour, which kitchen culture, economically... it has grown tremendously. And that’s all thanks to the foreigners. Look at the big market [in Groningen], there used to be only one kind of apple, one kind of orange and a couple of pears. Look at how many kinds of fruit there are now. Look how many restaurants there are, dinner pubs, all the different kinds of food and drinks you can get...”¹⁴

Turkish- and Moroccan-Dutch identification as Muslims has increased (De Koning 2008; Geelhoed and Staring 2016, Sterckx and Van der Ent 2016, cited in SCP, 2017: 18). According to the SCP, this is the result of a “[...] reaction to exclusion and subordination” (Buijs et al., 2006, cited in SCP 2017:18), as well as fulfilling the need for an “[...] identity that provides grip and an alternative positive identity.” (Andriessen and Wittebrood 2016; Geelhoed and Staring 2016, cited in SCP, 2017: 18). Religious identity, like Islam, is a strong base for a group identity, according to Buitelaar (2006). “Through symbols and rituals, religions establish social cohesion, they canalize emotions and they create certain moods and dispositions in people, through which they experience certain projections of cosmic ordering as absolute truths.” (Buitelaar, 2006: 18).

Asuman’s Muslim identity has become the central focus in life, Asuman explains, tapping his finger on the table after each word: “Qur’an. Dot. Muslim. Dot. Mohamed. Dot. [...] When I was 29 or 30 years old, I really got acquainted with the Qur’an. Then I was really aware of what I do believe in or what I don’t believe in. Since then, I visit the mosque regularly.”¹⁵

Being a Muslim, gives Asuman strength and confidence. “[...] as a Muslim I would not find problems anywhere. Wherever I am, I am with God. What somebody else thinks, [...] I have

¹³ Dutch text: “Trouwens, wij Turken hebben ook een heel andere mentaliteit, economisch. Als je naar heel Europa kijkt, niet alleen in Nederland: de Turken zijn werkgevers geworden. [...] veel eigen bedrijven. En wij geven heel veel belang voor studie, voor onze kinderen, dat ze dan een goeie opleiding kunnen krijgen, ook op goeie plekken kunnen komen. Dat is heel belangrijk voor ons.

¹⁴ Dutch text: “Maar moet je nu even kijken hoe rijk Nederland is geworden, met kleur, met keukencultuur, met economisch... verschrikkelijk gegroeid. En dat is dankzij de buitenlanders. Kijk maar op de grote markt, daar had je alleen maar een appel, een sinaasappel, paar peer. Moet je nou zien, wat er voor verschillende soorten fruiten zijn. Moet je zien hoeveel restaurants, hoeveel eetcafés, verschillende soorten dat je kan eten en drinken.”

¹⁵ Dutch text: “Koran, punt, moslim, punt. Mohammed, punt. [...] toen ik 29, 30 was, heb ik echt kennis gemaakt met de Koran enne... toen was ik eigenlijk bewust waar ik wel of niet in geloof. Sindsdien kom ik regelmatig in de moskee.”

no problem with it.”¹⁶ The way Asuman uses his agency to construct his identity in a diasporic context, and how the mosque plays a role in the identity construction, fits in with the experiences of the focus group participants.

A clear difference between the two focus groups is, apart from the obvious difference in age, the role nationality plays in the identity construction. Both groups mentioned Islam as its main focus in life, but the ‘older’ group clearly feels Turkish as well and, to some extent, Dutch, though feelings of alienation are growing, as participants pointed out. The participants in the younger group all put their Islamic belief up front. Nationality was no issue in the conversations, though this might be caused by the heterogeneous national backgrounds in this group.

The group of younger participants feel a deep bond with their religion. They come from countries that have no strong subcultures in the Netherlands. Other Muslims in diaspora West are their community, as part of the world-wide community of Muslims, the Ummah.

Islam is the most important identity marker, the participants emphasise. This is not surprising. The participants attend young people meetings in the mosques, founded to talk about their faith, to develop knowledge about Islam and to discuss how to apply Islamic rules in daily life. Islam is the beacon in their lives, they told me. The participants match the phenomenon of a growing religious awareness of Muslims in the West (Andriessen, 2017; Buitelaar, 2006). “In Islam everything is clear to me: the way I talk to my wife, how I address my parents, the way I work, the way I do business, the way I go to the mall, [...] everything is clear, you know”, Dawlat said. “[...] I have an ego, I’m far from perfect, but for a perfect Muslim, he would be like a walking Qur’an. Because Qur’an makes it clear how to interact every possible way. [...] even the small things [...] are explained in the Qur’an. So, every Muslim tries to compare to the one who is their role model, prophet Mohammed (‘alayhi s-salām). He is our example, and this is why every Muslim should be his religion, and his religion should be him. It does not mean he should not have an own character, but it’s always within the scale of Islamic laws [...]. So for example, he has his own language, his own culture, his own food preferences and stuff. [...] But there are some things that we all have to the same. Even the way we eat or drink things, the order in which we do things, in our manners. It’s all clear, and prescribed for us.”

¹⁶ Dutch text: “Maar als moslim zijnde zou ik nergens problemen vinden, want waar ik ook ben, ik ben met God zelf. Ik bedoel, wat andere denkt [...] heb ik geen probleem.”

Thus, Dawlat brings forth a clear prioritisation in the complexity of intersectionality. He is Afghani Dutch, he is a young man, he is a pharmacy student, but his Muslim identity always comes first, as a precondition. It is his guideline in life, his framework in which everything he does, should fit.

Aran has the same view on the pivotal importance of Islam religion in his life: “ [Being] Muslim is predominant, it’s a skill on which I do all the other things. So, if in my own culture, I do it according to the Islam. And if I behave like a Dutch person, I also do it in the skills of Islam. So, it’s like a way of life, a way of thinking, a way of doing .”

Their absolute dedication to Islam, makes them obviously believe in the moral and intellectual superiority of Islam. “I never had a conversation where I wasn’t dominant”, said Dawlat. “Because my morality and my arguments and the way I think, and I back it up with science, I have never seen someone else who can convince me of something else with good arguments. And it’s not something of myself, but the sources that I use, they’re really healthy books, you get a lot of knowledge reading them. It’s combining spiritual guidance and at the same time it’s also guidance for your ratio. It’s combining the heart and the brain.”

This argumentation has a way of enforcing itself, since Dawlat only accepts the authority of Islam scholars. He gets annoyed about Western Islam experts, presented in the media: “If you want to know how the Islam works, learn it from a Islamic perspective, not the way you want to see it [...]. How we approach the Qur’an, how we approach the Hadith, this is the way you should do it.”

The mosque-attending Muslims have developed a strong identity in their Islamic subculture. Participants in both groups mentioned Islam as the leading force in their lives. The older Turkish-Dutch participants mentioned a strong commitment to their Turkish identity, that exists next to their Islamic identity, and in no way conflicts with it. The younger non-Turkish participants mentioned no feelings of ethnic or national identity. This may be a consequence of the different countries of origin in this group. Perhaps as a result for the human search for common ground within a group, Islam is the shared identity.

Open mind

Clearly, contacts with fellow Muslims at the mosque are important to the participants. But they do want to express their open mindedness towards the Dutch (autochthone) society. The participating mosque attenders feel a duty to be open to all people, including non-Muslims,

though the core of their networks seems to consist of Muslims. “Most of the times you end up with the people who are like you”, said Aran. “[You share] a lot of the things that are important, like how you’re raised, your ideology, the way you’re thinking... That doesn’t mean I don’t have non-Muslim friends. I have a lot of non-Muslim friends. It only makes your own vision in life broader.”

The mosque administration values an open mind to its non-Muslim stakeholders, too. Dozens of times a year they receive all sorts of visitors, like schools. Berkan, one of the board members of the Mosque. “And we have very good contacts with the municipality and the police departments. When there is something going on in the community, they always come here to talk about it.”¹⁷

Asuman, the in-depth interviewee, makes a clear distinction between his direct contacts, especially his Dutch neighbours, and autochthonous people who do not know him. “I have very good contacts with people, neighbours. I moved three times and the people that stayed behind, started crying. That says enough. But surely, there are people among them who might hide themselves and who have, you might say, racist ideas. But the same people [...] who are like this towards me, might [...] see another Turk as a foreigner. Then you are nothing more than a stupid IS member or Turk, or an annoying Moroccan.”¹⁸

Still, Asuman’s image of the West is nuanced: “People usually think we are against the West. Absolutely not, absolutely not! When [...] a Dutch Turk and a German Turk come to Turkey, and they argue about issues, everybody defends their own country. That happens automatically. And when I meet a Dutchman there, it feels completely different. You feel you have seen [...] your fellow countryman.”¹⁹ As identity construction is also about positioning one’s identity towards the identity of the ‘other’, the Dutch part of Asuman’s identity comes

¹⁷ Dutch text: “En we hebben heel goede contacten met de politiekorpsen. Als er iets speelt in de buurt, dan komen ze altijd hier om erover te praten.”

¹⁸ Dutch text: “Ik heb heel goed contact met mensen. Buren... Ik ben drie keer verhuisd en de mensen die achterbleven, die zijn gaan huilen. [...] Dat zegt al genoeg. Maar er zijn heus wel tussen die mensen die zichzelf ook misschien verbergen en die racistische, zeg maar, ideeën hebben. Maar zelfde mensen, misschien niet allemaal... maar daar zit in diezelfde mensen die daar tegenover mij zo zijn, [...] een andere Turk, dan is voor hem misschien een buitenlander. [...] Dan ben je gewoon IS’er of een domme moslim of een Turk. Of een lastige Marokkaan.”

¹⁹ Dutch text: “Meestal denken ze dat wij dan tegen Westen zijn. Absoluut niet. Absoluut niet. Als zeg maar Nederlandse Turk en Duitse Turk en Franse Turk naar Turkije komt, daar komen ze toevallig tegenover elkaar in discussie, iedereen die beschermt dan je eigen land. Dat gaat automatisch. En als ik daar een Nederlander tegenkom, dan voel je heel anders. Dan voel je... Dan heb je [...] jouw landgenoot gezien.”

forward when visiting his country of origin, Turkey. There, he is transformed from a Turk in the Netherlands to a Dutch (Turk) in Turkey, separating himself even from Turks from other Western countries, and expressing a sense of pride towards the country he lives in, the Netherlands. Asuman's position in Dutch society is clear. He wants to respect Dutch culture, he wants to participate completely in Dutch society, but he wants to maintain his identity categories, being Turkish and being Muslim.

Liberal and Christian traditions

Secularity, more than Christianity, seems to be the driving force between a growing gap in understanding between autochthone Dutch and Dutch Muslims. Christians will experience a comparable gap in understanding with seculars, but since they are less visible and culturally more alike, their experiences of othering will be less confronting.

This effect is strengthened by the negative attitude of autochthone Dutch people towards Muslim immigrants, triggered by a fear of loss of Dutch cultural values, that are presented as Judeo-Christian, thus excluding any contribution of Muslims to the cultural system.

Moreover, Muslim values are considered the biggest threat to lose these (alleged) values. These Muslim values are supposed to collide with what is considered typical Western values, like democracy, freedom of speech and equality (Ivanescu, 2016: 37).

This apparently neutral judgement of Western and Muslim value systems promotes inherently different forms of prejudice. Muslims are racialized, as an ethnic cultural group with homogeneous values, contradicting typical Western values, like freedom, especially of women. Muslim values are considered backwards, the West would be more developed than the Orient. (Said, 1978; Buitelaar, 2006; Joshi, 2006). All these assumptions are a consequence of a very limited knowledge of Islam in the West. Unknown, unloved, and in this case, untrusted.

Participants emphasize the limited knowledge of non-Muslims about Islam. "Islam... people don't know anything, really",²⁰ says Metehan, 58 years old, a Turkish Dutch process employee at a dairy factory. 22-year old Omer has a similar experience with non Muslims in the West: "[...] people don't know anything about Islam, just the basics, like we don't eat pork or we pray five times a day. In general, like the most of the people. people at my study don't know anything about Islam."

²⁰ Dutch text: "Islam, mensen weten helemaal niets, eigenlijk."

The participants want to help bridging this knowledge gap. They feel obliged to answer any question about Islam, also because they consider this a religious obligation. However, they do not get many questions from autochthone Dutch about Islam. Mostly, questions arise at work, and only at certain moments, as retirement consultant Yildiz illustrated: “At work [...] if there are questions about Islam, it is most of the times at Ramadan. They ask the same questions every year.”²¹

Apart from a limited knowledge of Islam, the mosque-attending Muslims do have objections to the Western values, especially when it comes to vice values, that have widened the gap between Dutch society and what Muslims feel to be morally acceptable. “To be honest, the last couple of years I don’t like living here”, said Dawlat. “It’s because of the social changes, I like the Netherlands eighteen years ago. Now it’s normal to be filthy, [...] sexuality is not exhibited in a healthy way. We have billboards with naked persons. And a few weeks ago, there were even homo’s kissing. I don’t know why they have to go to this extend. I don’t think the culture that we had at around 2000 was bad. If you compare it to now, I think we had our top as a Dutch society and we’re like crashing now in an exponential rate, you know. Morality is going away, respect for elders is not present anymore. Respect for teachers is not present, we’re losing every kind of morality, every kind of things that make the Dutch culture a good culture, we’re losing it. And nobody is concerned about it and this is something that makes me at the same time a little bit angry and [...] powerless, because nobody wants it different, that’s the problem. Nobody brings it to attention.”

Schielke’s model (2010) can shed some light on the identity construction, in this ambiguous view on Islam and western values. Schielke suggests two dimensions to analyse this gap in understanding: “[...] ‘grand schemes’ in relation to everyday concerns and experiences and grand schemes in relation to other grand schemes.” (Schielke, 2010).

Thinking of grand schemes instead of religiosity moves secularity away from the neutral position it often claims. Secularity is one of these grand schemes, just as a religious denomination. Grand schemes can meet at a level playing field, in which Islam can claim a right to be judged by its merits and not by an ex ante judgement of being backwards, irrational

²¹ Dutch text: “Op het werk, [...] als er iets wordt gevraagd over islam, dan is het meestal met ramadan. [...] De vragen worden dan standaard elk jaar weer gesteld.”

and anti-democratic. When considering a grand scheme in relation to everyday concerns and experiences, Muslims can claim more slack in their way of life, in which personal circumstances are important, and not just their 'being Muslim'.

Schielke's approach seem to have many advantages in bringing Muslims and seculars closer to each other, but it will take a lot of missionary work to establish this leap in human understanding, starting with the media and public leaders to be aware of the damage caused by othering.

Secularists and Christians

Secularism plays an important role in the lack of understanding participants experience when religion becomes a topic of conversation. Seculars do not grasp the concept of religion. They seem to value religion as backwards and the secular as further developed and morally superior. The participants see a clear distinction between the view of seculars and Christians. "There are little religious people, you know", said Asuman. "Religious people have a completely different behaviour and appearance towards us. [...] They are much more open and understanding. [...] Most of the time [atheists] think they are quite free and that they also respect people, but they don't realise they are much worse racists."²²

At a later stage of the in-depth interview, the topic arises once more. "[...] Catholics, Christians, they respect you, they know you are Muslim. But the other [atheist], without knowing it, without realising it, he sees you as a not perfect human-being, because you believe. You are Muslim, you don't know human rights."²³

This feeling of superiority by secular Westerners is challenged by the participants, like Dawlat: "[...] we claim that our way of living is better and we express it. That's why we bring war to them, to change them. But for instance, when someone in Russia launches a rocket at a plane, MH17, we have so much protest, for only three hundred people, when there's like sixty years of occupation in Israel. [...] when you see the kind of violence [Palestines] are met with every

²² Dutch text: "De meeste [Nederlandse burens en kennissen] zijn atheïst. Er zijn weinig gelovige mensen hoor. [...] Gelovige mensen die hebben heel ander gedrag en uitstraling tegenover ons. [...] Die zijn veel opener en begrijpelijker. [...] meestal denken [atheïsten] dat ze heel vrij zijn en dat ze mensen ook respecteren, maar ze hebben niet in de gaten dat ze dan veel ergere racist zijn."

²³ "[...] katholieken, christenen, die respecteren jou, die weten dat je moslim bent. Maar die ander, zonder dat die het weet, zonder dat die het merkt, die ziet jou als niet volmaakt mens, want je gelooft. Je bent moslim, je kent geen mensenrechten. [...]"

day, their homes which they build, just finished, are demolished. It has nothing to do with them being even terrorists [...] So, we talk about such high morality, but in everyday life we fail to implement it, and that's the problem. I think we, as Western people, not only from a religious perspective, but from a moral perspective, we should do something about this. We should have a change of vision; we should meet them with love. If we think we have a high morality we should show it and you will see the change. You cannot force high morality with violence. You can't force democracy."

Fascinating is Dawlat's choice of words: "We, as Western people..." This way, he affirms his being part of Western (Dutch) society and at the same time he resents what he sees as a lack of morality of this society. His addressing wars and suppression in the Middle East, is an example of the connection he feels to the Ummah, the world-wide congregation of Muslims. He feels solidarity towards his fellow Muslims, like Palestinians and other Muslim people in the Middle East, suffering from wars, instigated by the West. He pendels between his Muslim and his Western identity, realising that he is part of Western society, though he feels clearly more connected to his Muslim identity, as his driving force and moral compass in life.

Dawlat struggles with his perception of moral decline of the West, especially when considering the loose sexual moral.

When I tell him about the former Dutch Prime Minister Balkenende's plea for a return to 'values and norms', Dawlat sighs. "I hope there are more people like him, you know. [...] This should not be a lazy society, I don't see this as a progress. For instance, if a woman would dress the way they do now, twenty years ago, it would be a shameful way to show yourself, you know. Self-respect is gone, also the image of a woman is more like an object and we don't look at them as a human being. It's more like a flashy substance you want to consume, you know. [...] see the way you're going as a society, what's [...] on television, billboards, what's becoming normal. What's becoming the [tendency], you see. [...] This is why I don't feel like at home anymore."

Dawlat pleads for more respect for women, not presenting them as objects. Whereas populist anti-Muslim voices emphasise Muslim's the alleged tendency to suppress women, Dawlat pushes back with a view that is similar to feminist's objections against the sexualisation of women.

These Muslim voices seem unheard in the West, as a consequence of demonising Muslim values as a whole, whereas many feminists, Christian and more conservative parts of Dutch

society would probably agree with Dawlat's plea for a less sexualised image of women in society.

Muslims as a mainly lower-class minority

Immigrants, especially those with "color", are over-represented in lower socio-economic classes in Western Society (Schwartz, 2006: 17), as is the case for the vast majority of Muslims in the Netherlands, who originate from countries like Turkey, Morocco and other countries in the Middle East, South Asia and Africa.

As the social and cultural planning bureau SCP shows, immigrants from dominantly Islamic countries like Turkey and Morocco, are over-represented in lower-income classes. Yet, this is not the case for the mosque-attending participants in this research. Some have (had) steady jobs as factory workers, one of them is a former head of department, one is a train driver and there are five university students among them. A random selection of autochthone Dutch people might have the same characteristics. Still, all of the participants are part of a visible minority in the Netherlands. Experiences of othering are to be expected and it happens, as we will see in the next paragraph.

7. Negative attitudes and discrimination

"Are you here again, with your goblin hat?",²⁴ Dawlat's head scarf wearing wife heard when she was shopping in a supermarket. "[...] They don't think you are going to react [...]" said Dawlat, smiling. "But my wife said to them: 'Excuse me? Is this how you treat someone?' When he gets a backtalk, you see he gets all red and purple, all the colours of the rainbow."²⁵

Discrimination is present in the life of the mosque-attending Muslims. At first, the participants were inclined to bagatelize the phenomenon, but probing led to a rich collection of examples. "No, no, there is no discrimination here", the participants of the older focus group assured me, one after another, when I brought forward the issue of discrimination in a general way. "I do think, Amsterdam, Rotterdam; it will be worse over there"²⁶, said Demir, a 44 years old retirement consultant. "But here in Groningen, it's really less worse. It is more a problem of

²⁴ Dutch text: "Kom jij weer met je kaboutermuts?"

²⁵ Dutch text: "'Pardon? Is dat je niveau? Ga je zo met iemand om?' Wanneer hij een tegenwoord krijgt zie je dat die helemaal rood wordt en pimpelpaars alle kleuren van de regenboog."

²⁶ Dutch text: "Ik denk wel, Amsterdam, Rotterdam, dat het daar erger is, hoor."

the Randstad.”²⁷ Berkan, an incapacitated supervisor at a paint shop, and my second key informant at the mosque, agreed: “Discrimination, maybe local, or where you work, it differs... [...] The workforce may be discriminated against, but... [...] it is diminishing.”²⁸

Still, later on in the discussion, Cavus told me he knows how it feels to be discriminated against. “I experienced it myself, we applied together [with an autochthone Dutch colleague] and he is hired and I am not hired. The reason? They asked me about a diploma. I happen to know my colleague. [...] He didn’t have [the diploma] either. That is definitely discrimination.”²⁹

The workplace is a fruitful ground for stories on discrimination of immigrants. This is not always religious discrimination. Being a visible foreigner, or even having a foreign name, leads to experiences of discrimination, is the conviction of Aran, a 22 years old Pharmacy student in the younger focus group: “A friend, he is half Argentinean, half Dutch. [...] He said: ‘I was applying for a job.’ [...] he used his mother’s name and he didn’t get the job. They explicitly told him: ‘We don’t have jobs right now.’ One day later he came with his father’s last name; they suddenly had jobs. So, it is not about being Moroccan or Turkish or from Afghanistan or from Iraq or from Indonesia, just having a foreign last name is what is bringing discrimination.” These stories not only pop up in the media, they really happen, according to Aran. And you cannot just blame the unemployed migrant, he thinks. “People who want to work, can’t get a job, they often tell their story on social media. And some people might think they are exaggerating, they’re not trying hard enough. But sometimes it’s not about the person who is trying, but it is about the person who is in charge.”

Mosque attending Muslims like Dawlat describe regular experiences of othering and discrimination. Sometimes these experiences are examples of clear and vicious in-your-face examples, in other cases, behaviour considered discriminatoire is more obscure or even not noticed by the person who made the assertion that the receiver considers discriminative. They

²⁷ Maar hier in Groningen is het wel minder hoor. Het is meer een probleem van de Randstad.”

²⁸ Dutch text: “Discriminatie, misschien plaatselijk, of waar je werkt of... wat verschillend zeg maar. [...] de beroepsbevolking wordt misschien wel gediscrimineerd, maar [...] wordt minder.”

²⁹ Dutch text: “Ik heb het zelf meegemaakt: een andere afdeling, toen hebben we samen gesolliciteerd [met een autochthone Nederlander] en hij wordt aangenomen en ik word niet aangenomen. Wat is de reden? Ze hebben mij het diploma gevraagd. Ik ken mijn collega toevallig. [...]. En die had het ook niet. [...] Dat is wel discriminatie.”

connect it to the situation in the Netherlands where autochthonous Dutch people consider visible migrants and Muslims as 'others'.

Osmak Asuman, a Turkish Dutch train driver, moved to the Netherlands when he was 17 years old. I interviewed him alone, since his fellow-participants of the planned focus group discussion had to leave prematurely. "Discrimination. Here, in the Netherlands I have learned well what humanity means by that. I come from the city of Kirşehir. People of many different nationalities live there. [...] You have absolutely no idea who is Kurd, who is Turk and who is Armenian."³⁰

As a train driver, Asuman notices a clear difference in approach when he wears his uniform. "When I am in uniform, people even greet me in the streets. People who don't even know you. But when I am not wearing a uniform, you are just a stupid foreigner. It is really bizarre. [...] You can see it in their face and in their behaviour. Isn't it strange, that a simple suite can change that. [...] but this has nothing to do with me. It has to do with their understanding of humanity. [...] then they have no respect for a human being, but for a piece of cloth."³¹

Anti-Islam sentiments play a role in these othering experiences, participants believe. "When you are against Islam, you can accomplish a lot in the Netherlands",³² said Metehan. "It is not yet accepted in Europe, other religions."³³

When Islam is negatively in the news, it becomes a a topic at work, Metehan tells. "When something has happened in the world, then they start to talk about it. Otherwise, it is completely quiet."³⁴ The main reason for non-Muslims to address their Muslim acquaintances is after a terrorist attack. "But the label it gets is Islamic terrorism. [...] we also consider this terrorism. In the Islamic world, in the media there, they are called just terrorist, not Islamic terrorists. That term is never used", said Halil.³⁵

³⁰ Dutch text: "[...] discriminatie, ik heb hier in Nederland goed begrepen wat de mensheid daar eigenlijk mee bedoelde. [...] in Turkije, [...] ik kom uit [...] de stad Kirşehir, daar leven heel veel mensen van andere nationaliteiten [...]. Je weet absoluut niet wie Koerd is, wie Turk is of wie Armeniër is."

³¹ Dutch text: "[...] als ik in uniform was, dan groetten ze zelfs op straat. Mensen die je helemaal niet kent. Zelfs met hun ogen. Maar als je dan geen uniform aan hebt, dan ben je gewoon een domme buitenlander. [...] heel bizar eigenlijk. [...] Gedrag en gezicht zijn anders. Dat zie je gewoon, in hun ogen en gedrag. Dat is apart he, dat een pakje dat kan veranderen. [...] maar dat heeft niks met mij te maken. Dat heeft met hun begrip van mensheid te maken. [...] dan hebben ze geen respect voor een mens, maar voor een stukje stof (lacht)."

³² Als je tegen islam bent, dan kan je veel bereiken in Nederland.

³³ Dutch text: "Ik denk dat het in Europa nog niet geaccepteerd is, andere geloven."

³⁴ Dutch text: "Als er wat in de wereld gebeurt, dan beginnen ze te praten erover. Anders is het helemaal rustig."

³⁵ Dutch text: "Maar die label die ze krijgen is islamitisch terrorisme. Als je naar de moslimwereld kijkt, gewoon

After terrorist attacks, non-Muslims often start asking questions to Muslims, as participants experience. Berkan: “[Then] I think, he looks at me as if I am a terrorist. When somebody addresses me then... Why do you ask me? He sees me as a terrorist. But there is a war going on in Syria. Daesh, do you know how many foreigners are there? Bad boys, they are bad boys.”³⁶ This constant linking of Islam to terrorism is a major source of irritation to the participants. As terrorists claim they kill because of their Islamic convictions, the West connects Islam to terrorism, as if all Muslims think random violence on civilians is justified. There are murderers in Dutch society, but that does not mean this society is murderous. The media is to blame for this mechanism of blaming Islam for Islamic terrorism, Dawlat thinks. “There is nothing honest about [the media], all dishonest. [...] we have 1,5 billion Muslims. If we had a terrorist mindset, we would have destroyed you. [...] A select group [causes] the bad name for all [...] Muslims.” 22-year old Omer from Germany is the only participant who showed some understanding for the reaction of non-Muslims, after terrorist attack, when they start asking questions to Muslims. “I think that is a normal reaction, when you see a Muslim you ask him. Of course, you want to hear a Muslim.”

The alienating process of othering makes it hard for Muslims to feel at home in Dutch society. The older participants, immigrants of the first generation, have had a strategy of integrating without assimilating. Their Turkish and Muslim identity should stay intact, within this precondition, they have always tried to adapt to Dutch society, respecting Dutch laws and culture. “I find it very important to know about Dutch culture and to know the language well”, Asuman explains. “It has also to do with... How come you feel discriminated against? Is it discrimination or is it just a reaction of those people. You see, among my colleagues [...] there are naturally some people who are... I won’t say fascist, but who think somewhat different. They will always be there. But in general, among colleagues and in the streets where I lived and live now, I do not feel discriminated against.”³⁷ As Andriesen explains: “Exclusion can [...]

naar ons, wij zien dat ook als terrorisme. In de islamitische wereld, in de media worden ze gewoon terroristen genoemd. Niet islamitische terroristen, dat woord wordt nooit gebruikt.”

³⁶ Dutch text: “Ik denk hij kijkt naar mij alsof ik terrorist ben. Als iemand mij aanspreekt, dan... Waarom vraag je mij? Hij ziet mij als terrorist. Maar in Syrië heb je oorlog. Daesh, weet je hoeveel buitenlanders daarin zitten? [...] Foute jongens, het zijn foute jongens.”

³⁷ Dutch text: “[...] ik vind het [...] heel belangrijk dat je de cultuur van Nederland weet en dat je ook de taal goed kent. Want heeft ook te maken met... Hoe vind je jezelf gediscrimineerd? Is dat discriminatie of is dat gewoon een reactie van die mensen? Kijk, tussen mijn collega’s of... Zijn tuurlijk wel mensen die een beetje... eh... fascist zal ik niet zeggen, maar... [...] die een beetje anders denken. Die zijn er altijd wel, maar over het algemeen, tussen mijn collega’s en in de straten waar ik woonde, en, waar ik woon, voel ik me niet

be seen as normal or unavoidable. For instance, migrants may think that (certain forms of) discrimination (are) is part of the migration experience and that they can earn their place in the new society, by working hard.” (SCP, 2017:13).³⁸

Asuman uses his agency to find his way in Dutch society, willing to adapt to a certain level, with a strive not to assimilate, by guarding his Turkish and Muslim identity. This way, experiences of othering hardly affect him. Jensen emphasises the importance of agency for immigrants: “[...] othering is not a straightforward process of individuals or groups being interpellated to occupy specific subordinate subject positions. On the contrary, agency is at play, and actors far from always accept becoming the other self. Othering can be capitalized upon or disidentified from.” (Jensen, 2011: 73).

Regardless of eminent discrimination experiences, the participants do not want to make a big issue of discrimination. It is therefore not a popular conversation topic among Muslims, when they are at the mosque. “We have far more important things to talk about”, said Dawlat.

Othering and discriminatory remarks are often a consequence of a lack of knowledge and sometimes they are testimonies of plain ignorance, according to the participants. Dawlat, laughing: “For instance, they say: ‘All Moroccan people should go back to Istanbul.’ It’s about the level from the person that is talking, you know, and what kind of person is representing the group.”

The older Turkish-Dutch participants are satisfied living in the city of Groningen. They consider discrimination and othering less a problem here than in other parts of the Netherlands. “[In Groningen] there are no black schools”, says Karim. “Integration is going well here. Neighbourhoods with only Turks and Moroccans do not exist here in the province of Groningen. Integration goes well here.”³⁹

Integration seems to be an important issue to the participants of the focus group discussions and the in-depth interview. For them integration is about adaptation, without blending in completely with Dutch society. Asuman’s urge to integrate has a limit. “Adaptation is absolutely necessary. [...] Dutch laws, Dutch society. But assimilation, that is a whole different

gediscrimineerd.”

³⁸ Dutch text: “Uitsluiting kan ook worden gezien als normaal of onvermijdelijk. Zo kunnen migranten het idee hebben dat (bepaalde vormen van) discriminatie nu eenmaal bij de migratie-ervaring horen en dat zij met hard werken hun plek in de nieuwe maatschappij kunnen verdienen.” Translation by the author.

³⁹ Dutch text: “Je hebt hier geen zwarte scholen. [...] De integratie is goed hier. Wijken met alleen Turken en Marokkanen, zo iets bestaat niet in de provincie Groningen.”

story. Precisely when assimilation takes place, problems arise. The Mosque prevents that. It is of the utmost importance that you keep connected to where you come from, what your culture is, what you believe.”⁴⁰

Live and let live, seems to be Asuman’s motto in the multicultural, complex Dutch society: “As long as nobody looks down on you because of religion and color. Personally, I find the far most important thing that you don’t judge people because of their religion, also those who are unbelievers or from another [religion]. For I am not a deciding factor on who these people are and where they will go to. That is not my job. [...] Let those people make up their own minds and build their own conviction and organise their own lives; nobody has the right to judge. [...] God calls everybody, everybody! But you decide individually whether you will live with these norms or you don’t. Your way of life may not burden the other, absolutely not. That is very important in Islam.”⁴¹

Conclusion

Identity construction is a complex phenomenon for the mosque attending Muslims participating in this research. Muslim identity seems to form the base of this construction. Above all and before anything else comes Islam identity for the participants. It is important to realise that the participants were all dedicated Muslims and mosque attendants. As only half of Dutch Muslims visit the mosque regularly, the participants are not representative for Muslims in general or even for Muslims in the city of Groningen.

In the focus groups socially acceptable answers will have dominated, since their common ground is their religion and, in case of the Turkish-Dutch, their ethnicity. I have tried to mediate this social influence by probing, going from general questions to personal experience. With the discrimination issue, this led to a wide variety of discriminatory experiences, after a

⁴⁰ Aanpassen, dat is absoluut nodig. Dat moet absoluut gebeuren namelijk. Nederlandse wetgeving, Nederlandse samenleving. Da’s heel belangrijk, van economie tot studie, alles, alles. Maar assimilatie dat is heel wat anders. Juist als assimilatie gebeurt, krijg je problemen. En dat voorkomt de moskee. Het belangrijkste is gewoon dat je op de hoogte bent van waar je vandaan komt, wat je cultuur is, wat je gelooft.

⁴¹ Dutch text: “Als maar niemand op je neerkijkt vanwege geloof en door zijn kleur en zo. ik vind persoonlijk eigenlijk aller- allerbelangrijkste dat je dan mensen niet beoordeelt op het geloof. Ook de ongelovige of van andere... Want ik ben geen beslissende punt over die mensen wat ze zijn en waar ze heen gaan. Dat is mijn taak niet. [...] Laat die mensen zelf maar gewoon met hun eigen verstand en eigen overtuiging zeg maar hun leven gewoon oprichten en daar heeft niemand, niemand recht op te beoordelen. En ik zie ook wel individueel: wel God roept voor iedereen, iedereen, maar nemen individueel [...] of je dan met die normen leeft of niet. Maar jouw levensvorm mag die ander niet belasten. Absoluut niet. Dat is heel belangrijk van islam.”

primary denial of the phenomenon, at least in Groningen.

For these mosque-attending Muslims, their religion seems to form a precondition in daily life. Pride of their country of origin is considered very important, too, especially for the Turkish-Dutch participants. But there is also a sense of 'Dutchness', expressed when being in their country of origin, confronted with other Turks, autochthone and from other western countries.

Agency is central in this identity construction. This agency gives the mosque attendants the strength to handle othering and discrimination experiences, alone, or with each other in the mosque. The strength drawn from social meeting with fellow Muslims at the mosque is implicate. Othering and discrimination are not considered big issues on a personal or regional level. In Groningen, it is not so bad, is the generalised impression. But participants do consider discrimination a major problem in Dutch society as a whole, with a focus on the big cities in the West. One participant gave an interesting explanation for this low and high level of discriminatory problems: in the big cities, Muslims live together in quarters with each other, with few autochthone neighbours. This aggravates integration problems, according to this participant.

6. Conclusion

Identity construction in a diaspora context is complex in general. Immigrants have to find their place in a new society, without losing contact with their roots. Muslim immigrants in the Netherlands have to fit in a third category: their religion. Islam is an 'imported' religion in the West, and since its followers form a visible minority, for the bigger part, they experience othering by the autochthonous people, aggravated by growing anti-Islam sentiments in the West.

Tactical reaction to this othering experiences is a growing awareness of Muslims in the West of their religion. Transnationalization and globalisation have enforced this phenomenon. Contacts with Muslims all over the world, through social media, makes the 'Ummah' really a worldwide community of Muslims.

Religionisation of Muslims is not the whole story. For one, this is only true for a part of the Muslim population in the Netherlands. Only half of the Muslims in the Netherlands are frequent mosque attendants. Secondly, Muslims in the Netherlands are problematised by part of the media, politics and population. This results in a growing gap between Muslims and non-Muslims in the West.

This does not seem to affect the religionisation tendency, if anything, Islam problematization seems to enforce religionisation. Mosque attending Muslims in this research seem to find strength in their religion, not so much to cope with othering and discrimination. Though attendants mention many examples of these, these Muslim men in Groningen did not seem to consider the personal experiences with othering and discrimination particularly burdening. The most direct forms of othering and discrimination they were confronted with, were either not their personal experiences or these experiences were mainly caused by remarks or behaviour by complete strangers. Subtle forms of othering and discrimination were more common, also within their personal network of colleagues, neighbours and acquaintances. Putting these experiences aside as ignorance and a lack of knowledge about Islam, seems to be the 'survival' tactics for these experiences.

As a whole, the participants in this research did not seem to value othering and discrimination as big issues in their lives. In their hometown Groningen, integration is rather successful, they claim. In Groningen, only 2.4 % of the population is Muslim and they live in various parts of

the city, not concentrated in one neighbourhood and there are no 'black schools' here.

The Turkish mosque is not only the place to come together for prayer, though the participants all tried to come at least once a week, for the Friday prayer. It has also become an important place for social gatherings and activities. The mosque is a place to meet your fellow Muslims and, in the case of the Turkish Dutch participants, to meet with your fellow 'countrymen'. This social sanctuary and religion itself seem to give the participants a base of security and in some cases a sense of moral superiority, feelings confirmed when meeting people with a similar background.

Islam is the basis in the lives of these mosque attending Muslims. Though the participants are all male, the women connected to the mosque have their activities and social gatherings as well. Whether their experiences are valued likewise, can be an interesting follow-up of this research.

Though the mosque is part of the Turkish governmental Diyanet network, mosque attendants come from all over the world. They come here for prayer, but they also take part in other activities, both religious and social. Non-Turkish Dutch as well as Turkish Dutch participants seem to put Islam first, as a basis for their lives, both spiritual as in the choices in daily life. But, on top of this base, they strive to participate in Dutch society, though pessimism about really being part of Dutch society, seems to have grown. For the Turkish Dutch participants, the bond with their country of origin is still strong. Still, being Dutch is part of their identity: when in Turkey, they tend to defend their new country in discussions with Turks from other Western countries.

Within pessimism about the harshening attitude of Dutch society towards Muslims, there are sparks of hope. Knowledge about Islam increases, as the attention for this from Western perspective foreign religion does, and knowledge is a fertilizer for understanding and accepting. And, perhaps even more important, autochthone Dutch people come across Muslims more and more, the young generation has Muslim classmates and they meet at clubs and in the street. Dutch policy of spreading immigrants over the whole country seems to have helped with promoting this integrational driving force, at least in the peripheral cities of the Netherlands. Despite this 'spreading' policy, concentrations of Muslims have emerged in the big cities of the Randstad, Amsterdam, Rotterdam and The Hague. These Muslim dominated neighbourhoods, with Muslim schools and clubs, seem to hinder the most successful integrational mechanism: people meeting people. Meeting each other is the best cure for

othering, as research on Contact Theory proves, time and time again (Savelkoul, 2011). For a follow-up research, it is interesting to compare the outcome of experienced othering problems in regions with a low percentage of Muslims, and few Islamic organisations, compared to regions with many Muslims, living close together, in a social circle of Islamic schools and other organisations, with little social encounters with autochthonous Dutch people.

Within a successfully integrated and participating population, the mosque is more than a place for prayer. It is a social meeting point where immigrants can experience the Ummah, the worldwide community of Muslims. Since being Muslim, and for the Turkish Dutch participants, being Turkish, is crucial for participants' identity construction, the mosque is the place to prevent assimilation. Assimilating seems to be an image of fear for the participants, as the core of their identity is at stake, when losing religious and ethnic bonds. In this way, participation and integration in a new society, is not hindered. Just being confirmed in the most important bases of your identity, can be enough: the mosque as a 'bar without booze', nothing more, and certainly nothing less.

Appendix 1. Ethics statement

All participants, both in the focus groups and in the in-depth interviews were asked for informed consent.

Anonymity was very important in the primary data collection. Especially with in-depth interviews, this anonymity was emphasized and maintained. With the focus groups, group safety played a vital role. Using theories on focus groups, controlling group dynamics were an important issue, guarantying an atmosphere of trust and space for all participants to give their views and opinions.

Furthermore, possible cultural sensitivities were dealt with at an early stage, by maintaining a modest, open attitude towards the interviewees, checking in cases of doubt if questions or remarks were appropriate.

One of these sensitivities might have been the interviewing of women. Action was taken to use a female interviewer, should this have been a problem for participants or key informants of the mosque. But in the end, I did not succeed in forming a female discussion group in time. Data gathered in the primary research is protected from external access. Transcriptions and sound recordings of the focus group discussions and the in-depth interviews are kept in a safe place and will not be shared with any third party.

The interviewees are all given feigned names, in order to guarantee anonymity.

Appendix 2: Focus Group Discussion Guide

Preliminary Codes:

Cope with daily life as religious minority.

Use of mosque as a social institution.

Experiences of othering.

Social interactions with fellow Muslims (in and outside the mosque)

Social interactions with other Dutch people.

Migrant-autochthone axis: first generation migrant, second generation migrant, third and further generation migrant, autochthone (converted muslim).

Experiences of help from other Muslims/Mosque attendants.

Role of mosque in past and present.

Introductie

- Fijn dat jullie allemaal willen meewerken aan dit groepsgesprek. Ik begin met een korte introductie, daarna gaan we in gesprek, met elkaar.
- Studie: Master Religion, Conflict and Globalization bij Godsdienstwetenschap (geen Theologie).
- Afstudeeropdracht: rol moskee als steun/hulp in het dagelijkse leven, in een maatschappij met vaak weinig kennis over de Islam.
- Het groepsgesprek gebruik ik om informatie te verzamelen rond deze vraag. Het gaat om jullie persoonlijke ervaringen.
- Het gesprek duurt ongeveer een uur.

Ethische kwesties

- Vertrouwelijkheid is zeer belangrijk bij het onderzoek, ik nodig jullie dan ook uit om aan te geven wanneer je zaken liever niet naar buiten brengt, zodat je in dit gesprek je vrij kunt voelen om je persoonlijke ervaringen te delen.
- In de uitwerking worden de voornamen gebruikt, een gefingeerde naam is mogelijk.
- Het gesprek wordt helemaal uitgeschreven, delen ervan ga ik gebruiken voor de scriptie.
- Het uitgeschreven gesprek wordt alleen gebruikt door mij en gecheckt door mijn begeleider aan de universiteit. De scriptie zelf komt in het bestand van de universiteit en kan gebruikt worden door andere onderzoekers. Mogelijk is de scriptie wel toegankelijk voor de buitenwereld.
- Graag wil ik dit gesprek opnemen. Die opname wordt alleen gebruikt om het gesprek uit te werken en zal niet naar buiten gebracht worden.

Introductie gesprek

Zoals gezegd, zal het gesprek ongeveer een uur duren. Ik ga eerst wat algemene vragen stellen, daarna ga ik specifiek in op de onderzoeksvraag. Voel je vrij om het woord te nemen en ik wil graag met jullie afspreken dat we naar elkaar luisteren, elkaar de ruimte geven om uit te spreken en dat we

bedenken dat je hier praat over je persoonlijke ervaringen. Er zijn geen goede of foute antwoorden. Hebben jullie nog vragen voordat wij beginnen?

Introductieronde

Iedereen noemt:

- Naam
- Leeftijd
- Beroep / studie
- Land/plaats van geboorte
- Land van herkomst, hoeveelste generatie-migrant
- Hoe vaak bezoek je de moskee?

Introductievragen

- Waarvoor komen jullie bij de moskee?
Probing: Bidden, activiteiten (welke?), vrijwilligerstaken, bestuur (welk?), Koranschool.
- Hoe lang komen jullie al bij deze moskee?
- Bezoeken jullie ook wel eens een andere moskee?
- Wat spreekt jullie aan in deze moskee?
- Zijn er ook zaken die je graag anders zou willen zien bij de moskee?
Probing: andere / meer activiteiten, meer aandacht voor... vrouwen, jongeren, ouderen.

Transitievragen:

- Wat vind je van het beeld van de islam in Nederland?
Probing: in de pers, op tv, Facebook/Instagram, in gesprekken met niet-moslims.
- Hoe ervaar je de gevolgen van dat beeld in het dagelijks leven?
Probing: aangesproken worden als moslim op: kleding, moslimgeweld, religieuze feesten, ramadan.
- Ervaar je wel eens discriminatie?
Probing: op het werk/school, bij sollicitatie, door burens, bij vereniging, op straat.

Key questions:

- Hoe belangrijk is je religie voor jou?
- Bespreek je je ervaringen met niet-moslims wel eens met medemoslims? Met wie? Waar?
Probing: familie, vrienden, gespreksgroepen, Koranschool, bij de moskee.
- Bespreek je deze ervaringen ook bij de moskee?
Probing: met wie, bij welke gelegenheid?
- Op welke plekken ontmoet je moslims buiten de moskee?
- Welke levensovertuigingen hebben je vrienden?
Probing: moslims, christenen, geen geloof.
- Welke andere manieren heb je om om te gaan met ervaringen met niet-moslims die je als niet prettig ervaart?
Probing: bidden, aanspreken van niet-moslims op gedrag of opmerkingen, ...

Afsluitende vragen:

- Wat vinden jullie ervan om te leven als moslims in Nederland en in Groningen?
Probing: geluksgevoel, thuis voelen, emotie over pers en politiek, over niet-moslims.
- Welke ervaringen in de moskee zijn vooral waardevol voor je?
Probing: bidden, sociale contacten, activiteiten, aanwezig zijn.

- Hoe belangrijk is je identiteit als moslim; als Nederlander: als voormalig inwoner van je land van herkomst (bijv. Turks), anders...

Conclusie

We zijn aan het einde van de gespreksonderwerpen gekomen.

Wil iemand nog iets toevoegen aan wat er allemaal besproken is?

Hebben jullie nog vragen over wat er besproken is, over het onderzoek of wat ik ermee ga doen?

Dan dank ik jullie allemaal hartelijk voor jullie tijd en jullie bijdrage.

Willen jullie mij allemaal nog even je e-mailadres doorgeven, zodat ik jullie kan mailen over de uitwerking?

Appendix 3: Coding Results

Rec.id.	Nr	Code Short	Data collection	Persoon	Tekst
50	1	COPING	Focus Group Young	Dawlat	<p>I experienced, when I went to the supermarket, Albert Heijn, my wife has a headscarf, they say 'kom jij weer met je kaboutermuts?' Some of them, I can see it in the way I look, that they are negative. And they don't think that you going to react back to them. So my wife said to them: Pardon? Is dat je niveau. Ga je zo met iemand om? Wanneer hij een tegenwoord krijgt zie je dat die helemaal rood wordt en pimpelpaars alle kleuren van de regenboog. Maar ik denk dat het een beetje, in mijn ervaring, dat als iemand een negatieve visie heeft, dat dat meestal komt door een laag opleidingsniveau. Het is geen generalisering, maar de ervaring is zo, dat mensen die laag opgeleid zijn meer dingen aan te nemen van wat er op tv verteld wordt versus die wat minder laag zijn opgeleid. Maar dat is een algemene conclusie, ik weet niet of het correct is of niet, om zoiets te zeggen, maar dit is mijn ervaring.</p> <p>For instance, they say: All Moroccan people should go back to Istanbul. It's about the level from the person that is talking, you know, and what kind of person is representing the group. (laughs). But it's not a joke it's really happened. You should watch the video.</p>

60	1	COPING	Focus Group Young	Aran	Yes, of course, sometimes friends ask question [about islam] and I feel obligated to answer them. But I wouldn't tell a friend like, hey why are you not Muslim? Maybe you should become a Muslim (laughs).
61	1	COPING	Focus Group Young	Aran	[...] if they have questions, as a Muslim, we are obligated to answer those questions. And if you don't have the information to answer that person you have to ask somebody else from the mosque.
63	1	COPING	Focus Group Young	Aran	(About people who attack him verbally): When you just say how it is, there's no left or right, but you can still be polite in those situations. So, I really tell them: I have the feeling that you just want to argue to win. If you want to, and there is a winning, by now I declare that I have lost. I can't convert your thought in this way. The only thing I can do is provide information and you should just make a conclusion of it. But if their goal is, you want me to think like you and I want you to think like I do, then there is no discussion. I don't perceive this way. [Okay, you just cut it off?] But then I add to it, if you do want to have a real discussion I'm open for it any time. So, I give them another chance to start again.

64	1 COPING	Focus Group Young	Dawlat	<p>The experience I have is, not to be arrogant, but I never had a conversation where I wasn't dominant. Because my morality and my arguments and the way I think, and I back it up with science, I have never seen someone else who can convince me of something else with good arguments. And it's not something of myself, but the sources that I use, they're really healthy books, you get a lot of knowledge reading them. And it's combining spiritual guidance and at the same time it's also guidance for your ratio. It's combining the heart and the brain at the same time. you know. And I have never had a good argument from someone who says otherwise. For instance, the feeling that you have about the topic of Christians that Jesus sacrificed himself for their sins. All these kind of arguments, they are not logical and their all contradicted by the Bible itself. For instance, when I have these kind of conversations, when Jesus said, I think it was (niet alles te verstaan 01:06:39) he said 'our Lord' and he repeats it three times you know. How can you interpreted this, if he was a Lord himself he wouldn't say 'our' Lord. And when he said one, why would he said one it was not one.</p>
94	1 COPING	In-depth interview	Asuman	<p>Maar moet je nu even kijken hoe rijk Nederland is geworden, met kleur, met keukencultuur, met economisch... verschrikkelijk gegroeid. En dat is dankzij de buitenlanders. Kijk maar op de grote markt, daar had je alleen maar een appel, een</p>

sinaasappel, paar peer. Moet je nou zien, wat er voor verschillende soorten fruiten zijn. Moet je zien hoeveel restaurants, hoeveel eetcafés, verschillende soorten dat je kan eten en drinken.

95	1	COPING	In-depth interview	Asuman	Ik heb er stront aan. A: Je trekt door en... (beide lachen)
96	1	COPING	In-depth interview	Asuman	Aanpassen, dat is absoluut nodig. Dat moet absoluut gebeuren namelijk. Nederlandse wetgeving, Nederlandse samenleving. Da's heel belangrijk, van economie tot studie, alles, alles. Maar assimilatie dat is heel wat anders. Juist als assimilatie gebeurt, krijg je problemen. En dat voorkomt de moskee. Het belangrijkste is gewoon dat je op de hoogte bent van waar je vandaan komt, wat je cultuur is, wat je gelooft. Maar dat je als respectabele burger in dat land ook de Nederlandse wetten respecteert en dat je dan gewoon helemaal integreert.
97	1	COPING	In-depth interview	Dawlat	I experienced, when I went to the supermarket, Albert Heijn, my wife has a headscarf, they say 'kom jij weer met je kaboutermuts?' Some of them, I can see it in the way I look, that they are negative. And they don't think that you going to react back to them. So my wife said to them: Pardon? Is dat je niveau. Ga je zo met iemand om? Wanneer hij een tegenwoord krijgt zie je dat die helemaal rood word en pimpelpaars alle kleuren van de regenboog. Maar ik denk dat het een beetje, in mijn ervaring, dat als iemand een negatieve visie heeft, dat dat

meestal komt door een laag opleidingsniveau.

1	2	MOSQUESOC	Focus Group Old	Karim	Het is ook een beetje een ontmoetingsplek voor de mensen.
6	2	MOSQUESOC	Focus Group Old	Berkan	Ontmoet je iedereen die je wil. Zo zie je een paar maanden misschien niet, maar als je hier komt, dan zie je meeste weer terug.
34	2	MOSQUESOC	Focus Group Young	Dawlat	[Education and prayer}, it's a combination, the social parts you always get for free you know (laughs)
71	2	MOSQUESOC	In-depth interview	Asuman	Middaggebed is al geweest. Tien minuten in totaal. En de rest gewoon wat eigenlijk in cafés... de dagelijkse dingen... behalve de drank. Wat de mensen in café doen, doen wij hier. Een beetje gezellig maken, over dagelijkse problemen praten. Ook sommige groepen organiseren gewoon sociale dingen. Bijvoorbeeld straks gaan ze voetballen of organiseren ze een dag dat ze dan wat... evenement hebben. Weet ik veel wat.
72	2	MOSQUESOC	In-depth interview	Asuman	Minstens een keer per week ja. Minstens een keer per week kom ik sowieso. Maar als werken... geeft je ook niet altijd gelegenheid. (Ja, u moest soms ook op vrijdag werken kan ik me voorstellen he?) OA: Ja, tuurlijk, tuurlijk. Niet alleen ik maar

				ook andere mensen, al die vrienden van mij. Ik kan wel vrij zijn, maar dan kom ik hier en is niemand. Dan ga ik wel even met andere mensen praten, maar als mijn vrienden er niet zijn... Dan ga ik weer weg.	
73	2	MOSQUESOC	In-depth interview	Asuman	[...] zondag is ook heel geschikte dag. Dan zijn ook mensen vrij. [...] Meestal met slecht weer... Als het weer goed is, zijn mensen met gezin... familie gewoon ergens te amuseren. Maar als het slecht weer is, dan komen ze hier.
18	3	OTHERING	Focus Group Old	Berkan	Ja. Discriminatie, misschien plaatselijk, of waar je werkt of... wat verschillend zeg maar. Later, de beroepsbevolking wordt misschien wel gediscrimineerd, maar ook nog eh... Wordt minder.
19	3	OTHERING	Focus Group Old	Demir	(Over discriminatie) Ik denk wel, Amsterdam, Rotterdam, dat het daar erger is, hoor.
20	3	OTHERING	Focus Group Old	Karim	Je hebt hier geen zwarte scholen. [...] De integratie is goed hier. Wijken met alleen Turken en Marokkanen, zoiets bestaat niet in de provincie Groningen. De integratie gaat goed hier.
31	3	OTHERING	Focus Group Old	Berkan	Ik heb het zelf... Ik heb het zelf meegemaakt: een andere afdeling, toen hebben we samen gesolliciteerd [met een autochtone Nederlander] en hij wordt aangenomen en ik word niet aangenomen. Wat is de reden? Ze hebben mij het diploma gevraagd. Ik ken mijn collega toevallig. Die ken ik. En die had het ook niet. [...] Dat is wel discriminatie.

49	3	OTHERING	Focus Group Young	Bilal	In Nederland. No, no discrimination. People to Muslim, I think they're welcome, because Suikerfeest, the holiday for Muslim.
51	3	OTHERING	Focus Group Young	Dawlat	For instance, they say: All Moroccan people should go back to Istanbul. It's about the level from the person that is talking, you know, and what kind of person is representing the group. (laughs). But it's not a joke it's really happened. You should watch the video.
55	3	OTHERING	Focus Group Young	Aran	It's not allowed, but it is present. A friend, he is half Argentinean, half Dutch. A guy has one mother from Argentine and his father is Dutch. He said: I was applying for a job and I used my father's name and I got the job. The other way around: he used his mother's name and he didn't get the job. They explicitly told him we don't have jobs right now. One day later he came with his father's last name, they suddenly had jobs. So, it is not about being Moroccan or Turkish or from Afghanistan or from Iraq or from Indonesia, just having a foreign last name is what is bringing discrimination.
56	3	OTHERING	Focus Group Young	Aran	Yes, I do talk with them, because they ought to know that these things happen. It is not just the media, not just people in the media. People who want to work, can't get a job, they often tell their story on social media. And some people might think they are exaggerating, they're not trying hard enough, sometimes it's not about the person who is trying, but it is about the person who is in charge.

57	3	OTHERING	Focus Group Young	Dawlat	(ABOUT DISCRIMINATION). No. It's not that important, we have far more important things to talk about (laughs) [...] If we're finished in time you can experience what we're talking about. (Talks about religion)
80	3	OTHERING	In-depth interview	Asuman	Ehm... Kijk ik vind in die zin heel belangrijk dat je de cultuur van Nederland weet en dat je ook de taal goed kent. Want heeft ook te maken met... Hoe vind je jezelf gediscrimineerd? Is dat discriminatie of is dat gewoon een reactie van die mensen? Kijk, tussen mijn collega's of... Zijn tuurlijk wel mensen die een beetje... eh... fascist zal ik niet zeggen, maar... [...] die een beetje anders denken. Die zijn er altijd wel, maar over het algemeen, tussen mijn collega's en de straten waar ik woonde, en, waar ik woon, voel ik me niet gediscrimineerd.
81	3	OTHERING	In-depth interview	Asuman	Ik heb heel goed contact met mensen. Buren... Ik ben drie keer verhuisd en de mensen die achterbleven, die zijn gaan huilen. [...] Dat zegt al genoeg. Maar er zijn heus wel tussen die mensen die zichzelf ook misschien verbergen en die racistische, zeg maar, ideeën hebben. Maar zelfde mensen, misschien niet allemaal... maar daar zit in diezelfde mensen die daar tegenover mij zo zijn, verderop als iemand anders, een andere Turk, dan is voor hem misschien een buitenlander. Dan ben ik gewoon de reden van tekortkomen. [...] Dan ben je gewoon IS'er of een domme moslim of een Turk. Of een lastige Marokkaan.

82	3 OTHERING	In-depth interview	Asuman	<p>Als ik in uniform ben, begroet... Vooral vroeger hadden ze heel veel respect daarvoor. En als ik in uniform was, dan groetten ze zelfs op straat. Mensen die je helemaal niet kent. Zelfs met hun ogen. Maar als je dan geen uniform aan hebt, dan ben je gewoon een domme buitenlander. [...] heel bizar eigenlijk. [...] Gedrag en gezicht zijn anders. Dat zie je gewoon, in hun ogen en gedrag. Dat is apart he, dat een pakje dat kan veranderen. [...] maar dat heeft niks met mij te maken. Dat heeft met hun begrip van mensheid te maken. [...] dan hebben ze geen respect voor een mens, maar voor een stukje stof (lacht).</p>
83	3 OTHERING	In-depth interview	Asuman	<p>[...] discriminatie, ik ik heb hier in Nederland goed begrepen wat de mensheid daar eigenlijk mee bedoelde. [...] in Turkije, [...] ik kom uit [...] de stad Kirşehir, daar leven heel veel mensen van andere nationaliteiten, [...] Koerden en zo. Je weet absoluut niet wie Koerd is, wie Turk is of wie Armeniër is.</p>
84	3 OTHERING	In-depth interview	Asuman	<p>De meeste [Nederlandse burens en kennissen] zijn atheïst. Er zijn weinig gelovige mensen hoor. [...] Gelovige mensen die hebben heel ander gedrag en uitstraling tegenover ons. Ook burens en zo. Die zijn veel opener en begrijpelijker. [...] meestal denken ze (atheïsten) dan dat ze heel vrij zijn en dat ze mensen ook respecteren, maar ze hebben niet in de gaten dat ze dan veel ergere racist zijn...</p>

85	3 OTHERING	In-depth interview	Asuman	[...] katholieken, christenen, die respecteren jou, die weten dat je moslim bent. Maar die ander, zonder dat die het weet, zonder dat die het merkt, die ziet jou als niet volmaakt mens, want je gelooft. Je bent moslim, je kent geen mensenrechten. [...] Ik heb er stront aan.
87	1 COPING	In-depth interview	Asuman	Als maar niemand op je neerkijkt vanwege geloof en door zijn kleur en zo. ik vind persoonlijk eigenlijk aller- allerbelangrijkste dat je dan mensen niet beoordeelt op het geloof. Ook de ongelovige of van andere... Want ik ben geen beslissende punt over die mensen wat ze zijn en waar ze heen gaan. Dat is mijn taak niet. Mensen in dat gebied ze weten dat een boek zijn, moslims Koran zijn, ze weten dat een Bijbel zijn. Laat die mensen zelf maar gewoon met hun eigen verstand en eigen overtuiging zeg maar hun leven gewoon oprichten en daar heeft niemand, niemand recht op te beoordelen. En ik zie ook wel individueel: wel God roept voor iedereen, iedereen, maar nemen individueel... of je gaat (...) of je dan met die normen leeft of niet. Maar jouw levensvorm mag die ander niet belasten. Absoluut niet. Dat is heel belangrijk van islam.

58	4	SOCMUSLIM	Focus Group Young	Aran	(MEETING OTHER MUSLIMS, OUTSIDE MOSQUE) Yes, at the university, it's a common thing when you see somebody like you, you automatically meet. You shouldn't choose your friends based on their appearance. Likelihood their similar to you. Most of the times you end up with the people who are like you. A lot of the things that are important are like how you're raised, your ideology, the way you're thinking. That doesn't mean I don't have non-Muslim friends. I have a lot of non-Muslim friends. It only makes your own vision in life broader.
13	5	SOCOTHER	Focus Group Old	Berkan	We hebben ook heel goede contacten met gemeente en politiekorpsen.
15	5	SOCOTHER	Focus Group Old	Demir	Er zijn scholen die langskomen.
23	5	SOCOTHER	Focus Group Old	Demir	Op het werk, [...] als er iets wordt gevraagd over islam, dan is het meestal met ramadan. [...] De vragen worden dan standaard elk jaar weer gesteld.
24	5	SOCOTHER	Focus Group Old	Metehan	Als er wat in de wereld gebeurt, dan beginnen ze te praten erover. Anders is het helemaal rustig.
25	5	SOCOTHER	Focus Group Old	Metehan	Mensen denken... Je hebt Turkse, Surinaamse, Marokkaanse, Somalische. Nee. Turken zijn eerste en dan de rest. Zo ervaar ik. Ik weet niet hoe die andere mensen...
28	5	SOCOTHER	Focus Group Old	Berkan	Ik denk hij kijkt naar mij alsof ik terrorist ben. Als iemand mij aanspreekt, dan... Waarom vraag je mij? Hij ziet mij als terrorist. Maar in Syrië heb je oorlog. Daesh,

weet je hoeveel buitenlanders daarin zitten?
 [...] Foute jongens, het zijn foute jongens.

30	5	SOCOTHER	Focus Group Old	Omer	I think that is a normal reaction, when you see a Muslim you ask him. Of course, you want to hear a Muslim.
42	5	SOCOTHER	Focus Group Young	Dawlat	If you're talking to academic person, with high education, their opinions are different. It depends also on their life experience. I had a neighbor and he said: I don't want to give a woman a hand. You are right, he said to me and I said why? And he said: my friend had become so close to my wife that they went off with each other. Now he is divorced because of this. And he said now I understand the rule of the Islam that woman and man should have a respect distance, you know?
59	5	SOCOTHER	Focus Group Young	Aran	That doesn't mean I don't have non-Muslim friends. I have a lot of non-Muslim friends. It only makes your own vision in life broader.
70	6	MIGHIS	In-depth interview	Asuman	Nou, ik ben tweede generatie, heel duidelijk.
2	8	MOSQUEROLE	Focus Group Old	Halil	Ja, er worden verschillende activiteiten uitgevoerd, zoals koranlezen voor kinderen, sportactiviteiten.
3	8	MOSQUEROLE	Focus Group Old	Metehan	Aantal keren samen, een gesprekje, ontmoetingsdagen.
4	8	MOSQUEROLE	Focus Group Old	Omer	Most of the time for praying.
5	8	MOSQUEROLE	Focus Group Old	Berkan	We hadden hier ook Turkse vereniging, culturele vereniging. Hadden wij kleine ruimte boven... bidden...

7	8	MOSQUEROLE	Focus Group Old	Halil	Wat ze [jongeren] willen, voert het bestuur uit. [...] Kijk, tien, twintig jaar geleden had je sommige dingen niet bedacht, maar vandaag de dag gebeurt het wel. [...] Sportactiviteiten en jongerenactiviteiten.
8	8	MOSQUEROLE	Focus Group Old	Halil	We zijn nog maar een paar jaar geleden... Elke dag ramadan, elke dag eten gegeven.
9	8	MOSQUEROLE	Focus Group Old	Halil	Bij elkaar komen, feest, bidden, over je geloof praten. Geen politiek hier. Iedereen heeft andere mening. Dat is een verschil met Turkije of andere islamitische landen. In Europa, hier worden ook culturele activiteiten uitgevoerd.
35	8	MOSQUEROLE	Focus Group Young	Dawlat	You could see everyone it's a social thing. (onverstaanbaar). They give education to children or something like that.
37	8	MOSQUEROLE	Focus Group Young	Supriadi	And when someone dies, we arrange everything, we host the body and everything.
39	8	MOSQUEROLE	Focus Group Young	Bilal	There is like a kindergarten.
40	8	MOSQUEROLE	Focus Group Young	Aran	Sometimes there's food here, then it's also kind of a supermarket.
38	9	UMMA	Focus Group Young	Aran	Everybody is welcome. It's like in some mosques you cannot understand language, for example here there is only a Turkish sermon, but even though you don't understand the Turkish part, you can still attend at the prayer and still attend the education part at the mosque. So, it's not only for Turkish people.

41	9	UMMA	Focus Group Young	Bilal	They call me here (onverstaanbaar) everything, because I cooked meal. It's like a nice experience for me, I know Indonesian people, it's kind of a regular thing in Indonesia. When I meet other Muslims from the other world it's like a big thing for me, okay I found other brothers here.
10	10	IMAGE	Focus Group Old	Metehan	Er is een soort trend tegenwoordig tegen islam.
11	10	IMAGE	Focus Group Old	Metehan	Seculiere meestal eh... Als je tegen islam bent, dan kan je veel bereiken in Nederland.
12	10	IMAGE	Focus Group Old	Demir	Maar hier in Groningen is het wel minder hoor. Het is meer een probleem van de Randstad.
14	10	IMAGE	Focus Group Old	Metehan	Islam, mensen weten helemaal niets, eigenlijk. [...] Je vraagt: wat is islam, dan weten ze helemaal niks.
16	10	IMAGE	Focus Group Old	Omer	First of all, the picture that people don't know anything about Islam, just the basics, like we don't eat pork or we pray five times a day. In general, like the most of the people. people at my study don't know anything about Islam.
17	10	IMAGE	Focus Group Old	Omer	So they don't have real opinions. They just have the opinions of the media and what the media intends... as we all know... We all know that. They always have that (onverstaanbaar) of terrorists, always bad, and they have the image of the media. Cause they don't know anything about... they don't do any research.

21	10	IMAGE	Focus Group Old	Demir	Niet alleen dat he. Maar die label die ze krijgen is islamitisch terrorisme. Als je naar de moslimwereld kijkt, gewoon naar ons, wij zien dat ook als terrorisme.
22	10	IMAGE	Focus Group Old	Demir	In de islamitische wereld, in de media worden ze gewoon terroristen genoemd. Niet islamitische terroristen, dat woord wordt nooit gebruikt.
26	10	IMAGE	Focus Group Old	Demir	Wat ik wel eens krijg: wat vind jij ervan? Ja, dan geef ik wel mijn mening. Maar dat is gewoon logisch, dat je zegt, ja tuurlijk is dat niet goed, als er iets ergs is gebeurd. (Vervelend?) Nee, niet echt. [...] Je legt het gewoon uit en dan ga je door.
27	10	IMAGE	Focus Group Old	Metehan	Die oorlogszaken, in het Midden-Oosten, wat er eigenlijk allemaal gebeurde, dat leggen ze allemaal bij islam neer. Daar gebeurt het niet. Niet alleen de moslims zijn daar aan het vechten en brandstichten of bommen... er zijn mensen die niet gelovig zijn. Er zijn ook wel christenen die dat doen. Dat wordt uiteindelijk niet meegenomen, want even kijken, als mensen daar bezig zijn, is het eigenlijk terrorisme. Terrorisme, daar gaan ze niet veel in verdiepen. Dan zeggen ze: Ja, daar gebeurt het, in islamitische landen gebeurt dat. En dan zeggen ze: ja, die mensen zijn moslim en daar gebeurt het... dat leggen ze dan gewoon bij islam neer.
29	10	IMAGE	Focus Group Old	Metehan	Ik denk dat het in Europa nog niet geaccepteerd is, andere geloven.

43	10	IMAGE	Focus Group Young	Dawlat	You have some people who are just... they have only instincts, you know, they don't think, you can see that their image is different. And you can see that some people are very interested. I don't think that there is a general Dutch person's opinion. It's not fair to say so.
44	10	IMAGE	Focus Group Young	Dawlat	It's like all the media has the same goal. It's like, if it's not bad news, or something that they can make in to something bad, it's not entertaining. It's like the media has a dishonest way of giving people knowledge. It's 99% of the time false information.
45	10	IMAGE	Focus Group Young	Dawlat	So if you're talking about honest media, daar is geen sprake van, zal ik maar zeggen. There is nothing honest about it, also dishonest. They take a select a group of people, because we have 1,5 billion Muslims. If we had a terrorist mindset we would have destroyed you. It's a lot. It's like a select group makes the bad name for all of the Muslims.

Focus Group Young	Dawlat	<p> People who have the mindset of Geert Wilders, they have the same mindset as ISIS. They read the Quran at the same manner, because for us, it's not only the Quran itself. We read the aya first, and then we read the cause of the revelation. Then we read the story before and after. So why and how was it reviewed, what was, hoe zeg je dat, de gebeurtenis? And then you have a good contextual, healthy image of the meaning. But you can also take only, not even the whole, but you take a part of the aya. And I think that you could use really harsh words. The media is immature, childish, because when you look at Fred Leemhuis, he interpreted the same ayas as Geert Wilders, and he said: I see no resemblance of what he wrote and what I wrote. He is not a Muslim. He is what we call Western Islamic scholar. When you have someone who is a professor, and you don't take his words into account, but you take the words of some crazy person, you can think, what's the maturity of Dutch social media, not social media how we know it, but also the news. it's like the media want to predicate something that looks bad, on purpose. They don't want to see it in another light, you know. If they would focus their energy into telling how it really is, they would have more success and more help and empathy from other cultures, but they don't do it. </p>
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47	10	IMAGE	Focus Group Young	Onbekend	<p>There are also tours in the mosque. When we organize tours, we ... We're here, like everything you know about the media, is simply giving you a prejudice, about foreigners, for Dutch people so easy to put foreign people in connection to negative things. it' so easy, other way around to put positive things with foreigners, it's so hard. So we're like, everything we tell you here, is the truth. And then people are like, oh I didn't know.</p>
48	10	IMAGE	Focus Group Young	Dawlat	<p>If you want to know how the Islam works, learn it from a Islamic perspective, not the way you want to see it you know. How we approach the Quran, how we approach the Hadith, this is the way you should do it. As an outsider they see you should do it like this.</p>

Focus
Group
Young

Dawlat

I think there's a big misunderstanding of the problems in the world by Dutch people. For example, I went to my internship in the hospital. I was talking to a guy who was also fascinated by religion, in general, so we were talking and the pharmacists came, the first, the second, the third came, and one of them said: if we all just act normal and let people believe what they want to believe, there would not be any problems in the world. And it was related with the problems in Syria. So, I said to her, it is not a religious problem. She said: Why? I said do you think it's fair to force democracy upon someone with tools that are not democratic? So, with war you want to start a democracy. She was like no. For instance if Islamic countries would invade The Netherlands and force sharia law on the Netherlands people they would demand on them to be passive and not fighting back, it would be more cruel if they didn't, it would be more unlogic, more senseless to not react upon violence. When we look before the 1990's there was one bomb suicide, and it was not a religious one. After America invited Iraq suicide bombing started exponentially. Before 1990 in recorded history, there was one suicide bombing, by someone who has no religious ties and it all came after 1990's. Why did they invite Iraq? They didn't have any reason.

62 10 IMAGE

Focus
Group
Young

Dawlat

I think the ones who ask the questions are the ones that seeking to get more knowledge about it. Most of the times when I see people the topic religion they get an allergic reaction. For example, I had a presentation at school and the only ... was that it had to be something close to me. They only wanted to see my presentation technique. It wasn't about the subject, but it was about the techniques that I use. It was about the essence of life, so I was talking about it, before me there was a girl who was talking about art, for like 25 minutes and she wouldn't stop. And the teacher didn't stop her at all. I was talking for 5 till 8 minutes and the teacher said, do you think about the time? And then afterwards I asked him, he was 60 years old, have you ever thought about the reason of life? He said: now that you're asking, to be honest, not really. I was shocked. I was so shocked, he is 60 years on this earth and you don't even think ones, why am I here?

76 10 IMAGE

In-depth
interview

Asuman

Onwetendheid en geen kennis! Kijk ik bedoel bijna met alle kennissen van hier hoor ik gewoon. Ze zijn gewoon hier normale burger. Ik woon gewoon hier bij mij in de straat, ik ben goede buurmens voor iedereen en dat ik dan Turk ben misschien denken ze daar helemaal niet aan. Maar als ik een volgende straat kom, dan ben ik gelijk een potentiële, zeg maar IS... Dat is gewoon de ervaring.

77	10	IMAGE	In-depth interview	Asuman	<p>Interviewer: Heb je het beeld dat Nederlanders van immigranten hebben, zien veranderen in de veertig jaar dat je hier woont?</p> <p>OA: Ja, absoluut! Absoluut! Nou, het heeft positieve kant, heeft ook negatieve kant. De positieve kant: vroeger wisten ze niet eens waar Turkije lag. Je was gastarbeider. Ze hadden een voorbeeld voor hen. Je was voor hen komen te werken. [...] En de jeugd weet nu niet anders want een buitenlander is voor hem een klasgenoot, buurjongen en vriend. Want ze zijn samen opgegroeid. Ze weten niet anders. Ze weten ook waar Turkije is. Maar, er is altijd een groep natuurlijk, die ongerust wordt, die gescheidenheid toch willen behouden. Naar racisme zeg maar, willen ze toch nadrukkelijk maken: zij zijn anders dan wij. Hun zijn niet wij. Die groep. Dat is niet alleen hier, maar overal.</p>
32	11	ID	Focus Group Old	Berkan	<p>Eerste generatie voelt altijd als Turk, want die zijn daar geboren. Bij ons zeggen ze: de grond roept je altijd terug. Tweede generatie, die is meer aangepast. De derde helemaal. Die voelt niet als Turk.</p>
33	11	ID	Focus Group Old	Omer	<p>We agree that some people may be attracted to your home country, like Turkey and I feel like it, because I love my country and my city and I feel like Turkey is my home, because I have my roots there. I am born in Germany and I have lived there for nineteen years. My parents still stay in Germany. My German seems better than my</p>

Turkish, but still, I feel Turkish and I think most of my culture, cultural part is Turkish, just a little part is German.

65 11 ID

Focus
Group
Young

Dawlat

To be honest, the last couple of years I don't like living here. It's because of the social changes, I like the Netherlands 18 years ago. Now it's normal to be filthy, it's normal to be (onverstaanbaar woord), sexuality is not exhibited in a healthy way. We have billboards with naked persons. And a few weeks ago, there were even homo's kissing. I don't know why they have to go to this extend. I don't think the culture that we had at around 2000 was bad. If you compare it to now, I think we had our top as a Dutch society and we're like crashing now in an exponential rate you know. Morality is going away, respect for elders is not present anymore. Respect for teachers is not present, we're losing every kind of morality every kind of things that make the Dutch culture a good culture, we're losing it. And nobody is concerned about it and this is something that makes me at the same time a little bit angry and at the same time a little bit powerless, because nobody wants a different, that's the problem. Nobody brings it to attention.

Focus
Group
Young

Dawlat

in Islam everything is clear to me. The way I talk to my wife, the I address my parents, the way I work, the way I do business, the way I go to the mall, the way I... everything is clear you know. Okay, I have an ego, I'm far from perfect, I have many mistakes, but for a perfect Muslim, he would be like a walking Quran. Because Quran makes it clear how to interact every possible way. When I talk to you, actually, normally, now we're in a group, in the psychology of talking to someone, is that you turn around your body and talk to them. Now I can't do it, because there are other people. But normally, even the small things of manners, even those are explained in the Quran. So, every Muslim tries to compare to the one who is their role model, prophet Mohammed (Arabic). So, he is our example, and this is why every Muslim should be his religion, and his religion should be him. It does not mean he should not have an own character, but it's always between the scale of Islamic laws, voorschriften. There is some variety, that's permissible, but it has to be in the scale of Islamic law. So for example, he has his own language, his own culture, his own food preferences and stuff, that's all permissible. But there are some things that we all have to the same. Even the way we eat or drink things, the order that we do things, in our manners. It's all clear, and prescribed for us.

68	11	ID	FGDYNG	Aran	Muslim is predominant, it's a skill on which I do all the other things. So, if in my own culture, I do it according to the Islam. And if I behave like a Dutch person, I also do it in the skills of Islam. So, it's like a way of life, a way of thinking, a way of doing .
69	11	ID	Focus Group Young	Aran	I'm Kurdish. I'm a minority in the country. And from our culture it's divided. Because we have a lot of people who are really religious, and there are people who are really anti-religious. And they all live together, because to be honest, most of the people don't have Islam on the first place. I'm Kurdish, we are all Kurdish, that's the first thing, that connects people. For example, we have a celebration, which is called (Newroz) 'lentefeest' and it doesn't exist in Islam, so I prefer to not celebrate it.
74	11	ID	In-depth interview	Asuman	Koran, punt, moslim, punt. Mohammed, punt.
75	11	ID	In-depth interview	Asuman	In Turkije, mensen hebben heel weinig kennis van Turkse cultuur en geschiedenis van Turkije. In Turkije, kerk en moskee en synagoge staan naast elkaar en heeft niemand anders probleem met een ander zijn geloof. Niemand.
79	11	ID	In-depth interview	Asuman	Trouwens wij Turken hebben ook een heel andere mentaliteit, economisch. Als je naar heel Europa kijkt, niet alleen in Nederland: de Turken zijn werkgevers geworden. [...] veel eigen bedrijven. En wij geven heel veel belang voor studie, voor onze kinderen, dat ze dan een goeie opleiding kunnen krijgen,

ook op goeie plekken kunnen komen. Dat is heel belangrijk voor ons.

86	11	ID	In-depth interview	Asuman	Maar als moslim zijnde zou ik nergens problemen vinden, want waar ik ook ben, ik ben met God zelf. Ik bedoel, wat andere denkt, wat andere voor mij uit... heb ik geen probleem. (onverstaanbaar)
88	11	ID	In-depth interview	Asuman	Meestal denken ze dat wij dan tegen Westen zijn. Absoluut niet. Absoluut niet. Als zeg maar Nederlandse Turk en Duitse Turk en Franse Turk naar Turkije komt, daar komen ze toevallig tegenover elkaar in discussie, iedereen die beschermt dan je eigen land. Dat gaat automatisch. En als ik daar een Nederlander tegenkom, dan voel je heel anders. Dan voel je... Dan heb je je medemens gezien. Ik bedoel: jouw landgenoot gezien.
89	11	ID	In-depth interview	Asuman	[...]als ik daar ben, dan heb ik geen probleem. Turkije is net zo modern als hier en... totaal geen probleem, niet zoals ze dat ze dan hier in Nederland vertellen. Absoluut. Misschien de veiligste land van die kant. Veiliger dan Parijs in elk geval. Veiliger dan Londen, in elk geval. Noem maar op. He, ik bedoel...

90	11	ID	In-depth interview	Asuman	Als je naar Hattay komt, daar is echt mozaïek van Turkije, [...] aan de [...] Syrische kant.[...] Dan zie je pas wat vrede is. Ook als je in Istanbul komt [...] Dan zie je echt wat vrede en respect voor een ander geloof is. Ze moeten [...] die kant van het gezicht van Turkije zien.
91	11	ID	In-depth interview	Asuman	Je kan wel honderd keer zeggen van ik ben Nederlander, maar dat is niet waar. Ik ben Turk. Ja. (Maar je bent ook Nederlander.) Ik ben ook Nederlander.
78	14	ISLAMAWARE	In-depth interview	Asuman	Maar moet je nu even kijken hoe rijk Nederland is geworden, met kleur, met keukencultuur, met economisch... verschrikkelijk gegroeid. En dat is dankzij de buitenlanders. [...] Kijk maar op de grote markt, daar had je alleen maar een appel, een sinaasappel en een paar peren. Moet je nou zien, wat er voor verschillende soorten fruiten zijn. Moet je zien hoeveel restaurants, hoeveel eetcafés, verschillende soorten dat je kan eten en drinken.

Focus
Group
Young

Dawlat

The problem is, we still have faith in their actions [AMERICA], we still believe them, while being fooled by them for a I don't know dozens of times. It's not just a simple thing. It's not like a simple arrow you know, thousands, millions of people are dead, cultures are being devastated. Whole countries are being demolished, by mistakes that we tolerate. When we look at this perspective of the West, towards the violence that is happening in the East, it's the most un-academic way of thinking, I would even call it stupid you know, totally no empathy. If some one's aunt dies, they have like traumatic experience of their life's. But their uncles and aunts are dying every day. Their nieces are dying every day. Is it not fair for them to be angry? Even when they cannot express it in a good way, I'm not saying killing people is good, bombing people, suicide bombing is good, but it's a result of bringing violence to them and the only thing they learn is violence. They have not seen anything else then violence. So, in return they respond with violence, because all they see growing up is violence. So, they know only violence, you know

66	13	IMAGEMOS	Focus Group Young	Dawlat	<p>I hope there are more people like him (Balkenende, waarden en normen), you know, because it cannot be in my knowledge (?) 01:15:08 and it should be in their knowledge. This should not be a lazy society, I don't see this as a progress. For instance, if a woman would dress the way they did 20 years ago, it would be a shameful way to show yourself you know. Self-respect is gone, also the image of a woman is more like an object and we don't look at them as a human being. It's more like a flashy substance you want to consume, you know. When you look at these stories about Breezer meisjes. [...] still you see the way you're going as a society, what's in programs, on television, billboards, what's becoming normal. What's becoming the trend, you see it's going like this. This is why I don't feel like at home anymore.</p>
54	12	IMAGEMOS	Focus Group Young	Dawlat	<p>Yes, but we claim that our way of living is better and we express it. That's why we bring war to them, to change them. But for instance, when someone in Russia launches a rocket at a plane, MH17, we have so many protest. For only 300 people, when there's like 60 years of occupation in Israel. And when you look at the documentary, it's a Western documentary, Occupation 101, then you see the kind of violence they're met with every day, their homes which they build, just finished, are demolished. It has nothing to do with them being even terrorists or whatever, when you see the</p>

piece of land Israel was at the beginning, now it's like increased by 70 or 80 percent. And Israel is not even an acknowledged state. So, we talk about such high morality, but in everyday life we fail to implement it and that's the problem. I think we, as Western people, not only from a religious perspective, but from a moral perspective, we should do something about this. We should have a protest. I like to use this example: Spain had a drugs problem, a few years ago. I don't know how many years. And there were a lot of people using drugs. They could do two things, either we can use the money for more prisons, so we could imprison them. Or we could use the money for prisons and we build rehabilitation centers, giving them guidance. In one or two years there were 10 percent of the drugs addicts were no drug addicts anymore. They gave them love and got them back. We should do the same her. We should have a change of vision, we should meet them with love. If we think we have a high morality we should show it and you will see the change. You cannot force high morality with violence. You can't force democracy.

92	14	ISLAMAWARE	In-depth interview	Asuman	[...] toen ik 29, 30 was, heb ik echt kennisgemaakt met de Koran enne... toen was ik eigenlijk bewust waar ik wel of niet in geloof. Sindsdien kom ik regelmatig in de moskee
93	2	ID	In-depth interview	Asuman	Koran, punt, moslim, punt. Mohammed, punt

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