KU LEUVEN

FACULTEIT SOCIALE WETENSCHAPPEN

Becoming an individual: A cultural-sociological study of socialization into individualistic scripts

Liza CORTOIS

Proefschrift aangeboden tot het verkrijgen van de
graad van Doctor in de Sociale Wetenschappen

Promotor: Prof. Dr. Rudi Laermans
Copromotor: Prof. Dr. Dick Houtman
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2019

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Nr. 374

2019

Samenstelling van de examencommissie:

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Prof. Dr. Nadia Fadil [KU Leuven]

De verantwoordelijkheid voor de ingenomen standpunten berust alleen bij de auteur.

Gepubliceerd door:
Faculteit Sociale Wetenschappen - Onderzoekseenheid: Centrum voor Sociologisch Onderzoek [CeSO] - 3000 Leuven, België.

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D/2019/8978/2

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Acknowledgements

Writing the final sentences of a PhD dissertation is like reading the concluding sentences of a good book. Although you have been looking forward to unfolding the plot for some time, a feeling of subtle melancholia takes you by surprise when you finally get there. Almost unnoticed, you create a bond with this unusual task that you engaged to carry on for five years, at least in my case. Getting up each day and going to bed with thoughts of your project, finding yourself thinking about it at the weirdest moments. In the end, when people ask you how you are, you find yourself elaborating on the progress of your thesis. In such a long and intense process, the 'eternal writing status' becomes part of your identity to a certain extent. Finishing it, seems to imply finalizing a part of yourself, in the form of a PhD (who knows what the future might bring?). I owe some of my friends an apology for being less available, but more importantly, I want to thank some people for their indispensable support.

In the first place, I want to thank my two supervisors, my main supervisor professor Rudi Laermans and my co-supervisor professor Dick Houtman. Rudi, I want to thank you for an inspiring trajectory, from the time I was a philosophy student amongst sociologists. In some classes in sociology I was an 'outsider', but definitely not in your class. Your courses brought these two interests together for me, which gave me a sense of belonging in this faculty. I especially want to thank you for always making crucial remarks on my texts, during my time as an assistant and PhD student. These comments immediately went to the core of the argument and gave me a new perspective on how I could adjust and improve my texts. Dick, my special gratitude goes out to you for your availability and your inexhaustible motivational energy. You always saw 'golden ideas' in people's work, motivated me with phrases like 'Zet 'em op', and it was always so pleasant when you passed by the office asking: 'Hoe gaat ie Lizaatje?' You were a source of inspiration and had a very pedagogical way of transmitting this inspiration into accessible language both to students and to your PhD candidates. While I already knew as a student that I was interested in theoretical puzzles in social sciences, the love and interest in specifically cultural sociology is something that was intensified during this PhD project and that was most surely steered by the example you set.

I also want to thank professor Nadia Fadil and professor Stef Aupers of my guidance committee for their feedback at our meetings. Stef, I want to thank you for the instructive experience of writing an article on mindfulness together with Dick and for your valuable expertise in the domain of spirituality. Nadia, thank you for very insightful feedback, particularly on a theoretical level, especially when relating to Foucault, and for making time to discuss the civic integration case study. I am also grateful to the Research Foundation – Flanders (FWO) for funding this research and thereby showing trust in my competences as a researcher.

Margot, I am thankful for sharing the bulk of the PhD process with you in our office. We were often portrayed as each other's antipodes: you as the well-organized, quantitative experimental number cruncher, and I as the chaotic, qualitative philosopher-interpreter. Yet, I believe we have always been on the same page on a personal level. I am glad I lost our bet, and that you had to come back to Leuven to claim your ice cream. I hope that in the future I will lose many more bets and you will have to keep returning.

Anneke, my second office mate, sharing the office with you made me very happy. While we were both very busy during this final year, we sometimes could not help ourselves and had some conversations about culture, interviewing, religion, spirituality, you name it… I hope that in the future, we will continue to have these conversations. Anna, my third (non-official) office mate during summertime, thank you for putting into perspective so many things with your ironic humor, things I initially took so seriously. Thank you as well for sharing the insane summer-heat with me the final month, until we came up with the brilliant idea to cool off in the basement. Hanna, my best friend, who chose the same path but in philosophy. We were finishing our dissertations at the same time, during this hot summer. I found a lot of support in our conversations.

Furthermore, there are so many people at the CeSO I want to thank for being here, sharing time together, having lunch, working together, having interesting conversations. It is often said that writing a PhD dissertation is a lonely and isolating process, and for a person like me who cannot live without social contact, it was a relief to find a balance between intellectual activity and social interaction here. While the clinically bare walls of our faculty frightened me at first, they gradually and fortunately took on another meaning for me. Lander & Sam, the iconic duo, thank you for the 'koffiekoekoen'. Francesco, thank you for the lovely dinner with 5 courses and for being the 'Italian volcano'. Qinchun, Jayun and Anna, I enjoyed our Friday ritual. Lorenz, Goele, Joy, Silke, Paul, Annet, Elena… thank you all for many wonderful moments. Marina and Martine (or as Dick called you: 'Martina'), thank you not only for all the practical help, but also for the pleasant small conversations. Kristien Hermans and Saar Van Asten, thank you for guiding me through the practical aspects of the PhD procedure. Thank you too, Connie Menting, for proofreading my dissertation on the English language.

I also want to thank all my interlocutors, the people who disappeared behind their pseudonyms in this dissertation, but were willing to share so many intimate stories. Interviewing proved to be very intriguing to me; getting to know people and their stories was one of the aspects of the PhD that fascinated me the most. Although not always self-evident (I almost was thrown out of somebody's house once for asking whether she thought mindfulness was spiritual), I had many fascinating encounters that I would never have had without this research project; encounters with newly arrived migrants, people into spirituality or managers. I especially want to thank Anna, Erik, Elif, Akram and Andy (again pseudonyms), the anchor points in each of the settings I studied and who initially showed me the way.

Special gratitude goes out to my family: my brother Elias, my sister Emma and particularly my parents. More and more I realize how grateful I am for the upbringing they gave us, the values they invisibly transmitted to us and for making us see what is really important in life. Empathy, curiosity, social relations, openness, beauty are only a few of them. The conversations at the dinner table, while enjoying the dinner my mother had prepared with so much love, also formed our intellectual and existential food. While family dinners are not always a walk in the park, they also generated the fertile soil to let us all flourish and become the people we are now. I am very grateful that they did not set out clear-cut materialistic goals we had to reach, but emphasized the continual quest that life can be, with so many interesting twists and turns.

Last but definitely not least: Kristof, my love, my home. Thank you for being the world beside my PhD, and thus the required condition for being able to continue some of the harder phases in this long process. The many walks we made in the meadows and forests literally and figuratively gave me air in this process. Especially those final months were a challenge, but you have always been there to support, motivate and help me wherever you could. I hope that, sometime in the future, I can be there for you in a similar way as you have been there for me.

Introduction: A Cultural Sociological Perspective of Individualism

In the recently released documentary, *The Swedish Theory of Love* (2017), director Gandini sheds his light on the 'society of individuals' by focusing his lens on the country that is an outlier with regard to individualist values in the European Value Survey, Sweden. A succession of exemplary settings is shown that have to illustrate this increased 'individualism', how it is experienced and its consequences. In one of the contexts shown on the screen single women appear that chose to have children through artificial insemination, shown rather plastically and in clinical settings very remote from the 'love' the title suggests. We also see a close-up of a group of new agers who attempt to mitigate the individualistic isolation in a rather forced and artificial way, by withdrawing from civilized life and searching for the connection of an alternative small-scale community related to nature. Furthermore, we are permitted a peek at the world of civic integration courses, where we find shocked newcomers confronted with the isolated life style of their new host society. Here they receive tips and tricks from a civil servant on how to breach the emotional wall of the seemingly frigid locals. Finally, the sinister summit consists of elderly who die alone and are only found days after because they lack relatives or friends. They appear not to be the exception, as a specific unit dealing with this kind of cases illustrates. The documentary concludes with the words of sociologist Zygmunt Bauman, who ventures his diagnosis in a more moralist fashion than usual in this medium: 'In the end of independence, there is not happiness, there is emptiness of life, meaninglessness and utter boredom.'

What immediately stands out in this documentary, is its striking moralist overtone when this theme of individualism is concerned. While this documentary is not social scientific material, and there is no link with Sweden in this dissertation, this anecdote provides a hint of how the theme of individualism is treated in common sense and which ideas live related to this topic in society. In social scientific literature, we can on occasions also perceive a glimpse of similarities of this caricaturistic analysis that enlarges these elements under a magnifying glass. In the diagnosis of individualization we find, for instance, some similar arguments. Beck, Beck-Gernsheim, Giddens, and Bauman are generally considered the main sociologists on individualization as an analysis situated in a broader frame of (post)modernity (Dawson, 2012; de Beer & Koster, 2009; Elchardus, 2009).[1] Despite the marked differences between these authors, we can abstract a general view of individualization from them with regard to at least two claims: firstly, that there has been a disembedding from traditional norms pertaining to class, gender, family, and religion. Beck and Beck-Gernsheim (2002: 6), for example, describe this tendency as the disappearing of 'collective habitualizations' in a 'cloud of possibilities to be thought and negotiated.' They simultaneously underline that this 'disembedding' goes hand in hand with a 'reembedding' of 'the individualized individual' in new legal, economic and other regulatory frameworks, such as the job market, pension regimes or the welfare state. Secondly, this suggests increased autonomy and responsibility, or even anxiety and risk, for the individual. Identity is no longer a 'given' on the basis of belonging to a collective, but has become a 'task' (Bauman, 2001: 142). Pre-established life paths become 'do-it-yourself biographies' (Beck & Beck-Gernsheim, 2002). Beck and Beck-Gernsheim (2002: 6) systematically emphasize the double character of this increased field of choice as 'precarious freedom'. The two tendencies are of course related: the premised increase in individual choice or personal agency goes hand in hand with a proportional decrease in sociocultural institutionalization.

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[1] The text from here to p. 10 is strongly based on my article that was published in European Journal of Cultural and Political Sociology: (Cortois, 2017: 410-413).

Furthermore, there are also more morally inspired critiques that address increased individualization and link it to a decrease in societal involvement. Putnam (2001), for instance, forms an ardent advocate of this perspective when he analyses the lost sense of community and social capital in America in recent decades: 'for the first two thirds of the twentieth century a powerful tide bore Americans into ever deeper engagement in the life of their communities, but a few decades ago – silently, without warning – that tide reversed and we were overtaken by a treacherous rip current. Without at first noticing, we have been pulled apart from one another and from our communities over the last third of a century' (Putnam, 2001: 27). By means of a large quantity of statistical material, the claim is made that in the last thirty year, in diverse fields, such as political participation, religious involvement, volunteering work, after-work activities etc. the social engagement has declined. It is also clear that a moral message that this trend should be condemned is also implied, especially where recommendations are made to turn the tide of the current 'social decay' (2001: 402-415).

To date, diverse critiques have been formulated on the individualization perspective, addressing this very broad sociological diagnosis. In the first place, it has been pointed out that a profound empirical testing of this perspective is missing, as Brannen and Nilsen (2005: 413-14), for example, state: 'Theory takes on the mantle of “truth” in the absence of the appropriate research evidence.' De Beer (2007) concludes that for the three dimensions of individualization he measures on the basis of the European values study and the World values study (de Beer & Koster, 2009) − detraditionalization, emancipation, and heterogenization of attitudes − there is no evidence for the last two facets of individualization. Elchardus (2009) and Elchardus and De Keere (2010) offer a similar observation and conclude that individualization and detraditionalization cannot be equated; the latter is not a sufficient condition for the former. Instead, they observe a new kind of social control that is related to the governing of the self by institutions such as education, mass media, the importance and sophistication of therapeutic practices, and the realm of consumption.

A second critique is related to a class-theoretical or Bourdieusian perspective (Atkinson, 2007; Goldthorpe, 2002; Mackenzie et al., 2006). According to this approach, theories of individualization universalize a particular, middle-class ideal of self-expression and autonomy to the population as a whole. Class remains an important variable for predicting attitudes or choices – such as partner choice, for example. Inglehart's study (1997) had already indicated that it is mostly the new middle classes who embrace so-called post-material values. This critique can be extended to a more Foucaultian inspired, critical perspective that frames individualization as an ideological discourse of neoliberalism, an ideal of meritocracy that in reality can only be achieved by the few (Howard, 2007; Lazzarato, 2009). A third potential critique involves the opposite approach to individualization and points to the importance of new or different kinds of communities in the context of a postmodern culture. Maffesoli (1996) speaks of 'neo-tribus,' where Duyvendak (2009) opts for the term 'light community'.

In this dissertation, in line with many who came before me, I want to develop a different perspective on this discussion that is situated in the domain of cultural sociology. On the one hand, it builds further on the diagnosis of the centrality of the individual as expressed in the individualization thesis, but on the other hand also takes distance from the ontological assumption that individual behavior and convictions would not be predictable anymore by collective identifiers. Unlike some of the above-cited critiques, this approach does not deny that subjectivity and personal development are central values of our society. However, instead of claiming that a real, ontological 'individualization' is taking place, where every individual is becoming more autonomous, aware, and independent of tradition than before, this position claims that it has more to do with the cultural 'scripts' or discourses about subjectivity people identify with today[2]. This perspective signals the absurdity of the point of departure of individualization: to present the main premise of sociology, that individuals are shaped by social factors, as a testable hypothesis (Houtman, Aupers, & De Koster, 2011). Instead, it reclaims the alternative perspective of 'individualism as a shared value-system', an outlook with a long tradition in sociology (e.g. Bell, 1979; Bellah, Madson, Swidler, Tipton, & Sullivan, 2008; Dumont, 1986; Durkheim, 1973; Ehrenberg, 2010; Parsons, 2007). Individualism has a far longer history than the more recent phenomenon of individualization, that can be traced back to early

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[2] For the further clarification of this notion of 'script', where I rely on the new institutionalist approach of John Meyer and Ronald Jepperson (2000), see chapter 1.

Christianity as for instance illustrated in Augustinus' emphasis on turning inward in order to establish a proper relation to the Devine (Taylor, 1989). Other key moments in history for the development of individualism were the Enlightenment and its emphasis on rationality and autonomy, the Reformation and Romanticism with its valuation of individual uniqueness. Although individualism showed itself under different gazes throughout history, we can distill a more general underlying individualist ethos that especially in Western modernity forms an important shared belief. Characteristic for this individualism is that the individual or the person is seen as the central category in the cultural imaginary instead of the group. The group is only envisioned as a secondary derived category. In other words, according to the individualist belief the group is in the first place composed of individuals instead of individuals being determined by their collective identifiers. This can be closely related to Luis Dumont's distinction between individualistic and holistic societies. For him, in traditional societies 'the stress is placed on the society as a whole, as a collective man; the ideal derives from the organization of society with respect to its ends (and not with respect to individual happiness). It is above all a matter of order, of hierarchy' (Dumont, 1970: 9). He articulates a sharp the contrast with individualist societies, that he defines as follows:

> In modern society the human being is regarded as the indivisible, 'elementary' man, both a biological being and a thinking subject. Each individual man in a sense incarnates the whole of mankind. He is the measure of all things (in a full and novel sense). The kingdom of ends coincides with each man's legitimate ends, so the values are turned upside down. What is still called 'society' is the means, the life of each man is the end (Dumont, 1970: 9-10).

What is crucial here, and what defines the particularly cultural sociological take on individualism that is addressed, is the distinction that Dumont introduces between the individual as *an empirical reality* and the individual as a *value*. The empirical individual is the individual as we see it before us in the reality, the psycho-organic unity that can be encountered in each sort of society, be it an individualist or a holistic one. The individual as value on the other hand is a cultural construct and the cornerstone of the modern individualist ideology. This value system of individualism has as its central belief this value of the autonomous, equal and free individual (Dumont, 1983: 263). While individualization might be considered more on the level of the empirical individual and how it is released from collective constraints, individualism is concerned with the individual as value. The paradox here is that from this viewpoint, individualism is not seen as the loss of collective values and culture and a consequent atomization of society, but as the new collective ideology.

In fact, three shortcomings become visible in the above individualization perspectives from the cultural sociological viewpoint of individualism. Firstly, in the individualization perspective, individual and society are opposed to each other as two mutually exclusive entities. When the individual gains in importance, society, social bounds, cohesion, culture and socialization are assumed to decrease in importance. The individual is perceived as replacing these social entities and a lost sense of community is generally deplored. From a cultural sociological perspective, the mutual dependence of society and individual, which Elias (2001) still took to be self-evident in his *Society of Individuals*, is also embraced for an individualist society: 'In reality, such a gulf between individual and society does not exist. No one can be in doubt that individuals form a society or that each society is a society of individuals' (Elias, 2001: 6). Secondly, individualization is presented as a uni-linear and one-dimensional process. However, from the critiques it already becomes apparent that diverse meanings fall under this 'bulldozer concept', such as self-expression, autonomy, meritocracy, egoism and so on. From a cultural sociological perspective, these ambiguities specifically form the object of inquiry. Finally, and very present in the anecdote of the documentary, is the moralist overtone in diagnoses related to individualization. Either individualization is conceptualized as something we should celebrate because it is seen as emancipatory and freeing us of previously shared social identities or forms of authority. Or it is related to value loss, social isolation and a loss of community. While both perspectives are clearly opposing, they share the same moral investment in the topic. This preset moralist viewpoint hampers a truly detached social scientific analysis that is neutral with regard to morality and values (Weber, 2005). Before moral outlooks can be taken, it is of the utmost importance to understand this multifarious cultural phenomenon that apparently captures the imagination of both interested observers of society and social scientists.

In the chapters that follow, we will attempt to elaborate this cultural sociological perspective on individualism from diverse angles. In the first chapter, we will provide an alternative approach that especially highlights the multifarious nature of this complex phenomenon of individualism. Here, I reconstruct the three predominant interpretations of the general individualist script in the literature, i.e. utilitarian, moral and expressive individualism. For each variant, the intellectual genesis and overall definition of the institutionalization in specific societal domains and the dominant articulations in social theory are briefly presented. In the second chapter, I will look further into one of the consequences of maintaining a cultural sociological view on this phenomenon, i.e. that people can be *socialized* in these cultural scripts of individualism and what it means to be an individual. In particular, we will present three broad approaches of the notion of socialization that might be applicable to the theme of individualism. From these two theoretical chapters, our main research questions are derived. First, we explore the question how the three outlined forms of individualism or potential other forms of individualism relate to each other in research settings connected to distinct functional domains. This question relates to the literature on the forms of individualism that show interconnections in the institutionalization of the forms of individualism, for instance in the literature on the new spirit of capitalism (Boltanski & Chiapello 2005), but where it is not satisfactorily answered how these forms of individualism relate to each other in these functional domains. Secondly, the question is posed how people are socialized in this general ethos of individualism in these research settings that are instances of clearly observable purposeful socialization. Whether socialization in individualist discourses will take a different form as the classic socialization process and which are the characteristics of the process of socialization of individualism will be the focus here. With the theoretical tools at our disposal, in the third chapter, we will subsequently make the connection to the concrete empirical research into individualism and present which case we will study and by means of which methods. By participant observation and in-depth interviews, we will explore our research questions in a mindfulness course in the spiritual milieu, in civic integration courses embodying notions of individualism as related to citizenship, and finally in management courses. Chapter 4, 5 and 6 will provide an in-depth analysis of the diverse overlapping scripts of individualism in these cases and how course members are socialized in these multiple strains of individualism. In chapter 7, we especially focus on this notion of socialization in individualism and attempt to formulate an overarching model of socialization. This model, while inspired by the theoretical reflections in chapter two on socialization, is anchored in the empirical case studies and their shared logic, despite their very specific and different societal context. In the final chapter, we resume the main findings and anticipate other contexts, where the model of socialization in individualism we found opens new vistas for future research in this rich field of a cultural phenomenon that is characteristic for our current society. This is of the utmost importance for the discipline of sociology, since it reminds us that individualism does not imply the end of cultural and social mechanisms but opens up a new domain of intellectual reflection and empirical research.

Chapter 1: Rethinking Individualization: The Basic Script and the Three Variants of Institutionalized Individualism[3]

Introduction

According to a widespread diagnosis, the role of subjectivity has vastly increased in contemporary society. How must we understand and conceptualize this tendency? Individualization theorists such as Zygmunt Bauman, Ulrich Beck and Anthony Giddens contend that we have witnessed since the 1960s a marked rise in individual autonomy and personal reflexivity as a consequence of the de-institutionalization of former socio-cultural traditions (such as Christian religion) and identities (such as class- or gender stereotypes) (Dawson, 2012). Released from previously existing constraints, self-consciousness and personal choice have become built-in expectations within various societal domains such as education, labour or the sphere of primary relations. Overall, this individualization process is thought in a homogeneous way: it has the same form in the diverse institutional domains making up late modernity.

In this chapter we advocate a less rectilinear and less one-dimensional approach and instead propose a culturalist and multifarious take on both modern individualism and the more recent process of individualization. This alternative perspective is primarily inspired by insights of Emile Durkheim (1973), Talcott Parsons' (2007) broader considerations on institutionalized individualism and John Meyer's and Ronald Jepperson's (2000) analysis of the actor-notion as a basic script within modern culture. By discerning three institutionalized variants of the individual-as-actor script, i.e. utilitarian, moral and expressive individualism, we can more adequately grasp the somewhat contradictory nature of the dominant understandings of the individual. Hereafter we reconstruct these three subscripts from a threefold point of view. After defining its principal characteristics, we briefly point out for each mode in which societal sphere(s) it is most pronouncedly institutionalized. For besides having a considerable general societal and personal impact, each form of institutionalized individualism is more strongly and legitimately embedded within one or more societal fields. In a word, the overall societal institutionalization of three modes of individualism goes hand in hand with their selective embedding within specific social spheres. We complete the presentation of each script by briefly mentioning its main theoretical elaborations or 'crystallizations' in social theory. Besides being influential cultural scripts, utilitarian, moral and – to a lesser extent – expressive individualism have indeed also been re-articulated into social scientific frameworks in their own way.[4] In other words, we start from a cultural sociological perspective to elucidate the specific value complexes that these forms of individualism entail. Here, we do not consider the theoretical or ontological analyses that have been given of these individualisms in social sciences, which differ for each of the forms of individualism. The specific form of individualism as a causal factor for explaining social behaviour will only be considered in the final section for each of the forms of individualism.

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[3] This chapter largely overlaps with an article that was written together with R. Laermans and published in European Journal of Social theory: (Cortois & Laermans, 2018).

1. Two Approaches of the Individual-as-Actor

Together with globalization theory, individualization theory has meanwhile become part and parcel of common social-scientific knowledge. However, the leading proponents of the individualization paradigm also partly differ in their views of the conceptualized phenomenon. Whereas Bauman (2001a, 2001b) links individualization to a primarily consumption-driven society in which once solid values have become 'liquid', resulting in an existential loss of normative orientations, Giddens (1991) offers a more optimistic analysis. He emphasizes the reflexive bound between late modern institutions and the self. Abstract systems such as the global financial system or so called expert systems position the self into an open-ended project that has to deal with uncertainty and risk but that is also capable of trust and commitment. Furthermore, the increased sense of reflexive awareness results in a new kind of 'life-politics' within the public sphere, which contrasts with Bauman's more bleak perspective of public engagement. Beck (1992), who coined the notion of individualization and relates it to the second phase of modernity, also underlines the immanent relation between the growth in individual autonomy or responsibility and an elevated sense of personal risk and uncertainty. How one deals with the latter is a matter of finding biographical solutions to systemic contradictions (compare Beck-Gernsheim, 2002).

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[4] With the word 'crystallization' and related expressions, we do not imply a causal logic between the societal institutionalization of a mode of individualism and its theoretical formulation. As for instance neo-classical economics shows, the latter may as well have performative effects on the related script (i.e. utilitarian individualism) and institutional sphere (i.e. economics).

Notwithstanding these notable differences, Bauman, Giddens and Beck relate the process of individualization to a decline of previously institutionalized life forms related to religion, traditional gender and family roles, social class and/or territorially embedded communities. Moreover, they emphasize the institutionally embedded character of individualization within the spheres of for instance education, the labour market or law. Overall, today’s social structures take the individual as basic unit and emphasize responsabilization and activation. For example, being unhealthy or staying unemployed are increasingly regarded as personal shortcomings. And if individuals 'are not sure about their career prospects and agonize about their future, it is because they are not good enough in winning friends and influencing people and have failed to learn the arts of self-expression and impressing others', Bauman (2001: 47) observes.

This approach of individualization contains some elements that are questionable. Firstly, it is in general rather unclear to what extent Bauman, Giddens and Beck assume that individuals effectively possess the basic capacities traditionally associated with the notions of autonomy and subjectivity, i.e. self-consciousness and free will. Due to the diminishing impact of socio-cultural facts, individual reflexivity and personal decision-making have gained in importance, yet to what extent does that latter process result from either the actualization of already existing but formerly 'repressed' personal capacities or the way late modern institutions address individuals? Secondly, individualization is presented as a homogeneous socio-historical trend that traverses different institutional spheres in a uniform manner through the enhancement of self-reflexivity, individual autonomy and biographical 'self-planning'. However, don't we need a more complex notion of individualization that takes into account both the diverse faces of the dominant understanding of individuality and the uneven ways they are embedded in the different domains making up modern society? Can we for example put on a par the idea of individuality underlying the legal notion of universal human rights and the one informing 'the right to be yourself' in the sphere of personal relationships?

In addressing these two lines of critique, we advocate a twofold conceptual clarification. Firstly, the process of individualization does not mean that a growing number of persons effectively gain in self-consciousness or autonomy against previously solid but meanwhile attenuated social-cultural facts. Instead, it first and foremost implies a marked shift in the collectively shared, personally interiorized and socially sanctioned core notions that co-define a culture, i.e. from primarily group-oriented representations to a mainly self-oriented script. In an individualist culture, the collectively shared core notions focus on the self (e.g. Dumont, 1983). Secondly, within our culture the notion of individuality points to both a basic script and its variegated articulation in three different, mutually contrasting definitions of a person's core qualities. The subscripts of utilitarian, moral and expressive individualism are unevenly institutionalized within the different societal spheres and related to distinct intellectual traditions. This approach not only underlines the different nature of existing conceptions of individualism but also allows to situate the recent process of individualization against the background of a much broader history of subjectivity and its conceptualization.

In suggesting this variegated and overtly culturalist take on modern individualism as well as individualization, we are not entirely opening up a new vista and are to a certain extent following well-known literature on the theme of individualism.[5] We indeed partly rely on the respectable French tradition initiated by Emile Durkheim's (1963, 1973) well-known considerations on moral individualism. Durkheim however still made a sharp distinction between moral and utilitarian individualism, where he only considered the former to be of a social nature, 'the sole common end which is today capable of providing a focus for men's will' (Durkheim, 1898: 28). Utilitarian individualism on the other hand is considered by him as an anomic tendency that rather opposes individual wills. The anti-social leanings of utilitarian individualism oppose in his writings the more culturalist tendencies of moral individualism: 'It is only too clear that all social life would be impossible if there did not exist interests superior to the interests of individuals. Nothing is more just than that such doctrines should be treated as anarchical, and with this attitude we are in full agreement' (Durkheim, 1898: 20). Inspired by Durkheim's work, Talcott Parsons (2007) later coined the notion of institutionalized individualism to underline the socially imperative and culturally regulated character of particularly moral individualism and to a lesser degree its seemingly more natural counterpart, i.e. utilitarian individualism. While underlining that 'individualism constituted one of the primary sources of integrative strength of society' (Parsons, 2007: 424), Parsons also tends to favour moral individualism as an integrative ideal and the utilitarian individualism and its expressive counterpart are rather seen as more anomalous varieties of individualism.[6] We follow the functionalist sociological tradition on individualism as far as the content of the labels of these three forms of individualism is concerned. We however depart especially from this tradition in so far as utilitarian and expressive individualism are considered as anomic there and emphasize instead the institutionalized character of all three forms of individualism. While we adopt the labels from these three forms of individualism, we situate them against a different theoretical or ontological background.

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[5] We leave it open to what extent our culturalist perspective can be combined with the kind of constructivist approach of individualism in social systems theory (compare Laermans & Verschraegen, 2001) or, with quite different accents, in the work of Michel Foucault (2002) on the changing relations between power, knowledge and 'subjectification'.

[6] It is a bit double in this particular chapter in his book *American Society* in how far Parsons follows Durkheim in claiming that only moral individualism can form a collective ideal or whether utilitarian and expressive individualism are also prone to institutionalization. Especially in the case of utilitarian individualism, Parsons also speaks in terms of being 'normatively "bound by" […] relevant cognitive standards of meaning, namely of validity and significance' also when referring to 'economic rationality' (Parsons, 2007: 444). In other places he clearly seems to follow Durkheim's analysis of utilitarian individualism as strongly opposed to moral individualism: 'What Durkheim did was to shift the focus of reference from the self-interest of the individual in the sense of the postulated non-social individual to its obverse, the conception that the human individual was "by nature" a social being who had to face the task of developing individuality. Far from this being man's natural state, it had to be treated as a field of achievements. […] It was however a deeply grounded basis of Durkheim's position that such an achievement was only possible if it took its departure from a common moral base. The focus of this common moral base for Durkheim lay in the "cult of the individual" as what he

In order to do so, we adopt the concept of institutionalized individualism and selectively combine it with the idea of the actor-as-script as proposed by John Meyer and Ronald Jepperson (2000) in their inspiring analysis of 'the "actors" of modern society' (compare Krücken and Drori, 2015).[7] This theoretical model of approaching actors or individuals as scripts derives from new institutionalist sociological theory. The approach of treating an individual as a script is completely opposed to realist models of actors and their agency. In realist models of actorhood, for instance interest based theories, the actor is taken as the point of departure, the taken for granted and already given entity. Cultural rules and norms can play a role here, but only as constraining those already given actors. With the view of the actor as a script, we advocate a more invasive and strong cultural program where actorhood or individualism is itself a cultural script, culture completely constructs how we collectively make sense of individuality and agency. Meyer (2010: 4) describes his 'phenomenological' or 'institutional' stance on the actor as a script in opposition to the realist model as follows: 'In realist models, the relation of actor and action is causal, with society and its structure as a product. In phenomenological models, the actor on the social stage is a scripted identity and enacts scripted action. In such models, thus, the institutional system—the organizations and cultural meanings that write and rewrite the scripts—becomes central, and the actors are seen as partly derivative on a very rich institutional environment.' In short: 'the core institutional theory idea is that actorhood is a scripted form more than a hardwired reality' (Meyer, 2010: 14). This basic script is central to modern culture and discursively transforms unqualified individual or social entities into qualified actors or subjects possessing agency and the related qualities of (a conditioned) autonomy and self-reflexivity. The notion of cultural script from institutional theory is however not so new and similar intuitions can be found in other notions such as the Foucaultian concept of 'discourse' or Alain Ehrenberg's (1991; 2010) notion of 'mythology' which both refer to culturally shared manners to give meaning or collective beliefs. We focus hereafter on the three dominant cultural scripts of individualism , i.e. utilitarian, moral and expressive individualism. Given their institutionalized character, these

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interpreted to be the most prominent pattern of common value which had emerged […] in modern societies' (Parsons, 2007: 447).

[7] Meyer and Jepperson indeed apply their actor-as-script approach to both individual actors and collective actors such as organizations, states or transnational political bodies.

‘grammars of the individual’ (Martucelli, 2002) or ‘subject cultures’ (Reckwitz, 2006) nowadays inform common ways of thinking about or acting towards individuality and alternately specify, extend and supplement the predominant individual-as-actor script, yet without deconstructing its primary contours.

2. Utilitarian Individualism

2.1. Definition

As an articulated theoretical position, utilitarian individualism dates to the work of English political philosophers Thomas Hobbes and John Locke. Both regard the individual as the sole proprietor of his own person and his capacities or skills, which he may therefore freely trade on the market. C.B. Macpherson’s (1969) famously characterized this view as ‘possessive individualism’, yet underlying Hobbes’ and Locke’s model of human nature is the idea that selfishness is a prime motive of action. Human actions are therefore essentially understood as utilities or means towards the satisficing of egoistic ends.

The influence of the utilitarian framework exceeds the strictly intellectual realms of liberal philosophy or moral theorizing. Writing during the 1830s on American individualism, Alex de Tocqueville (2002) envisaged the utilitarian variant and stressed its immanent relations with democracy and equality. Toward the end of the 19th century, sociologist Ferdinand Tönnies (2001) argued at length that utilitarian individualism had become an essential ingredient of modern *Gesellschaft* as such. Considered as an institutionalized subscript, this mode of individualism gives a specific twist to the more general modern actor-script (compare Bellah et al., 2008; Parsons, 2007). It positions the individual above all as a *homo economicus* who consciously pursuits his personal concerns in a rational-calculative mode, so as efficient or self-maximizing as possible. Involved is indeed a self-directed script in which actions primarily appear as premeditated means to realize or advance in the mode of free will individual interests, preferences or desires.

As an established view of human nature, utilitarian individualism is most closely related to what is commonly regarded as egoism. With the utilitarian script therefore corresponds the well-known picture of society as ‘a lonely crowd’ (Riesman, 1950) – as consisting of a multitude (the older terminology) or a mass (the more recent one) of self-directed atoms who first and foremost entertain calculative exchange relations with each other. The other is not valued for himself but fundamentally appears as a possible means to achieve private ends: social action is first and foremost strategic action, the self-centred calculative use of the other's actions or capacities as self-serving resources.

2.2. Primary Societal Institutionalizations

Utilitarian individualism has often been described as an anomic form of individualism, most famously by Durkheim (1898) in his strong opposition between utilitarian and moral individualism. His understanding of utilitarian individualism, strongly anchored in Spencer's and the economists' theory, as the pursuing of self-interest could not result according to him in social order. Notwithstanding its apparent anti-social leanings, utilitarian individualism already functions for quite some time as a dominant interpretative scheme underlying individuals' actions, self-understanding and idea of social relationships. Moreover, this particular scripting of the individual-as-actor is vastly institutionalized within the economic field, which greatly contributes to its seemingly evident character. Given the direct conceptual affinity between the notions of self-interest, maximizing exchange and free market relations, this specific societal embedding is of course everything but strange.[8] Through the figure of the individual-as-entrepreneur who combines maximum profit seeking with the taking of personal risks, utilitarian individualism has even created its own kind of social hero. However, the individual-as-consumer remains as important a figure within this script since this socially sanctioned role couples the socially legitimate articulation of self-interests to the buying of commodities.

To see the economy as a market with its own 'regime of truth' (Foucault, 2010) apart from state regulation is a fairly recent phenomenon. Adam Smith's famous notion of the invisible hand in fact economically translated the utilitarian moral maxim that the general interest will automatically emerge if everyone pursues his own interest. Accordingly, liberal governance theory from the mid-18th century onwards prescribes that the market economy is self-regulatory and not in need of much external steering. Rather, economic governance must be a sober exertion of power that intervenes as little as possible in existing markets. However, as for instance Michel Foucault (2010) or David Harvey (2007) have emphasized, the kind of neoliberal governmentality that has come to dominate since the 1980s clearly takes another line of action. It actively creates and oversees markets, for instance through the termination of previous state monopolies or by means of a 'regulated deregulation' that counters the quasi-spontaneous formation of fixed market hierarchies or cartels on the one hand and enhances free competition among supervised agents on the other. Moreover, neoliberal governmentality further institutionalizes the script of utilitarian individualism within private and public organizations through a managerial regime that posits workers as entrepreneurial, self-interested individuals. It indeed systematically incites them to rationally compete with others on internal and external markets for scarce means or incentives, ranging from project money to staff support to personal bonuses (compare Laermans, 2009).

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[8] In line with a.o. Jean-Jacques Rousseau and Karl Marx, Macpherson (1969) views utilitarian or – in his terminology – possessive individualism as the prime ideology at once legitimizing and naturalizing the reign of free market capitalism.

According to Jürgen Habermas (1983), modern-Western societies have actually institutionalized strategic action within the spheres of both the economy and politics. Whereas money functions as the prime medium for the instrumental coordination of self-interested actions in the first domain, power takes up this role in the second field. Yet within the world of modern politics, utilitarianism also acquires a distinctive social dimension. Ranging from visible interest groups to diverse kinds of social organizations to political parties, various social actors try to advance within the political arena socio-economic interests or the specific concerns of the constituency they are organizationally catering for (compare Bleiklie, 2004; March & Olsen, 1989). Different from economics, democratic or pluralist politics therefore does not privilege utilitarian individualism in a direct way but rather promotes the social aggregation of shared self-interests in view of their public articulation, their formal and informal pursuit and – ultimately – their mutual trade-off through negotiations on the distribution of scarce public means.

2.3. Theoretical 'Crystallizations'

The cultural script of institutionalized utilitarianism has directly influenced the different strands of rational choice theory (RCT). Academic sociology has been from its early beginnings quite suspicious of purely utilitarian explanatory models, partly to delineate its own disciplinary identity from economic science. The founding fathers of sociology indeed stress the importance of social rules or individual motives that go beyond a mere utility calculus (Zafirovski, 1999). Whereas Durkheim (1973) emphasized the societal necessity of norms regulating utilitarian actions of whatever sort for the sake of social order, Max Weber (1978) deliberately defined the category of goal-rational action as an open concept, thus dissociating it from particular individual motives such as the pursuit of economic or material interests. Depending on the societal context in which it is embedded, calculative instrumental action may therefore involve divergent goals.

The somewhat cliché-like difference between the utilitarian and presumably selfish *homo economicus* on the one hand and the norm-driven, successfully socialized *homo sociologicus* on the other hand remains overall relevant. Yet due to the highly influential works of Gary Becker (1976) and James S. Coleman (1990), RCT has meanwhile also become a widely applied paradigm within sociology (Hechter & Kanazawa, 1997) and political science (Erikson, 2011). Proponents of RCT champion it as a unifying theory for the social sciences, a claim that has already sparkled quite some controversy and will probably continue to do so (see e.g. Lichbach, 2003). According to RCT's principal axiom, individuals act rational in order to satisfy preferences or to maximize utility on the basis of motivating desires, beliefs – including beliefs on available options and their consequences – and disposable information on resources, likely outcomes, and so on (Elster, 2007). Besides optimality requirements regarding these three components, no further presuppositions are made. RCT thus differs from the standard script of utilitarian individualism in a crucial respect: it does not assume that calculated purposeful action a priori furthers self-interests. Or as John Elster (2007: 193) notes: 'What is "best" is defined in terms of "betterness" of preference: the best is that than which none is better, as judged by the actor. There is no implication that the desires be *selfish*.' Moreover, sociological RCT not only takes account of individual motives but is a multilevel enterprise since it assumes the existence of an aggregated level of social determinants that influence personal behaviour and choice at a given moment.[9]

Last but not least, a 'social' version of utilitarian individualism permeates conflict sociology (compare Elster, 1985). This sociologically influential line of thought contends that human beings do not act in a selfish way in the strict sense but advance those specific self-interests that are related to the social positions they take up in the fields of class, gender and/or ethnicity. Within these domains, they either defend their privileges or fight for better living conditions. One may therefore speak of a socially conditioned utilitarian individualism that is first and foremost theoretically articulated and substantially differs from the prevalent cultural script. Its social character is twofold: individuals are regarded as having primarily position-derived self-interests on the one hand and they are expected to collectively defend these because of their shared nature and the efficient or goal-rational character of collective action on the other.

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[9] Within sociology, the script of utilitarian individualism also shimmers through in social exchange theory as developed by Georges Homans (1961) and Peter Blau (1964). However, during the 1980s this somewhat particular blend of psychology and micro-economics, resulting in the double-sided axiom that individuals pursue both their personal preferences and social rewards in social relations, faded away. Social exchange theory indeed did not intellectually survive the growing impact of codified RCT within the different social sciences.

3. Moral individualism

3.1. Definition

Whereas the utilitarian script positions the individual as self-centred by nature, moral individualism is first and foremost directed to the other since it emphasises the moral obligation to treat the other not as a means but as a goal in itself. Hence its intrinsic relationship with humanism, understood as the belief that every human being deserves respect on the mere basis of being human (Joas, 2013). Consequently, one must treat oneself as well as every other human being as the bearer of an at once unique and shared worth that derives from the sole fact of belonging to humanity. Nevertheless, the corresponding behaviour is primarily expected in the relations with others. Within modernity, Immanuel Kant (2015) has without doubt most forcefully voiced through his 'critique of practical reason' this imperative that human beings must approach each other as ends in themselves. Moreover, his theory shows that moral individualism is not just an ethical view of human beings, but logically implies a particular script of the individual-as-actor. Indeed, Kant highlights free will as morality's prime condition of possibility: thanks to this faculty, every individual has the effective capacity to realize the principal demand codified by moral individualism.

Overall, a notable relationship of both asymmetry and complementarity at once separates and unites utilitarian from moral individualism. The first aggrandizes the presupposed natural inclination to pursue self-interests as a prime motor of individual actions, not the least in the interactions with others; on the contrary, the second's focus on the other's intrinsic worth as an ethically commanding instance comes exactly with the requirement to treat her or him not in a purely instrumental or strategic way. In a word, moral individualism asks for the active personal tempering of what utilitarian individualism considers the main motivation of human action. In addition, utilitarian and moral individualism differ from a historical point of view. Whereas utilitarian individualism has an elective affinity with modern capitalism, the core of moral individualism's view of man can be traced back to the Christian notion of the human soul that is inherently valuable on the one hand, and to the equally Christian belief of God becoming human on the other (Joas, 2013). The idea that as 'a child of God' each human being possesses an intrinsic value has been present from early Christianity onwards but was intensified during its further cultural evolution. Although the Reformation is often considered as a crucial first step in the modern process of secularization, it may also be regarded as gradually bringing an unmediated transcendence closer to humanity and even as initiating a sacralisation of ordinary life (Taylor, 1989). Faith was democratised, which resulted in an increasing importance of equality as well as of the value attributed to human worth.

The Enlightenment at once further solidified and secularized the view of humanity as consisting of individual beings who have all in principle an intrinsic worth that must be respected. Through their emphasis on the values of justice, liberty and equality, *philosophes* such as Jean-Jacques Rousseau and Voltaire not only 'rationalized' moral individualism but also gave it a staunch political twist that was highly influential. Thus, the French revolution and the American Independence movement directly challenged from the point of view of moral individualism the hierarchical notions of humanity as represented by the institutions of the clergy and the nobility. Later on, moral individualism gained further societal prominence through the declining socio-cultural role of the transcendental level and, inversely, the increasing sacralisation of the individual within modernity (Joas, 2013).

3.2. Primary Societal Institutionalizations

The ethical horizon of equal human worth became effectively institutionalized in several domains, yet besides the sphere of daily life – in which moral individualism often acts as a taken for granted ethics – law and politics are probably the most important ones. Within law, the notion of the autonomous, rational and equal individual is not only the prime ground for attributing juridical responsibility. Since the Declaration of Independence (1776) and the Declaration of the Rights of Man and of Citizens (1789), moral individualism acquired as well a direct juridical translation. Today, we find this institutionalization in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948), which has turned moral individualism increasingly into a globalized culture that is both stimulated and safeguarded by the UN (Elliott, 2014). Within the European Union, human dignity is explicitly mentioned in the EU treaties and the Charter of Fundamental Rights, in which the dignity of the human person is not only a distinct fundamental right in itself but constitutes the real basis of all fundamental rights.

Moral individualism also underlies the notion of citizenship and, particularly, the widening of its meaning during the past centuries. Through this concept, law grants rights to individuals and simultaneously links them with a nation-state. Besides civil and political rights, twentieth century citizenship comprises through the notion of social rights the right for each human being, irrespective of their difference or origin, to a minimum of economic welfare, education, health and security as well as the right to share to the full in the social heritage. The 'equalization between the more and the less fortunate at all levels, between the healthy and the sick, the employed and the unemployed', thus T.H. Marshall (1950: 102) emphasizes, 'is not so much between classes as between individuals within a population, which is not treated for this purpose as though it were one class.' This characterization clearly indicates that the notion of the equal and worthy individual, who is unqualified by particularities and must be first and foremost regarded as intrinsically embodying the dignity of being human, is central to the notion of social rights.

The post-war welfare state effectively institutionalized social rights through a complex regime of public services (Dean, 2015).[10] Marshall (1981) terms the welfare state a 'hyphenated' society: a 'democratic-welfare-capitalism' in which a precarious balance has to be negotiated again and again between the welfare of citizens, private economic profit and state impact. The welfare state's translation of moral individualism indeed does not imply the disappearance of inequality or of the logic of the market altogether but rather involves the idea of a more meritocratic basis for differences in wealth.[11]

3.3. Theoretical 'Crystallizations'

Within sociology, Emile Durkheim was the first to emphasize the distinctive character of moral individualism against the prevailing utilitarian discourse; moreover, in his later work he came to grant it a central role in his approach of cultural cohesion and social solidarity within a modern society, thus overcoming his initial scepticism about its possible integrative function (Laermans, 2014; Marske, 1987).[12] In line with the more general transition around 1900 in his work from a structural to an idealist approach, and partly inspired by Auguste Comte's dreams of a new 'religion of humanity', Durkheim regards the shared appreciation of the individual as bearer of a general human worth as a crucial social ideal. Within a society characterized by a growing task differentiation that stimulates individual differentiation, it actually is the only definition of the valuable that can create a genuine solidarity within society. The new ideal sacralises the individual-as-person or as possessor of a 'soul' and is instituted by society, thus Durkheim emphasizes. Hence his expression 'cult of the individual': moral individualism unites modern society in a comparable manner as traditional religion used to.

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[10] Durkheim (1963) already suggested that moral individualism is an ethos that moves beyond the protective core mandate of the state and asks for a serious widening of the state's tasks.

[11] The actual balance between democracy, welfare and capitalism may differ among singular welfare states. Overall, three different regimes can be discerned (Esping-Andersen, 1990). Whereas the liberal model is based on minimum income schemes and provides social protection only to those who are in need when family and market fail, the conservative model has social insurance schemes mainly focussing on maintaining the status quo. The social democratic model probably most strongly institutionalizes moral individualism through the minimum income for all, regardless of their status on the economic market.

[12] In his initial works such as *The Division of Labor in Society*, Durkheim (2014) was still pessimistic about the integrative power of the ideal of individualism and held the opinion that it may eventually be too weak to secure social cohesion. Later, especially in his essay 'Individualism and the Intellectuals', he changes his mind and describes it as the preeminent modern ideal (Durkheim, 1973).

Inspired by Durkheim's idea of 'the cult of the individual', Erving Goffman (2005) has analysed how we pay respect to others in daily life through various interaction rituals. Well-known examples are keeping a minimum physical distance, even in a crowded lift or metro compartment; 'civil dis-attention', or the rule of not staring to another person during communication or in public places; and opening sequences such as 'how do you do?' upon meeting someone. More in line with Durkheim's culturalism, or the axiom that only common ideas and not just formal rituals can adequately secure social integration, Talcott Parsons explicitly concurred to Durkheim's diagnosis that moral individualism plays a pivotal unifying role within modern society. He therefore describes it as one of the three main forms of institutionalized individualism, besides utilitarian and expressive individualism (Bourricaud, 1977; Parsons, 2007).

Inspired by Parsons' social systems approach, yet without endorsing its culturalist leanings, Niklas Luhmann (1999) has developed a primarily structuralist approach of human rights as the prime epitome of 'the cult of the individual'. According to Luhmann, the emphasis on the equal and worthy subject is a logical consequence of functional differentiation, or the 'splitting up' of modern society into diverse subsystems such as politics, economy, law or education that each fulfil an essential societal function (Verschraegen, 2002). Given this context, every individual must have the possibility to freely move from one domain to another or to participate in different subsystems through the successive taking up of distinctive social roles such as citizen, consumer, legal client or student. Precisely this proverbial social nomadism is guaranteed by the fundamental freedoms. With the concomitant pluralization corresponds a fragile and instable individual identity that human rights endow with an extra protective and stabilizing 'shield' through the notion of the person as a separate category. At the same time, human rights avoid a regression back to a hierarchical, pre-modern society in which the prime subsystems were collective entities such as tribes or estates that imposed a social identity negating individuality.

4. Expressive Individualism

4.1. Definition

Like utilitarian individualism, expressive individualism is self-directed, yet does not have an instrumental but a distinctive value-rational character. Actions do not have to further personal interests or desires but are primarily perceived as means to express one's 'true self', particularly from an emotional point of view. Consequently, authenticity is a central value in this variant: 'to be true to yourself' is at once the principal yardstick and goal of expressive action (Taylor, 1991).[13] Through the marked stress on the uniqueness of each individual, expressive individualism clearly diverges from its moral counterpart, which emphasizes human sameness and equality. Moreover, moral individualism is intimately connected with the faculty of the will as the prime condition of possibility for moral choices and an ethical lifestyle; on the contrary, expressive individualism highlights the shared capacity to have individual feelings or to be personally affected. Both modes of individualism also differ in the way they criticize and eventually reject traditional socio-cultural arrangements. Whereas moral individualism repudiates social hierarchy and inequality under reference to the idea that all human beings possess an intrinsic and equal worth as members of humanity, expressive individualism criticizes first and foremost those cultural conventions and routinized forms of sameness that hamper the possibilities for true self-expression.

Historically, Jean-Jacques Rousseau played a key role in the discursive articulation of expressive individualism (Taylor, 1989). In Rousseau's view, our moral purpose and only road to ultimate happiness is to restore the lost contact with the original sense of ourselves, which he considers in line with the intrinsic goodness of nature and would offer us an intuitive feeling of what is right and wrong. However, Rousseau's ideas exemplify a broader shift during the last quarter of the 18th century that is mostly associated with the somewhat loose notion of Romanticism (compare Taylor, 1989, 1991). According to romantic poets like Blake, Wordsworth, Novalis, or Hölderlin and philosophers such as Herder or Schelling, living in accordance with the surrounding nature is a crucial way to discover one's own human nature, now understood in terms of personal feelings and passions.[14] Sigmund Freud further 'complexified' this emotionalist view of the self through the distinction between manifest and latent emotions, conscious and unconscious drives. Hence the notion of a 'double self' and the concomitant idea that the expression of one's 'true self' is synonymous with the exploration of unconscious feelings or desires. While entailing a different and in fact contrasting psychological perspective than the psycho-analytic one, the humanistic psychology of Abraham Maslow and Carl Rogers (1961) is also closely related to expressive individualism as the human need to develop one's personality and make it flourish to its best potential form (see also 'human potential movement'). This psychological approach goes back to Maslow's (1943) pyramid of human needs. According to Maslow, once basic needs such as physical, social or psychological needs are met, the higher need for self-actualization poses itself, where expressing one's true capabilities, competences and creativity become central. Again, the assumption is here from the perspective of humanistic psychology that there is a pre-social and authentic self that can be developed to its fullest potential. While this instantiation of expressive individualism is not conveyed as return to a state of nature as in the classic Rousseauian model of the good savage, but instead as a higher level of development, the idea that there is a more natural core of the self over which awareness has to be gained, is similar in both traditions.

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[13] As Trilling (1972) has rightly emphasized, authenticity differs from sincerity. Whereas the first value promotes a strict individual stance, the latter presupposes an impersonal ethical code stressing the desirability of honesty, truthfulness, fairness and impartiality.

[14] There is a difference between the German version of Romanticism as for instance exemplified in the works of Herder and the French and British versions of Romanticism. Herder also formulates a collectivistic version of Romanticism as the particularistic and unique identity of a culture or 'Volk'. We do not refer to these collectivistic understandings of the Romantic sentiment, but to the collective understanding of the individual as a unique person with his own sentiments that require expression. One can find this particular understanding

The counter culture that already emerged during the 1950s and became highly trendsetting among youngsters during the period 1965-1975 translated the values of personal authenticity and emotional self-expression into a widespread longing for liberation of the sartorial, sexual and other norms of 'square society'. In essence, the counter culture wanted to break the prevailing socio-cultural order in order to be oneself, which is why Parsons (2007) speaks of 'the expressive revolution' (compare Turner, 2005). The then counter culture actually rehearsed the romantic tendency to choose the transcendent over the finite, the taboo-breaking over convention, and innovation over repetition (Martin, 1981). However, the counter culture's stress on anti-structure has meanwhile become part and parcel of the dominant cultural structure. Within the Western world, thus Ronald Inglehart (1997) argues, a culture shift has become institutionalized during which post-materialist values such as authenticity and self-expression have gained prominence over materialist ones. Bellah et al. (2008) as well extensively studied the institutionalization of expressive individualism and its utilitarian counterpart in contemporary American culture and situate expressive ideals primarily in the private sphere or 'lifestyle enclave' as opposed to the strongly utilitarian public sphere.[15]

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very clearly in the works of Rousseau, for instance in his 'Les confessions' (1782), already in one of its opening sentences: 'I know my heart, and have studied mankind; I am not made like any one I have been acquainted with, perhaps like no one in existence; if not better, I at least claim originality' (1903: 1).

[15] From a broader historical perspective, Daniel Bell (1979) has described how the expressive ethos took root in modernist culture and avant-garde movements and subsequently in hedonistic consumerism, clashing with the utilitarian and disciplinary norms that dominate in the sphere of work or production.

4.2. Primary Societal Institutionalizations

Already long before the idea of authenticity became the core of a widely shared normative pattern, expressive individualism was institutionalized within specific domains. We already referred to Romantic Art, which broke with the primacy of mimesis and the stress within religious art and Academicism on art's moralizing function (Vaughen, 1994). Originality through emotional self-expression, individual creativity and imagination became the norm for good art: the true artist is a genius who does not follow aesthetic rules or precepts but only relies on his personal vision and intuition. The manifestation of art therefore collides with its expressive potential, which can never be exhausted by specific forms or arrangements. Although the heyday of Romantic Art in the strict sense was already over around the mid-19th century, the idea that art is synonymous for self-development continues to be highly influential within both professional art worlds such as contemporary dance (Laermans, 2015) and the more 'arty' strands in popular music associated with the 'alternative mainstream' (Keunen, 2015).

Romanticism also directly influenced social life through the new ideal of romantic love as the necessary base for genuine intimate relationships (Illouz, 1997). Authenticity must prevail between partners: their personal relationship should be the pre-eminent domain in which they can fully develop their personal potentials and be emotionally open toward each other. Together they can be who they 'really' are and take off the social masks they are wearing in public life. According to the ideal of romantic love, a personal relationship is indeed not structured by selective role expectations but first and foremost relies on the norm that the involved partners behave authentic and give each other ample room for communicative self-expression (Luhmann, 2012). The partners are interested in each other's 'self' and subjective experiences of the world on the one hand and in the relation as such on the other. Giddens (1991) therefore describes contemporary personal relationships as 'pure relationships' and points out that particularly love relations are no longer determined by pre-existing external involvements.

Closely related to intimate relations is the therapeutic domain, which offers within a professional context marked by confidentiality chances for both the authentic expression of one's feelings and a narrative or unitary structuring of the self. Foucault was one of the first to study the shaping and disciplining of the self through therapeutic interventions inspired by the earlier religious self-technique of confession (compare Danziger, 1997; Rose, 1999). Contemporary sociologists document how therapeutic language overflowed the boundaries of professional psychology and transformed into a general 'therapy culture' (Furedi, 2003; Illouz, 2008). As Eva Illouz (2008) aptly mentions, it is specifically the strain of humanistic psychology that contributed to a broader societal institutionalization beyond the psychological profession. This broader mainstream adaptation is exemplified in the 'self-help movement', which changes individuals in their self-therapists (Dolby, 2005; McGee, 2007). More generally, there seems to exist a general obsession with wellness: we have to care for our mind and even more so for our body through food, sleep, sports or meditation in order to be the best possible version of ourselves (Cederström & Spicer, 2015).

There is yet a third domain that may be associated with Romanticism as the historical engine propelling expressive individualism. Indeed, as Colin Campbell (1987) has argued, the breakthrough of modern consumption was intrinsically linked with both the pursuit of material goods allowing self-expression and the longing for ever new emotional experiences or sensations. Whereas fashion still satisfies the latter urge, 'to be oneself' through the buying of particular commodities has meanwhile become a central slogan in advertisement. Half a century ago, consumption was associated with 'keeping up with the Joneses', conformity and passivity; on the contrary, in today's dealing with consumer goods the notions of activity, personal development and individual activity are code words, resulting in a.o. the birth of the 'prosumer' (Beverland & Farrelly, 2010). Also in contemporary marketing the ideas of realness, craftsmanship, authenticity and naturalness are key (O'Neill, Houtman and Aupers, 2014). The recent trend of DIY ('Do It Yourself') fashion, knitting and sewing as well signals a nostalgic return to these values.

The institutionalization of expressive individualism from the 1970s onward resulted in its assimilation within the sphere of work and production beyond the traditional 'expressive professions' in the domains of education, social work or therapeutic care (Martin, 1981). Already with the advent of mass consumption, various new professions emerged that blurred the distinction between high and popular art through a marked emphasis on creativity and innovation. These new 'cultural intermediaries' (Bourdieu, 1984), which make up the core of the new middle class, work within the domains of advertising, design or public relations. Due to the growing 'aesthetization' of goods and services, which is often regarded as a crucial symptom of 'postmodernization', these spheres have become of central importance for the realization of economic value (Lash & Urry, 1994). As is also underlined by Negri & Hardt (2000), those performing the related 'immaterial labour' mostly value their work as offering genuine chances for the realization of personal capacities, even for self-expression. The artist has thus become a more general model, particularly within the cultural industries or the creative economy (indeed a telling expression) (Boltanski & Chiapello, 2005). Consequently, expressive individualism changed from a rather specific ethos into a common professional one with which correspond new post-Fordist management styles emphasizing individual freedom and personal engagement to such an extent that Peter Fleming (2014) speaks of 'the corporatization of life'.

4.3. Theoretical ‘Crystallizations’

The sociological theory *about* expressive individualism abounds, describing its historical development (e.g. Berman, 2009), its subsequent institutionalization in various societal spheres as well as a general actor-subscript, and the way it promotes a new 'life politics' differing from former emancipatory politics (Giddens, 1991). However, as far as we know, no social theory regards the desire for authentic self-expression as a distinctive causal factor that helps to explain social behaviour in general. In this respect, sociology markedly differs from certain strands within psychology or psychoanalysis. As Parsons (2007) already pointed out, the longing for emotional authenticity or unmediated self-expression is indeed rather counter-intuitive to the sociological imagination. However, indirectly authenticity has informed the normative valuation of certain societal evolutions, especially regarding identity and the so-called culture industry, particularly within the thinking of the Frankfurter Schule. Marcuse (2002, 2015) for example takes authenticity as his vantage point when he criticizes the false needs induced by industrial society in the worker. Production as well as consumption alienate people from their ‘true nature’, resulting in a repressed Eros or libidinal potential. Adorno and Horkheimer (1997) as well take the possibility of authentic culture as their implicit premise when criticizing the culture industry and its standardized production of ‘soulless’ songs and films.

We can trace the sociological valuation of authentic social life and culture even further back to Georg Simmel’s (1997) diagnosis of ‘the tragedy of culture’ characterizing modernity. Inspired by Hegel, Simmel opposes objective to subjective culture. While the first stems from the second and its attainment to personal development, the objectification in cultural forms, such as laws, traditions, language or norms, alienates from the truly subjective and can even form an impediment to authentic expression. Modernity intensifies this structural tension through the oversupply of evermore specialized, fragmented and fleeting forms or objects that overwhelm the individual and curtail the chances for a genuine authentic expression.

Conclusion and Discussion

The above considerations do not entirely open new vistas but synthesize in a systematic and consistently sociological fashion the still expanding and varied literature on modern individualism, at least as far as the content of these labels is concerned. The point where our analysis however deviates from classic sociological taxonomies of individualism, is the theoretical foundation in terms of anomic and integrative varieties of individualism. Instead of formulating judgements on more or less social cohesion that these forms of individualism might entail, we purely looked on the level of the 'logical coherence' of these individualistic discourse, to use the terminology of Alain Ehrenberg (2010). As was already suggested by Meyer and Jepperson (2000), the characterization of the individual as an actor or a subject, having agency thanks to self-consciousness and a free will, is a basic script that was institutionalized in modernity and globalized during recent decades. The script-notion clearly introduces a constructivist view on individualism as a shared belief. As such, it clearly distances itself from so called 'methodological individualism' that situates action and agency in the individual. However, this script inspires three distinct modes of institutionalized individualism that have different histories, dominate in divergent societal spheres and inspire contrasting modes of theorizing in the social sciences. The distinction between utilitarian, moral and expressive individualism is as such rather evident and may be traced back, as Parsons (2007) suggests, to Immanuel Kant's three critiques. Nevertheless, to regard them systematically as institutionalized interpretations varying a basic script informing modern culture, still demands an effort in sociological imagination that seems to go a bit 'against the grain'.

One can ask the legitimate question in how far these three very distinctive interpretations of individualism still refer to one and the same concept. To a certain extent, there is indeed a clear discrepancy between expressive and utilitarian individualism on the one hand, and moral individualism on the other. For the former two forms of individualism, it is the autonomous and active individual that is the central belief of both discourses. With regard to utilitarian individualism, this active individual has the task to pursue his interests, in the case of expressive individualism to express one's unique personality. In the moral individualist script, it is rather a passive individual that has to be protected on the basis of his worthy individuality that is at stake. While the first two scripts can be considered as truly 'self-oriented', moral individualism can be seen as 'other-oriented', dealing with the other as worthy individual. We do not want to overlook these different orientations. However, on a broader level, we argue that we are still dealing with individualistic scripts here. Individualism is then understood, as already indicated in the introduction, as the shared belief that man is in the first place an individual, be it a self-interested, authentic or moral worthy individual. Only on a secondary level, man is seen as belonging to a group. This is in line with anthropological insights on individualistic societies as for instance developed by Dumont or Marcel Mauss. As Kobe de Keere (2015: 19) aptly remarks in his dissertation on individualism: '"A human being is not an individual" is an assertion that today, at least in Western societies, is viewed as a paradox or even a contradictio in terminis. It has become common practice to perceive the 'other' – in the same way as the 'self' – as a singular individual capable of making autonomous choices.' While moral individualism is more situated on the side of how the other should be viewed as an individual, expressive and utilitarian individualism are related to the self as an individual.

We started this chapter with a brief critical discussion of individualization theory and the contention that individuals have been incited to act more autonomously within the framework of institutions during the last decades. A connection can be drawn between this claim and the discussed scripts of individualism. Individualization can be viewed in terms of a primarily cultural transformation that 'democratized' or at least heightened the overall plausibility of both the individual-as-actor script in general and its three subscripts in particular within the life-world. This latter perspective suggests a broader research agenda that will be elaborated in the empirical chapters of this book. If individualization entails a democratization of the individualistic scripts, it might be the case that these forms of individualism are not strictly limited anymore to clearly confined institutional fields where they function rather independently of each other, but instead cross institutional fields and have alliances or conflicting relations with each other. This might help explain why the individualization theory remains so one-sided in its view of the individual. The criss-crossing of these individualistic scripts might make it more difficult to establish their different nature. However, with our clear demarcation of the diverse individualistic scripts, we might have a better conceptual apparatus to in first regard see their different articulations and in a second consideration to establish their potential and more complex relations. In the literature there are indeed indications that connections between the forms of individualisms over the boundaries of institutional fields exist. Particularly the literature on 'the new spirit of capitalism' illustrates strong alliances between expressive and utilitarian individualism in a broadly shared neo-liberal capitalist culture (Boltanski & Chiapello, 2005). As we observed, both on the consumption and production side of neo-liberal culture, utilitarian and expressive individualism seem to play an important role. It remains however unclear how these scripts might be combined with one another. Also in the domain of politics, it was indicated, for instance by Habermas (1983) and his generalization of strategic action that utilitarian individualism plays a role in the field of politics. On the other hand, moral individualism seems the prime conception of the person when citizenship or human rights are concerned. Also here, the question remains: how do these forms of individualism relate to one another? Ideally, a research design that attempts to capture a maximum variation with regard to the use of the individualistic scripts and their interconnections in daily life, selects at least three case studies that are related to the institutional fields connected to the three forms of individualism that were just outlined. In the subsequent chapters we will develop such a research design that is in the first place connected to these ideal types of individualism, but that in fact aims at discerning the subtler interconnections between these forms of individualism. Subsequently, this approach in terms of cultural scripts raises the question as well as to how people are socialized in these identity subscripts. From this perspective, socialization and individualization are not opposed to each other, but the more sociological question of how the diverse aspects of individuality are formed in relation to diverse societal fields becomes visible. Before elaborating a research design that can optimally answer these two research problems, we will first formulate some approaches to this other key notion in this dissertation: socialization.

Chapter 2: Beyond an ‘Under-socialized’ and ‘Over-socialized’ Conception of Man?

Three Aspects of Socialization

Introduction

More than half a century ago, the sociological view was criticized in a seminal paper by Denis Wrong (1961) for maintaining an ‘over-socialized conception of man’. This critique was mainly directed at a functionalist understanding of socialization as internalization of norms and values and conforming to expectations of others in society. According to Wrong, particularly the concept of ‘internalization’, which prevailed in sociology at the time, formed a misinterpretation of this same notion in Freudian psychoanalysis. Sociologists, and he especially has Talcott Parsons in mind here, denied the conflict that might arise between the societal norms internalized in the *superego* and the more natural drives of the *id*. Socialization is not an automatic copy of prescribed norms and values without internal struggle, Wrong objects. He describes the problem with socialization as follows: ‘Thus when a norm is said to have been “internalized” by an individual, what is frequently meant is that he habitually both affirms it and conforms to it in his conduct. The whole stress on inner conflict, on the tension between powerful impulses and superego controls the behavioral outcome of which cannot be prejudged, drops out of the picture’ (1961: 187). Although man is guided in his behavior by social factors, Wrong held that man is ‘never a fully socialized being’ (1961: 183), something sociologists overlooked at the time, according to him.

Some sociological perspectives might nevertheless be pointing in the opposite direction, which can rather be described as an ‘under-socialized conception of man’ (Gronow, 2008).[16] This, for instance, can be found in some interpretations of the individualization theory (Bauman, 2001; Beck & Beck-Gernsheim, 2002; Giddens, 1991). From the increased disembedding of social roles, collective identities or traditions, there are some indications that the conclusion is drawn that the individual gradually becomes more independent from social influences in identity formation. The choice, agency and freedom that results from the process of individualization is seen as an ontological feature of human nature by these theorists, which has been freed of previous social constraints. Bauman (2002: 50) states that 'individualization brings to an ever growing number of men and women an unprecedented freedom to experiment – but […] also […] of coping with its consequences.' In other fragments, he especially emphasizes the negative side of the increased freedom that 'all the messes into which one can get are assumed to be self-made and all the hot water into which one can fall is proclaimed to have been boiled by the hapless failures who have fallen into it' (2001: 9). Giddens, on the other hand, emphasizes that the authority and limitations to agency are a pre-modern condition that are currently undesirable and could even be considered a 'pathological tendency': 'A person in this situation […] essentially gives up faculties of critical judgement in exchange for the convictions supplied by an authority whose rule and provisions cover most aspects of life' (Giddens, 1991: 196). The increased individual freedom or responsibility is approached as a natural faculty that is increasingly freed from bygone cultural dominance or determination. This causes them to ignore the more cultural sociological question of how people are socialized in a culture that emphasizes these ideals of autonomy, authenticity and so on, as worth pursuing. This tendency could be connected to a declining importance of socialization. In other words, according to this 'under-socialized conception of man', the more individualized a culture is, the less socialization seems to play a role. At most, socialization is taken to be a cultural addendum to an already existing personality.

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[16] Gronow particularly uses this term to refer to Margret Archer’s realist practice theory. We will nevertheless focus on the individualization theory that can also be approached from this perspective.

In this chapter, in line with the previous chapter, individualism and socialization will not be approached as mutually exclusive. On the contrary, our guiding question will precisely be: how are people socialized in a culture of individualism? Instead of assuming more or less importance of socialization in quantitative terms, as a characterization in terms of an 'over- or under-socialized' conception of man implicitly does, we want to ask, in qualitative formulations, *how* socialization in individualist values might take form. Both conceptualizations in terms of over- and under-socialization seem to be dependent on a one-sided characterization of this particular concept. On the other hand, the individualization theory in a more nuanced formulation might be informative for an amended concept of socialization as pointing at a more active relation of the individual to social conditions. While the sociologists of individualization leave the question of socialization untouched, and imply a decreasing importance of this notion, their analysis might as well form a starting point for a different conceptualization of socialization. Reflexivity, autonomy, authenticity and personal development might then be conceived not as features of human nature increasingly freed of cultural dominance, but precisely as cultural ideals that form the object of an alternative form of socialization. In order to elaborate this alternative view on the relation between individualism and socialization, it is important to get a better grasp on how the concept of socialization has been conceptualized in diverse sociological traditions. In this initial theoretical reflection, we might already observe that some conceptualizations are more compatible with individualist culture than others. In what follows, we will elaborate three models of socialization that do not necessarily exclude each other. The first, more passive characterization of socialization fits best with primary socialization of the infant, while the latter interactive and reflexive self-socialization had rather be situated in adult socialization processes.

1. The Passive Model of Socialization

1.1. Mentalist Internalization

The classic conceptualization of the notion of socialization in sociology can first and foremost be found in the so-called ‘mentalist’ tradition (Hirst, 1976). Here, socialization is mostly seen in terms of the transmission of what we could call ‘a mental content’. This content can be rational, as in the case of knowledge, or can be in Durkheimian terms ‘moral’, and thus consist of norms and values. These norms and values pertain to the social roles one is expected to play in society. This conceptualization of socialization is the most broadly shared and also goes beyond this particular tradition. This can for instance be seen in the general definition that is given of the concept in the *Oxford Dictionary of Sociology*: ‘the process by which we learn to become members of society, both by internalizing the norms and values of society and also by learning to perform our social roles’ (Scott & Marshall, 2009: 219).

For Durkheim, the main proponent of this view, the relation between society and the individual is conceptualized in a very dualistic model, in terms of what he calls ‘collective’ and ‘individual representations’. The former are prior to the latter and in his formulation ‘impose themselves on the individual from outside’ (Durkheim, 1996: 35; *author's translation*). Socialization in other words is an *internalization* of these collective representations in each individual belonging to society. Durkheim’s notion of socialization even goes one step further; it is not merely a socio-cultural addition to an already existing person (Walle, 2008), but it is precisely socialization that transforms the individual into a proper human person. The individual is in Durkheim’s terminology understood as the mere biological organism, the person before socialization has taken place. Without socialization, there is, according to Durkheim, no distinction between animals and human beings, the self merely consists of sensations and sensory appetites, and ‘then it would be empty of all content’ (2005: 37). Thus, Durkheim continues, ‘man is man only because he is civilized’ (2005: 35). The person is a double entity; on the one hand, an empty biological organism and, on the other, a socialized being that can be considered fully human. Durkheim terms this concept of man the *homo duplex*: ‘on the one hand, there is individuality, and, more specifically, our body that is its foundation, on the other, everything that, within us, expresses something other than ourselves’ (2005: 37). The ‘other aspects than ourselves’ transcend our mere bodily organism and are social in nature. For Durkheim, our properly human qualities do not derive from the individual, but are in origin of a social nature.

Parsons continues this mentalist view of socialization as the transmission of social content to the individual consciousness. He defines socialization as: ‘the process of assimilating the cognitive content of subject matter and methods of dealing with cognitive problems; and the process of internalizing the values and norms of the social systems of reference as part of the non-cognitive, if not non-rational, structures of personalities’ (Parsons & Platt, 2018: 32). While Parsons ascertains that both the cognitive and non-cognitive processes are deeply intertwined, he makes a distinction between them and refers to the former rather as ‘learning’ and the latter as purely ‘socialization’: ‘The acquisition of the requisite orientations for satisfactory functioning in a role, is a learning process, but it is not learning in general, but a particular part of learning. This process will be called the process of socialization’ (Parsons, 1963: 205). For Parsons, transmitting the emotional and moral content is more important in the process of socialization than bare knowledge transmission. Socialization, in his view, has more to do with appropriating suitable social roles in the social system. Expectations that are connected to a social role are internalized from childhood on. The emphasis on internalization as a passive process on the side of the socializee is apparent here: ‘The socializing effect will be conceived as the integration of ego into a role complementary to that of alter(s) in such a way that the common values are internalized in ego’s personality, and their respective behaviors come to constitute a complementary role-expectation-sanction system’ (Parsons, 1963: 211). The last element Parsons names here is ‘sanction’, and this is also clear from the close connection he makes between socialization and social control: ‘There are such close relations between the processes of socialization and social control that we may take certain features of the processes of socialization as a point of reference for developing a framework for the analysis of social control. The preventive or forestalling aspects of social control consist in a sense of processes which teach the actor not to embark on processes of deviance. They consist in his learning how not to rather than how to in the positive sense of socialization’ (Parsons, 1963: 298). Socialization and social control form each other’s complement as ways to create order and equilibrium in Parsons’ approach of the social system. This can happen in a latent way, as is mostly the case in the upbringing of children or in a more explicit sense in the form of imposing sanctions: ‘Many of the most fundamental elements of social control are built into the role structure of the social system in such a way that neither ego nor alter is conscious of what goes on. Their functions are wholly latent functions. On occasion, one or more of them might be manipulated with greater or less awareness of what the actor is doing. These are deliberately imposed sanctions […]' (Parsons, 1963: 300-301). The passive internalization of the roles of the social system or the social control in the case where the actor deviates from role expectations, is in fact not only passive for the socializee but also for the one who socializes in many cases. On the other hand, in settings where socialization is a more deliberate goal, as the ones we will research in the following chapters (see next chapter), more deliberately imposed sanctions on the side of the socializer can also be part of the socialization process.

Socialization as passive internalization is also conceptualized in the classic work of Berger and Luckmann (1966). More particularly, 'objective social reality' is internalized, meaning that the people of a society, who are referred to as 'the subjective social reality' internalize so-called 'objective' social roles, institutions, norms and values, stocks of knowledge and so on. People 'take over the world in which others already live' (1966: 150). Here we can again observe, what Berger and Luckman describe as 'a symmetric relation' between society and the individual, a reproduction of the social in the individual. The socialized self is seen as a 'reflected entity' (1966: 152), be it a selective reflection of the objective social reality.

The model of socialization that is presented in these three representations of the mentalist model resembles the emptying of a container filled with social content such as norms, values and beliefs, in the consciousness of each individual and that transforms them into a social being. The individual that is socialized remains passive in this process. There is a total correspondence between the societal values and the socialized individual. In this mentalist model, a dualism between society and individual prevails. This makes it more difficult to imagine how it could apply in a society where diverse constellations of individualism constitute important values. Related is the mind-body dualism in this socialization model. For all these authors, the body is the pre-social, un-socialized aspect of the person, while socialization applies to the influence of society or culture on the mind. Affect and bodily sensations are not approached here as part of socialization, as something to be further cultivated, but rather as elements that have to be repressed. The subtler bodily learnings that are really 'incorporated' in the process of socialization, are lost sight of from this perspective. They can, however, be found in a different articulation of this classic, passive model of socialization.

1.2. Structuralist Un-reflexive Incorporation

In the mentalist tradition of socialization, especially as represented by the Durkheimian *homo duplex*, the body was taken as the 'uncivilized' part of man. Another theoretical line in the classic model of socialization takes the body into account as an automatic 'un-reflexive incorporation'. While this incorporation remains passive, it does include the body and its reflexes as part of it. Marcel Mauss, for instance, transcends Durkheim's dualism between the social domain and the individual realm with his alternative notion of 'the total human being' (Karsenti, 2011: 77). Here, the individual becomes the anchor point where social, psychological and biological aspects cross. Mauss considered the body not to be a pre-social entity, but analyzed socialization in close relation to the body. From his anthropological perspective, this correlation between culture and the posture or position of the body in diverse activities, and especially the differences between cultures with regard to these aspects of the body, was his central focus. Mauss (1968: 73) refers to this phenomenon as 'techniques of the body' and clarifies this notion as follows:

> These 'habits' do not just vary with individuals and their imitations, they vary especially between societies, educations, proprieties and fashions, prestiges. In them we should see the techniques and work of collective and individual practical reason rather than, in the ordinary way, merely the soul and its repetitive faculties.

For Mauss, this bodily anchored socialization involves acquiring bodily reflexes, which cannot be made undone with the mere mental internalization of norms and values, because in the end they become 'hardwired' in our human biology.[17] While the end result of this incorporation, taken in isolation, might seem like a calculated and goal-rational technique, it is in fact the product of a long trajectory of incorporation.

Bourdieu (1990: 52) continues this focus on the body in the process of socialization, but arrives here from the point of view of distinct class-related behavior. Bourdieu refers to the concept of the habitus, which he defines as: 'systems of durable, transposable dispositions' that are formed in order to provide an adapted response in a concrete social situation. This response is not reflexive but rather comes about in a quasi-automatic fashion. In this sense, the habitus is more a 'practical sense', a feeling that one has incorporated over the years through unconscious processes and that allows one to provide an adequate response in concrete social situations. It involves ‘structured structures predisposed to function as structuring structures’, where these structures not only guide our thought, but also the schemes of perception, body postures or unconscious mannerisms. In Bourdieu’s approach of socialization, the emphasis is on incorporation rather than merely mental content that is interiorized. He also makes explicit that his approach of socialization forms a critique of what he calls ‘objectivist’ approaches. While social behaviour might seem ‘objectively “regulated” and “regular”’, he emphasizes that this is not ‘in any way the product of obedience to rules’ (Bourdieu, 1990: 53). Obedience to norms or values does not form a sufficient explanation for social identity formation for Bourdieu. According to him the objectivist approaches pass by on the more fine-grained underlying mechanisms that are of an embodied nature. On the basis of the regularity of social conduct, it might seem that social actors are following rules, while for Bourdieu automatic and reflex-based sensibilities lie at the basis of socialization.

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[17] It is not entirely clear whether it is a reflexive or un-reflexive process of bodily socialization that is taking place here for Mauss. I categorized Mauss' theory here as an automatic process of incorporation, but some elements in his text might direct more to a reflexive education in these bodily techniques. Especially where Mauss talks about 'imitation' as the underlying principle, it could be interpreted as a conscious choice to imitate an exemplary figure of his/her culture: 'What takes place is a prestigious imitation. The child, the adult, imitates actions which have succeeded and which he has seen successfully performed by people in whom he has confidence and who have authority over him. The action is imposed from without, from above, even if it is an exclusively biological action, involving his body. The individual borrows the series of movements which constitute it from the action executed in front of him or with him by others' (Mauss, 1968: 73).

In this model of socialization as incorporation, the reactivity of the body is reduced to automatically learned responses. What we could call ‘recorded reflexes’ are the main foundation of this incorporation. Bourdieu approaches the body in his own terms as ‘the body as a think-animal’ (Bourdieu, 1990: 123). The common characteristic of the classic model recurs here, which applies both to its mentalist and structuralist formulation: the passivity of the one that is socialized. The one that is socialized does not contribute to this process and merely takes the position of a passive receiver, be it of cultural content or bodily reflexes. This implies that the ‘socializer’, the significant other that introduces the ‘socializee’ to a given culture or subculture, has a position of power in the socialization relation. In fact, by reducing socialization to such a passive process, the whole difference between the two parties that are involved in socialization and the different roles they might play in this process, is lost. This approach does not make the process any more transparent, but instead what happens during the interaction between ‘socializer’ and ‘socializee’ remains a black box.

2. Interactive Model of Socialization

While the passive model fits well with the primary socialization of the child, it might have to be complemented with additional aspects for further life phases. Here, a model that takes account of interaction in the process of socialization will form an important addition. This is first an interaction between a socializer and a socializee, in which the former guides the latter and helps him in attributing a certain meaning to experiences. Secondly, an interaction between the physiological and the cultural level takes place, or between sensations and their conceptualization that are brought in a constant dialectics by the socializer. The experience forms the concept that is linked to it by the socializer, and the concept, in turn, forms how the experience of the socializee is interpreted. To learn new behavior, how another, be it a teacher or merely a more experienced person, gives meaning to behavior is crucial to perceive that behavior, experience it as valuable and even enjoyable. The difference with the mentalist socialization model is that socialization is unfolded here as a gradual process, not an automatic and mechanistic internalization of norms and values. What happens between the socializer and the socializee and their mutual exchange of cultural content is analyzed in detail. As such, time, activity, practice and communication are given a place in this process. Especially the vantage point of the socializer and how he or she gradually guides the interpretation of behavior are highlighted from this angle. This interactive model is, for instance, developed in the symbolic interactionist tradition and most prominently by Howard Becker in his essay on *Becoming a Marihuana User* (Becker, 1953), but more implicitly it can also be found in his more general labelling theory.[18]

In the essay on the marihuana subculture, socialization is defined in three steps: first as learning the right technique. Secondly, gaining awareness of the relevant symptoms and finally, learning to perceive the sensations as enjoyable. In all of these steps, there is a more experienced member of a (sub)culture that guides the experience of the novice. This might happen either through implicit mechanisms, for instance the novice imitating the more experienced member, or through explicit communicative guidelines, redirections or corrections from the more experienced user (1953: 237). Especially in the last two steps, the cultural guiding or labeling of experiences is central in the socialization process, for instance in the drug subculture: ‘It is not enough, that is, that the effects be present; they alone do not automatically provide the experience of being high. The user must be able to *point them out* to himself and *consciously connect* them with his having smoked marihuana before he can have this experience’ (1953: 238). It is the task of the more experienced member to point out these relevant experiences. These interactions do not only indicate the relevant experiences, but also make the novice aware of some of the details of the experience that he did not even notice before. Even more so, they form ‘the concepts that make this awareness possible’ (1953: 238). A cultural process of labeling some experiences as relevant, while minimizing others is taking place on top of the purely physiological process: ‘This [learning] happens in a series of communicative acts in which others point out new aspects of his experience to him, present him with new interpretations of events, and help him to achieve a new conceptual organization of his world, without which the new behavior is not possible' (1953: 242).

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[18] Unfortunately, his theory has remained captive in the narrow field of socialization in drug culture (see e.g. Hallstone, 2002; Järvinen & Ravn, 2014), while it has potential to form a general model of adult socialization in diverse new institutional fields (some exceptions exist such as an application to professional running culture Ewald & Jiobu, 1985).

This process of cultural labeling of experiences as a gradual process of socialization does not only apply in case of deviancy, but also when the more experienced member or teacher is attributed legitimate authority over the novice, for instance when he is seen as an expert in a given domain of knowledge or practice. In this regard, labeling would be closely related to having the definitional power to guide the other's interpretation of a phenomenon. 'Interactionist theories […] pay attention to how social actors define each other and their environments. […] superordinate groups maintain their power as much by controlling how people define the world as by the use of more primitive forms of control. […] But control based on the manipulation of definitions and labels works more smoothly and costs less' (1997: 204-205). This cultural guiding might indeed imply a subtle use of power by guiding the interpretation of experience of a newcomer. This guiding as form of social control is also present, for instance, in the Foucaultian concept of 'the conduct of conduct', which points at the subtle steering of interpretations and behaviors.[19] Social control is given a positive content not in terms of prohibitions, but of guiding behavior and meaning making, or: 'To govern, in this sense, is to structure the possible field of action of others' (Foucault, 1982: 790).

3. Reflexive Self-socialization

The final aspect of socialization is a shift in attention from the socializer to the one that is socialized. Nonetheless, this third model of 'reflexive self-socialization' is perfectly compatible with the interactive model, and could be seen as a continuation of the former on the side of the socializee. However, both models do not necessarily imply each other and in some socialization contexts more emphasis might be on either one or the other model. To elaborate this model of self-socialization, we will mostly draw inspiration from the later Foucaultian theories on so-called 'self-techniques'. Foucault never describes his field of investigation in terms of 'socialization'; this is an interpretation and application of his theory on my part. He rather situates his theories in an analytics of power, but I deliberately chose to approach him from a cultural sociological angle and deem the theory of self-techniques important for the broader sociological literature on socialization. This model of self-socialization shows differences with the passive mentalist view on socialization. The self is not just a product of the culture it lives in, and thereby a redundant category to be taken into consideration when one wants to approach a culture, but there is a relevant and significant space between the cultural discourse and how the self appropriates this discourse in an actual practice. Laidlaw (Laidlaw, 2002: 312), for example, indicates this difference with the passive model, especially as it takes form in its Durkheimian formulation as follows: 'Durkheim's conception of the social so completely identifies the collective with the good that an independent understanding of ethics appears neither necessary nor possible.' In the reflective process of applying moral principles or ethical precepts in a concrete situation and repeatedly applying them in diverse forms, is where there is an active moment of what Foucault (Foucault, 1984a: 284) describes as 'reflected freedom'. The self is here not merely a copy of the social, an unnecessary deduplication of the social system, but makes ethical choices in the formation of its self.

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[19] In French, Foucault uses the wordplay 'conduire les conduites', which refers to 'conduct' as behavior, but also *conduire*, which signifies leading or guiding and *se conduire,* guiding one's self.

In the last two volumes of *The History of Sexuality*[20], and in his lectures at the Collège de France of 1981-1982 on *The Hermeneutics of the Subject*, Foucault introduces the concept of 'self-techniques' or the 'care of the self'. These techniques form an expression of a heightened attention of the self for one's self, where the self transforms, forms or constitutes itself. Foucault establishes his concept of self-techniques in his study of the ethical forms of Classical antiquity and Hellenistic philosophy, where philosophy was not merely a theoretical exercise, but also an 'art of existence', which instructed people on the practice of how to live a good life (1984b).[21] Self-techniques as theoretical approach are, however, not limited to a certain historical period, nor to a given activity, as in this case ethical philosophical practices,[22] but can be applied as a more general theoretical outlook. Especially for individualist societies, this might be a fruitful path to elaborate, since it surpasses the assumption that there is already a pre-given core of identity in the person, as we for instance especially saw in the previous chapter for the expressive variety of individualism with its focus on authenticity as central value. Instead of assuming the existence of a pre-social identity, identity is depicted as a product of intense self-construction. To approach authenticity and individualism from this perspective, gives us a more sociological approach of these values.

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[20] Self-techniques were also not limited to the domain of '*aphrodisia*' or the narrower field of sexuality, as the title of his books on the history of sexuality might suggest. This was just one exemplary field where he applied his frame of self-techniques, but the concept in itself is related to a broader field of ethical practices. This can be observed in his lectures on *The Hermeneutics of the Subject* that treat a broader field of investigation.

[21] He conducted this study after his discussion of the classical Greeks (Foucault, 1984b). With the classical Greek writers such as Plato and Xenophon, self-techniques were still mostly a matter of controlling desires. The relation that the self had with itself was mostly an agonistic and polemic relation of suppressing excesses or excessive desires. *Sophrosunè* or moderation was the goal the ethical subject wanted to reach in this period (1984a: 37).

[22] Foucault did not intend to limit his study of self-techniques to the ancient philosophical variety, but the inquiry was supposed to cover a whole history of the role of self-techniques up until modernity.

Interpreted in terms of socialization, we see an active form of socialization where the self turns to itself and engages in an activity of 'self-socialization'. Foucault defines them as:

> Techniques which permit individuals to effect, by their own means, a certain number of operations on their own bodies, on their own souls, on their own thoughts, on their own conduct, and this in a manner so as to transform themselves, modify themselves, and to attain a certain state of perfection, of happiness, of purity, of supernatural power, and so on. Let's call these kinds of techniques a technique or technology of the self (Foucault, 1993: 203).

In a shorter way, he refers to them as 'work of the self on the self', 'an elaboration of the self by the self' (Foucault, 2005: 11), the 'cultivation of the self' (Foucault, 1984b: 49) or 'the art of existence'. Foucault gives some examples of self-techniques: 'these are, for example, techniques of meditation, of memorization of the past, of examination of conscience, of checking representations which appear in the mind and so on' (Foucault, 2005: 11). In the Stoic context, for instance, we find the practice of testing oneself. By seducing oneself with copious meals but nevertheless resisting the food, one trains in resisting temptations and finds another kind of more profound pleasure in being less dependent on external needs. In a more contemporary translation, this can be related to dietary regimes, where a person is trained to pertain to a certain healthy lifestyle in order to live up to culturally prescribed ideals such as health or slimness. As can be imagined, this is not just a matter of deterministic and automatic following of rules, but rather of active work on the self. Another example involves meditation, that equaled a 'steady screening of representations' (1984b) in the Stoic context and was closely related to the examination of conscience (Foucault, 1993: 206). One had to examine one's own thoughts thoroughly and measure in how far they were in accordance with the general ethical principles. In early Christianity, there is a similar meditative examination of conscience, which precedes a confession. In this case, thoughts are examined in detail to discover whether their origin is sinful or virtuous and in correspondence with God's will. This meticulous work of inspection of the soul had to lead to discovering a higher, divine truth (Foucault, 1993: 218-19). In confession, the monk subjugates his own soul to careful inspection and verbalizes to his spiritual guide all the thoughts that could be suspicious from a religious perspective, and thereby submits to ethical training (Foucault, 1993: 217-18).[23]

More contemporary examples of self-techniques can be situated in the current therapeutic culture. Rose (1989), for instance, describes the current techniques of subjectivation as 'confessional', not in the religious sense, but as verbalizing oneself and one's problems in a therapeutic relation, be it in an informal relation or one with a professional therapist (Rose, 1989: 244). In this relation, it is not only the therapist who makes an analysis of the person, but in the first place the person herself in how she presents herself. 'In the act of speaking, through the obligation to produce words that are true to an inner reality, through the self-examination that precedes and accompanies speech, one becomes a subject for oneself' (Rose, 1989: 244). To become a mentally healthy person, or a person altogether, intense self-work through verbalizing the self, reflecting on the self, gaining knowledge of the self, or correcting certain behaviors is necessary. Given our focus here on individualist culture, it is especially this contemporary application of self-techniques with a specific focus for therapeutic practice that interests us here.

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[23] In Christianity, we see a first break away from the care of the self in and for itself, which will be further developed in modern philosophy or what Foucault calls 'the Cartesian moment', where transforming the self becomes an objective outside of the scope of philosophy.

While ethical self-shaping involves an active component of the self working on the self, it is important to note that this self is constructed in accordance with a broader ethical frame. The subject Foucault presents here is not the individualized individual that creates a do-it-yourself biography beyond any cultural vocabulary. Self-shaping in this context, is not a creation *ex nihilo*, but is inspired and confined by ethical models on the good life:

> I would say that if I am now interested in how the subject constitutes itself in an active fashion through practices of the self, these practices are nevertheless not something invented by the individual himself. They are models that he finds in his culture and are proposed, suggested, imposed upon him by his culture (Foucault, 1984a: 291).

Foucault does not suddenly shift from an anti-humanistic model where the subject is an effect of power relations to the complete opposite of an active subject without a relation to culture or norms and values. Self-techniques form an active transformation of the self after pre-given cultural models or out of the intention to develop a certain given virtue in the self by continual practice. In this sense, there is a relation between the mentalist model and these self-techniques. In some contexts, for instance in monotheistic religious contexts, we find religious prescriptions that function as normative guidelines for behavior and that are in many cases linked to authority and technologies of the self to form the religious self. Here, norms and religious law are not opposed to self-formation, for instance under the form of rituals or religious practices, but both aspects of morality, or in our terminology socialization, mutually inform each other. For example, in Sabah Mahmood's (2011) analysis of the Muslim Mosque movement in Cairo, the interplay of code and ethics oriented behavior is constantly at hand. The ethical and the moral are not situated in different spheres in this case study of an orthodox religious movement, but the ethical stance involves a relation to moral codes that is embodied, grounded in practices and basically involves the way people live or in her terms: 'inhabit' the moral code (2011: 28-29). The prescribed norm and value of piety is for instance brought into practice by continually shaping oneself through the technique of payer. Instead of being radically opposed in all cases, the mentalist and self-socializing model in several cases reinforce each other. It is nevertheless worthwhile to distinguish between these two aspects of socialization, because as Foucault (1984a: 29-30) states, we can make a distinction between moralities where the main emphasis is on what he calls 'the moral code' and more 'ethics oriented moralities': 'codes of behavior and forms of subjectivation […] can never be entirely dissociated, though they may develop in relative independence from one another. […] In certain moralities the main emphasis is placed on the code.' (Foucault, 1984a: 29). For Foucault, this code oriented morality is rather related to social control and a strong codification in explicit rules. On the other hand, for the ethics oriented moralities where self-techniques are central, the emphasis is more on the relation to the self and practices. 'Between the two types, there have been, at different times, juxtapositions, rivalries and conflicts and compromises', Foucault (1984a: 30) further elaborates.

Even in a moral system where there is constant interaction between mentalist norms and values and self-techniques, we see a more active formation of the self after the model of these values, instead of a passive one on one relation between culture and the self. 'In the art of existence, the subject is not merely effect. The individual subjectivates itself. Here, we see an active *I* that does not overlap with its *Self*, but objectivates itself and forms itself into a subject' (Devos, 2004: 137; my translation). There is a part of the subject that takes an active role to transform itself, to adopt a certain ethics and apply this in a concrete situation and meanwhile forms one's identity. A parallel can be observed here with the Meadian (1934) model of socialization, more specifically the interplay between what he calls the 'I', that part of the self that escapes complete socialization, and the 'me', the socialized part that is closely related to the conscience. The me tries to discipline the I in line with expectations of 'the generalized other'. A similar dynamic as the one of the self-techniques is taking place here that is characteristic for this general model of self-socialization as active work on the self. Like the Foucaultian frame, this does not imply that there is some center of unbridled creativity in the self, but rather that this everlasting work of the me on the I forms a continual process of self-disciplining and self-formation.

From this model of self-socialization, the body of the 'socializee' appears in a different light, particularly compared to the aforementioned model of 'un-reflexive incorporation'. Sabah Mahmood (2011), for instance, documented this decisive role of the body in self-socializing work, particularly in relation to pious Muslim women. While Mahmood also refers to the notion of 'habitus', she relies here on a different, Aristotelian notion of habitus than Bourdieu. In his deterministic version of habitus, the ethical dimension of repeated and reflexive pedagogical training is lost sight of.[24] In the

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[24] Although Bourdieu's objective with the notion of habitus was also to transcend the distinction viable in social sciences between what he calls 'objectivism' and 'subjectivism' (Bourdieu, 1990: 51). With objectivism

Aristotelian tradition it is, however, ‘understood to be an acquired excellence at either a moral or a practical craft learned through repeated practice until that practice leaves a permanent mark on the character of the person’ (2011: 136). With regard to the self, the behavior that one shows is not an expression of a deeper lying self, but the self is constantly constructed through embodied and habitual behavior until a more permanent change in the self is obtained. Praying in Mahmood’s analysis is not approached as merely an un-reflexive practice that is learned from early on and that expresses the underlying cultural group one adheres to. In the analysis of her observations in Koran classes in the orthodox milieu, she shows the reflexive effort that is undertaken to stylize the body to the pious attitude of praying (2011: 124-125). The body is not external or merely an instrument in social learning, but is deliberately involved in this process at every step.

Conclusion

From the juxtaposition of these three aspects of socialization, we can derive a final scheme that depicts the main differences between a passive approach of socialization, a model that takes interaction as its first premise and a final model that looks into active self-socialization. The passive model is here mostly anchored in ‘the mentalist tradition’ in sociology, which starts with Durkheim, and continues in functionalism and social constructivism, but can also be related to traditions that emphasize bodily reflexes in socialization, as we discussed in relation to Bourdieu and Mauss. As can be observed, this model fits well with the common-sense notion of socialization and is the most broadly shared in sociology. Yet, in this passive conceptualization of socialization, the exchange between the two parties involved in the socialization process remains largely uncovered. In this chapter, we also worked out two other aspects of socialization, especially for later life phases, that took account of the active interaction and shaping of people’s selves. The interactive model of socialization still acknowledges the role of culture in socialization, but additionally frames how the socializer actively engages in cultural discourse and guides the socializee’s interpretation of experiences. With regard to self-socialization, the cultural situatedness of this process was also

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he associates the structuralism of Lévi Strauss, which can explain regularities of the social world, but cannot account for the motives of people and the situatedness of social action in a practice (1990: 81). The proponent of subjectivism for him, on the other hand, is Sartre and he equates this to an active voluntarism (1990: 43). As Mahmood argues, his synthesis is nevertheless still more in the direction of an objectivist stance.

pointed out: the one who is socialized actively forms herself in accordance with cultural ideals. The different accents in these three models are illustrated in the following scheme:

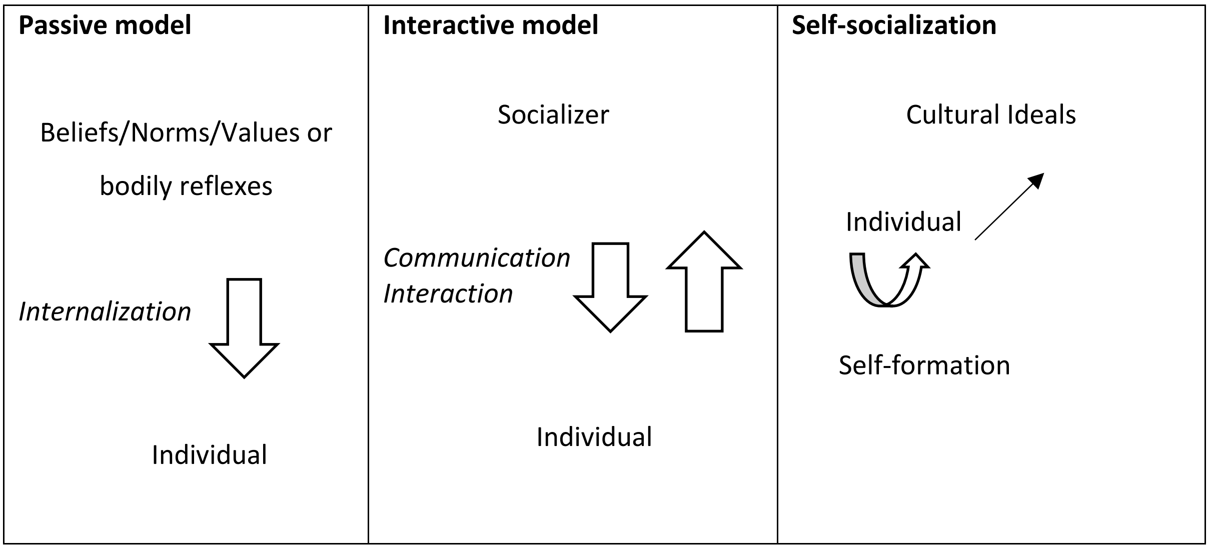

Figure 1: Three aspects of socialization

These three models of socialization oppose each other in some respects, especially with regard to whether socialization is portrayed as a passive or active process. Nonetheless, it is crucial that they do not necessarily have to exclude each other in practice. They might describe diverse phases in the socialization process. The more mechanistic and passive notions of socialization might be more suited to describe early socialization phases of the infant, while the active socialization might be more befitting later adult contexts of socialization. However, one might claim that in the literature on socialization there is still disproportional attention for the passive variety of socialization, whereas the active interpretation is at least equally important. The presentation of socialization either in terms of over-socialization as Wrong did fifty years ago, or in an opposite under-socialized conception of man that can, for instance, be found in the individualization theory, are both dependent on this one-sided passive notion of socialization. By juxtaposing these three aspects of socialization, we want to break with this one-sided conceptualization of socialization.

The approaches to socialization presented here are not intended as fixed models, neither as mutually exclusive and show the complexity, different aspects and diverse accents for other life-life phases where this process occurs. In accordance with the previous chapter on the three individualistic scripts, they serve as theoretical abstractions and tools to further elaborate in empirical research. Here, the focus will be on how these models might be related to each other in concrete settings and subsequently, how they interact with diverse conceptualizations of the subject or individual. While it might be more likely that an interactive or self-socializing model plays a more important role in an individualist culture than a passive model, it remains the question how these models are combined in these concrete settings. Are some forms of socialization in individualist values explicitly rejected while others are embraced? Do some forms of individualism relate more easily to some of these aspects of socialization, while others find themselves to be at strained terms with some aspects of socialization? New perspectives are opened up from this approach that surpass observations in terms of over- or under-socialized conceptions of man but rather ask for the relation between diverse conceptualizations of socialization and individualism.

Chapter 3: Methodology: Comparing Cases

1. Research Questions and Case Selection

From the previous two theoretical chapters, two overall research questions follow, one related to the introduced scripts of individualism, and the other one to the described aspects of socialization in relation to settings where individualism is transmitted. These questions will be answered by means of an in-depth study of three socialization contexts. Socialization can be studied in diverse formats, but we choose here for clearly formalized contexts of socialization where a directed, purposeful sort of socialization takes place. The reason that we chose specifically this sort of socialization is that we presume that socialization in individualism might take place in more subtle forms already, so the more hidden, implicit or unintentional forms of socialization might make it more difficult to observe the precise mechanisms of socialization that are taking place. With more hidden and implicit forms of socialization we mean for instance the daily socialization in the upbringing of children. For both socializer and socializee this form of socialization might take place in a more unconscious manner and interwoven with other interaction processes. Additionally, it might be more difficult for both parties to explain which socialization tactics they are using and how they appropriate them, specifically in the case of the child that is socialized.

One of the clearly formalized and purposeful socialization channels comprises education. Durkheim (1956: 71) also terms this form of socialization ‘methodological socialization’, a more directed and purposeful form of socialization than the implicit socialization interwoven in daily practices. We however would like to make a distinction between education and pure socialization, since in education the transmission of cognitive content is central and we are here primarily interested in the transmission of cultural content as related to discourses on individualism. The theories on hidden curriculum address this cultural content more in relation to education (e.g. Margolis, 2001; Giroux, 2001), but also here we are dealing with processes more difficult to observe with socializees that might have difficulties to verbalize the effect of this socialization. The form of socialization that we will concentrate on in this study is directed, purposeful socialization in the form of courses for adults that are related to socialization processes in cultural content related to individualism. We expect that in this specific socialization format we might see the specific characteristics of socialization in individualistic culture in the clearest fashion.

1.1. First Research Question: Forms of Individualism

The first main research question looks at particular discourses of individualism and their concrete composition. We study *how the three forms of individualism are related to each other in directed and purposeful socialization settings that transmit individualistic cultural values*. Here, we look at the potential connections between all three forms of individualism. For instance, it can be the case that the content of the course is intended to purport an expressive or moral form of individualism, but that the course members apply this content in a calculating, utility centered manner. This question to the ratio of the three forms of individualism makes out the complexity of the research. It is not our aim to ascribe one form of individualism to each of the cases, but precisely to describe the complex interconnectedness of diverse discourses on the individual. Are there situations wherein a conflict between the claims of these cultural values arises? Or do moral, expressive and utilitarian conceptions of individualism complete each other? Finally, this research examines whether there are other forms of individualism that do not arise in the relevant sociological literature on the subject. Given the fact that this is explorative research that aims to give a qualitative analysis of the cultural phenomenon of individualism, we do not want to start from a rigid frame that already sums up all possible forms of individualism. On the contrary, we hope to outline new forms by connecting the mostly abstract and theoretical literature to the empirical reality. The very diverse cases that are all situated in a highly specific functional domain of society enable us to give a more concrete content to what individualism precisely means in several functional domains of Western society.

1.2. Second Research Question: Aspects of Socialization

The second question focusses on socialization processes into these cultural discourses on individualism. Here, we are not merely interested in the factual question whether socialization in individualism occurs, or whether we are currently dealing with an under- or over-socialized conception of man, but rather when it occurs, how this socialization process takes form in relation to individualism. The overall questions asked to socialization in this regard mirror those to the forms of individualism. In particular, the first question asks how the diverse aspects of socialization are related and connected to each other in the selected cases related to individualism. We want to see how the passive, interactive and self-socializing models of socialization are combined in cases where individualism is transmitted. Are there some of these aspects of socialization that are more compatible with individualism in its diverse articulations, while others turn out to be on strained terms with transmitting individualism? From the theoretical chapter on socialization, we can derive a crude guiding hypothesis that for socialization in individualism, the interactive and self-socializing form of socialization play a more important role than passive mentalist socialization.

To answer this question to the nature of socialization in individualism, we direct our attention to both parties involved in the socialization process, both socializers and socializees, to make sure that we might picture all the relevant aspects to the process. From the point of view of the two parties that are involved in the socialization process, two broad questions can be distinguished: How does the socializer transmit the main ideas on individualism in the course? And how does the socializee appropriate these ideas concerning individualism? When studying the socialization tactics of the socializers, we will have special attention for the distinction between a rather passive transmission of norms and values or the more active interaction as models of transmission. More specific sub-questions with regard to the socializers involve then: How does the socializer guide or correct the interpretations of course members? How do socializers intervene in group discussions? How do socializers deal with conflicts over interpretations? We will also have special attention for punishments, rewards or incidents in the socialization process. For the socializees, the distinction between passive appropriation or more reflexive self-socialization will be crucial. Also for the course members, more specific sub-questions will be asked. First, the question will be asked which expectations course members had before the course. Secondly, how they experienced the course. Finally it will be asked what they do with the insights of the course afterwards or how they continue practicing learned techniques. Here, we investigate to which degree they continue working on themselves to alter themselves after the course and how a potential process of self-training takes place. Other aspects that we will explore have special attention for are potential processes of identification or imitation. As in the case of the forms of individualism, the additional question will be asked whether other aspects to socialization can be discerned that were not outlined yet in our theoretical chapter on this topic.

Research Question 1: Individualism discourses	Relation between the forms individualism
	Other forms of individualism
Research Question 2: Socialization processes in individualism	Relation between forms of socialization in individualism - Tactics of socializers (rewards, punishments, guiding/correcting interpretations, incidents) - Appropriation of course members (expectations, experience, further training)
	Other forms of socialization in individualism

Table 1: Research questions and sub-questions

1.3. Case Selection

As has been pointed out, we study three cases where a socialization process into the value system of Western individualism is likely to occur. These cases do not pretend to form a complete representation of individualistic culture, but three theoretically interesting anchor points to study diverse fashions in which a subject is performed and cultivated. Consequently, we also do not aim for a representative selection of cases to capture the whole phenomenon of individualism; this would be an impossible task. Instead, we want to research clearly formalized contexts in which a process of purposeful socialization is likely to occur. This is why we chose three cases that explicitly profile themselves as courses, which means that their explicit objective is to transmit cultural content. By choosing formalized courses, we are at least certain that the objective is socialization, regardless of whether this socialization eventually is successful. The most suitable design we chose for this study is a multiple case design (Yin, 2004: 46-47).

For the selection of concrete cases, we aim for maximum variation. The selection strategy is thus situated between a *diverse* and an *extreme* case selection (Flyvbjerg, 2011; Seawright & Gerring, 2008). We deliberately chose for cases that do not represent the average socialization contexts, such as the regular education context or the media, but are situated on extreme points of the spectrum. As criterion for maximum variation we look at the forms of individualism introduced in chapter 1. We want to research the multifarious concept of individualism and make sure that we capture at least the three discussed individualist scripts in the selection of our cases. Since we also indicated in which societal domains these forms of individualism were gradually institutionalized, the selected courses are related to some of these domains. More particularly, to find a course where utilitarian individualism is represented, we will look into the sphere of work. To study ongoing socialization in worker subjectivity and utilitarian individualism, management trainings form an interesting setting. Secondly, for moral individualism we will look deeper into the field of politics, and select more specifically a course that aims to socialize people into notions of citizenship. The selected case here is concerned with civic integration of newcomers. Finally, in relation to expressive individualism, the selected course is situated in the more existential or cultural societal domain. We selected a case that is concerned with teaching authenticity and self-development in the field of spirituality, more particularly currently popular mindfulness. For each of these courses related to one ideal type of individualism, the question is what the entanglement of the diverse varieties of individualism within these spheres is. While the selection of the cases is motivated by their connection to a seemingly expressive, moral and utilitarian profile, our interest is precisely to go further than this first impression and research the complex connection of these forms of individualism or the presence of other forms of individualism.

Besides the relation to the forms of individualism, there is also a clear contrast specifically related to the nature of socialization between the case in mindfulness and management on the one hand, and the civic integration course on the other. In the first two cases, we could describe the participation in these courses by course members as 'voluntary'. The course members take part in these courses with the intention of reaching an objective they share with the trainers, i.e. of improving or working on themselves. The mindfulness participants subscribe out of their own initiative in order to deal with problems they experience that they are willing to tackle. The trainers assist them in this shared project. The managers take this training as an extra opportunity for development in their career. In the latter case there might in some cases be an extra incentive to participate, in the sense that the managers that participate might get more opportunities in the company because they show their investment in a career by participating in these courses. Nevertheless, also here we might say that they participate out of their free will. In the case of civic integration, there is however a disjunction between the intentions of trainers and a significant part of the course members. While some groups such as citizens of the EU, European economic zone or Switzerland rather have a right to participate in this course, taking this course is legally compulsory for other newcomers who are over age in order to stay in Flanders (Integration monitor, 2016). This makes this socialization context significantly different from the two other contexts. Some disciplinary features are also present in this specific context (Foucault, 1975). This might have interesting consequences for our key topic of socialization in individualism. A disciplinary approach, for instance, seems to conflict with the respect for the individual that is implied specifically by moral individualism. For the analysis of the socialization process, we will give extra attention to this disjunction in the research design.

With this selection of variegated cases, we also attempt to illustrate the broad reach of a cultural sociological approach. While the social scientific research on these cases is usually situated in distinct research traditions and fields that remain unconnected, we want to show the potential of a more encompassing cultural sociological approach. Spiritual courses are embedded in the research tradition of sociology of religion, while civic integration programs are mostly observed from a critical outlook on the hegemonic value system in the tradition of political sociology. Management courses are neither seen as centers of the transmission of cultural values, but are studied in the context of organizational sociology. These fields are not often associated with the domain of cultural sociology. By bringing these diverse cases together and approaching them from a cultural sociological perspective, we want to focus on their cultural content that permeates diverse societal domains and how this content is transmitted. In the following sections, we will provide some clarification on the specific selected cases and their characteristics.

Case 1: Mindfulness

With regard to the course in spirituality, the course was selected on the basis of the consideration that it concerns a popular form of spirituality. This creates the probability that it is rooted in the general cultural ideas of mainstream society and not limited to a very restricted public. Given this consideration, we selected a course concerned with ‘mindfulness’. Massive media attention, extensive research, and bookshops full of mindfulness-related books suggest a widespread interest in this meditative technique and its effects on psychological wellbeing and health. A wide range of aspects of everyday life has meanwhile been approached through its lens: mindful eating, mindful parenting, mindful sports, mindful birthing, mindful communication, the mindful way through depression, etcetera. The list is long and keeps growing. An American government survey found that Americans spent about 4.2 billion dollars on mindfulness-related practices and products in 2009 (Wilson, 2014). Self-reliance and self-actualization through inward exploration is crucial in this Western reframing of Buddhist meditation (Harrington & Dunne, 2015: 629). Mindfulness has roots in Buddhist practices, but has been remodeled to an eight-week program for the prevention of stress (MBSR, *Mindfulness Based Stress Reduction*) and the relapse in depression (MBCT, *Mindfulness Based Cognitive Therapy*) in a highly medicalized context (Barker, 2014). In short it is: ‘paying attention in a particular way: on purpose, in the present moment, and nonjudgmentally’ (Kabat-Zinn, 1994). Through this mode of observation, people work with their problems and are handed over the tools to observe their own emotions and thoughts.

More in detail, the concrete eight-week course in mindfulness consists of several phases and techniques. First, the participants learn the so-called body-scan, where they observe their bodily awareness by scanning each part of their body with their attention and meanwhile focus on their breath. When the mind wanders, attention is brought back to the breath. In a second phase, through Hatha yoga, the boundaries of the flexibility of the body are explored without the purpose to surpass them. The crucial next step in the training is the shift of the awareness to thoughts and emotions. This goal is obtained from diverse meditational positions, such as sitting meditation, a lying posture or through walking. In a final phase, the object of meditation is everything that presents itself in the mind without strict guidelines to direct the focus. The movement that is made in the learning process is from a more formal approach of a meditation exercise to a more informal approach that prepares students to integrate the attitude in daily life and to be present in the so-called 'now-moment'. For this final generalizing step, smaller exercises are introduced, for instance a three-minute break to focus on one's breath, which can be integrated in daily activities. An important aspect of all these phases in the eight-week program is the role of the body. From the first session on, the importance of the body is emphasized. In the later sessions, when thoughts and emotions are observed, the initial importance of being aware of the body is rearticulated. The participants learn to observe what these thoughts and especially emotions do to their body (DeWulf, 2009; Segal, Williams, & Teasdale, 2013). In mindfulness, the participants learn that the conceptual designation of a feeling is already an interpretation of something more primal: bodily sensations. This approach to feelings and thoughts is very much in line with the original approach in Theravada Buddhism or *vipassana* (Pagis, 2009), combined with findings of cognitive psychology (Segal et al., 2013).

Case 2: Civic integration program

With regard to the civic integration program in Flanders, all foreigners integrating have a right to this program, including those migrants who had already been living in Belgium some time before the civic integration courses were seriously institutionalized (De Cuyper, 2010; Pauwels & Lamberts, 2010).[25] However, some groups of people are legally obliged to follow the courses. These groups comprise persons of age who recently emigrated to Belgium and have taken up residence in Flanders.

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[25] In Dutch they are called 'oudkomers', which could be translated as 'oldcomers' (to make a clear contrast with 'newcomers', who recently arrived in the country).

Migrants from EU countries, the European Economic Area and Switzerland are not required to take the courses (Van den Broucke et al., 2015).[26] In the following table the categories of newcomers that enrolled for a civic integration program in 2014 can be found. Here, not only the mandatory course members are involved, but also those who voluntarily participate:

	Men	**Women**	**Total**	**% in total**
Family reunion with Belgian	1240	2143	3383	19.1
Labor migrant EU+	1384	1152	2536	14.4
Family reunion with EU+	691	1477	2168	12.3
Family reunion with national of third country	583	1509	2092	11.8
Authorized refugee, statutary protection, victim of human trafficking	1405	654	2059	11.7
Regularization	472	412	884	5.0
EU+ pending	277	344	621	3.5
Asylum seeker	467	187	654	3.7
Labor migrant national of third country	213	110	323	1.8
Job-seeker EU+	115	146	261	1.5
Enough resources EU+	47	85	132	0.7
Student EU+	30	54	84	0.5
Family reunion EU+ or Belgian	37	48	85	0.5
Belgian newcomer	21	19	40	0.2
Other reason EU +	5	1	6	0.0
Other reason national of third country	46	85	131	0.7
Undesignated	1032	1180	2212	12.5
Total	8065	9606	17671	100.0

Table 2: Quantity of integrating newcomers that signed a civic integration contract for the first time, sorted by residence motives, gender, in Brussels and Flanders, 2014. Source: Integration monitor 2015

There are four pillars in the primary civic integration program: a basic Dutch course up to the A2 level[27], a six-week course of 60 hours in societal orientation, where newcomers are acquainted with Belgian and more specifically Flemish society (from now on abbreviated as SO),[28] coaching in the search for employment and personal guidance.[29] After this primary trajectory, they can proceed to the secondary program, comprising a work perspective, and educational perspective or a social perspective (De Cuyper, 2010; Pauwels & Lamberts, 2010). This part of the program is given outside the specific integration centers and is taken care of by the regular institutions in the Flemish society. Since this research is focused on the theme of cultural norms and values on identity, only the SO-part of the whole trajectory was studied in detail. The societal orientation course comprises two aspects. Part of it is very practical and is concerned with daily questions such as 'How can I get medical help?' or 'Where can I register my children for school?' Yet, besides practical skills and know-how, the values and norms of Belgian and more generally Western society are also transmitted. For instance, the special commission that determined the key themes of societal integration in Flanders, approaches Western culture from five values that are subsequently translated into legally binding and social norms: freedom, equality, solidarity, respect and citizenship (Bossuyt, 2006).

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[26] Under age migrants have an alternative integrating trajectory, called OKAN, which is combined with secondary school. In Dutch: 'Onthaalklas voor anderstalige nieuwkomers', which can be translated as 'Welcome class for non-Dutch speaking newcomers'. This trajectory is integrated in the general Belgian schooling system, and is more focused on language acquisition than on norms and values (although norms and values are implicitly addressed during the language courses).

[27] Breakthrough level

[28] Shorter or longer trajectories exist depending on the education or literacy level, but this is the standard duration.

[29] During the whole integration process, newcomers have a trajectory guide at their disposal, who is in charge of their individual case, gives administrative assistance, and refers them to the specific institutions they need (De Cuyper et al., 2010).

Case 3: Management training

The final place of socialization that has been studied is situated in the realm of work. Because socialization is the central concept, we looked for a course that does not consist of one or a few sessions, but a longer trajectory in which the development of leadership competencies is central. We also did not opt for a trajectory in the context of a business school. The classes here are rather costly, both for newcomers in the managerial realm who engage in an MBA, which takes up a whole academic year, and for experienced managers. Additionally, because of the prestige of the business schools, it is generally difficult to obtain entrance as a researcher (Davies & Kettunen, 2017).[30]

With regard to the content of the course, we wanted the management course to be in between two extremes: on the one hand, the purely technical courses treating subjects such as accounting, business law, economics or strategic management, and, on the other hand, the courses focusing directly and only on soft skills, such as business spirituality or business ethics. We chose this middle ground because we were searching for a course that focuses on developing a leadership identity and building up relational and soft skills, yet also showing sufficient variation in comparison to the other cases. In particular, it could not overlap too much with the first case study in spirituality. Business spirituality is an upcoming phenomenon as can be seen in mindfulness, yoga or NLP applied in the sphere of work (Bovbjerg, 2011; Heelas, 1996; Wilson, 2014). Mindfulness, for example, is also offered in renowned business schools. To obtain maximum variation, we deliberately chose not to study a course that advertises itself as business spirituality. Another trend in management courses is the teambuilding workshop (Hovelynck, 1999). Here 'experiential learning' and the building of community through collective activities, usually outside and with an element of adventure, is key. We chose not to select this kind of courses because they are more focused on the building of group cohesion than on actual reflection, or learning of competencies, capacities or insights. Yet, this does not mean that the experiential aspect might not be present in our selection when it explicitly serves the goal of learning. After all, role-plays, out-of-comfort settings and a more active form of learning are nowadays almost indispensable in every kind of management training (e.g. Clark & White, 2010 for a sociologial analysis of this emphasis on experience and adventure; see Ehrenberg, 1991).[31] The courses we can find in this arranged middle ground are for example project management, HR-education, leadership courses, management of organizational change or self-leadership.

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[30] In a first exploratory phase, I tried to obtain entrance to two of the most important business schools in Flanders. However, both of them declined this request to collaborate in the research. The main reason they gave was protecting the confidentiality of their customers; they did not want them to be harmed by the presence of an observer in the setting. In general, they were very skeptical of especially observant researchers and did not allow their own PhD students to observe in the classes either. I was, however, able to have an exploratory conversation with one of the professors of these business schools.

A final aspect to be kept in mind for the selection of this case, again to avoid overlap with the previous two cases in the light of maximum variation, was that the management course needed to be situated in the profit sector. A leadership course for government or non-for-profit organizations would come very close to the second case of civic integration that is situated in the public sector. The selected case contrasts with the former realm, and provides leadership trajectories in the financial, research and development, logistics and food sector.

2. Data Collection Method

We chose to approach this topic with a combination of qualitative methods.[32] This choice is obvious given the exploratory character of our overall objective. We want to research a phenomenon that is generally omitted in the literature on individualization, i.e. how one is socialized in individualistic culture, which implies that our emphasis is on the inductive process, combined with the rich tradition of sociological thinking on individualism as a theoretical starting point. Instead of testing hypotheses that are deduced from a rigid theoretical frame, the two preceding theoretical chapters provided us with sensitizing concepts both on the theme of individualistic scripts and socialization in these scripts that guide our exploratory research. The inductive process will ideally result in empirically informed theoretical insights with concern to socialization in individualism. Neither the three outlined forms of individualism, nor the three aspects of socialization impede the research to find other forms of individualism, unexpected combinations of individualistic discourses or other mechanisms of socialization. Furthermore, the specific research questions demand a qualitative approach. We are not dealing here with effects of one variable on another one or causal relations where we have clear hypotheses for. To the contrary, our questions deal with more complex underlying mechanisms. The question here is not 'what' mechanism is at hand but 'how' this mechanism is taking place. In the case of socialization in individualistic discourses, we ask how this process of socialization takes place. Also when the question to the relation between individualistic scripts is at hand, we are dealing with a question that requires a qualitative methodology. We do not ask 'which' scripts, but are interested in how these scripts might be combined with each other. With regard to the ethical integrity of the research, I submitted and received approval for two of the studied cases[33] from the ethical committee of social sciences (SMEC).[34]

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[31] During the case study we experienced that this distinction between 'team-building' and 'experiential learning' was eventually an untenable distinction from an etic point of view, while emically it functioned as a symbolic boundary that the course we studied drew to emphasize its 'unique selling point' (which was not so unique in fact). Experiential learning in practice also improves team cohesion, and team building activities are not without learning and reflective purposes.

[32] While quantitative approaches to case studies also exist (e.g. Elman, Gerring, & Mahoney, 2016), the most developed research tradition in this regard is qualitative research (Yin, 2004).

When it comes to the specific qualitative methods I opted for a combination of participant observation and in-depth interviews. Initially, we also wanted to do a content analysis, but since there was not a similar amount of written sources available in each of the settings, we decided not to include this content analysis as a rigorous phase in the research. Instead, we used this initial reading phase of important written sources that circulated in the selected settings as a preparation for the two data collection methods. Books (often bestsellers), leaflets or teaching material were read and summarized, and are occasionally referred to in the empirical chapters. In the case of mindfulness, a list of bestsellers in this subculture were used, where both the American original formulation of *MBSR* and the British more cognitive rearticulation of *MBCT* were considered. For the civic integration program, material for the class in societal orientation and an online forum for teachers where course material was shared were studied. For the management case popular management books in combination with the management books the selected coaching company advises their managers to read were used as orientation tools. A list of the used popular written sources can be found in the appendix. Participant observation and interviews make up the proper methods for this research and are also the most suitable to answer our specific research questions. Socialization is a process that takes place in these courses, so if we want to look deeper into its characteristics, we should observe the practices that are used in these courses. Especially also since we are interested in interactions, communications and exchanges between trainers and course members, the actual process and its evolution should be observed during the course. Interviews with the trainers on the other hand form a necessary supplement to interpret these observations, since they can dig deeper to the intentions of trainers. Also, since we observe one of the courses, we can ask the trainer in the interview in how far the particular observed course differs from other courses he or she has given. Finally, interviews with the course members are informative to get more insight in how the course members continue with what they learned in the course. We opted for interviews instead of focus groups since it might be difficult for some interlocutors to talk about some of the topics in group. For instance, if we are dealing with psychological problems, which might be the case in relation to mindfulness, or about how to deal with integrating in a new country for a refugee. A one on one interview might create a more confidential situation than a group conversation.

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[33] For the first case, I did not submit a report, since the FWO (Fund for Scientific Research Flanders that funded this PhD project) did not require ethical approval in the year 2014 for this kind of research situated in the human sciences. The regulations, nevertheless, changed for the renewal of my project, and every research involving human beings needed approval from an ethical committee. Unfortunately, I could not ask ex post for an approval of the first case study, since the data was already collected by that time. However, here I also always used an informed consent document to inform my respondents of the objectives of the research, their rights to withdraw at any time and I ensured to protect their privacy by not using their real names. The document was signed by each of the individual interlocutors.

[34] Abbreviation stands for 'Sociaal-maatschappelijke ethische commissie' in Dutch. This committee gives its advice for non-medical or pharmaceutical research, involved with human sciences or engineering and natural sciences. It is an ethical committee linked to the University of Leuven, Belgium. The file numbers for respectively the civic integration course and the management course admitted by the SMEC were: G 2016 03 517 and G 2016 08 610.

For each of the three case studies, we went through the same process of participant observation and interviews with a similar topic list (Yin, 2004). However, since we are not dealing here with experiments in which we can control all elements, there are some imbalances in the applied methods. A rigid replication is not desirable, however, since we want to shed light on the specificity of each case study in line with a qualitative ethnographic approach. For instance, with regard to the civic integration case, the same kind of popular advice literature did not circulate in this milieu. Instead, brochures, government regulations and preparation material for teachers was used. In this setting, which also had an ethnic and race component the other two cases did not share, the interviews with the newcomers proved to be challenging, due to the more vulnerable group we were dealing with (Anderson & Hatton, 2000; Merry et al., 2011; Sanchez-Ayala, 2012), which is why we used more interviews with the teachers in civic integration. These are only a few examples of the imbalances between the case studies, but we want to emphasize that it was a conscious choice to flexibly adapt to the research setting, since studying the natural setting in its rich empirical detail was deemed more important from our research angle, than forcing it into a rigid research design. This approach also influenced our final choice to focus more on each individual case and its relation to the research questions and to approach the comparison more theoretically at the end of this book.

2.1. Participant Observation

The first serious phase in the unraveling of the socialization process consisted of participant observation of the courses. By observing the whole or an important part of the course, we gained more understanding of the socialization process in the limited context of these specific courses. This cannot merely be done by registering the story of each of the individual participants in interviews, but their stories must be completed by ethnographic field notes on the interaction between coach and students (Denzin & Lincoln, 2002; Fetterman, 2009). Especially because coach and students constantly enter into a dialogue with each other, this part of the socialization process cannot be obliterated and so-called 'thick descriptions' are necessary (Geertz, 1973). The reactions from the students to the content during the courses were, for instance, informative on the process of how they reflexively internalize this content. The most evident way to observe within this naturalist design (as opposed to an experimental design) is by taking a minimal participatory stance. This means, also taking the course and participating but not in an active, directive manner. This strategy seems to purport the lowest chance for interaction effects, since the student's reaction to the researcher will be reduced to a minimum (Jorgensen, 1989; Mortelmans, 2007). To control for interaction effects, we afterwards asked the teacher to compare this context with previous classes.

The first case in the spiritual milieu that was observed, was the eight-week program of *Mindfulness Based Stress Reduction* of Edel Maex.[35] Maex is the pioneer in mindfulness in Flanders and one of the leading figures in this subculture in Flanders today, besides David Dewulf and Bjorn Prins. All of them differ in approach, but teach more or less the same basis. Maex works as a psychiatrist in the context of a hospital, and teaches the original eight-week program to very diverse groups of people and additionally gives individual consults. I chose to participate in Maex's course because he is very close to the original interpretation of Jon Kabat Zinn, who he collaborates with. Secondly, Maex has a background in psychiatry, and has 30 years of experience with Zen-meditation. In his approach, we observe the combination between Buddhist meditation and the emphasis on a natural scientific approach, which is characteristic of the mindfulness milieu as such. From the initial interviews I conducted with trainers in the mindfulness milieu and contacts that were familiar with the subculture, it soon became clear that Maex had the most ‘spiritual capital’ or credibility within the mindfulness milieu in Flanders (Arat, 2016). Thirdly, the groups Maex treats, are very heterogeneous and consequently, a good reflection of the diverse types of people that are attracted to mindfulness. With the other two persons involved, courses for specific target groups such as students or employees are more common.

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[35] With regard to the first case in spirituality, I initially started by testing my observation skills in two organizations; in a New Age Center called 'East-West-center' and in the integrated multidisciplinary health-neighborhood-center: 'de Brugse Poort'.

I obtained entrance to the course by paying the regular fee for this course.[36] The course is open for everybody who wants to try out mindfulness on the condition that you fill in a form that explains your motivations for joining the course. I filled in this form pointing out a dual motivation: to learn more on how to deal with stress as a person sensitive to stress, and I also indicated that mindfulness was (one of the) topics of my PhD. Gaining access to the socialization setting was for this case study not difficult. In the clarification of my role towards the trainer and the participants of the course, I also indicated this dual ambition by mixing overt and covert observation: I told them that I was a PhD student working on mindfulness, but also that I was personally interested in mindfulness as a way to deal with stress. This strategy helped me to informally connect with the participants and get an insider status as well. Most of the participants gradually forgot that I also had a role as a researcher, which made the probability of interaction effects in this case very low. From 5 January till 23 February 2015 I participated in these weekly courses and took field notes.

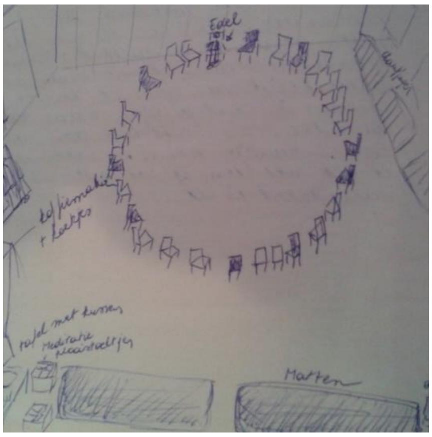

Figure 2: Drawing composition room in mindfulness course, from observation notes

The course I selected to observe with regard to civic integration, was given in the city of Antwerp, a city that with 164 different nationalities could be described as multicultural, and that yearly has a substantial number of newcomers that qualify for civic integration courses. In 2014 25,5% of all the registrations for integration in Flanders was done in Antwerp (Integration monitor, 2015), the highest number of all the integration centers. Unlike Brussels, in this city integration is mandatory for newcomers of age outside of the EU, subscribed in the national register and living in the Flemish region. Other newcomers do not have this obligation, but can voluntarily partake in the offer. In Antwerp, more than 60% enrolls in the courses voluntarily (Integration monitor, 2015: 120), an indication of a large coverage of nationalities even beyond the compulsory categories of newcomers. Moreover, Antwerp has an administratively good tracking system (BEAM) that immediately generates the call for integration as soon as a newcomer registers in the city hall, which causes this center to reach the highest range of newcomers that fall in the compulsory category (HIVA, 2010). In Antwerp, this course is given in 29 languages and the two top languages that are offered are English (20,2% of the total number of organized courses) and Arabic (12,8%) (website integration). This variegated offer of languages in which SO is organized, results in a very diverse teaching staff, with a majority of them having a migration background. The course is either provided in a language that the newcomer is familiar with as a second language such as Dutch or English, in the contact language of his/her home country, or the teacher has an interpreter in the contact language. In the figure below, the different divisions in Flanders and Brussels with the numbers of integration contracts that were signed in each department between 2009 and 2014 can be found. It is clear that Antwerp receives the largest share of newcomers in civic integration.

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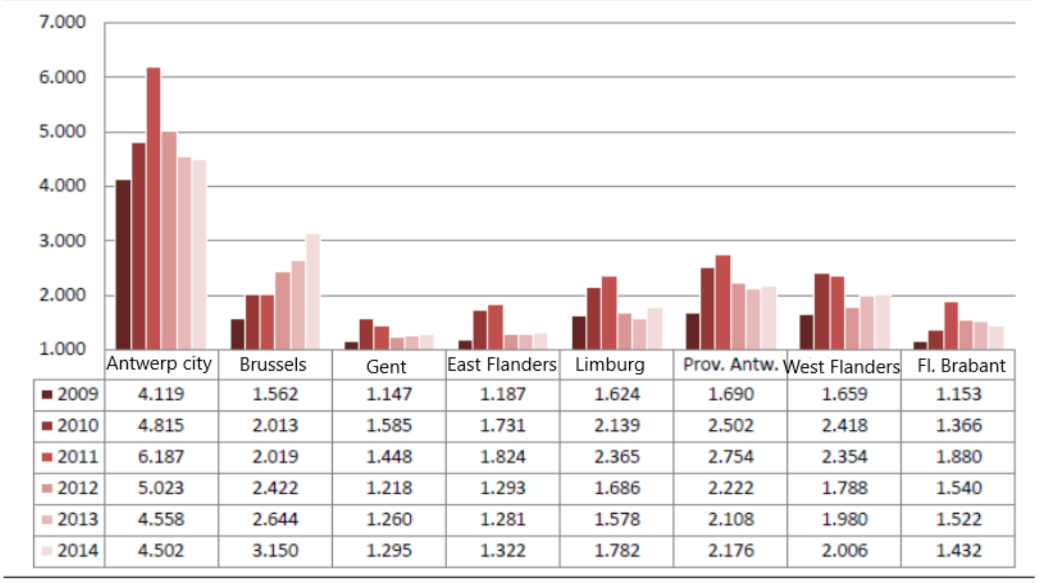
[36] Which costs 325 euros.



	Antwerp city	Brussels	Gent	East Flanders	Limburg	Prov. Antw.	West Flanders	Fl. Brabant
■ 2009	4.119	1.562	1.147	1.187	1.624	1.690	1.659	1.153
■ 2010	4.815	2.013	1.585	1.731	2.139	2.502	2.418	1.366
■ 2011	6.187	2.019	1.448	1.824	2.365	2.754	2.354	1.880
■ 2012	5.023	2.422	1.218	1.293	1.686	2.222	1.788	1.540
■ 2013	4.558	2.644	1.260	1.281	1.578	2.108	1.980	1.522
■ 2014	4.502	3.150	1.295	1.322	1.782	2.176	2.006	1.432

Figure 3: Adult people integrating in Flemish divisions for 2009-2014, Source: Integration monitor, 2015: 119.

Obtaining entrance in this setting proved to be somewhat more difficult. I first tried to contact some official contacts that were indicated on the website of civic integration, but never received a reply. I also tried calling the head office of civic integration in Brussels, but also here I was sent from one service to another without any result in the end. The difficulty to gain access might have been related to the recent organizational reforms towards more centralization in civic integration which resulted in many new departments, adaptation to the new organizational structure, and a work overload for the staff. Additionally, it seemed that they were not so welcoming to researchers, specifically from the point of view of potential political controversy or publication of research results in popular media. Finally, I tried a more personal approach of the civic integration service in Antwerp via a colleague at the HIVA[37] in policy research in the field of civic integration. He had a good collaboration with the director of this division, and I could refer to this colleague when I contacted the director. In this case, the director answered to my request and referred me to one of the policy workers of the civic integration center of Antwerp. After I explained her in person the content of my research and also how the organization might benefit from my interviews with both teachers and newcomers, she subsequently gave me the contact details of several teachers in the English SO classes. One of these teachers became my prime source, who let me observe in 2 of her classes and later introduced me to several other teachers. Once I got access to the teacher corps, I could easily make contact with the other teachers and the course members. The initial barrier to obtain access had completely disappeared. Most of the teachers were very willing to talk to me or to let me observe in their classes. This might be explained because some of them had an implicit expectation, that a few made explicit, that I might change something to their situation. In general, many teachers were dissatisfied with the high workload and the superficial attention that they could give to the students because in the end 'only the numbers counted'. Contrary to the policy officers that specifically feared a more policy-oriented use of research, this was specifically what the teachers welcomed. From this initial process of gaining access, I could already observe that opposing interests were at play in this setting, not only between teachers and students but also between street level bureaucrats and the actual bureaucrats behind the scenes that implemented policy.

In total, I conducted participant observation in the context of three classes, two classes given in English by my prime source, and one in Arabic. In this case, I conducted overt observation, because it was clear that I was not a newcomer in Belgium and I had a closer bond with the teacher, who gave me more information during the breaks. In practice, this meant that I got a role somewhere in between the teacher and the students. The teacher sometimes asked me to assist her with some assignments, or I was treated as a privileged source to inform the newcomers about Flemish culture. Other times, I just participated like the students in discussions or assignments, but not very actively, not to disturb the natural flow of the course. In general, the students did not see me as a threat, but were interested in my point of view. My general impression was that it was easy for me to build a connection with them, and that the role between teacher and fellow students was very beneficial, since they trusted me more with some confidential topics than the teacher. The observations took place between the period of March 2016 and November 2016. Besides following the actual formal six-week program of 60 hours, I also partook in another event organized by the integration center, called 'citytalk' or 'stadsklap' in the Antwerp dialect. This consisted of meetings between Flemish volunteers and groups of newcomers, during which topics relating to 'autochthone' and 'allochthone' culture were discussed.[38] Particularly in these meetings the topic of values and norms is brought up in a quasi-organic way and discussions in a guided setting by the teacher are the main goal. Between March and August 2016 I partook in five of these sessions.

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[37] HIVA stands for Research Institute for Work and Society (originally in Dutch: Hoger Instituut voor Arbeid, but the name also changed here to Onderzoeksinstituut voor Werk en Maatschappij). This Institute is connected to KULeuven and is specialized in applied and policy directed research to work, labor market, but as well civic integration.

Figure 4: Picture of me and newcomer in the classroom after the course was completed

The final observations were conducted in the context of a management course. The (anonymous) coaching bureau we chose provides long-term trajectories for senior and junior leaders in important (also anonymous) multinational companies. They offer diverse tracks, some for existing teams, some for selected leaders, others for the HR-managers of the company. We specifically chose the *Leading Talent Development Track* (LTDT), presented to leaders across departments and affiliations of a multinational. In this trail, 15 to 20 managers participate each time. The content of the trail slightly differs from company to company, but on average this trail takes about one year. It consists of diverse modules, and either the managers are taken outside of the context of their company and learn something in practice on location for 3 to 4 days. Or they get an extra project that they have to combine with their usual position in the company and that has to presented at the end of the project. The following figure shows an example of a trajectory:

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[38] This can be with private individuals or groups of students. This event was part of the sixty-hours SO class, so each of the newcomers took part in it. Yet, the difference is, that while the formal classes are not open to outsiders, every person that wants to volunteer in stadsklap is welcome.

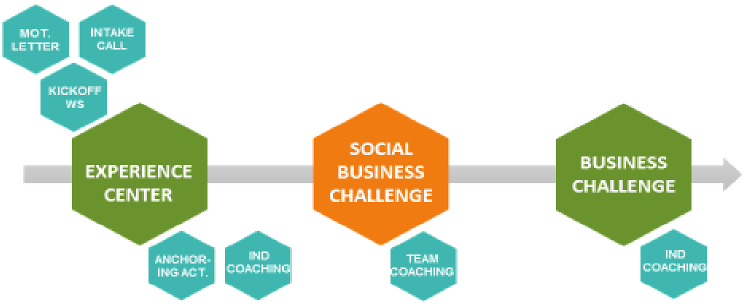

Figure 5: Example Leading Talent Development Trail (LTDT) coaching bureau

Here we see several elements that make up the trail, consisting of some smaller components, such as moments of individual coaching to support the trainee, writing a motivation letter at the beginning of the trail, an intake call with one of the coaches to test the suitability of the candidate and a kickoff event to inform participants of the content of the trail. The main components of the trail, however, contain three elements: the 'experience center' (also called the 'nature linked seminar'), the 'social business challenge' and finally the 'business challenge'. To get a better idea of what the coaching center does, we will briefly explain these three modules.

The 'nature linked seminar' is a 3- to 4-day module, during which the managers are taken outside their daily context of the office and are relocated to the woods in the region of the Ardennes. Each topic is treated in three phases: first a short theoretical introduction to the subject by the three coaches present, then a practical assignment - or as they call it 'challenge' - in small teams of five managers, each accompanied by a coach who merely observes their behavior. Finally, a long feedback session in the small teams, when the coaches analyzed the behavior of the individuals and the group, and all members of the team also gives their feedback. Usually, during this 'nature linked seminar' three topics are treated: personal leadership, functioning in a small team and communication between several teams. The practical assignments that are linked to each of these topics are: a dropping in the middle of the night, a challenge where the team has to work together in order to find a destination within 100 minutes, and finally, an assignment where three teams are dispersed over an area of more or less 10 km and have to find each other by using walky-talkies. While adventure is an important aspect of this nature part of the trail,[39] the emphasis lies especially on the feedback that is given to the managers, which functions as a sort of mirror of the kind of leader they are.

The next part of the trail is the 'social business challenge'. Here the participants have to function in a non-for-profit organization or an NGO. They have to find a solution for a problem that the NGO is dealing with and come up with a business plan. The difference with their usual context is, on the one hand, the scale of the organization and, on the other, that the organization has a social goal. Contrary to their multinational, they feel an almost immediate impact of the changes they implement and can also offer the social organization a more business directed perspective.

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[39] This was exemplified by the big SUVs of the coaches, their sportive outfits, the use of topographical plans, and jogging at the start of every day.

The final module is the 'business challenge'. The managers have to work together in their own company with other selected 'talents' on a business wide project that transcends their distinct departments and give a presentation to the board of directors at the end. This extra project offers the opportunity to work together with other departments and to align with the general business strategy of their company. In short, the competencies that are learned in the trail can be summarized as intrapersonal skills, interpersonal skills and business knowledge and a stronger affinity with the organization's strategy.[40]

I obtained entrance to this coaching bureau via a former employee in the research center of organizational sociology of our faculty, who sent me a few references of consultants and coaching bureaus in the field of leadership. In return for a report of my interviews with former participants of the trail, which focused on the 'impact' of the trail, I could do observations and they provided me with contacts for the interviews. The bargaining process for obtaining entrance and thinking in terms of 'win-win', made me aware of the different nature of this domain compared to the previous two ones. The norm of reciprocity was stronger here than in the other cases, which is connected to the high price of this program, but of course also to the general economic logic that characterizes this setting.[41] The observations I did, involved the first part of the trail, the nature linked seminar, since this was the part of the trail they were most known for. The other parts of the trail were described to me in the interviews with coaches. In this case, I was an overt researcher, since I was clearly not a manager from the same company as the participants. However, to make my role less threatening for the participants, the coaches told them that I often make reports on the impact of their programs, and was thus part of the coaching crew. I also took notes during the assignments and the coaches tried to involve me in their activity by asking for my opinion about several aspects.[42] I did these final observations in June

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[40] These were the general objectives of the coaching bureau that they singled out on their PowerPoint to introduce themselves to potential new clients.

[41] E.g., the price of the hotel alone, without the costs of the course was € 880 pp. for 4 nights.

[42] Later on, they reported back to me that they did, however, have different expectations of my role, since they expected me to be an expert in leadership.

2017.

Figure 6: Natural setting of 'nature linked seminar' in the region of the Ardennes

2.2. In-depth Interviews

For the last and most important phase of the research, I used in-depth interviews with members and trainers or coaches of the course. In the end, the interviews presented the most important source of data for the analysis. The main questions for the trainers were more general questions relating to the content of the course and secondly how they transmitted this content to the course members. In these two questions, both the research question on forms of individualism, and the question of how they socialize the course members in this individualism is present. With regard to individualism, more general questions were asked that concern the content of the course. Questions that explicitly mention the notion of individualism were not asked, since they would have been too suggestive or even counter-productive because of the mostly negative connotations of this term in common sense.[43] By subtly posing broad questions about the content of the courses, we expected to discern individualistic characteristics in the trainers' discourses. Examples of these questions are related to the specific context they were asked in. For instance, to the mindfulness coaches it was asked how mindfulness differs from therapy or the original Buddhist meditation. In the case of civic integration, many of the questions revolved around the theme of norms and values, such as: 'how do you treat the topic of norms and values?' (see topic list in appendix for more examples). In the final setting these questions to the content of the course were for instance: 'How are exercises in nature with managers connected to their daily setting in the company?' or 'Can you learn to become a leader?'. With regard to socialization in the course, the questions were more similar and streamlined over the diverse settings. Questions were asked such as: 'What are the main beliefs or competences you want to teach?', 'which were the most difficult things to teach?', 'what is the ideal result you want to obtain with your course members' or 'how would you describe your role as a coach/trainer/teacher?'.

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[43] I noticed this especially when, at the participants' request, I started explaining the general topic of my PhD project. The connotations they attributed to individualism were usually negative, such as egoism or social isolation, or vague and abstract, and thereby, in their opinion, unconnected to the concrete activities they were involved in.

In relation to the course members, three broad themes were questioned that aim to operationalize three phases in the socialization process. More specifically, questions were asked that concern the period before the course, during the course and after the course. For the first phase, questions are asked that concern the motives people had to participate in the course. Also prior expectations of the course were questioned. Subsequently, for the phase during the course, we asked how the course members experienced the course. This information is of course supplemented with the information we collected during the observations. Finally, we treated the phase we can get the most information on via the interviews, the phase after the course. Here, questions were asked such as: 'What was the most important thing you learned during the course?', 'Do you still use what you learned in the course?' or 'Do you plan to develop these insights further in the future'. In the interviews with them, especially the question about socialization is central. To get a better grasp of the socialization process, we compared what the course members learned with the prior expectations they had before the course. The goals the trainer formulated and the process observed during the participant observation were also taken into consideration. With the interviews with the course members, we want to account for the fact that socialization is not only a process that takes place within the course itself, but that unfolds over time. Before the course, people have certain motives to take part in this course, hear from other people why this course might be something for them, or read things about this particular course, that might shape their perception of the content of the course. The expectations beforehand might be important for which aspects of the course they are inclined to pick up and which not. Furthermore, the results sometime after the course (at least a half year we took as measure) are also crucial to see what the participants do with the insights of the course over time. Due to time limitations, this research design is however still very rudimentary, since there is only one point in time after the course were we ask what the impact of the course is. For future research to socialization, a more longitudinal approach that asks to impact of the course at several points in time after the course is an important addition. An improvement of the design might also include to ask about motivations for the course before the course. Due to practical reasons, this was not possible for this research. This might result in slightly biased representations of these initial motives with hindsight. To get more insight in the concrete questions that were asked, the topic lists for each setting were added in the appendix.

With regard to the first case, I collected a sample of 10 mindfulness coaches in diverse milieus.[44] I contacted mindfulness trainers that represent the diversity of the offer in Flanders. A 'theoretical' (or 'strategic') sample of mindfulness trainers (e.g. Charmaz, 2006; Glaser & Strauss, 1967) was composed through a combination of initially maximum variation sampling and subsequently snowball sampling (Patton, 1990). This resulted in a sample that included psychotherapists, doctors, physiotherapists, teachers, consultants in the business milieu, and social workers. With course members of the eight-week program where I did my observations, I conducted thirty interviews. In this first case study, more interviews were conducted than in the other cases, because it still required getting acquainted with the topic lists and the interview situation. Afterwards five interviews were not considered for the analysis, since they took place too quickly after the eight-week program and these interlocutors did not go through the same reflection process as the participants who took the course a longer time ago. The demographics of the sample prove to be in line with the diversity I encountered in the observed group: 70 percent is female, 30 percent male, the average age of the respondents was 51 and the education level extends from middle to very high. The interviews with the course members were conducted between September and October of 2015. The length of the interviews ranged from 20 min to 1h36min. Furthermore, the respondents also differ with regard to the time that lies between the interview and the moment they took the course in mindfulness. In total, eight practitioners followed the course half a year earlier, eight one to two years earlier and nine three or more years earlier.

In the civic integration course, I first conducted 15 interviews with newcomers who followed the course in societal orientation. Since some categories of the newcomers can be considered as vulnerable social groups, these interviews were experienced as more challenging than interviews with the other groups. The reasons for this were diverse.[45] Firstly, for some of the interlocutors, there was an unfamiliarity with scientific research and the corresponding procedures, such as recording, using a topic list and signing an official form for consent. Related to this, the respondents, some coming from authoritarian political regimes, gave the impression of being intimidated or suspicious that wrong or critical answers would jeopardize their just obtained citizenship (Anderson & Hatton, 2000; Sanchez-Ayala, 2012). This resulted in answers that were to a great extent socially desirable, short or unelaborated. Also important as an explanation for these experienced difficulties is the disciplinary context of this socialization setting that was already pointed out. My role of a researcher might have given some of the course members the impression that I was part of this disciplinary project of civic integration and that 'incorrect' answers might be sanctioned. Again, in these methodological difficulties, the involuntary nature of the participation of some of the course members and especially its conditional nature for citizenship and social rights become very visible. Furthermore, two interviews were conducted with an interpreter, and all but one of the other interviews were done in English, which was not the native language of the respondents, causing language barriers (Merry et al., 2011; Squires, 2008). Some of the respondents avoided talking about themselves, and when they mentioned the things they learned, they mostly elaborated on practical matters such as transportation, applying for a job or social security. Besides a language barrier, we could also clearly see a cultural barrier (Merry et al., 2011). These interviews were specifically informative on the lack of socialization into an individualist frame, but less on how socialization in individualist culture takes shape. Therefore, I decided to complement these interviews with additional interviews with the teachers of civic integration and how they described the socialization process. I conducted twenty in-depth interviews with teachers in SO. In the selection of the sample of teachers, I took account of three factors amongst which I aimed for maximum variation: gender, whether they were Belgian or had a migration background, and the length of their teaching experience with the organization. The duration of these interviews was on average 1h30min.

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[44] Besides the questions about the content of the mindfulness courses and the teaching techniques, questions were also posed that concerned the trainers' attitude towards traditional religion, the church, the Buddhist roots of mindfulness, spirituality, New Age, science in general and the scientific research that is being done into mindfulness. The findings related to these questions are described in the following article: Cortois, Aupers & Houtman (2018). The Naked Truth. Mindfulness and the Purification of Religion. *Journal of Contemporary Religion*.

[45] I gave a presentation on this topic at the European conference on qualitative enquiry, Leuven 2018. Here, I framed the difficulty not as a consequence of a 'cultural bias' that distorts the information given by the respondents (a positivist approach), but as a mismatch of cultural frames (more a social constructivist and cultural sociological approach of methodology). My frame as a researcher implies familiarity with scientific research, neutrality and the intrinsic value of the research. Also, from an individualist cultural background, I expect respondents to formulate their answers based on true self-reflection. However, for many of my respondents, other cultural frames were valid, where a lack of trust of researchers and the suspicion of

The sample of course members I selected from the final case, consists of 15 former participants of the LTDT-trail from three of the most prominent companies the coaching agency offers its courses to. One of the companies was situated in the logistics sector, one in research and development, and finally one company in the financial sector. Since private companies usually have these three key departments in their organizational structure as well, this provided an extra rationale for these three sectors. From each of these organizations, five former participants of the trajectory were selected by the HR-department of each company. They were asked not to select the most successful or compliant participants. While there seemed to be no selection bias, since there were

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political affiliations was paramount and a self-presentation in the frontstage (Goffman, 1959), directed toward social desirable answers, was the norm.

also some respondents who were critical of aspects of the program, this might still have been the case and has to be taken note of in advance and in relation to the analysis (Mortelmans, 2007). The length of these interview varied between 48 minutes and 1h30. The average age of the respondents is 37 years.[46] In this case, the respondents I interviewed followed the trail one year earlier and were thus not the same respondents I observed. This was done for practical reasons, so that the interviews could be finished on time. Finally, I also conducted 5 interviews with coaches from the coaching agency, 3 men and 2 women. The length of these interviews varied between 54 minutes and 2 hours. For more information on the demographical characteristics of the in total 90 respondents that were interviewed, a table can be found in the appendix at the end of this dissertation.

Summarized, the following scheme assembles the different phases of the research per case:

	Participant Observation	**Interviews**
Mindfulness	8-week program MBSR	10 trainers 25 course members
Civic Integration	6-week civic integration course Antwerp	20 teachers 15 course members
Management	4-day nature linked seminar coaching company	5 coaches 15 course members

Table 3: Two data collection methods for the three selected cases

3. Data Analysis

For the analysis of the data, the cases were analyzed individually in order to do justice to their inner complexity. Additionally, from a methodological point of view, first thoroughly presenting the data before thematically comparing cross-cases, was considered to yield a more accurate approach: 'Both the individual and multiple-case results […] should be the focus of a summary report' (Yin, 2004: 50). If we had immediately compared the three cases, there would have been a high probability of selectively focusing on resemblances between the cases and obliterating the singularity of each of the cases.[47] Instead, we decided to embrace the empirical diversity of the cases. In these individual presentations of the cases we did, however, clearly focus on our two main research questions from the beginning. This is not a grounded theory approach that starts from a blank slate (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). After transparently presenting the data for each individual case, we decided to compare the three cases from a more theoretical angle within the second phase. Comparing in just as much empirical detail as in the individual analyses would result in a lot of overlap between the chapters and poor legibility. In total, three empirical in-depth chapters on the socialization in individualism in each of the specific settings resulted. In chapter 7, the cases are compared on a more theoretical level, specifically with regard to socialization in individualism. In the conclusion, we also draw some more general conclusions with regard to the combinations of individualistic scripts that surpass the thick description of the specific case studies. For both of the research questions that are treated in each of the chapters, both the data from the interviews and the participant observation were taken into consideration.

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[46] Which is rather a young age for managers. This is an indication that in two of the companies, they selected mainly junior managers. Only in the financial organization, they also selected senior managers. This can obviously be explained by the busy schedule of managers with more responsibilities.

[47] This was, for a long time, a point of discussion in the presentation of the findings of this dissertation. Both ways of presentation were tried out, also in terms of legibility. First considering each case in its specificity before making a comparison was the better option. Since these cases require a lot of background information, and form specific subcultures not known to everybody from everyday practice, these specific empirical

The analysis was partially done manually, with regard to observation notes, and partially with the software program NVIVO for the analysis of the interviews. The interviews were meticulously transcribed and subsequently coded.[48] In the first open coding phase (Mortelmans, 2007), also referred to as the ‘initial coding phase’ (Charmaz, 2006), the codes were attributed in detail and line by line. The following step was to merge similar codes that were clearly dealing with the same theme and that from a theoretical point of view belonged together, the so-called ‘axial coding phase’. Finally, I was able to construct a coding tree, consisting of some general categories followed by a few levels of subdivisions. For instance, for the mindfulness case study, the coding tree consisted of three main categories: the motives of the course members, what happened during the course and what they learned from it. In an initial coding phase, I had a subdivision between all kinds of motives, such as: eating disorder, migraine, back pain, fatigue, depression, anxiety, trauma, burn-out, stress, combination family and work etc. In a second coding phase, I merged this multitude of codes in three categories: physical problems, psychological problems and work related problems. Finally, I merged these codes, because in comparison to the other phases in the socialization process, all these distinctions where too detailed, into one overarching category: pragmatic motives. With concern to what the course members had learned, the coding process went in a similar manner, from detailed

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chapters, nonetheless, provide this situating of the context with the theoretical focus on individualism and socialization we set out from the beginning.

[48] The transcriptions were made with the help of job students. For the final case of management trainings, I was lucky to collaborate with a job student who had a degree in organizational psychology, with whom I also did an initial coding round of the interview material. As such, we could discuss the coding of the interviews and share our analysis, remarks, and theoretical insights with each other. Her organizational background was also an addition in the process. While we had a different approach resulting from our sociological and psychological background, this collaboration was very fruitful.

and specific codes to broader codes that were relevant for the theory I connect my findings to. First, the things the course members had learned was captured in many codes: acceptation of problematic situation, relativizing the importance of work, decreasing hours work, increased confidence/self-awareness, awareness of breath, awareness of emotions, awareness of body, awareness of others, self-control, concentration. In the second coding phase, I reduced this variety to two categories: a management of the mind aimed at self-control often in the organizational context and an interpretation that focused on self-awareness. For further information on the coding process, you can find the coding trees in the appendix. In the subsequent analysis, I refer to my interlocutors with pseudonyms to guarantee confidentiality. In the mindfulness case, this is accompanied by their age and profession. When the interlocutor was a mindfulness trainer, this is indicated. In the case of civic integration, for the teachers, I state the main language they teach in (not their nationality) and their age. With regard to the newcomers, their age and country of origin is mentioned. Finally, for the managers, their age, their current position and the sector their company is situated in are mentioned. The coaches in this final case are indicated with 'coach' and their age. The quotes that are referred to are presented in English. While all the interviews with course members in civic integration and half of the interviews with the managers were conducted in English, the rest of them were originally in Dutch. In the English translation, we attempt to stay as closely as possible to the original Dutch formulation.

Chapter 4: Introspective Individualism as Self-technique of Control or Freedom

Mindfulness and the Socialization into Spirituality

Introduction

In a culture that emphasizes personal development, authenticity and self-realization, people are increasingly attracted to the phenomenon of spirituality at the expense of traditional religion (e.g. Heelas, 1996; Huss, 2014; Streib & Hood, 2011). The category of people who define themselves as 'spiritual, but not religious' seems to be on the rise (Chaves, 2011; McClure, 2017). Woodhead and Heelas (2004), for example, speak of a 'spiritual revolution' in which 'religion is giving way to spirituality'. They link this tendency to a more general 'subjective turn' where values of authenticity and the overarching frame of expressive individualism are central (Taylor, 1991, 2007; Zondag, 2013). Expressive individualism and modern-day religion or spirituality are also linked to each other by Bellah et al. (2008) and their relation is exemplified in one of their paradigmatic American interlocutors Sheila Larsson, who defines her individualist faith as 'Sheilaism. Just my own little voice.' Streib and Hood (2011) make the observation that many people in the US identify with being 'more spiritual than religious.' Wuthnow (1998), in turn, speaks of a 'historical shift' in the relation to the sacred in terms of spirituality. Finally, Roof (1993) describes the baby boom generation as a 'generation of seekers.' Contemporary theorists of religion cannot look past the popularity of spirituality. Already a few decades ago, classical sociologists such as Parsons (2007) or Simmel (1997: 89) indicated the importance of the upcoming cultic milieu in the aftermath of the 'expressive revolution' and interpreted it as a search for religion in a pure and authentic expression beyond institutional forms: 'a situation where existing religious forms are being repudiated by the inner religious life.' Religion does not seem able anymore to answer people's need for deeper meaning, while spirituality leaves room for an authentic development of one's 'own spiritual path' in correspondence to a general expressive individualist culture.

The emphasis on the self in spirituality is understood by many a sociologist of religion as 'privatization' and hence, reduced to a sociologically irrelevant phenomenon. A consequence of this analysis is that socialization into spirituality is deemed impossible. Within the spiritual milieu *socialization* is a suspect notion as well, on strained terms with an emic understanding: being spiritual is not something one learns, but something one inherently is. According to practitioners, it involves getting to know deeper parts of oneself beyond an alleged societal socialization (Hammer, 2001; Hanegraaff, 1996). Romantic, Rousseauian ideas of an unspoiled, morally good self beyond society's influence inform this strain of thought. A parallel can be drawn with expressive individualism and its main value authenticity that cannot be learned, and even more so, that is opposed to any notion of learning and assumes a prior personality before learning that is more real. Sociologically speaking, however, it is naive to assume that in a cultural phenomenon like spirituality a process of socialization would be absent. Little has been written on socialization in spirituality so far, which is probably due to this dual denial of its possibility. In this chapter, we precisely want to question this and ask how socialization during a course in spirituality might take place and how is it continued afterwards by the participants. The broader question of how people are socialized into spirituality can be broken down into three more detailed research questions: What are the motives of people to join a course in spirituality? Subsequently, what happens during the course? Finally, what did the participants learn from the course? By splitting socialization up into these three phases, we aim at a more detailed perspective of the transitions that take place during the socialization process.

1. Before the Course: Pragmatic Motives for Mindfulness

A first global observation is that the vast majority comes to this course because they experience a problem. Firstly, there are the people who experience smaller problems such as 'looking for quiet' or 'making time for myself.' Trudy, for example, came to the course to find a counterbalance for all the hustle:

> Well, I came here because I was a bit tense and I was always busy, busy, busy… I immediately pressure myself for every task I have to complete. I was looking for a way to stop doing this (Trudy, 49, Pharmacist).[49]

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[49] All the quotes in this chapter are translations from Dutch. We tried to adhere as closely as possible to the original formulations of our interlocutors.

The second category, however, faces more severe problems that have an impact on their entire life. We can talk about a break between a time when everything was experienced as normal, and subsequently a time when everything seems to be going wrong. These respondents describe the situation as ‘a difficult time that they were going through’ or ‘not finding their way’ in a certain role or position or ‘getting stuck’ for several years. The majority of them faces a cascade of misfortunes where several aspects of their lives are falling apart. Usually they go through a combination of physical and psychological complaints. Amy, for example, had torn her Achilles tendon. As a result, she could not deal with the stress of her work and afterwards she experienced Meniere’s disease with heavy tinnitus. Ruben describes how a fall with his bike led to much deeper problems, physically as well as mentally:

> After a party at work, I went home by bike, I had a little too much to drink and I fell. I had a concussion, but nothing too serious. […] The recovery took a month, two months, three months and then again for two weeks home from work, but my condition didn’t improve. And this went on and on, and eventually I started realizing: ‘Maybe it’s not only that fall and the concussion.’ I went to see a neurologist and finally someone said: ‘You are suffering from constant hyperventilation.’ I did some exercises for this, but it still didn’t improve. Eventually, because I wasn’t doing better, I got a depression (Ruben, 50, Marketing).

Amanda also tells us of the time prior to her start with mindfulness as a moment when years of frustration, devoting her life to other people such as her husband and her mother, came to a culmination point. Although she tells us that the last 18 years were very tough on her (living with a depressed spouse, an elderly mother in constant need of care and a job with irregular shifts) and that at a certain point a chain of events led her to perceiving the situation as unbearable:

> My mother died in 2007, I had very serious back surgery in November of the same year, and the recovery took a very long time […]. Suddenly, I found myself in a black hole. My mother had passed away, I didn’t work anymore, and I had been taking care of my mum for the last ten years of her life (Amanda, 69, Nurse).

In a large part of the sample (twenty of the respondents), work was one of the main reasons these participants collapsed. They experienced the combination between family and work (mostly women), work related stress or the transition to the status of pension as heavy burdens. However, the number one problem mentioned was burn-out. The concept of ‘burn-out’ functions in their discourses as a container concept of a malaise caused by work, with psychological and physical consequences. The people who describe their problem in terms of burn-out generally have a sense of not being able to cope with the situation anymore, combined with vast exhaustion (e.g. Maslach, Schaufeli, & Leiter, 2001).

> In November 2011, I found myself making to-do-lists of my to-do-lists during the night. I had so much to do during that time that I had to get up during the night, or I couldn’t cope. And my wife told me then: ‘Now you are really doing too much at once.’ I said the same night: ‘the rest of the week, just

> cancel everything.’ Luckily, I have enough people to whom I can say: ‘Look, this week I’m temporarily invisible.’ And a few days later I went to a doctor and he said: ‘You really have to get some good rest.’ After that I slept well for a few weeks and thought about the situation. We had some people in our neighborhood who had a serious burn-out, even someone who ended his life because of this. Then you really start thinking: why am I doing all of this stuff? (Frederic, 53, Writer).

> Last year in the summer, it was very busy at work and I was also starting up my own educational project for adults and I was pregnant from July-August as well. I was very tired, exhausted actually, and suddenly, I didn’t feel like working anymore. I really couldn’t bring myself to go to work and according to the doctor it was a burn-out or whatever. I don’t think it was one thing in particular. I had two colleagues that have also been home because they couldn’t take it anymore, and they recommended this course (Karen, 29, Teacher higher education).

Furthermore, our interlocutors found it difficult to point out an exact cause for their troubles.

> I had already been complaining for some time about exhaustion. I wasn’t doing well, and the doctor couldn’t find any exact causes. My blood values were good. Actually, I knew everything was okay, but nevertheless, I had less energy than before and less drive. I do have to admit that I always led a very busy life, but when I read the introduction [of a book] on mindfulness, I thought: ‘I just have to try this. (Lora, 42, Pharmacist).

> I have irritable bowel syndrome and I could not get rid of the complaints and according to my doctor, this was caused by stress. I don’t really know, because I’m not so aware of stress. Anyway, I’m very emotional, and stress and emotions… They are probably related. And because there was no medication available to calm down my bowels, except for antidepressants, he advised me to try out mindfulness (Emma, 61, Lecturer higher education).

As the case of Emma already exemplifies, the undecidedness of her condition and the difficulty to deal with it medically, caused her doctor to refer her to mindfulness. Her case is not unique; a large group of course members was referred to mindfulness by general practitioners, psychologists or other first-aid workers.

Even though medical professionals are an important referential channel to mindfulness courses, it is important to mention that the practitioners have a strong conviction that it is a way to tackle their problems *themselves*. They do not feel as if they are handing themselves over to the trainer, but rather that he is providing them with tools to make them stronger and more empowered as a person. In their perception, the change they aim for will be obtained by themselves. Thus, an individualist discourse in terms of self-determination and responsibility is already present at the start of the mindfulness trajectory . Helen (60, Lecturer higher education) expresses this sentiment as: ’I’m going to try to be in charge of what happens to me in my life.’ In Patty’s story, we recognize the same urge to be autonomous. She describes it as: ‘I have to do something with myself.’

> In 2014, I had a breakdown at work. But it was not only the work, it was a combination of the things you build up throughout life, your career, the combination with household work, children, the values you have as a person and how you translate them to your work. So I think that, at a certain moment, I couldn’t handle it anymore. I fell apart and I realized ‘I have to do something with myself.’ And usually, I don’t look for medical solutions, I rarely see a doctor. But then, I went to a doctor and he said: ‘You

> have to sit at home, mandatorily, and you are going to figure out how to get yourself back on track.' That's when I started the mindfulness course (Patty, 57, Architect).

Other solutions, such as seeing a doctor, taking medication or even going to a psychologist, are perceived by most respondents as a less autonomous way to deal with their problems. A doctor gives you medication, but this is seen as a superficial way to get rid of some of the complaints that arise from a more fundamental problem. Medication is equated with being determined by chemical processes. Going to a psychologist is 'searching for ready-made answers' according to Susan:

> I thought [mindfulness] was a way of dealing with it myself. I have a prejudice against psychologists: 'You go to a psychologist and he or she says: you have to do this or that.' I know this is not very true, it's not like that, but I thought: I have to do something with myself, I have to learn to discover myself and maybe I saw this as a better alternative (Susan, 40, Researcher).

And not only professional help is rejected by the respondents; some of them also perceive it as a way to help themselves instead of asking friends for help:

> With mindfulness, you discover, it is in yourself. You are not dependent on someone else. I became a widow very young, I went through the beginning of breast cancer after four years, I can write a book about my life, which most people of my age can. But the feeling of: I will help you. Oh, I cannot stand that! And in 2011, I thought: I am going to help myself from now on, you can all go to hell! (Sabrina, 64, Entrepreneur).

This remarkable combination of, on the one hand, the impotence exemplified in a burn-out and, on the other hand, the need to autonomously take charge of one's own problems resembles the attraction of self-help manuals Nicolas Marquis (2014) describes. The readers of this secular individualist genre get involved in self-help literature from what Marquis calls a 'breach' that initiates a 'double opening': for one thing the recognition of their vulnerability and the need of support that they cannot acquire through the usual channels, but then again the recognition of a certain responsibility to overcome their problems (Marquis, 2014: 87-89). In mindfulness, this combination of being in need of help and taking responsibility for one's own fate is also present.

2. During the Course: 'Emotions are Interpretations'

During the eight-week course, two patterns keep reoccurring. Firstly, the actual performance of the group meditation exercises. The sequence for these exercises is the same: the instructor indicates what the course members have to do, what they have to focus on (i.e. breath, thoughts, emotions, parts of the body), and in complete silence the group takes on the appropriate posture and follows the instructions. The second phase involves everyone sitting together and discussing with the instructor how they experienced the specific variety of meditation. The role of the trainer is not to correct the experience of the practitioner; this experience is per definition and in itself true and valuable. The trainer has to keep a certain distance and neutrality towards the experience and take it as an unquestioned point of departure. As a trainer, he or she can only intervene in two cases: to ask for more details or more experiences through guiding questions, and to normalize experiences the practitioner feels uncomfortable with. Experience is taken as the ultimate foundation and is deepened and extended by asking more questions.

During the observation in the mindfulness course, this process of what emphasizing experiences entails is made clearer. For example, this fragment from the observation notes documents a discussion about the first meditation exercise, the so-called body scan. Most people make the remark that their thoughts are scattered, and they do not succeed in purely focusing on their breath or body. The instructor, however, tells them that they should not judge this natural inclination of the mind; it wanders by nature:

> Instructor: You must not think: ‘Here we go again, I cannot do anything right, this was not the exercise.’ Mindfulness is about mildness. Observe the fleeting character of your thoughts and the agitation in your mind. Say: ‘Interesting. So this is bothering me apparently.’ Just observe this and then slowly bring your attention back to your breath (Observation notes, week 1).

At another time, the discussion revolved around a homework assignment for which negative experiences or feelings had to be listed up in a diary. More concretely, the instruction was to carefully describe the expression of these feelings in one’s body. In the group, someone describes her feelings on a given day. The instructor corrects her and directs her attention to the bodily experience:

> Participant’s emotions: ‘I was emotional, tears were welling up, I felt angry and powerless.’
>
> Instructor: What you describe are not the bodily sensations. This is already an interpretation. Emotions are interpretations, labels you stick to the bodily awareness. Go back to the emotion. How did the emotion express itself in your body? Did your neck get stuck? Did your salivary glands block? The purpose of this exercise is to learn to feel this again (Observation notes, week 3).

In these corrections, advice or answers of the trainer, we see that he constantly tries to reframe the experiences the course members describe in line with the broader frame of mindfulness. It is really about meticulously reinterpreting how to see, even how to name and analyze feelings, thoughts or perceptions. This is most clear in the last example. The names of the emotions are already ‘an interpretation’, and he incites the practitioners to break them down into smaller entities that are less distorted by ‘subjective’ interpretations, but allegedly closer to what we ‘really’ feel. This focus on experience does not mean either that the practitioners are constantly sharing the concrete content of their thoughts or emotions. Rather, they are describing how focusing on parts of their body, thoughts or emotions made them feel. They are instead sharing their - in psychological terms also used by the mindfulness subculture - 'meta-cognitive awareness', as they meditate on these thoughts instead of the thoughts themselves (Teasdale et al., 2002). Sharing one's personal problems during the training and drawing a lot of attention to one's personal life from the group, is even considered a problem by some of the trainers:

> We will never discuss the concrete content in a mindfulness training, we absolutely avoid that. So, when I notice that during the training someone constantly refers to his relation with his partner, or his youth… then I will address this and we will discuss together whether the person may need help for this concrete problem apart from the training. But after one or maybe two mindfulness trainings, I think that in the long run, you will not end up in such concrete pitfalls anymore (Nicolas, 51, Trainer).

Besides the psychological perspective, this approach to feelings and thoughts is also akin to the original approach in Theravada Buddhism, which aims at an 'embodied self-reflexivity' (Pagis, 2009). This precedes discursive self-reflexivity and can be described as 'a process based predominantly on feeling the body, in which the relation with oneself unfolds through a corporeal medium by way of practices that increase awareness of sensations, such as meditation.' Embodied self-reflexivity can be related to the Buddhist principle of the 'selfless self', where personal identity is unmasked as an illusion and deconstructed in thoughts and feelings that pass by in our consciousness (Collins, 1982).

In terms of socialization, what happens here is very similar to the process Tanja Luhrmann (1989) terms 'interpretative drift' or 'the cultural kindling' (Cassaniti & Luhrmann, 2014) of spiritual experiences in her analysis of neopagan practices. She defines this as 'the slow shift in someone's manner of interpreting events, making sense of experiences, and responding to the world'(1989: 12). At concrete instances, the interpretation of experiences is redirected in order to slowly change the frame wherein practitioners - in her case highly educated people that come to be socialized in magical practices - make sense of them. Consequently, practitioners become more skilled in seeing new patterns in events, making new connections and paying attention to different aspects of experience. If we look beyond the specific domain of spirituality, we can also clearly recognize similarities with the broader interactive model of socialization we introduced in chapter 2, with as most important author Howard Becker. The trainer as the more experienced practitioner in a first phase interacts purely with the experiences of the practitioners and provides them with a paradoxical labeling, i.e. one that claims to go beyond culture and labels, back to the pure bodily experience. In a second phase, the interaction takes place between trainer and less experienced practitioners, where interpretations are confronted with each other and the trainer continues to guide the interpretation of experiences in terms of embodied self-reflexivity. As we observed during the course, this interactive socialization is a matter of slow transformation: practitioners present a question, a doubt, a feeling they have during a meditation, and during these very concrete and seemingly insignificant little events, the trainer slowly redirects their view. In this sense, the 'interpretative drift' is very similar to developing a theory, since it involves moments of ‘guided induction’ by the trainer, when one learns to interpret similar events or experiences as pure bodily sensations or ‘bare awareness’ (Sharf, 2015) and deduction, where this perspective is applied to interpretation of new experiences.

3. Afterwards: Mindfulness between *Mind-management* and *Self-transformation*

After the course, two discourses on important insights stand out. People come to a mindfulness course with a utilitarian mindset, to solve a problem, but not all of them take utilitarian insights from it. A considerable part of our sample learned to reframe the whole straightforward goal-rational ‘problem-solution’ scheme. Instead of finding a clear-cut solution and thinking in terms of achieving some ‘results’, they changed their perception of the initial problem (see also Tipton, 1982 on western Zen students).

3.1. Mindfulness as ‘Mind-management’

The first group keeps on thinking about mindfulness as a way to obtain a result. Usually they train hard in meditation in order to discipline themselves. In line with Foucault (1993), this interpretation of mindfulness is closely related to a ‘self-technique’, particularly as interpreted from a very technical and pragmatic perspective as a technique the subject uses to discipline oneself. This work on the self supposes an active self that applies the mindfulness ethos in the concrete context, where the practitioners experience a problem which results in every time slightly different translations of the original practice. The exercises are applied by some at the exact moment when they are confronted with their problem. George (52, Lecturer higher education), for example, tells us that he meditates when he feels nervous and that the exercises helped him ‘to become calmer and to be less upset.’ Mary shares the experience of becoming calmer and meditates whenever she feels a panic attack coming up:

> I used the exercises when I had panic attacks. Normally, I would have gone on the street, screaming, so to speak, but with mindfulness I thought: stay calm, do the exercises and it helped, for example to fall asleep or to become a little more relaxed (Mary, 55, Bio-engineer).

Ruben (50, Marketing) uses mindfulness to conquer his fear of heights and especially refers to the ‘embodied self-reflexivity’ at the moment he experiences his fear: ‘After the course I could approach my fear differently: I have fear of heights, but what is this doing to my body?' He gains control over his fear by analyzing which bodily sensations accompany this fear. Feelings are decomposed to embodied self-reflexivity, which for Ruben has the result of neutralizing their impact. We find the most extreme example of this functional interpretation of meditation in Sabrina's narrative. She tells us how she used the body scan technique in a very disciplined way after she had surgery to place an artificial lung after she had had lung cancer. As a result of the surgery, she experienced heart fibrillations, but to the surprise of the doctors, she was able to get them under control. She claims that this is thanks to her disciplined practice of mindfulness:

> When the lung oncologist asked me: how have you been able to come through this difficult surgery this way, especially those first difficult days? Because those are really hard. You get a morphine bomb; the pain is really indescribable. And yes, thanks to mindfulness, I pulled through (Sabrina, 64, Entrepreneur).

In all these applications of mindfulness, a clear narrative of control becomes apparent. Their problems, be they fear of heights or extreme pain, are transformed through disciplined meditation to function normally again. For example, Emma (61, Lecturer higher education) says that it is pretty clear that it is a way to control your body: 'Those Buddhists, they can even control their body temperature.' This narrative of control, technique and constant repeated training is illustrated in George's explanation. He draws an interesting parallel between meditation as mental training and sports as physical training:

> For me, it is really a mind management tool. I regularly have to calm down the agitation in my mind. I'm also a marathon runner and I draw a strong parallel between physical and mental training. It is a training to keep your brain healthy. The spiritual side or Buddhism, I don't think so highly of that because I used to live among those people [he lived in India for a while], but the technique to calm down your thoughts and to keep them under control, that is what it is about for me. The training is a mental training instead of a physical training. In fact, the two are complementary to me (George, 52, Lecturer higher education).

Note as well how his emphasis on control is related to the objective of 'keeping your brain healthy.' A scientific-neurological perspective on the self underpins his emphasis on control in this quote, which was also a more general tendency shared by the former course members that saw mindfulness in terms of control (see also Cortois & Pons, 2018). This is in turn contrasted with the spiritual side of Buddhism in mindfulness, which is not applicable to him because it goes beyond the technical meaning he attributes to it. This was also the case for Sabrina, who almost threatened to stop the interview when I asked her whether mindfulness was spiritual for her. George presents the technique as a pure 'mind management tool', not to improve his brain as with sports, but to cope with 'agitations'. Frederic also reiterates the discourse of control and connects it to a sense of personal autonomy:

> The feeling: 'I'm in control', I decide. Not the stress, not the thoughts. I, I decide. I thought that was a revelation, to notice how a person can calm himself down (Frederic, 53, Writer).

In this quote, we clearly see how a technique becomes a ‘self-technique’; the meditation creates for Frederic a strong self, and in this regard ‘the self forms itself into a subject’ (Devos, 2004; Foucault, 1997). The feeling of control makes him independent of stress or other external stimuli and thus, strengthens him in his reliance on himself. We might call this a utilitarian individualist interpretation of the practice based on control, which is illustrated in the often repeated ‘I’, an ‘I’ that works on itself and thereby also shapes this self into an autonomous entity (Foucault, 1984).

The question remains where this control leads our interlocutors to. For people with psychological problems, fear or pain, the desired outcome is not to be controlled by these obstacles anymore, but to regain control over them and return to a situation they deem ‘normal’. In the case of burn-out, control is equivalent to learning to cope with the work situation or engaging in this situation more wisely, for instance by taking more breaks. The control discourse does not really fundamentally question the work-conditions in that sense, but forms a means to function under the ‘new spirit of capitalism’ that also includes ‘the human side of enterprise’ in its make-up (Boltanski & Chiapello, 2005; McGregor, 2005). Frederic and Sara, for instance, apply meditation in between jobs to regain their focus and energy:

> I have a big beanbag at my office and often I sit there. Then I give attention to my breathing and I sit for five minutes, between two jobs (Frederic, 53, Copy writer).
>
> If I take a break, I make myself a cup of tea, and I sit apart very consciously to take a moment and really taste my cup of tea (Sara, 41, Architect).

Some go even further and see mindfulness not merely as a coping-technique to function under neoliberal conditions but have the impression that it has even improved their performance.

> I think it is very useful. I have the impression that at work, I can focus better than before. I don’t know if this is the goal of mindfulness. It also helped me quite a lot with my career. […] If you are functioning well, it can help you to function even better. If I were the CEO of my company, then I would stimulate my employees to do this (Ruben, 50, Marketing).

Ruben has the impression that mindfulness allowed him to direct his attention better, which even helped him to be more successful in his career. A self-technique is for these interlocutors not a way to counter a cultural discourse, for instance the neoliberal discourse of work performance but is completely situated in this cultural discourse and allows individuals to actively align themselves with it. While mindfulness might be associated with alternative spirituality, for these interlocutors it allows them to function in conformity with expectations (Merton, 1968).

3.2. Mindfulness as Self-awareness: I Found Myself Again

The second group explicitly distances itself from the first interpretation of mindfulness. Especially the people who see mindfulness as a means to find peace are criticized:

> What I notice with the people that followed the mindfulness training, and almost with a hundred percent of them, […] is that they still say afterwards: yeah, I do this, because it really calms me down. Can you believe it? I talk to ten people and they all literally say what is not the purpose. It can be an effect, sure, but it is not good if you specifically want to achieve this. As if it is a medicine that calms you down (Marc, 45, Social assistant).

The main insight that Emma (61, Teacher higher education) stresses is also opposite to the utilitarian perspective. She learned to reappreciate 'the importance of insignificant activities', by tinkering for her own amusement. This second group claims to have a more balanced understanding of the practice. Mindfulness for them is a way to be confronted with the good as well as with the bad moments. This can be a very hard exercise in self-confrontation, they say. For them, mindfulness was a true 'eye-opener' that changed something in their attitude towards life and the things that happen to them. Sarah describes it, as she says herself 'not in such Zen-Buddhist terms' as 'punches in the face'. The term the mindfulness practitioners mostly used for this shift was 'awareness'. They gained awareness of themselves, their surroundings, other people etc. This awareness was anchored in the body, in line with the 'embodied self-reflexivity' the trainer instructed them in (Pagis, 2009; Sharf, 2015).

However, also this group of interlocutors exceeds the teachings of the trainer with their own active interpretation of the practice: they emphasize that they experience their selves in a more authentic, conscious manner. In their perception, mindfulness helped them to obtain a clearer image of who they truly are. Luc tells us that 'mindfulness brings him continuously closer to himself'. Our interlocutors emphasize that mindfulness did not change them, in line with the taboo on socialization in the spiritual milieu. Mindfulness brought them back in touch with aspects of themselves they once knew, for example during their childhood, but that had been gradually pushed to the background. The sources of this alienation they indicate are, for example: their work that asks too much of them, being hard on themselves, or appointments with acquaintances that take up too much of their time and that actually feel like an obligation. Sarah got back in touch with the person she was during childhood:

> I noticed that my self-acceptance and the connection with myself just became so much better. I do think, it has always been there, but it disappeared through certain circumstances. I'm talking about me as a little child of three or four years old. I know that as a child you have a certain personality and certain sensitivities, but through circumstances they cannot fully develop sometimes… And then slowly, you develop into another direction (Sara, 41, Architect).

Amanda tells us that she had always followed other people and that mindfulness helped her to gain self-confidence. As so many others, she uses the phrase: 'I found myself again':

> I learned to realize, that for a lot of things in my life, I was not really on the right track. He [the trainer] didn't use these words, but I've always been the meek one, too obedient, I was always doing everything for other people, I was always ready to help everybody. But it took me a very long time to find my own refuge. And for years this need has completely been neglected. And suddenly, I understood, and I had found myself again. I'm happy with who I am. This is thanks to mindfulness. I knew I was intelligent, I knew I was attentive, but I really found myself again and accepted myself, like: 'Look! This is me!' (Amanda, 69, Nurse).

Leo emphasizes that he has not changed either. During the interview, he tells us that as a child, he lived very mindfully. He could search for hours for mushrooms and watch birds. 'Nature, the smell of a Mediterranean church, scents, spheres, music, noises, notes… that could enchant me very much.' He also shares a nostalgic story of his father who got three rabbits and a pheasant, recently shot game, as a gift from a local farmer, and that he still remembers how his father let him smell the blood. He had lost this authentic understanding of his surroundings and nature, but mindfulness helped him regain it:

> I found myself again, I did not really change I think, but I could observe what caused me to crash [he had a burn-out]. But what made me crash, was not really part of my personality, those were external circumstances (Leo, 49, Manager).

The descriptions the course members use come very close to Heelas' concept of self-spirituality and are in line with expressive individualist understandings of the self that emphasize a deep authentic self (Bellah et al., 2008; Taylor, 1991). Rather than the 'bare awareness' anchored in bodily sensations that the trainer aimed at during the course, and which in fact unmasks the self as an illusion, the course members alter this perspective in their interpretation and see it in line with the Western expressive individualist script as a way to get in deeper contact with a profound sense of themselves. A better term might even be '*introspective individualism'* (Laermans, 2017)[50], because it is through repeated introspection, and not through real expression of this self via speech or other symbolic means of expression, that 'one comes to find oneself again'. This introspective individualist interpretation of the practice does not necessarily imply that they label it as spiritual, but for more than one third of the interlocutors it had spiritual connotations. When asked whether he saw mindfulness as spiritual, Marc, for example, answered: 'not mindfulness in itself, but it can have spiritual effects. Anyway, it caused me to develop this spiritual aspect further.'[51]

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[50] The distinction between expressive individualism and a kind of individualism that takes introspection as its main characteristic was introduced during a staff meeting by Rudi Laermans.

[51] This is in line with Greeson's (2011) study that claims that spirituality plays an intermediate role between the application of the exercises and the health outcome. People who are looking deeper into the spiritual aspects

Not only does the more authentic way they experience themselves change, a lot of mindfulness practitioners also say that mindfulness enabled them to make different choices in life. For most of them, this implies reduction of the number of hours they work, an earlier pension or even a different job. Amy and Jane both decided to work less after taking the mindfulness course:

> It gave me the courage to take the decision to work less. Finally, I could see: 'Help! What is this?' Because of this, we [she and her husband] started thinking: the financial aspect is one thing… and finally, we made the decision, and there is less [income] now from the first of July on… but our life is just as good. And our children, they are so pleased! (Amy, 45, Insurance agent).

> I am more aware of myself and my family, and yeah, my work is affected by it, in the sense that I decided to do less. I had to; the pace was not realistic anymore (Jane, 47, Researcher).

Not only related to work were people inclined to make other choices after the course. Susan, for example, joined a Buddhist community, which was for her the start of a more Buddhist inspired lifestyle. Many people also reported a change in drinking and eating habits, such as quitting alcohol and becoming vegetarian. Luc, for instance, embarked on a bigger personal quest after following the mindfulness training where many aspects of his life were questioned, but for him the work aspect was the most essential:

> It meant so much for me, mindfulness and Buddhism, that I started to question being a lawyer. All the values and convictions that I had always had of course, but that had been neglected because of work etc., they came to the surface. This didn't always make my life easy, because if you work at a bank, and you come with certain values and norms, then life becomes more difficult, there is more tension. I had a burn-out, I'm just getting out of it. […] Because mindfulness helped me so, I'm also following a trajectory to become a trainer myself. […] I still have to change a lot in my life, because I have the feeling that with every change, I'm coming closer to myself. Because of mindfulness. Absolutely. (Luc, 46, Lawyer).

In line with the introspective argumentation, he says that his true personality and values increasingly surfaced after the repeated practice of meditation. Implicitly, we also hear that he does not assume that he changed as a person, but that instead his previous alienation became visible to him. After getting in contact again with his true personality and true values, the mismatch with his career as a lawyer became more pressing. Mindfulness had encouraged him on a deeper level to scrutinize the mismatch between his work as a lawyer in a big firm and his personality. This caused a burn-out, but nevertheless mindfulness helped him to act on it.[52] For this category of practitioners, mindfulness as

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after a course in mindfulness, are more likely to report a positive health outcome according to the results of their survey.

[52] This burn-out was not seen by Luc as an effect of constantly confronting himself with his difficult situation. When this was suggested, he firmly denied this interpretation. Instead, it was framed as a 'necessary evil' that he inevitably had to encounter on his path to becoming true to himself. This is an interesting contrast with a utilitarian interpretation of the practice, where a negative experience was seen as proof that the practice did not work. This suggests that the framing in terms of a utilitarian or expressive script can be crucial for becoming socialized in mindfulness or not. The cultural script one uses to interpret the practice might be more important than whether the practice 'really' works in order to believe it works.

a self-technique not only becomes a means to cope with a situation, but also leads to true self-transformation (Foucault, 1984c). Because of mindfulness, Luc quit his job as a lawyer and radically switched careers and wants to become a fulltime mindfulness trainer. Later in the interview he explains that this is a big step that he would normally not have taken because of fear of job and financial insecurity. Due to mindfulness he dared to take the leap of faith.

The crucial aspect here is that the mindfulness practitioners do not frame reducing the hours they work or the change to an alleged 'less prestigious' job as a personal failure to live up to neoliberal standards. Instead, they frame this as more conscious choices that lead to a more ethical way to live.[53] The self-technique of mindfulness is not an active means to subscribe to the general cultural expectations and actively form oneself to attain those neoliberal ideals. Instead, as Foucault (1984a) describes in one of his later interviews, a self-technique can become a 'practice of freedom' and can in that regard formulate alternative ethical solutions for a given cultural frame. Mindfulness in its utilitarian interpretation provides the means to actively function under the given cultural frame of (mental) health and neoliberal performance. As we have seen in the last category of a more introspective interpretation of mindfulness, it might also form the start to formulate and live up to alternative ideals and values, and to actively shape one's life in accordance with them. Nevertheless, for mindfulness as a whole counts that it does not form a rigid frame where strict norms and values are transmitted, but that it leaves room for interpretation and application, either in a utilitarian or a transformative direction. 'Loyalty' to the conditions they are in might be one response, but 'exiting' their conditions is just as well a choice that is made by some of the participants (Hirschman, 1970).

Conclusion and Discussion

In this chapter we studied the process of socialization into spirituality by focusing on currently popular 'mindfulness'. The initial motives to start with mindfulness are pragmatic for most participants: people experience a problem, ranging from trivial problems to burn-out or depression, and they expect to find a solution with mindfulness. From the beginning, they emphasize that they see mindfulness as a way to come up with a solution on their own, suggesting already individualist expectations at the beginning, which might guide their further socialization. During the course, the trainer slowly redirected the interpretation frame of the participants. They learn to abstain from identification with thoughts and emotions, and here we can hear an echo of the original Buddhist doctrine of a ‘selfless self’ (Collins, 1982). In the participants’ discourse after the course, we distinguish two interpretations that both exceed this Buddhist self-denial. Both interpretations demonstrate the active application the course members make of mindfulness in the formation of their selves (Foucault, 1984c). This active interpretation and self-transformation forms a correction of the passive container notion of socialization as a vessel that is filled with content (e.g. Durkheim, 1898; Parsons, 2007). Instead of the passive internalization of norms and values, ethical work is conducted by the practitioners where they actively give shape to their selves in line with two concepts of individualism. The first group frames mindfulness as a utilitarian individualist discourse of ‘mind-management.’ Controlling their situation in the sense of coping with their initial problems is their main objective. The other group, which claims to have a more profound understanding of the practice, proceeds with a search for their authentic self after the course. Paradoxically, by this group Buddhist denial of the self is made compatible with its western antithesis: individualist self-spirituality. While most of the literature associates this ‘self-spirituality’ (Heelas, 1996) with expressive individualism (Taylor, 1991; Woodhead & Heelas, 2004), we instead, on the basis of our data, proposed the term ‘introspective individualism’ (Laermans, 2017)[54], since it is mostly an internal process of questioning that takes place. This term might also be more suitable for other spiritual courses beyond mindfulness.

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[53] See here also the increased interest in ethics in research, especially in anthropology, where this movement is described as 'the ethical turn' (Laidlaw, 2002; 2014; Lambek, 2010; Fassin, 2012; Faubion, 2011).

With regard to the concept of socialization in spirituality, this case study of the mindfulness milieu formed a critique of the – mostly emic – interpretations that deny socialization in spirituality. Self-spirituality is clearly a stage that is reached after a long path of socialization in a certain branch of spirituality. Two aspects of socialization could clearly be distinguished that take place in two distinct phases. On the one hand, we find the interactive socialization where the trainer guides the participants to interpret their experiences in a different light, which they apply to future experiences. An ‘interpretative drift’ (Luhrmann, 1989) takes place here, where experience and interpretation mutually influence each other. However, it does not explain the subsequent process where the interpretation of the course members breaks up into two groups. Here, the ‘interpretative drift’ is actively appropriated in a reflexive self-socialization, implying a more active construction and self-transformation on the side of the course-members. In the phase after the course, we found the most crucial processes to understand the socialization into spirituality and how it might develop into diverse directions; some that might also not be spiritual as shown by the group that refers to mindfulness in terms of control. In the case of mindfulness, rather than learning self-spirituality in the course, we found that this was an active interpretation on the side of the course members, which might also apply to other forms of more secular and health related forms of spirituality, for example yoga. The choices people make after turning inwards also testify of this active process of self-formation.

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[54] Put forward in staff meeting.

The two paths practitioners chose might also be informative in relation to the growing literature on business spirituality (e.g. Bovbjerg, 2011; Heelas, 2002) and the expressive ethos in organizations (e.g. Boltanski & Chiapello, 2005). While most studies on the relation between spirituality and work research the offer of business spirituality within the organizational context, it might be interesting that also spirituality outside the organizational context has a large impact on the work life of practitioners. While most of the literature is critical of business spirituality and sees it as a commodified and instrumental tool to reconcile the employee with his or her work[55] (e.g. Bell & Taylor, 2003; Carette & King, 2004; Case & Gosling, 2010), our study showed that this utilitarian use of spirituality is only one side of the coin. A more critical, or even rebellious (Merton, 1968) counter discourse to neoliberal pressure also takes root for those who develop the spiritual aspect further. Further research might be needed to see whether business spirituality for a part of the participants also engenders the same reflexive and critical effects besides the instrumental coping strategies that have already been documented.

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[55] Which might be compared with a modern-day form of Marxist analysis of the impact of cultural ideology or even religion as opium for the people.

Chapter 5: The Paradox of Tolerance in Civic Integration

Strategies for Socialization in Sexual Citizenship

Introduction

Currently, Europe is dealing with an ever increasing stream of immigrants, among which in first regard refugees, but other immigrant statuses keep prevailing such as family reunion and economic migration (OECD, 2013). Diversity itself has become diverse, with regard to migration statuses, nationalities, cultures and religions. This is referred to as 'diversification of diversity' (Holliger, 1995) or 'super-diversity' (Vertovec, 2007). This change and intensification in migration flows is perceived to bring challenges with it in the domain of policymaking, for instance with regard to the integration of newcomers. Since the nineties we have witnessed in Western European civic integration courses a growing formalization, government involvement and stricter regulations especially with regard to cultural and language requirements (Caponio, Jubany, & Güell, 2016; Goodman, 2010, 2012; van Houdt, Suvarierol, & Schinkel, 2011). In some countries, such as the Netherlands (Suvarierol & Kirk, 2015), France and Germany, exams of social orientation courses are mandatory and in most Western European countries, formal sanctions for newcomers who omit taking these courses are common (Joppke, 2007). In public debates on multiculturalism, the common aversion on both sides of the political spectrum seems to have become so-called 'political correctness'. The 'new political correctness' consists of refuting the myth of peacefully living together, and facing the alleged 'real problems' of a pluralist society. The dream of multiculturalism is replaced with the so-called 'reality of multicultu*realism*' (Schinkel, 2017).

In line with this alleged realism, the current trend in civic integration courses is to lay an emphasis on the theme of norms and values, or in other terms, to make citizenship conditional upon cultural appropriation. Newcomers have to subscribe to the prevailing norms and values of the host-society in order to receive diverse stages of citizenship. This movement suggests a departure from once popular notions of multiculturalism and diversity, as the protection of minority rights and identities (Kymlicka, 1995; Taylor et al., 1994), in favor of a more assimilationist understanding of integration into a Western mono-culture. The question, however, remains how this policy is translated to the daily practice of civic integration centers.

1. The Culturalization and Sexualization of Citizenship

Civic integration could be seen as the gradual process of obtaining citizenship in a new host society. Classically, citizenship is approached through the well-known analysis T.H. Marshall (1950) made of the evolution of citizenship in Britain from the 18th till the 20th century. In this understanding of citizenship, the emphasis is on rights, be they civil, political or social rights. Civil rights are related to individual liberty, in the form of freedom of religion and speech, the right to property and to engage in contracts. Political rights in their turn, entail the right to vote and to run for political office. Finally, equal access to food, shelter, healthcare and education constitutes the basis of a notion of citizenship that is inspired by social rights. Marshall's analysis of citizenship was often criticized for being too narrow and insensitive to other variables such as culture, religion or ethnicity (Turner, 1990). Currently in the context of integration, we can witness a shift to defining citizenship in moral terms (Schinkel, 2008) or as subscribing to certain norms and values, which others have termed a 'culturalization of citizenship' (Tonkens, Duyvendak, & Hurenkamp, 2008). They contrast this cultural understanding of citizenship specifically with the Marshallian conception of citizenship as 'less in terms of civic, political and social rights and more in terms to adherence to norms, values and cultural practices' (Tonkens & Duyvendak, 2016: 2). Instead of a rights-focused conception of citizenship, being socialized in norms, values and cultural practice becomes a condition for migrants who want to obtain citizenship in a new host society.

In the context of integration, this becomes especially apparent in the low countries, where concepts such as 'autochthony' and 'autochthonous culture' are frequented as quasi-natural categories (Geschiere, 2009). In the Netherlands, this has been the case since the murder of Pim Fortuyn and Theo Van Gogh (Entzinger, 2002; Mepschen, Duyvendak, & Tonkens, 2010). In Flanders, the populist autochthony discourse can be connected to its relation with the Southern part of Belgium and is said to be transposed to other alleged 'outsiders', a.o. newcomers (Arnout et al., 2009; Ceuppens, 2011). For instance, the special commission that determined the key themes of societal integration in Flanders, approaches Western culture from five core norms and values: freedom, equality, solidarity, respect and citizenship (Bossuyt, 2006). In the Netherlands, we can also observe a shift in the handbooks of societal orientation to the theme of norms and values (Van Huis & de Regt, 2005).[56]

As these documents show, the concrete themes that these norms and values are applied to mostly deal with the acceptance of gender and sexual identities, i.e. women and homosexuals (Dudink, 2017; Mepschen et al., 2010; Puar, 2013; Schinkel, 2017).[57] Some authors refer to it as 'sexual citizenship' (Richardson, 2017). Both in the case of gender equality and homosexuality, a metonymical association is made between sexual freedom and liberal democratic values.[58] Other cultural identities are presented in this discourse as opposed to these values. In the strongly mediatized public debate, this 'other' is often equated with 'Arabic', or, the ultimate clash, 'Islamic' values where a lack of this same sexual freedom is equated with non-Western features: tradition and dominance of religion. Remarkable is that the preservation of norms and values is a classical rightwing theme, while sexual identity politics and LGBT rights are traditionally leftwing agenda points. Before, anti-immigrant politics was mostly an expression of ethnocentrism or blunt racism. In this discourse of sexual citizenship, progressive ideas on sexual identity are combined with a conservative political agenda and used to make a symbolic demarcation with other, mostly Islamic, cultures (van Bohemen & Kemmers, 2011). Gay rights are in this context recast as a means to 'civilize' the cultural other (Puar, 2013; Van Huis & de Regt, 2005).[59] Once considered a marginal group, homosexuals are now, in the demarcation with oriental culture, portrayed as the cultural mainstream in the West.[60]

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[56] With the difference that in the Netherlands they rely on a standardized handbook that illustrates this shift to norms and values, while in Flanders there is only a document of a specialized commission available that lists the relevant norms and values.

[57] I consciously use the term 'homosexuality' and not 'queer' or 'LGBTQ', because in the debate and in course manuals of societal orientation courses in civic integration, they only refer to the gay-identity. The nuances of other sexual identities are lost in the discourse where homosexuality is used as in line with liberal democratic 'values and norms'. This indicates on the one hand the centrality of only one of these sexual identities to the Western cultural imaginary, while other queer identities are still attributed a marginal position. On the other hand, it is also a sign of the strategic use of sexual identities, not as inherent politics of standing up for their rights amongst the whole queer spectrum, but more as a cultural demarcation tool with other cultural identities.

[58] Scott (2009) calls this 'sexularism', which is historically incorrect in the case of gender equality. While a linear ideal of secularism portrays it as a movement away from irrational inequalities, gender inequality persisted through, for example, the French revolution, led by a masculine elite, which associated religiosity with women who were allegedly 'more easily seduced' by it.

[59] The relativity of this political association between gay rights and secular modernity, becomes clear, for instance, in opinion research on homosexuality in Flanders. This research shows the idealized nature of presenting acceptance of homosexuality as the norm (Carton, Pickery, & Verlet, 2017).

[60] Especially in the American context, homosexuality is used in the post-9/11 era as a national symbol of cultural eminence to counter an intolerant 'terrorist other', negating the existence of queer Muslim identities and the very divided opinions with regard to homosexuality in Western society (Puar, 2007).

In the context of civic integration courses, the equation between norms and values and tolerating sexual identities, implies for newcomers that they are expected to assimilate to this morality that is presented as characteristic for Western society (Elliott, 2014; Mepschen et al., 2010). Understood as such, this discourse heads for an assimilationist model of integration and we could ask whether this might not endanger alternative notions of multiculturalism that emphasize pluralism and diversity (Banting & Kymlicka, 2013; Kymlicka, 1995; Modood, 2007). Does this deemed superiority of the Western morality of respecting sexual identities result in a retreat of a multiculturalist model (Joppke, 2004)? From the description of a culturalization of citizenship, especially if culture is understood in an essentialist manner in terms of fixed norms and values concerning sexual identities, one might hypothesize a similar evolution. This implies that a culturalization of citizenship not only clashes with other notions of citizenship, but also with other conceptions of culture, such as multiculturalism where recognition and positive accommodation is given to the diversity of ethnic minority groups (Kymlicka, 1995; Taylor et al., 1994).

However, most of the literature one-sidedly focuses on the change in policy regulations or shifts in the public debate on integration to answer this question. Little is known of the actual practice of civic integration itself. The community workers are specifically interesting to get a more complete picture of how policy is implemented at street level. They have to deal with the transmission of these norms and values permanently in the daily practice of civic integration and they are constantly confronted with other cultural frameworks. Lipsky (1969; 2010) emphasized the importance of taking 'street level bureaucrats' into account when analyzing policy, since 'policy implementation in the end comes down to the people [street level bureaucrats] who actually implement it.' Do they emphasize diversity of opinion as an absolute value or is equality and respect for homosexuals and women the incontestable ethic they aim to teach newcomers? In this chapter, I investigate how the culturalization of citizenship is translated on the street level. The socialization process in this culturally diverse context into these liberal democratic norms is highlighted, both from the side of the 'socializers' and the 'socializees'. The structure of this chapter is organized as follows: the first section focuses on norms and values in general and how they are treated in civic integration. The second section deals with a specific paradox the teachers experience when teaching their students to respect gay and women's rights, for which they develop four strategies. In the final section, we shift our attention to the course members and how they experience this culturalization of citizenship.

2. Norms and Values and the Sexualization of Citizenship

2.1. Hidden Norms and Values

A course in integration does not merely consist of lessons on norms and values and controversial discussions in the cultural sphere. A substantial number of rather formal and pragmatic topics are treated as well, such as the housing market, social security regulations, garbage sorting or public transport. Nevertheless, all of the interviewed teachers indicate the indisputable importance of norms and values and most of them even refer to it as 'the most important topic.' As anticipated from the literature on sexual citizenship, gender equality and homosexuality make up the most prominent norms and values related themes. Some of the teachers also term them 'the taboo-themes' and they point at the essential importance of dealing with these subjects. Yet, they also indicate that norms and values are broader than just these taboo-themes, and a genuine integration teacher should make a more general connection of morality to all the topics that are treated. Norms and values form the common thread amongst the themes of SO, they argue. Some of the teachers, like senior teacher Najib, are even of the opinion that there should not be a separate course that is dedicated only to values and norms, but that every topic is an opportunity to make the connection with morality:

> Norms and values are the most important. I see them as: freedom, respect, solidarity, equality and citizenship. These have to be central. What does that mean? You have to make them concrete in each theme. You can't say: 'Today, we will talk about norms and values.' As a teacher in societal orientation, you always have to keep norms and values central in your head (Najib, 51, Teacher Arabic).

In line with the culturalization of citizenship, and even beyond its narrow focus in the literature on sexual identities, several topics are reframed from the point of view of culture. Fakhir gives us a more concrete explanation of the connection between seemingly pragmatic topics and norms and values.

> I don't have a specific course on norms and values. I try to mention them every course when I see an opportunity. For example, when we talk about being on time, then I talk about respect. If we brainstorm about politics, I discuss the difference between democracy and dictatorship. If I'm talking about the family, I will automatically discuss equality between men and women. With the theme of health, I will talk about sexuality, and subsequently homosexuality and freedom (Fakhir, 32, Teacher Arabic).

The advantage of this connection of almost every theme to norms and values is that it allows a quasi-organic bringing about of these sensitive themes related to pragmatic themes. Another strategy of organically raising these themes is by discussing the news. This easily merges into a discussion on norms and values.[61] These strategies are to a large extent related to the teachers' conviction that you should not use an authoritarian style when discussing these themes. It cannot be a story of 'raising your finger'. 'We are dealing with grown-ups here', they tell. While Natasha (42, Teacher Russian), for example, points at the importance of norms and values of the guest society, she warns that it is not a matter of 'preaching'. Emilie (33, Teacher Dutch) continues in a similar vein that it 'cannot be a story where you impose norms and values.' To illustrate this, she told an anecdote of her and a colleague visiting a seminar at the local university about civic integration: 'And he [the professor] said: "in the course of civic integration, the rules of the country are imposed." People really think that we teach [newcomers] how to make béchamel sauce!' She strongly rejects this rule-directed view of integration. Najib, in his turn, exclaims that civic integration is 'not a Koran or a Bible!' Hendrik states that he attributes a lot of attention to the history and the formation of the norms and values of this society, so that he does not teach in a 'paternalistic' style about this subject or presents it 'like a fait accompli'. The teachers acknowledge the importance of the theme of norms and values. Nevertheless, the manner in which they raise these themes is mostly dispersed throughout the lessons, connected to other topics and presented in a non-authoritarian way. Laura illustrates this shared approach in this concise fragment:

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[61] Most of the teachers I interviewed had the habit of starting the course with one of the course members who had the assignment as a 'journalist' to present a news item from the Belgian news to the group. According to the teachers, this encouraged them to watch the Belgian news, which made them familiar with the language and the cultural frame of this country.

> I: What do you think about norms and values being central?
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> R: I think that that is good, they should be central. For me, it has more to do with how you communicate them. Very authoritarian with you finger raised in front of the class, that doesn't work. It doesn't work for anybody and it isn't natural. But those topics can be treated as a sort of common thread throughout the whole course, and that is absolutely fine. That is our task, that is what is expected from us (Laura, 31, Teacher Dutch).

2.2. The Sexualization of Moral Individualism

Norms and values are interwoven with diverse topics. Nevertheless, the taboo-topics on sexual and gender identities form more explicit moments when culture and morality are treated. In both of these topics there is a clear connection to teaching Western individualist values. Recognizing the other as a worthy individual is central; in most of the literature it is described as moral individualism (Durkheim, 1973; Joas, 2013). For these two topics there is, nevertheless, a slightly different accent on how moral individualism is approached. With regard to women, the argumentation is strongly related to the classic moral individualism, in the sense that it is mostly approached from the angle of equality of men and women and the fact that women also have the right to build a life of their own. The most frequently treated topics in relation to women are: that they have a right to work, that the household should be divided equally between men and women, that women should not be bothered on the street (so-called 'catcalling') and that polygamy is not in line with gender equality. Equality is the key concept, as teacher Akram (31, Teacher Arabic) suggests: 'For some men it is important that women stay at home, also for the children. You have to indicate that women are equal to men here.' Sandra (48, Teacher Dutch) also illustrates that equality is especially the focus when it comes to women with an example on childcare:

> There was an info session about pregnancy. One of the men said that it only concerned the women. I responded: 'To make a child, you need two persons. The woman is not the only responsible one, both man and woman are responsible.' His wife was pregnant. I sent him to that info session.

With regard to styles of feminist argumentation, it is certainly not the so-called 'difference feminism' that is defended here, but the argument is more similar to 'equality feminism' or post-modernist variations of it (Scott, 1988; Voet, 1998).

With regard to gay people, a moral individualist aspect that was highlighted was the taboo on violence against this group. However, the main discourse in this regard was not focused on equality, but rather on authenticity of the homosexual person. Particularly on three occasions that were stressed during the course, respecting gay people and authenticity appeared to be strongly connected. First, the nature-nurture debate, with one of the key objectives of the teachers to show the newcomers that being gay was not something one learned, or worse, as some of the newcomers verbalized it: 'with which a society indoctrinated its people', but a natural characteristic that belonged to the authentic personality of the gay person. Vice versa, the teachers saw the solution of other civilizations to ban gay people from the public sphere, or even punish them, as an inauthentic indoctrination. Basim (36, Teacher Arabic), for instance, tells that he deliberately 'shows them videos of Arabic countries, not of Belgium, of gay people and transgender people in their countries of origin' to illustrate that it is not a cultural construct, but occurs in each society. Secondly, it was important for the teachers to transmit the conviction that homosexuality is not a disease that can be cured, but an intrinsic part of one's identity. Sandra (48, Teacher Dutch), for example, elaborated that in one group she was very disappointed, because they still did not figure that it was not a disease. She illustrates this with a rather controversial dilemma:

> During the last class, I gave them a few statements. One of them was: 'Do you prefer a handicapped daughter or a homosexual daughter?' Only one woman preferred a homosexual daughter. She chose this because she saw this as a disease that could still be cured. They still didn't understand that it is not a disease.

Finally, the fact that some newcomers perceived homosexuality as merely an individual choice was also seen as problematic and instead, the teachers attempted to present it as an unquestionable personality trait: 'who one is'. 'It is a feeling to be homosexual, you don't choose it', Hanne (32, Teacher Dutch) explains. These three elements are closely related, each with a different accent, but all point to the importance of seeing homosexuality as an authentic part of the person itself (see also Seidman & Meeks, 2011). One of the educative games that is used in the integration course with questions that were either wrong or right also strongly illustrates that respecting the authenticity of the gay person is what is at stake. A few examples are: you only find homosexuality in the west; whether someone is gay is already fixed at birth; being homosexual is something you choose. And finally one of the most absurd questions to illustrate that homosexuality can also be found in nature: what percentage of male sheep is gay?

In both these sexual and gender identities, we observe that they have a close relationship to moral individualism. Respect is the fundamental value is what they want to teach the newcomers, with as the ultimate boundary the prohibition of violence against these groups. In the case of the subject of women, this becomes particularly apparent in the emphasis on equality. When gay identity is concerned, moral individualism is intertwined with a focus on the authenticity of the gay person. The discussions in the course do not only revolve around equality and rights, but mostly deal with the natural, unchosen and normal nature of homosexuality. In this case both moral and expressive individualist intuitions seem to play a role in the discourse of the teachers.

3. The Paradox of Tolerance: Should we Tolerate Intolerance?

For the discussion of these sexual identities, the same applies as with the more hidden introduction of norms and values: the teachers do not want to present them in an authoritarian style. However, and for these sensitive topics this becomes more pressing, they do want to socialize them to a certain degree in accepting a moral individualist stance on sexual and gender minorities. This dilemma especially comes to the surface when the question of tolerating an alleged intolerant opinion in relation to sexual or gender identities is at stake. Several examples of these intolerant opinions were observed; for instance, one of the students defended the opinion that gay marriage was as absurd as marrying your dog. Examples with less imagination are that homosexuality is a disease, that homosexuals should be punished, that it is something that a liberal society indoctrinates their children with etc. With regard to women, alleged intolerant opinions are that women should not swim in public swimming pools, that they should stay at home, or that crèches cannot be trusted and only the mother can provide proper care. Homosexuality, nevertheless, is definitely the most controversial topic and most of what the teachers communicated on intolerance was related to this theme. In all these instances, the teacher does not take a merely passive stand and only observes the diversity of opinions, but different strategies are used to deal with intolerant opinions, without ending up in the other extreme of forcing a moral perspective on them.

In their teaching practice, each time they discuss these sexual and gender related norms and values, the teachers face what Popper (2013: 237) referred to as ‘the paradox of tolerance’. In other words, the question whether we should tolerate an intolerant opinion to be in line with a general principle of tolerance, or whether a tolerant society can only persist if we make an exception here and condemn the intolerant opinion. Popper radically chose for the latter solution: ‘Unlimited tolerance must lead to the disappearance of tolerance. If we extend unlimited tolerance even to those who are intolerant, if we are not prepared to defend a tolerant society against the onslaught of the intolerant, then the tolerant will be destroyed, and tolerance with them. The integration teachers are not so categorical in their defense of moral individualism, but nevertheless apply diverse strategies to socialize the newcomers more indirectly. In the following sections, we will discuss four strategies we encountered with the teachers to defuse this paradox of tolerance. These strategies involve firstly, privatizing intolerant opinions, secondly, stimulating diverse opinions through discussion and thirdly, confronting the taboos of the newcomers. Finally, the teachers with a migration background use a more personally involved strategy where they present themselves as examples of successful integration.

3.1. Private Judgement, Public Acceptance

A first recurring approach of the teachers, when they are faced with the paradox of tolerance, involves making a sharp distinction between the public and the private sphere. They hold that, while everyone has a right to their private opinion, in the public domain they have to behave respectfully towards homosexuals and women. Here, the classic liberal boundary between the public and the private realm is used to approach the limits of morality. Privatizing your intolerant opinion opposing moral individualism is seen in this regard as a solution for resolving cultural conflict. Amina (34, Teacher Arabic) says: ‘Gays have their rights on the streets, just like you have your rights on the street.’ Newcomers are prepared for how to deal with gay people in the public sphere. Sandra (48, Teacher Dutch) focuses on public behavior: ‘I prepare them for what they have to do when their colleague, boss, neighbor is gay.’ Zuzanna and Natasha explicitly contrast the right newcomers have to their own opinion, implicitly expecting that their opinion will be negative towards homosexuals, and the rights of homosexual in the public space to freely express their identity. Public behavior is opposed to private opinion:

> Maybe they can't accept it, and that is also not necessary, but how do you deal with gays at work? When the parents or the friends of their child are gay? What are they going to do? (Zuzanna, 32, Teacher Polish).

> I don't expect that they will change their opinion and I also openly told them this: 'People, you can stay critical, that is not bad, that is normal. You have a right to your personal perception.' For me it is more important how you communicate it to others (Natasha, 42, Teacher Russian).

Femke also emphasizes 'your place in society' and the consequences of your opinion in the public sphere. If you want to have the opinion that women have to wear a burqa, you have to live with the consequence that you will have a marginal position in the public sphere. More than an intrinsic morality of respect and human value, she takes a consequentialist point of view:

> If it concerns norms and values, sexuality, citizenship, you name it, I'm convinced that we don't all share the same opinion. […] If you look at average Belgian people, I'm convinced that you will also have gay-haters and neo-Nazis. I want to emphasize more the fact that you can have your own opinion, but that you have to realize which influence it has on […] your place in society. If you want to isolate yourself with the opinion that all women have to wear a burqa, you have to realize that you will have a minority position in society (Femke, 29, Teacher Dutch).

Notice in Femke's quote that, according to her, religion and religious symbols have no place in the public sphere. While the teachers mostly frame it from the perspective of tolerance of sexual and gender identities, the public role of religion is time and again implicitly denied.

The most important representation of the public realm for the teachers is the law. Here again, the distinction between public and institutionalized law is contrasted with private opinion, for instance by Alper (53, Teacher Turkish): 'I would say that they have to abide by the law, no matter what they think about it privately.' They often refer to the indisputable character of the law on gay marriage and adoption to show that homosexuality is publicly accepted in this society. Lucas (37, Teacher Arabic) argues in his course that if you harm a homosexual person out of hate, this can form an aggravating circumstance. To the teachers, the law represents 'the facts' (Laura, 31, Teacher Dutch); 'You don't have to discuss anymore, that phase is already over' (Bakul, 55, Teacher Tamil) and they find it consoling that they have this foundation to rely upon when intense conflict arises during the discussions. While discussing norms and values forms an important part of their job, when they present the law, there is no room for discussion anymore. For them, the law forms a higher degree of institutionalization than norms and values, which the newcomers just have to accept:

> Finally, it is not only norms and values, it is also legislation. […] Ok, you don't accept it, but you have to respect it. […] You can keep on thinking that homosexuality is a disease, but according to Belgian law, you cannot do anything to people that are gay. So, you'd better watch out (Elif, 52, Teacher Turkish).

In the end, this public-private distinction illustrates that the teachers are very pessimistic about the potential for personal change on the side of the course members to a moral individualist stance. They prefer to stay realistic and, in that case, their last resort is to make sure that the course members know that they cannot discriminate or especially cause any harm to minorities in the public sphere. While this public-private distinction is seen from the perspective of tolerance for women and gay people in the public sphere, public secularism is always taken as the implicit assumption. A strong demarcation between the secular public sphere and sacred values that can merely play a role in the private sphere forms the unquestioned point of departure. That the opinion on gay people and women might be connected to the public role some of the religious newcomers attribute to religion remains unmentioned by the integration teachers.

3.2. (Performing) Diversity

A second manner to deal with the paradox of tolerance is through discussion. In line with the democratic ideal the teachers want to transmit to the course members, they think it is also important during the course to let the discussion unfold naturally. This strategy, which is actually preferred by all the teachers, has more to do with introducing the course members to a sense of 'moral relativism' (Taylor, 1991), instead of making them accept moral individualism. With moral relativism we refer to the belief that no moral conviction is superior to another, also intolerant opinions on gender and sexual identities are a valid moral stance. This position presupposes that no moral position takes itself as the absolute truth and respects the diversity of opinions. Najib, for example, tells us that it is only natural that people differ in opinion:

> We can have different opinions in the group. That is healthy, that is no problem! The world is born out of contradictions! It's normal that there is difference, but we all have to listen to each other, with respect. Respect is: I understand your opinion, but even though I don't agree, I respect your opinion and you respect mine (Najib, 51, Teacher Arabic).

In the last sentence of Najib, we hear an echo of the defense of free speech attributed to Voltaire: 'I disapprove of what you say, but I will defend to the death your right to say it' (Hall, 2016). Najib is, nevertheless, framing it rather from the point of view of 'respect', which is more in line with 'tolerance' as a concept, than the more radical 'dying for free speech'. In the end, the plurality of opinions does not have to disappear, everybody has a right to their own point of view, and in this process the teacher does not seem to intervene.

The reason why teachers can take such a relativist and impartial stance in the course is that especially in groups with diverse nationalities,[62] there is a high probability that people in the group automatically will bring up diverse perspectives. As such, a discussion will naturally unfold and the teacher is not forcing an opinion top-down upon the group. A confrontation of diverse points of view is brought about within the group itself. Natasha, for example, talks about a woman who challenges a man's views on how a Somali woman should act. Emilie, on the other hand, makes clear that the confrontation with different opinions does not always arise from the need to refute the other's opinion, but that it can result from the mere question to explain cultural phenomena:

> Sometimes it spontaneously comes from the group. In the Somali group there was a woman who said: 'I don't want to start the procedure for family reunion with my husband, because coming to Belgium, I almost got killed and I heard he has another woman there.' A male student said: 'You can't do that, you are married! You have to be loyal to your husband.' She said to him: 'You could talk to me like that in Somalia, but not here anymore.' That was fantastic. That is always the best way, when this comes from the group (Natasha, 42, Teacher Russian).
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> When they start a dialogue about something they don't understand, I think that is fantastic. I once had a moment when […] the Latina women asked the Spanish Moroccan women to explain the headscarf to them because they didn't get it. 'How do you communicate?' – 'Communicate? We just talk.' – 'But you also communicate with your body?' That is such a fruitful course (Emilie, 33, Teacher Dutch).

In these fragments, both teachers want to make the point that a natural exchange of opinions is taking place within the group. The woman Natasha describes, confronts the man from a Western emancipated perspective on gender against unconditional loyalty to her husband. In Emilie's story, we have two cultures where they accidentally speak the same language and, in this context, have to exchange opinions. Both teachers are not purely impartial; they value this exchange. Both select an anecdote in which a liberal democratic perspective is defended from within the class, and this selection is also significant. Natasha values the emancipated woman and Emilie is positive on the questioning of the headscarf. Laura adds to this that this makes a much stronger impression than when she, a white woman not of their culture, makes the same remarks. When on top of that this person is homosexual, it makes an even stronger impression on the fellow class members:

> If you are very lucky, then you also have someone in the class who can talk about it with well-considered words, and that is the greatest gift, because other people in the class also start sharing their opinions. That is often so much stronger than when it comes from me, a white Western woman […]. And mostly, it is someone who is him/herself related to the topic. In the last group, for example, there was a lady who was a lesbian herself, so I was very grateful that it was also someone who could express herself very well (Laura, 31, Teacher Dutch).

Laura is not keeping it a secret that she considers it a 'gift' if someone in the group can defend the right of homosexuals. From a strategic point of view, she also recognizes her racial and cultural situatedness and the ‘civilizing message’ that might be deduced from her urging her course members to respect homosexuals, while it might not be interpreted like that if the same opinion comes from within the group.

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[62] Heterogeneous groups as they are called in the organization. They are mostly found in the courses that are taught in English.

Not only in their representation afterwards of the class context in the interviews, teachers select the liberal democratic opinions as valuable, but also during the course the teachers subtly try to intervene behind the scenes to ‘facilitate’ the discussion. We see here that pluralism is not only a natural condition, but also that the teachers actively create this pluralism. They will encourage the members of the group that can represent an alternative voice or one that is in line with the moral agenda of the teacher. In fact, they perform in a deliberate way the liberal utopia that every individual can equally strongly represent their own opinion in the discussion and, besides, that the moral individualist opinions automatically outbalance other opinions in a fair discussion. By invisibly orchestrating the discussion behind the scenes, the paradox of tolerance dissolves.

> With a course on norms and values […] you look for people you can use to offer a counterbalance. I do that very deliberately. As a teacher, I don’t always want to be put in a situation where I have to defend the opposite point of view. Or that I have to impose something (Femke, 29, Teacher Dutch).

Additionally, the pluralist utopia is very dependent on the structure of the group. The performing of diversity is possible in heterogeneous groups with multiple nationalities, but it is especially difficult to get the course members acquainted with a sense of relativism in groups with one nationality or culture, the so-called ‘homogeneous’ groups. In these situations, we can observe that pluralism of opinions is not an automatic condition arising in each group, but that it is mediated by the diversity of cultures that is present in the group. That everybody has their individual opinion that has to be expressed in a true pluralistic discussion, is already a Western individualist premise for thinking about pluralism that does not take the role of culture for the formation of opinions into account. We see this in homogeneous groups, where conflicts between teachers and students over norms and values are most likely to arise. This conflict is even regardless of whether the teacher is from the same nationality or not. A simplistic opposition between ‘us’ and ‘them’ very easily arises in these conditions, the teachers indicate. Either the students argue that the teacher is ‘one of us’ and accordingly (s)he should defend the same stance, or the teacher is the representation of ‘them’ and (s)he has to take an opposite stance from the course members. In both cases, conflicts arise: either the teacher is seen as a traitor of their culture, or as someone deliberately trying to civilize the students. In both situations, a teacher-versus-all situation can arise, which the teachers indicate to be emotionally very demanding. Natasha, for example, experienced this with a Russian group that formulated racist opinions about Muslims after the fundamentalist attacks of Brussels airport.[63] Her group wanted her to participate in calling Muslims offensive names, but she wanted them to take those words back. 'You are one of us, you have to participate', was their reply. Eventually she stopped the course, because emotionally she could not handle the situation anymore. The situation was only restored after the course members collectively offered their apologies to the teacher. In this situation, we can clearly observe that it is not always the default position that discussion naturally leads to an awareness of moral relativism, but that this is very dependent on the composition of the group.

3.3. Confrontation: 'There are no Taboos'

A recurring observation with all the teachers was their emphasis on confrontation. The 'taboo-themes' are not meant to stay taboo. Taboo here refers to how the newcomers perceive these themes according to the teachers; they are not deemed to be taboo in a liberal democratic society. Confrontation is mostly understood as openly talking about these themes. They absolutely want to avoid is that these topics become unmentionable. Basim (36, Teacher Arabic), for instance, explains this goal very clearly: 'This is our society, everything can be discussed. There are no taboos in civic integration. There are no limits.' He nuanced this by telling that you can of course not start with these topics in the first classes. You first have to gain the trust of the students, but in the end, there should be a confrontation with the taboo because: 'There are taboos in every country, but you have to find the courage to mention them and confront them.' Implicit here, is that according to him, there are taboos everywhere, except in the Western society. This absolute ban on taboos is in line with the emphasis on freedom of expression that a liberal democratic society projects as its self-image (Assad, Brown, Butler, & Mahmood, 2009: 56-57). Fakhir explains that it is necessary to confront the newcomers with these themes, before they meet a homosexual person in society. In order to reduce the 'shock' that might result from such an encounter, it is of the utmost importance to already mention this in class:

> I plan to always treat those topics. This is our reality, it is their new reality. It is important for them, they come from another culture, another world. They never saw a gay person. To reduce the shock, it is important to tell them that one day, they will meet a gay or transsexual person, and [to make them reflect on] how they will react (Fakhir, 32, Teacher Arabic).

Underlying his reasoning is that taboos follow the same logic as fears: through continual exposure to taboos, one might overcome the taboo. Fakhir is psychologizing taboos in this fragment. That a deeper underlying moral or religious value-pattern might lie at the basis of this rejection of homosexuality, is not taken into account in this explanation.

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[63] These attacks took place on March 22, 2016. The interview with Natasha was conducted in August of the same year.

The focus on confrontation is also noticed by the course members. During the observations I witnessed a woman who questioned the fact that we were discussing homosexuality: ‘Why do we have to talk about this?’ she objected. She refused to talk about it any further and wanted to close the topic. The teacher intervened firmly in this case and emphasized that they had to talk about this, because it is part of the society they are in now. In the end, the fact that she had a negative opinion on gay people was deemed less of a problem than the fact that she wanted to stop talking about it altogether. Regardless of what her opinion was, its expression was perceived as a necessary step in her process of integration.

Talking is used as the most important confrontational strategy. Confrontation can nevertheless also be obtained through images. Usually, this visual confrontation serves the goal of starting a discussion. In itself it also generates an effect with the students as Zuzanna told me:

> I often use videos. Last year I used one […] I saw it on television, it’s a French advertisement for a car […]. A dad goes to church with a young girl, you can see it’s a marriage. The dad brings the daughter to the altar. But actually, it is the daughter that brings her dad to the altar and the young man who is waiting there is going to marry the dad […]. The slogan is: ‘Times are changing, it is time for Renault.’ I had one group who really got a trauma from that video clip. For another topic, I also used a video, and they were really scared that it would be like the last one! (Zuzanna, 32, Teacher Polish).

Zuzanna talks jokingly in terms of ‘trauma’, because the students were afraid of videos from that moment on. Yet, she doesn’t take the feeling of trauma seriously at any moment, or that words or images can offend or hurt (Butler, 1997).

Another form of confrontation is an actual encounter. In the ‘stadsklap’ (see chapter 3) for example, a transsexual person from time to time participates in the discussions. The confrontation with this person in a dialogue with the newcomers necessitates them to move beyond the taboo. Sandra, moreover, invited a homosexual friend of hers to the class. The encounter with the homosexual, not as an abstract concept in speech or images, but as a person, helped some of the course members to accept him, tells Sandra:

> I invited in one group […] a homosexual friend of mine. That was really good. There were afterwards people who told me that it really made a difference for them. I also asked them whether they would know that he is homosexual when they would see him on the street, because their image is so one-sided. But not every homosexual looks feminine. It nuanced their image (Sandra, 48, Teacher Dutch).

Confrontation as such does not immediately lead to the acceptance of moral individualism, but it is for some teachers the preparatory step to seeing ‘the person behind the emblem’ (Laura, 31, Teacher

Dutch). In order to open up the possibility for future respect of certain identities, preferably homosexuals, the topic has to be made discussable.

The teachers connect this general strategy of confrontation with opening up a theme for closer individual reflection. The teachers do the first work, but the actual acceptance is left to the course members themselves. Akram, for example, tells us that he encourages his students to look up information for themselves. They have to learn to become critical by consulting other sources. The following quote is situated in an example he gave about stoning women for adultery and revolved around the question whether this was allowed according to their religion. He gave them the assignment to look this up in the Koran and in interpretations of imams to let them discuss this topic. His aim was not to teach them something about this particular topic, but rather to develop the competence of looking information up themselves.

> I said that it was not my purpose to argue against religion or against one [imam], but that the purpose was that they realized that you don't always have to believe everything and that sometimes, we have to look things up ourselves, read a bit. […] they can go for free to the library, look up on the internet. We don't always have to believe everything […] of one imam. You have the right here to look it up yourself […] Then they became calmer (Akram, 31, Teacher Arabic).

While at first the discussion was very tense, because the newcomers experienced this discussion as an anti-religious message, Akram describes that the newcomers were more relaxed when they realized that the goal was rather to teach them to reflect themselves. Femke defends the same point of view on the importance of individual reflection, instead of blindly believing one source. This stimulation to self-reflexivity is something else than forcing a point of view upon them, she believes. She explicitly opposes this encouragement to reflexivity to agreeing with moral individualism as institutionalized in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. At another point in the conversation she described it with the biblical metaphor: 'We do not have to give them fish, but we have to teach them to fish':

> Muslims learned their whole life certain things from the Koran, from their parents. If they look up themselves whether it is true […] that is a more important evolution than for example imposing the Universal declaration of human rights everywhere (Femke, 29, Teacher Dutch).

Similar to Akram and the broader media debate, we notice also with Femke a focus on Muslims. Zuzanna (32, Teacher Polish) tells her course members: 'that it is not my goal to change their opinion or that they have to start thinking differently within seven weeks, but they just have to start thinking.' In Hendrik's discourse, the same concern to reflect yourself is expressed:

> I just want to make them reflect. And what I hope, is to change their attitude. Indeed, that they adopt a sort of researching attitude and ask questions about the things that happen in their lives (Hendrik, 34, Teacher Arabic).

Emilie connects this ability to reflect deeply on a topic and to subsequently express this opinion to individualism. According to her, Western people have been trained more in this individualist competence, through schooling, than people from more community directed cultures, or cultures that are focusing more on knowledge transmission than on critical thought:

> A difficult fact in the integration story is that we are an individualist society. This has advantages and disadvantages. One of the advantages is that we are trained to express our own opinion. […] For them, this is difficult, no matter what the level of schooling is. I myself have taught in Latin America, and that is completely different. Repetitive schooling is the norm there, they have to repeat what the teacher says, be a sponge (Emilie, 33, Teacher Spanish).

While it is emphasized that making the students *reflect* on the issue is something else than making them *accept* sexual minorities; many teachers talk in terms of the metaphor of 'planting a seed'. In a sense they do assume, even though it might be a long process, that self-reflection might eventually lead to acceptance of moral individualism in relation to gay people. Sandra (48, Teacher Dutch), for instance, says: 'I think that we can always plant a seed. […] I also think it needs time. People need years to adapt.' While the intention behind the confrontation strategy might not be to force people into tolerance and thus starts from a pluralist approach, the underlying assumption for some teachers is a moral individualist one: confrontation and the subsequent reflexive process that follows will eventually lead to respecting minorities. In the literature on the effects of pluralism, for instance religious pluralism, this assumption is everything but self-evident. From the confrontation of religious points of view in a pluralist society, adopting a secular perspective might be a result (Bruce, 2002), but religious relativism or religious fundamentalism, a fortifying of one's original point of view are just as well effects that are reported (Smith, 1998).[64] It is possible that the same counts in the case of cultural pluralism, where norms and values on sensitive topics such as gender equality and homosexuality are often related to a religious value system that informs it.

3.4. Exceptional Teachers

A final strategy only applies for teachers with a migration background. Flemish teachers deem it important not to present their personal opinion too much, since a too strong focus on their personal opinion is at strained terms with the pluralism they want to promote. Yet, the teachers with a migration background take on a more ambiguous approach to involving their own identity or opinion in the integration course. Especially some of the religious teachers deliberately privatize their religion. They feel that the students are very curious, and sometimes ask for their religion, but they choose to keep this information in the backstage. This is not only out of a sense of bureaucratic professionalism, but also to make a normative statement: religion is in principle not important for your public identity. Like sexual identity, your religious identity is a private matter; the person you are behind the religious label, is who you should show in public.

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[64] See also the dissertation of Pons, A. on the effects of religious pluralism for 3 diverse religious groups: fundamentalist religious people, perennialists and atheists (forthcoming).

> Something funny happened during Ramadan: the course members wanted to know what my religion is. I'm from Palestine, Bethlehem-city, so they start doubting. During the course, I talk about the Bible, the Koran and the Thora […] When it was Eid al-Fitr, they asked me whether they could stay home. I told them that according to the rules of Belgium, I have to come to my work and they also have to come. Some teachers took the day off. I didn't do this, because for me it was an opportunity to see which student would really want to come. It is only three hours, and then I participate in Eid like everybody else. […]
>
> I: *And why do you try to keep it a secret what your religion is?*
>
> R: That is also an objective I want to teach them that it is not important to ask people which religion they have. In the beginning I also said: Maybe I'm gay, maybe I'm Christian, maybe I'm Muslim, maybe I have no faith. I also told them during the course that I'm like them, I'm also new in Belgium (Akram, 31, Teacher Arabic).

The personal involvement of the teachers with a migration background entails that they want to lead the newcomers by their example: religiosity is something they do not find important in their role as a teacher, so it should also become something that the students can distance themselves from, especially in the public sphere. The neutrality that Akram displays can be said to differ from the bureaucratic neutrality of his Flemish colleagues. His professional neutrality towards religious positions, should form a personal example for the students that inspires them.

In contrast to deliberately privatizing religious identity, some of the teachers with a migration background are openly exhibiting their identity and personal opinion. This is mostly done from the rationale to set an example. They consider themselves good examples of successful integration and they give their story to inspire the students. The tactic the teachers use is in line with what Fernando (2009) describes as *exceptional citizens.* They portray especially their secular characteristics, to show the importance of public secularism. Najib, for example, tells about the fact that he does not believe anymore and that he has, what he calls a 'modern family', with only two children and a wife who is into Buddhist spirituality.

> I ask them: 'Is my wife Muslim or Catholic?' They say: 'Catholic.' I say: 'She was Catholic, but she became a Buddhist!' They are quite shocked. They want to hear more. […] They ask me how many children I

> have. I answered: 'Two, we are a modern family.' And I tell them that I don't believe in God (Najib, 51, Teacher Arabic).

Amina uses a similar argument when she explains her position of not wearing a headscarf. Whereas she is religious, she takes herself as an example for the students in showing that real religiosity does not have to be shown on the public outside in the form of traditional dress and that if you read the Koran from a critical perspective, you would also know that nowhere is written down that Muslim women should wear a veil, according to her. Elif, subsequently, explains that she can be a little more severe than her Flemish colleagues, and told us in a slightly joking fashion that she communicates that they can always return to their country if they do not agree with the norms and values.

> I can always give myself as an example. What I've been through, what I think and what could happen. That is maybe more convincing. And I can sometimes be cruder in what I say than the Belgian colleagues. I sometimes say: 'If you are not satisfied, then go back' (Elif, 52, Teacher Turkish).

From their role of 'exceptional citizen' (Fernando, 2009) or even 'exemplary citizen' (Weber, 1992: 447-450) they show the students from a more personal perspective what they deem important for integration in this new society. Their personal involvement is, however, only limited to attitudes that fit with their view of a 'liberal subject'.

There are some teachers in integration that move one step further with their personal interpretation of their relation to their students. Because they themselves have been through the same process as their course members, and share the same cultural background, a process of mutual identification takes place. Alper describes this recognition of the same experiences during the process of integration. He sees his position as a former migrant who gives the integration course as privileged, because he has also been through this process. This experience gives him more insight than whichever book and gives him the legitimacy to be severe when needed as well.

> I've been through it all myself. The feeling with being a migrant, with civic integration, arriving somewhere in a foreign country. If I tell this, then I tell my own story. That is different from telling from a book. I never say: 'Norms and values, you can find them there [in the book].' I've experienced it, my father experienced it… Then they listen with their mouths open. What will you tell, when will you tell it? 'Yeah, first generation, second generation,…' Maybe you are a good storyteller, but you will tell it from the third person. That is different. […] And if I oblige them [to do] something, it is like an older brother, who tells them. If you tell them, they will say: 'Hey, she thinks she knows better again, she is obliging us to do this' (Alper, 53, Teacher Turkish).

Alper makes a stark distinction between an authoritative style of someone who is not familiar with the process of integrating in a new society, and his more caring and involved attitude because he understands the migrants and can place himself in their positions. Najib describes a similar teaching experience in the following quote:

> I see myself, I see myself sitting there. I teach, Najib who's 18 years old. I see this and I'm talking to myself. If I want to talk to myself, I have to be honest. I motivate people, because I know they are sitting there as a refugee and I know what it means to be a refugee, I know what it means to be a migrant. I know many things through my own situation. I know what it means to feel frustrations, and I know what it means to leave your country behind and come here […] If I see someone, it is as if I have known him for years already, even from the first day! I see myself in them (Najib, 51, Teacher Arabic).

Both Alper and Najib, present two very personal interpretations. However, also in this case, there are limits to their involvement. When I asked Najib whether he still had contact with his students after the course, he gave the following cryptic answer:

> I know it is not possible, because these people disappear in society. They always tell me: 'Sir, I want to contact you.' Then I say: 'You want to contact me? Why? Firstly, you are I, and I am you. Like you are I and I am you, we are you and me!' And then they look confused at me. And I continue: 'You are I, so you will not contact me, because you *are* me!' They look at me as if I speak Chinese. They will never contact me (Najib, 51, Teacher Arabic).

We can derive from this that the personal attitude has its limits in the given bureaucratic context in the end. It is only valid in the sphere of the course and in the shared project of integration.

4. After the Course: The emphasis on Practical Self-sufficiency of the Newcomers

4.1. Norms and Values: Social Desirability and Sticking to their Opinion

While the teachers indicate the evident importance of norms and values and this importance is translated in a continual struggle with several tactics to deal with the paradox of tolerance, the course members that were interviewed were not so reflexive about these norms and values. In fact, only two newcomers brought up the topic of norms and values automatically when they were asked what the most important thing was they had learned. Even those two did not phrase these norms and values in terms of accepting gay people and gender equality, but rather in terms of 'being tolerant' or of 'dealing with diversity in a discussion'. The rest of the course members, on the other hand, had to be probed with explicit questions about homosexuality and women's rights to start talking about these topics. This already gives an indication of the importance the course members attribute to the theme of sexual citizenship, or of their willingness to openly discuss this topic.

When asked what their opinion is on gay people or how newcomers should deal with them, a significant share of the course members gives a positive or accepting answer. However, as the teachers pointed out, there are many indications that the course members are not comfortable with the interview situation and perceive specifically these questions about norms and values as threatening.

This is also not surprising, given that they just received the integration certificate, and some experience the interview situation as a sort of control or examination situation. Many of the interviewees were not acquainted with an interview situation, and for some it was not clear what the role of an interviewer entailed.[65] This was, for example, illustrated when one of the interpreters briefly interrupted the interview to tell me: ‘I think she is really stressed about how she has to talk to you.’[66] That social desirability also played a role was illustrated by one of the course members who started to talk about other course members that had already been interviewed, and who expressed themselves in very accepting terms about the so-called ‘taboo-topics’ during the interview. Farah, however, starts pointing out how they were shocked by some of these topics. This incites us to be cautious in our interpretation of the answers of the course members.

> For me, it is not taboo at all. Gay,… or HIV, but for [Helena], the way she looked… She was like: ‘What kind of topic is this? It is disgusting!’ You want to live in Belgium! For me, when we visit [the tropical institute], it was very interesting, but for her… who wants to check the blood, can come, she said: ‘I don’t need it.’ It is not because I have something, but it is free, I’m in there, why not? […] And talking about red light when we are at the police. [Kalid], he is like: ‘Is there red light in here?’ Hello, if you go to Amsterdam, you will think red light, it is not taboo anymore. And the girls, it is not human trafficking. They pay tax (Farah, 30, Indonesia).

There are also course members who are rather straightforward in their rejection of homosexuality and gender equality. Imani (26, Congo), for instance, keeps repeating when she’s asked about homosexuality: ‘It hurts me.’ She gives arguments, for example that in Africa, gay people are deemed to be lazy, because they look for another man to do the work for them and earn a living in their place, or that fathers who turn gay, wreck their family. She indicates that she realizes that gay people in Europe might be different, but that in the end she cannot explain it, but that it still emotionally affects her in a negative manner. In the following quote, her ambivalence towards gay people comes to the surface, in the sense that she likes some of them as persons, but that it would be better if they were ‘normal’:

> If I would do like that, oh, I think I would die! Please God protect me. I also wish that one day, God would help those people to be normal. To be themselves. But I don’t blame them. I also see them as people, and also, I like them. They are very charming, if I just take out that they are gay (Imani, 26, Congo).

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[65] I did mention I worked for the university as a PhD student or researcher. Also given the fact that in other countries PhD candidates have diverse positions, are considered in some context as students, in others as employees, it was understandable that there was confusion about my role.

[66] This happened during the interview with Jamilah (pseudonym), a young Syrian refugee. She had just turned 18, and because of being overage, could not stay with her parents who requested asylum in Denmark. She was forced to integrate in Belgium instead, without any acquaintances. This could probably also explain why this young woman was feeling insecure and threatened during the interview.

Efwa did not change her opinion on gay people either and condemns their behavior. She was very concise in her answers to questions that treated this subject. When asked for further explanation, she could not argue either why she had this opinion or why she thought it was morally wrong, except that she connected this to her religion.

> *What's your opinion on lesbians and gays?*
>
> Me I don't like them. In my country it is forbidden. You can get in jail.
>
> *Do you think you should change your opinion in order to be part of the Belgian society?*
>
> My opinion is something that cannot be changed. Like my religion cannot be changed. I'm Muslim (Efwa, 25, Lybia).

The morally conservative stance on homosexuality is neatly paralleled with conservative opinions on the role of men and women. Imani (26, Congo) expresses it as: 'Because women, […] we like to forgive and to forget. We are very caring. And men also, they are hard. So that is how you make a good couple. […] Always man is high. You have to respect your man.'

4.2. Positive Attitude when Already Socialized

Amongst the interlocutors, there were also migrants that accepted homosexuality and expressed their opinion in progressive terms. Remarkable was that all three of these interlocutors had been in Belgium for a longer time (between 5 and 10 years) and that they indicated that they already had this opinion before starting class. Fadhili, for one, indicated that he changed his opinion on gay people through watching a lot of Western news programs. BBC, CNN and Al-Jazeera gradually influenced him in changing his opinion, rather than the integration course of six weeks. In the following quote he points out the importance of education for people to change their opinion on these norms and values topics:

> *Did you think it was a strange topic to talk about gay and lesbian people? Or do you think it is necessary?*
>
> For me, I thought it was very necessary. I wished that this subject was discussed in every course. It is part of society now. Belgium, the US, the UK, most countries are now legalizing it. […] The more we educate people, the more they will accept. The same as when AIDS came in Africa. In the beginning, people didn't even want to shake hands, use the cup that they were using. But through education, now people have accepted it, it is not a transmittable disease, it's ok, to live with those people. Through education people accept it and we all live in peace (Fadhili, 37, Kenya).

Fadhili is drawing the parallel with education on the topic of aids, which was also taboo, particularly in Africa. For him, accepting a moral topic has to do with gaining 'scientific' information. At another moment, he expressed it in terms of 'getting enlightened'. He does not take into account that there might be other reasons, more related to morality than science, that could explain why newcomers might not accept gay people or women's rights.

Although Fadhili was already socialized in these moral topics, he nevertheless indicated that he found it really necessary to talk about the subject. Nabil, on the other hand, who has been in Europe for over ten years, indicates that while he has gay friends and has no problem with gay people, he found it rather disturbing that the teacher constantly wanted to talk about this topic.

> It is ok. We can talk about it. But not always you know. One time is ok. But we always focus on this. It is not something abnormal you know. It is normal you know, but by always talking about it, you make it abnormal (Nabil, 42, Egypt).

This quote of Nabil seems to point out a compulsory element in the socialization in these moral topics. While the teachers deny the disciplinary character of this setting by emphasizing pluralism and confrontation, Nabil indicates the strong focus on these moral topics. This observation can be connected to the other observations such as the lack of reflexivity on norms and values, social desirability or absence of socialization for other course members. Partially, these elements can be explained by unfamiliarity with the interview situation or perceiving this specific moment as an instance of control on the side of the interviewer. It is however on a more general level also telling on the specific socialization context that we are dealing with here which is disciplinary in character. A significant share of the course members does not participate to this courses out of a will to develop their self further. The course is not perceived by them as an inducement for 'working on the self' or liberal 'self-making', but the content of the course is situated in a frame of compulsion for most of the participants. The moral aspects are not embraced by the course members out of a will to change themselves, but are indulged because they have no choice. In this particular setting, the disciplinary context seems to form an obstacle for socialization in moral content.

4.3. Emphasis on Practical Themes: Socialization on Another Level

The lack of socialization with regard to moral topics, however, does not mean that no socialization whatsoever takes place. There is certainly no dissatisfaction of the course members with the integration course; the overall attitude is one of gratitude for everything they learned. Their education has more to do with practical matters though. They learn which organizations offer which services, how to use public transport, which legal rules they should pay attention to, particularly with regard to garbage sorting or traffic regulations. Kalid, for instance, makes the following enumeration when he was asked what were the most important things he had learned:

> Something about organizations. Something about renting a house. […] How to deal with your boss, or if you have trouble with your house owner. Some organization about child support. I didn’t know about it before, but now I know. Most of the things I learned were useful, it was every time three hours full of useful information (Kalid, 32, Syria).

His main conclusion about the course is also significant: it was very useful. He describes it more in terms of utility than morality. The moralizing part about sexual citizenship is something that he endures in order to get educated in other topics, namely practical, useful information to build up his life in the new society where he lives now. Helena indicates the same practical learnings after the civic integration course:

> Many times, I have seen a paycheck, and I didn’t understand what it was. I have seen police in the street, I didn’t know. I have seen many things, but I was not informed. I didn’t know which door to knock on for a problem. Because, everybody who is new here needs many doors to knock on. I learned on which door I can knock. […] Actually, you need one whole life to learn what you need in a country. I can’t say that I learned as much as in one life, but I learned enough to help myself (Helena, 27, Albania).

While the course did not teach every practical thing there is to learn in a new society, and this is also not necessary in her opinion, it helped her to continue autonomously on this path herself. After the course, she ‘learned enough to help herself.’

In the end, what Helena indicates is also the main goal most of the newcomers associate the course with: ‘self-sufficiency’. Self-sufficiency is a goal that is also actively promoted by the government and the civic integration teachers.[67] One of the main tools for this self-sufficiency is the so-called ‘action plan’. On this paper, the newcomers first have to formulate their long-term goal in Flanders and, then, all the smaller steps that might lead to this final goal. Particularly work related goals prevail for the teachers, most of the course members and also the policy makers.[68] With this tool, they learn to think ‘goal-rationally’ (Weber, 1978) to function in Western society. While a substantial number of the teachers has their doubts about this action plan, either because it takes their time off other topics or because it involves a very Western and rational way to deal with integrating, none of the interviewed course members questioned this tool. During the interviews, they specifically emphasized the value of making an action plan and how it helped them find their way and formulate their priorities.

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[67] Marino Keulen, the previous Minister of civic integration, formulated self-sufficiency as one of the main goals of civic integration in his integration note of 2004: ‘We expect the newcomer to become self-sufficient, while the Flemish government in turn takes its responsibility by giving the starting opportunities to begin a new life in this society’ (Keulen, 2004).

[68] Liesbeth Homans, current Minister of civic integration, especially focuses on this active engagement of migrants on the job market. In her policy note on integration, her main concern is ‘the ethnic cleavage’, which is specifically characterized by a deprivation on the level of education, poverty and lower participation level of migrants in the job market. The most important of these dimensions, since it is the goal of education and the means by which the other two aspects are solved according to this view, is the participation in the job market (Homans, 2014).

> We developed a plan on what you wanted to do. And I think that was a good chance to think about [it]. And it was part of the program. If you don't do it, you don't get your certificate. So that makes people think: 'What do I want to do, what do I want to become.' It was very good, very helpful (Fadhili, 37, Kenya).

Again, this is not surprising, given the situation the newcomers are in. Many of them formulate their future goal as stability. They want to build up a new life here, learn the language, find a place to live and have a stable income. Imani (26, Congo), for example, had suffered from violence and rape and due to her psychological traumas, experiences trouble adapting to the new society. Belgium and its cultural values are not important to her; the most important thing for her is that she is finally safe. She expresses her feeling with the situation as follows: 'Even if […] I'm not happy, at least, I'm safe.' Kalid, Syrian refugee, also mainly talks in terms of feeling safe and stable. His first goal is to find a job as a dentist in Belgium to support his family who joined him. However, knowing that he can survive in the meantime while looking for his job, thanks to the support of the government, makes him feel protected:

> Well, most of our feeling now is, we have to survive. You are in a society that respects you, that helps you until you find the work, so you feel good and protected when you find the work. Even if you don't have work, you feel protected. You can take money, you can take help for your children and wife. It makes me feel good and safe. […] But I really want to work and my main goal is to find a job (Kalid, 32, Syria).

Saghir, a Syrian gay person himself, who fled because of discrimination and violence, also says that his final goal in Belgium is to be stable and build a life for himself: 'My plan is, after one year […] I'm working and I will try to find my own place, my own car. I need to build my life here. […] I'm starting my language course here and I want to stay here. […] I don't want to move from here. If I see myself in one year, everything will be stable and everything will be fine' (Saghir, 29, Syria).

Conclusion

In this chapter, we studied the question how teachers of civic integration transmit norms and values to newcomers and how the latter respond to them, especially given the cultural turn described in the literature. We observed that an emphasis on norms and values does not necessarily imply a 'retreat of multiculturalism' (Jopkke, 2004) in favor of assimilationist notions of civilizing the 'ethnic other'. In practice, the teachers testify of a constant tension between moral individualist notions of equality, and a moral relativist stance that emphasizes free expression of opinion, especially with regard to themes relating to sexual and gender identities. In the dilemma that the teachers face between making the newcomers accept moral individualism or letting them retain their opinion, the intern contradictions of the same Western political model of liberal democracy between values of equality and freedom become apparent (Berlin, 1969). While conflict in the context of integration is often presented as solely a conflict between cultures, especially the conflict within the same Western cultural model becomes apparent in this case study. With regard to the question of whether we should tolerate an intolerant opinion, we observe that moral individualism and moral relativism give different answers, which results in what Popper (2013) calls the 'paradox of tolerance'. This makes the 'cultural turn' also an essentially ambivalent notion, since the renewed focus on norms and values can be understood both in an assimilating and a multicultural manner. Both models deal with the increased importance of culture, be it as the co-existence of multiple cultural models or the assimilation in one majority culture. Thus, the cultural turn cannot one-sidedly be interpreted as implying the assimilation to moral individualism. On the other hand, and equally important, an emphasis on diversity is not presented by the teachers as the absence of cultural disciplining, but also involves a learning process.

On the street-level of the community workers, diverse strategies are used to solve the paradox of tolerance. In line with the liberal principle that everything should be open for discussion, a constant element the teachers emphasized was confrontation. From a liberal point of view, the teachers approached taboos as irrational elements that should be unlocked. In the end however, they keep on emphasizing diversity. The most important is that the students learn to express their opinion in a fair discussion. The teachers only ask for the minimum requirement of respecting minorities in the public sphere, but in private, the newcomers can keep their opinion. Implicitly, there is the assumption from the teachers that 'confrontation' and 'starting to think for themselves' will eventually lead to a reflexive process that will result in a moral individualist perspective that is assumed to be universal in the end. This is expressed in various metaphors such as 'planting a seed', 'initializing a process' etc. that might not have immediate results. This rationalist emphasis in this specific interpretation of moral individualism gives it a slightly different content than the original formulation of Durkheim that merely emphasizes respect for the other. We can conclude, that while on the rhetorical and policy level a movement to simply accepting the value of sexual and gender identities is taking place, at the local level of civic integration centers this civilizing message and multiculturalist strategies that accept other opinions on these topics co-exist. In line with other authors we might even say that multiculturalism on the street level predominates (Banting & Kymlicka, 2013; Modood, 2007).

A remarkably absent element in the narrative of the teachers, especially the Flemish teachers, is religion. Since we did not specifically focus on this element, further research should be done on how it plays a role in relation to the norms and values that are taught in the civic integration course. Already on the basis of some indications, we expect religion to play a crucial role here. Public secularism seems to be the hidden underlying assumption of the paradox of tolerance. For example, with regard to the theme of taboos, from a liberal point of view without a strong demarcation between profane and sacred, taboos are an irrational given. Yet, from a religious perspective, it makes sense that not all topics should be equally mentionable. On the other hand, while the teachers claim to break with taboos, religion seems to stay their underlying taboo. Also, with regard to the strategy of privatizing intolerant opinions, the assumption that the public domain equals secularism and that religion should be privatized plays a part in the background. The teachers with a migration background are more explicit about religion, but also here they specifically put forward their secular characteristics as exemplary for the newcomers. This can be explained by the implicit assumption of the teachers that moral individualism necessarily implies secularism, and therefor is at odds with religious tradition, dogma and convictions. This assumption however does not take more modern, individualized interpretations of religion into account where moral individualism does play a role (e.g. Fadhil, 2008). This is particularly remarkable if we compare it to the story of the course members, because the reasons they indicate for having trouble with gay rights or gender equality are always religious. Not tapping into the underlying explanation for their rejection of the moral individualist themes and treating the themes of sexual and gender identities as completely standing on themselves, might explain the lack of socialization that takes place with the course members. The absence of addressing the underlying religious frame as an explanation for their stances on these topics might be hindering socialization in this regard. On the side of the course members, additional research into the role of religion is needed as well. The disciplinary context of the course on the other hand also explains the very minimal socialization, especially when moral topics are concerned. While the Flemish teachers are in denial of discipline in this context and portray the process as a purely rational transformation or a 'pluralist utopia', the course members are aware of the disciplinary objectives of the course. The result is that most of the course members merely endure this emphasis on moral themes in order to learn the topics they are really interested in, the pragmatic topics on how to start their life in a new society. That there might be something like 'a paradox of tolerance' the teachers are struggling with in their courses, is something the course members do not even seem to realize. The level on which socialization does occur is mostly on the practical level of learning the value of self-sufficiency. While economic liberalism seems uncontested and a shared assumption on both sides, it is cultural liberalism as a disciplinary project and its implied secularism that creates conflict and lack of consensus. This disciplinary form of socialization seems especially difficult to execute when individualist values are concerned. In contrast to the two other cases (see chapter 4 and 6), the course members are not here out of a free will to develop their self further. The combination of a compulsory course and developing a morally loaded view on the person seems especially difficult. When developing a view of the self is no longer presented as a choice, and the individualizing power becomes too visible, its impact seems to become jeopardized. This case study was particularly instructive on what might happen when individualizing power fails.

Chapter 6: Managers into the Wild

The New Spirit of Capitalism Moving Outside the Company

Introduction

Play and adventure do not seem to be opposing today's western organizational culture anymore; neither are they a mere distraction from it. Instead, so it is assumed, playfulness even seems to possess certain qualities that can instruct the organizational sphere in how to function better. In the nineties, Alain Ehrenberg (1991) already pointed out the upcoming 'sport/adventure' elements in the sphere of the organization, for instance in outdoor trainings for managers, or as he calls them 'adventure seminars'. A specific example thereof were the scouting and military inspired 'outward bound' trainings that in the meantime have become a proper movement and involve nature linked team buildings (Burletson & Grint, 1996). But also rafting, skydiving, survival routes and so on are used in an organizational context to build teams or 'discover' one's leadership capacities. Since then, this phenomenon has only increased in importance, and a whole collection of diverse trainings in the context of nature, with experiential learning aspects fall under the loose category of 'outdoor management development' (Burke & Collins, 2004; Jones & Oswick, 2007). Beyond this category, adventure and play elements permeate almost every kind of management training. A whole array of organizational workshops is, for instance, listed under the heading of 'serious play', such as inventive problem-solving with Lego bricks, role playing, improv theater and other sorts of gamification, with or without virtual technology (Rasmussen, 2014; Schrage, 2000).[69] Costea et al. (Costea, Crump, & Holm, 2005) observe in this focus on playful elements a true 'Dionysian turn' in the corporate context. The *homo ludens*, whom Huizinga (1938) saw in his famous study as the foundation of culture beyond utility, is apparently no longer perceived as opposed to the *homo faber,* but became an essential aspect of it.

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[69] The concept 'serious play' comes from the workshop developed by Lego. Since then, this label has been used to designate a whole amalgam of workshops that attribute importance to play and the development of creative thinking.

That work and play, or broader: attention for wellness and self-actualization, are related in the post-modern context is affirmed in most of the literature. There is, however, discord as to how these two facets of organizational subjectivity are connected. Either it is seen as a smarter and slicker style of exerting social control over employees, exploiting them with more subtle tactics they willfully embrace. Fleming and Sturdy (2011), for instance, see the emphasis on youth culture and playfulness in American call centers as a distraction from the real conditions of social control that characterize this kind of service industry. Or it is seen as a manner of truly humanizing the workplace. Playfulness adds to human welfare at work, and that employees turn out to be more productive when the human factor is taken into account is merely accidental bycatch according to this second perspective (Fry, 2005). Both the critical and the celebratory perspective contain a moralizing aspect and the descriptive view of how human centeredness and effectiveness in these managerial trainings are related to each other is overlooked by the underlying ideological frame. In this chapter we want ask this question from a more detached, cultural sociological point of view.

1. The New Spirit of Soft Capitalism

The elements of playfulness and adventure in management trainings can be connected to drastic cultural shifts in the organizational context, particularly related to worker subjectivity. Opposed to playfulness, rationality and self-abnegation, central elements of the Protestant ethic, have always been seen as necessary conditions for the rise of early capitalism (Weber, 2003). Thereupon, in the beginning of the twentieth century, frugality and sobriety were complemented with the discipline of ‘organization man’ in the context of mass bureaucratic organizations (Whyte, 1956). Here as well, excessive rationalization was the unquestioned paradigm, in line with for instance the Taylorist scientific management and the Fordist assembly line. In both models, human factors, such as emotions, communication, relationality or cognitive input, were deemed superfluous in the work context, which causes Ehrenberg (1991: 171) to describe their anthropological foundation as ‘the Taylorist man-bullock and the Fordist man-chimpanzee’. An illustration thereof is the following quote that is attributed to Ford: ‘Why is it that whenever I ask for a pair of hands, a brain comes attached?’ (Micklethwait & Wooldridge, 1996). The old spirit of capitalism was either characterized by complete *ascesis* or stark discipline and authoritarian control.

Adventure and play, however, point at completely different organizational values and opposite assumptions on worker subjectivity (see also McGregor, 2005). Many authors describe this new phase of capitalism with the concept of ‘soft capitalism’ (Costea, Crump, & Amiridis, 2008; Heelas, 2003; Thrift, 1997) referring thereby implicitly to the soft skills and personality that is completely immersed in the world of work. Soft capitalism is characterized by a different work ethic than the authoritative or the utilitarian, and instead focusses on self-work and more expressive values such as self-actualization in the context of work (Heelas, 2003; Tipton, 2008). 'People are our most important assets' could be seen as the implicitly shared neoliberal slogan (Costea et al., 2008). This focus on the 'human factor' is, for example, illustrated by the focus on self-development of employees and managers and extra care for wellbeing at work. Coaches for diverse sorts of skills or mental wellness support personnel, be it on the work floor by an extensive HR team or in management trainings by trained psychologists (Cederström & Spicer, 2015). This care for mental wellbeing, but also the more fine-grained and constant use of psychological vocabulary in the context of work incites some authors to use the term 'therapeutic turn' to describe this specific aspect of soft capitalism (Illouz, 2008; Costea et al., 2008).

All these human-related aspects, emphasizing freedom, play, wellness and so on, could be said to give rise to a so-called 'new spirit of capitalism' (Boltanski & Chiapello, 2005). The irony of this new spirit is that these elements were once deemed completely opposite to the 'iron cage' of control, rationality and efficiency that - especially bureaucratic - capitalism stood for (Weber, 2003). During the counter-culture, precisely these former alienating aspects of the 'capitalist system' were criticized. However, this critique of capitalism, emphasizing authenticity and self-development, was not realized in a utopia beyond capitalism, but became thereupon incorporated in that same system. Paradoxically, as has been analyzed by many authors, the expressive critique of capitalism has been institutionalized in the new spirit of capitalism (e.g. Boltanski & Chiapello, 2005; De Keere, 2014). Instead of standardized and controlled repetitive labor, more volatile networks and always new projects succeed one another, where creativity becomes a key factor, especially in the 'culture industries' (Lash & Urry, 1994; Boltanski & Chiapello, 2005). In the (stereo)typical neoliberal vocabulary, one always has to be 'flexible' and principally 'employable' or, as Boltanski and Chiappello express it themselves: 'never to be short of a project, bereft of an idea, always to have something in mind, in the pipeline, with other people whom one meets out of a desire to do something' (2005: 110). The other side of the coin is pointed out by many authors under the name of 'precarization' (Negri & Hardt, 2000; Standing, 2011) or a new level of 'biopower' that blurs the distinction between life and work (Fleming, 2014).

Yet, the question remains how these new expressive influences are related to older utility and efficiency logics in the organizational context. This relation might still carry the residue of the original value conflict, new conflicts might arise or this conflict might have completely dissolved. Thereby, it has often been claimed that expressive individualism is an ethos not prone to proper institutionalization. Parsons (2007), for instance, still maintained that in the end it was anomic, and also for Bellah et al. (2008) it remained a privatized and individualized logic. We want to ask whether expressive individualism might nevertheless form a unifying cultural logic in the organizational context and if so, how it relates to its utilitarian counterpart. We will approach this question from two angles: firstly, the descriptive question as to how we could map this cultural discourse. Secondly, if there is this coherent discourse, we want to explore how managers are socialized in it and apply it in the organizational practice itself. To answer this twofold question, we will observe the neatly delineated context of a management course that is exactly specialized in socializing managers in elements of soft capitalism. The question then becomes how managers who learn these techniques translate them to the context of the company. Does this translation to practice add elements to how the companies effectiveness is related to the more human aspects in the management training? The concrete management training that was selected especially has elements that focus on adventure and play in their pedagogical techniques. Their objective is, however, not merely teambuilding but focusses more on self-development and communication strategies in a nature bound setting and therefore falls in the category of 'outdoor management development' trainings. The chapter will be structured as follows: In a first section, to look deeper into the cultural discourse, we will focus on the perspective of the coaches of this trajectory and how they describe the objectives of their training. Attention will particularly be given here to the sort of worker subjectivity they subscribe to. We will refer to the specific vocabulary the coaches use to describe their view on worker subjectivity that revolves around authenticity. This however does not imply that we subscribe to this kind of subjectivity, we still see it as a culturally constructed discourse on the self that we nevertheless want to describe accurately. The second section shifts attention to the managers who followed the training and how they form themselves in accordance with this cultural discourse on the authentic self from the training and how the discourse is used to guide their own team members. We will analyze here how the new spirit of capitalism embodied by the outdoor management development training might become anchored in the organizational context. For this final question, we give extra attention to the role of the organizational culture and structure of the three organizations the interviewed managers came from and how this might influence them in their application of the learnings from the training (see chapter 3 for clarification of case selection).

2. Coaches Giving Feedback to Authentic Leaders

2.1. Authenticity: The 'Real' People Behind the 'Facts and Figures'

A first central notion in the particular outdoor management development training we observed, was leadership. Leadership stands for the coaches of the training in stark opposition to the classical notion of management. The name of the training also does not include the word 'management', but instead is referred to as the 'leading talent development track.' While management is related to a position, a function or a role that is coupled, according to the coaches, with expectations as in the classical sociological role-concept, 'leadership is not a role or function' (Ella, 38, Coach). This implies that while management can be learned by applying some techniques (such as feedback or communication techniques), leadership cannot be learned; instead everybody might be a potential leader. However, not everybody succeeds in bringing that inner leader out. The key to realizing this is becoming aware of what kind of person you are. This is precisely what this training wants to work on. The alleged opposition between management and leadership is also paramount in the management bestseller literature. Often, these bestsellers refer to leadership guru Warren Bennis and his seminal book *On becoming a leader*, which listed the main differences between 'managers' and 'leaders'. For example: 'The manager imitates; the leader originates'; or 'The manager is the classic good soldier, the leader is his or her own person'; or, finally: 'the manager does things right; the leader does the right thing' (Bennis, 2009: 42). In all these characterizations, the manager is equated to a passive product of the organization context, a cog in the machine, focused on controlling, administering and maintaining the order. The leader, on the other hand, is portrayed as an agentic and creative individual, who has visionary characteristics. This presentation of the leader is completely in line with the expressive individualist ideology.

Moving beyond alienating organizational roles is also embodied in the objectives of the observed coaching trajectory. In the first module of this trail, leaders have to carry out assignments in the woods. The idea behind this is that the managers are taken out of their usual organizational role, out of the inauthentic environment of the office, even out of their suits that symbolize their professionalism. Instead, they are dressed in sportive gear and have to take part in adventurous and competitive activities that are beyond their daily routine and business-related expertise. It is significant that this process of discovering one's own nature is connected to this specific natural environment in the program. Not the so-called urban jungle but the woods are taken to provide the optimal condition to bring out the personality of the leaders. In the jargon of the coaches, they are taken 'out of comfort', in order to show their 'real personality' and, consequently, 'real leadership' will result in this natural context. The process of authentification that results from placing the managers in this natural environment is clearly illustrated in this quote from coach Ella:

> If you take people out of their roles and place them in the woods, and you say: 'you have to go from point A to point B', then you see real leadership. Then you see who dares to open their mouths […] and that is what we want to work on. […] It is easy to get the function of leader in a company. We let people take off their costume. You are standing there in your sportswear, everybody is equal that way. […] The expertise people have in their business is also irrelevant. Nobody knows, by manner of speech, how you have to read a topographical plan. Nobody knows how to get from point A to point B. And what happens? You see *real* relations in the team, *real* leadership, you see people's *human* characteristics, they arise in the woods. […] If we work on leadership and on teams, we try to look beyond the fixed structure of the company (Ella, 38, Coach).

Particularly notice the emphasis coach Ella puts on *real* leadership in this fragment. Her assumption here is that in this nature-linked setting, the people taking part in the trail will move beyond their fixed organizational roles. A strong opposition between nature and society underlies her explanation, where nature in this instance is taken as exempt from societal influence or hierarchies. This dualism is mirrored in the participants: by leaving their roles behind, they are forced to fall back upon their 'true identity'. She presents it as a sort of social experiment which has similarities with Rousseau's state of nature. The presumed authenticity of nature has the effect that people display more natural aspects of themselves or of the so-called 'good savage' in them, not imprinted by the detrimental effects of the social order. Doing activities in a natural setting, which is also done in the context of many other teambuilding or leadership trainings, does not only form a change of scenery, but is significant in and of itself as a context that is seemingly beyond the social world and can evoke in consequence, so Ella assumes, more real and natural behavior. Her discourse is characterized by deep romantic assumptions of a more real self that surfaces in connection to nature (Taylor, 1989).

Moving beyond organizational roles in this natural environment is the first step in a path that leads towards a characteristic of key importance for leaders according to the coaches: *authenticity*. This emphasis on authenticity is also found in many popular bestsellers on the topic of leadership that can all be categorized under the heading of 'authentic leadership' (e.g. Blekkingh, 2013; George, 2003; George, Sims, & Gregen, 2007; Luthans & Avolio, 2003). When explaining what he meant with authenticity, coach Andy gave the following explanation:

> For me it has to do with not feigning another personality. There are super introvert people who have been taught to advertise their opinion in an extravert way, and you just notice it doesn't work. You feel, […] there is something amiss. You show a personality, but not your own […]. You feel that the person really has to put an effort in it. And that he is actually uncomfortable when he is in front of a group. And that he was so much stronger in smaller group discussions. Then you had the feeling: wow. But not in the bigger group (Andy, 42, Coach).

His clarification of the meaning of authenticity especially relates to not pretending to be someone else. His view of the social order is dissimilar to a Goffmanian (1959) dramaturgic ontology or any notion of sociological role playing, which results in an all-round denial that role playing in a social situation might be desirable. Authenticity is presented as an alternative that involves bringing the real self behind the role out of the backstage into the social sphere according to the coaches. A second remarkable element in this quote is the psychological scientific jargon the coaches use to analyze personalities. More specifically, the categories of 'introversion' and 'extraversion' are constantly relied upon by them and could be said to form a symbolic binary, since it is one of the most present oppositions in the particular subculture of this management bureau to give meaning. In relation to these concepts, the inauthentic person is seen in this particular example as someone who is by nature introvert, but nevertheless behaves in an extravert manner. When I asked Andy whether the other way around was also possible, he said 'of course'. However, when trying to give a concrete example of an extravert person that behaves in an introvert manner, he found it difficult to come up with one. This might illustrate the implicit preference for extravert people in the training and that there might be a double standard with regard to authenticity. It is especially extravert authenticity that is preferred. This shows the strong relation of their interpretation of authenticity to romantic expressivism. While the coaches also want to create a moral individualist inclusive view on leadership, both notions conflict here, and in the end, it is the expressive extravert style that predominates in their discourse.[70]

Coach Ella connects authenticity to clear values and norms that a person stands for. In her explanation, she gives an ethical aspect to authenticity:

> I think it is really important that people stay close to themselves, that people are authentic, close to their norms and values […] that they really work from their strengths. Like: 'this is what I stand for and this is what I want.' If you don't know what you stand for, and I give you some good arguments, then I can blow you away. But if you find: 'No, I really believe in this', then you will argue back. And I need that resistance, the company needs that resistance, to become better (Ella, 38, Coach).

Here, an authentic person is someone who knows who she is and from this knowledge chooses her own values and acts accordingly. Norms and values are not seen as determining factors, but as actively chosen by the authentic leader. We can see a parallel here between the two ethics Weber (1965) describes in relation to leadership in politics: on the one hand the ethics of responsibility and on the other hand the ethics of conviction. While the former corresponds to the increasingly generalized bureaucratic rationality and making compromises, the latter can be connected to how the authentic leader is described here: an idealistic leadership that originates from strong convictions and decisiveness to realize them. Similar distinctions such as the one between ‘pragmatic’ and ‘redemptive’ politics in connection to, for instance, populism can also be informative (Canovan, 1999; Laermans, 2012). The connection to goal-rational and value-rational action is evident here. Weber’s ideal politician is a combination of both these ethics. While the ethics of conviction is emphasized in relation to authenticity in the discourse of the coaches, they nevertheless also make a connection with effectiveness. Believing in something is not hailed in and of itself but is explained from a utilitarian perspective by the coach (see also Tipton, 1982). She argues that ‘people who stand for something’ are going to defend their position more strongly than people who just work according to a predetermined procedure. This perseverance is valuable for her, because in the end it is useful, meaning that the company can improve by people with a strong opinion. Andy also talks in terms of the ‘*impact* of authentic leaders’, which is bigger than the impact of leaders who do not act in accordance with their personality. He connects this impact to more classic notions of leadership, such as charisma as well. ‘People who are authentic, […] have a lot of impact and are often described as charismatic’ (Andy, 42, Coach).

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[70] In this fragment, inauthenticity is not only analyzed from a psychological scientific outlook, but also from the angle of intuition: You *feel* that this behavior is not right for this person. Authenticity is not only being true to your personality, but according to the coaches, others in the environment of the person can sense whether the person is showing authentic behavior. This intuitive element was especially emphasized by coaches without psychological background.

While the ethics of conviction emphasizes the strong masculine side of the ideal of authenticity, the coaches also point out its connection to the softer ideal of *vulnerability* as an ideal for leaders. There is also a logical connection between both elements of this discourse, in the sense that not hiding behind bureaucratic and technical procedures, as in the ethics of responsibility, makes one more vulnerable to critique. Andy, for example, illustrates vulnerability as one of the sore points in a technical company that only communicates in terms of facts and figures:

> In one of the companies I often coach now, one of the sore points is vulnerability. It is an engineering company that purely communicates on facts and figures, on technical skills, and you notice that. If you walk around in that company, you wonder: but who are the real people behind the facts and figures?
>
> *Maybe they are really like that?*
>
> Yeah, but you don’t know that […] they don’t talk about it. Being vulnerable means admitting mistakes, giving each other feedback. They don’t do that. Because it is seen as: ‘I don’t have to give you feedback, because that concerns who you are as a person, and you are here to do your job’ (Andy, 42, Coach).

Vulnerability is characterized here as the human side beyond pure technicalities, for example giving feedback or admitting mistakes. Andy shows that the misunderstanding of the people of this company lies precisely in supposing that there is a clear opposition between who you are as a person and in your job. He problematizes this opposition here by claiming that vulnerability should also be attributed a place in the work context. Ella sees vulnerability as admitting that it is sometimes difficult, that 'it is not all roses', that others also struggle with their work-life balance, and that having 'a big house, a big car, and big jobs' is merely the façade of leadership. While decades ago, misfortunes or struggles were carefully stuffed away in the private sphere, and the work sphere was the domain of competition par excellence, she argues for an open display of vulnerability, an illustration of a historic shift in discourse on worker subjectivity. Leaving the safety of the splendor and the authority of the role of the boss implies that others see one's more fragile side and that the two are not seen as opposing any more in this discourse. In her discourse, it creates recognition and eventually connection between people working together, instead of envying each other. For clarifying this ideal of vulnerability, Ella abundantly relies upon emotional and therapeutic language (see also Furedi, 2003).[71] Leadership, in her discourse, has nothing to do with strength and, in turn, vulnerability nothing with weakness.

The emphasis on admitting one's vulnerability and one's mistakes in this discourse centered on authenticity is further complemented with a belief in growth of this authentic personality. The human potential movement is an important point of reference here, as, for instance, represented by Carl Rogers (1961) and Abraham Maslow (1943). The emphasis lies upon self-actualization and self-realization in terms of 'realizing one's potential'. This developing of one's potential is not opposed to the notion of authenticity, to the contrary, it is implied in it, since it involves coming closer to this authentic personality. In many of the management books that the observed training relies upon, this growth model of the person is further elaborated on. For instance, Dwerck (2006), a developmental psychologist, describes the growth mindset for leaders, which is 'based on the belief that your basic qualities are things you can cultivate through your efforts, your strategies and help from others. Although people may differ in every which way – in their initial talents and aptitudes, interests, or temperaments – everyone can change and grow through application and experience' (2006: 7). The management guru Covey, to whom the coaches of the track frequently referred ,[72] also sees personality from a growth perspective. In fact, the opposition that he makes at the beginning of his bestseller, *The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People*, between the personality ethic, the currently popular thinking on the self in relation to work according to him, and the character ethic, a deeper philosophy on this same topic with a longer history, precisely relies upon this difference of the factor of self-actualization: 'The glitter of the personality ethic […] is that there is some quick and easy way to achieve quality of life – personal effectiveness and rich, deep relations with other people – without going through the natural process of work and growth that makes it possible' (Covey, 1989: 43). This natural process of work is, on the contrary taken for granted under the character ethic. The personality ethic instead tries to shortcut this growth and development and is therefore a superficial and egocentric solution according to Covey. His whole argument for habit formation is based on this character ethic of personal growth.[73] However, Covey's plea for the character ethic might in reality not be so different from the collection of theories on personality he distinguishes himself from, since his argument for personal development is not so exceptional in the management literature in the end. The ideology of personal growth is embedded in the program by constantly challenging the participants and putting them out of comfort to create new habits.

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[71] In Furedi's analysis of what he calls the 'diminished self', he looks at vulnerability only as a debilitating characteristic of needing help to deal with adversity. In his analysis of therapeutic culture, vulnerability is seen as the motive to rely on a therapist in order to become self-sufficient. However, in the organizational context analyzed here, vulnerability is portrayed as an ideal for people with a leading role, inspiring other people, and as an ontological characteristic of people per se that does not necessarily requires fixing.

[72] In the beginning this coaching bureau started as a completely Covey inspired trajectory. Later on, it further developed in communication with other leadership and coaching theories.

2.2. Homo Communicans: Transparent Feedback

The main method that is used during the trail to give people insight in their authentic personality, is giving them feedback. 'We are just going to give open and honest feedback about how we see you' is how coach Vince defines the main purpose of the training. Feedback is given in many configurations: the coaches give feedback to the course members, the managers give feedback to their colleague-managers and, finally, the managers are taught that good leadership involves giving feedback to their team in the context of the company. Coach Lucy explains the importance of the interaction between feedback and trying out things in practice:

> You just see, if you can try out things […] and afterwards get real feedback about that, then you learn so much more. We are not telling mind-blowing theories, but their reaction to the feedback is: indeed, that is true, and that as well. But that gap between knowing and doing is huge. […] You can try out a lot, but if you don't get feedback, you don't know whether you improved or not. We give feedback on the behavior we observe (Lucy, 30, Coach).

Lucy sees feedback as a bridge between theory and practice, a way to bridge the so-called 'knowing-doing-gap'[74], which is how the coaching company especially advertises itself. Many of the aspects of the feedback the managers get is already familiar to them according to her, but trying out new things and coupling them with collective feedback, makes the feedback stick. When they have learned something through feedback in one context, they can apply this in the next context and again get feedback on it. According to Lucy it is this loop to habit-formation that eventually causes the managers to learn.

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[73] Covey also often quotes Aristotle's virtue ethics to explain his concept of habit formation.

[74] This phrase refers to a pedagogical management book *The Knowing-Doing Gap* (Pfeffer & Sutton, 1999).

Such a context is, for example, an assignment in the woods where the managers have to find eight points and an end-destination on badly visible wood paths through a topographical plan that they studied by heart but had to leave behind before being dropped somewhere by a 4X4 jeep, while being blindfolded. In this 'survival modus' they are not assisted by the coaches, whose function at that particular moment is limited to timekeeping and constantly taking notes on the observed behavior, consisting of their initiative in the group, their leadership, their cooperative skills and their personality. After the assignment, it becomes clear that it was neither this assignment that was so important nor whether it succeeded or not, but that it merely forms a context where the coaches can observe behavior.

> For us, the activity is important because we need something to talk about. But the focus is not on the activity, but on the feedback afterwards. […] For each assignment, we are outdoors two hours, but each time we also have two hours feedback for that (Andy, 42, Coach).
>
> We only use nature to create a mirror. […] We use it as a method to give people feedback. Not to create better teams or closer ties or whatever. That is only accidental bycatch. The most important is feedback (Vince, 36, Coach).

The real moment where learning takes place is at the moment of the feedback that is given afterwards. This is also what distinguishes this program from other programs for managers with an outdoor part or focused on adventure. The classical 'outward bound' adventure trail is also a trip in the context of work with a team or for management level, but here the goal is in the first place 'team building'.[75] In the latter, the purpose lies in the activity itself and the feelings of mutual sympathy this creates. The coaching bureau we studied, however, had a more pedagogical approach: 'We don't do teambuilding, we do team-learning' (Andy, 42, Coach). The crucial part in the 'team learning', as they describe it, is the feedback that is given to the managers.

The theoretical tool to structure this feedback afterwards is based on the (pseudo)psychological theory of the quadrant of Ofman (2004). Here, the coach that observed the team, as well as the team members, fill in a quadrant in which they link the personality of each person to four aspects: a quality, the person's 'pitfall', which is an exaggeration of this quality, the person's challenge, which is the positive opposite of the pitfall and finally his or her allergy, which in turn is the exaggeration of the challenge. An example of the theory is, for example, the following quadrant:

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[75] When we look deeper into literature on outward bound, they also clearly indicate that not only team-building is an objective but also what they call 'experiential learning', learning in an activity, 'learning while doing', and learning through metaphors (Hovelynck, 2001). The coaches we have studied here clearly use stereotypes to draw a symbolic boundary between their activity and the outward-bound activities other coaching bureaus offer (Lamont & Virag, 2002).

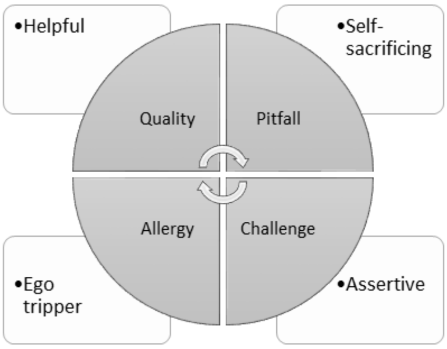

Figure 7: Example of quadrant of Ofman on personality traits

In this case, the person they are giving the feedback to was showing helpful behavior during the assignment. His pitfall, however, might be that he forgets himself and his own opinion and sacrifices it for the wellbeing of the group. His challenge, the part of his personality that he will have to work on, will be to position himself somewhat more assertively in the group and speak his mind. His allergy, or the quality that he finds annoying in other people and with whom it will be difficult to collaborate, is the ego tripper, someone who is full of himself. By being aware of this allergy, he will, so says the theory, not step in this automatic allergy, but will reflect properly on it, recognize this quasi automatic disliking and be able to suppress it or to give feedback on it to the other person.

In the end, this method of feedback serves two important goals for the coaches. Firstly, the coaches want to 'create a mirror' for the course members, to confront them with how they are perceived by others. Giving feedback is for the coaches perceived as the means to authentic leadership. In their opinion, a real, authentic personality emerges in the exercises in nature, and this personality is reflected to the person by giving honest feedback. The final purpose of the coaches is that the manager does not change her behavior in her organizational role but comes to live up more to this authentic reflection of herself. This also explains the following response of coach Andy on the question whether he aims for a transformation of the participants:

> Transformation, that sounds very heavy. We are not trying to change people […] awareness, I think that's a better term. […] We work with people that mostly have been active in the bank for 10 to 20 years, who have seen all that time a certain management style, usually very directive and hierarchical, extravert, and we try to create some awareness: other styles are also possible. And maybe even better today (Andy, 42, Coach).

This relates to their belief that an authentic leader should not be transformed, but instead should be true to herself. Awareness is a better term for the coaches, which fits their philosophy of authenticity. Most of all, the coaches want to tell the participants from their observant point of view how they perceive them and make them more *aware* of this.

The second goal of giving feedback is to offer an example to the managers of how they should deal with their team. Vince formulates this very straightforwardly: ‘The purpose in the end is that, when people go home, they create this culture of feedback around them and implement it in their own team.’ In fact, the coaches also figure as role models for a type of leadership, where feedback and coaching are central and are believed to provide a means to authentic subjectivity. This style of leadership is referred to in the leadership bestseller literature as ‘coaching leadership’ (e.g. Hersey & Banchard, 2000). Not only the authenticity of the leader but also the authenticity and agency of the employee is targeted by means of guiding through feedback from this angle. Rather than authoritatively deciding from above how a certain problem should be tackled or a task fulfilled, the employee is given the freedom to decide how to execute this task. Along the way, the manager functions as a coach who merely gives feedback to the process.

Thus, feedback forms for the coaches the means to authentic leadership, an originally romantic and expressive ideal. However, in this organizational context, it does not equal unlimited expression of emotions or unstructured creativity that everybody chases for themselves, as the notion of authenticity might suggest, but in the end serves the goal of open, transparent and effective communication. The model of personality that prevails here is what Illouz (2008: 88) calls the ‘*homo communicans*’. She characterizes it as follows: ‘[It] explains conflict and problems as the result of imperfect emotional and linguistic communication; conversely it views adequate linguistic and emotional communication as the key to achieving desirable relationships.’ In other words, expressing emotion in a therapeutic language serves the goal of an effective communication with others, also in the sphere of work. Success, as well as experienced problems, are interpreted as a product of this communication that has to be very open. In communication, the connection is made between the self that has to be authentic but on the other hand also the others with whom one works and who also have to be transparent. In this sense, the moral individualist intuition that the other also has his right to authentic expression forms a correction to unbridled expressivity. It serves the goals of ‘expressing the self yet cooperating with others; to understand others’ motives, yet to manipulate oneself and others to reach desired goals; to be self-controlled, yet personable and accessible’ (2008: 89). In the observed training, this emphasis on communication and making oneself clear to others, in the sense of transparent, was very apparent.

What the coaches are describing is not an unbridled expression of emotions, but a very reflexive and controlled way of monitoring one’s own thoughts, speech and others’ thoughts. While the way they explain the importance of communication is very emotionally aware, it is not emotional (Illouz, 2008; Giddens, 1991). It involves being able to place oneself in the position of the other, in a sense being emphatic towards their position, and to clearly elucidate one's own thought process so that others can understand it and act according to expectations. The emphasis on emotion is clearly a controlled decontrolling (Elias, 2000; Wouters, 2008). Emotion is acceptable in the sphere of work and leadership, but as a subject of 'therapeutic' communication, which one has already taken distance of by putting it in a rational language, that one reflexively analyses. While some authors have strongly emphasized this element of control in the sphere of work (e.g. Hochschild, 1983; Jackall, 1988; Kunda, 1992), the coaches' discourse forms a testimony of an interesting dialectic with emotionality and control. Again, as with authenticity, transparency in communication is not an intrinsic goal, but serves effectiveness. Coach Vince outrightly says that after the feedback they have to think: 'What is the relation to effectiveness? Because the final question is always: how does the feedback help me to be more effective for the collective in the end?' Transparent communication and coaching leadership is not solely to respect the human agency and authenticity of the person they are working with, but eventually, the conviction is that this kind of leadership is more *effective* than an authoritative style.

3. From the Forest to the Company: The Application of Feedback by the Managers

3.1. Personal Growth in the Growth-company

In this paragraph we shift perspective to the managers and how the coherent discourse on authentic leadership through feedback is translated to the company context. While the coaches emphasize authenticity through personal growth, it is especially this latter element of personal growth that the course members take from the trajectory and that seems particularly applicable in the organizational context. Brooke, for example, claims that 'For me, this was an opportunity to grow' (34, Phase engineer, Logistics company). Connor also expresses that 'the confirmation that I indeed grew during the trajectory was also pleasant to hear' (31, System integration manager, Logistics company).

Most of the managers indicated that for them growth is connected to an increase in confidence. This implies that personal development is not understood as a drastic personal change, but rather as daring to express their existing personality better. In relation to leadership, it entails presenting oneself more in the frontstage, as someone willing to take charge. Confidence, in the end, is the will power to better develop those qualities you already possessed before:

> What it does, is that it also gives you the confidence to know that you're doing the right thing, and to follow what you believe is right, because sometimes, if you're not confident, you do not try and employ

> it, or do it, whereas with the course, you learn and build up confidence in yourself, which I think is very important in actually making something happen and following through (Andrew, 48, IT manager, Logistics company).

Brooke expresses this increased confidence as daring to ‘aim higher’. Confidence is related to a logic of attaining goals here, where it is implied that not just any goal will do, but that she attempts to aim as high as possible:

> This is part of the personal development that I got from the program, which was just to dare. It was one of my goals, just dare. Aim higher. If I aim low, and I achieve the goal, I’m going to be happy, but I know I’m not going to be happy because I didn’t want to be here, I wanted to be here (she gestures with her hand one time in the middle, the next time higher above her head) (Brooke, 34, Phase engineer, Logistics company).

Having goals higher than purely realistic goals, forces Brooke to grow in what she can achieve. The course taught her to push herself out of her regular habits and targets and to aim for more, which becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy through which she actually achieves more. Growing is here related to a clear goal-rational theory of action, in line with the goal-rational environment of the organizational sphere. There is no contradiction in the narratives of the former participants between personal growing and being efficient in the organizational context. This assumption is even stronger in the translation of the training program to the organizational context than in the discourse of the trainers. The participants see the training as an investment in themselves, their capacities and competences that in turn also affects the company’s overall effectiveness. In fact, the self is seen after the model of a company one has to invest in, referred to by many as ‘human capital’ (Becker, 1976; Foucault, 2010; Vallas & Cummins, 2015). From this modeling of subjectivity after the image of a company, a congruence results between personal and company growth. All managers confirmed this congruence of the growth at both levels. As Curt expresses it: ‘It can help the efficiency of the organization to give people a better understanding of their own behavior, their own mindset and also to potentially change that’ (34, Sales manager, R&D company). This congruence is very clearly illustrated in Brooke’s discourse:

> It’s a win-win situation. The employee wins because you know your performance is going to be better, because you discover skills or you show more strength, and for the company it’s a win if you have a motivated employee that’s full of energy and discovers a new me (Brooke, 34, Phase engineer, Logistics company).

In the typical neoliberal lingo, she describes the training as a win-win situation. She describes the win for the company not merely in terms of a more effective employee who is better at what he or she is doing, but, more importantly, as a *motivated* worker who is going to like what she is doing. In this calculative logic this means that the probability that she will fall out is lower. Here we see how psychological factors, such as motivation, form the connection between personal and company development, which is something that Rose (1989) already pointed out.

While personal growth is the shared vocabulary of the managers to express 'the impact' of the training, for some this resulted in factual growth in the organizational structure. Six of the fifteen people that followed the trajectory a year ago have changed position in the company in the meantime. Of those six, two have stayed at the same hierarchical level. The other four managers have grown in the organizational hierarchy and have responsibility over more people now than they had before the training. Learning about themselves and getting feedback created for most a sense of confidence and confirmation of their capacities, which has been translated into a factual upward move in the company. Many of them explicitly indicate during the interview that it was specifically the training that gave them the impulse to apply for a 'higher' position with more responsibility. In line with the analysis of Chiapello and Boltanski (2005), the expressive individualist learnings that in the first place have a counter-cultural origin, are not used here as a critique of the organizational system, but rather to affirm a common ideology of personal and organizational growth. It is especially at this nexus of both sorts of growth that the former expressive critique of capitalism apparently finds its reconciliation with the organizational context. The knowledge about themselves serves a more self-aware positioning of themselves within the organization. The following two persons exemplify how the expressive ethos of personal growth in their discourse almost invisibly merges with climbing the organizational ladder:

> By getting me out of my comfort zone, believing in myself, having higher goals for myself,… the training gave me the courage to occupy this position. At that moment, I realized that I also really needed […] a new stimulus. I realized this during the talent program, and together with what I learned there, it made me apply for my current position (Ray, 34, Program director, Logistics company).
>
> Look, [the training] helped me quite a lot…. I know for sure that I'm in my current position because of it… And that I delegate my people in another way than I might have done before. […] And this helps the organization for sure. For me personally, it really helped me and the people I work with. It changed me (Jones, 38, Financial controller, Logistics company).

In these quotes, personal transformation and factual organizational growth go hand in hand. These men clearly indicate that they assume that this could happen because of the competences that they acquired during the training. Authenticity and personal growth are, in their understanding, in line with a more humane approach of the company – *the human side of enterprise* – and not as a place of control and punishment, but as a sphere that functions in terms of positive motivation. The cultural paradigm on the organizational subject they assume is contained in McGregor's (2005) theory Y model, which holds that people have an intrinsic motivation to work and seek the social commitment of working together rather than the opposite theory X, which supposes that people have to be forced.

Due to the training, this cultural paradigm specifically becomes a model of how the managers learn to relate to themselves as intrinsically motivated and self-developing subjects. This encourages them to also take action in accordance with these ideas on identity in the organizational context, for instance, to move further up in the organizational structure.

What is a remarkable correspondence between the four people that grew in their organization is firstly, that they were four men and secondly, that they were all from the same company, namely the logistics company. This observation might suggest, although we would need additional research to confirm this, that the actual organizational growth could depend on significant social factors such as gender and organizational culture as well. For our small sample, especially the latter proved to be an important facilitator of factual growth. This observation led us to look deeper into the company culture and how the managers of the logistics company perceived this culture. Here follows a description of the company culture by one of the managers:

> Actually very open, accessible. There is not really a hierarchy: you have your leader, but the mentality is in fact that everybody is quite equal. It does not really matter who you ask a question or which question. And it is stimulated that people take the initiative. If you indicate that you want to achieve something, then they take serious note of that. At least, that is my experience. They give you direction so that you can realize your goals (Connor, 31, System integration manager, Logistics company).

This description was not only a representation of his own experience as he suggests in this quote but recurred with the other people in this company. It was described as a rather progressive company; it has an ideal typical post-Fordist organizational culture with a flat organizational structure. The respondents described the culture as open, informal and with fluent communication between team members, departments and across levels. There were many younger people at diverse levels of the company, and the respondents had the impression that young people were given equal opportunities to grow in the company. Finally, initiative was actively stimulated for employees. This description of the company culture suggests that, although the managers attribute their growth to the training, a significant role might be played by the company culture as intermediate factor. This culture actively promotes growth and forms a welcoming context to the ideas the managers have picked up during the training. Thus, their factual growth might not be such a purely individual achievement as they assume themselves.

3.2. Coaching Leadership: Stimulating Entrepreneurship

For the former four ‘growth-managers’ from the logistics company and five additional managers from the financial company, the training also changed something with regard to their leadership style and how they deal with their co-workers. In fact, they encourage their team members to fulfill their roles in a way that is similar to what the coaches recommended to do during the trajectory, namely to have confidence in their capacities and to create an open and transparent environment of feedback and communication. Andrew, for instance, emphasized the importance of communication and how this helped him to collaborate better with his team. Having a technical background in IT, this emphasis on communication was really something new for him, or as he expresses it: ‘We engineers are used to talking to computers.’ The training made him realize that, on the contrary, people all think differently and that consequently it is of vital importance to guide them through one’s thought process via transparent communication:

> I’m an IT person, I work with computers and I think very logically. My realization was that other people think very differently. Sometimes when I’m talking to them and explaining to them what I need done and how I need them to go about doing it, I make a lot of assumptions that actually they know everything that I’m talking about, because everyone thinks logically like I do. And in actual fact there’s very few people out there or there’s only a few that think exactly like I do, and so I need to, when I’m explaining my thoughts, I need to take everyone through my whole thought process, so that they understand what the objective is, and understand how to get there. So for me that was the biggest learning coming out of it, about myself, in that I need to communicate properly and that I need to take everybody through my logical steps for getting somewhere (Andrew, 48, IT manager, Logistics company).

Besides communication, it also resulted in taking their team members more seriously. ‘I give more ownership to the team’, Claudette (38, Tax manager, Financial company) says; the team can decide more often how they tackle a given problem or task. In line with the literature on ‘possessive individualism’ (MacPherson, 1969), under this neoliberal discourse of *ownership*, the individuality of the team members is approached as their own property that should not be ruled too much by the manager. The individual is seen as ‘owner’ of himself and of his or her work. Elsa expresses it as follows:

> That is also what I changed with my team, I give them more confidence. I let them do how they think they have to do it. Even if it is not the way I would do it. Before the trail, I would explain in detail to someone how they have to do it. But after the trail, I tell them: I want that. Do it how you want, I can help you if you want, but in the end I just want to see the result. And it was also an effort for me, because I like to control things, I like to see how they are doing it (Elsa, 47, Risk manager, Financial company).

The confidence that was emphasized for the managers themselves during the training, is transmitted to their co-workers. When relating to her team, Elsa expresses herself in the same therapeutic discourse that the coaches used to analyze the managers. In this quote, she explains that she is micromanaging her team less, but that she gives them more freedom to execute a task as they see fit. She does not take the role of the ‘controlling manager’ and does not explicitly correct the way they work. This, however, does not imply complete freedom; at the beginning of a task she explains what she expects and in the end she evaluates the end product. In between, the team members have the freedom to choose their strategy and style to execute the task, but in the end they also have the responsibility to deliver. A respect for individual freedom, but nevertheless an emphasis on individual performance and delivery that is evaluated, go hand in hand in this leadership style that is typically neoliberal (Power, 1999; Rose, 1999).

Besides and related to giving more responsibility to their team members, they also approach them more from a coaching or mentoring point of view. Andrew explains this ideology of 'mentoring' very clearly:

> Mentoring is great. I don't want to say I practice my influence sometimes but it's more about… when they ask a question and I think it requires a bit of mentoring from me, I like to think that I'm applying what [my mentor] taught me, so not… don't give them the answer, give them the path to the answer so that next time they can find their own way, and find the right way. And I think that's important generally with managing staff as well. It's not only about just influencing them in the right direction, it's about mentoring them to get there themselves (Andrew, 48, IT manager, Logistics company).

Instead of what he sees as the old-fashioned authoritative style, he mentors his team members to find the answer themselves. Again, a large individual responsibility is expected from them. As he expresses it, he merely 'gives them the path', but they have to get there themselves in the end. Here we see that the emphasis on leadership as coaching leadership and the focus on feedback in the training is translated to the work context of the managers. With regard to coaching leadership, a recurring motive is that the leader does not set out what the employee has to do, but through questions makes her reflect on how to fulfill a task. To what degree these questions are guiding, differs from source to source. In the case of Andrew, he believes in non-guiding mentoring of his team members as can be seen from the utterance 'it's not about influencing them in the right direction.' Andrew gives a high degree of responsibility to his colleagues in the process of completing a task. Other leaders spoke in a more directive way about coaching as 'subtly leading them to the right answer' or 'giving them the impression that they did it themselves' (Ray, 34, Program director, Logistics company). Most of the managers clearly know which answer or end-product they want to achieve and the questions they ask already guide the person in a certain desired direction. The difference, however, is that the employee has the feeling of self-determination, motivation and satisfaction for achieving the desired result. Here as well, we see the responsibility and respect for individual input merge with a goal-rational orientation of efficiently reaching a result that is psychologically supported by the persons who achieved it. This is also clearly illustrated in the following fragment of Andrew, where he couples 'understanding his people better' to making them more productive.

> I think there's still a lot for me to learn, because people are different. […] Everyone is an individual as well so […] I feel like I've got to learn more about them, and what makes them tick, get to understand

> their drivers, and then use those drivers to possibly *get more out of them*. And it's not about me just chasing them, it's about me understanding what makes them, or what can help them *improve in their delivery*, in their *output* (Andrew, 48, IT manager, Logistics company, *italics added by author*).

The human centered and the calculative view neatly merge with each other in this fragment. The respondent talks in terms of *understanding* his people and helping them to grow and be better at what they are doing. In his explanation, a caritative perspective for the development of the potential of his people is underpinned by a strict goal-rational view on output and delivery.

With regard to coaching leadership, a similar, although with regard to the scale of our sample, still suggestive remark as with the formerly discussed organizational growth can be made. Coaching leadership was also more likely to be applied in the organizational context, if the organization formed an optimal environment to implement it. Again, we see a kind of circular dialectics between what the managers learn from the training and what is already part of the organizational culture of their company. The managers from the logistics and financial organization mostly talked about a personal switch in leadership style to coaching leadership. The logistics company, as can already be derived from its emphasis on growth, also stimulates coaching leadership styles. The financial organization subsequently, was at the moment the interviews took place making a broader organizational cultural shift in terms of empowerment, entrepreneurship and ownership as central values. One of the senior regional directors of the financial organization, James, explained some of the elements of this cultural shift:

> Responsibility and entrepreneurship[76], they go hand in hand. This entails that the goal is set in advance that the bank practically and strategically wants to reach and your role in that scenario. Within that role, a frame of freedom is created, where we expect entrepreneurship from our people and where responsibility has to be taken for the results that are achieved. That is in a nutshell what we define as empowerment. The contrast with 'the Fordist way of doing business' is clear. Before, we said from beginning to end: these are the strategical goals where we have to get, and this is the way you have to do it. Now we will say: ok, this is the goal, look at potential leverage at your level (James, 41, Sales manager, Financial company).

Regional director James clearly opposes the current style focused on 'responsibility' and 'entrepreneurship' to the earlier Fordist culture in the company. The form of subjectivity that is promoted here for the employees that are coached is the 'entrepreneurial subject' as a self-sufficient, creative and responsible subject that can find solutions him or herself and merely has to be 'coached' a little (see also Bröckling, 2015; Brown, 2003; Foucault, 2010; Rose, 1999). In this regard James also referred to the motivation of the entrepreneurial employees that was higher when people had the sense of ‘ownership’ over ‘their’ task. In the end, the organizational culture that stimulated this entrepreneurial subjectivity seemed to be particularly supportive for the managers to implement the coaching leadership they learned from the training.

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[76] This respondent spoke in Dutch, but in line with the typical management-speak, which is still at heart a phenomenon of American business culture, he used some phrases in English, for example 'responsibility', 'entrepreneurship' and 'the Fordist way of doing business.' For a critical analysis of the management jargon (e.g. Laermans, De Cauter, & Vanhaesebrouck, 2016).

3.3. Critiquing the Organization: Bumping Against Organizational Walls

The optimist story of growth and coaching leadership was, however, not shared by all respondents. For some respondents the story of self-knowledge and confidence did not match the opportunities that were offered by their company. Even to the contrary, because of the management training, the former participants started questioning their company and whether they wanted to stay there. The expressive individualist content of the course functioned in their story as a critique on their organizational situation. While before, they were already mildly critical of their context, the emphasis on growth and development of the training sharpened their feeling of discomfort. These respondents might put the claim of Chiapello and Boltanski (2005) into perspective that the expressivist critique of capitalism in the end only came to serve capitalism. In the critical managers’ testimonies, we still see some residue of the critical potential of the expressivist ethos questioning the organizational context. Curt, for example, explained that the training and other management trainings in the past, made him aware of his potential and how this cannot be properly developed in his organization:

> The training was especially about: what is your function in the company and how do you see yourself developing? And I just notice that I cannot develop enough in this company. And I talked a lot about that with the coach. I realize this more often, that I bump against a wall in this company. […] I’m one of the few young people in this company […] I have more than 10 years’ experience in sales […] Do something with that! I’m really committed. […] but yeah, the reality… (with a discouraged tone) (Curt, 34, Sales manager, Genetics company).

Curt uses the metaphor ‘to bump against a wall’ to express his feeling of facing an obstruction to grow. The valuation of the capacities of the managers can have a positive influence on their performance in the company, as we saw in the previous two companies, but it can also cause them to question the company conditions, as in Curt’s situation. In the following quote, Curt indicates that he will give it another try in this company, but that if he still finds his development obstructed, he might change companies:

> The management training made me more aware of this: […] this is where I am and where I want to go. I made a plan for myself […]. It would be nice if I could walk that route in this company, but if it is not possible, I’ll also draw my conclusions… (Curt, 34, Sales manager, Genetics company).

One of Curt's colleagues, Bettany, shared his feeling. She explains that during the training it was emphasized that she was an extravert person, which made her more aware of the fact that her real personality is not valued in her current company and accordingly cannot develop:

> In this organization, they would like me to talk less, to formulate fewer of my ideas. Well, then I'm very far removed from my own core. So I can better search for another organization that does appreciate this (Bettany, 34, Marketing, Genetics company).

Bettany was working in the marketing department and in contrast to many of the people she had to work with, was very open about her ideas and opinions, with sometimes conflicts as a result. She had already before experienced some difficulty to work together with her co-workers, but the trainers made the problem more pressing. They told her that either she had to adapt to what people expected from her and keep herself more in the background, or she had to search for another company where this sort of personality is valued more. In accordance with the authenticity that is preached during the training, Bettany makes known that the latter option would be the better one for her.

Bettany and Curt are not the only ones who, after the program, are doubting whether they should continue in their organizational context. Both people come from the research and development company, and in this company all of the respondents more or less clearly indicated that they saw it as a possibility to quit this company. When asked whether the training made them think about their future career path and how they saw this future development, the five people from the research and development company all indicated that 'they kept their eyes open.' What was also remarkable, was that none of the people from this company occupied a formal management position at the time of the interview, while the most extensive part of the training is on leadership skills. For the 'talents', the silent expectation is created that they might obtain a position with leadership, but this was not realized within the year after the training. Informally, these people tried to take leadership in their team, which sometimes resulted in conflicts with their team members. Again, the personal development story is contextualized by the organizational context it is anchored in.[77] In this particular case, this company-culture was characterized as follows by one of the people:

> This is a rapidly growing company, but still with the culture of a family company, however big we might be. A little conventional also. When I first came here, I was one of the first real young people in this office. The average age is rather high […].
>
> *And what do you mean by 'conventional'?*

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[77] In this case, gender played no role. Men and women equally questioned their organizational context, and all had the impression of being hindered by organizational conditions. However, in the other companies, which were generally more post-Fordist in culture and structure, one of the women experienced the same feeling as all the people of this organization, namely that she could not easily grow in a very masculine organizational context.

> Yeah, I don't know whether it is because of the older age, but many people who started in this company, are still here (Ruth, 28, IT manager, R&D company).

Other colleagues described the culture as 'rather political' and hierarchical. The coaches explained to me that this was related to the history of this company that was indeed first a family company, but that grew very fast by buying other genetics companies. They were all specialized in different species, and could keep their own name and identity, but in actuality belonged to the family company. This made it a decentralized company, which some of the respondents described by their impression of feeling 'disconnected'. Communication between departments or between sub-organizations was seen as very difficult and there was barely a sense of a common identity. For young people, the shared impression was that they had few opportunities to grow and that the policy of the company was decided at a higher level and they could not participate in the decision-making process. One of the respondents even describes the way the company deals with people as 'pawns', overloading them with tasks without giving them the due recognition for it. Generally, the respondents gave the impression of being disillusioned by the organizational culture.

When further exploring this phenomenon of people quitting their company, changing position or reducing their responsibility after the program, the coaches explained to me that it happened quite often that participants of the trail start questioning their professional identity, or rather: the role they currently fulfill in the company and whether it matches that identity. The coaches suggested that while this critical reflection occurs in every company, it might happen more frequently in certain companies with conservative cultures. This suggests that the company culture might work as an intermediate variable that influences people in the application of the expressivist ethos in the company. Either expressivism is applied in line with a 'new spirit of capitalism', which stimulated personal growth that neatly merges with organizational growth or as coaching leadership stimulated by a general 'entrepreneurial spirit'. However, expressive individualism can also make the managers question the company conditions. What is remarkable is that the coaches do not perceive this as a wrong interpretation of their training, but are in fact very excited about:

> *People who come to the conclusion, because of the training, that they actually don't want to be leaders, how do you deal with that?*
>
> Fantastic! That is what I call major self-knowledge!
>
> *And what with the people that say that this company is actually not their sort of thing and want to leave it?*
>
> Then I hope that they quit their job, or have a deep conversation with their manager, I sincerely hope that (Ella, 38, Coach).

This response might lead one to assume that the coaches are in favor of a critical interpretation of the company culture through their emphasis on authenticity. However, to the contrary, this does not imply that they are suddenly critical of the notion of the entrepreneurial self. The coaches align individual development, even if the managers cannot develop this individuality in their organizational context, with developing their human capital beyond specific organizational boundaries, and express it in the general neoliberal vocabulary as a ‘win-win-situation’:

> It is of no help to our society if someone works somewhere against his will. There are so many companies that probably relate so much better to that person’s norms and values.
>
> *From the point of view of the person that is probably better, but from the perspective of the company?*
>
> That is also a win, right? You can better have someone in the right place. Maybe you have to search longer for that person that is in the right place and likes to work for your company, than for someone who merely works to earn a salary but actually constantly thinks at the back of his mind: I don’t belong here. I think it can be a win-win situation for both (Ella, 38, Coach).

Here, we see again that human capital, in terms both of human and company capital, is not opposed to the focus on authenticity, but both ideals seem to uphold each other. In the end, the recurring argument is that doing what is in line with your personality, will also benefit the company in the long run. Even if the organization is questioned by the ex-participants, this does not result in an overall questioning of capitalism or work in general. In that regard, the focus on authenticity and self-development as motive to question the current company might be interpreted as an even more radical new spirit of capitalism that incites people to match their personality more carefully to their profession, but also for companies not to be satisfied with employees that are not directed to growth and development (Chiapello & Boltanski, 2005). This argumentation, however, completely puts the responsibility of finding the right position on the side of the individual, while we also saw that the company culture might have a negative impact on the employees. Yet, the coaches neither question the company culture, nor if there might also be some work on this side, even when ‘the right individual is in the right place’. In the end, the philosophy of human capital and entrepreneurial subjectivity, which forms the cornerstone of their training, is not limited to specific company boundaries but forms an all-round ‘new spirit of capitalism’.

Conclusion

In this chapter, we looked at an outdoor management development training, to obtain a better understanding of how these trainings relate to the new spirit of capitalism. A first question that guided our analysis was how the elements of soft capitalism relate to the older views of the *homo economicus*, which project a view of subjectivity in terms of utility. A first important observation was that we were dealing with a coherent cultural script or discourse here. The central notion of this script was authenticity. This notion was expressed in diverse interconnected concepts that presumed each other. Feedback was perceived by the coaches as the means to arrive at an authentic view of oneself. The belief in an authentic self was furthermore logically connected in the discourse to an ethos of transparent communication in relation to others. Adjacent notions such as vulnerability or personal growth were also closely related to the central notion of authenticity. All of these connected elements of the script point at the importance of expressive individualism. However, other subject notions as well play a role in the cultural script, such as moral individualism that is implied in the notion of controlled communication which also takes other people's perspectives in consideration. At other points, it was clear that expressiveness had the upper hand over the moral subject notion, for instance when extravert leadership was preferred over other styles.

Utilitarian views on the subject, however, completely merged with the expressive discourse. Authentic leaders were deemed to have more impact in the organization, and were deemed to provide the company with an 'added value', since the company could improve by this person's 'ethics of conviction' (Weber, 1965). This fusion was especially apparent in the coalescing notion of personal growth and the underlying perspective of human capital. Investing in the growth of, especially junior, managers through trainings like the one observed, is expected to pay off in economic terms and is perceived by the coaches as in the benefit of the overall effectiveness of the company. Getting to know oneself, knowing how one is perceived and where one can improve, are not merely seen by the coaches as important self-work points in an absolute sense, but are expected in an indirect sense to result in a better, more effective execution of one's tasks. This also changes the nature of utilitarianism in itself, from the old *homo economicus*, who is interested merely in optimizing self-interest, to seeing the self after the model of a company as human capital one has to invest in (Foucault, 2010; Brown, 2003) or that always has to take the initiative like an entrepreneur (Bröckling, 2015). Communication and feedback, finally, are understood as 'transparent communication' and aim at achieving the predetermined goal effectively in collaboration with the team. This implies more room for ideas and input from the whole group from a moral individualist perspective. The interplay of these diverse subject scripts in one coherent discourse also affects expressive individualism and makes it differ from its original romantic formulation. Instead, a constant reflexive and controlling distance is taken from these affective elements, mostly by means of a therapeutic jargon that objectifies emotion (Illouz, 2008).

The second question that guided the analysis inquired into the socialization in the cultural discourse, and more specifically, how these aspects of the training were implemented in the context of the organization. In this particular case study, we dealt with three ideal typical organizational cultures: a post-Fordist logistics company, a financial company that was making an organizational shift towards post-Fordist values, such as empowerment and ownership and finally a hierarchical and decentralized company in the field of research and development. The interpretation of the interviews with the managers of these diverse companies led us to hypothesize a circularity in the application of personal growth and coaching leadership principles. While these results are based on a rather small sample, they might offer a potential route for future research. The training had strengthened the belief in personal growth and confidence for all the managers. Yet, only in the post-Fordist organizational culture this was indeed translated into a formal growth in the organizational hierarchy. Additionally, coaching leadership as a leadership style was only successful in the two companies that already stimulated this kind of leadership. As such, the potential for real organizational change through this leadership program was rather limited; the role of the managers had best be interpreted as ambassadors of an already existing organizational culture. In the third, more traditional company, this company culture hindered these managers to truly grow as leaders. While they were already slightly aware of this before the training, the training strengthened this awareness. In the latter case, a conflict arises between the expressive ideal of development and their particular organizational context. This does not cause them to question the expressive organizational ethos, but to look beyond the confines of their particular company to better develop this potential. Here, it is clear that the new spirit of capitalism extends beyond the confines of one particular company. In the end, the coaches reason, it is both in the company's and the person's interest if a person who did not like his or her job, searches somewhere else where he or she can develop in a better way. Here as well, expressive values of development are made compatible with a capitalistic aiming for efficiency. In this second part of the chapter, we showed that the expressive discourse has very real consequences when applied in organizations.

While these results for the second question are rather suggestive, it sets out an interesting path for further research on the interaction between management trainings and the organizational context they land in. Are there for instance also managers who are critical of these trainings and how would they fit in the predetermined analysis? Also, with regard to the company culture, more diversity in the observed companies might give us more insight in the underlying mechanisms at work here. Finally, we also briefly touched gender as a potential element in how these trainings are transformed to the organizational practice. This could be further examined as well. This second part also begs for an important question: why do traditional companies send their managers to these kinds of trainings if it turns out to be in their disadvantage? A potential explanation might be that there is pressure on companies, even the bureaucratic ones, to offer this to their employees, but again further research is needed. While organizations compete on markets, they also compete on the labor market, and it might be that the best employees expect this sort of 'investment' in their 'human capital'. A 'cultural competition' on the labor market drives even traditional companies to these sorts of trainings. Additionally, this might also be related to an intern conflict between the senior managers who still attain to the old bureaucratic ideals and a younger HR department that completely follows the expressive capitalist discourse. Both these explanatory paths again point at the strongly institutionalized character of the new spirit of capitalism.

Chapter 7: Interactive and Self-reflexive Socialization in Individualism:

'We are not Changing People, We are Creating Awareness'

Introduction

So far, we have been looking at each of the cases in their empirical detail. In the previous chapters, our vantage point was the specific combination of forms of individualism and the particular processes of socialization that were connected to these individualist values. In this chapter, we want to take a step back and instead observe from a broader, more generalizing perspective the socialization processes in these specific settings that are related to diverse articulations of individualism. For this objective, we revert to the theoretical background on socialization we sketched in the second chapter. Here, three models of socialization were outlined: a passive model, which can still be subdivided into a mentalist and unreflexive incorporation model, an interactionist and a reflexive self-socializing model. The mentalist model is mostly taken as point of reference as the general and most common sensical model when socialization is discussed. However, the question remains how this model is related to spheres where diverse individualist scripts prevail. The 'undersocialized conception of man', which we specifically described in relation to theories of individualization, might be a consequence of a one-sided focus on this passive model of socialization. Since this passive model seems to be contradicting a culture valuing the individual, the conclusion has been drawn that socialization in general decreased in importance. The interactive model, on the other hand, emphasized the active involvement of both parties in the socialization process and how in communication and constant adjustment of interpretation new meaning was developed. Finally, reflexive self-socialization highlighted how through repeated exercises, self-transformation might slowly take root. In this chapter we will further analyze how these three models of socialization relate to the three selected cases and the individualist scripts they include. From the previous three empirical in-depth chapters, we can already deduce that in the second setting on civic integration, there was a lack of socialization on the side of the course members. In this disciplinary setting, there was a sort of tension between the teachers' individualist assumptions on socialization in moral themes such as tolerance for gay people and the course members' expectations of the course. This makes this setting especially interesting since we can more clearly see the contours of the socialization strategies here because they are no longer naturalized and in some cases cause conflict. Additionally, it can reveal some features of socialization in the other two individualist settings, that might go unnoticed since in these voluntary trajectories both trainers and course members share the same assumptions. In this more generalizing chapter, the case on civic integration will serve rather as a contrasting case.

1. The Taboo on the Classic Mentalist Notion of Socialization

In the three contexts studied, a process of socialization occurred. It was, however, very ambiguous how this socialization specifically took shape. Moreover, there were several indications that socialization in these courses seemed a rather contested topic. A common characteristic among both teachers, trainers, coaches and the course members was their refusal of a passive mentalist notion of socialization as transmitting norms, values and beliefs that are subsequently internalized. Related to this, an authoritarian style of teaching with overt display of power, which could be seen as a correlate of a passive mentalist socialization model where one actor has the power to socialize the other, is also firmly denied. In short, all of the three settings exemplify a sort of 'taboo' on the passive notion of socialization.

When asked what they want to teach their course members, mindfulness trainers in general gave me answers that either pointed in the direction of some general moral principles such as 'more aware and conscious living', observing their thoughts without judgement or, more interestingly, they questioned the way I formulated my question in terms of 'classical teaching'. It became apparent that mindfulness is not a matter of classical teaching where mere knowledge is transmitted to the students. The coaches especially dismissed an authoritarian way of teaching people how to live their lives. An important element in the socialization process is for them that the course members discover themselves whether they can do something with the mindfulness practice in their lives. Many of the trainers testify that mindfulness was a discovery for their own lives, which causes them to feel prompted to help people discover the same wisdom. This attitude is parallel to Weber's (1992: 447-450) description of exemplary prophets, who can particularly be found in religions of the east. Instead of demanding obedience to certain ethical rules, the exemplary prophet demonstrates the way to religious salvation by his own practice. From the side of the course members, there was also a very consistent pattern in their answers when they were asked whether mindfulness changed them as a person. Most of them found this statement too exaggerated, did not really know how to answer it and often just denied this change. ‘Did it change me as a person? No, I don’t think so. Your personality stays the same, but I think you get to know it better and deal with it in a different manner’ is how Ruben (50, Marketing) expressed it. Amanda (69, Nurse) states that she did not become a different person but ‘that I’m standing up for myself.’ Rose (34, Researcher) says that she is ‘still the same person with still the same problems.’ Underlying this denial of personal change is a belief in a stable notion of the self.

In the integration course we could observe a similar refusal of especially an authoritarian style on behalf of the teachers. The teachers want to stay far away from a paternalistic or neocolonial civilization style of imposing norms and values on the newcomers (Nkrumah, 1965). Attempting to explicitly alter the opinions of the newcomers was not used as educational strategy. Instead, the objective for many was rather to create an ‘awareness of diversity’ in a liberal democratic society. This pluralism started in the class itself as the active promotion of exchange of perspectives. Some of the teachers had the hidden assumption of reaching a rational and universal moral point of view on norms and values through discussion. The argument is put forward that it is not the goal to change the newcomers’ opinion, but they just have to, in the words of the teachers, ‘start thinking.’ By this, they make a contrast between the culture that the migrants lived in before, which was, according to them, more guided by traditions and rules that had to be followed, and the - in their opinion - ‘reflexive Western culture’ they are teaching in class. A very rationalistic and individualistic logic guides their argument here. At least, according to some of the teachers, the newcomers must become aware of the relativity of their own cultural frame. They emphasize that this effect is not a matter of radically changing, but rather of realizing that different opinions are possible on the subject. On the side of the course members, a same refusal of a mentalist model of socialization does not occur however. Instead, they often complained in the interviews that the teachers did not seem to know immediate answers to some of their questions or did not give them clearly defined knowledge on the moral subjects they taught. Especially when the teachers incited them to look up the things they asked themselves, this was for the newcomers a sign that the teachers were not sufficiently informed or even educated to fulfil their role as a teacher. In opposition to the teachers, the newcomers expected to get clear-cut knowledge and a teacher with a more authoritative role to teach them, in their words, ‘the rules of Belgium’. We see here a contrast in models of socialization that structure the expectations of teachers and newcomers in this setting.

Finally, in the outdoor management training the achievement of personal transformation is denied as well. The trainers indicated here that ‘transformation’ was too heavy a concept to characterize what happened during the training and that they rather saw it as ‘gaining awareness’ of what is already there. The leadership style, which is closely related to the personality of the person, is already a given the managers merely have to gain reflexive knowledge of, instead of learning some quick-fix management techniques. The metaphor that is used of showing the managers 'a mirror of themselves' also illustrates that a classic transformative learning process is denied. Instead, merely a reflection is given of what was deemed to be already present. The central notion of 'feedback' in a similar way points in this direction. Assumed in this notion is that both the coaches and the other managers merely give back to the person how they perceive his or her existing personality and leadership style. Moreover, it is 'the gaze of the other' that is deemed to be decisive when it comes to giving real, objective information on this stable core of the identity of the person that is perceived. Yet, the image that the person has of himself or herself might be biased, and the feedback of both expert coaches and other people in the same managing position is intended to rectify this bias in the direction of more 'objective' self-knowledge. The view that what has to be known is already present, is complemented by the conviction that other people can help the person to gain more objective self-knowledge.

We could observe that in all three cases, except for the course members in the civic integration course, the passive mentalist notion of socialization is under taboo. This can be explained in relation to the individualism that prevails in these cases, especially in its moral and expressive formulation. If an authentic and unchangeable core of one's identity is assumed to be the basis of personal identity, then the notion of socialization becomes problematic, at least in the form of transmitting clear-cut norms and values. Explicit social control and authority equally become problematic notions, more from a moral individualist point of view of respecting the person. This became particularly clear in contrast to the course members in the civic integration course, who did not hold these individualistic assumptions. We could interpret these observations from the perspective of the notion of the 'cult of the individual' of the later Durkheim (1973; 1998), where he describes this individualism as an integrative ideal in modern society, and relate it to his writings on taboo and religion.[78] As the word 'cult' already shows, the individual is considered as a sacred value in modern society, according to Durkheim. Sacred values are surrounded by taboos, which mostly have to do with denying, transgressing or profaning their sacred character. This provides us with an explanation why this sole sacred value that forms a source of mechanic solidarity in modern society, the individual, also has taboos that accompany it. The passive mentalist socialization of identity implies the denial of the true authentic and individual nature of the person and pushes the person in a passive and subordinate position. This makes this form of socialization taboo in a culture that values individualism. We nevertheless want to look beyond this discursive denial of mentalist socialization at the alternative forms that socialization might take in relation to individualism. We bear in mind that it might be different and less straightforward than a mere transmission of norms and values. Through the study of our three settings related to individualism, we attempted to get a clearer view on what this notion of socialization might more specifically entail.

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[78] This stance of the later Durkheim is in contrast with the early Durkheim (2012) in *The Division of Labor in Society*. The early Durkheim is rather pessimistic about the influence of the cult of the individual on social cohesion. This can also be connected to the Durkheim we related to the mentalist model of socialization who strongly opposes individual and society.

2. Diverse Phases of Socialization Related to Individualism

2.1. De-socialization

The first phase in the learning process involves a kind of un-learning.[79] However, it would be naïve to assume that unlearning previous convictions, traditions or role patterns does not involve a learning process itself. This was already pointed out by several sociologists and anthropologists in completely different contexts than the socialization in individualist culture. Goffman (1971), for instance, describes in his analysis of the learning process in total institutions, among which he counts for instance prisons, mental institutions, hospitals or other institutions that are clearly separated from society, the first step with the concept of *disculturation*. Rather than learning something new, the learning activity consists here of ‘un-training’ (1971: 23). The normal roles an individual plays throughout his life and when he changes from one to another functional domain, are stripped off upon entering these total institutions. Role deprivation is real in its consequences for personal identity and in some of the chances in the outside world it reduces after being dismissed from the total institution. While we have not studied total institutions and there are many differences with our contexts, the ideal of the total reign of the pure person deprived of certain characteristics is also to a lesser degree present here. Yet, the framing is different, in the sense that authenticity is framed as the key to personal freedom instead of incarceration in a total institution. Turner (1969) also emphasizes the constructive element in unlearning social or structural content, especially in relation to rituals. Echoing Van Gennep (1909), he sees *separation* of the cultural roles and social structure as an essential element in all rites de passage. This phase ‘comprises symbolic behavior signifying the detachment of the individual or the group either from an earlier fixed point in the social structure, from a set of cultural conditions or both’ (1969: 94). In the liminal phase that results and that forms a sort of antipode to the normal structure of daily life, the individual unlearns many of its previous social attributes such as its role, gender or sexual identity. Here too, the person learns to be a pure individual, a ‘tabula rasa’ or a blank slate (1969: 103).

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[79] The concept of ‘learning’ is used more often in this empirical description than ‘socialization’. This was only noticed after the text had completely been written. However, I decided to retain this concept, as it was indicative of the empirical context where ‘learning’ and ‘teaching’ seem to be present. I see these concepts as part of the broader phenomenon of socialization, but they particularly fit in the description of these cases since we are dealing with strictly delineated institutional contexts, where socialization takes place. This is in line with the distinction Luhmann (1988) makes between ‘teaching’ and ‘socializing’.

Unlearning institutional side-issues

For our courses related to individualism and the central values of individualism, this ‘learning as unlearning’ took a central position. Roles, culture and traditions were gradually peeled off in order to arrive at a purer notion of the individual. In the case of the management course, especially bureaucratic roles and older concepts of leadership involving authority were unlearned. In the outdoor and authentic environment, the managers were de-socialized from their roles and all attributes that accompanied them, such as professional clothing, business competences and so on. Unlike the rites de passage in pre-industrial societies, it is not assumed that an ‘anonymous individual’ that almost absolves in a ‘community’ of equal individuals will result (Turner, 1969: 96), but rather, that an authentic individual lies under these bureaucratic and formal side-issues.

In the civic integration course, the cultural turn and the consequent focus on norms and values applies just as well for learning so-called ‘Western values’, as *unlearning* of previous cultural values and convictions. The emphasis on reflexivity in order to scrutinize one’s own cultural background, for example, illustrates this de-socialization. See, for instance, how Akram defends critically looking up information as a starting point for questioning the opinion on gay people:

> Some say that [being gay] is a disease. I say then that it is their assignment to prove this. Go to the library and bring me information. […] Like this they will also learn. They cannot just claim something without information. You are allowed to have your opinion, but it has to be proven with correct information (Akram, 31, Teacher Arabic).

Through discussion, a sense of relativity of their previous context should be developed. In relation to the emphasis on ‘sexual citizenship’, this reflexivity especially was to be developed towards the subject of sexual and gender identities. Here too, assumed culturally based convictions that could imply the inferiority of these identities had to be unlearned for the underlying so-called truth of the equal and valuable human. Unlearning in this case study meant de-identifying of assumed cultural convictions to arrive at what we could call a 'cultureless individual', who is purely rational and reflexive, and considers culture to be relative.[80]

Finally, in the spiritual mindfulness course, Western individuals had to learn to de-identify with typical neoliberal expectations and roles. Stress, depression, obsessive emotions and unrealistic expectations, especially related to the work context had to be unlearned by turning inwards through meditation. In the chapter on mindfulness, we especially identified this with the people who decided to work less after the mindfulness course, in order to take better care of themselves. The mindfulness trainers kept on stressing to take distance of thoughts and emotions, and to go back to the 'bare attention' of mere bodily sensations (see also Sharf, 2015 on mindfulness as 'bare attention').

In all these cases where diverse scripts of individualism are learned, we could observe a similar pattern. Social or institutional elements, be they bureaucratic roles, culture or work-related expectations, are in a first phase unlearned in these courses. People are taught to throw institutional side issues overboard, in order to arrive at a purer core of their identity. The role-less, culture-less or expectation-less subject is each time portrayed as more real and authentic than the identities that were still incarcerated in social structures. In fact, in this first phase of socialization, the classic mentalist model is reversed. Instead of learning norms and values, they are gradually peeled off. We can make a connection here to the notion of 'purification', which has mostly been used to explain the spiritual turn in the West (Cortois, Aupers, & Houtman, 2018; Houtman, 2018; Roeland, Aupers, Houtman, De Koning, & Noomen, 2010), but was also adopted more generally to explain cultural change in other institutional realms, such as politics and science (Simons, Laermans, & Houtman, 2018). As we have seen here in these contexts of socialization, purification is not only a concept that is useful to describe large-scale cultural-historical transformations, but can also be used to describe a first phase in the socialization process related to individualism. Here, it forms an explanation on a biographical level to describe change through the unlearning of institutional side issues in socialization contexts related to individualism.

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[80] The paradox is that this 'self-reflexive, cultureless individual' exists besides a celebration and attention for diversity. Questions on how something is done or experienced in one's culture, and comparing this with Belgian and other customs are equally present in the civic integration course. The newcomers are given room to share their experiences from their cultural point of view. But this awareness of diversity also had the purpose of making each of the newcomers realize that in the end their culture did not offer the only solution, especially in relation to moral topics. Diversity, as I argue here, also served the goal of creating an awareness of the relativity of their perspective.

Confrontation

A subsequent question is which methods are used by coaches and trainers to peel off socially determined identity patterns? An important aspect for all of the courses was *confrontation*. Confrontation in these contexts does not carry any denotation of violence or conflict. By this concept we imply that instead of merely relying on rational argumentation patterns to convey a certain view on personal identity, more emotional and experiential aspects of convincing are also used. This created the impression that what is at stake, is not just a point of view, but forms the 'truth' on personal identity. The perspective on subjectivity is not presented as a choice one can make, but rather as a confrontation with one's true self or the true nature of others. This illustrates the importance of interaction in these contexts of socialization. A socializer confronts a socializee with a view on the latter's identity. This method of confrontation is not a passive form of socialization initiated only on the side of the socializer, but rather demands of the course members reflexivity on their self through this confrontation. Confrontation arises in interactive contexts such as the guided introspection of one's self, through feedback from others or in a seemingly organic discussion.

In the case of mindfulness meditation, one's own feelings or thoughts or briefly, one's self were the object of confrontation. Course members described the confrontational experience as an 'eye-opener'. A significant share of the course members was not only looking for pleasant feelings or calm, but emphasized confrontation with good as well as bad moments, to be present in whatever offers itself to their consciousness. They described this as a very hard and emotionally demanding exercise in self-confrontation. The shape confrontation took in this context was very embodied, as being thrown back on their embodied selves. Some of the trainers described mindfulness as a constant exposure to previously repressed feelings, sensations and thoughts, in line with the basic assumptions of psycho-analysis that confrontation with repressed feelings will have a healing effect in the end. Trainer Anna refers to exposure as a first step towards acceptance of negative emotions:

> What you actually do during a mindfulness training […] you sit and watch and observe, also when we are dealing with negative emotions. Actually, that is a form of long-term exposure. Because of this, you learn to investigate your negative thoughts, not change them […] and this forms a sort of learning to accept them (Anna, 54, Mindfulness trainer).

The confrontation with the inner mental world through meditation, furthermore, leads a significant part of the course members to explore a more authentic account of that self.

In the case of civic integration, confrontation figured on diverse levels, some more direct and experiential, and others more indirect and rational (see chapter 5). Discussions, videos and encounters with gay people were used to actively show the equality of gay people and confront this taboo-topic.

That confrontation involved a more experiential strategy became particularly visible in the diverse ways affect was involved in these confrontations on cultural topics. In contrast to the other two cases, these confrontations were sometimes met with intense affect or even a form of conflict by the course members. An example thereof is a Muslim man who ran away from a discussion on the possibility of men becoming pregnant. In other cases, the need for confrontation was actively questioned by the course members, for instance when one of the course members refused to talk about the topic of homosexuality. Most of the course members endured the confrontation with the cultural topics in order to be informed on the more pragmatic topics. The way to deal with this confrontation was to passively undergo it or to formulate socially desirable answers in order to 'manage their affects'. It is clear from these reactions of the course members that this is a disciplinary context of socialization for the course members. They do not engage in this socializing trajectory out of their own will to alter themselves, but there is a large aspect of compulsion. In this context, we observed a mismatch between two models of socialization. While the teachers put interaction central, the course members have other, more passive expectations of how the socialization to citizenship will take place. Confrontation is in this context not embraced by the course members as a strategy to get to know themselves better, but is imposed on them. This confrontation as part of socialization in individualism is the most visible in this setting, since it clashed with the course members' expectations. Finally, there was also the group that already went through excessive socialization in Western liberal democratic ideas and for whom confrontation was rationally embraced or even seemed like an exaggeration that magnified the difference between 'the west and the rest'. From the side of the teachers, however, the affects relating to previous cultural socializations were often denied, from the rational conviction that they were confronting the newcomers with universal moral norms and values (see also Fadil, 2009). The confrontational strategy was used to tackle taboos and to show the irrationality of what the teachers took to be fear or aversion of the newcomers to talk about these topics. However, in many of the cases, this strategy did not work to socialize them into acceptance of these sexual identities, since it did not consider the importance of deeply rooted cultural and especially religious convictions. Confrontation as a way to deal with taboos and psychologizing these taboos seemed to be a strategy that only worked for those who already to a large extent shared a liberal democratic and secular cultural frame.

In the management training, confrontation was achieved through feedback from the coaches and colleagues on the manager's personality. More than in meditational confrontation where the self mainly confronts itself, confrontation is brought about in interaction with the other. What is at stake here are not repressed elements of the self that the self rediscovers, but rather how the person comes across in a social context. We can relate this to a Meadian (1934) notion of socialization as interiorizing the view of a significant other. The view of the coach or of the present colleagues on the self is taken as the true representation of the self (while this might be partial, only from the perspective of work or even wrong) and is subsequently internalized. Especially the feedback of the coaches impressed many of the managers, as becomes, for instance, clear from the following quote:

> What I found special is that someone comes with you, an observant, who writes down a bunch of stuff, says nothing, and in the end makes an analysis of how the group acted, how you functioned in that group and so on. Subsequently, they relate this to theory, to say what you could have done differently (Ray, 34, Program director, Logistics company).

Feedback is here not just passively imposed, but actively experienced in practices together. Again, experience plays an important part here, which is subsequently reflected back to the person. While some aspects of this projected self were familiar, most course members learned something new from this interactive confrontation with their selves.

2.2. Re-socialization

The conduct of conduct through coaching

In the re-socialization phase, the phase in which new content is learned, the connection to the interactive model of socialization becomes even more apparent (e.g. Becker, 1953). The two parties in the process both take an active role in continual communication. In a first phase, especially the socializer plays a crucial role in all three cases. He or she can be characterized as a coach. While only in the last case the socializers explicitly call themselves *coaches*, the argument could be made that all of these socializers implicitly identify with the role of coach. In civic integration, the teachers refer to their method as ‘coaching guidance’. In the case of mindfulness, they instead refer to ‘training’, because the competence of meditating is trained by the course members. But here too, the trainers rely on psychological coaching tactics to make collectively sense of the meditation experience afterwards. The coach as the paradigmatic figure of the socializer in individualist cultural settings fits with the ‘interactionist model’, since he guides in a more interactive sense instead of merely teaching in a classic sense. This interactive guiding corresponds to Becker’s guiding of experience and the interpretative drift of Luhrmann (1989) we discussed in relation to the specific socialization in spirituality, but that can be generalized to the two other cases and the broader topic of socialization in individualism.[81] The coach is not the ethical prophet Weber (1992) described, as someone who declares pre-given ideas as an absolute truth that people have to adopt without retort. Rather, he or she could be seen as someone who, in line with the later Foucault's analysis of power, guides the conduct of others and influences how people guide themselves, which we described as 'the conduct of conduct' (Foucault, 1982; Rose, 1989). The difference with a psychotherapist is that the coach relies less on the label of expert and forms in fact a broader generalization of the therapeutic attitude (Binkley, 2011; Rose, 1989; Yankellevich, 2018). What is at stake is mostly a guiding of experience. The cultural labeling of experiences, pointing them out and making people more aware of them (Becker, 1997) has an effect on which things they selectively experience, enlarge, how they experience them and even how they affect their bodily and physiological reactions.[82] In settings where individualism is important, especially this guiding of experience is key.

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[81] Luhrmann’s approach is very similar to Becker’s on socialization. However, she does not refer to his work at any point. This might be due to the fact that both authors are enclosed, probably to an extent against their

Guiding of experience is done very subtly by the coaches, and the most used strategy consists of asking questions. Asking questions does not transgress the taboo on passive socialization, since they merely seem to demand for an answer that is already there, blurring the fact that they also selectively guide the attention by asking a specific question. In the case of mindfulness, the question the coach asks always directs the practitioners to experience: 'How did you experience this meditation session?' 'How did you experience your body?' As trainer Anna explains, they start from the experience that they just evoked during the exercise and the role of the trainer is first and foremost to value and guide that experience:

> All sessions start with exercises, you let people experience mindfulness. Classic group trainings usually start with: 'How was it last week' and 'Did people do their homework?' and then the next thing. In mindfulness training, this is different, we simply start by doing exercises, and the next step is not to explain, but to let people discuss in small groups: 'How did I experience this [exercise]?' […] Not: 'What do I think about it' or 'What is my opinion', but 'How did it feel to do this?' As a trainer, you are not going to correct that experience, but through your questions you are going to stimulate the process of awareness one way or another. You also pay attention to the experiences the people themselves report. For instance, that they become nervous […] during the body scan. You are going to normalize that and say: 'Look, probably there are other people like you, this is a normal process.' You bring them trust, especially by bringing them back to their selves (Anna, 54, Trainer mindfulness).

By culturally and verbally singling out experience as single important point to truth, the practitioners learn to focus on the given bodily awareness, or 'embodied self-reflexivity' (Pagis, 2007). As we described in more detail in chapter 4, the coach directed the attention to bodily sensations instead of

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own will, in their specific empirical domain; Luhrmann in socialization in magic thinking and Becker in drug or outsider milieu.

[82] See, for instance, also the concept of bio-looping (Seligman & Kirmayer, 2008), which Luhrmann relates to her concept of cultural kindling. The origin of this concept lies in the discipline of psychiatric anthropology, where it is observed that certain cultural contexts or personal history cause some mental state to be hyper-cognized, while others that are culturally not recognized or not part of personal history are rather hypo-cognized.

labeling them as specific emotions that already were considered as an interpretation of these bodily sensations. A constant interaction between new ways of approaching experiences and the actual experiences creates new sensitivities on the side of the course members, which forms the breeding ground for new experiences. This became clear in one of the very first exercises we observed during the participant observation, where the trainer taught the course members to taste a raisin, and guided this experience by asking many questions, such as: ‘How does it feel? How does it smell? What is the texture?’ This formed a metaphor for how the participants had to learn to deal with their body in subsequent phases of the training. Here we saw the interpretative drift (Luhrmann, 1989) at work as giving new meaning to existing experiences and guiding the attention, so that new experiences were brought to the attention.

In the case of civic integration, the pedagogical method of coaching guidance focused on questions as well. These questions selectively guided the newcomers in the direction of a certain conception of subjectivity. In this case, inner and embodied experience is not central, but the coaching questions rather guide toward a morally worthy subjectivity. Questions were aimed at reflexively scrutinizing tradition such as: ‘Where does the Koran say that you have to wear a headscarf or that being gay is not allowed?’ or ‘Which imam defends this point of view?’ Again, the impression is created that by asking questions, a point of view is not forced on the newcomers but through open questions, people arrive at the solution themselves. This is the general conviction of the teachers. Attention is pointed towards other perspectives on morality, religion and sexual identities. The objective of guiding conduct in this case is to create a sense of relativity towards one’s own cultural frame or, more radically, to embrace a cultural liberal democratic point of view. In this setting of mandatory socialization to obtain citizenship, the guiding of conduct was less invisible for the course members than in the previous case study. This can be explained by the conflicting interests of teachers and migrants integrating. While the teachers also have a cultural civilizing mission, the course members are mostly interested in practical guidance in the new society.

In the case of the management courses, guiding of conduct was not aimed at experience or critical reflection, but rather at the goals and ambitions of the managers. ‘What are your goals?’ was one of the main questions of the coaches, not only to question the effectively formulated goals that the managers already had for themselves, but also to create the awareness that ‘having goals’ is a priority from their leadership position or to criticize people who do not think about their work-related subjectivity in terms of growth. Ruth, for instance, was made aware by the coaches that being satisfied is not enough and that she should continue to envision goals for herself:

> During the last conversation of the first week, they confronted me with the fact that I had no goals anymore, and they kept on asking about this, also about more personal stuff, and this created the awareness for me: ‘Oh yes, I have to think about that.’ There is still work to be done, you know, I cannot run away from that, I just have to work on that (Ruth, 28, IT manager, R&D company).

A question is not so neutral as it seems and singles out certain topics as important, while concealing alternative perspectives as irrelevant or non-existing.

In all three cases, attention was guided in diverse directions conform the underlying subject notions. This might explain why in all these cases, change was denied, but the softer expression of ‘gaining awareness’ was used to describe socialization. The crucial point here is that this ‘gaining awareness’ is not merely getting to know what was already present, but also offers a new selective perspective. This especially becomes apparent from the comparison of these three cases, that while relying on the same method, each bring very different aspects of individualism to light. The guiding of attention is a first step in re-socialization, which can subsequently be carried on by the individual itself.

Self-techniques

Asking questions as first embodied by the coach has to become an internalized attitude in a second phase, so that the coach becomes redundant. One of the coaches in the management trajectory compared this to learning how to swim, but this quote might have just as well been derived from one of the other settings:

> It’s a bit like the lifeguard on the edge of the swimming pool. It is you who has to swim. You have to work and move your arms and swim from left to right in the swimming pool. I will, from time to time, support you, occasionally dive into the pool, but I’m not going to swim for you. The idea is […] that you are a good coach when you make yourself redundant (Ella, 38, Coach management).

That this description is transposable to the other settings becomes, for instance, apparent in one of the often recurring expressions the mindfulness trainers use. As trainer Nicolas says, the mindfulness practitioner in the end has to become ‘his or her own therapist’:

> We use the expression that you become your own therapist if you have practiced mindfulness and if you are willing to continue doing it afterwards. […] Now, ten years after my first mindfulness training, I dare to say that I am my own therapist. I deem the chance small that I will ever need a psychotherapist (Nicolas, 51, Trainer mindfulness).

In the final phase, the conduct of conduct is given in the hands of the person himself. The self-transformatory work is continued by the person, in the form of using self-techniques. This continuation of the influence of the coach by the person himself is in contrast with some approaches of therapy culture that especially emphasize the dependency of modern-day individuals on therapeutic institutions. Furedi (2003: 9), for instance, is very critical of this assumed dependency: ‘Contemporary society transmits the belief that problems of the emotion ought not be faced by people on their own. Therapeutic intervention and counselling is continually offered to individuals facing unexpected or difficult or challenging or unpleasant encounters.’ In our cases, however, the continuance of the socialization by the person herself was crucial for successful socialization and cannot be overlooked.

Paradoxically, for this sort of socialization that heavily relies on therapeutic self-socialization to work, liberal democratic values such as the importance of this reflexive working on yourself are already assumed. This can explain why these specific liberal self-techniques did not take an important place in the narratives of the newcomers after the civic integration course. The invitation to look up information on cultural themes themselves and to develop their own critical attitude was not continued by the newcomers with intense identity work on the moral topics that were discussed during the courses. The invitation to deliberate self-socialization here faces the resistance of previous subjectivations related to their cultural background. The newcomers hold at the moment of the civic integration course distinct notions of self-making from the therapeutic and highly self-reflexive forms of self-techniques that the teachers in this context take for granted. The role the distinct regulatory ideals and notions of self-making of the newcomers play in their identity is underestimated and leads to frequent confrontations on moral themes. On a cultural level, liberal self-making faces obstacles on side of the newcomers. Nevertheless, a very minimal notion of identity work can be discerned on an economic level, where the newcomers have to make an action plan in order to find a job, which is continued after the course. This level of socialization had best be approached with the concept of neoliberal governmentality, where the conduct of conduct is used to create risk-averse, self-sufficient and responsible subjects, who can guide themselves in a new society (Foucault, 2010; Rose, 1999; Suvarierol & Kirk, 2015). In what follows, we will focus on the two other socialization contexts, since reflexive self-socialization plays an important role here.

Both in the mindfulness and management case, reflexive self-socialization formed the decisive final step for socialization in individualism to be successful. In the case of mindfulness, a training program was suggested to the course members that incited them to practice daily. Furthermore, many tips and tricks were given to incorporate mindfulness in daily life. Discovering an authentic self is clearly not something one just finds by turning inwards once, but requires constant work and the creation of new sensibilities through meditation.

With regard to management, after the outdoor management training, three main 'take home work-points' were communicated to each participant to be further considered in the actual work context. Coach Vince calls these work points their personal 'training plan':

> They have a training plan. […] At the end, they have to think by themselves: at which moments will I develop these new habits? I just give an example, for instance, listening. I notice that I don't really listen to people. At which moments, during which meetings will I train? How am I going to ask for feedback? How will I make sure I get feedback? (Vince, 36, Coach management).

Vince gave the example of 'listening', but during the participant observations of the training, many other examples were given. Here is a sample of three of the participants and the work points they took home:

1. Speak up more often
   Force myself to step back & analyze more frequently
   Explain your thinking

2. Don't jump to solutions
   Dare to go into details
   Don't forget to show my vulnerable side

3. Let go, don't control too much
   Be confident
   Keep on asking

All of these work points can be viewed as self-techniques, with which the managers are incited to work themselves and to transform themselves. They are not formulated as obligations, but as an ethic to transform their daily practices in the context of work. The two most clearly present domains of ethical work in this self-advice are the domain of communication – communicate more clearly to your team members and verbalize what you think; do not keep your thoughts to yourself – and have confidence – dare to express what you think and do not bother about other people's judgements. The expressive and communicative ethic (chapter 6) recur here as the ideals the participants have to transform themselves to.

Especially in the mindfulness case study, the role of the body is important in self-formation. In this case, self-formation involved training oneself in learning to experience thoughts, emotions and mostly, bodily sensations in a better way. In the first trials, the body of many course members resisted this sort of attention, for instance as described by some of the course members who experienced unrest in their bodies. It requires self-formative labor to apply meditation correctly as a way to experience the body better. One of the course members described this as 'becoming thin-skinned' (after the German 'dunnhautig'), more sensitive to bodily sensations, a capacity that people who are determined by what is expected from them suppress or never even develop, he claims. The parallels with Becker's (1953) description of learning to perceive what marihuana precisely does to your body are evident.

> What I already experienced during the courses, was the contact with the body. Gradually, you learn to feel your body more. During the day, you feel what is going on, what do I feel? For instance, going to the coffee machine, just for a moment feel, what is going on? (Luc, 46, Course member mindfulness)

For meditation, a certain degree of control and discipline of the body was needed and trained. Meditating is everything but letting emotions run wild; it rather entails a controlled observation of these 'authentic emotions'. In line with Mahmood's (2011) description of embodied self-formation, meditation required the individual to train his or her own body and inclinations.

Thus, while we first distinguished a negative moment of de-socialization, there is also clearly a positive content that can be given to socialization in these settings related to individualism. This form of socialization is different from a passive notion of socialization and ideally combines an interactive and self-socializing model. More specifically, the combination of these two models of socialization can be characterized as truly therapeutic. In a first phase, this therapeutic socialization is embodied in an external socializer who takes the role of the coach and carefully guides the attention, with the intention of creating more awareness. Secondly, the person is invited to internalize this therapeutic attitude towards herself and to engage in disciplined self-work. These phases of socialization in settings related to individualism are summarized in the table below:

		Mindfulness	**Civic Integration**	**Management**
De-socialization	*Purification*	Bare attention	'Cultureless' individual	Authentic leadership
	Confrontation	Self-confrontation	Confrontation cultural taboo	Feedback confrontation
Re-socialization	*Coaching the conduct of conduct*	How did you experience it?	What does your culture say?	What are your goals?
	Self-techniques	Meditation	Action-plan, no cultural self-techniques	Work-points

Table 4: Four phases of socialization in the three case studies related to individualism

Conclusion

In this comparative chapter on the case studies that were described in their empirical detail in the previous chapters of this book, we attempted to formulate an encompassing and generalizing answer to how the paradoxical socialization related to individualism might take form. The diverse steps we outlined in this socialization process explicitly depart from a classic mentalist notion of socialization, which was seen as taboo in the described settings, and instead connect better to the interactionist and/or self-socializing model of socialization. The socializer takes the role of the coach who actively redirects the attention of the socializee, in line with Luhrmann's (1989), Becker's (1953; 1997) and Foucault's (1982) guiding of attention or 'conduct of conduct'. In two of the three cases this influence is subsequently continued in the active self-formation of the course members. Instead of an under-socialized conception of man, we found that in individualist settings socialization takes a different shape. Two of the outlined theoretical models of socialization recurred in our cases related to individualism: the interactive model and the combination of the interactive and self-socializing model.

From the empirical analysis of these settings related to individualism, an extension can be made to these two theoretical socialization models insofar as individualism is concerned. This concerns the prior phase of de-socialization that should not be seen from an emic point of view as the opposite of socialization, but instead also consists of a form of learning as un-learning. This perspective, that some forms of socialization require a phase of de-socialization, was already defended for pre-industrial societies by anthropologists such as Turner (1969) in his analysis of rituals and by Goffman (1971) for total institutions, both very collectivist contexts. In the case of individualist socialization, this point is generally disregarded. What is unlearned are typical social structural characteristics that are in opposition to the culturally shared ideal of authenticity, such as roles, power relations, and culture. This makes it a very paradoxical form of socialization, consisting of the denial of the importance of social determinants. People are not socialized in a classic social role, as the mentalist form of socialization has it, but rather in how to be an 'authentic' or 'reflexive' person, a process we referred to with the concept of 'purification' (Roeland et al., 2010; Houtman, 2018; Cortois et al., 2018). Of course, this authenticity or reflexivity itself is not an innate quality, but a socially conditioned expectation. Given the age group we studied of adult persons between 25 and 69, who undergo a form of tertiary socialization and have been socialized throughout their lives in diverse values and norms, this learning as unlearning might also be more obvious. Yet, the question remains whether socialization also takes this form of un-learning when we are dealing with children who go through primary or secondary socialization in the family and the school. Further research would be needed to explore socialization processes related to individualism in these earlier life phases.

The importance of previous contexts of socialization is not only relevant in relation to un-learning, but also in relation to subscribing to the ideal of continuously developing one's identity. This ideal is grounded in a general therapeutic culture that had already before these courses implicitly socialized a significant share of our interlocutors (Illouz, 2008; Furedi, 2003; Marquis, 2014; McGee, 2005). From the study of our cases it became apparent that interactive socialization is not necessarily complemented by reflexive self-socialization. Since the interactive phase of socialization in diverse strands of individualism had rather be seen as an *invitation to self-socialization*, the importance of this self-socialization already has to be evident to the particular person in advance. It forms the condition to continue the conduct of conduct in interiorized self-techniques. This especially became apparent when contrasted to the case in civic integration, where this ideal of therapeutic or liberal self-socialization did not take root yet for most of the newcomers. In this case, socialization in individualism is limited to the interactive phase of socialization. Socialization is situated here more in a context of power relations, that from moral individualist assumptions are continuously made invisible or not even realized by the teachers, especially the Flemish ones. On the side of the course members, the intense cultural confrontation that was initiated by the socialization made this disciplinary context for them on the contrary very apparent. The contrast was informative, not only on the particular nature of socialization in civic integration itself, but it brought to light the implicit assumption of the other two cases in which a liberal democratic individualist context was already the evident cultural frame. Confrontation was for instance both in mindfulness and the management course embraced and not resisted by the course members as a means to self-knowledge and therefor, less visible. However, the more explicit confrontation in civic integration made it apparent that this was also taking place in the other cases but in a more subtle form. Because some of the newcomers resisted the conduct of conduct, and the cultural topics were not continued in self-techniques, these mechanisms that were present in the other cases became visible. With this element too, new research questions arise, such as how this prior socialization into the importance of self-work arises. Supposedly, the media, popular culture and social media play an important role in priming these ideals as worthwhile.

In the two cases where the interactive model is complemented with self-socialization, interesting dialectics between control and emotion take place. Socialization is not comparable to the classic civilization process (Elias, 2000) as a simple controlling and repressing of affect. The other extreme in line with an emic understanding of authenticity as emotions running free is also not taking place if the socialization process is observed closely. Rather, a controlled de-controlling and informalization of the control of affects occurs (Wouters, 2008). In both cases, self-socialization can be seen as rationally and reflectively approaching affect and making it object of communication in a therapeutic manner of dealing with one's emotions (Illouz, 2008). In these two cases there were, nonetheless, some different accents. While in the management course the emphasis was on the interactive phase, as illustrated in the importance of feedback on experienced practices, in mindfulness it was rather on self-socialization as the continuance of the meditational practice, where the self observes and analyses the self. Additionally, in mindfulness the importance of the body in socialization was more strongly highlighted. Beyond Durkheimian (2005) dichotomies between individual and social and body and culture, we emphasized the interaction between body and cultural content in socialization (e.g. Becker, 1997; Luhrmann, 1989; Mahmood, 2011). This differs from the un-reflexive habitus formation of Bourdieu, where the body merely had the role of unconsciously imitating habitual behavior. Interaction also takes place at the level of the body as a continuous and reflexive cultural shaping of the body. The relation to the body in socialization and how it is important in an individualized culture could be further explored in familiar settings that focus even more explicitly on the role of the body, or engage in a more disciplined styling of the body as expression of identity. Think for instance of fitness courses or dietary regimes that are related to authenticity, personal growth or strong control of the self. The important role of the body could be related to a bio-political regime (Foucault, 1982), where bodily appearance and health is the central ideal (Cederström & Spicer, 2015). With or without this emphasis on the body, socialization in these individualist contexts implies developing a therapeutic attitude of ‘care for the self’ (Foucault, 1984c).

Chapter 8: Conclusion

Introduction

Individualism has been of interest to sociologists from the dawn of the sociological discipline to describe one of the main structural features of modern Western societies (Durkheim, 1973; Elias, 2001; Lukes, 1971; Parsons, 2007; Weber, 2003). In many accounts, however, the phenomenon has been narrowed down to a singular, unilineal phenomenon, seemingly coherent in its logic. Individualization theories describe it as the process where traditions fade and individual autonomy increases (Bauman, 2001; Beck & Beck-Gernsheim, 2002; Giddens, 1991). Social scientists from a critical theory outlook, rather refer to a new governmental practice where social control is increasingly individualized and interiorized by subjects as a manner to guide themselves (Foucault, 2010; Rose, 1989). Still others take the concept of authenticity as the key concept to define how we conceptualize the relation to ourselves and others (Berman, 2009; Inglehart, 1997; Taylor, 1991). While all these approaches capture an important aspect of individualism, our point of departure for this book has been a different one, precisely emphasizing the multifarious and potentially conflicting nature of the phenomenon in its diverse expressions. As we pointed out in the first theoretical chapter, we made a distinction between utilitarian, moral and expressive individualism. In the three empirical chapters, the complex entanglements of these individualist scripts in the selected empirical cases was one of our main vantage points.

In this last chapter, the findings of this study, and the theoretical approaches and contributions to the multifarious phenomenon of individualism will be finalized. This will be done from two angles. In the previous chapter, we already focused on socialization in individualist settings. In the first section of the conclusion, the emphasis will lie on the interaction between the diverse forms of individualism and how these interactions reformulate the original forms of individualism we started from. In the second section, we will look at the combination of both interdependent approaches of scripts and socialization and how they might be informative for further research in other domains of socialization in individualism. Here we will also return to our general cultural sociological approach of individualism and how it opens up a whole domain of research.

1. Complex Entanglements of Individualist Scripts

1.1. Introspective and Reflexive Individualism

The script most present across cases, was the expressive individualist script with as central value authenticity, be it each time in slightly different articulations, depending on the context. While 'expressive individualism' is the general term that recurs in the literature on individualism, our in-depth study of these cases gave us reason to assume that 'authenticity' is not always connected to 'expression' as instantaneous 'acting out' or an outburst of spontaneous creativity. To be authentic has diverse meanings, which do not necessarily go together with expression. Authenticity, on the other hand, could also be arrived at through careful reflection and reflexive development of individual capacities or potentialities. The latter form could be considered as a more modest and rational interpretation of developing the individual potential or talents one has. This was especially apparent in the mindfulness case, where instead the term 'introspective individualism' (Laermans, 2017)[83] was used. For the managers as well, a more controlled and communicative version of expressive individualism was professed. In the latter case, this was mostly due to the fact that a notion of moral individualism, of respecting one's co-workers, was also implicitly assumed in the models of leadership that were stated. Moral individualism in this case transformed the meaning of expressive individualism to a reflexive form that took others into account. In communication, the authentic representation of the self, especially when it comes to imposing one's will on others, has to be toned down. This soberer form of expressive individualism might also be related to the influence therapeutic culture has on the reformulation of this originally romantic ideal. This requires a more detached approach to one's feelings where analyzing them from an objective and rational point of view becomes important to grasp their meaning (Illouz, 2008).

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[83] The distinction between expressive and this more inward-directed form of individualism was introduced by Rudi Laermans during a staff meeting.

1.2. Expressive and Utilitarian Combinations

This expressive script was in the cases studied, however, never the sole conception on individuality or identity, but always entered in a relation with other forms of individualism, either harmoniously merging with each other, either in overt value conflict. In case of a value conflict over diverse articulations on individualism, two kinds of conflicts could be observed. In the first variety, the socializer and the socializee have different interests, which results for each in a different interpretation of individualism. This was, for instance, the case in the civic integration course, where teachers held moral individualist ideas, while the course members limited their interpretation of individualism to a focus on self-sufficiency, which might be interpreted as a light version of pursuing self-interest. The other kind of value conflict is not related to different roles in the socialization process, but formed general value conflicts or inconsistencies in the shared discourse of the particular setting. This was the case in the mindfulness case study, where two different interpretations of the practice were present, indifferent of whether one was a trainer or course member. This interpretation was on the one hand one focused on self-control and on the other hand one on self-discovery. Especially the latter group found the former to have a misinterpretation of the purpose of the meditational practice.

The combination of individualist scripts in the observed case studies that occurred most, was the combination of expressive and utilitarian varieties of individualism (see also Bellah et al., 2008; Tipton, 1982). This is also a particularly interesting combination of individualist scripts, since it is highly relevant for the sphere of work today, where being one's authentic self is portrayed as a preferable professional alternative to authoritarian or bureaucratic management roles or passive employee identities (Boltanski & Chiapello, 2005; Fleming, 2009). Especially in the management and mindfulness case studies, these two scripts of individualism interacted with each other, yet in a very different manner. In total, we could distinguish four different ways of how this combination of utilitarian and expressive individualism related to each other in our specific settings. These combinations could be approached as an application of Merton's (1938) anomie typology, also known as his 'means-ends theory' or 'strain theory'. Merton distinguishes five categories that he terms the 'innovators', the 'conformists', the 'ritualists', the 'retreatists' and the 'rebellions'. This categorization is made to provide a 'systematic approach to the study of socio-cultural sources of deviate behavior', but clearly it can also be used beyond deviant behavior to describe social behavior, as our observed cases illustrate. These categories form combinations of what he describes as 'culturally defined goals' and 'acceptable modes of achieving these goals' (Merton, 1938: 38) or simply the means to these goals. Each of the categories form different combinations of means and ends. The innovators subscribe to the prescribed goals but achieve them through different or illegitimate means. The conformists use legitimate means to achieve legitimate goals. The ritualists use the available means, without being able to achieve the determined goals, and the retreatists withdraw both from accepted means and goals. The fifth category of the rebellions is similar but replaces the accepted means and goals with alternative means and goals. In our case studies, four of the five combinations that Merton describes could be found as a way to approach the relation between expressive and utilitarian means and goals and combinations of both. The category of retreatism was not present; completely leaving aside either utilitarian neoliberal goals or expressive alternatives was not found in our case studies. Further research should be done to explore this application of Merton's theory, since this combination could presumably also occur in other cases that are less mainstream or situated more at the margins of society. For the four combinations we found the four labels from Merton's typology form an interesting approach.

In the mindfulness case study, two interpretations of the relation between authenticity and utility were present with two groups of practitioners. In the first group, meditation was seen as a means to self-control, allowing the participants to continue performing in their work context. Here, the introspective features of mindfulness are seen as a means to be engaged again in the neoliberal circuit of work, especially after burn-out, be it in a more responsible manner than before. Here, utilitarian and expressive individualism merge with each other under the general banner of increased 'self-control'. Mindfulness is used here as a means to keep functioning in the neoliberal system, but without subscribing to the general goal of improving under this system. Work under neoliberal conditions is rather endured than embraced as encompassing life-goal. Mindfulness allows these people to cope with the conditions of their job, but in fact they are not so willing anymore to invest in achieving new goals in the work context. This can be compared best to what Merton describes as 'ritualism'. In critical management studies to the phenomenon of 'workplace spirituality', it is especially this interpretation that is emphasized as a renewed form of hidden 'exploitation' (e.g. Bell & Taylor, 2003; Carette & King, 2004; Case & Gosling, 2010).

There was an equally pronounced group as well, which used the expressive potential in mindfulness to formulate a critique of a broader neoliberal culture focused on utility. Mindfulness is not just used in this case to withdraw from the neoliberal rat race, but forms an alternative means to new alternative goals. These goals are, rather than being part of the neoliberal system, dedicating more time to the family, becoming part of a Buddhist community or becoming a mindfulness trainer oneself. Analyzed from the perspective of Merton's (1968) anomie typology, they took a more rebellious stance and opposed an expressive self-spirituality to neoliberal utility thinking (Aupers & Houtman, 2006; Heelas, 1996). The initial counter-cultural impetus of expressive individualism as it was institutionalized in spirituality has been preserved in how mindfulness is used here as a critique of neoliberalism.

For most of the practitioners in the management case study, the utilitarian and expressive script continuously merge, forming one inseparable discourse with as central value ‘personal growth’. This personal growth is understood from an expressive perspective as becoming more authentic in one’s work-related role and showing this personality in the form of ‘authentic leadership’. At the same time, from a utilitarian point of view, it is conceptualized as growth in human capital connected to an entrepreneurial view of the self (Bröckling, 2015; Du Gay, 1996), which is proactive and prone to actual growth in the company and continually wants to develop its human capital. This merging of the two scripts is particularly present in the discourse of the coaches. They develop several arguments to prove that an authentic leader, who is true to herself, is also more effective on the work floor. The managers that subscribe to this general discourse of personal growth, want to develop themselves by the customary means, intending to develop a career in their company directed at formal growth in leadership roles. In Merton’s terms, they can be seen as typical conformists, subscribing to the currently broadly shared new spirit of capitalism (Boltanski & Chiapello, 2005).

Expressive and utilitarian individualism did not always merge harmoniously in this setting. Some of the leaders, after taking the course on authentic leadership, became critical of their particular organizational context. They used the expressive ethos not to criticize neoliberalism in general, as with the alternative mindfulness practitioners who emphasized self-discovery, but rather their particular institutional setting that they deemed too bureaucratic and too little adapted to the current neoliberal climate. In fact, instead of criticizing the company for being neoliberal or utility focused, these leaders criticized their company for not being neoliberal enough. As we argued in chapter 6, this creates a more radical interpretation of the new spirit of capitalism that puts some pressure on the specific organizations to live up to the current expressive ethos, which especially ‘high potential’ leaders expect from their organizational context. We could describe these leaders as the ‘radical neoliberalists’, or in Merton’s terminology the ‘innovators’. They subscribe to the goal of self-development in neoliberal society, but not by means of a classic career in one company.

It is clear in these cases that neoliberalism relies on diverse interaction of the utilitarian and expressive individualist scripts. However, the degree to which diverse subcultures and the subjectivities that are formed there relate to this duality differs, and either emphasize the expressive or the utilitarian side, or a critical or conforming attitude. Merton’s anomie theory generates an interesting approach to systematize the diverse interactions we found between expressive and utilitarian individualism. Courses inspired on an expressive ethos, such as mindfulness or the adventure-based training focused on personal development are used as a means to achieve utilitarian goals such as actual growth in the neoliberal company or growth of 'human capital'. The manner in which this expressive ethos is applied differs and is either used in a 'legitimate way' as a way to subscribe to the growth discourse (indicated in the table with a '+'), or in an 'illegitimate way' as a way to criticize the growth discourse or certain aspects of it (indicated with a '-'). In the case of the innovators, expressive individualism is used to criticize the specific means that are available to the managers to realize their goals; in this case their specific company culture. The combination '+/-' stands for the formulation of alternative means and goals that come to replace the generally accepted ones, as in the interpretation of mindfulness that highlights self-discovery. This categorization might add some complexity to the literature, especially the one on neoliberal subjectivity (Bröckling, 2015; Du Gay, 1994), or on the new spirit of capitalism (Boltanski & Chiapello, 2005) that considers the kind of subjectivity related to neoliberalism as a harmonious, unidirectional identity. This assumption most likely stems from the fact that many of these researchers merely study the crystallized discourse of this new spirit, for instance when they study management advice literature. They do not take into consideration how this discourse is actualized in practice. We saw in the interpretation and application of practitioners of the expressive ethos, that it certainly does not in all cases serve mere utilitarian goals. In the following scheme, the four combinations of expressive and utilitarian individualism that occurred in our case studies, are illustrated:

Relation Expressive – Utilitarian individualism

Case	**Category**	**Ends**	**Means**	**Category Merton**
Management	Radical neoliberals	+	-	Innovators
	Personal growth	+	+	Conformists
Mindfulness	Self-control	-	+	Ritualists
	Alternative self-discovery	+/-	+/-	Rebellions

Table 5: Relation between Expressive and Utilitarian individualism approached from Merton's anomie theory

It might be interesting to take this scheme as a starting point for further research into the interaction between expressive and utilitarian individualism. We did not, for instance, encounter any participants who were outspokenly critical on the expressive courses themselves. In addition, including the category of retreatists might add more complexity to the relation. On the basis of our case studies it appears that the most critical course members can be found in a voluntary course, not organized in the organizational context itself. Whether this is generalizable is also a topic for further research.

1.3. Moral and Expressive Combinations

Interactions between moral and expressive individualism could especially be found in the management and civic integration setting. In some situations, this combination formed an organic whole. However, most of the time the relation between the two values showed some elements of tension. In the case of the management course, authenticity has an ambiguous relation to the equal worth of each of the leaders, which is related to moral individualism. On the one hand, a notion such as authentic leadership implies that there is not one leadership style that is taken as the one and only proper way to lead a team. A different sort of leadership suits each of the leaders. Here, the unicity and the equal worth of each of these leadership styles collide. On the other hand, it was clear that, at some instances the coaches struggled with this implication, since extraversion in a leader was equally valued by them. It was easier to see the display of the authentic personality and especially leadership in the case of extravert behavior, than with an introvert leader. This preference for extravert leadership was probably also related to the close connection between authenticity and the original romantic expressivism. This reminds us that an organizational setting still forms a context of hierarchy. While this is not solely expressed in blunt notions such as seniority anymore, in the seemingly egalitarian discourse of authenticity, new modes of installing hierarchy are hidden as well. Contrary to the moral worth of each person, extravert leaders are deemed more deserving of a leadership function than introvert ones. This sort of hierarchy based on psychological terms might even be more constraining than classic notions of hierarchy, in the sense that there is little room to change the ascribed personality traits such as introversion or extraversion.

In the case of civic integration, a different although again discordant interaction between moral and expressive individualism could be observed. In this case, the acceptance of moral individualist values when related to sexual and gender identities, especially when related to gay identity, was not self-evident for the migrants. Moral individualism in this specific articulation of accepting sexual and gender identities clashed with moral individualism as accepting the newcomers and their convictions, which resulted in what we referred to as the ‘paradox of tolerance’. We could say that moral individualism as accepting people, regardless of their cultural background, is most closely related to the classic notion of moral individualism as accepting the worthiness of every person regardless of their background (Durkheim, 1973; Joas, 2013). In the acceptance of sexual and gender identities, both expressive and moral interpretations of individualism are intertwined. The originally left-wing and countercultural discourse of defending gay and women's rights is adopted by rightwing neoconservative parties to demarcate so-called Western culture from other cultures. Especially with regard to homosexuality, there is a connection to recognizing sexual preference as an authentic part of the person rather than as a product of Western culture (see also Seidman & Meeks, 2011). The conflict between expressive and moral individualism mostly occurs here as a conflict between the authenticity of the gay person and the moral worth of the immigrant and his or her convictions. This conflict is presumably amplified by the secular assumptions underlying the acceptance of gay identities.

In these two cases, in which we could observe combinations of moral and expressive individualism, we could clearly see that both forms of individualism stand for different values. In the literature, when distinct forms of individualism are introduced, it is usually either the distinction between moral and utilitarian individualism (Durkheim, 1973), or, even more popular, between utilitarian and expressive individualism that is made (Bellah et al., 2008; Boltanski & Chiapello, 2005; De Keere, 2014; Derks, 2000; Tipton, 1982). Either moral and expressive individualism are seen as the same form of individualism, or moral individualism, since it deals with the dignity of the other person, is not related to individualism at all. In our analysis, we could observe that a distinction between these two subject scripts is nevertheless valid and that they relate to different, and sometimes conflicting conceptions of the person. When this is, for instance, mobilized to represent the interest of one's own group as against the cultural identity of the other group, the dignity of the other person conflicts with the expression of the self. This was illustrated in the civic integration course. Related to this, expressive individualism is often seen, from a moralist perspective, as the 'positive side' of individualism, which emphasizes freedom, creativity and self-development (Beck & Beck-Gernsheim, 2002; Giddens, 1991). Utilitarian individualism, on the other hand, was by different moralists rather seen as the negative side of the coin, related to egoism (de Tocqueville, 2002; Riesman, 1950). However, in confrontation with moral individualism, we could observe that expressive individualism can also install new forms of hierarchy, of extravert managers who are more deserving of leadership and of tolerant people of sexual identities versus alleged intolerant culture of these sexual identities that should be civilized. Expressivity in these cases is not just about the development of the individual, but generates the condition for new formations of social order as well.

2. Cultural Sociology and Socialization in Individualism

In this book, we had two guiding questions. On the one hand, the question of cultural scripts of individualism, on the other hand of how people are socialized in these scripts. While these were presented as two separate questions, the two approaches are inextricably linked. Implicitly, the answers to these two research questions criticized the very distinction between these two concepts, since individualism as a multifarious combination of scripts presupposes socialization in this value. If one wants to research individualism and its many facets as a broader cultural transition, socialization as central process through which it is transmitted should be included. The contradiction between both terms is only an apparent one, which would only hold if one sticks to a strong ontological distinction between them. This strong distinction was, for instance, present in what we referred to as 'the under-socialized conception of man' that can be found in the individualization theory. Here, the individualized individual is opposed to the social conditions that used to determine it and the latter merely become a matter of choice. From the cultural sociological approach that was followed in this book, it became apparent that individualism precisely forms on of the aspects of the currently shared cultural condition. The centrality of individualism does influence how socialization might be conceptualized and which notions of socialization become less plausible in combination with individualism.

The combination of an interactive and a self-socializing model, especially as initiated by the paradigmatic figure of the coach, seems particularly relevant for socialization in individualist values. While separately, these models have already existed and been conceptualized in social science for a long time (e.g. Becker, 1953; Foucault, 1984c), the constant reflexive guiding of interaction in combination with equally reflexive self-socialization makes out the specificity of this socialization model. While this finding is based on three very specific case studies related to very diverse societal fields, this specificity is also a strength, since it singled out the three forms of individualism and their relation to socialization. In this regard, this analysis could generate a magnifying glass to study the interaction between forms of individualism and socialization in other societal fields. Likewise, additional research in other cultural fields might complexify the current analysis. The research into socialization in individualism is still in its infancy, and to get a better grasp of this socialization model and its diverse articulations in relation to the distinct forms of individualism, further research is needed. It might be the case that the socialization model takes on slightly different features depending on which forms of individualism prevail. We could already see different accents in socialization in each of the case studies that were analyzed in this book, but a more systematic analysis of the interaction between the forms and combinations of individualism and distinctive socialization sub-models might give us more insight into the phenomenon of socialization in individualism. Education, upbringing and (social) media are, for instance, more general fields to further investigate expressions of individualism in relation to socialization.

With regard to education, we can indeed see a more interactive and reflexive understanding of teaching and learning, where especially the student and her life world become more central.[84] A passive transmission of knowledge has to make room in the current pedagogical jargon for more active terms such as 'competencies' or 'skills'. These transitions do not only relate to the importance of individualism, but can be connected to other processes, such as the ongoing neoliberalization or the still growing importance of pedagogical experts. Developing competencies through education involves an active engagement and formation of oneself (Masschelein & Simons, 2007), which continues through the life course and aims for a constant adaptation to the requirements of the employment market. In the form of competencies, learning becomes an attitude for which everybody has their own responsibility. At an early age, connections are already drawn between self-development and human capital. To further study the interplay between utilitarian and expressive individualism, and how this combination is already primed from early on, this context might be an interesting anchor point.

In the field of the family and socialization as upbringing, the reflexive interactive socialization model can be situated against the background of the broader cultural transition from a 'management of demand' to a 'management of negotiation' (De Swaan, 1979). Here, especially the moral individualist notion of the child as already a full person from the start, forms one of the impetuses towards these shifting family relations. Instead of civilizing children through authoritative punishments or constant corrections of their behavior, conversation and interaction are the norm. The generalization of the therapeutic outlook (Illouz, 2008) also plays a role here, which influences the general reflexivity as shared principle (Giddens, 1991). This transition can also take more extreme forms, in which not the authority, but especially the anxiety of parents is highlighted for the wellbeing of their children and their own successful parenting (Stearns, 2003). Expressive individualism as stimulating children to express their personality already from an early age might also play a role here. Again, how these notions of individualism interact remains object for further research.

Socialization in individualism might also be an interesting approach for further research in the domain of social media. From a perspective emphasizing reflexive self-socialization and interaction between social media users, it becomes visible how identities 'are constituted and reconstituted constantly' (Sauter, 2014).[85] From this perspective of self-socialization through social media, for instance, the differences between an offline and an online identity become apparent (Chen & Marcus, 2012), or how social media might influence the view on our identity (Sauter, 2014). Especially the active identity work in terms of self-socialization to shape an image of oneself that is perceived as culturally ideal, might open up new perspectives for research. In the literature connections have already been made to specific varieties of individualism in relation to social media such as networked individualism (Castells, 2003; Wellman et al., 2003) or connective individualism (Svensson, 2014). It might be interesting to further research how these forms of individualism relate to the three forms of individualism already outlined in this book.

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[84] That teaching has to take place in close consideration of the life world of the students is also the premise for many social scientific theories, such as the hidden curriculum thesis, theories of cultural congruence or the perceived relevance of a course for students (Belet, 2018; Langhout & Mitchell, 2008).

Also relating to classic media, there are interesting fields open for further research into individualism and the form of socialization that accompanies it. Think for instance of (women's) magazines or self-help books related to wellness, life style and health (see also Marquis, 2014) and how they inspire many readers to work on their selves. Here, passive reading seems to result in active identity work, which might ensue other accents in socialization. Furthermore, reality shows can specifically be related to the value of authenticity. How this value might defy existing boundaries between classically deemed highbrow and lowbrow culture (see also McClure, 2017 on cultural taste) might form a field for further research. Talk shows can also be approached as transmission of individualist values, especially those relying on a therapeutic jargon or those explicitly therapeutic in their objective (e.g. Doctor Phil or Oprah Winfrey, see also Illouz, 2003). Not only the explicit content that is transmitted is relevant here, but also the techniques, such as the dynamic with an audience, the confessional form they take and so on. Beyond classic media, more general research is needed to the role of the body in socialization in individualism. In the mindfulness course, this more embodied reflexive learning already became apparent. It might also play a role in courses where the body is even more important, such as yoga or fitness classes that have a strong link to health, wellbeing and self-development through the body.

In the end, these potential topics for further research bring us back to cultural sociology as a fruitful approach to individualism and the empirical and theoretical puzzles that are connected to it. By taking the combination of cultural discourses and the socialization processes in these discourses as vantage point, this study showed the importance of studying social practices to study culture in the making and how culture is actualized. When culture is only studied as static and crystalized discourses, an essential aspect of the meaning-making in action is lost. It is specifically by bringing this practice-related side of culture in the picture, that sharp oppositions between individual and society dissolve and it becomes visible how both co-constitute each other through the process of socialization. The maintained comparative design also showed the merits and overarching reach of the cultural-sociological approach to the phenomenon of individualism. Here, cultural sociology is not perceived as a separate sociological field such as organizational or political sociology or sociology of religion, but rather forms a fundamental research attitude spanning the entire discipline. Culture as a crucial dimension for social meaning-making is anchored in each societal domain. Specifically, in times when the individual forms the central perspective of this social meaning-making, cultural sociology establishes an indispensable encompassing perspective to bring to light the diverse and shared manners in which this value of the individual is given meaning. The cultural sociological perspective reminds us of central assumptions of the sociological imagination: that individualism is not an individualized phenomenon, disembedding individuals from previous collective ‘webs of significance’ (Geertz, 1973), but forms one of the central cultural motives to endow social reality with meaning.

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[85] Some studies, especially from a psychological angle, approach the relation between identity and social media rather from an essentialist and fixed perspective, for instance when existing personality traits like introversion, extraversion or neuroticism are related to how social media are used (Hughes, Rowe, Batey, & Lee, 2012; Moore & McElroy, 2012). From a cultural sociological perspective that emphasizes socialization, the formation of identity in interaction with this social medium becomes visible.

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Appendices

A. Preparatory Reading Material

Mindfulness

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Civic integration

Website with course preparations: www.climrek.be

Management

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B. Table Respondents

Participant/Coach	Case	Age	Gender	Profession	Ethnicity	Pseudonym
Participant	MFN	42	w	Pharmacist	Flemish	Lora
Participant	MFN	56	m	Lecturer	Flemish	George
Participant	MFN	45	w	Insurance agent	Flemish	Amy
Participant	MFN	40	w	Researcher	Flemish	Susan
Participant	MFN	45	m	Social worker	Flemish	Marc
Participant	MFN	60	w	Lector	Flemish	Helen
Participant	MFN	46	m	Lawyer	Flemish	Luc
Participant	MFN	55	w	Bio-engineer	Flemish	Mary
Participant	MFN	41	w	Architect	Flemish	Sara
Participant	MFN	61	w	Lecturer	Flemish	Emma
Participant	MFN	50	m	Marketing	Flemish	Ruben
Participant	MFN	60	m	Doctor	Flemish	Nick
Participant	MFN	53	m	Copy writer	Flemish	Frederic
Participant	MFN	69	w	Nurse	Flemish	Amanda
Participant	MFN	64	w	Entrepreneur	Flemish	Sabrina
Participant	MFN	54	w	Writer	Flemish	Loise
Participant	MFN	47	w	Researcher	Flemish	Jane
Participant	MFN	49	m	Entrepreneur	Flemish	Leo
Participant	MFN	57	w	Architect	Flemish	Patty
Participant	MFN	67	w	Engineer	Flemish	Sharon
Participant	MFN	35	w	Hairdresser	Flemish	Carry
Participant	MFN	56	w	Nurse	Flemish	Carla
Participant	MFN	29	w	Researcher	Flemish	Karen
Participant	MFN	53	m	Community worker	Flemish	Mickal
Participant	MFN	43	w	Nurse	Flemish	Abby
Coach	MFN	64	w	Physiotherapist	Flemish	Heleen
Coach	MFN	54	w	Teacher	Flemish	Anna
Coach	MFN	51	m	Teacher	Flemish	Nicolas

Coach	MFN	51	w	Doctor	Flemish	Annemie
Coach	MFN	66	w	Therapist	Flemish	Marianne
Coach	MFN	62	w	Entrepreneur	Flemish	Chiara
Coach	MFN	54	w	Social worker	Flemish	Catherine
Coach	MFN	59	w	Writer	Flemish	Brenda
Coach	MFN	46	m	Doctor	Flemish	Steven
Coach	MFN	58	m	Psychiatrist	Flemish	Erik
Participant	Integration	30	w	Sales	Indonesia	Farah
Participant	Integration	25	w	Unemployed	Lybia	Efua
Participant	Integration	27	w	Hairdresser	Albania	Helena
Participant	Integration	29	m	Blue collar	Syria	Mahir
Participant	Integration	29	m	Sales clothing	Syria	Saghir
Participant	Integration	18	w	Unemployed	Syria	Jamilah
Participant	Integration	24	m	Cook	Syria	Omar
Participant	Integration	32	m	Dentist	Syria	Kalid
Participant	Integration	41	m	Sales store	India	Darshan
Participant	Integration	26	w	Unemployed	Congo	Imani
Participant	Integration	37	m	Blue collar	Kenya	Fadhili
Participant	Integration	42	m	Entrepreneur	Egypt	Nabil
Participant	Integration	32	w	Unemployed	Kenya	Masika
Participant	Integration	34	m	Hairdresser	Suriname	Ronnie
Participant	Integration	39	w	Cleaning lady	Kenya	Celine
Coach	Integration	32	w	Teacher	Flemish	Hanne
Coach	Integration	42	w	Teacher	Russia	Natasha
Coach	Integration	34	w	Teacher	Arabic	Amina
Coach	Integration	32	w	Teacher	Polish	Zuzanna
Coach	Integration	31	m	Teacher	Arabic	Akram
Coach	Integration	36	m	Teacher	Arabic	Basim
Coach	Integration	48	w	Teacher	Flemish	Sandra
Coach	Integration	31	w	Teacher	Flemish	Laura
Coach	Integration	29	w	Teacher	Flemish	Femke
Coach	Integration	32	m	Teacher	Arabic	Fakhir
Coach	Integration	33	w	Teacher	Flemish	Emilie

Coach	Integration	51	m	Teacher	Arabic	Najib
Coach	Integration	52	w	Teacher	Turkish	Elif
Coach	Integration	37	m	Teacher	Flemish	Lucas
Coach	Integration	34	m	Teacher	Flemish	Hendrik
Coach	Integration	53	m	Teacher	Turkish	Alper
Coach	Integration	55	w	Teacher	Tamil	Bakul
Coach	Integration	32	m	Teacher	Flemish	Rik
Coach	Integration	53	w	Teacher	Arabic	Aisha
Coach	Integration	45	m	Teacher	Arabic	William
Participant	Management	38	m	Logistics: Financial controler	Netherlands	Jones
Participant	Management	34	m	Logistics: Program Director	Netherlands	Ray
Participant	Management	48	m	Logistics: IT manager	UK	Andrew
Participant	Management	34	w	Logistics: Phase Engineer	Colombia	Brooke
Participant	Management	31	m	Logistics: System integration manager	Netherlands	Connor
Participant	Management	34	w	R&D: Marketing	Netherlands	Bettany
Participant	Management	34	m	R&D: Sales	Netherlands	Curt
Participant	Management	31	m	R&D: Sales	Canada	Kenney
Participant	Management	28	w	R&D: IT management	Netherlands	Ruth
Participant	Management	36	w	R&D: R&D manager	Belgian	Claire
Participant	Management	41	m	Financial: Sales manager	Flemish	James
Participant	Management	31	w	Financial: Operations manager	Flemish	Catty
Participant	Management	38	w	Financial: Taks	Belgian	Claudette

				manager		
Participant	Management	46	m	Financial: Director Retail	Flemish	Jack
Participant	Management	47	w	Financial: Risk Department	Flemish	Elsa
Coach	Management	42	m	Coach	Flemish	Andy
Coach	Management	38	w	Coach	Flemish	Ella
Coach	Management	30	w	Coach	Flemish	Lucy
Coach	Management	36	m	Coach	Flemish	Vince
Coach	Management	41	m	Coach	Flemish	Rik

C. Topic Lists

C1. Topic List Mindfulness Coaches

1. Introductory questions

1) What is your age?
2) What is your current profession?
3) How did you first get in touch with mindfulness?
4) How come you became a mindfulness coach?

2. Socialization in course

5) What are the most important things you want to teach the course members during a course in mindfulness?
6) Which practices/beliefs are the most difficult to teach during the course?
7) If course members quit mindfulness, what are their main reasons?
8) Did mindfulness make you realize things about yourself? Which things?

3. Content of course

9) How does mindfulness for Westerners differ from the original Buddhist tradition?
10) Would you describe mindfulness as new age? Why not/yes?
11) Would you describe mindfulness as spirituality? Why not/yes?
12) Would you describe mindfulness a therapy? Why not/yes?
13) Is mindfulness useful in professional life/ business context?

C2. Topic List Mindfulness Course Members

1. Introductory questions

1) What is your age?
2) What is your profession?

2. *Beginning: Motives for mindfulness*

3) Did you read books on mindfulness before the course?
4) Did you follow courses before that were related to spirituality?
5) How did you first hear from mindfulness?
6) What were your motives to follow this mindfulness course?
7) Why did you think that mindfulness was a solution for this?

3. *During the course*

8) Did you notice any changes with yourself during the course? Mental/Physical changes?
9) Did you also practice mindfulness outside of the course?

4. *Afterwards: What did you learn?*

10) Which meditation exercises do you still use?
11) What are the main insights you learned from the course?
12) Did the course change you?
13) Did the course have an impact on your life style?
14) Do you still follow courses on mindfulness or spirituality?
15) Do you plan to keep practicing mindfulness?
16) Would you say mindfulness helped you? If so, how?
17) What did you learn from mindfulness?

C3. Topic List Teachers Social Orientation

1. Introductory questions

1) What is your age?
2) How did you first get in touch with civic integration?
3) Which are the main language groups your teach to?
4) How long do you work for the organization?

2. Socialization in course

5) What are the main insights/beliefs you want to teach during the course on societal orientation?

6) What are the main competences you want to teach during the course?
7) Which insights/beliefs are the most difficult to teach?
8) Are there newcomers that do not get the certificate? How flexible are you in this regard? Can you give examples?
9) Do you think the obligation to follow civic integration is a good thing?
10) What would you think of an exam in civic integration, after the example of the Netherlands?
11) How do you estimate that the course impacts the life of the newcomers?
12) Do you have examples of course members who followed the course and from whom you know now what they are doing/ how they are progressing?

3. Content of course

13) Do you notice that the program helps the course members to find a job?
14) Does the course lead to personal reflection for some of the course members?
14) How do you treat the topic of norms and values in your course?
15) Which values/norms do you treat and how?
16) Do you have a specific course about gender relations, homosexuality, freedom of religion, discrimination, respect etc. ?
17) What do you think about the focus on the topic of norms and values in civic integration?
18) How do you deal with intolerant opinions such as: ‘I think homosexuality is wrong?’
19) What about intolerant opinions in relation to gender(in)equality? For example: ‘I think women should not work’?
20) Do the opinions of the course members change on these topics?
21) How would you describe your role in the integration of newcomers?
22) How would you define civic integration?

C4. Topic List Course Members Civic Integration

1. *Introductory questions*

1) What is your age?
2) What is your country of origin?
3) What was your profession in your country of origin?
4) How long are you in Belgium?
5) Do you have a job in Belgium?

2. *Beginning: Motives for the course*

6) How did you find your way to the course in societal integration?
7) What did you expect from this course?
8) What did you hope to achieve with this course?
9) If the course would not have been obliged, would you have come anyway?
10) What is your main goal in Belgium?
11) What do you think about the fact that this course is obliged in Belgium?

3. *During the course*

12) How did your experience the course?

4. *Afterwards: What did you learn?*

13) What is the most important thing your learned from the course?
14) Did the course change you?
15) Did the course help you? In what way?
16) What are according to you the biggest cultural differences between Belgium and your home country?
17) Do you feel as if the course prepares you enough for life in Flanders?
18) What would you personally change/add to the course?
19) Which themes of the course did you really find useful? Interesting?
20) Which values do you see as central for the European/Western society?
21) What features does a perfectly integrated individual have according to you?
22) How do you see the future from now on?

C5. Topic List Coaches Leadership and Development Track

1. Introductory questions

1) What is your age?
2) How long do you work for this coaching company?
3) How did you first get in touch with this coaching company?
4) Did you exercise other jobs before? Which ones?

2. Socialization in course

5) How would you describe your role as a coach?
6) What are the most important qualities/competences of a coach?
7) How does the role of a coach differ from a teacher?
8) What are the most important things you want to learn people during the trajectory?
9) What is the ideal result you wish to obtain with the managers?
10) Are there managers who come to the conclusion that the job they do is nothing for them? How do you deal with that?

3. Content of the course

11) In the trajectory you make use of many exercises in nature. What is the philosophy behind this?
12) How does your concept differ from *outward bound*?
13) There is a big difference between exercises in the woods and the company context. How are both connected according to you?
14) In the *social challenge* people have to function in a small scale social organization. What is the idea behind this?
15) Do you see transformations with the participants? How?
16) Do you think you can learn how to be a leader?
17) What are the most important qualities of a leader?
18) What do you still hope to realize as a coach?

C6. Topic List Managers Leadership and Development Track

1. Introductory questions

1) What is your age?
2) What is your profession? Can you explain your specific function in the company?
3) Which steps did you follow in your career so far?
4) How would you describe the culture of your organization?

2. ***Beginning: Motives for the course***

5) When did you follow the leadership trajectory?
6) What did you expect before the course?
7) Which results did you hope to obtain with the course?
8) Did you follow other courses on leadership or development? How were they? How are they different from the current one??

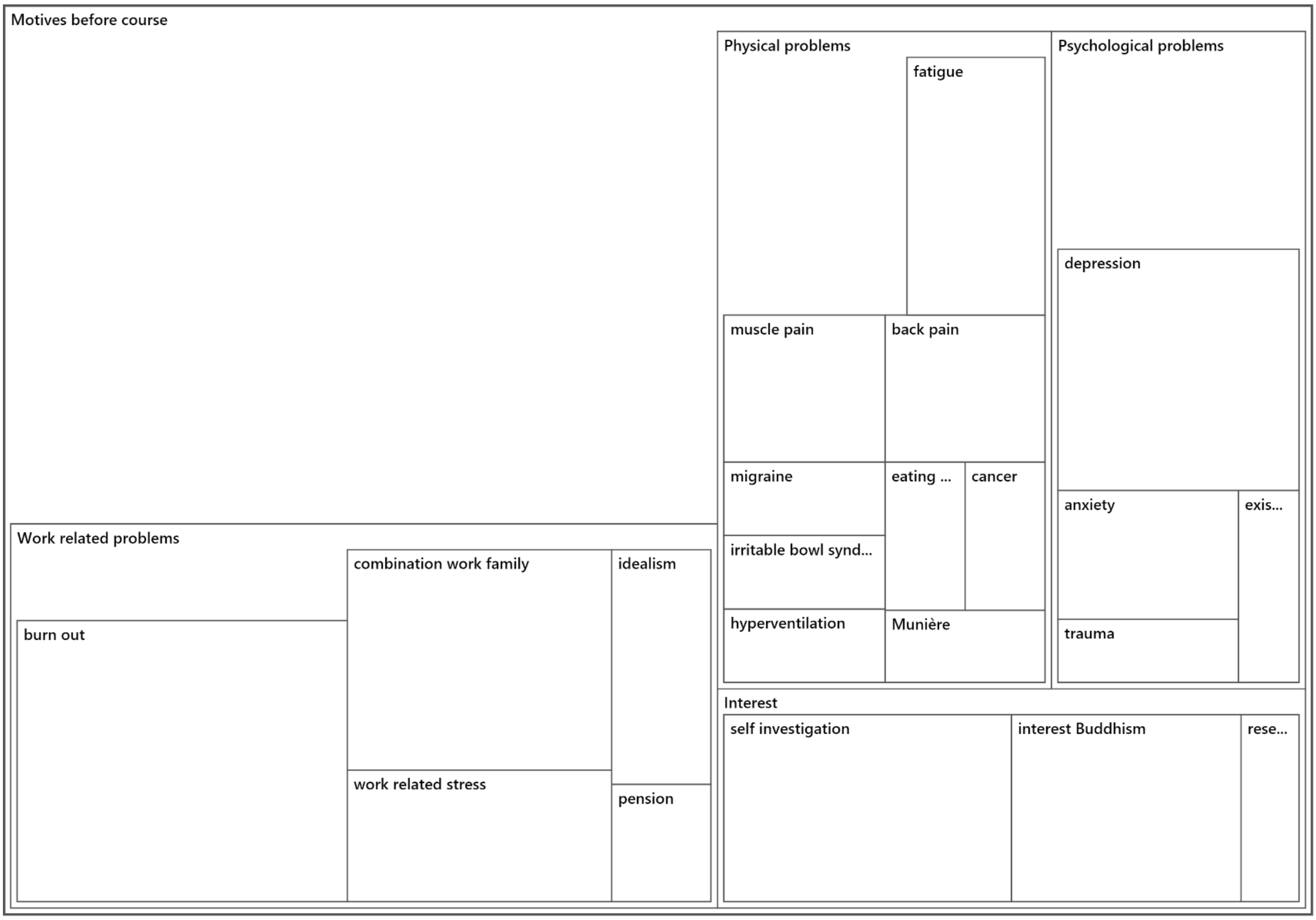
3. ***During the course***

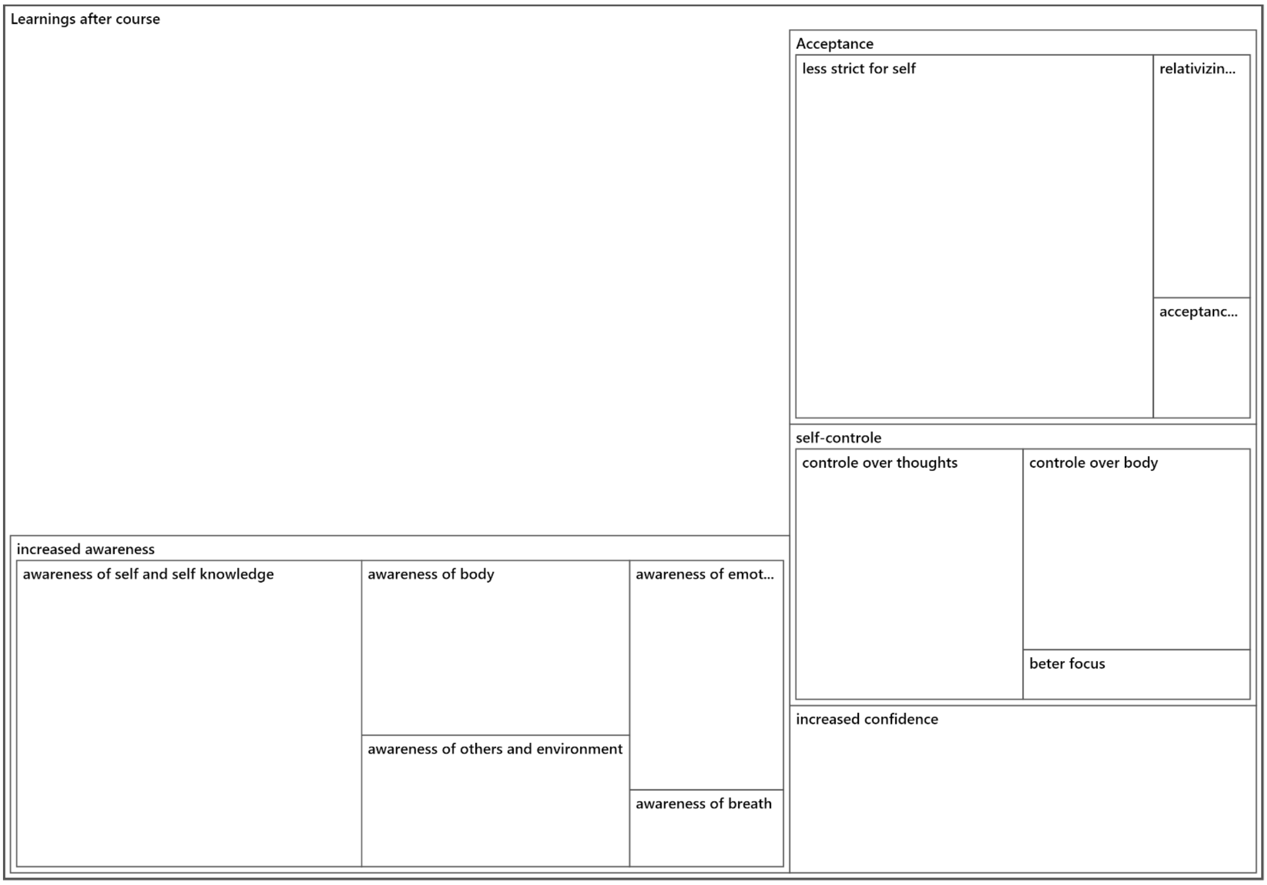
9) Can you describe me the leadership trajectory you followed? What were the main activities?
10) Did you think the trajectory was long enough?
11) How did you experience the outdoor part?

4. ***Afterwards: What did you learn?***

12) What is the most important thing you learned during this trajectory?
13) Did the course have an impact on how you work?
14) Did the course have an impact on your leadership style?
15) Did the course have an impact on how you function in your team?
16) How do you apply the insights from the course in your work?
17) Can you apply what you learned elsewhere besides work?
18) What did the course teach you about yourself?
19) Do you have critique on the course? Where there topics you missed?
20) Which topics where really useful according to you?
21) Do your colleagues notice a difference after you followed this course?
22) Are you more confident after following the course? How so?
23) Do you think there is an influence on the effectiveness of the organization of these sort of courses?
24) Did this trajectory make you reflect on your further career?
25) How do you see your future professional development?

D. Example Coding Tree from NVivo for Mindfulness interviews


Motives before course
Physical problems
fatigue
muscle pain
back pain
migraine
eating ...
cancer
irritable bowl synd...
hyperventilation
Munière
Psychological problems
depression
anxiety
exis...
trauma
Work related problems
combination work family
idealism
burn out
work related stress
pension
Interest
self investigation
interest Buddhism
rese...


Learnings after course
Acceptance
less strict for self
relativizin...
acceptanc...
self-controle
controle over thoughts
controle over body
beter focus
increased confidence
increased awareness
awareness of self and self knowledge
awareness of body
awareness of emot...
awareness of others and environment
awareness of breath

Samenvatting Nederlands: ‘Een Individu Worden: Een Cultuursociologische Benadering van Socialisatie in Individualisme Scripts’

De vaststelling dat individualisme een van de toonaangevende culturele scripts is in de huidige Westerse samenleving, is waarschijnlijk zo oud als de moderniteitsthese zelf en gaat dus al mee van bij de geboorte van de sociale wetenschap (e.g. Durkheim, 1973; Parsons, 2007; Weber, 2003). Deze thematiek gaat dan ook gepaard met fundamentele theoretische debatten die aan de grondslag van de sociale wetenschappen liggen zoals de verhouding tussen individu en de samenleving. In de jaren ’90 kreeg deze aandacht voor het individu binnen de sociologie een hernieuwde impetus onder de vorm van de individualiseringsthese (Bauman, 2001; Beck & Beck-Gernsheim, 2002; Giddens, 1991). Hier werd de claim naar voren geschoven dat het individu steeds meer los komt te staan van traditionele instituties, en daardoor meer autonome keuzes kan maken in haar ‘do-it-yourself-biografie’, met als keerzijde de precariteit van die verworven vrijheden. In dit proefschrift werd daartegenover een cultuursociologische benadering van het individu als culturele waarde geplaatst, die zowel de klassieke werken over individualisme in acht neemt als de meer recente toevoegingen daaraan.

Het theoretisch standpunt dat werd uitgewerkt, stond een meervoudige culturele scriptbenadering van individualisme voor in tegenstelling tot de uni-lineaire en eendimensionale benadering van de individualiseringstheorie. Uit de literatuur werden drie scripts naar voren geschoven die voornamelijk teruggaan op Parsons' (2007) benadering van zogenaamd 'institutioneel individualisme': utilitair individualisme, moreel individualisme en expressief individualisme. Het tweede theoretische punt, dat een gevolg is van de cultuursociologische benadering, hield in dat socialisatie het proces vormt om deze culturele scripts door te geven. Hierbij werd getracht om een kwantitatieve benadering in termen van over- of onder-socialisatie, waarvan de laatste benadering opnieuw met individualisering kan geassocieerd worden, te overstijgen door eerder in kwalitatieve termen te bevragen welke vorm socialisatie in individualistische cultuur zou aannemen. Hier werden drie niet exclusieve aspecten van socialisatie besproken, socialisatie als een passieve internalisering, als interactieve socialisatie en als reflexieve zelf-socialisatie.

Deze twee theoretische insteken op het individualisme debat, resulteerden in twee overkoepelende onderzoeksvragen, namelijk, ten eerste: '*Hoe verhouden de drie scripts van individualisme zich tot elkaar in diverse maatschappelijke settingen en spelen daar eventueel nog andere vormen van individualisme een rol?*' De tweede vraag luidde: '*Hoe verhouden de aspecten van socialisatie zich tot elkaar en zijn er ook hier nog niet geïdentificeerde aspecten voor individualistische socialisatie?*' Om deze vragen te beantwoorden, werd er gekozen voor een comparatief case studie design met drie cases waar een maximale variatie aan vormen van individualisme werd beoogd. Elk van de cases had een duidelijke band met een van de vormen van individualisme, wat niet in de weg staat dat er zich een complexere verhouding met andere vormen van individualisme kon aftekenen. Daarbij waren de drie casussen ook geformaliseerde socialisatie contexten. Mindfulness, een inburgeringscursus en een management cursus zijn met de klassieke sociale domeinen verbonden waar respectievelijk expressief, moreel en utilitair individualisme geïnstitutionaliseerd zijn. In deze casussen werd gebruik gemaakt van observaties van het socialisatieproces en werden in het totaal 90 interviews afgenomen zowel van cursusleiders als cursisten.

Met betrekking tot socialisatie bleek in de drie casussen een taboe te rusten op expliciete, mentalistische socialisatie. Vooral het passieve en autoritaire karakter werd ervaren als in strijd met de waarde van het individu. De paradoxale socialisatie in individualisme uitte zich in eerste instantie als een 'ontleren' van sociale categorieën, rollen, culturele betekenisgeving enz. wat we aanduidden met de term 'purificatie'. Daarbij wordt gebruik gemaakt van technieken die werken op confrontatie met het voorgehouden beeld op subjectiviteit. De positieve invulling van deze vorm van socialisatie vond vervolgens plaats op een subtiele wijze waarbij interactie centraal stond onder de vorm van 'cultural kindling' (Cassaniti & Luhrmann, 2014) of het sturen van gedragingen (Foucault, 1982). De voornaamste techniek hield het stellen van gerichte vragen in die de aandacht stuurden naar een bepaalde onderliggende manier van het subject vorm te geven. Deze interactie vindt plaats op zeer therapeutische, of meer specifiek, coachende wijze, waarbij de indruk door de coach gewekt wordt dat de te leren inzichten uit de cursist zelf komen. Dit wordt vooral geduid als een proces van ‘bewustwording’ i.p.v. overdracht van waarden en normen. Deze coachende manier van socialiseren werd in mindfulness en management verder gezet door de cursisten onder de vorm van een zelfsocialisatie waarbij de coachende attitude eigen gemaakt werd (vergelijk Foucault, 1984).

Met betrekking tot de verhouding van individualistische scripts in de casussen, was het vooral de interactie tussen utilitair en expressief individualisme die opviel en dit vooral bij de management en mindfulness case. Hier werden vier mogelijke manieren van omgaan met deze combinatie onderscheiden die konden gerelateerd worden aan vier categorieën uit de anomie typologie van Merton (1938). Meer bepaald was er in de mindfulness casus een groep cursisten die vooral de nadruk op zelfcontrole legde om terug productief te worden in de werkcontext, vooral na een burn-out. De andere groep gebruikte mindfulness net om deze neoliberale condities te bekritiseren. Met betrekking tot de managers werd er voornamelijk in termen van ‘persoonlijke groei’ gedacht waar expressief en utilitair individualisme in elkaar overlopen. Een kleine groep managers echter wendde de cursus aan om hun bedrijfscontext te bekritiseren als niet neoliberaal genoeg. Deze verschillende vertalingen die de nieuwe geest van het kapitalisme (Boltanski & Chiapello, 2005) krijgt in de praktijk vormen een aanvulling op de eerder eenzijdige literatuur over neoliberale subjectiviteit. Verder werd in de mindfulness casus een meer inwaarts gerichte vertaling van expressief individualisme gevonden die we eerder kunnen benoemen in termen van ‘introspectief individualisme’ (Laermans, 2017). Vermoedelijk speelt deze ook een rol in andere spirituele cursussen waar expressie van het zelf niet centraal staat. Tot slot stootte moreel individualisme op zijn grenzen in de inburgeringscasus. Hier trad een conflict op tussen twee waarden die de leerkrachten willen aanleren: moreel individualistisch respect voor seksuele en gender identiteiten en het eerder relativistische de migranten hun vrije mening laten uiten. Dit fenomeen benaderde we als ‘de paradox van de tolerantie’ (Popper, 2013). Meer dan een conflict tussen Westerse en niet-westerse cultuur vormde dit een paradox binnen het cultureel liberalisme zelf. De ongeschreven assumptie hier was dat de paradox van de tolerantie vanuit een seculier standpunt beslecht wordt.

Deze diepte case studies vormen de eerste stappen binnen een cultuursociologisch onderzoek naar socialisatie in individualisme dat nog kan doorgetrokken worden in vele domeinen zoals onderwijs, opvoeding en (sociale) media. In plaats van het einde van sociale categorieën in te luiden, biedt dit perspectief op individualisme nieuwe handvaten voor cultuursociologisch onderzoek.

English Summary: ‘Becoming an Individual: A Cultural-sociological Study of Socialization into Individualistic Scripts’

The observation that individualism is one of the leading cultural scripts in contemporary Western society, is probably as old as the theory of modernity and consequently, the birth of social science (Durkheim, 1973; Parsons, 2007; Weber, 2003). This topic is accompanied by fundamental theoretical debates that lie at the basis of social sciences, such as the ratio between individual and society. During the nineties, this attention for the individual received a renewed impetus in sociology in the form of the individualization theory (Bauman, 2001; Beck & Beck-Gernsheim, 2002; Giddens, 1991). Here, the claim is made that the individual is gradually disembedded from traditional institutions, and can consequently make more autonomous choices in her ‘do-it-yourself-biography’, with as drawback the precarity of this newly acquired freedom. In this dissertation, we instead develop a cultural-sociological approach of the individual as cultural value, which takes both the classical writings on individualism and the more recent extensions thereof into consideration.

The theoretical perspective that was elaborated, proposed a multifarious cultural script approach of individualism in opposition to the unilinear and one-dimensional approach of the individualization theory. Based on the literature, and particularly on Parsons’ (2007) approach of ‘institutional individualism’, three scripts were introduced: utilitarian, moral and expressive individualism. The second theoretical point, which is a consequence of the cultural sociological approach, entailed that socialization is the process to transmit these cultural scripts. An overly quantitative approach in terms of over- or under-socialization, in which the latter can be associated again with the individualization theory, was avoided. Instead, the question was posed in qualitative terms as to which form socialization might take in individualist culture. We discussed three non-exclusive aspects of socialization: socialization as passive internalization, as interaction and as reflexive self-socialization.

These two theoretical approaches on the debate on individualism resulted in two overarching research questions. Firstly: ‘*How are the three forms of individualism related to each other in concrete courses that transmit individualistic cultural values and do other forms of individualism also play a role?*’ The second question was: ‘*How are the aspects of socialization related to each other in individualist contexts and do we encounter here also non-identified aspects of individualist socialization?*’ To answer these questions, a comparative case study design was chosen with three cases that showed a maximum variation with regard to the forms of individualism. Each of the cases had a clear connection to one of the forms of individualism, which did not prevent a more complex ratio with other forms of individualism from occurring. Additionally, the three contexts were formalized settings of socialization. Mindfulness, a civic integration course and a management course are connected to classic social domains, where respectively expressive, moral and utilitarian individualism are institutionalized. To study these cases, participant observation of the socialization process and in total 90 interviews with trainers and course members were conducted.

With regard to socialization, in the three cases, a taboo was found on explicit, mentalist socialization. Particularly the passive and authoritarian features were experienced as opposing the value of the individual. The paradoxical socialization in individualism in a first phase took the form of 'un-learning' social categories, roles, cultural determinants etc., which was indicated with the concept 'purification'. In this process, the trainers make use of techniques of confrontation with the upheld image on subjectivity. For the positive content of this form of socialization, subtle interactions were key in the form of 'cultural kindling' (Luhrmann, 1989) or the guiding of conduct (Foucault, 1982). The main tactic here was asking questions that guided the attention to a certain conception of the subject. This interaction was very therapeutic, or more specifically, coaching, and the impression was given by the coach that the learned insights came from the course member himself. This process is seen in terms of 'gaining awareness' instead of a transmission of norms and values. This coaching style of socializing was continued by the course members in the mindfulness and management course as self-socialization and becoming one's own coach (compare Foucault, 1984).

Concerning the ration of individualist scripts in the cases, particularly the interaction between utilitarian and expressive individualism stood out, and this especially for the mindfulness and management case. Four potential styles of relating to this combination were distinguished that could be connected to four categories of Merton's (1938) anomie theory. More specifically, in the mindfulness case, there was a group of course members that emphasized self-control in order to become productive again in the work context, mostly after burn-out. The other group used mindfulness, to the contrary, to criticize these neoliberal conditions. In the case of the managers, most of them saw a harmonious relation between expressive and utilitarian individualism in terms of 'personal growth'. A smaller group of managers, however, used the course to criticize their organizational context as not neoliberal enough. These diverse translations of the new spirit of capitalism (Boltanski & Chiapello, 2005) in practice are an addition to the earlier one-sided literature on neo-liberal subjectivity. Furthermore, in the mindfulness case, a more inward directed form of individualism was found, which was termed 'introspective individualism' (Laermans, 2017). Presumably, this also plays a role in other spiritual courses, where expression of the self is not central. Finally, moral individualism met its limits in the integration course. It created a conflict between two values the teacher wanted to teach: moral individualist respect for gender and sexual minorities and moral relativism of letting the newcomers express their opinion. We approached this conflict as ‘the paradox of tolerance’ (Popper, 2013). More than a conflict between Western and non-western culture, this was a paradox within cultural liberalism itself. The implicit assumption was that the paradox should be approached from a secular perspective.

These in-depth case studies form the first steps within a cultural-sociological research to socialization in individualism that can be extended to many other social domains, such as education, upbringing and (social) media. Instead of announcing the end of social categories, this perspective offers new tools for cultural-sociological research.

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