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Caroline Essers

New Directions in Postheroic Entrepreneurship: Narratives of Gender and Ethnicity

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Introduction

Entrepreneurship has always been an intriguing phenomenon which has gained attention from many different professional and scientific angles. The importance of entrepreneurship as the motor for our economy is stressed by scientists and policy-makers. The self-made man who 'started his business from scratch' is frequently praised by governments – American and European alike – and governments often emphasize the importance of taking new initiatives and setting up new companies (Perren and Jennings, 2005). To understand entrepreneurship[1], which in this book is seen as the creation of new organizations (Gartner, 1988: 15), it should be viewed as a discourse. By discourse I mean everyday speech and writing used by diverse layers in society that encompass a truth effect and as such, function ideologically to produce, maintain, and reproduce divisions of power and control (Van Dijk, 1997). Accordingly, Western governmental discourses on entrepreneurship reveal a structural 'grand narrative' of entrepreneurs who are seen to have an important role in the 'machine' of the economy, an implicit responsibility to deliver economic results, and to provide a 'steady basis' of growth so that the national economy can progress (Perren and Jennings, 2005: 177). The discourse on the important function of entrepreneurs and their life-worlds is powerful as it calls upon the wider 'taken for granted' ideology of rational economic behaviour and enterprise (Fairclough, as cited in Perren and Jennings, 2005: 178). As a result, founders of large companies, such as Bill Gates, are often admired and celebrated in the media. They are elevated to heroic status as if there was something unique to their psyche that is the ultimate cause of their economic success (Jones and Spicer, 2005: 237). In her essay 'The Entrepreneur as Hero', Candace Allen (1997: 1) confirms the heroic journey of the entrepreneur, and stresses societies should hail the entrepreneurial function with much more acclaim, as they are 'honest, courageous and steadfast' and hence set a good example to emulate in the future. Consequently, the popular discourse on entrepreneurship is girded with her-

[1] Often, the word 'entrepreneurship' is used interchangeably with 'self-employment'. Sometimes the word 'self-employment' is even preferred over 'entrepreneurship', either to account for small-scale businesses or to avoid the heroic, capitalistic and Western connotation of the word 'entrepreneurship'. Yet, all the women cited in this book call themselves entrepreneurs. Furthermore, self-employment might also imply in a critical management perspective the act of 'exploiting' oneself. Therefore, this term would not do justice to the women interviewed. Moreover, *not* using the terms entrepreneurship or entrepreneur might imply (in line with the hegemonic entrepreneurial discourse) that we as researchers would have or use the power to decide that these women were not (worthy) entrepreneurs. Additionally, self-employment does not necessarily entail the accountability for other people, whereas entrepreneurship does assume responsibility for others as well (Bruni et al., 2005).

oism, action, adventure and growth. Smith and Anderson (2004) describe this as 'the entrepreneur eulogized'. The 'grand entrepreneurial narrative' often celebrates the entrepreneur succeeding against all odds, the entrepreneur taking on the establishment (such as Richard Branson), and the positive aspects of the development of hubris (see Smith and Anderson, 2004: 135). Jones and Spicer (2005: 235) even emphasize the 'phantasmic' character of 'the entrepreneur', and by doing so they suggest that 'the entrepreneur' is an empty signifier, an open space or 'lack' whose operative function is not to 'exist' in the usual sense but to structure phantasmic attachment. In this sense, the entrepreneurship discourse would offer a narrative structure to the fantasy that coordinates desire (idem: 237).

The gendered and ethnically determined discourse of entrepreneurship

Entrepreneurs: born or made?

In line with popular discourse, mainstream academic literature on entrepreneurship argues that entrepreneurial success depends on particular personality traits (Schumpeter, 1976; McClelland, 1987; Chell, 2001). Although the definition of 'the entrepreneur' might vary, this 'trait' school develops the idea of an archetypical entrepreneur; one who is innovative and creative, has the urge for achievement and autonomy, and exhibits risk-taking behaviour (Thomas and Mueller, 2000). In addition, entrepreneurs are said to be looking for recognition, are assumed to have an individualistic character, and are believed to possess a strong internal locus of control (Carter et al., 2003). Consequently, this popular discourse portrays a static and universal entrepreneurial identity. People are fated to be an entrepreneur in this discourse, and scholars, the media and business people themselves have contributed to the creation of this archetypical entrepreneur. Accordingly, the fictional entrepreneur is found to be a skewed construct as this image is romanticized and laden with myth (Smith and Anderson, 2004: 136). Yet, this view of 'the entrepreneur' is contested and so is the idea that the above mentioned traits are innate.

A gendered and ethnically determined discourse

This book criticizes discourse on entrepreneurship as not only constructing a heroic archetype but also one which is gendered and ethnocentrically determined (Ogbor, 2000). A scrupulous discourse analysis of research texts on entrepreneurship reveals that feminine aspects of the entrepreneur are rarely promoted (Ahl, 2004); the accepted notion of morality in entrepreneurial narratives is patently a 'masculine' gendered form (Smith and Anderson, 2004: 137) and entrepreneurship typically has a masculine label

attached to it (Petterson, 2004; Ahl, 2004). For instance, many authors such as Schumpeter, one of the most authoritative and cited authors in the entrepreneurship literature refers to 'the entrepreneur' as him/he and it is striking that the *Harvard Business Review* is promoted as '*the magazine of thoughtful businessmen*'. Collins and Moore (1964: 5–6) explicitly advocate a heroic and even Darwinian model of entrepreneurship, by stating that 'However we may personally feel about the entrepreneur, he emerges as essentially more masculine than feminine, more heroic than cowardly. [...] His values and activities have become part of the character of America and intimately related to our ideas of personal freedom, success, above all, individualism.' Hence, the entrepreneurial archetype is based on male rationality, risk-taking, conquest, domination and control, and the hegemonic entrepreneurial discourse reiterates the conventional female stereotype of subordination, support and dependence (Bruni et al., 2005: 186). Accordingly, female entrepreneurs and ethnic minority entrepreneurs are often ignored in these mainstream texts on entrepreneurship, or at best, appear to be depicted as different (the 'other' entrepreneurs)[2].

Marginalization of female and ethnic entrepreneurs might be interpreted in terms of them not being as good as their male/white counterparts. Literature such as *China Business: The rule of the game* (Blackman, 2000) – which seems to paint Chinese business people as backward and corrupt, difficult to manage, stubborn and thus inferior to Western business people– contributes to this idea. Also the emphasis on Protestantism as favourable to an entrepreneurial spirit which is found in mainstream texts (Smith and Anderson, 2004) helps to cast other religions as disadvantageous to entrepreneurship, depicting an image of 'the Orient' (Said, 1978) and other non-western regions as incompatible with 'doing business' in the way Western people usually do business.

The problematics of the gender and ethnic subtext

Consequently, there seems to be a gender and ethnic subtext in the mainstream literature on the entrepreneurial archetype, implicitly prescribing masculinity and whiteness for successful entrepreneurs, a binary and hierarchical way of thinking that reifies and normalizes existing power positions (Wekker and Lutz, 2001: 27). This creates problematic truth effects as it may result in discriminatory practices by practitioners and governments, while at the same time urging business people to construct their entrepreneurial selves in relation to this archetypical entrepreneur and thus to adopt more masculine and Western behaviour (Ogbor, 2000; Bruni et al., 2004).

[2] Despite the fact that for instance in developing countries it is very common to be a female entrepreneur, or the amount of Asian entrepreneurs in western countries is booming.

'Doing' masculinity and Westerness is hence often an intrinsic part of the life of a successful business (see also Bruni et al., 2005). Alternatively, Bruni et al. (2005: 89) explicate the anti-heroic story-line in which businesswomen call themselves 'dis-entrepreneurs' where they interpret their experiences as an entrepreneur 'by default' with respect to a (male) standard of what is 'normal entrepreneurship'. This 'dis-entrepreneurship' would relate to deliberate non-compliance with male corporate performance, and the entrepreneur as the 'solitary hero'.

In order to contribute to the entrepreneurship literature from a critical angle, this book takes issue with this often taken-for-granted universal subjectivity of 'the entrepreneur', which is predominantly derived from and based on research on white men in the West (Ogbor, 2000). It deconstructs the static entrepreneurial archetype by focusing on the identity constructions of a particular group of entrepreneurs: businesswomen of Turkish and Moroccan origin in the Netherlands. Consequently, it addresses the masculinity and whiteness of the archetypical entrepreneur by *including* the identity categories of gender and ethnicity, and by studying what is being produced at the intersection of the social axes of gender and ethnicity within the context of entrepreneurship.

The aim of this book

The aim of this book is to provide insights into the intersectional influence of the social categories of exclusion, gender and ethnicity on the multiple identity constructions of migrant businesswomen of Turkish and Moroccan descent. These are women who originate from two large ethnic minority populations in the Netherlands. Their differences notwithstanding, Turks and Moroccans are comparable because of their similar migration histories, Islamic affiliation, and similar positions in the Dutch labour market (Prins, 1996). An intersectional analysis leads to a better specification of the notion of entrepreneurship. By illustrating other subjectivities and experiences of female entrepreneurs of Moroccan and Turkish origin living in the Netherlands, it contributes to the entrepreneurship literature by exploring the lived practices of a group of entrepreneurs, hitherto marginalized and neglected in scientific studies, who are positioned at the crossroads of previously ignored identity categories. Accordingly, this book revolves around the question of how female entrepreneurs of Moroccan and Turkish origin in the Netherlands construct their multiple identities at the junctions of the social categories of exclusion, gender and ethnicity, and which strategies these women develop in order to cope with the tensions that might emerge at these junctions.

By focusing on three themes I will examine how these migrant businesswomen construct their multiple identities, and which strategies they develop to cope with certain tensions that emerge within these themes. The first important theme concerns how these women construct their multiple identities from two cultural contexts in dialogue with relevant others. This theme aims to provide a better insight into what the effect of living between two cultural contexts is on female migrants' multiple identity constructions. A second important issue in the case of Moroccan and Turkish female entrepreneurs is how their Islamic affiliation affects their multiple identities as a female migrant entrepreneur. By focusing on their religion, this theme aims to contribute to a better understanding of how Islam is implicated in female Muslims' entrepreneurship and their identity as a female entrepreneur. A third important topic that needs to be studied in this context is how migrant businesswomen, within their entrepreneurial contexts, construct their gender and ethnic identities in relation to their perceptions of the norms that family members have regarding gender and ethnicity. These topics all relate to the notion of 'female ethnicity', which will be developed as a central concept to account for the dynamic and complex activity of identity construction of migrant businesswomen within their entrepreneurial context. This activity of identity construction involves all the negotiation processes with diverse constituencies and encompasses the coping strategies which these women develop to deal with the tensions that arise from these negotiation processes. By elaborating on the notion of female ethnicity in the context of these women's entrepreneurship, the concept of entrepreneurship can eventually be specified.

Identity, intersectionality and female ethnicity

Identity

The research reported in this book relates to debates on gender, ethnicity and entrepreneurship. It can be positioned as a study striving to contribute to the literature on ethnic minority entrepreneurship that traditionally neglects the role of women and gender in entrepreneurship (Portes et al., 2002; Kloosterman et al., 1999; Westwood and Bhachu, 1987) and the literature on female entrepreneurship (Buttner and Moore, 1997; Brush, 2005) that hardly distinguishes between the ethnic backgrounds of women entrepreneurs. Moreover, the identities of entrepreneurs have hitherto been largely underexposed in entrepreneurship research. So far, only a few authors such as Hjorth and Steyaert (2004) have described how entrepreneurial identities are dynamic and continuously developing, instead of being regarded as static entities. The dynamic view of entrepreneurial identity accords with the idea that identity is constructed as a discursive process that is dependent on time,

place and context (Haraway, 1991). Depending on the concrete situations in which they find themselves, people construct their selves in relation to their 'relevant others'. These identities can be conceived as multiple, as they are crafted through diverse identity categories. Accordingly, identity construction is not an isolated psychological process. Identity is a changing perception of the self and other, constantly acquiring new meanings and forms through interactions with social contexts and within historical moments (Ghorashi, 2003a). Consequently, business people's gender, ethnic and entrepreneurial identities bring about dynamic and multiple professional identities that can be conceived of as 'somewhat fluid, situationally contingent, and the perpetual subject and object of negotiation' (Ghorashi, 2001: 20).

Gender

The category 'women' is historically and discursively constructed in terms of gender, and always in relation to other categories which themselves change (Anthias and Davis, 1983). Hence, gender should not be understood as a 'real' social difference between men and women, but as a mode of discourse which relates to groups of subjects whose social roles are defined by their sexual/biological difference as opposed to their economic positions or their membership in ethnic and racial collectivities. Gender is the personal, symbolic and societal system in which sense is being made of the biological differences between men and women (Wekker, 2002). It involves categories, structures, practices, which give meaning to the reality of people, their experiences, and how they see themselves (their identities). The symbolic universes of gender pertain to the public vs the private, the family vs the labour market, the personal vs the political, and the places of production vs the places of reproduction (Bruni et al., 2005). It is a dual symbolic presence of femaleness and maleness, which emphasizes the hegemonic character of masculinity. Accordingly, it divides societies and organizations in categories. Gender can thus be seen as a process that is embedded in power relations and particular historical material conditions, a process that entails practices of masculinity and femininity within public and private spheres, dominant discourses on gendered labour and identities that are being constituted through the intersections of gender, race, class, sexuality and other categories of social repression (Calás and Smircich, 2006: 287). Accordingly, gender identity can be regarded as 'the ways that masculinity and femininity are socially constructed' (Ghorashi, 2001: 7). People construct their gender identities in relation to the norms of appropriate gender behaviour that feature in people's cultural contexts, their families, and their religions. The focus of this book is how gender is 'done' as a social and discursive practice (Bruni et al., 2005).

Ethnicity

Ethnic identification revolves around the symbolic elements that are chosen as markers of ethnicity, such as cultural practices, language and religious affiliation (Ashcroft et al., 1998). Ethnicity can be conceived of as an ideological construct dividing people into different exclusionary and inclusionary discourses of collectivities or communities (Anthias and Yuval-Davis, 1983); this divides people into 'us' and 'them' (Yuval-Davis, 2006). Such boundaries are often built upon myths of common origin and/or common destiny (Yuval-Davis, 2006: 201). As they are generally in contact with both the dominant ethnic group in Dutch society as well as their fellow ethnic minorities, migrants construct their ethnic identities from two cultural contexts.

Entrepreneurial identity

People construct a professional identity in their work which relates to the creation of a self which is based on the values, norms, symbols, rituals and artefacts that dominate the discourses of a certain community of practice (Bruni and Gherardi, 2002). Entrepreneurs construct a particular professional identity within their entrepreneurial context. In other words, they construct an *entrepreneurial identity* which refers to an ongoing process of identity formation by entrepreneurs, implying that people regulate their activities based on the internalized attitude of the archetype of the entrepreneur as 'someone who takes care of his or her activities according to his or her own standards of what is good or bad for the business' (Doorewaard and Brouns, 2003: 12). Such an archetype relates to the idea that doing business can be seen as a social practice which ideologically necessitates a mercurial personality (shrewd, pragmatic, creative and adventurous), which resides in the symbolic domain of initiative-taking, accomplishment and the relative risk. Since such entrepreneurial action is located in the symbolic universe of the male (and the public), entrepreneurship as a set of norms of values based on hegemonic masculinity raises a cultural barrier against femaleness, alternative forms of masculinity as well as against entrepreneurial activity by women and other minorities (Bruni et al. 2005: 1–2). Hence, hegemonic masculinity is embodied in the figure of the entrepreneur.

Intersectionality

It is important to acknowledge that although the salience of a particular identity category might become more important in a certain situation than another, multiple identities are intersectionally constituted. *Intersectionality* was originally developed to stress the importance of simultaneous categories of oppression that constitute differences in power (Crenshaw, 1997). Intersectionality reveals the complexity of lived experiences and actions of marginalized groups at neglected points of intersection (McCall, 2005:

1774). Intersectionality is a useful notion to understand how the categories of social exclusion, gender and ethnicity, are implicated in the construction of entrepreneurial identities (Crenshaw, 1997). Female entrepreneurs of Moroccan and Turkish origin are not only female, and entrepreneur, and of Moroccan/Turkish origin, but they are all of these at the same time. Accordingly, axes of differences do not add, but multiply (Ludvig, 2006).

There are more categories that could be taken into account when studying the multiple identities of these women. Yet, it is impossible to deal with all the complexities that result from infinite lists of differences (Phoenix and Pattynama, 2006: 189). Moreover, gender and ethnicity are often considered to be major social categories of exclusion (Wekker and Lutz, 2001). And although these social divisions are not reducible to the same ontological level, they need to be viewed as part of a creative, constructive process in which the relationships between positionings, identities and political values are all central (Phoenix and Pattynama, 2006: 188–189). Therefore, the identity categories of gender and ethnicity influence each other concurrently within an entrepreneurial setting, which might result in different meanings of these separate identity categories and different locations of power accordingly. Hence, in the case of migrant businesswomen, the construction of their identities in the context of entrepreneurial activities is strongly and intersectionally influenced by gender and ethnicity, as categories of social exclusion.

The book will illustrate the concurrent influences of gender and ethnicity within entrepreneurial contexts. To account for the diverse meanings that arise from the dynamic co-construction of gender and ethnicity within an entrepreneurial context, this book therefore develops the notion of 'female ethnicity', a concept that refers to the various meanings of femininity constructed within ethnic contexts. I will argue that entrepreneurship needs to be analyzed through the notion of female ethnicity in order to understand how entrepreneurship works.

The societal relevance of this research

Migrant entrepreneurs in the Netherlands

The idea that the dominant entrepreneurship discourse constructs an entrepreneurial archetype is particularly relevant in a West European context where women are trying to reach top positions within organizations and where migrants (particularly Muslims) are discriminated against on the labour market.

Turks and Moroccans[3] comprise, respectively, the first and third largest groups of migrants in the Netherlands. Because they share a similar migration history, religion and socio-economic position, their situation is comparable to some extent. At the end of the 1960s and the beginning of the 1970s, many Turkish and Moroccan workers came to fill gaps in the lower segments of the labour market in the Netherlands as so-called 'guest-workers', which literally indicates their stay was thought to be temporary (Lutz, 1996; Merens, 2000). However, their stay turned out to be prolonged. Moreover, family reunification, which was supported by the Dutch government (Odé, 1996; Lutz, 1996), resulted in the immigration of many Turkish and Moroccan females to the Netherlands. These primarily Islamic migrants entered a country which was traditionally Christian, but which at the same time was becoming more and more secular.

The 'multicultural drama'

Because there was little contact between these guest workers and the native population, the general opinion regarding these migrants was initially merely indifference. In the 1980s, the Dutch government started to focus on the integration of immigrants on a group basis while seeking to preserve the immigrant's own identities. This governmental approach was criticized from the 1990s onwards by several politicians, because they thought this approach had contributed to the isolation and the socially and economically lower status of immigrants, which had made them underclass citizens. The writer Paul Scheffer symbolically referred to these problems of and with immigrants in his essay on the 'Multicultural drama', published in January 2000 in the NRC (a Dutch newspaper). His critique focused mainly on the poor response of the Dutch government to the 'lagging behind' of whole generations of immigrants in Dutch society and the development of an ethnic lower class that could potentially become a danger for societal peace as a whole. Later, migrants were the targets of attack in discourse on the multicultural society and right-wing politicians, in particular, even stereotyped migrants as uneducated and therefore dumb, uncivilized, criminal and dangerous (Ghorashi, 2003b). Moreover, several politicians argued (and some are still arguing) that Islamic values were not compatible with Western values, and accordingly that immigrants, especially those with a Muslim background, had to assimilate into Dutch culture. Their statements had an enormous impact on the public opinion of Muslims in the Netherlands, and this

[3] The Turks (364.333) constitute the largest group in the Netherlands, while the Moroccans (323.239) constitute the third group. The total Dutch population is 16.3 million. The birth rate of people of Turkish and Moroccan descent is much higher than that of the native Dutch (CBS, 2006). Combined with the continuing immigration from Turkey and Morocco, the percentage of both groups in the whole population will increase.

was enhanced by the events of September 11, 2001. These developments resulted in an Us/Them dichotomy[4] in Dutch society and a negative image, specifically for people of Moroccan and Turkish descent (Gijsberts and Dagevos, 2004), who are mostly Muslim. However, there is more to this complicated debate on Us/Them, and it was not only Dutch politicians who contributed to the construction of this dichotomy. Some Muslim fundamentalists in the Netherlands, for instance, tried to impose their conceptions of Islam on fellow believers by calling for a universal *jihad* against the West (Buitelaar, 2006a: 260).

Talk about 'the Muslima'

Many politicians and policy-makers have contributed and still contribute to this binary ethnic division by using 'the migrant woman as victim' paradigm (Lutz, 1991; Nieuwkerk, 2003). Particularly Muslimas' (female Muslims) femininity serves symbolically to represent the 'Other'; the Western woman serves as the counterpoint. An important symbolic marker of this Otherness of Muslim migrant women is the veil (or head-scarf), which is considered incompatible with the Dutch self-image as an emancipated society (Nieuwkerk, 2003) and therefore highly contested. By emphasizing the alleged oppressed position of women of Moroccan or Turkish descent, politicians and policy-makers try to prove the undesirability of Islamic components in Dutch society. This paradigm defines the cultural heritage of these migrant women as *only Islamic,* and attributes their disadvantaged social position to an 'Islamic value system' (Lutz, 1991; Moors, 1991, Nieuwkerk, 2003). The fierce statements of the former Member of Parliament, Ayaan Hirsi Ali, saying that Muslim women are oppressed by Islamic tradition and law (Ghorashi, 2003b) has contributed significantly to this vision of 'the Muslima'.

Other images of Turkish and Moroccan women

There are alternative discourses regarding Turkish and Moroccan women that hardly reach our newspapers. For instance, in Morocco or Turkey (the home countries of these migrant women of Moroccan and Turkish descent) many other images of femininity are present. Female domestic abuse is still a big problem in Morocco. But nowadays more and more women find their way to lawyers to file for divorce since family law has recently been changed and the number of governmental support agencies for women

[4] In Dutch there is a specific expression to account for this Us/Them dichotomy: people of Dutch descent are called 'Autochtonen' and migrants are called 'Allochtonen'. In this study, migrant women (or ethnic minority women, or in Dutch '*allochtone vrouwen*') are considered to be women for whom at least one parent was born abroad, and who belong to either the first or second generation of migrants.

has increased. Women increasingly hold societal and business positions; in Turkey, for instance, there are more female managers than in the Netherlands (Management Rendement, 2006). In both Morocco and Turkey there are organizations for women entrepreneurs that stimulate female entrepreneurship[5]. And although women's rights in Turkish culture are still at risk, as can be seen from the high number of actions taken against women such as honour killings (Sev'er and Yurdakul, 2001), the official Turkish secular state has (since Kemal Atatürk) stimulated women (especially in the middle and upper classes in urban areas) to obtain higher education and to participate on the labour market (Marshall, 2005). However, it does not follow that, for instance, the abolishment of the head-scarf in public institutions (including universities) in Turkey is necessarily helpful to enhance gender equality. By compelling women to wear the head scarf (as in Iran) or by prohibiting them from wearing it, the authorities actually deprive women of their freedom of choice; both approaches therefore repress women. Nor do these changes, seemingly in favour of the position of women, discharge governments and institutions from their responsibility to resolve the still ongoing gender inequality and female oppression in both countries. However, these examples illustrate that there are many different images of women having a Turkish or Moroccan background, and given their circumstances, women can have various kinds of agency. (By agency I mean the capacity of human individuals to behave and act independently.)

Labour market participation through entrepreneurship

Official figures on the position of women of Turkish and Moroccan descent in the Netherlands demonstrate that these women are catching up with other groups of females in society, both in an educational and economic sense. Particularly since the 1990s, Turkish and Moroccan women have made great gains regarding their entrance to poly-technical programmes and universities, and at this moment they participate even more in polytechnic programmes than do their male counterparts in the Netherlands (Gijsberts and Dagevos, 2005)[6]. Although the labour participation of Turkish and Moroccan women in the Netherlands remains low compared to that of Dutch native women (56% in 2004), the labour participation of Moroccan women doubled between 1995 and 2004 to 28% and the labour participation of Turkish women increased from 17% to 33% (Portegijs et

[5] During my fieldwork periods in Morocco and Turkey, which had the purpose of gathering background information on the societal position of (business)women in these countries, I talked with L'AFEM, L'Association des Femmes Entrepreneurs du Maroc (in Morocco) and the Kagider Women Entrepreneurs Association in Turkey.

[6] Yet, their degree of participation and level of education remains low compared to, for instance, women from the Antilles and Surinam, and to the most highly educated migrant women who are of Iranian descent (Merens, 2006).

al., 2004; Merens, 2006)[7]. Similarly, the number of Turkish and Moroccan entrepreneurs in the Netherlands, men and women alike[8], has been growing in recent years. Some studies note that these numbers have grown because of increasing discrimination on the labour market; in the case of women, Merens (2006) states that a small group of Muslim women reported barriers in finding a job because of their veil/head-scarf[9]. Others, however, explain the large numbers of Turkish entrepreneurs from a socio-cultural perspective, meaning they would inherit a strong entrepreneurial mentality[10]. At any rate, their decision to enter entrepreneurship fits well with Dutch and European Union government policy to stimulate entrepreneurial activities in general. The Dutch Ministry of Economic Affairs conducts a survey of Ethnic Minority Entrepreneurship every four years to provide up-to-date information on ethnic minority entrepreneurs, but the Dutch government could develop more activities to stimulate entrepreneurship among these minorities[11].

The present study avoids a stereotypical representation of female migrants by providing a more diverse view through the analysis of stories of a hitherto neglected group of migrant women: female ethnic minority entrepreneurs of Moroccan and Turkish origin. Listening to and reflecting on these women's voices and their experiences is important to provide more insights for other migrant women interested in setting up their own enterprises. Writing up and analyzing these stories allows us to nuance or even counter the negative images regarding the integration of Muslim migrants in general and Muslim women in particular.

[7] The PAVEM Committee (Participation of Women of Ethnic Minorities), which was disbanded in 2005, played an important role in stimulating local governments to set up so-called participation agendas, agreements between municipalities, social partners and/or educational organizations in which migrant women obtained a job or a traineeship. Through these agreements, 3000 migrant women managed to get a job (Merens, 2006: 69).

[8] Of all Turkish and Moroccan entrepreneurs, 17% and 12% are female, respectively (EIM, 2004).

[9] Figures published by the Committee for Equal Treatment demonstrated that 20 of the 24 complaints regarding religious discrimination concerned wearing a head-scarf (Merens, 2006).

[10] This socio-cultural approach, however, might be critiqued for its essentialism, as it directly relates cultural traits to entrepreneurial success. Moreover, figures show that approximately the same percentage of ethnic minorities as Dutch 'autochtonen' own a company (11% vs. 12%). Nevertheless, Turkish entrepreneurship is much more common than Moroccan (8% vs. 3%) (Merens, 2006).

[11] This is slowly changing; in the last two to three years several projects supporting migrant entrepreneurship have been initiated, such as the EU programme Equal.

Organization of the book

The outline of this book is as follows. As the concepts of intersectionality and female ethnicity are basic notions in this study, the first chapter in this book clarifies the importance and contribution of an intersectional approach and the concept of female ethnicity to entrepreneurship studies. The second chapter aims to contribute to a better understanding of organizational identity through the intersectional study of the businesswomen's situated enterprising between two, often different, cultural contexts. In the third chapter I will reflect upon the interaction and relationship between the researcher and the interviewees and how this might have affected the way in which I gathered, interpreted and wrote up the material. This reflexivity is important, as I take the stance that identities and narratives are both the result of the interactions between various parties. One could even argue that people construct their identities through the ways they tell and are able to tell their stories. Moreover, it is essential to take ones own subjectivity and situated knowledge into account in the research in order to show the reader how the material was interpreted. After this reflexive essay, the fourth chapter will elaborate on how the Islamic affiliations of these women affect their multiple identity constructions. The fifth chapter will analyze the relationship between these women's gender and ethnic identities and their perceptions of the norms their family members have regarding gender and ethnicity. Finally, the last chapter includes a general discussion on the subject. How do these women construct their multiple identities and deal with possible tensions that might emerge from the intersectionality of the identity categories gender and ethnicity in the context of their entrepreneurship? In what way does this research contribute to the literature on entrepreneurship and intersectionality studies, and how can we come to a redefinition of entrepreneurship, being a more postheroic one? These conclusions also reflect on the boundaries of the methods used, and how the research findings could be used in additional research.

Chapter 1

Female Ethnicity: the intertwinement of gender and ethnicity within entrepreneurial contexts

'I am a woman and I'm from an ethnic minority,
and I'm operating in a sector where there are only men.
So for me this is simply an incentive to go further than men.'

This statement by Karima, a forty-four-year-old migrant businesswoman who runs a cleaning company, illustrates her belief that both gender and ethnicity shape her identity as an entrepreneur. She is not just an entrepreneur: she is a migrant woman with a Muslim background living and working between two cultures in the Netherlands. All these influences give her a complex and multiple professional identity (Essers and Benschop, 2007).

This chapter elaborates on the functioning of interlaced gender and ethnicity identity processes within the context of entrepreneurship. It builds on intersectionality theories considering social categories such as gender, race, class and sexuality as inextricably interconnected in the production of social practices of exclusion (Crenshaw, 1997). Theories of intersectionality are useful to develop the notion of *female ethnicity*. Female ethnicity refers to the diverse meanings of femininity attained through intersections of gender and ethnicity within ethnic contexts. This notion helps to analyze how migrant businesswomen construct their identities beyond dichotomies and stereotypes such as Western/non-Western, local-foreign and modern-traditional, which are often used to place them within fixed identity categories.

The theoretical emphases on intersectionality and on the concept of female ethnicity are based on standpoint feminism, which produces knowledge based on the actualities of women's everyday lives, and uses that knowledge politically to question the practices of powerful institutions (Harding, 2004). Feminist standpoints can be regarded as situated and engaged knowledges, and as places from which feminists can articulate a counter-hegemonic discourse where they can plead for a less repressive society (Hekman, 2004: 239). Life-stories provide doorways through which women's lived experiences and their constructions of identities can be en-

tered; hence, I used life-stories to examine the gendered and ethnicized practices that oppress, exclude and marginalize migrant businesswomen (the use of life-stories will be further elaborated upon in chapter three and the appendix). Specifically, these analyses illustrate how female migrant entrepreneurs deal with these practices, by accepting, resisting and changing them. In so doing, these analyses contribute to a more precise specification of the concept of entrepreneurship, one that is more inclusive and attentive to the agency of entrepreneurs and their complex and contradictory processes of identity constructions.

The social categories of gender and ethnicity are important identity categories for analyzing female migrant entrepreneurs in the Netherlands (Wekker and Lutz, 2001). The debate, for example, on the incompatibility of the life styles, norms and values between Muslim migrants and the native Dutch population, often manifests itself in a discussion on the position of women. Roggeband and Verloo (2007) summarize this debate by stating 'Dutch women are liberated, migrant women are a problem'. The wearing of the veil, female circumcision, attitudes toward honour-revenge, education and restrictions on the appearance of women in public are often referred to as practices of difference which have gained meaning in the heated public debate on the position of Muslim women in Dutch society (Prins and Slijper, 2002).

In the following pages, the notion of female ethnicity will be developed as a new concept that helps to analyze intersectional processes of gender and ethnicity of Muslim migrant businesswomen. Next, four life-stories will be presented through which this concept will be analytically deployed in order to illustrate how Muslim migrant businesswomen articulate the influence of gender and ethnicity in the context of their entrepreneurial activities. In the conclusion of this chapter I will further argue how notions of intersectionality provide a better understanding of entrepreneurship, in particular through dynamic concepts such as female ethnicity, which are necessary to understand the complex influence of gender and ethnic processes in the construction of entrepreneurial identities.

Female ethnicity: Identity construction in entrepreneurial activities

Applying the notion of intersectionality

Both gender and ethnicity are underanalyzed in traditional conceptions of the entrepreneur. Scholars, the media and businesspeople have contributed to the creation of an archetypical and taken for granted entrepreneur who is typically associated with masculinity and whiteness (Ogbor, 2000). However, in so far as people are involved in entrepreneurship they are also involved

in identity construction where social categories such as gender and ethnicity are implicated. Thus, to better understand entrepreneurship, we need first to analyze the socially accomplished and culturally constructed identities of entrepreneurs. The notion of intersectionality is suitable to make sense of these multiple, socially and culturally constructed identities.

The concept of intersectionality was originally forwarded for understanding the oppression of black women through interactions between race and gender (Crenshaw, 1995). Intersectionality emphasizes the simultaneous and dynamic interactions between different 'axes' of identity (Wekker and Lutz, 2001: 38), which entail different power relations and different relations of oppression (Crenshaw, 1997). It demonstrates how gender is played out in conjunction with other categories (Adib and Guerrier, 2003). As interest in the idea of intersectionality burgeons, it both attracts and repels feminist researchers (Phoenix and Pattynama, 2006). Sceptics of intersectionality such as Saharso (2002) claim it contains a static, deterministic view on identity and that it obstructs the deconstruction of identity categories. However, in line with constructionist approaches to intersectionality, which offer the tools to avoid overly static views (Prins, 2006), I argue that this notion helps us to understand identities as being multiple, complex and ambivalent.

The dangers of reducing the complexity of social reality into general and abstract categories however should be recognized; nevertheless, I contend that in this research categorization is a useful tool for charting complex and mutual influences of gender and ethnicity within the context of entrepreneurship. My approach to intersectionality is an intra-categorical one which studies the intersections of single dimensions of multiple categories in selected social positions (McCall, 2005). In my analysis, I focus on the intersection of gender and ethnicity as categories of social exclusion when actual experiences of gendered and ethnic exclusion intermesh with the construction of entrepreneurial identities.

Female ethnicity

Studies of social exclusion in regard to gender, ethnicity and entrepreneurial activities have addressed either gender or ethnicity in relation to entrepreneurship, but they have not addressed both of them simultaneously. While these studies have demonstrated that female entrepreneurs and migrant entrepreneurs are often seen as the 'other' entrepreneurs, excluded from the 'inner circle' of entrepreneurship or at best forwarded as the 'hidden partner' in family businesses (see for instance Goffee and Scase, 1985; Mirchandani, 1999; Ahl, 2004; Bruni et al., 2004; Portes, 1995; Kloosterman et al., 1999), none of these studies have focused on the intersectionality of gender and ethnicity in identity construction within entrepreneurial settings. This gap in the literature has been acknowledged elsewhere (see Essers and Benschop, 2007), yet here the concept of female ethnicity is developed as an intersec-

tional notion that helps to analyze the simultaneous and interwoven influences of gender and ethnicity in entrepreneurship. The concept allows for explorations of the connections between gender and ethnicity in the experience of entrepreneurship (Mirchandani, 1999: 233). It demonstrates how the crossovers of gender with ethnicity are articulated in the particular entrepreneurial workplace.

Female ethnicity refers to the various meanings of femininity constructed within ethnic contexts; it emphasizes the socially constructed nature of gender and of ethnicity. With this concept, it is possible to do justice to the importance of gender when interwoven with ethnicity and vice versa. As a category of social exclusion, we may consider gender a process embedded in power relations, which is manifested in social practices and the identities that are formed 'in the intersections of gender, race, class, sexuality and other categories of social oppression' (Calás and Smircich, 2006: 287). Ethnicity as a category of social exclusion is an ideological construct dividing people into 'us' and 'them' (Yuval-Davis, 2006) and it can be observed in symbolic elements such as cultural practices, language and religious affiliations that have been chosen as markers of inclusion and exclusion (Essers and Benschop, 2007). Both gender and ethnicity influence people's opportunities simultaneously and in concert (Wekker and Lutz, 2001). Depending on people's ethnicity, gender may be experienced differently, and vice versa. Female ethnicity thus accounts for this simultaneity and mutuality in Dutch contemporary society, particularly in relation to entrepreneurship.

Making sense of female ethnicity

The various meanings of female ethnicity are developed continually through a dialogue with at least four different groups in society: men and women belonging to the dominant society, men and women from other minority groups, men and women from the same ethnic group and men and women from their country of origin (Buitelaar, 2002). The intensity of these dialogues is partly dependent on the generation to which people belong (Afshar and Maynard, 1994), the contacts they have with other ethnic or professional groups and the extent to which their families adhere to orthodox gender opinions (Anthias, 2001).

In general terms, two manifestations of female ethnicity can be distinguished in the context of Muslim migrant businesswomen in the Netherlands. The first manifestation is a restrictive one. For instance, the honour of men in Muslim communities might be in jeopardy when women transgress the private-public divide. Honour generally corresponds to the public and masculinity, while shame relates to the private and femininity (Buitelaar, 2002). In this case, the intertwinement of gender and ethnicity produces subordination that expresses itself in the way Muslim women as mothers, wives, daughters or sisters are addressed as lesser than their male relatives (Salih,