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### Migrant family matters

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# CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

### 1.1. Migration and family relations

Migration is a well-covered theme in debates about the changing demographics of Northwestern European societies. Currently, a lot of attention goes out to the sudden stream of asylum seekers. A more recurring issue, however, is the integration of non-Western migrant groups who have been settling in Northwestern Europe for quite some time (Van Mol & De Valk 2016). Together with their offspring, these immigrants form an ever-increasing part of the populations and are of growing significance for social and political events there. The reverse, however, how sociodemographic developments are impacting the lives of migrants, is unfortunately not always considered. Such is the case with alterations in the family sphere. Over the last century, demographic changes have transformed both the structure and interactional dynamics of families in Northwestern Europe. The fact that people live longer, for instance, means that children are sharing a relatively greater part of their lives with parents. Especially in the light of the feasibility of welfare states, this has led to questions regarding care responsibilities and the solidarity between parents and their adult children. Another aspect of changed family lives concerns the dynamics of partnerships, in particular the dissolution of unions. Instigated by socioeconomic advancements in the position of women, diminished social restrictions and legal reforms, divorce has become markedly more common (Kalmijn, De Graaf, Broese van Groenou & Dykstra 2001; Lesthaeghe & Van de Kaa 1986). At the same time, the number of non-marital cohabitations, which are generally less stable than marriages, have steeply risen (Haskey 1992). Given the serious implications that union dissolutions may have for individuals and their families, divorce and separation have become subjects of debate. Yet, it has still been seldom taken into account how these matters play a role in migrant families. The same holds for the academic field of migration and that of the family respectively. Much research has been conducted on how migrants are faring compared to natives, but mostly in respect of socioeconomic and political integration (e.g. Bijl & Verweij 2012). At the same time, scientists have hugely advanced our knowledge about intergenerational solidarity (e.g. Dykstra & Fokkema 2011; Moor & Komter 2008; Nauck & Steinbach 2009) and the prevalence, causes and consequences of divorce (Amato 2010; Lyngstad & Jalovaara 2010). How these latter issues shape the lives of immigrants, however, is still only meagerly understood.

In this thesis, I start from the assumption that in order to fully understand contemporary family relations, we should also include the ever-growing number of migrant families. Although it is far from obvious how, it is clear that processes of migration and settlement are likely to change family lives. Family and partnership dynamics are intrinsically related to the society in which people grow up and live. Migration, therefore, means that people have to accommodate to an (abruptly) changed sociocultural situation. Meanwhile, the children of immigrants who are born and raised in the destination country, the second generation, are familiar with this “new” normative and practical setting from childhood on. My aim, therefore, is to advance our understanding of the diversity in intergenerational solidarity and union dissolution patterns by recognizing these complex ways by which migration impacts family relations. As a representative example of Western-Europe, I focus on the Netherlands. The trends in family and partner relations in the Netherlands are characteristic for this larger region. Furthermore, comparable to other Northwestern European countries, the Netherlands has a history with diverse migration flows and a growing number of second generation migrants, making it a suitable and illustrative context for studying non-Western migrant families of various origins. Taken together, two overarching research questions guide this dissertation:

*What patterns of intergenerational relationships and partner separation characterize non-Western migrant and Dutch native families in the Netherlands? And to what extent can these be explained by processes of migration and settlement?*

I will address these questions by examining the four largest non-Western migrant groups in the Netherlands, which are the Turks, Moroccans, Surinamese and Antilleans. Furthermore, I particularly look at the role of women in families, focusing on mother-child relations and union dissolution among migrant women. In the empirical chapters of this thesis (Chapter 2-5), the main questions will be answered on the basis of six comparisons. First, between native Dutch and migrant families of various origins (Chapter 2, 3 & 5). Second, between first and second generation migrants (Chapter 3 & 5). Third, between migrant families who live together in the destination country and families who are organized transnationally (Chapter 3). Fourth, between migrants who are oriented in different degrees towards the destination country (Chapter 3). Fifth, between individual migrants with different

sociodemographic characteristics (Chapter 2 & 5). And finally, sixth, between migrant parents and children in terms of how they give meaning to family relations (Chapter 4). In order to assure not only a broad but also in-depth insight into these matters, multiple types of data and analytical methods are used. In sequence of the chapters, I employ survey material (Chapter 2-4), in-depth interviews (Chapter 3) and population register data (Chapter 5). Jointly, these elements make this dissertation a multi-method study that enhances our understanding of kin- and partnership dynamics among both migrant and native families.

## **1.2. Theoretical background**

### *1.2.1. Socialization, acculturation and migration specific effects*

From a theoretical perspective, there are at least three main processes that can help us understand how the lives of migrants are characterized by continuity and change. First, migrants' behaviors have been explained as guided by beliefs that are acquired through early socialization (Burr & Mutchler 1999). Socialization is a social learning process by which group norms, values and customs are transmitted through interaction with parents, peers and significant others (Lutfeý & Mortimer 2006). Children learn what is expected of them and what the dominant normative attitudes and appropriate conducts in society are. With respect to family values and behaviors, cross-cultural research has commonly made a distinction between less economically advanced "non-Western" and more prosperous "Western" societies. Whereas non-Western regions tend to promote collectivistic norms and are strongly oriented towards the family (Hofstede 2001; Nauck & Suckow 2006; Todd 1985), Western countries principally uphold values of individual autonomy, self-reliance and independence (Felling, Peters & Scheepers 2000; Inglehart & Norris 2003; Thornton & Young-DeMarco 2001). Although socialization is a lifelong process, it is commonly assumed that its impact is most formative and lasting during childhood and adolescence. From this theoretical perspective, given that (adult) migrants were born and raised in a society with different family norms and customs than the destination country, it can be expected that these have a lingering influence on their attitudes and behaviors.

Second, whereas socialization emphasizes continuance over the life-course, processes of assimilation and acculturation describe how migrants are influenced by

intercultural contact and the alternative value systems they encounter. Older models, such as classic assimilation (Park & Burgess 1925), have mostly focused on trends over migrant generations, predicting that immigrants increasingly come to adopt the norms and behaviors of the native population. In order to allow for more complexity and alternative pathways of adaptation, however, newer theories have arisen (Alba & Nee 2003). Segmented assimilation, for example, (Portes & Min Zhou 1993), considers how structural barriers or other obstacles may also lead to downward relocation of certain migrant origin groups and, furthermore, accounts for the possibility that migrants retain parts of their origin culture. The assumption that migrants are negotiating an influence of the origin and destination country is also central to the more complex concept of acculturation, which is defined as the outcome of a combined orientation towards the origin and destination culture on two relatively autonomous scales (Berry 1997). Rather than focusing on the integration of immigrant groups, acculturation describes the multifaceted psychological and structural processes by which individuals (partly) change their behaviors and beliefs over time. It thereby includes as well individual differences in acculturation orientations and outcomes (Sam & Berry 2006). Despite the elaborate theoretical concept, however, much empirical research has nonetheless focused on immigrant groups and the question to what extent they resemble the native population (e.g. Schneider, Crul & Lelie 2012).

Third, in addition to the impact of socialization and acculturation, there may be migration specific effects. Whereas socialization and acculturation refer to longer-term processes of continuity and change, migration-specific effects are a more direct consequence of the experience of moving and settling in another country. There are opposing arguments of how the event of migration would affect family ties. On the one hand, it has been claimed that migration would be disruptive, as a sudden alteration of living situation may be stressful and hard to deal with (Boyle, Kulu, Cooke, Gayle & Mulder 2008; Frank & Wildsmith 2005). Such challenges may put families or partners under strain and consequently deteriorate relationships. On the other hand, it has been proposed that migration alternatively would have a binding effect on families. This argument has mostly been applied to relationships with kin. Migration would, for instance, draw family members together and make children more willing to comply with the solidarity norms of their parents (Nauck 2007; Phalet & Gungor 2009). All in all, empirical support is still unequivocal about the issue and whether and how migration affects the closeness (and other aspects) of families

remains a question.

### *1.2.2. Changing families*

Instead of modelling the separate impact of socialization, acculturation or migration-specific effects, the Model of Family Change (MFC; Kağıtçıbaşı 1996) offers a more integrative explanation of how continuity and change simultaneously affect migrant families. This cross-cultural theory, rather than focusing on the influence of migration on individuals, describes how the family as a unit changes. It departs from the same general distinction between non-Western and Western countries, but refines it by considering the combined influence of cultural and socioeconomic conditions on two different dimensions of parent-child relations: practical and emotional. According to the model, the particular circumstances of non-Western and Western societies would foster different in(ter)dependencies in these dimensions, culminating into different types of family relations. On the one hand, individualistic norms and the availability as well as social acceptability of external sources of care would encourage a family system of “independence” in urban Western societies. In less economically developed countries, on the other hand, a collectivistic normative orientation and material necessity would encourage parents and children to rely on each other for support. In contrast to the well-arranged formal care provisions in the more affluent welfare states of Northwestern Europe, care for the elderly is mainly informal and falls under the responsibility of the family itself. These conditions would foster a so-called “full-interdependent” family system, characterized by an interdependence in families in both practical and emotional respect. In addition to distinguishing these Western and non-Western family relations, the MFC subsequently describes how family systems change if societal conditions are altered. Economic advancements and emerging urban lifestyles in non-Western regions would affect parent-child relations by diminishing the importance of practical support and shifting the emphasis to the emotional or psychological meaning of relationships: an “emotional-interdependent” family system.

By virtue of describing how profound alterations in people’s living environment propel a shift in family relations, the MFC is a preeminent theory for explaining how non-Western migrant families relations develop. Assuming that migration to a Northwestern welfare state indeed decreases the urgency for practical reliance among family members (and heighten the acceptability of using external sources of support),

while at the same time not discouraging close emotional ties, parent-child relations would shift from being predominantly characterized by full-interdependence to emotional-interdependence. Thus, rather than predicting either continuity or change, the MFC guides the expectation that migration effects vary across different dimensions of family ties, reflecting both a lingering influence of the origin country and adjustment to the socio-structural and cultural context of the destination country.

### *1.2.3. Contribution of this thesis*

Although the explanatory value of the MFC for cross-cultural differences and also migrant family relations has been recognized in the literature (Baykara-Krumme 2010; De Valk & Schans 2008; Keller et al. 2003; Nauck 2010), empirical support in the form of studies that incorporate the multidimensional nature of the model is nearly absent. Moreover, much research has focused on normative beliefs about family relations (e.g. Carnein & Baykara-Krumme 2013; Mayer, Trommsdorff, Kagitçibasi & Mishra 2012; Phalet & Güngör 2009). The MFC, however, is primarily a theory that describes and predicts how families behave. In my dissertation, I will draw on the MFC as a basis for empirically examining (the multidimensionality of) family behaviors. In addition, I elaborate and deepen our understanding of the MFC in at least two ways. First, accounting for the possibility that migrants are maintaining family relations that extend across national borders, the theory is applied to intergenerational solidarity in a transnational setting. Until now, the focus of studies on transnationalism has been on economic, political and socio-cultural practices or transnational child-raising (e.g. De Haas & Plug 2006; Mazzucato & Schans 2011). Very little is still known about the ways in which the solidarity between parents and their adult children takes shape in transnational living arrangements. Second, next to analyzing concrete interactions between migrant parents and children, I devote attention to the question how intergenerational relationships are viewed and explained by migrants themselves. Apart from giving an in-depth perspective on the meaning of family behaviors, this also offers the opportunity to more thoroughly examine intergenerational differences in migrant families. The experience and consequences of migration are arguably not the same for migrant parents and their offspring. In contrast to their parents, children of migrants who were born and raised in the destination country have been familiar with the prevailing norms and practices



from childhood on. The MFC does not explicitly account for the potentially conflicting experiences of migrant parents and children, yet it can be assumed that these intergenerational differences will influence the dynamics in migrant families. I will address this issue in a qualitative study of how migrant parents discursively manage their expectations and the actual behaviors of their children, as well as in a quantitative analysis of how the orientation of migrant children towards the destination country shapes intergenerational solidarity behaviors. Recognizing the multifaceted nature of acculturation, the measurements include a behavioral as well as attitudinal indicator. Finally, although the MFC is aimed at explaining kin-relations, particularly those between parents and children, families are also formed by the intra-generational ties between partners. Moreover, in analyzing the family as a unit, the MFC fails to consider the possibility that families could break apart. It has nonetheless been argued that migration threatens the relationship stability of couples (Boyle et al. 2008; Muszynska & Kulu 2007). In my dissertation, therefore, I will attend to this matter by examining and explaining trends in union dissolution among immigrant, non-immigrant and mixed couples.

### **1.3. Research context**

Over the last half century, demographic trends in the Netherlands have developed parallel to those in larger Northwestern Europe. As the result of processes of individualization and secularization, the importance of traditional collectivistic institutions diminished, while the value of individual freedom of choice became more central (Felling et al. 2000). With respect to intergenerational relations, these tendencies have amongst others translated into a less strong authoritarian orientation of households and greater mutual respect for the autonomy of both parent and child (De Swaan 1979). Changing social attitudes about the family, combined with an increased participation of women in the labor force and liberalization of divorce laws, also brought alterations in the sphere of partner relations. Divorce rates strongly increased, while the number of marriages declined and alternative living arrangements such as unmarried cohabitation became more common (Liefbroer & Dykstra 2001; Van de Kaa 1987). Around the same time that these developments started to take place in the family domain, Western Europe turned from a continent of emigration into one of immigration. On the one hand, economic growth led to the attraction of

(predominantly male) labor workers. The Netherlands, specifically, actively recruited people from the poorer regions of Turkey and Morocco (Vermeulen & Penninx 2000). Although these “guest workers” were initially envisioned to stay temporarily, they stayed and later brought over their families under family reunification policies. On the other hand, many migrants arrived from countries that were European colonies at the time. The Netherlands, for example, experienced a large influx of migrants from Suriname and the Dutch Antilles, who came in search of better prospects for education and work. Today, the Turkish, Moroccan, Surinamese and Antillean immigrant groups continue to grow in size, but mainly because of births of the second generation, who are currently nearly as numerous as their parents. Together, they formed roughly two thirds of the non-Western immigrant population in 2015, making them the four largest non-Western immigrant groups in the Netherlands (Statistics Netherlands 2015).

Immigrants from the Mediterranean and Caribbean region originate from societies that differ from the Netherlands in terms of typical family organization and norms and practices surrounding (the dissolution of) partnerships. Most Turkish and Moroccan immigrants came from rural and more conservative areas (central Anatolia and the Rif region respectively) of countries where the population is predominantly Muslim. Families there tend to be traditionally organized along patrilineal lines, meaning that women usually move in with the family of their husband. Marriages carry great weight in terms of family honor and are therefore often negotiated and arranged by family members. Nearly every adult is married and divorce was and still is very unusual, particularly in rural regions (Caarls & De Valk 2015; Morocco: Demographic Health Survey 2005; Turkey: Demographic Health Survey 2009). Initiating divorce is possible by law, but tends to be socially disapproved of. Women, moreover, have fewer rights than men in instigating a divorce and it can be very challenging for them to finalize one (Joseph & Najmabadi 2005). In contrast to the typical patrilocal organization of families in the Mediterranean region, a matrifocal family structure is dominant in Caribbean societies such as Surinam and the Antilles. Mothers there have a special position in households, as these are not rarely headed by single women raising the children on their own, while fathers are often absent (Distelbrink 2000). Although the Surinamese and Antillean populations are heterogeneous in religious composition, Christianity is the most important religion (van Tubergen 2003). Marriage occurs, but is closely tied up with socioeconomic

status and mostly restricted to the higher social classes, as well as religious minorities such as Hindustanis and Muslims. Non-marital partnerships, however, are a common, socially accepted occurrence and the dissolution rates of these unions are also quite high (Emery & Golson 2013).

To some extent, immigrant households in the Netherlands resemble the dominant family patterns of the origin countries. Turkish and Moroccan couples, for example, are often married, while unmarried cohabitation is rather uncommon, applying to less than 10 percent of the unions (Huijnk, Gijsberts & Dagevos 2013). Most of these married couples consist of partners who share the same origin and are either both first or second generation immigrants. Although the number of migration marriages has strongly decreased over the last years, many Turkish and Moroccan immigrants as well as descendants have married someone from their country of origin (Sterckx, Dagevos, Huijnk & Van Lisdonk 2014). Intermarriage with native Dutch, despite recently growing numbers, still does not occur very often (Gijsberts, Huijnk & Dagevos 2011). Among Surinamese and Antillean families, in contrast, unmarried cohabitation is prevalent and intermarriage with native Dutch is not uncommon: about thirty respectively forty percent of the marriages among Surinamese and Antilleans include a native Dutch partner (Gijsberts et al. 2011). In addition, the high proportion of one person-households stand out among Surinamese and Antilleans, many of which consist of single mothers (Van der Vliet, Ooijevaar & Wobma 2014).

Apart from an empirical focus on the Netherlands and the four largest non-Western migrant groups in this country, my research specifically addresses the role of migrant women and mothers. It is generally well-known that women, and especially mothers, fulfill a special role in the family. They are often viewed as kin keepers in terms of maintaining family connections and providing care (Gerstel & Gallagher 2001). A divorce, moreover, is usually more economically detrimental for women than men (Härkönen 2014), while mothers still retain sole custody of the children significantly more often than fathers (Cancian, Meyer, Brown & Cooke 2014). Another reason for singling out immigrant women is that they, even more so than immigrant men, are often in a precarious socioeconomic position, being comparatively less economically independent, less active on the labor market and lower educated (Merens & Van den Brakel 2014). Given the rather understudied nature of intergenerational solidarity and union dissolution among migrant groups, immigrant women are thus an essential group to attend to first.

## 1.4. Data

### 1.4.1. *Netherlands Kinship Panel Study*

The overarching aim of this thesis to examine and explain intergenerational solidarity and union dissolution patterns among non-Western and native Dutch families in the Netherlands is achieved by a combined use of various types of data, highlighting the particular strengths of each, as well as utilizing their complementary potential. The first empirical chapters, Chapter 2 and 3, are based on survey material from the *Netherlands Kinship Panel Study* (NKPS; Dykstra et al. 2004), whose central objective was to gather data about the nature and degree of connectedness in families. Survey studies are interesting as they are a means for reaching relatively many respondents to inquire about beliefs and behaviors that are not recorded in administrative population registers. Surveys on subgroups such as migrants, however, even large-scale and nationally representative ones, often necessitate an oversampling of the subpopulation in question to permit reliable conclusions. This is precisely what makes the NKPS an adequate source of data for this dissertation, as a nationally representative sample of the Dutch population was supplemented with a stratified random sample of persons of Turkish, Moroccan, Surinamese and Antillean descent (migrant sample). Both samples were drawn among individuals between ages 18 and 79, who lived in private households. This means that residents of care-institutions and elderly homes were excluded, as well as migrants who did not (yet) have a permanent residence permit.

Although the NKPS has a panel design and 4 waves have been conducted (Wave 1 in 2002 - 2004, Wave 2 in 2006 - 2007, Wave 3 in 2010 - 2011 and Wave 4 in 2014), the studies in this dissertation are only based on the first wave, as subsequent waves did not contain a sufficient number of migrant respondents. First-wave data on the migrant sample were gathered in collaboration with the *Social Position and Use of Facilities by Ethnic Minorities*, organized by the Institute for Sociological and Economic Research and the Social and Cultural Planning Office of the Netherlands. Households in the migrant sample consisted of individuals who were born in either Turkey, Morocco, Suriname or the Dutch Antilles or had at least one parent who was born there. In the main sample, respondents were identified by a random sample of addresses of private residences in the Netherlands (obtained by Cendris). These

addresses were not restricted to any region. Data on the migrant sample, however, were purposely collected in the 13 municipalities of the Netherlands where relatively large proportions of migrants reside. These municipalities included Amsterdam, Rotterdam, The Hague, Utrecht, Eindhoven, Enschede, Bergen op Zoom, Almere, Alphen aan de Rijn, Dordrecht, Tiel, Delft and Hoogezand-Sappemeer. The result was a main sample of more than 8150 individuals and a migrant sample of about 1300 persons of Turkish, Moroccan, Surinamese and Antillean origin. The methods of data collection differed slightly in the two surveys. Whereas the NKPS survey used Computer Aided Personal Interviews, the SPVA comprised paper and pencil questionnaires. For Turkish and Moroccan respondents, equivalent questionnaires were developed in Dutch, Turkish and Arabic. Response rates in the SPVA survey ranged from 40% among migrants of Surinamese origin to 52% among Moroccan migrants. These rates are comparable to the overall response rate of the NKPS (47%) and other large-scale family surveys in the Netherlands (Dykstra et al. 2004; Feskens, Hox, Lensvelt-Mulders & Schmeets 2006; Stoop 2005).

#### 1.4.2. *Qualitative study*

Chapter 4 is based on one of the in-depth qualitative studies that were conducted to complement the large-scale NKPS survey to facilitate more detailed analyses of family relations. In-depth interviews are necessarily small in sample size due to the labor-intensive and time-consuming way of data gathering. Unlike survey studies or administrative material, however, qualitative data do not face the methodological limitation of being based on pre-defined concepts and closed, standardized answering options. Instead, they yield extensive information about personal viewpoints by allowing respondents to elaborate on certain topics in their own words. For my dissertation, I made use of the qualitative study: *Lonely but not alone: measuring loneliness in migrant samples* (De Valk 2012). Initially, the objective was to gain information about loneliness among migrant elderly. Since participants were asked about the primary people who made up their social network, however, the interviews included sufficient, specific information about parent-child relations.

Persons who were approached had already participated in the NKPS wave 1 (2002-2004) and sometimes in the next two waves as well. Only immigrants of Surinamese or Antillean and not Turkish or Moroccan descent were selected, to

ensure that respondents had a good command of Dutch and avoid misunderstandings or misinterpretations. Unlike the Turks and Moroccans, Surinamese and Antillean immigrants originate from former Dutch colonies and most were hence already acquainted with the Dutch language before migrating. Other selection criteria included that respondents had to be over 40 years of age and living in the Netherlands for at least ten years. A total of 242 invitation letters were sent out, from which 65 people responded, including 44 persons who declined the invitation and 21 individuals who agreed to participate.

A total of four interviewers, including myself, conducted the interviews over a three month period in fall 2012. The interviews followed a semi-structured, flexible guideline and lasted between 90 minutes and two hours. They were held at the respondents' homes, who lived dispersed across the Netherlands but mostly in large cities, corresponding with the documented residential patterns among immigrants in the Netherlands (Van der Vliet, Ooijevaar & Van der Bie 2012). The interviews were recorded (with permission of the respondents) and subsequently transcribed in Dutch by the interviewers. With the purpose of remaining as close as possible to the actual wording used by respondents, analyses were done in Dutch while illustrative fragments were translated into English, retaining grammatical errors and speaking language.

#### *1.4.3. System of Social statistical Datasets*

In the fifth Chapter, administrative population register data are used from the System of Social statistical Datasets (SSD; Bakker, Van Rooijen & Van Toor 2014). The SSD was constructed by Statistics Netherlands with the purpose to meet the growing demand for register data and warrant their safe and efficient use in official statistics and social research. Administrative data are an important source of information on the entire population, which is particularly essential for migrant studies. Moreover, the use of registers lowers the burden on respondents, while problems with panel attrition, social desirability and initial nonresponse can be avoided. Normally, register data are limited in terms of the number of variables they contain. The SSD, however, makes up for this limitation to some extent by interlinking data from various administrative registers, storing and connecting information of different types of units (e.g. persons, households and buildings) in a centralized way. Its core is formed by

administrative data from the Dutch Municipal Population Registers, which include primary demographic information about people's sex, age, country of birth, marital status and living address. These are, furthermore, linked to tax registers and registers from the Employee Insurance Agency. Since information from different years are interconnected, it is possible to follow individuals over time. This allowed me to capture dynamical events like union dissolution and residential relocation by comparing the registered living addresses of immigrant women and the composition of their households at two different points in time. In addition, the integrative data of the SSD offered me the possibility to analyze the impact of individual, family and residential characteristics on these life-events.

### 1.5. Outline of the thesis

The remaining part of this dissertation consists of four empirical chapters and a concluding chapter in which the main findings are summarized and the scientific and societal implications of the results are discussed. Of the four empirical chapters (Chapter 2-5), the first three deal with mother-child relationships in adulthood. Chapter 2 starts by posing the following research questions: *How are mother-child relationships in non-Western migrant and native Dutch families characterized by patterns of intergenerational solidarity? And how does the prevalence of relationship types differ across origin groups, between younger and older adults and between sons and daughters?* Building on the assumptions of the MFC, I conduct Latent Class Analyses to empirically construct a typology of mother-child relationships, combining information about practical and emotional support as well as the direction of support (who helped whom). Next, the prevalence of relationship types are compared and related to the origin, life-phase and sex of children. In Chapter 3, I continue with this typology in the transnational realm, again using Latent Class Analyses to examine the types of relationships that adult migrant children maintain with their mother abroad. Furthermore, Multinomial Logistic Regressions are performed to analyze the impact of acculturation on mother-child relations, both for families who live together in the destination country and for families who are organized transnationally. Taken together, Chapter 3 answers the questions: *How do patterns of practical and emotional support characterize transnational mother-child relationships? And how does acculturation impact the different types of (trans)national mother-child ties?* Whereas Chapters 2 and 3

look into behaviors of intergenerational solidarity on the basis of survey data, Chapter 4 is based on in-depth interviews. Using a descriptive and discourse analytical approach, I dive into the question how solidarity behaviors become understood by migrant mothers and children themselves. Or more precisely: *What meanings do migrant mothers and children attach to practical and emotional aspects of their relationship? And how do mothers understand and evaluate situations in which their norms or expectations conflict with the actual behaviors of children?* In Chapter 5, I shift attention from intergenerational to intra-generational relationships by examining the prevalence of union dissolution among migrant and native Dutch women. Here, I use register data to analyze the differences across origin groups and immigrant generations in larger society. An additional aim of this chapter was to address the residential relocation of women who had separated, highlighting the interdependence between various life-events. For both union dissolution and residential relocation, Logistic Regressions were conducted to examine the degree to which sociodemographic compositional effects interfered with the comparisons across groups. All in all, the last empirical chapter is guided by the following questions: *How do union dissolution and residential relocation rates vary across women of different origins and immigrant generations? And to what extent are these variations the result of sociodemographic characteristics?* Given that the empirical chapters were originally written as separate journal articles, a certain amount of overlap can be encountered between them. Chapter 2 and 3 have been published in international, peer reviewed journals and Chapter 4 and 5 are currently under review.



