A Bureaucratic Gap or a Policy Made to Measure?

An Intersectional Analysis of the Women's Emancipation Policy of the City of Amsterdam

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Master in Comparative Women's Studies in Culture and Politics

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Foreword

This thesis is, on the one hand, the end product of an emotional and intellectual rollercoaster. On the other hand, it is the beginning of a new adventure. I am proud and relieved to be able to say that with genderstudies, I have found an academic discipline which interests me so much; I want to continue to work in it for the rest of my life. I want to dedicate this thesis to my special friend Liesbet. Her struggle against cancer made me to relativize basically everything this year and her strength and optimism have inspired me countless times.

I need to thank many people who made this year possible and successful. First of all, special thanks go out to my mentor Dr. Eva Midden who has accompanied me throughout the whole year in Utrecht. I am very thankful for her excellent mentoring and the fact I was always able to share all my doubts, frustrations and victories with her. In addition, I want to thank my colleagues from my internship at Servicepunt Emancipatie Amsterdam. All four of them have been great teachers and mentors. I am grateful for the professional chances and friendship I got from them.

I also want to thank all my friends and family. Still not understanding genderstudies to the core, they have always sympathized with me and have been very compassionate and proud about my achievements and independence this year. Last but not least, I want to thank my partner Michaël. He has always supported my choice to study Women's Studies in Utrecht although this meant we have been separated for the duration of the programme. His interest and criticism motivated and inspired me many times. This thesis means the end of a period of four years in which I studied and lived in the Netherlands and to be honest, it is a sad goodbye. At the same time, it is the beginning of a new period in which Michaël and I can finally share our lives together.

Introduction

Amsterdam, 'the city of cheese, tulips and tolerance', has a very progressive image all around the world. The city was probably the first to allow gay marriage and the use of drugs is tolerated (to a certain degree) as well. In addition, the city believes itself to be open-minded and liberal. Nevertheless, discrimination and exclusion are present and seem to be part of many policies and daily (political) life. Especially women are vulnerable for these practices of discrimination and exclusion. Everyday, hundreds of people do volunteer work in women's organisations to improve the situation of women in Amsterdam. In some cases supported by the policies of the city of Amsterdam and in other cases counteracted by it.

A nota about women's emancipation in 1980 signalled the start of communal women's emancipation policy in Amsterdam. The main issues were to abolish power inequalities between men and women, to improve the emancipation of women and to challenge violence against women. Since then, different policies have been developed. Nevertheless, the attention for women's emancipation specifically has ceased in recent years, as the city of Amsterdam decided about five years ago to place women's emancipation under diversity policy. This decision has had severe consequences for the working of the more than 120 women's organisations in Amsterdam. Although some politicians, civil servants and city councillors in Amsterdam are very eager to come to terms with the discrimination and exclusion of women, it remains uncertain and unclear whether the policies they enact and execute fit to the needs of the women's organisations.

♀ Research Question and Approach

As part of the master programme Comparative Women's Studies in Culture and Politics, I did an internship at *Servicepunt Emancipatie Amsterdam* (SPE - Service Point Emancipation Amsterdam). SPE is an organisation enacted by the city council of Amsterdam but working independent from it. The goal of SPE is to support and give advice to all NGOs and initiatives which have women's emancipation as their main goal. SPE was an initiative of the city council of Amsterdam in reaction to an investigation of *Dienst Maatschappelijke Ontwikkeling* (DMO – Service for Societal Development) of Amsterdam. The main outcome of this investigation was that the women's organisations in Amsterdam felt the need for practical support given by an independent, city-wide expertise centre; this centre became SPE.

My main task during my internship was to work on a Women's Monitor of Amsterdam, which would inventorise the main obstacles to women's emancipation in

Amsterdam. This Women's Monitor, which will be finished in October 2010, will be handed over to the city council of Amsterdam, politicians and local and national media. In this respect, I have interviewed many women's organisations. During these conversations, I noticed frustration about the current women's emancipation policy in Amsterdam. This has triggered me to find the answer to the following research question: *To what extent does the women's emancipation policy of Amsterdam fit to the needs of the women's organisations?* I will argue that there is a bureaucratic gap between the existing policy and the reality the women's organisations experience in everyday life.

In order to find the answer to the research question posed, I will study the past and present women's emancipation policy in Amsterdam and to a lesser extent of the Netherlands as a whole. In particular, I will conduct an intersectional analysis of the current women's emancipation policy in Amsterdam. In addition, I have conducted in-depth interviews with women active in women's organisations in order to know their opinion about the women's emancipation policy of Amsterdam. They were able to utter their opinion about their needs, frustrations, best practices and alternatives. Taking into account the intersectional analysis of the current policy and the contents of the in-depth interviews, I will finally give some recommendations for an alternative women's emancipation policy for Amsterdam.

♀ Existing Literature and Societal Relevance

Among others, Verloo and Roggeband have studied different women's emancipation policies. Nevertheless, they focussed on national (i.e. the Netherlands) and international policies (i.e. the European Union) (Roggeband & Verloo, 1994; Roggeband & Verloo, 2006; Verloo, 1992, Verloo, 2006). Communal women's emancipation policies have, as far as I know, not been studied yet. Although there has not been done much research on communal women's emancipation policies, I argue that it can be of great importance. First of all, it can be of great value for the politicians, city councillors and civil servants of Amsterdam. It is in some way understandable that top-down policies developments do not perfectly fit to the needs and wishes of the target groups: the bureaucratic process of enacting and executing policy often looses sight of the real needs, worries and expectations of the people involved. Therefore, this thesis can give them a better insight in the actual and current needs and wishes of women's organisations in order to change the current policy for the better.

Second, this thesis can be a tool for women's organisations in Amsterdam. First of all; it can be used to find out what is happing in their field. Women's organisations in Amsterdam

often work rather isolated and the majority is divided along the axes of race/ethnicity, sexual orientation, age, etc. In addition, they tend to work only in one or some districts of the city. There is little cooperation and involvement in each other's work. Furthermore, this thesis can be used as a pressure tool for the women's organisations in order to convince the authorities to improve the current women's emancipation policy of Amsterdam.

It is important to acknowledge this thesis cannot give a final outcome about the emancipation of all women living in Amsterdam. The reason for this is that I have chosen to focus on women active in women's organisations and not all women in Amsterdam are active in women's organisations. The main reason for choosing to focus on women active in women's organisation is that I have been acquainted with women's organisations in Amsterdam due to my internship at SPE. As a result of this experience, I have a good network among different kinds of women's organisations which made it possible to conduct the research in this way. There are more than 120 different women's organisations in Amsterdam which attract a diverse and representative group of women. Therefore, I argue that the women's organisations in Amsterdam are able to formulate the needs and wishes of a large group of women in this city.

♀ Outline

The thesis is structured as follows: in Chapter 1, I will expand on the theoretical framework and the methodology I will use in this paper. First of all, I will expand on my feminist way of doing research. Second, I will go into different concepts which are important for the purpose of this paper. After that, I will explain the use of intersectionality to analyse the women's emancipation policy of Amsterdam. In addition, I will explain my choice for conducting in-depth interviews by using standpoint theory. In this part of the thesis, I will also position myself as a researcher. In Chapter 2, I will focus on women's emancipation policy. I will start off by giving a short overview of the developments in women's emancipation policy in the Netherlands as a whole. Thereafter, I will briefly describe the developments in the women's emancipation policy in Amsterdam. I will continue by analysing the current women's emancipation policy in an intersectional way. In Chapter 3, I will give the outcomes of the in-depth interviews I conducted. I have divided the chapter according to the main themes that were touched upon in the interviews. The last section summarizes, concludes and gives recommendations for an alternative women's emancipation policy in Amsterdam.

1. Theoretical Framework and Methodology

In this chapter, I will expand on the theoretical framework and methodology I will use in this thesis. I will start off by explaining my -feminist- way of doing research. Thereafter, I will continue with the discussion of the key concepts that are important for the purpose of this paper: gender, ethnicity and emancipation. Subsequently, I will discuss the theory of intersectionality and I will explain how and why I will use this theory to analyse the women's emancipation policy of Amsterdam. After that, I will explain the process and relevance of doing in-depth interviews by using standpoint theory. In this section, I will also go into my position as researcher, relying on the politics of location of Adrienne Rich.

1.1. A Feminist Way of Doing Research

In their book '*Feminist Perspectives on Social Research*' (2004), Hesse-Biber and Yaiser identify several characteristics of feminist research. According to them, the purpose of feminist research is to ask new questions. As stated above, no research has been done yet on communal women's emancipation policies. Writing this thesis about the women's emancipation policy of Amsterdam, gives me the opportunity to research a new subject. I argue that it is a relevant research topic because, and this is typical for feminist research as well, it is a study for women rather than about women since women's organisations will be able to benefit from this study. In this respect, feminist research should be seen as a tool for social transformation: knowledge building does not bend toward dominant interest groups but toward democratic ends. This thesis can give all persons involved in the women's emancipation policy in Amsterdam tools to improve it (Hesse-Biber & Yaiser, 2004).

Hesse-Biber and Yaiser argue that feminist research has a tendency to focus on issues of difference: feminist research is often marked by an inclusion of the interconnections between the categories of gender, race, class, sexual preference, etc. In this respect, my research is a good example of feminist research as I study the intersection of different social categories in women's emancipation policy. In addition, Hesse-Biber and Yaiser argue that in feminist research lived experiences are very important, especially women's experiences and that of other marginalized groups. Subsequently, feminist research has an awareness of power dynamics and practising strong reflexivity. By applying standpoint theory and the politics of location in this thesis, I want to take these characteristics of feminist research into account (Hesse-Biber & Yaiser, 2004).

1.2. Discussing the Main Concepts: Gender, Emancipation and Ethnicity

In this thesis, I will often refer to the concepts of gender, emancipation and ethnicity. These concepts, as all concepts, are not easy to define, nor fixed. Nevertheless, I argue that it is important to conceptualize these terms because they are relevant for the understanding of this thesis. In order to do this, I will review some ideas and discussions behind these concepts.

Bagilhole (2010) argues that gender refers to "the social attributes and opportunities associated with being male and female and the relationships between women and men and girls and boys, as well as the relations between women and these between men. These attributes, opportunities, and relationships are socially constructed and are learned through socialization processes. They are context and time-specific and changeable". According to Bagilhole (2010), this means that gender affects what is accepted, approved and appreciated in a woman or a man within a certain framework. In most societies, there are discrepancies between women and men in responsibilities allocated, activities carried out, access to and direction over resources, as well as decision-making chances (Bagilhole cited in Franken et al., 2010, p. 45).

Hooks (2000) argues that emancipation is a term used to describe various efforts to obtain political rights or equality, often for a specifically disenfranchised group, or more generally in discussion of such matters. Women's emancipation, in particular, refers specifically to the struggle of women to obtain equal rights (hooks, 2000). Nevertheless, there is no single route to women's emancipation. Midden (2009) expanded on different interpretations of emancipation in her PHD dissertation. She argues that for many women emancipation is about making your own choices and not just about having the same rights and possibilities and men, such as a career. In addition, the women in Midden's research argue that emancipation cannot be an individualistic concept; rather it is about making choices within a certain framework, such as the needs and wishes of your friends and family. In that sense, these women explicitly criticise interpretations of emancipation that ignore these ties. Moreover, women tend to emphasise a clear difference in thinking about emancipation between different generations. It is also important to notice that emancipation is both about women and about men (Midden, 2009).

According to Midden (2009), many women from all over the world do not believe that their culture/religion is a threat to their emancipation, but an inspiration. Nevertheless, others as Ayaan Hirsi Ali, argue that religion, and in her case Islam, is a potential threat to the emancipation of (Muslim) women (Midden, 2009). Some believe that the emancipation of

autochonous[1] women in the Netherlands is finished. Others argue that only allochtonous women need emancipation, but autochtonous women still experience discrimination on the basis of their gender as well. While others say that emancipation is never finished, not in the Netherlands or in the rest of the world. According to Midden, many women believe that emancipation should come from within: only when you have respect for the opinions of others, you can talk and make alliances. These women argue that by giving strict interpretations to emancipation, we will never be able to change anything; instead it is better to accept the situation as it is, and to be prepared to make small steps towards emancipation. (Midden, 2009).

Wekker (2010) argues that ethnicity is "the social system that gives meaning to ethnic differences between people: differences that can be made on the basis of people's origin, appearance, history, culture, language and religion". Wekker believes that race and ethnicity are "two sides of the same coin" (Wekker cited in Franken et al., 2010, p. 74). The concepts of gender, emancipation and ethnicity will be crucial for the argument of this thesis. As I will explain in the next paragraph, I will mainly focus on the intersection of gender and ethnicity in the women's emancipation policy of Amsterdam.

1.3. Policy (Documents) and Intersectionality

Gender and ethnicity are part of a person's identity. Three ways of understanding a person's identity can be found in the feminist lexicon: one is a fluid rather than a fixed identity, the second is multiple identities rather than a singular identity; the last is contradiction. Haraway argues that feminist research must begin from the recognition of multiple identities since identities are contradictory, partial and strategic. There is nothing about being female that naturally binds women. Thus one must be careful not to essentialize or universalize women as a single entity (Arneil, 1999; Hesse-Biber & Yaiser, 2004, Yuval-Davis, 2006).

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[1] In history, an autochonous person referred to 'a person from this country' and an allochtonous person was 'a person from another country'. In the 1970s, the term 'allochton' was reintroduced by the Dutch government to replace the term 'immigrant'. Because it was a very confusing term, the Dutch government defined it: a person living in the Netherlands and has a least one parent who was born outside the Netherlands. A person who is born abroad is a first generation allochton, a person who is born in the Netherlands (but has at least one parent who was born abroad) is a second generation allochton. A difference is also made between western and non-western allochtons. Because the term is still very confusing and stigmatizing, several Dutch politicians tried to get rid of it. Nevertheless, no one has been successful on this point until now. I am not in favour of using the terms 'allochtonous' and 'autochtonous' either because they are stigmatizing and problematic. Nevertheless, I have decided to use them in this thesis because I will describe and analyse the women's emancipation of Amsterdam and the Netherlands in which these terms are frequently used.

If I presume multiple identities, I should also acknowledge that gender and ethnicity are not the only identities which play a role in a person's position in society and the way a woman wants and is able to emancipate. Intersectional thinkers do not only believe that a person has multiple identities, they also argue that the intersection of these identities results in a specific position in society. The term intersectionality was coined in the late 1980s by lawyer Kimberly Crenshaw who compared the lives of women of colour with a traffic intersection, where traffic comes from different directions. Intersectionality may be defined as a theory to analyse how social and cultural categories (axes of differentiation) intertwine. The relationships between gender, race, ethnicity, disability, sexual orientation, class, nationality, etc. are examined (Buikema, 2009; Franken et al., 2010; Knudsen, 2006; Ludvig, 2006; Prins, 2006).

Intersectionality, as all theories, can be applied in various ways. McCall (2005) identified three approaches of intersectionality. The first approach is called *anticategorical complexity* because it deconstructs analytical categories. According to this approach, social life is too irreducibly complex to make fixed categories anything but simplifying social fictions that produce inequalities in the process of producing differences. The second approach, *intercategorical complexity*, requires that scholars provisionally adopt existing analytical categories to document relationships of inequality among social groups and changing configurations of inequality along multiple and conflicting dimensions. The final approach is named *intracategorical complexity* by McCall and inaugurated the study of intersectionality. This approach falls conceptually in the middle of the continuum between the two other approaches. Authors working in this vein tend to focus on particular social groups at neglected points of intersection in order to reveal the complexity of lived experience within such groups (McCall, 2005; Ludvig, 2006). I choose to use the *intracategorical approach* in this thesis because it allows me to distinguish between the different factors that seem to influence how women want and can emancipate themselves and their rank and file. In addition, I am able to simultaneously acknowledge the social constructive nature of our identities. This approach also allows me to take into account different groups of women and the differences within groups of women.

McCall's approaches do not form the only divergence in intersectionality. One can also find the appliance of structural and political intersectionality in feminist literature. Structural intersectionality focuses on people's experiences: how inequalities and the product of their intersections impact on their daily lives. Political intersectionality deals with the level of political strategies, although it does not offer a model to understand structures (Franken et

al., 2010). I will use both types in my thesis. First of all, I will apply structural intersectionality in Chapter 3 of this thesis when conducting in-depth interviews with women active in women's organisations in Amsterdam because this method focuses on people's lived experiences. Second, I will use the concept of political intersectionality when analysing the women's emancipation policy of Amsterdam in Chapter 2.

Social and cultural categories of inequality as race, class, gender and sexual orientation are contextual. Although they persist throughout history, race, class, gender and sexual orientation hierarchies are never static and fixed; they constantly undergo change as part of new economic, political, and ideological processes, trends, and events (Hesse-Biber & Yaiser, 2004). In addition, social and cultural categories of inequality seem to be endless. Analysing all or even many of these categories in an intersectional way is beyond the scope of this thesis. Therefore, I have decided to focus on gender and race/ethnicity in this thesis due to several reasons. First of all, along these axes most women's organisations seem to be fragmentised in Amsterdam. Therefore, these axes seem to be the most important for this research. Second, gender and ethnicity are the categories, which I have been studying the most during the master programme of Comparative Women's Studies in Culture and Politics. For this reason, I feel confident further using and studying these categories in this thesis. Minor attention will be paid as well to other social categories as sexual orientation and age whenever possible and relevant. Unfortunately this means that many categories will not be included in this research. In my view, it would be interesting and relevant to study some other categories in another research project.

As I accept that a person has a specific position in society, due to the intersection of social categories of inequality, I should also give meaning and importance to a person's world view or perspective. This is why I will introduce standpoint theory and the politics of location in the following paragraph. I will use standpoint theory to explain why I choose to do in-depth interviews to support my argument. The politics of location of Adrienne Rich, I will use to explain my own position as a researcher.

1.4. In-depth Interviews and Standpoint Theory / The Politics of Location

When thinking about the best way to analyse the women's emancipation policy of Amsterdam, besides doing an intersectional analysis of the policy itself, I decided that doing in-depth interviews would give this thesis a surplus value. The argument behind this is that by doing in-depth interviews with women active in women's organisations, I am able to share

knowledge with the group who is mainly touched by the women's emancipation policy of Amsterdam. I choose to interview these women because they have the ability to critique the policy from a bottom-up perspective. They do not have any interest in remaining the situation as it is today. They are not content with the current state of affairs because they experience everyday that their work -voluntarily helping women in Amsterdam to emancipate themselves- is needed since hundreds of women come to women's organisations on a daily basis. They claim, in contrast to others, that emancipation in the Netherlands, of both autochtonous and allochtonous women, is not finished yet.

My approach can be placed within standpoint theory since standpoint theorists want to understand society through the lens of women's experiences and believe that the experience of women is a map for social change. In addition, standpoint theorists believe that women, as member of an oppressed group, to have cultivated a double consciousness -a heightened awareness not only for their own lives but of the lives of the dominant group (men) as well. Some feminist standpoint scholars argue that women's subordinate status in society, and their capacity for double consciousness that evolves from it, places them in a privileged position from which to generate knowledge about the world. This feminist standpoint concept, sometimes called 'strong objectivity', teaches us that women are more capable of producing an accurate, comprehensive, and objective interpretation of social reality than men are, because they are part of the dominant group. Strong objectivity requires what we can think of as 'strong reflexivity'. Reflexivity is the process through which a researcher recognizes, examines, and understands how her social background, positionality, and assumptions affect the practice of social research. Reflexivity also requires that the researcher makes visible to both the researcher's audience, and possibly the participants, one's own social locations and identities. The reflexive researcher must also continually be aware of and examine the relationship between the researcher and the research participants (Hekman, 1997; Hesse-Biber & Yaiser, 2004; Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2007).

Feminist researchers are particularly concerned with reducing the hierarchy between researcher and researched. Acknowledging the similarities and differences between myself and the respondent, allows me to assess the impact of difference on the interview situation. As a feminist interviewer, I am aware of the nature of my relationship to those whom I interview. I try to understand my personal and research standpoints and the role I can play in the interview process in terms of my power and authority over the interview situation. The famous question of Andrienne Rich: "When, where and under what conditions the statement I am making is true?" is always in the back of my mind (Diaz-Diocaretz & Zavela, 1985).

I understand that my position as a young, white, heterosexual university student with middle class background is crucial for the topics I choose (not) to write about and the arguments I (do not) make. Both my education of European Studies and Women's Studies influence me in daily life and in my academic work. During my internship at the Belgian Embassy in Jordan, I wrote a report about women's rights in Jordan. After that, I have written my bachelor thesis about Muslim feminism. Both these developments triggered me to come to Utrecht to study Comparative Women's Studies in Politics and Culture. There, I got into contact with the theory of intersectionality, which interested me from the start. Utrecht University gives a lot of importance to the research and the teaching of intersectionality. Nevertheless, I believe that the appliance of this theory in reality is equally important. By applying intersectionality in reality, in this case making an intersectional analysis of the women's emancipation policy of Amsterdam, I want to reduce the bureaucratic gap between policy and reality.

Feminists are particularly concerned with getting at experiences that are often hidden. In-depth interviews form a good basis for this. Firstly, because in-depth interviewing allows the feminist researcher to access the voices of those who are marginalized in a society. Secondly, in-depth interviews seek to understand the lived experiences of the individual: the interviewer should be interested in getting at the subjective understanding an individual brings to a given situation or a set of circumstances. Lastly, in-depth interviews are issue-oriented: a researcher might use a method to explore a particular topic and gain focused information on the issue from the respondents. The researcher's job is to listen carefully, discerningly, and intently to the comments of the researched (Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2007).

Most of the interviews I use for this thesis, I did when doing my internship at SPE. Since it is one of SPE's main tasks to report about current developments in the women's movement in Amsterdam, SPE wants to have a face-to-face meeting with all women's organisations in Amsterdam. In these meetings, SPE investigated the following subjects: the target group and goal of the organisation, the activities and background of the organisation, general wants and needs and specific questions to SPE. Although SPE did not ask about the organisation's opinion about the women's emancipation policy of Amsterdam in a direct way, they were free discuss and comment on the past and current policy and often they did. I also had some additional interviews, specifically for this thesis, with key figures in the women's movement in Amsterdam.

There are different types of interviews. Informal interviews have little structure and are used to build a relationship with the respondent, to explore what might be the relevant

topics of interest to them, and to uncover topics that might be otherwise be overlooked by the researcher. Unstructured interviews have a basis interview plan but a minimum of control. A semi structured is conducted with a specific interview guide – a list of written questions that the interviewer needs to cover within a particular interview. During this kind of interview the interviewer/researcher has some control. During a structured interview the researcher/interviewer has total control over the agenda of the interview. During interviews the researcher can ask different two different types of questions: open-ended questions and close-ended questions (Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2007). All the interviews conducted for this thesis can be defined as semi-structured with open-ended questions. Examples of questions I have posed are: What has changed since the structural subsidies for self-organisations in Amsterdam have been abolished? How have these (possible) changes influenced the working of your women's organisation? What would you change if you could have influence on the women's emancipation policy of Amsterdam?

In my view, it is important to explain the way I am doing research in this thesis to make visible my personal interests and position as a researcher. Nevertheless, it is also important to understand the main concepts, methodology, theoretical framework and approach of this thesis in order to better comprehend the remaining chapters. In the next chapter, I will describe and analyse the current women's emancipation policy of Amsterdam in an intersectional perspective. I will start off by giving an overview of the women's emancipation policy in the Netherlands as a whole. This is important to better comprehend the developments in Amsterdam, since the national-wide developments have strongly influenced the women's emancipation policy in Amsterdam.

2. Women's Emancipation Policy in Amsterdam

In this chapter, I will describe and analyse the women's emancipation policy of Amsterdam and to a lesser extent of the Netherlands as a whole. I will start off by discussing the past and current women's emancipation policy in the Netherlands by drawing attention to the main developments and discussions. Thereafter, I will highlight the main developments of the women's emancipation policy in Amsterdam. Subsequently, I will pay attention to the place of women's emancipation policy within the wider policy frame. After that, I will pay attention to the definition of women's emancipation according to the city of Amsterdam. Lastly, I will devote a section to the question whether the current women's emancipation policy is a 'policy made to measure' or a 'one size fits all policy'. In general, I will analyse the current women's emancipation policy in Amsterdam in an intersectional perspective.

2.1. Women's Emancipation Policy in the Netherlands

During the 1970s the first women's emancipation policies were enacted in the Netherlands. From the start, the labour participation thesis was very essential in these policies. The essence of this thesis is that if women were given the possibility to work outside their homes, they would be able to develop themselves and to earn their own income. This would result in more autonomy and more equality. By strengthening their power position they would, for example, become able to enforce a more equal labour division in the house, prevent molestation and gain more control over their own existence. An important aspect of the thesis is that maintenance of the house and taking care of the children is not seen as a 'women's only task' anymore. Children should be able to go to nurseries and the maintenance of the house should be rearranged among men and women. In addition, a five hour working day should become possible. Although women were stimulated by the government to work outside their homes, they had to rearrange the division of work at home themselves (Brouns et al., 1995; DMO, Unit Diversiteit en Integratie, 2008).

From the mid 1980s, the attention in women's emancipation policy shifted from autochthonous women to allochthonous women, also due to the changes of the composition of the inhabitants. Traditional women's emancipation policy changed in many cases into diversity policy. In addition, women's emancipation policy of the 1980s practically only focused on paid labour for women. The marginalized position of certain groups of people was mirrored in their position on the labour market. Paid labour was and still is not only a source

of income but also of societal status (Brouns et al., 1995; DMO, Unit Diversiteit en Integratie, 2008).

In my view, it is important to make a remark about the shift in attention from autchtonous to allochtonous women. In the past, the government seemed to enact women's emancipation policy for *all* women in the Netherlands. Nevertheless, implicitly they were heading at autochonous 'white' women. In the 1980s, the attention shifted from 'women's emancipation' to the 'women's emancipation of allochtonous women'. This can be seen as a shift from an issue (women's emancipation) to a target group (allochtonous women). Therefore, I argue that women's emancipation policy in the 1980s has become ethicized. The fact that nowadays almost all the women's emancipatory activities that are subsidized by the Dutch government are focussing on women from ethnic minorities, can be seen as a support for this argument. The Dutch government supposes that the emancipation of autchtonous women in the Netherlands is finished. In addition, they believe that allochtonous women still have to make big progress with regard to women's emancipation (in order for the situation of allochtonous and autchtonous women to become comparable). They do not seem to ask themselves whether allochtonous women feel the same need as autchtonous women some decades ago to emancipate theirselves. In addition, they do not differentiate within the group of 'allochtonous' women, which is equally problematic.

The promotion of the participation of women in political and societal decision-making and the breaking through of stereotypical image-forming of masculinity and femininity have been the front lines of Dutch women's emancipation policy in the 1990s. At the same time, policy itself contributed to the production and continuing of stereotypical image-forming of the sexes. As during the last decade, political and policy there was a lot of attention for allochthonous women. *Zwarte, migranten en vluchtelingenvrouwen* (ZMV-Vrouwen, Black, migrant and refugee women) demanded their position in the women's movement. Meanwhile, most activities with regard to women's emancipation subsidized in the Netherlands and Amsterdam focus on women from ethnic minorities. Hence, implicitly, the Dutch government argues that the emancipation of autchtonous women in the Netherlands is finished (Brouns et al., 1995; DMO, Unit Diversiteit en Integratie, 2008).

The first goal of the *current* national emancipation policy is the increase of the economic independence of women by means of increasing their labour participation. Second, the government wants to create safety for women by resisting violence against girls and women. Third, the government wants to stimulate societal participation to counteract social expulsion of women in vulnerable positions. Next, equal representation of women in decision-

making positions is an important goal in the current women's emancipation policy of the Netherlands. In addition, the government wants to support people to make the combination of a job and maintenance of the house easier to combine. More women at top functions and more girls in technical courses and jobs is an important striving point as well. Lastly, the Dutch government thinks equal wages for men and women to be very important (Ministerie OCW, 2007; Ministerie OCW, 2010; Ministerraad, 2005; SCP & CBS, 2006; SCP & CBS, 2008).

The Dutch government stresses that in the domain of women's significant progress has been recorded in the last decades: "men and women are equal before law, inequalities have been reduced and more women than men are studying at the moment". Nevertheless, the government seems to understand that emancipation is not finished yet: for example, it acknowledges that there is still no equal division of labour. In the Netherlands, most of the families prefer a 'one and a half breadwinning system': the husband works fulltime and takes care of the main income; the woman works part-time and takes care of the biggest part of the housekeeping and the care for the children. In addition, big differences in position and remuneration keep on existing and few women fulfil top functions in business, the government and the academic world. Moreover, allochtonous women stay behind on autochonous women (DMO, Unit Diversiteit en Integratie, 2008; Ministerraad, 2005, SCP, 2006; SCP, 2007; SCP, 2009;).

Nation-wide, the government chose gender mainstreaming as its strategy to anchor women emancipation in all relevant policy domains. Recently, *Visitatiecommissie Emancipatie* (National Visitation Committee for Emancipation) concluded this has not led to the wanted result since one cannot speak of systematic and structural attention for women's emancipation in national policy. There is a lack of specific expertise at the ministries and there is insufficient attention for the topic at the governmental and administrative top. Nearly all ministries have dissolved their emancipation committees. The result is that emancipation policy has been weakened (DMO, Unit Diversiteit en Integratie, 2008; SCP & CBS, 2006; SCP & CBS, 2008; Visitatiecommissie Emancipatie, 2005; Visitatiecommissie Emancipatie, 2007).

2.2. Overview of Women's Emancipation Policy in Amsterdam

A nota about women's emancipation in 1980 signalled the start of communal women's emancipation policy at Amsterdam. The main issues were to abolish power inequalities between men and women, to improve the emancipation of women and to challenge violence

against women. In 1982 the *Emancipatiebureau* (emancipation desk) was founded and in 1994 the *Gemeentelijke Adviesraad Emancipatie* (communal advice council for women's emancipation). The last note about women's emancipation was published in 1997. Two years later all policies and organisations were brought under the denominator 'diversity policy'. The *Emancipatiebureau* of Amsterdam was transformed into *Projectbureau Multiculturalisatie Emancipatie* (MCE -project bureau multiculturalization and emancipation). Right after the 20th anniversary of this bureau the subsidies were stopped. Henceforth, the activities of the women's organisations rather than the women's organisations themselves were put to the centre of attention (DMO, Unit Diversiteit en Integratie, 2008).

MVVN (Moroccan Women's Organisation of the Netherland), SITARA (a Surinam-Hindustan women's organisation) and ATKB (*Vereniging van Vrouwen uit Turkije in Amsterdam*-a Turkish women's organization) decided to combine their strengths and established the foundation *Samenwerkingsverband Vrouwenorganisaties Amsterdam* (SAMMAS–umbrella association for women's organisations in Amsterdam) in 2004. After an intern evaluation of SAMMAS and after consultation of different women's organisation and the city of Amsterdam, the decision fell in 2008 that the construction of these three women's organisations was not working properly. SAMMAS decided to put down its work and hoped to make space for another emancipation centre for all women of Amsterdam (Adviesraad Diversiteit en Integratie, 2006; DMO, Unit Diversiteit en Integratie, 2008). The need for more cooperation resulted in the development of Servicepunt Emancipatie Amsterdam (SPE) in 2009. I will come back to the issue of cooperation among women's organisations and other institutions in Section 2.6.1 and Chapter 3.

In 2004, the structural subsidies for self organisations were abolished. Many women's organisations and other self organisations in Amsterdam currently only receive project subsidies. This situation is problematic for at least two reasons. First of all, a steady money flow is important for the continuity of a self organisation which depends on the energy and time of volunteers. Secondly, the self organisations were not consulted about the shift towards project subsidies. I argue that it is important that the self organisations of Amsterdam are always involved when the city council enacts or evaluates policy the organisations will be touched by. Giving structural subsidies to every self organisation without any form of control or evaluation might not be the solution because in the past corruption has been a problem. This is probably the reason why the working method was revised and was shifted to project subsidies instead of structural subsidies. In order to improve the current situation, the city council should consult the self organisations in Amsterdam with regard to the working

method of subsidies and ask how the current problems can be resolved without running the risk of corruption. I will come back to the financing of self organisations in Amsterdam in Chapter 3. In 2005, another important development occurred that influenced the women's emancipation policy in Amsterdam. The city decided to shift from target group policy to diversity policy. In the case of women's emancipation policy, the policy shift meant a change from gender mainstreaming to diversity mainstreaming. I will discuss these developments in Section 2.3.

A paid job was for a long time the frontline to get women out of societal desolation. Nevertheless, according to the city of Amsterdam, to get a paid job is a big step for many women. The city argues that this specific group of women finds this goal unreachable. Nevertheless, Amsterdam argues that investing in this group does not only have big significance for these women themselves, there is also high societal profit. If these women have more knowledge and skills, they can improve their role as a caretaker for their children and this can be the beginning of 'success' for themselves and the next generation. According to the city council, the emancipation of the most vulnerable women is therefore the responsibility of the city and they argue that they have the instruments to engage women who are situated at the margins of society: reintegration tracks and social integration tracks (O+S, 2008; Arichi et al., 2007; DMO, Unit Diversiteit en Integratie, 2008).

Nevertheless, Amsterdam acknowledges it is not able to reach all the women who need their help. However, there are some women's organisations like *Oemnia, Nisa voor Nisa* etc. that do reach these women. Many women's organisations do the first steps to get these women out of their desolation and to bring them further towards the finding of paid work. Nevertheless, this asks for more professional skills than these organisations have. The professionals which are needed can actually be found at the reintegration bureaus of the city, which have an 'achievement-directed-method'. However, at the moment one cannot speak about a decent handover to the reintegration bureaus. According to the city council, it is of great importance to find the lacking link between the successful women's organisations and the reintegration bureaus (Krikke et al., 2007; DMO, Unit Diversiteit en Integratie, 2008). The cooperation among the women's organisations in Amsterdam was eventually partly solved by the establishment of SPE. I will come back to the issue of SPE later on in this section. Nevertheless, the cooperation between self and professional organisations in Amsterdam has not been solved yet. As far as I know, not even a strategy is set up by the city council to tackle this problem.

The lack of cooperation among the many involved organisations was an important issue for the *Adviesraad voor Diversiteit en Integratie* (Advice Council of Diversity and Integration) as well. During expert meetings organized by the city many women's organisations uttered the need for a covering knowledge and supporting centre. It is important that the existing organisations get to share their expertise and bundle their strengths. According to them, a platform would give them the opportunity to realise this. The alderman planned to make this independent emancipation platform possible from January, 1st 2008 (Adviesraad Diversiteit en Integratie, 2006; Belhaj et al., 2008; DMO, Unit Diversiteit en Integratie, 2006; Klooster, 2007).

In the end, SPE was established in June 2009. SPE has the following functions: information function, networking function, signalling function and promotion of expertise. SPE should contribute to the professionalization of the women's organisations and to the increasing of reach of the women's organisations. The platform should also be able to encourage the women's organisations to make more use of financial arrangements of the city, the national government and funds. In addition, SPE should enable the knowledge and experience exchange between the women's organisations. Because of that, more successful projects should take place in the different city districts. SPE got a budget of 400.000 Euros for two years (Adviesraad Diversiteit en Integratie, 2006; Diversion en Van de Bunt, 2009; DMO, Unit Diversiteit en Integratie, 2009; SPE, 2009).

2.3. Women's Emancipation Policy within a Wider Policy Frame

2.3.1. Gendermainstreaming

Since the 1970s, Amsterdam had a specific policy for several target groups: ethnic monitories, homosexuals, women, youngsters, disabled and elderly. The most important result of this policy was that the unequal position of these target groups became visible and was put on the agenda. A disadvantage of this target group policy was that minority groups were problematized. It appeared that without the help of the government they would not be able to 'survive'. In addition, the policy went beyond the social-economic and cultural differences within the different target groups (DMO, Unit Diversiteit en Integratie, 2008; Visitatiecommissie Emancipatie, 2006).

In the case of women's emancipation policy, Amsterdam used gendermainstreaming. Gender mainstreaming involves ensuring that gender perspectives and attention to the goal of gender equality are central to all activities. Gender mainstreaming is not about adding on a

'women's component' or even a 'gender equality component', to an existing activity. It involves more than increasing women's participation. First of all, gender mainstreaming situates gender equality issues at the centre of policy decisions and entails bringing the perceptions, experience, knowledge and interests of all women as well as men to bear on policy-making and decision-making. In addition, it can reveal a need for changes in goals, strategies and actions to ensure that both women and men can influence, participate in and benefit from development process (Franken et al., 2010).

Gender mainstreaming promises to address gender equality at a structural level rather than focusing on ameliorating the specific symptoms of inequality. Mainstreaming questions the neutrality of the presumed 'norm' against which women are judged, and enquires into the reality of people's lives via gender impact assessments, which should in principle be sensitive to the diversity amongst women and men. By focusing on the causes of inequality, it aims to prevent their future reproduction. In this way, mainstreaming questions the presumed neutrality of bureaucratic policymaking, highlighting the way in which apparently impartial policies might reproduce existing inequalities by failing to address their structural impact. Moreover, mainstreaming has the potential to take a holistic approach to inequalities (Franken et al., 2010).

I agree that gendermainstreaming is a good approach to tackle gender inequality in a society. Nevertheless, we have to take into account that many members of other target groups still have a huge gap in front of them that has to be closed as well. Therefore, diversity mainstreaming can be a good, although not perfect, alternative. This was the opinion of the city council of Amsterdam as well. I will discuss the shift from gender to diversity mainstreaming in the next section.

2.3.2. The Shift from Gender to Diversity Mainstreaming

At the end of the 20th Century more and more people wanted to be seen as unique individuals and not just as part of a group. The target group policy therefore was transformed into diversity policy in 2005. Mainstreaming approaches are still central to the Amsterdam policies, but it is no longer applied in relation to gender alone. Other inequality issues, including race/ethnicity and disability, are increasingly being mainstreamed as well. In Amsterdam, diversity policy encompasses among other policies: women's and gay's emancipation policies and newcomers and minorities policies. In diversity policy not so much the group, but the problems which should be solved are central (Helmers, 2008; Stadsdeel

Centrum, 2008; Stadsdeel Noord, 2004, Stadsdeel Oost-Watersgraafsmeer, 2007). We can make a significant difference between the past 'target group related policies' and the current 'issue related policies'. From an intersectional perspective, I would argue that issue related policies could have a more holistic approach as there is more room for divergence. Since there is a focus on problems that need to be solves instead of target groups that are addressed, a more diverse group can be reached with this kind of policy. In target group related policies, often no difference is made within groups of people. To make these differences is crucial since belonging to a certain group (being a woman, being a member of an ethnic minority) does not mean one has common merits and goals.

The new diversity policy wants the diversity which can be found in the streets of Amsterdam to be mirrored at all levels of society, in all kinds of organisations and in the labour market. The ideal is that Amsterdam will be a city wherein all citizens can recognize themselves and can feel at home while getting the chances they need to develop their talents. This is not only social but also creates a better city in which all potential is used. The diversity policy does not strive for the removal or finishing of all efforts done for the target group policy. At the contrary, the policy which is lead with regard to minorities, women and gays delivers building blocks for the new diversity policy. This new policy strives for giving an impulse to the existing policy and to promoting a new general way of thinking (Helmers, 2008; Stadsdeel Centrum, 2008; Stadsdeel Noord, 2004, Stadsdeel Oost-Watersgraafsmeer, 2007).

The city has translated her assumptions of diversity policy into several goals. These goals and measures have been processed into several projects. First of all, Amsterdam wants to better adjust their policies to the diverse composition of their citizens. It sees diversity policy as a changing process for the communal organisation and the policies which it enacts. Another important issue is to take care of the reflection of the diversity of the Amsterdam population in the personnel composition (at all levels) and the organisation culture of communal organisations and companies. The assumption is that if the personnel of Amsterdam is diverse also the preparing and executing of policies will be more diverse. This increases the chances that the policies go along with the diverse needs of all citizens of Amsterdam. If all citizens of Amsterdam can recognize themselves in the communal policies this also can have positive effects on the reliability of the communal services. In the recent past, the city already increased their efforts to equally represent women, allochtons and disabled people in their personnel (Helmers, 2008; Stadsdeel Centrum, 2008; Stadsdeel Noord, 2004, Stadsdeel Oost-Watersgraafsmeer, 2007).

I argue that the strategy of Amsterdam to make its policy more diverse by employing a more diverse personnel to be a positive evolution. Policies enacted by, for example, white middle-class male bureaucrats might not fit to the needs, wishes and possibilities of the 'target groups' (women, disabled people, gays, allochtons). Therefore, I believe that it is important to have personnel from various backgrounds. Nevertheless, the city of Amsterdam should keep on investing in the equal chances and strive for the cutting back of perpetual inequalities of these target groups. Marginalized groups in society should be able to have, for example, a good education to be competitive with other candidates for jobs at the city of Amsterdam as well as in the labour market as a whole.

Nevertheless, there is a need for a cultural change as well. Diversity should become generally accepted and we should not see differences as a burden but as a chance. Such a change cannot be done by the city of Amsterdam by itself. This can only become true if diversity policy will be linked to the objectives of each segment of the community: each time there should be made clear why diversity helps to better reach the goals of a certain policy. Commitment of the different city areas, politicians, business, societal organisations, self organisations and citizens is necessary as well. All citizens of Amsterdam must be able to participate in their neighbourhood. Nevertheless, women and allochtons are underrepresented, especially allochthonous women. To improve this situation, the city wants to give more attention to the question whether enough groups were involved when making certain policies. As long as the population of Amsterdam is not equally represented in all kinds of policy directed advice councils of the city the existence of categorical advice councils (an example of this is *Adviesraad Diversiteit en Integratie*), remains needed. Consultation and cooperation among those advice councils must be stimulated and the advice structure should be flexible and action minded. Amsterdam concludes by stating "the policy of Amsterdam will have to be diverse. Almost as diverse as the city itself" (Helmers, 2008; Stadsdeel Centrum, 2008; Stadsdeel Noord, 2004, Stadsdeel Oost-Watersgraafsmeer, 2007). I argue that if one wants to reach as many people as possible with a policy, then the imaginary should not be the norm –a white middle-class man or women- but a person who deviates in many respects from the standard.

Franken, Squires and Verloo argue that one can be rather sceptical about the shift from an exclusive focus on gender to a more wide-ranging concern with diversity and multiple inequalities. First of all, Verloo argues that categories of inequality are so dissimilar that the tools (f.e. gender mainstreaming) to tackle one form of inequality cannot simply be applied to other forms of inequality. The different bases of inequality are not similar and they are

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differently framed to be relevant as policy problems. Categories of inequality differ for example on the dimension of choice (one can choose her religion but not age), on the dimension of visibility (one can hide sexual orientation but not gender), and dimension of change (age and disability can change but many will not change their sex) (Franken et al., 2010).

Secondly, there are concerns that 'diversity' is conceived primarily as a means of producing greater economic productivity, rather than social justice and that the creation of institutions and laws that address multiple inequalities via the establishment of equality commissions and policy agencies will erode many of the institutional gains made by feminists in the past decade. Thirdly, there are also fears that the recognition of multiple inequalities will generate a 'hierarchy of oppression' in which different equality groups fight over scare resources and institutional access. Moreover, there is a profound concern amongst many feminists that other equality strands may have demands that run counter to those of women's equality groups. The recognition of ethnic and religious group rights may limit and erode the pursuit of gender equality, leading to anxieties that a multiple equalities agenda may undermine rather than facilitate gender justice (Franken et al., 2010). I argue that if diversity mainstreaming would take into account the theory of intersectionality, it would not run the risk of a 'hierarchy of oppression', nor the counteraction of gender justice by acknowledging ethnic or religious rights. The basic assumption about women's emancipation should be that every woman has the right to emancipate in her own way, within her specific framework and position in society, thus taking into account her intersecting identities.

Nevertheless, one has to admit that many members of other target groups still have a huge gap in front of them that has to be closed. Franken (2010) argues that it would be good if we succeed in defining the appropriate goals for each of the target groups, the obstacles and opportunities at the intersection of the discriminating mechanisms, and the common causes for the target groups to work on together (Franken et al., 2010).

2.4. Definition of Emancipation according to the City of Amsterdam

As stated before there is not one right definition of women's emancipation. I argue that women should have the freedom to emancipate in their own way according to their own needs, abilities and wishes. Although, it is difficult and rather 'dangerous' to give the concept of women's emancipation a fixed definition, the city of Amsterdam chooses to have its own definition: the progress to self-development in which work, independence and participation

are central. According to the city council, emancipation is an individual process. Nevertheless, Amsterdam stresses that for individual development, *equal* rights and opportunities are necessary. Societal obstacles must be removed to make the process of individual development possible. If this does not work, support and assistance of the government can be necessary. Women's emancipation in particular is about the process of individual development of women and the removal of obstacles they experience because they are women. The women's emancipation policy in Amsterdam focuses on removal of discrimination on the basis of sex and takes care of *equal* rights, chances, freedoms and responsibilities. In addition, the policy of Amsterdam wants to stimulate women to take chances, be independent and fully take part in society (DMO, Unit Diversiteit en Integratie, 2008).

The women's emancipation policy in Amsterdam thus rests on the never tested hypothesis that equality is the principal motivation for emancipation. The accepted notion is that policy in principle should not make a difference between the sexes. Special attention for women is seen as temporary and is legitimized by appealing to their marginalized position. Herewith there is confirmed that women deviate from the norm, while men are the norm. The implicit message of this kind of women's emancipation policy seems to be that men should not change; women should adapt themselves to the conditions which are actually grafted to the world as it is seen by men. When this implicit message will not be changed, 'equality' can even work out to be negative because women will not be able to confirm to the supposed but hidden conditions. What is meant to bring women forward, can eventually lead to a boomerang effect of perpetual arrears (Brouns et al., 1995).

2.5. One Size Fits All or Policy Made to Measure?

The definition of women's emancipation of Amsterdam does not touch upon differences among women or differences within groups of women. What we can wish for in a women's emancipation policy is, in my view, inclusiveness: an intersectional women's emancipation policy in which all women can recognize themselves. Differences as ethnicity, class, sexual preference, age should therefore be included in the policy. Equally important are the differences within groups of women. For example, not all Muslim women with Turkish roots want to emancipate in the same way. Not all these differences might be literally touched upon in the policy, because this is basically not realistic: the intersection of inequalities is very

specific and personal for every woman. Nevertheless, there should be room for interpretation and more important: no matrix of inequality may be excluded.

I would like to argue that Amsterdam touches upon the differences among women and differences within groups of women in a rather exclusive way. It states in its policy that in recent years the extra dimension of the multicultural society mingled itself in the women's emancipation debate. This extra dimension gets a lot of attention in Amsterdam. Indirectly, one is heading at the emancipation of Islamic women and the indirect message is that the emancipation of Dutch women is almost completed. Probably because Dutch women have made so much progress in the last decades with regard to emancipation and because the emancipation of Dutch and Islamic women is so different and seems incomparable. On the one hand, allochthonous women are often seen by society and policy-makers as victims of the repressing Islamic culture. On the other hand, these women are also seen as the key figures for the solutions of integration and emancipation of their community. The argument is that women should do distance from their Islamic culture in order to emancipate (Adviesraad Diversiteit en Integratie, 2007; DMO, Unit Diversiteit en Integratie, 2008).

Nevertheless, the city of Amsterdam does not share this view. It is a form of 'we/them thinking' which they do not wish to support and which they argue that can be disastrous for the solidarity among different groups of women in the city. Amsterdam argues that it does not want to shut the eyes for the problems of allochthonous women and think it is important not to ignore or forget the many young Muslim's women which have a prosperous career. In addition, Amsterdam argues that there are as much autochtonous Dutch women which have a weak position as there are autochthon Dutch women with societal success. Violence against women, low societal participation and unequal division of work are problems of allochthonous and autochthon women (Roggeband & Verloo, 2006; DMO, Unit Diversiteit en Integratie, 2008).

It is clear that the city focuses on two main target groups: 'autochtonous' women with a weak societal position and 'allochtonous' women with specific problems as language barriers. Thus, the city is mainly focussing on ethnicity and race. But what about other social and cultural categories of inequality as class, sexual orientation, religion and age? And what about the intersection of different social and cultural categories of inequality? These can cause a very specific position in society and have specific forms of discrimination and inequality as result. All these factors influence the way in which a woman can and wants to emancipate and there should be space for these conditions and circumstances. It is true that not all allochtonous women need help or assistance from the (local) government to emancipate

themselves but it is neither true that all autochtonous women are emancipated. Until so far, the city of Amsterdam is right. Nevertheless, I argue that is it is not relevant nor just for Amsterdam to make the comparison between how much autochtonous Dutch women with a weak position there are and allochtonous Dutch women with societal success there are. The reason behind this is that intersecting identities should be taken into account when thinking about the way a women wants and can emancipate. All women have a specific position in society and want to emancipate within a certain framework. Therefore, comparison between the emancipation of different women is neither relevant nor just.

According to the city council, the difference between the emancipation of allochtonous and autochonous women is that allochthonous women are entangled into a process of "double emancipation" and argues that it is "not that simple to step out of a culture" (DMO, Unit Diversiteit en Integratie, 2008). I tend to disagree with this statement since it goes right against the theory of intersectionality which argues that there is not double or triple discrimination nor double or triple emancipation. It is the intersection of categories of inequality which influences the position in society of a person and the way in which a woman can and wants to emancipate. Hence, it is not that migrant women suffer from double discrimination, but they encounter a different form of sexism than white women do, and a different form of racism than migrant men.

Amsterdam argues that people have the right to emancipate from their own culture and experience. The city council believes that the freedom to use your own cultural forms, gives women the space to emancipate themselves in the way they want and are able to. A lot of women choose to emancipate from their own cultural background. Preferably the challenges for women living in Amsterdam are taken hold on together. Nevertheless, the nature of the problems and certain circumstances, legitimize a specific method directed at specific ethnic groups. General provisions are the rule. Nevertheless, a policy made to measure can be necessary sometimes (DMO, Unit Diversiteit en Integratie, 2008). Nevertheless, I argue that this is insufficient. As stated before, there is nothing that naturally binds women. Nevertheless, women's emancipation seems to be one of the main goals of contemporary Dutch society and it is very fashionable to gain votes with at election time. First of all, we must ask ourselves whether emancipation is a goal for every woman. Second, whether there is some common denominator in everyone's definition of women's emancipation in order to speak about women's emancipation and all be on the same page. Until there is no clear answer to these two questions, I argue that general provisions are not sufficient since a woman's specific position in society cannot be not taken into account. Brouns et al. argues

that what for one woman can offer progression, can for another woman mean a new dependence and new restrictions. Cordial policy proposals can have a boomerang effect and gender-inequality will occur in new ways, often unintentional and not directly visible. Statistics can prove that women participate more but at the same time important policy decisions can be made elsewhere that counteract women's emancipation. Policy decisions can offer opportunities but societal structures and traditions cannot be solved by some policy measures (Brouns et al., 1995).

The city of Amsterdam chooses to focus on the group of women who needs the support from the government the most. These are the women who are not doing well on different territories: they have no job, have a low educational level, almost do not have activities outside their homes and almost do not have social contact besides their family. In addition, these women sometimes have financial problems, health complaints and suffer from depression. Because of the combination of different problems the distance to society can seem unbridgeable for them. Allochthonous women who do not or badly speak the Dutch language are overrepresented in this group. The problems they encounter become even more painful if one realises a lot of these women are single mothers (O&S, 2008; DMO, Unit Diversiteit en Integratie, 2008).

In this chapter, I have discussed the women's emancipation policy from the Netherlands and Amsterdam. We can conclude that the shift towards diversity policy and the abolishment of structural subsidies have seriously influenced the working of women's organisations in Amsterdam. These developments, among others, were also touched upon in the in-depth interviews I conducted with women active in women's organisations.

3. Women's Emancipation Policy according to the Women's Organisations

In this chapter I will discuss the main outcomes of the in-depth interviews I had with women active in women's organisations in Amsterdam. As stated before, some of the interviews were part of my internship at SPE. Although the research conducted by SPE had a slightly different aim and was not directly concerned with the opinions of women's organisations about the emancipation policy of Amsterdam, the organisations were free to discuss and comment on the past and current policy and often they did. In order to gain more information about specific themes, I had some additional interviews with key figures in the women's movement in Amsterdam outside my work at SPE as well. I have subdivided this chapter according to the main themes several women's organisations mentioned in the interviews. Many organisations talked about the lack of cooperation among women's organisations, the lack of continuity in their work, the lack of available locations and the need for more active members and volunteers.

In addition, several organisations working with older women and girls are frustrated because they do not feel connected to the other women's organisations since these seem to be focussing on women between 30 and 50 years old: one can speak of a blind spot in the activities women's organisations provide for certain age groups. STICHTING ONDERSTEBOVEN was the only organisation referring to the lack of attention for lesbian women. Although they were the only one, I argue that it is important to highlight this issue because they are one of the few organisations for lesbian women in Amsterdam and the problems they mentioned in the interviews seem structural and wide-spread. Lastly, I will pay attention to the diversity of the rank and file of the organisations. Many organisations want to attract women with different backgrounds. Nevertheless, only a few of them manage to have a diverse rank and file.

3.1. The Lack of Cooperation

The first problem that becomes visible after my interviews is the lack of cooperation among women's organisations in Amsterdam. This problem is not new and does not seem to be solved with the establishment of SPE in June 2009 either. The most obvious reason for this lack of cooperation is that most organisations are divided along the axes of ethnicity, race, nationality, religion, etc. Therefore, many organisations only work with very specific target

groups like 'women from Turkish origin living in Bos and Lommer' (a city district in Amsterdam) or 'women that were active during the second wave of feminism in Amsterdam'.

I argue that cooperation among women's organisations can have a surplus value for women's organisations themselves as well as their rank and file. Although women's organisations in Amsterdam are focussing on different issues, there is a certain degree of overlap within the target groups and working methods. Cooperation would, on the one hand, enable the organisations to avoid overlap in activities which can free them from a lot of work, energy and money. In addition, if different women's organisations cooperate when being consulted by the city council of Amsterdam, they are more likely to be able to change something about the policies the city enacts with regard to women's emancipation. Also when not consulted, the women's organisations are more likely taken into account when they cooperate and have a strong, unitary voice towards the city council.

On the other hand, it can be positive for the rank and file of an organisation to have contact with another organisation. First of all because this would enable women from a certain city district to broaden their horizon by going to another women's organisation in another city district in Amsterdam. Physically move beyond the borders of their city district is often a very big step for certain women. I argue that taking this step can enlarge their self confidence, freedom and independence. In addition, conversation and sharing experiences with different kinds of women can also mentally broaden the horizon of women. As stated before, many women's organisations have a very specific and homogeneous rank and file. Women visiting women's organisations often do not have many social contacts beside their family, friends and the women's organisation they visit. Mixing up with women from other women's organisations can have new social contacts, friendships, sharing experiences with other women and mothers, etc. as a result.

Fatima Bourri, the chairwoman of SJA MEIDENPLAZA[2] also argues that there is a need to bind the initiatives in Amsterdam with regard to girl's and women's emancipation. SJA MEIDENPLAZA coordinates girls' work in Amsterdam and strives for the improvement of quality of life for girls and young women in Amsterdam by giving them a platform and the chance to come together, work as a volunteer for other girls at a central and accessible location. In this way, girls can discover and develop their talents and can stimulate other girls to empower themselves. Bourri states SJA MEIDENPLAZA is working on the establishment

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[2] The list of interviews can be found in the section bibliography at the end of this thesis. The Dutch notes of the interviews are available on request.

of a *Meiden Informatie en Empowerment Punt* (MIEP – girl's information and empowerment point) which will be established in 2010. This initiative is comparable with SPE but focuses on girl's emancipation (Interview SJA MEIDENPLAZA, Fatima Bourri, 29-04-2010).

SITARA is a Hindustan women's organisation in Amsterdam and surrounding districts. The organisation focuses on women and girls who want to orientate themselves with regard to education, work and cultural aspects. SITARA was the first Hindustan women's organisation in Amsterdam and surroundings. It was established in 1986 and until 2004 SITARA was a professional organisation until the structural subsidies were abolished. After that, they decided to work together with MVVN and ATKB in SAMMAS. However, SAMMAS appeared not to have common goals and merits and they decided to stop the project in 2007. Before they finished, SAMMAS wrote *Plan Emancipatiebureau* (plan emancipation desk) for Amsterdam. They plead for an emancipation desk in Amsterdam which is driven by women active in women's organisations themselves (Interview SITARA, Vidya Ramdaras, 17-05-2010).

When they heard that SPE would be established they were very disappointed. The reason for this was that SPE Amsterdam was a project directed by experts and not by women active in women's organisations. Although SITARA was very sceptical about SPE at first, they want to give SPE a chance. Nevertheless, they emphasize that the project of SPE will only be successful whenever Amsterdam is ahead of the other big cities in the Netherlands with regard to women's emancipation. According to SITARA, SPE can have an important task in women's emancipation policy in Amsterdam: it should stimulate cooperation among women's organisation and counteract disintegration. In addition, SPE should be a mouth-piece in direction to the city for structural subsidies for self organisations (Interview SITARA, Vidya Ramdaras, 17-05-2010).

Not only SITARA and SJA MEIDENPLAZA want more cooperation among the women's organisations in Amsterdam. SIPI (Stichting voor Interculturele Participatie en Integratie) is an organisation developed in 2005 by some Moroccan, Islamic women with the mission of helping people to help themselves. Basic assumption is that the women should not wait for others to solve their problems, they should solve them themselves. Souad Salama, chairwoman of SIPI, argues that cooperation is important because, at the moment, every women's organisation in Amsterdam is on its own island and many of organisations organise the same activities for the same target group but in a different city districts or the other way around (Interview SIPI, Esma Souad, 29-03-2010).

There is a lot of overlap according to SIPI, and NIEUWE KANSEN NIEUW WEST agrees with this statement. NIEUWE KANSEN NIEUW WEST is a knowledge centre with regard to participation in Dutch society and the accompaniment to paid work. They claim the organisations should be better informed about the activities other organisations organise and they should cooperate better (Interview NIEUWE KANSEN NIEUW WEST, Liesbeth Mors, 12-02-2010). Liesbet Mostert, the coordinator of AKANTES, a women's organisation originated during the second wave of feminism in Amsterdam, argues that there is a need to get women's organisations on one track, there is need for more cooperation. According to Mostert, the city should always take into account the history of women's emancipation in Amsterdam. In addition, Mostert argues that many women who are active in women's organisations do this for such a long time that they can be seen as experts as well; they really want to be taken seriously (Interview AKANTES, Liesbet Mostert, 26-02-2010).

In this section it became clear that the women's organisations are in need of more cooperation for several reasons. In Chapter 2, I already highlighted the issue of cooperation among women's organisations but from the standpoint of the city council of Amsterdam. It does not seem to be easy to enhance cooperation among very diverse and more than 100 women's organisations, although SPE can proof itself to be a good partner on this issue in the future. If women's organisations are willing to cooperate on at least one issue, it would be to lobby for structural subsidies. I will discuss this issue in the next section.

3.2.   The Lack of Continuity

The lack of continuity in women's organisations is actually a dual problem. Firstly, there is a lack of volunteers and active members in women's organisations which has consequences for the continuity of the organisations as well. I will come back to this problem in Section 3.3. The problem I will describe in this section is the lack of continuity because structural subsidies were abolished a few years ago. This has several severe consequences for the working of women's organisations and self-organisations in general. In general, they can apply for different kinds of subsidies in Amsterdam. First of all, if the organisation is active in a few city districts in Amsterdam, they can apply for SIP subsidies. If they are only active in one city district of Amsterdam, they can apply for subsidies at their local city district. In addition, every organisation can apply for project subsidies at the central administration of the city of Amsterdam.

In my opinion, this system brings along a double burden. In the past there was a steady money flow and women's organisations could work semi-professional and employ administrative workers, social workers or experts for empowerment workshops, bicycle lessons, art classes, etc. In addition, the administrative tasks were manageable since there were structural subsidies neither writing of project plans nor constantly working on evaluation of past projects, etc.). Currently, the situation is contrarily. Since they do not receive structural subsidies anymore, there is not money to employ professionals. Moreover, the administrative work has become a real burden: volunteers are constantly writing projects plans and evaluations.

With regard to the continuity of women's organisations, I had an interview with the chairwoman of MVVN, Ikram Chiddi. MVVN (*Marokkaanse Vrouwenvereniging Nederland*) is a progressive Moroccan women's organisation and has a long tradition in Amsterdam. In addition, it was part of SAMMAS a few years ago. MVVN is based in Amsterdam but is active in the Netherlands as a whole. The organisation exists more then 20 years and has gathered expertise about Moroccan family right and the Dutch migrant regulations. In the past, they had several paid employees who took care of the consulting-hours and information sessions. When in 2005 the structural subsidies for women's organisations were abolished, MVVN had to cut back and nowadays they only work with volunteers and much of their expertise got lost (Interview MVVN, Ikram Chiddi, 27-05-2010).

Some time ago MVVN did submit a project plan but the civil servant of DMO commented on it and wanted them to change so much that the project would lose its original idea. They decided to give up the project and not hand in another project plan. Chiddi argues that before 2005 they could talk with DMO, there was some space for new ideas and developments and MVVN tried to influence the women's emancipation policy of Amsterdam this way. This space is not existent anymore: if you do not want to work within the system, your organisation does not make it and will be ignored, Chiddi argues (Interview MVVN, Ikram Chiddi, 27-05-2010).

According to Chiddi, the biggest problem of the women's emancipation policy in Amsterdam is that the city does not acknowledge black, migrant and refugee women's organisations. Chiddi argues there is a gap of attention in emancipatory work in Amsterdam. On the one hand, bicycle lessons for allochtonous women are subsidized. On the other hand, the women's emancipation policy concentrates on the lack of women on top functions. In-between there is a lack of attention for women's organisations who take their work seriously. MVVN was a professional organisation with much knowledge to support Moroccan women

who want to divorce, women without legal status or kidnapped children brought to Morocco. These issues cannot be brought back to one or several projects, continuous attention and therefore a steady money flow are needed (Interview MVVN, Ikram Chiddi, 27-05-2010).

Like MVVN, SITARA wants to work together with other bigger women's organisations in order to claim structural subsidies again. Emel Can, chairwoman of SITARA sees her organisation as one of the main victims of the cut down expenses of self organisations in Amsterdam and argues that it is essential for SITARA that structural subsidies become possible again, in order for them to employ fulltime employees. Nowadays SITARA has one paid employee and about ten volunteers. In addition, they apply for SIP and project subsidies. At the moment, the volunteers who are active in SITARA cannot handle the workload: they are very busy writing project plans and making evaluations. Can argues that SITARA does not have any problem with evaluations or controls with regard to the subsidies they receive. Nevertheless, they just do not agree with how the system of subsidies is arranged at the moment. SITARA cannot organise every activity they want because they depend on project subsidies (Interview SITARA, Emel Can, 17-05-2010).

AWP (African Women Perspective) encounters similar problems. The organisation was established about 15 years ago. Their main purpose is to support African refugee women with regard to social integration and to promote a multicultural society: they organize thematic discussions, cultural activities and presentations. Maria Smit, the chairwoman of AWP, argues that the organisation applies for project subsidies once a year for one big project around one central theme. Nevertheless, they do not have money for other activities during the year. They receive money once a year from DMO to pay the rent. AWP has many ideas for other activities they could organise to help emancipate their rank and file but they just do not find the money for it (Interview AL MAARIF, Maria Smit, 11-03-2010). The chairwomen of both MEIDENLOUNGE DE CLUTCH, an organisation focussing on youngsters, and ZINA PLATFORM, an organisation which organises art activities for women, argue that continuity is currently the most important issue in women's originations: they are both in need of a steady money flow to employ professionals and organise more activities for their target group (Interview MEIDENLOUNGE THE CLUTCH, Emma Scherpzeel, 10-05-2010; Interview ZINA PLATFORM, Elly Ludenhoff, 26-05-2010).

Many women's organisations in Amsterdam were professional organisations before the abolishment of structural subsidies and want to become professional again. In addition, some new women's organisations want to become professional as well. The reason for this is that if they were professional, they would be able to employ professional employees like

social workers, administrative workers, etc., to better help the women visiting their organisations. VROUWENLIJN, the umbrella organisation of the women's organisations in Amsterdam-Noord, would like to employ a professional who can organise their consulting-hours (Interview DE VROUWENLIJN, Lia van den Broek, 20-04-2010). HILAL BASAK as well wants to develop into a professional organisation. They believe their working method is very successful and they reach many women. Nevertheless, they cannot grow as they want and need to because they have to keep working with volunteers only (Interview HILAL BASAK, Hanife Ozer, 2-03-2010).

In Chapter 2, I already highlighted the wish of the city council to make a bridge between the professional reintegration bureaus, which are not that successful in attracting women on a longer term, and the non-professional women's organisations, which are rather successful in coming to terms with women in societal desolation. These two kinds of organisations do not cooperate enough and there is a need, according to the city council, to find the lacking link. I argue that more cooperation would be positive and possible since these two kinds of organisations have a common goal: the emancipation of women (striving against women in societal desolation, integration, participation, etc.).

Nevertheless, the reintegration bureaus and the women's organisations have very different working methods. The women's organisations work from a bottom-up perspective and the social reintegration bureaus have a top-down approach. If these two kinds of organisations could work out a cooperation in which both working methods, the history and the goals of both are respected, a successful cooperation can become possible. This could lead to a better 'flow-through' since, on the one hand, women's organisations want to help these women to emancipate themselves but they do not have the capacity since they cannot employ professional workers. On the other hand, professional social reintegration bureaus are looking for motivated women who already did their first steps with regard to women's emancipation in a women's organisation.

3.3.   The Lack of Active Members and Volunteers

Many women's organisations in Amsterdam were originated by just one woman. The organisations often originate from the engagement, enthusiasm or frustration of just one person to work on the women's emancipation in Amsterdam. These women in many cases seek for other volunteers or active members to develop their organisations, although it is currently not easy to find people who want to do voluntary work or want to become active in

a self organisation. Even if other people become involved, the initiative taker of the organisation often is chairwoman and has a lot of administrative and coordinating work. This work can be too much to bear for one pair of shoulders since these women often have a paid job beside their work as a volunteer in the women's organisation.

The chairwoman of the women's organisation of CENTRO CULTURAL DE HISPANOHABLANTES, Fabiola Morales, argues that the whole organization is dependent on her (Interview CENTRO CULTURAL DE HISPANOHABLANTES, Fabiola Morales, 25-05-2010). STICHTING CLEOPATRA, DE DOORZETTERS and HILAL BASAK are in a similar situation. In March 2010, I had an interview with the chairwoman of DE DOORZETTERS, Elsey Blijd. She claimed that without her devotion, and that of the few other active members, the organization would not be active anymore. She had been the initiative taker of the organisation and kept on coordinating it until the end of her life. When she passed away in April of this year, the organisation became passive and until today there is no certainty about the future of the organisation. This is a pity, because DE DOORZETTERS was one of the most powerful organisations in Amsterdam. In addition, it was one of the few organisations focussing on Surinam women in the city. This indicates how important it is for an organisation to have successors who want to continue the emancipatory work that has been done in the past. In addition, I argue that it is very important that the chairwoman of an organisation is willing to share her knowledge and expertise with others possible successors (STICHTING CLEOPATRA, Abier Mahmoud, 15-04-2010; HILAL BASAK, Hanife Ozer, 2-03-2010; Interview DE DOORZETTERS, Elsey Blijd, 13-03-2010).

VCA (*Vrijwilligerscentrale Amsterdam*) believes that the flow of active volunteers within self organisations should be stimulated (Interview VCA, Maribi Gomez, 26-03-2010). Nevertheless, it is not easy to find volunteers for an organization. Lia van den Broek, chairwoman of DE VROUWENLIJN and Shahnaz Shahbazi, chairwoman of STICHTING ANDISHE both argue that it becomes more difficult to find volunteers (Interview DE VROUWENLIJN, Lia van den Broek, 20-04-2010; STICHTING ANDISHE, Shahnaz Shabazi, 15-05-2010). Haidy Bijnaar, chairwoman of BUURVROUWENNETWERK GAASPERDAM wants to become a *rechtspersoon*[3] (legal person) in order to apply for subsidies but they need a board of directors and volunteers for such an application and they

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[3] In the Netherlands, only natural and legal persons can apply for subsidies. A legal person is the characteristic of a non-human entity regarded by law to have the status of person. A legal person allows one or more persons to act as a single entity for legal purposes. They may sue and may be sued, incur debt, and have ownership over property.

cannot find these (Interview BUURVROUWENNETWERK GAASPERDAM, Haidy Bijnaar, 4-03-2010).

Currently, it is not easy to find volunteers or active members who want to devote their time and energy to self organisations. Many people lead busy lives or have a lack of engagement. Nevertheless, it is important for the existing women's organisations that people engage themselves. Otherwise the risk exists that certain women's organisations will not exist anymore within a couple of years and this would be a loss for the women's emancipatory work in Amsterdam. In addition, it would be positive if new women's organisations would arise in Amsterdam. Especially women's organisations focussing on target groups or issues which are currently neglected or forgotten. For example, there is a lack of attention for lesbian and bisexual women in Amsterdam. I will highlight this issue in the next section.

3.4. The Lack of Attention for Sexual Orientation

In Amsterdam about 10% of the population is homosexual, lesbian or bisexual (O+S, 2009). Amsterdam wants to be a city where homosexuals, lesbians and bisexuals can feel comfortable and safe. To promote tolerance and increase the visibility of this group activities like the Amsterdam Gay Pride are organised every year. Nevertheless, the city council as well as self organisations seem to focus mainly on gays and male bisexuals. STICHTING ONDERSTEBOVEN argues that there is a clear lack of attention for lesbian and bisexual women in Amsterdam.

STICHTING ONDERSTEBOVEN is one of the few women's organisations which focuses on lesbian and bisexual women in Amsterdam. It was established in 2006 and aims to improve the social position of lesbian and bisexual women in the city so that they can lead their lives as they want to. To reach this goal, the organisation wants to make the group of lesbian and bisexual women more visible and stimulates academic research in the field of sexual diversity and different life styles of women. STICHTING ONDERSTEBOVEN organizes several projects around this theme such as the facilitation of *De Trotse Lesboot* during *De Botenparade* of the Amsterdam Gay Pride and the introduction of *Het LesbIcoon* and the biennial crowning of the *LesbICOONingin* (Interview STICHTING ONDERSTEBOVEN, Irene Hemelaar, 18-03-2010).

Irene Hemelaar, the chairwoman of STICHTING ONDERSTEBOVEN argues that lesbian and bisexual women are situated in the gap between gay's and women's emancipation. In addition, there is no gender balance in the gay's emancipation budget; only

about one-tenth of the subsidies is given to lesbians and bisexual women. Nevertheless, there is an additional problem according to Hemelaar. She argues that women's organisations which focus on women from ethnic minorities do not want to talk about homosexuality because they are afraid that their rank and file will not appreciate it because of the taboo sphere around the subject in several cultures (Interview STICHTING ONDERSTEBOVEN, Irene Hemelaar, 18-03-2010).

As long as some women's organisations do not want to cooperate with women's organisations which talk in a free and constructive way about homosexuality, cooperation among all women's organisations will get no chance in Amsterdam. Nevertheless, it is a question whether the city council of Amsterdam or other women's organisations which are progressive on this issue have the right or the ability to force these women's organisations to open up on this discussion. As stated before, the city council argues that women have the right to emancipate from their own culture and tradition. But what if these traditions and cultures are discriminating homosexuals? In the end, the women's organisations which neglect the issue of homosexuality in their emancipatory work (mostly women's organisations focussing on ethnic minorities) neglect a part of their target group as well, since among ethnic minority women there are lesbian or bisexual women as well. I argue that stimulation of cooperation among all women's organisations in Amsterdam is the only option. In my view, forcing cooperation will work contrarily.

The problem of the lack of attention for lesbian and bisexual women in Amsterdam is structural and widespread. The fact the certain women's organisations do not want to cooperate with organisations which openly discuss homosexuality is problematic. This problem will not be solved on a short term and especially not whenever the cooperation is brutalized. Nevertheless, in my view, the city council of Amsterdam is able to easily resolve the problem of the gender imbalance in subsidies given to homosexuals by fairly dividing the subsidies available according to the number of people who make use of these subsidies. The lack of attention for women is not only existent with regard to lesbian and bisexual women in Amsterdam. For example, there is a lack of attention for girls and young women in comparison to the attention given to girls and young men. I will highlight this issue in the next section.

3.5.   The Gender and Age Gap

Most women's organisations in Amsterdam seem to be focussing on women between 30 and 50 years old. Organisations which focus on girls, young women or older women therefore feel neglected in the field of women's emancipatory work. Girl's organisations do not fit in the range of women's organisations since these focus on adult women but they cannot be seen as part of youngster's organisations either because they often seem to be focussing on boys and young men. Women's organisations focussing on older women are in the same situation: they just do not fit in.

Fatima Bourri, chairwoman of SJA MEIDENPLAZA argues that too much of the facilities for youngsters focus on boys because the city council of Amsterdam wants to diminish the nuisance these boys tend to cause. Nevertheless, there are many girls who want to emancipate themselves and develop their talents in a women friendly environment but they do not get the chance because the facilities are not available. SJA MEIDENPLAZA focuses on girls with all kinds of backgrounds but gives priority to girls who, because of their background, are restricted in their possibilities to undertake activities in their free time. Bourri argues that there is a gap between girl's and women's emancipatory work; especially young women miss organisations where they can go to, to emancipate themselves. Girl's work should fall under women's work and not under youngster's work, according to Bourri. Because it has not proper place within a certain policy framework, girl's work is not taken seriously at the moment, according to Bourri. Because not activities for girls or young women are organized, they want to set up projects themselves, Bourri argues. Nevertheless, these projects miss continuity. Bourri believes that these women are just too young to handle the responsibility of such project; they really need assistance to set up attracting projects on a longer term (Interview SJA MEIDENPLAZA, Fatima Bourri, 29-04-2010).

SJA MEIDENPLAZA wants to develop itself as a talent and expertise centre for girls in Amsterdam who want to meet each other and share knowledge. According to Bourri, girls should have the possibility to mirror themselves to other girls and come into contact with role models. DMO wants SJA MEIDENPLAZA to assign their working methods for girls and young women to local initiatives for girl's emancipation. Nevertheless, SJA MEIDENPLAZA does not want to give up their working with the target group themselves because they are afraid they will lose sight of their target group. In addition, they are afraid no other organisation will take up the work they will leave behind whenever they become a knowledge centre (Interview SJA MEIDENPLAZA, Fatima Bourri, 29-04-2010).

Not only SJA MEIDENPLAZA is worried about the age gaps in the activities of women's organisations in Amsterdam; STICHTING ANDISHE, an organisation for Farsi-speaking women in Amsterdam, asks for more attention for girls, young and older women in Amsterdam. Both target groups often feel very lonely and isolated. Women's organisations can play an important role but at the moment, the existing women's organisations do not provide activities for certain age groups (STICHTING ANDISHE, Shahnaz Shabazi, 15-05-2010. STICHTING CABO as well as WOUW (*Wijze Oude Wijven*), a women's organisation originated in the second wave of feminism in Amsterdam and now focussing on the rights of older women, both ask for more attention for older women as they are often single and feel isolated and lonely in a big city as Amsterdam (Interview WOUW, Saar Boerlage, 4-06-2010; STICHTING CABO, Wendela Grondhoud, 17-03-2010).

In this section, it became clear that not all women in Amsterdam get the chance to emancipate themselves in women's organisations as certain age groups (girls, young and older women) are forgotten or neglected in the current working of many women's organisations. From an intersectional perspective this situation is problematic as age seems to be the lost axe of difference. More attention for girls, young women and older women in the existing women's organisations is needed. In addition, some new women's organisations solely focussing on one of the age groups should become active. Nevertheless, this is a problem the city council cannot solve easily as private persons are the initiators of self organisations, not the city council itself.

3.6. The Need for Locations

When doing my internship at SPE, I often had to phone and visit women's organisations in Amsterdam. It was very remarking how often these organisations move to another location. Every time I made a round of phone calls (sometimes about 50 organisations) I had to take notice of several changes of address. It happened more than once that I unexpectedly visited a women's organisation and when I would arrive, the organisations seemed to be moved.

The reason for this is that many self organisations are always looking for a cheap(er) and better location which is in the neighbourhood of their target group. Nevertheless, it is astonishing how a change of location can change the energy of an organisation. Often organisations thought their rank and file were very loyal and stable and a change of location would not make a difference but this often turned out the other way around. The members of the organisations tend to stay away as soon as the organisation moved to a further or less

attractive or accessible location. The fact whether the location of the organisation is physically nearby and 'accessible' for the members seems to be very important. Accessible can mean different issues for women. Accessibility can for example be whether men have access to the building as well.

DE DOORZETTERS, a women's organisation which offers activities with regard to education, jobs and culture, has moved recently to a less attractive location. This location s is not as close to their target group as the past location. Since then, many of the visiting women are not coming anymore. DE DOORZETTERS argue that it is very important they find a location which is in the neighbourhood of their target group because for these women going too far from their homes it a big step (Interview STICHTING ANDISHE, Shahnaz Shabazi, 15-05-2010). STICHTING AMINA, an organisation for Arabic-speaking women in Nieuwendam Noord (a city district in Amsterdam), is looking for a location which is close to their target group and which is not accessible for men. STICBTING AMINA that s this is very important for their rank and file (Interview STICHTING AMANI, Mina Chahali, 9-03-2010).

We can conclude that close and accessible locations are important for the women's organisation in Amsterdam. In my view, the city council should inventorise the existing potential locations and facilitate the renting of these locations. In addition, the rent should be low and/or subsidies should be giving for the payment of the rent. The finding of a location or the payment of the rent should, in my view, not be an issue for a women's organisation. The city council should facilitate this in order for the women's organisations to be able to do their job: emancipating women, rather than looking for locations, searching for sponsors to pay their rent or move their organisation to another (maybe cheaper but less attractive or closer but more expensive) location.

As stated before, city districts in Amsterdam are often divided along the axes of ethnicity and race, class, etc. This means that women want their women's organisation to be located in their neighbourhood because they feel uncomfortable going out of their 'safe cocoon'. Therefore, this also has as a result women do not only mix-up in women's organisations. I will discuss this issue in the next paragraph.

3.7. The Need for Mixing-Up

Many women's organisations want to attract people with different backgrounds; women with various social classes, different ethnicities and races, women with different sexual orientations

and religions, etc. They want to do this because they want women to mix up, meet role models, share experiences and enlarge their social network. In addition, they want to increase mutual solidarity and a feeling of belonging in Amsterdam. Nevertheless, only few organisations are successful in this project.

STICHTING ONDERSTEBOVEN argues that many women's organisations which focus on women from ethnic minorities do not want to engage in the theme of lesbian women because they are afraid their rank and file will not appreciate this because of the taboo sphere around homosexuality in various cultures (Interview STICHTING ONDERSTEBOVEN, Irene Hemelaar, 18-03-2010). EVA (Educatief Vrouwencentrum Amsterdam-Noord) argues that it is one of the few women's organisations which does succeed in having a diverse rank and file with regard to ethnicity and class. EVA seems to be *the* place in Amsterdam-Noord where women from all populations groups can meet each other. EVA offers all women from Amsterdam-Noord the possibility to orientate themselves with regard to education, a job and becoming active in society. EVA organises tracks, trainings, information meetings, workshops, volunteer work, internships, and individual guidance (Interview EVA, Karen Kraan, 16-04-2010).

EVA argues that there are only few organisations which have a diverse rank and file with regard to ethnicity. EVA believes that they are so successful because of their location. In Amsterdam-Noord many different ethnicities, races, religions, and social classes are mixed-up since a long time and EVA is known in the district Amsterdam-Noord (Interview EVA, Karen Kraan, 16-04-2010). Amsterdam-Noord is indeed a very mixed-up district in Amsterdam although this is not always seen as positive. In the past, criminals and prostitutes were sent to this city district and today it is still known as the 'white trash' city district of Amsterdam. Nevertheless, I argue that it to be positive that ethnicities mix-up and women with a different background can feel at home in a city district as well as in a women's organisation. To make this situation possible in other women's organisations will be more difficult. Many city districts in Amsterdam are divided along the axes of ethnicity and social class. To improve the current situation, to enlarge the diversity of the rank and file of women's organisations, these maybe should go along with the diversity policy of the city of Amsterdam. By focussing on problems that should be solved instead of target groups (like ethnicity, religion or nationality), they would maybe be able to attract a more diverse rank and file. Nevertheless, this is not the 'all-embracing' solution as, for example the lack of knowledge of the Dutch language, is a problem 'allochtonous' women more often have to deal with then 'autochtonous' women.

In this chapter, I have highlighted the main issues which were touched upon in the in-depth interviews I had with women active in women's organisations on their opinion about the women's emancipation policy in Amsterdam. These issues should not be seen as a long list of complaints from the women's organisations towards the city council of Amsterdam. It should be interpreted as a chance for the city council to enhance their current policy and change things for the better. It is clear that the current women's emancipation does not fit the needs of the women's organisations in Amsterdam: we can speak of a bureaucratic gap. In the next section, after I summarize and give a final conclusion, I will give some recommendations and insights for the improvement of the current women's emancipation policy in Amsterdam, based on the intersectional analysis I conducted in Chapter 2 and the outcomes of the interviews I discussed in Chapter 3.

Conclusions and Recommendations

In this thesis, I have tried to find the answer to the question whether there is a bureaucratic gap between the women's emancipation policy of the city of Amsterdam and the real needs and wishes of the women's organisations or whether this policy is 'made to measure'. As explained in Chapter 1, I have chosen to first analyse the women's emancipation policy of Amsterdam in an intersectional way. The reason behind this is that intersectionality acknowledges that a person has multiple identities and that the intersection of these multiple identities result in a specific position in society. Secondly, I have conducted in-depth interviews with women active in women's organisations in Amsterdam, relying on standpoint theory since standpoint theorists want to understand society through the lens of women's experiences and believe that the experience of women to be a map for social change.

By conducting an intersectional analysis of the women's emancipation policy in Chapter 2, I firstly concluded that the abolishment of structural subsidies have originated a lack of continuity in the working of women's organisations in Amsterdam. Many women's organisations were professional before the abolishment of structural subsidies and employed professional employees. Nowadays, many women's organisations again only work with volunteers who can not handle the workload: they have to do both the administrative work (the writing of project plans to apply for project subsidies) and the emancipatory activities.

Secondly, the shift from gender to diversity mainstreaming has caused a backlash on gender in Amsterdam. Categories of inequality are so dissimilar that the tools to tackle one form of inequality cannot simply be adapted to other forms of inequality. In addition, there are concerns that diversity is conceived primarily as a means of producing greater economic productivity, rather than social justice. The creation of institutions and laws that address multiple inequalities via the establishment of equality commissions and policy agencies will erode many of the institutional gains made by feminists in the past. There are also fears that the recognition of multiple inequalities will generate a 'hierarchy of oppression' in which different equality groups fight over scare resources and institutional access. Moreover, there is a profound concern that other equality strands may have demands that run counter to those of women's emancipation groups.

Thirdly, I concluded that the lack of cooperation among women's organisations is a structural problem in Amsterdam. This problem is not new and does not seem to be solved with the establishment of SPE in June 2009 either. I have argued that cooperation among women's organisations can have a surplus value for women's organisations themselves as

well as their rank and file. Although women's organisations in Amsterdam are focussing on different issues, there is a certain degree of overlap among the target groups and working methods. Cooperation would, on the one hand, enable the organisations to avoid overlap in activities which can free them from a lot of work, energy and money. In addition, if different women's organisations cooperate they can have a strong unitary voice towards the city council of Amsterdam, which can give them the opportunity to improve the current policies of Amsterdam. On the other hand, it can be positive for the rank and file of an organisation to have contact with women from another organisation. First of all, because this would enable women from a certain city district to broaden their horizon by going to another women's organisation in another city district in Amsterdam. In addition, mixing-up with women from other women's organisations can have new social contacts, friendships, sharing experiences with other women and mothers, etc. as a result.

Moreover, I have concluded that the definition of women's emancipation according to the city council of Amsterdam is rather exclusive as it mainly focuses on 'allochtonous' women and therefore excludes autochtonous women (which emancipation is not finished yet) as well as the differences among these two diverse 'groups'. Lastly, general provisions are the rule in the women's emancipation policy in Amsterdam. Nevertheless, the city council acknowledges that a policy made to measure can be necessary sometimes. I have argued that this is insufficient since the definition of women's emancipation of Amsterdam does not include all differences among women in Amsterdam. In my view these differences are so crucial that a general 'one size fits all' policy cannot work. For example, the problems autochtonous women encounter on their way to emancipation are very diverse (not every autochonous women wants to and can emancipate in the same way) and different to the problems of allochtonous women (which are evidently very diverse as well).

By conducting more than 20 in-depth interviews with chairwomen of women's organisations in Amsterdam, I have been able to evaluate the current women's emancipation policy of Amsterdam with their help in Chapter 3. The lack of cooperation and continuity which already became clear after the intersectional analysis of the policy in Chapter 2, were mentioned by the women's organisations as well. Nevertheless, the women's organisations were able to identify some addition problems. The lack of active members and volunteers is a problem which can not be solved easily as people are leading busy lives these days and have a lack of engagement to dedicate their time and energy for free to a self organisation. Nevertheless, it is important people want to engage themselves voluntarily; otherwise the future of women's organisations is in danger. In my view, the lack of attention for lesbian and

bisexual women is a problem which can be partly solved by the city council. Firstly, by finding a gender-balance in the subsidies they give to homo emancipation and secondly, by stimulating cooperation among women's organisations with regard to bisexual and lesbian women in the city. In addition, new women's organisations focussing on this target group should get the opportunity to develop theirselves without being counteracted by the current policy (lack of structural subsidies, etc.).

The gender and age gap in the activities women's organisations provide can also be partly solved by the city council. Firstly, it is important that girl's work is taken seriously and is given a proper place within women's emancipatory work in Amsterdam. Secondly, attention should be given to specific age groups as older women, girls and young women as at the moment the focus lies on women between 30 and 50 years old. The structural need for locations is an additional problem which can only be solved if the city council revises its current policy. Long-term and attractive locations should be made available in every city district, the rent should be low and/or subsidies should be given to pay this cost in order for women's organisations in Amsterdam to finally focus on their main task, the emancipation of women, instead of looking around for a better and affordable location.

Finally, the women's organisations uttered the need for more diversity within their organisations. They do not attract a diverse rank and file because many city districts in Amsterdam are divided along the axes of ethnicity and social class as well as the women's organisations themselves. To improve the current situation the women's organisations maybe should go along with the diversity policy of the city of Amsterdam. By focussing on problems that should be solved instead of target groups (like ethnicity, religion or nationality), they would maybe be able to attract a more diverse rank and file. Nevertheless, this is not the 'all-embracing' solution as, for example, the lack of knowledge of the Dutch language, is a problem 'allochtonous' women more often have to deal with then 'autochtonous' women.

After doing an intersectional analysis of the women's emancipation policy of Amsterdam and evaluating this policy on the basis of in-depth interviews with chairwomen of women's organisations in Amsterdam, I can therefore conclude that there is a bureaucratic gap between the current women's emancipation policy and the real needs and wishes of the women's organisations. I want to add some personal recommendations for the improvement of the current women's emancipation policy of Amsterdam as well. I argue that if the city council wants to improve the current women's emancipation policy of Amsterdam, it should consult the women's organisations when working out and evaluating policy. Since Amsterdam chose for diversity mainstreaming instead of gender mainstreaming (or even a

specific women's emancipation policy), it is important that women's organisations are involved in the enactment and evaluation of *all* policies. A specific women's emancipation policy should become possible again since it is very important as this policy is needed to add specific measures to improve the situation (of groups) of women. In my view, such a women's emancipation policy should take into account the theory of intersectionality in order to include differences among women.

In my opinion, city council of Amsterdam should also pay attention to the fact that many policy choices have influence on emancipation possibilities, especially when there is no specific women's emancipation policy. Attention is therefore needed for the fact that emancipation should not be forgotten in other policies like income policy, integration policy or economic policy. In addition, the city council of Amsterdam should employ a coordinating civil servant on women's emancipation policy as (gender and) diversity mainstreaming only works when a powerful coordinating civil servant addresses his or her colleagues to this issue. Lastly, the city should take care of a good emancipation supporting structure. In my view, this can remain an umbrella organisation like SPE. Nevertheless, SPE should be structurally subsidized on a longer term in order to get acquainted with their target group (women's organisations in Amsterdam), gain their trust and plan projects on a longer term. It is important that the employees of SPE often visit women's organisations in Amsterdam. In addition, they should try to build bridges among women's organisations and other organisations and institutes. Not only on the basis of the target groups of these women's organisations but on the basis of common projects and issues as well, in order to stimulate cooperation among the existing women's organisations in Amsterdam.

In addition, it is important that the city of Amsterdam systematically and critically analyzes the gender-effects of all legislations and policies. Nevertheless, in Amsterdam not much use is made of emancipation effect reports and gender budget analysis. Amsterdam could for example make use of a 'gender impact assessment'. This is basically a detailed questionnaire to gather information about the situation of the specific target group in society. If you want to analyse a problem you have to know what the particular situation of your target group is in relation to your policy problem. From this analysis you can draw your conclusions as to which decision needs to be made so that the policy will promote the well-being of your target groups. The purpose is to find out how the intended policy will affect the target group and whether this will improve or deteriorate the situation for the target group.

Lastly, I would like to advice the city council of Amsterdam to revise their current women's emancipation policy. Firstly, structural subsidies should become possible again in

order to enlarge the continuity of women's organisations and decrease the workload of volunteers and chairwomen. Locations should be made available for women's organisations in Amsterdam in all neighbourhoods and become affordable. Secondly, cooperation among women's organisations and other organisations and institutes should be stimulated in all ways by the city council of Amsterdam. In my view, SPE can be a good partner on this issue. First of all, cooperation can save money, time and energy of the city council itself and the women's organisations. Second, cooperation can have positive effects for women visiting women's organisations as well. Lastly, it is important that if Amsterdam wants to define women's emancipation, that the definition should be an inclusive one. I argue that the theory of intersectionality is a good starting point to give an inclusive definition to women's emancipation. In an inclusive definition, target groups like lesbian and bisexual women, girls, age groups like young women and older women will get attention too. This will eventually lead to a policy 'made to measure': a women's emancipation policy in which all women in Amsterdam can recognize themselves.

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