

Social Anchoring in Exclusion spaces: Zooming on the role of Art in Asylum Centers

Master Thesis

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Student name: Vera Menezes

Student number: 485963

Thesis supervisor: Balázs Boross

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Preface

Research would be nothing without people. Individuals that share the meaning they give to the world through words and gestures. In this particular research I want to thank Bana,

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1. Introduction

Clear boundaries delimitate a mysterious and small area filled by white containers that from the outside seem almost invisible. Migrants. Nationalities collide in this asylum center positioned on the end-border of the city of Rotterdam. In this limbo-like place, individuals

anticipate the moment in which their path will gain a direction, the day in which they can move to a new Home. Their lives appear to be in pause, but time still passes. There is an all-encompassing silence that dominates the environment, where the lack of color frames small windows from which the tired mothers look outside and into the cloudy sky. In the midst of this environment, one starts to hear a low sound which appears to be fighting against the silence. Crossing the corner, a group of children is dancing and laughing, pushing a big speaker which emanates loud music. Closer, one notices that they are all singing and dancing the choreography of a Dutch song for children: “*We doen de Pasapas, Met de hele klas, We doen de Pasapas* [English translation: *We do the Pasapas, With the whole class*]”.

This thesis focuses on the work of Vrolijkheid, an organization that works in thirty camps all over the Netherlands, offering artistic activities to the asylum seekers that live in these provisory settings. The growing number of migrants entering the European countries, poses significant challenges for the host societies, especially in the realm of integration. Just last year, the Netherlands received around 30.000 applications for asylum, and a quarter of the applicants had less than 18 years old (Ministry of Justice and Security, 2019). Behind these astonishing numbers, there are individuals that await their destiny in provisory settlements all over the country. Research shows that the individuals that live in these spaces suffer from great uncertainty since they are in-between structures (Turner, 1994). This liminal condition is fed by the absence of the local, social, political and cultural forms within the camp, where the individuals are excluded from the mainstream society (Madanipour, 2015; Diken, 2014). However, there is a cultural organization that bridges this exclusion - the Vrolijkheid is an institution that takes joy into the Dutch camps through weekly art workshops given by artists to children that live in these settings (Vrolijkheid website, n.d.). This thesis aims to delve into the work of the Vrolijkheid and uncover the intricacies behind what might seem just another organization with Humanitarian purposes. It is urgent to study projects like this one, as they deal with some of the most fragile actors of our societies.

Previous studies indicate that the employed individuals that come into temporary settlements affect the social environment of the camp, contributing to its hybridity (Agier, 2002). Diken (2014) argues that Humanitarian actors, such as the ones of Vrolijkheid, possess significant social power within the camp because they can connect the migrants with the outside world. These facts open breaching questions for this research: what happens when this social power is given to the workers of Vrolijkheid? How do they impact the social and cultural dynamics of the camp? On the other end, studies on the use of Art in camps, such as the one of

Andemicael (2011), outline the key-influence that artists exert in camps because they can create a link with the mainstream society. This author also mentions that the artists should be reflexive in their practices as Art deals with all the components of life, such as religion and gender (2011). But what happens inside these workshops? This study opens the door to the comprehension of the social dynamics inside Vrolijkheid activities, where several cultural backgrounds collide. For these reasons, sociological macro theories will be connected to the micro-reality observed at the camp in Rotterdam.

To grasp the world of Vrolijkheid, ethnographic methods of research were used, most specifically, the technique of reflexive triangulation, where three types of data create a layered apprehension of their work. The research question that guides this research is: *How are artistic activities with a humanitarian aim combined in the work of Vrolijkheid, and what are the expectations, social dimensions, and tensions that influence this project?* This research aims to explore three levels: expectations, social dimensions and tensions, which will be grasped as follows. Firstly, a content analysis of Vrolijkheid's reports and website will shed light on their online identity, framing what is *expected* of this organization. Secondly, the *social dimensions* of their work will be assessed through the fieldnotes derived from the four-month fieldwork at the camp in Rotterdam, where the researcher was present in the workshops of Vrolijkheid. Lastly, to grasp the *tensions* and challenges the workers face, interviews were conducted during the fieldwork. These interviews give key-insights that allow us to understand the divergences between the organization online content and the reality encountered in the field.

This thesis is split into four main sections, which present the theoretical, methodological, analytical, and concluding grounds of this study. In the first section, previous research on vital aspects of this study is exposed, enclosing the chapter with a research gap which calls for further empirical evidence. In the following part, a demarcation of the three types of data used in this study is exposed together with an explanation of the steps involved in the analysis. The next section presents the findings of this study and connects them with previous research. Lastly, in the conclusion, the analytical results will be summarized and linked to the research question, putting forward a theoretical proposition to understand Vrolijkheid's work, as well as, it's limitations that open breaches for further research.

2. Theoretical framework

In this segment of the thesis, a literary puzzle is going to be assembled, forming an all-compassing view of the studies which have touched upon some of the key aspects of this

research. Going back to the initial research question, one notices that there is an aim to dive into the world of Vrolijkheid and understand how their expectations related to the work in loco at the Azc Rotterdam. To grasp the layers of meaning entailed in Vrolijkheid's work, this literary section gives input on the characteristics of provisory settlements, showing the unique socio-political conditions formed in these micro-societies. Attached to this, previous studies that outline the psychosocial circumstances of the individuals that live in these contexts put forward the concept of liminality. To apprehend the processes of social adaptation that are formed in these hybrid micro-societies, the concept of social anchoring is theoretically clarified. Art is central to the work of Vrolijkheid; therefore, several qualitative studies that shed light on the Humanitarian use of Art in projects are exposed. Here, the intention is to grasp the purpose of Art and how the Humanitarian aid mediatizes it. The diverse qualities found in shelters call for the capacities of Art in a multicultural environment to be clarified through studies on intercultural dialogue. Lastly, to capture the social dynamics that are at play in the camp, several multicultural processes are identified.

This literary section forms a puzzle of understanding that also introduces the relevance of this specific research. Camps are seen as exclusion spaces, where individuals that come from the mainstream society exercise high social power. This particular social phenomenon sets the breach of interest of this research, that zooms on the expectations, social dimensions, and tensions of this organization. A research gap is also clearly demarcated, supporting the academic relevance of this research.

2.1 Provisory Settlement and Humanitarian action

In the last seventy years, refugee camps were assembled across countries as a first response to forced migration (Schmidt, 2003). Schmidt (2003) points to the fact that that Western depictions of refugee camps, deceive us into thinking that this phenomenon only takes place in developing countries. Diken's (2014) study focuses on these temporary spaces, either refugee camps or shelters, to argue that both cultural and political forms are absent in these 'non-spaces' that force life into a permanent state of waiting. In the same lines, Diken focuses on the ideological strength of camps in which the idea of freedom is left behind within blurred boundaries of escape and survival (2014). Moreover, this author argues that a central motivation for the creation of these exclusionary camps is the image of refugees as a threat to the order of western societies (2014). This scholar argues that within this type of provisory settlements, there are strong power relations which negotiate these individuals access to the outside world (2014).

An ethnographic study of Agier (2002) problematizes the camp as a space that breathes through humanitarian intervention as a constant reply to conflict. The social conditions built inside the refugee camp reflect the duality between enduring conflict and the continuous response of humanitarian aid, which happens inside a world deviated from the social and political contexts that we live upon. Agier (2002) focused on the urban space to grasp the role of humanitarian intervention in camps, which increase hybrid and plural forms of socialization in remote areas that are paradigms of liminality, described as waiting zones. Agier (2002) outlines an oppositional strategy between the organization of camps: they can promote intercultural dialogue and cultural integration, or they can opt to avoid these encounters as they can be sources of conflict (2002). This author conducted fieldwork in Dadaab refugee camp, in 2000, where he identifies social and cultural complexities, which take form in the symbolic space of the provisory settlement (2002). This camp is divided into specific areas according to nationalities, and 90 % of the refugees are from Somalia, which, consequently allows them to dominate the space, exerting high social power. Contrarily, the cultural minorities of the camp, such as Ethiopian and Sudanese, feel intimidated by their presence, expressing fear and rejection (2002). Zooming on the social differentiation aspects, Agier identifies a hierarchy in the camp composed of four layers. Firstly, the Somali 'notable' such as the head of clans and traders, which are at the top. Secondly, one finds the voluntary community workers, refugees from the camp paid by the NGO's. Thirdly, small traders and employees, and, lastly, at the bottom, one finds the rest of the population that struggle for basic minimum needs such as food and health care (2002). In the Dadaab camp, a social distinction takes place due to economic and cultural differences (2002).

A sequential study by Agier (2010) elaborates on refugee camps and shelters as places governed by Humanitarian politics, where there is an evident tension between assisting functions and the total control which the Humanitarian actors possess. According to Agier (2010), camps are paradigms of the humanitarian government, in which there is a tension between the humanitarian apparatus and the inhuman treatment of migrants and refugees that have no voice and are baffled by the overarching international dynamics. In Europe, the recent trends of holding refugees and migrants in camps is a form of 'avoiding scandals' where undesired individuals are managed in detention centers where humanitarian aid also plays a significant role (Agier, 2010). The humanitarian actors in these social setting possess a particular culture and power, which affects the social dynamics of the camp (2010). Agier (2010) outlines an abuse of power in small gestures such as the unequal distribution of blankets

and food. According to Agier, this “*humanitarian apparatus is a contemporary system of government and power, where control and assistance are entangled.*” (Agier, 2010, p.43).

Zooming on Europe, Sandri (2018) conducted a study on the Humanitarianism in the Calais refugee camp, looking into the motivations of volunteers that made ‘survival in the Jungle’ possible. Most of these volunteers were not professionals. Instead, they related directly to this new reality, finding solutions in empathetic proximity and social activism processes (Sandri, 2018). The volunteers of Calais pressured the British government to reconsider their policies on border placement and sentenced the abuse of power of the French police (2018). According to Sandri (2018), these empathetic movements defy the neoliberalism principles, and negotiation between morals faces solidarity and alienation in Western societies.

This research aims to contribute to the discussion on the role of Humanitarian aid in refugee camps by zooming in the context of the Netherlands. Different studies point to varying views of humanitarian actors. They can be individuals that bring further social distress onto the camp (Agier, 2002; 2010), or they can be actors of social activism (Sandri, 2018). Previous research also outlines the lack of cultural and political forms in the camp (Diken, 2014). This research wants to expand on the role of a cultural organization in the provisory settlement in Rotterdam, which contradicts the lack of culture in these spaces by bringing artistic initiatives to the children. Moreover, it aims at understanding the social and cultural dimensions of the humanitarian aid actors in the camp.

2.1.1 Exclusion spaces

Madanipour (2015) zooms on the relationship between exclusion and space, specifically on how space can form social segregations, arguing that “*exclusion should be regarded as a socio-spatial phenomenon.*”(Madanipour, 2015, p. 188). Focusing on Europe and its integrative response to globalization, Madanipour (2015) suggests that the Geography of cities has created a long divide, undermining the quality of life of social minorities which can live isolated in fragile conditions, invisible to the dominating social majorities. This exclusion harms individuals in society, affecting citizenship and integration procedures. Madanipour (2015) wants to extend our notion of economic factors as the main drive to social exclusion, arguing that is a rather narrow way of evaluating broad and complex phenomenon. In European developed countries, social exclusion should not be exclusively regarded as economic exclusion; instead, it is a social result of the institutional machine which can control access *to space* composed of inaccessible activities, information, and resources (2015).

The spatial structural division also works through inclusion activities which maintain the continuity of the social division, feeding the social structures (2015). Exclusion breathes through inclusion, which feeds the dimensions of social exclusion through political, cultural, and economic processes (2015). In the cultural sphere, the shared symbols and meanings can shape a feeling of inclusion (2015). In a globalized world, these can be associated with the consumption of cultural products and the needs of everyday life (2015). Multicultural groups can become victims of exclusion, figures marginalized to the rituals, languages, and discourses of the dominant culture (2015). Different groups suffer various types of social exclusion, that are affected by economic, political, and cultural domains (2015). On the opposite side of the scale, one encounters the mainstream society that is economically, culturally, and politically integrated (2015). In a compass between the two extremes of inclusion and exclusion, several groups can be included in some domains, while being excluded in others (2015). Studies show that excluded individuals suffer from great anxiety and uncertainty in the social scheme of our Societies (2015).

Madanipour (2015) argues that the compass of negotiation between inclusion and exclusion can be seen through the concept of access, *“access to decision making, access to resources, and access to common narratives, which enable social integration”* (Madanipour, 2015, p.191). When diving in deeper into the complex dynamics of space, we encounter the concept of mental accessibility whereby one regulates access through codes and symbols (e.g: before a very expensive shop, one might hesitate to get in if one doesn't have the financial capabilities that feed the activities set in this particular space). Consequently, our behavior is adjusted to the conceptions space, where one identifies certain economic or cultural features that shape our actions. Building on theory, Madanipour (2015) highlights the extreme relevance of channels that bridge this segregation and allow for individuals to have access to the mainstream society and their practices. Narratives of nationalism tend to legitimize the creation of these exclusion spaces, also building our conception regarding the Other (2015). In this sense, exclusionary narratives also look upon others through a collective historical experience, where nationalities become paradigms of association which can foster further exclusion (2015). Madanijpour (2015) brings our attention to the dialogue of exclusion through space and the social meanings that surface such spatial allocation. Promoting accessibility should be then one of the focus of local governments, which should bridge the excluded and the mainstream, fostering social integration and spatial freedom (2015).

Going back to Diken (2014) one also finds these problematics *“the refugee is included while being excluded and excluded while being included; this zone of indistinction between*

inclusion and exclusion.”(p.89). In his theoretical proposition, he argues that these individuals are excluded from political choices, but they are still subject to them, meaning that their life is regulated by mainstream society, but they have no agency in it. This particular study aims to grasp the tensions of exclusion and inclusion in the case of Vrolijkheid. They are a Dutch organization that brings artists into camps all over the Netherlands, and they conduct workshops with the children, as well as taking them outside the camp to participate in cultural initiatives. What happens when individuals from the mainstream culture and the ‘excluded’ meet? Are the children becoming socially included in mainstream society? Or do they remain excluded? These issues will be further developed in the analytical segment of this thesis.

2.2 Liminality

Zooming on the asylum seekers themselves, this section outlines previous studies that aid in the comprehension of migrants and refugees that inhabit in such ‘exclusion spaces’. Turner (1994) concept of *liminality* has long been used to analyze the negative consequences of the non-status individuals that live within provisory settlements. Turner defined *liminalities* as interim periods in individuals lives, as a means to outline their condition as *in between structures* (1994). Moreover, he defines it as “*neither-this-or-that, here-nor-there, one-thing-not-the-other*” and “*both this and that*”(Turner, 1977, p. 37). In these transnational periods, refugees and migrants can suffer from great confusion due to the fact that the individual is separated from the structure of their prior culture and they are not rooted into a new one (Krulfeld, 1994). Being caught between the past and the present, the old and the new.

Liminality implies the continuous development of an individual which is detached from his previous structure and is not fully anchored into a new one (Turner, 1994). Extending his theory to the Dutch context, Ghorashi, Boer, and Holder (2018) studied the lives of asylum seekers that inhabit in provisory settlements by zooming on their narratives. These authors argue that the *liminality* of these settings deeply affects these individuals’ agency, which forces them to live in-between structures. However, these authors argue that this lack of structure can foster individual’s imagination and allow them to project in a space ‘without structure’ (2018). In a sense, these scholars argue that the living conditions of these migrants can allow them to reflect on their past to fully understand where they want to be positioned in the future (2018). By arguing this, the authors do not claim that the lack of structure is positive for these individuals, instead they outline the crucial importance of imagination which can fight the physical lack of agency in the camp through a physiological exercise which is border-free, giving time to these individuals for them to reflect on their lives and build new dreams (2018).

Liminality allows grasp of the non-anchored individuals in between structures. According to literature, these periods produce great uncertainty (Tuner, 1994; Krulfeld, 1994), but they can allow for the individual to reflect and reinvent his life (Ghorashi et. al., 2018). In this study, it will enable us to grasp the conditions of the children with whom the Vrolijkheid works. It also allows us to further understand how small organizations deal with the liminalities of this temporary placements, and what solutions they find in their practices.

2.3 Social anchoring

The concept of social anchoring merges notions of identity and social integration in contemporary and multicultural societies. Grzymala-Kazłowska (2016) formed a conceptual framework which deconstructs the process of cultural adaptation of immigrants into three domains: identity, security, and integration. Going back, since the 80s immigration to Europe has been rising and becoming more diverse, forming the hybrid societies in which we inhabit nowadays (Massey et al., 1998). This has provoked several challenges in the host countries, which have been focusing on how to integrate the majority of immigrants (Grzymala-Kazłowska, 2016). In the same lines, Europe has also been trying to control immigration through regulation, and recently policies of multiculturalism have been diminishing, as an assimilation approach has defined the latest European trends (2016).

A recent topic of discussion is the vague notion of integration (Favell, 2001; Spencer and Cooper, 2006). This concept doesn't encompass key issues like cultural identity, psychological adaptation, and need for stability (Grzymala-Kazłowska, 2016). According to Castells (1997), identity is the becoming one of the strongest players in postmodern societies where organizations and institutions are deconstructed, and social movements and cultural dogmas are becoming extinct, giving more room and importance to the individual identity. Identity is crucial for individuals that have lost their ontological security, and they are subject to the self and his life story (Grzymala-Kazłowska, 2016). Integration is seen as the process whereby immigrants participate in the several spheres of the host Society (2016). Lastly, security refers to a process by which the immigrants feel safe and stable in their process of cultural adaptation (2006).

Grzymala-Kazłowska (2016) builds an integrative concept named Social Anchoring, based on the analogy on the functionalities of an anchor. This anchor-like conceptual term binds issues *as identity, security, and integration* (2016). It entails these trinary aspects through the analysis of external aspects, whilst paying attention to psychological resources that individuals use for adaptation in their host countries (2016). This Psycho-Sociological term translates the symbol of an anchor as something that allows an object to be held and ordained

in the right position into the realm of integration (2016). The author distinguishes different types of anchors which can be internal, referring to a subjective inner feeling, such as national identification, and external which refers to objective shifts such as formal citizenship (2016). Zooming on the internal types of social anchors, frequently they are related to individual values, beliefs and memories, as well as social and professional anchors as occupation or group belonging (2016). Different anchors can provide a different basis for identity and adaptation. According to Grzymala-Kazłowska (2016), social anchors are also crucial for relational building, since they create a network of support for the individual. The notion of social anchoring touches upon the key issues of migrants' lives: adapting to a new social environment in a flexible manner, whilst forming new ties (2016). Social anchoring refers to the process by which individuals are anchored in new societies: relying on significant situations and points of reference as a means to reestablish their social ties in a new society. This concept should be used in research practices, to support migrants and study their processes of anchoring. It will also allow us to further dive into the reality of Vrolijkheid: an organization that brings Art into asylum seekers' lives.

2.4 Art and Humanitarian work

Appel (2006) studies the pivotal role that Art plays in peacebuilding and humanitarian relief, all over the world. Artists undertake artistic activities in several communities, however, very little scholarly attention was given to these matters (2006). Through a comparative case study, this author assesses the different ways in which artists experience humanitarian work (2006). This scholar outlines some of the challenges these NGOs face, such as struggling to remain neutral in their practices and coordinating with other organizations in the field (2006). One example of such an organization is Clowns without Borders, an organization that goes into refugee camps as a means to make the children laugh and have fun. According to Appel (2006) this a short-term objective, but the organization can have implications in the long-term.

A study by Zelizer's (2003) zoomed on the role of the arts in Bosnia Herzegovina peacebuilding, showing that the community members participation in arts-based activities fueled the improvement of their social environment. In this case, community arts-based projects allowed for groups to share their identity through everyday cultural experiences, which raised awareness of their suffering past (2003). This author conducted a fieldwork of fourteen months, where he focused on the post-conflict stage of individuals lives in Bosnia-Herzegovina to understand how the Arts initiatives contributed to peacebuilding (2003). His exploratory study concluded that Arts were the 'excuse' to bring the group together and rebuild social relationships (2003). The facilitation of reconciliation and reintegration of different members

through Art fostered active empowerment of the communities through the artistic process (2003). In this research, these dynamics between Art and the effects it has in the social group will be studied in the case of Vrolijkheid.

Focusing on the artists themselves, Selkrig (2011) conducted a study on the impact of that community-based projects have on their views and practices. With a qualitative approach, this scholar uncovers the consequences of Humanitarian projects on the artists that work with social minorities (2011). One of the key findings of his research is that the artists' identity is transformed through their interactions with a broader range of people, by becoming more understanding about themselves and empathetic towards the others (2011). Moreover, the meaning-making processes that they go through make them more reflexive while extending their view onto other cultural worlds that called for great adaptation (2011). In Selkrig (2011) research, one can understand that the artists' participation in community projects challenges their network by inviting them to engage with people from other backgrounds which makes them more adaptable and aware of themselves (2011). In this thesis, the view of the Vrolijkheid artists regarding their learnings at the camp will also be discussed.

2.4.1 Art in Provisory Settlements

Andemicael (2011) builds an overview of the artistic activities that take place in refugee camps, arguing that they are the foundation for holistic human development in refugees' contexts. Even though these artistic activities can be seen as a peripheral concern, Andemicael, (2011) calls for further research on the use of artistic undertakings with humanitarian purposes in refugee camps, as they are of extreme relevance due to their capacity to respond to the universal human right of freedom of expression. Andemicael, (2011) identifies several genres which can be used in these activities: Performing arts, Visual arts, Literary Arts, and Crafts which take place within several different types of camps. One important aspect underlined by Andemicael (2011) suggests that within the majority of camps and temporary settlements, the space in which these artistic activities take place is a private one, deeply contrasting from scarce privacy that most of the refugees have to tackle within a camp (sharing containers, eating in canteens). One of the purposes of these initiatives is classified as Entertainment and recreational activities, tackling with the 'passage of time' within these contexts where people are waiting (2011).

The ties between Artistic creation and forced migration, have long been acknowledged as Art becomes a strategy used to tackle the space of alienation. Andemicael (2011) points to the fact *"many of the world's greatest artists have been refugees at some point in their*

lives.”(p.25). These artistic activities fight against the idea that an individual cannot be work-productive within a shelter or a camp (2011). The artistic process can build bridges between the outside and inside the camp through artists, audiences and the broader society since the majority of artists that come into the camp are from local communities, creating a link with the outside society (2011). The artistic medium can also build positive connections with the surrounding and host communities (2011). The artistic activities also relate to all the components of life, which encompass subjects as gender, sexuality, age, class, language, ethnicity and politics, which should be taken into consideration when preparing them (Andemicael, 2011). Humanitarian actors should be sensitive to these matters, as they can also unsettle the power dynamics of a certain social scheme.

O’Neill (2008) conducts an Ethnographic study on the role of artistic initiatives that connect asylum seekers and artists. This scholar conducts participative fieldwork to apprehend the transformative potential of Art. Drawing from Adorno (1978), Art is understood by O’Neill as a consequence of mediation, whereby the artistic result is always political since it comes from a specific standpoint. Life stories are deeply connected to artistic creation. One of the projects studied by O’Neill (2008) is named *Global refugees: exile, displacement, and belonging*. In this project, both Bosnian and Afghan refugees were invited to create images describing chapters of their lives, using mediums such as photography, painting, and video. The artistic outcomes of this project were shared with the broader audience through the format of an exhibition. Moreover, this O’Neill argues that sharing these stories through Art allows them to have a political impact on the outside world, where processes of social justice come into play since there is a democratization of artistic discourse (2008). This author concludes that these types of creative projects allow for a feeling of transnational belonging, where participation fosters politics of inclusion (2008). Storytelling is also one of the pillars of Vrolijkheid’s work, and these aspects are also going to aid us in understanding the mediating role of Vrolijkheid.

2.5. Art and intercultural dialogue

Gonçalves and Majhanovich (2016) build a conceptual scheme on ‘contact zones’ whereby different cultures collide and individuals engage exchange their values. This process is here understood as intercultural dialogue. The Declaration on Intercultural Dialogue and Conflict Prevention (2003) understands intercultural processes as mirroring gestures of democratic principles, whereby diverse cultures come in play and create innovative forms of cultural expression which represent the hybrid societies that we live upon. Gonçalves and

Majhanovich (2016) grasp intercultural processes as a continuous exchange of views between individuals from different backgrounds, that extend their knowledge by sharing their culture and getting to know others while extending their view to a worldly understanding, instead of falling into ethnocentric fallacies. On the other side of the scale, the emerging social clashes are segregating cultures, making intercultural dialogue a challenging and hard-to-place process. On the other, Gonçalves and Majhanovich (2016) put forward Art as a grounding stimulus for intercultural dialogue where a contact zone can be built, promoting cosmopolitan citizenship, where multicultural exchange truly exists instead of appearing. Community art projects are becoming focal strategies for intercultural dialogue, where individuals from different backgrounds build bridges of understanding in a micro, personal level (2016). By gathering data on different projects these authors argue that Art is a key communication tool that can foster cultural diversity (2016). Through a series of case studies, these authors build an empirical ground to the argument that Art has great significance, having the capabilities of affecting the social, economic, social and philosophical domains of the public sphere.

Merkin, Taras, Steel (2013) put forward some challenges of intercultural communication whereby cultural perspectives can generate several misunderstandings among individuals in society. This is not only related to linguistic segregation but the underlying meanings that imagery and contexts have for individuals that have different cultures (2013). Content as never been so crucially important since it breathes in a limb between intercultural understanding vs. further social isolation where transnational communities further inhabit with each other.

2.6 Multiculturalism

This particular research is set in an asylum center in Rotterdam, where continuous Multiculturalism is at play. Therefore, further clarification on the phenomenon of multicultural systems is here presented. Sealy (2018) calls our attention to the grounding definition of Multiculturalism, an overarching term which is usually used to describe an environment that gathers people from various backgrounds. According to Sealy (2018), this concept can form an apparatus that hides the social inequalities that take place in a particular environment. The author reflects on Multiculturalism through notions of identity, difference, and recognition, that give room to an alternative framework of understanding this phenomenon. According to Sealy (2018), the long-used macro use of the term Multiculturalism should be replaced by a micro understanding where one can identify clear contact zones, whereby identities are transformed through identity and difference. Theories on interculturalism (Cantle, 2012, 2015)

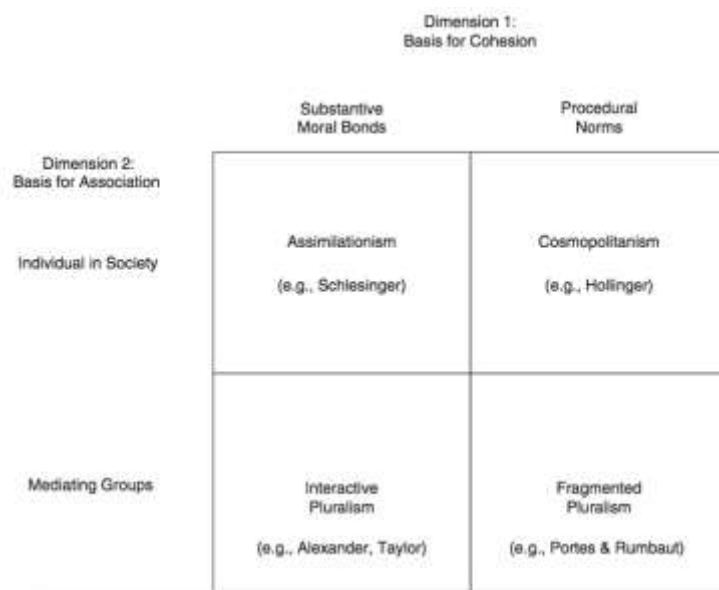
bring forward the central role of contact zones as a sphere where the ‘parallel lives’ formed in multicultural societies are merged, fighting the tendency of individuals tendency to live in transnational communities. Cantel (2015, 2012) studies had a great impact on the studies of Multiculturalism, arguing that this term could no longer respond to the high complexity of that takes place in contemporary societies, leading to an illusionary macro definition of ‘plural monoculturalism.’ Cantel (2015, 2012) calls our attention to the fact that cultural connections between individuals achieve should be built, as a means to form a shared and inclusive future.

Cantel (2015, 2012) puts forward a ‘contact theory’, whereby communication can bridge our social and cultural segregation and generate communitarian cohesion. Contact zones affect the individual and his relationship with the surroundings. Therefore, it is essential to expose the theoretical map built by Hartmann and Gerteis (2005), that render the possible multicultural processes that take place in Society, through a diagramed outline of specific social dynamics.

Hartmann and Gerteis (2005) build a model which allows us to assess multicultural environments and the social dynamics that can take form within the process of communication. The authors distinguish social (associational) and cultural (moral) features that form a particular phenomenon in the context of diversity. Both these authors collect information intending to create a model that identifies the several existing views on multicultural practices (2005). Based on Durkheim, this author distinguishes two main analytical segments: social integration and social order. There are three main distinct types of responses to Multiculturalism when compared to assimilation, and this author exposes them in a model which displays theories in Weberian ideal types. The primary distinction which can aid in the comprehension of these ideal types is the one between ‘thick’ and ‘thin’ forces of cohesion – thick visions entail the need for commonality through moral bonds, whilst the one ‘thin’ accepts different values as long as the law can provide a grounding structure to Societies that share procedural norms (Figure 1). The second dimension refers to processes of association, where the relational aspect is considered. The dimension forces of association derive its relevance from Simmel notions of sociation, which refers to how people interact with one another. These interactions between individuals affect societies are structures from then onwards. On the one hand, social interactions between individuals can be a priority, or contrarily, central strategic groups can provide a basis for shared values (2005).

In figure 1, one encounters an assessment model whereby social pre-dispositions and differences propose three ideal types of pluralistic incorporation– cosmopolitanism, interactive pluralism, and fragmented pluralism. On the opposite side of the scale, one encounters

Assimilationism, which cannot be considered a form of multicultural engagement. Instead, it is an overall form of acculturation, where the dominant culture functions as a melting pot, allowing for a single culture to over reign. Recent studies by Alexander (2001) extend on these assimilation processes whereby a whole society adjusts to the dominant culture. This scholar describes assimilation through the “*socialization channels that can provide “civilizing” or “purifying” processes—through interaction, education, or mass mediated representation—that allow persons to be separated from their primordial qualities.*” (2001, p.243). Moreover, Alexander also mentions the dangers of assimilation since the dominant culture filters the others, forcing a massive incorporation, where the ones that are excluded from this process are seen in a very stereotyping manner (2001) More than this, the democratic principle of freedom and diversity are replaced by a need of social incorporation (2001). Sporadic events can be part of long-term assimilations processes, and they should be analyzed in contrast to other responses to Multiculturalism.



Hartman and Gerets (2015) create a visual diagram for the different types of social order, which can feed our comprehension of the suggested ideal types. The four types of social response to multiculturalism are going to be here exposed. Assimilation usually does not refer to a multicultural process, since through this phenomenon, different cultures tend to melt into the dominant one, where mutual responsibilities tend to be aligned core values and cultural commitments. There is a connection between the individual and the social whole. This approach tends to eliminate social distinction by erasing differences, which lead to greater social conformity.

The second phenomenon outlined in this model is cosmopolitanism, which acknowledges the importance of diversity. However, it doesn't rely on processes of social cohesion. Instead, it focuses on tolerance and choice, accepting that people have several traits that form singular identities. In this case, diversity takes place as cultures are mostly individualized, and individual's nationalities are secondary traits in a globalized world.

The following ideal type outlined by the model of Hartman and Gerteis (2015) is fragmented pluralism, and it can be seen as the most opposite to assimilation, as it implies that social groups are critical, and they share procedural norms instead of moral bonds. Group identification is crucial, and the individuals tend to seek their identity in the group instead of the nation, creating a fragmented society. In this case, group belonging is crucial for identity, and decentralized communities preserve diversity. It is fed by processes of pluralism in which differences are preserved in social groups that have specific value systems.

Lastly, interactive pluralism acknowledges the existence of different groups in society; however, there is a care for cross-cultural dialogue, in which individuals learn different value systems, by keeping a common understanding. Interaction allows the existence of a moral whole, and the cultural differences of individuals are preserved. To further understand the social dynamics in the case of *Vrolijkheid*, such guiding schemes on multiculturalism will allow for an assessment of the organization dynamics, both in their work guidelines, as well as in their practices.

2.7 Research Gap

The theoretical puzzle above assembled frames this study, which aims to contribute to the academic discussion on how humanitarian aid can be combined with artistic initiatives. Several research gaps presented in this section feed the relevance of this specific study. Andermichael (2011) built an overview of artistic activities that take place in refugees camps as a means to suggest avenues of research for policy-makers and academics. This scholar calls for in-depth case studies on specific programs that take artistic activities into camps (2011). According to Andermichael (2011), studies should dive into camp-based field research since there is a lack of “*case-studies of specific artistic initiatives, including assessment of refugee participation, program efficacy.*” (p. 53). On a last note, this scholar calls attention to the importance of studying refugees in urban settings (2011). On another front, Kuo (2014) calls for studies that zoom on migrants' cultural adaptation and copying behaviors, which can shed light on different phases of social integration. In the United States and Canada, several studies have zoomed on these issues, while in Europe there is a lack of empirical analysis on these matters (2014). McGregor and Ragab (2016) argue that the facilitation of integration through

cultural activities is a complex one, calling for further empirical analysis on how art can integrate migrants and refugees. These authors call for further research of Arts and Culture initiatives in reception centers for asylum seekers (2016).

These gaps will be here partially answered, through a case study which zooms on the role of the arts projects in the asylum seeker's centers in the Netherlands.

3. Methodology

In the current section, this research is problematized in methodological terms through a procedural inquiry that displays the stages involved in the empirical analysis. Moreover, this section presents the reasoning that feeds the methodological choices of this particular study. For greater analytical precision, the main research question will be exposed, as well as some of the sub-questions which draw the scope of this research. Subsequently, input on the context of this ethnographic research is obtained through three descriptive levels: national (Migration Netherlands), local (Camp in Rotterdam), and institutional (Vrolijkheid). Subsequently, a clarification of the Ethnographic method is defined, alongside the three types of data used in this study: content analysis, fieldwork, and interviews. This is complemented with information on the Ethnographic interpretive method, as well as the procedures involved in the data analysis. The technique of triangulation is discussed to apprehend how it applies to this

Ethnographic case study. Lastly, some ethical considerations taken during this study will be discussed due to the intrusive nature of Ethnography. Moreover, this chapter gives an overview of the choices involved in this case study that aims at an interpretive comprehension of the micro reality of Vrolijkheid at work in a camp in Rotterdam.

3.1 Research question

As mentioned in the initial segment of this thesis, the major aim of this research is to delve into the work of Vrolijkheid as a means to apprehend the microdynamics of their work at the camp located in Rotterdam. The data here analyzed aids in the theoretical breaching of the research gap presented, and it aims to answer the following question:

How are artistic activities with a humanitarian aim combined in the work of Vrolijkheid, and what are the expectations, social dimensions, and tensions that influence this project?

The research question presented above calls for an in-depth understanding of Vrolijkheid, and it will be answered through Ethnographic methods of research. To further investigate artistic activities with a humanitarian aim, in the case of Vrolijkheid, this study uses the technique of triangulation whereby different types of data are analyzed and empirically crossed as a means to get a full image of this organization. Firstly, the *expectations* will be assessed through a content analysis of Vrolijkheid's online information, such as their website and reports. This segment of the analysis will form an image of the *ideal Vrolijkheid* as this content gives an insight into the mission and identity of this organization. Secondly, the analysis of *social dimensions* will be assessed through the fieldwork I conducted at the Azc Rotterdam, where I took the role of a volunteer during a four-month timeframe. In this analytical segment, the *real Vrolijkheid* is grasped as the activity's outcome was directly observed and documented through observations on the field. Lastly, the *tensions* segment will bridge the ideal and real through an understanding of the narratives of the workers of Vrolijkheid at the Azc Rotterdam. Through semi-structured interviews, a bigger input is given on the challenges that the workers face in their practices. Through their narratives, a justification of the gaps between the ideal Vrolijkheid and the real Vrolijkheid will be further understood. Three key aspects, three main types of data, which will be crossed to get a grasp of the layers of meaning entailed in Vrolijkheid's work.

3.1.1 Sub-questions

The sub-questions presented in this segment shed light on some of the most important dimensions of this research, and they can be seen as a deconstruction of the main research question. Some of the sub-questions rely on concepts mentioned in the literary section, and

they zoom on specific issues raised throughout the fieldwork. The sub-questions that guide this research are:

1. *How do the volunteers and workers of Vrolijkheid at the Azc Rotterdam perceive the social and cultural dimensions of their work?*
2. *What are the multicultural processes entailed in the Vrolijkheid's work at the Azc Rotterdam?*
3. *How does the online depiction of Vrolijkheid relate to the work conducted at the Azc Rotterdam?*

These questions zoom on some of the fundamental aspects of this study, and they call for an intertwined understanding of Vrolijkheid. Firstly, there is an interest in grasping the *workers view* to delimitate the individual meanings given to Vrolijkheid, as well as how they interpret the social environment and the actors present (both children and co-workers). Another concern of this study is to grasp the *multicultural dimensions* of their work, as a means to apprehend the social interactions that take place at the camp in Rotterdam. Lastly, identifying the common threads between *the online depiction* and *the reality* found in the fieldwork, as well as the distinct aspects between them. Moreover, these questions intensify the most critical issues of this research that were raised throughout the analytical process. It is essential to mention that during the study the sub-questions readjusted.

3.2 Context of the research

This methodological segment gives further input on the unit of analysis of this particular research. A national, local, and institutional contextualization of this study sheds light on, respectively, the migration policy in the Netherlands, the specific camp where this research is set, and the Vrolijkheid. Therefore, three segments are drawn. For a macro contextualization of this research, the Netherlands agenda on migration is presented. This is complemented with information on the Azc Rotterdam that gives an insight on the specific shelter in where this research is set, which allows for the reality of the social actors to be sharper in the eyes of the reader. Lastly, a general description of Vrolijkheid's mission and work sheds light on the central institution of this research.

Migration in the Netherlands

In recent years the Netherlands developed a strategy in the reception of asylum seekers, aiming at an efficient system focuses on solidarity politics, which is aligned with European policies (Ministry of Justice and Security, 2019). In a typical case, during an asylum procedure, the asylum seeker awaits in a regular reception center, which is commonly referred to as Azc, where his application is evaluated (2019). If the application is rejected, these individuals are voluntarily or forcibly sent to their countries of origin, whereas, if the request is granted he is

moved to municipality accommodation in which he is given either temporary or permanent housing (2019). The ministry understands the migratory issue as a complex phenomenon which calls for a comprehensive agenda that encourages integration and participation (2019). The ministry also promotes a civic integration program, reflected in the term “*Staying means participating*” (Ministry of Justice and Security, 2019a, p.12).

Recent data on Asylum Trends in the Netherlands shows that from March 2018 to March 2019, a total of 30.638 individuals have applied for asylum in the Netherlands, out of which around 23% are under 18 years old (Ministry of Justice and Security, 2018). The first countries of migratory origin are the Syrian Arab Republic, Eritrea, Iran, and Iraq (2018). A report produced by Defence for Children, Kerk in Actie, UNICEF, the Dutch Council for Refugees and War Child (2018), focused on children living at camps all over the Netherlands. This study puts forward nine crucial domains of attention which outline different points of care that should be considered when dealing with the children that live in Azcs all over the Netherlands: *Family, Housing, Play & Recreation, Education, Health, Security, Participation, Procedure, and Finance* (2018). This report calls attention to the fact that most of the children attend a school which focuses solely on learning Dutch, and they only move to a mainstream school when the advanced level of the language is obtained, meaning that only a small portion of children have access to it (2018). Attached to this, the researchers put forward the crucial importance of recreational activities which can allow for the children to “*learn about the Dutch society and peers*” (2018, p. 19).

Azc Rotterdam

For further contextualization of the Azc Rotterdam, some of the features regarding its capacity and organization are here outlined. This asylum center allocates around six-hundred asylum seekers, and it is located in the Netherlands, IJsselmonde, the southeastern part of the city of Rotterdam (Geemente Rotterdam, n.d.). The migrants and refugees habit the camp during their process of asylum. The shelter was built as a response to the big influx of refugees which took place in the year of 2015 and it was assembled during the summer of 2016 to function for five years (Geemente Rotterdam, n.d.). The residents of this camp consist of families which originate from countries such as Syria, Afghanistan, and Iraq (Geemente Rotterdam, n.d.). The asylum center has 78 units, which give shelter to eight individuals (related or not), as well as common areas such as the recreation room, the games room, a playground, a classroom and the computer room (Geemente Rotterdam, n.d.). The children and teenagers that live in the asylum center are obliged to go school near the camp – the children from 4 to 12 years go to the primary school in Rijnhauwensingel, and the older ones to the

Olympiacollege or De Hef (Geemente Rotterdam, n.d.). A recent study zooms the narrative of the asylum seekers that live on the Azc Rotterdam and puts forward the concern that individuals at the Azc feel an overarching sense of lack of participation, as well as concerns on identity and ethnicity generated by the media coverage of migrants (Segers, 2017).

Central Agency for the Reception of Asylum Seekers is the institution which is responsible for the camp, working together with the police and the municipality (COA, n.d.). This institution works in reception centers all over the Netherlands, offering basic services as a means to guide asylum seekers in their process of allocation until they either have a permit to leave or remain in the Netherlands (COA, n.d.). This organization offers basic services to most of the asylum seekers in Azcs, since they spend the majority of their time in this space (COA, n.d.). The residents of the Azc receive an allowance which permits them to do their shopping and cook their food (COA, n.d.). Zooming on the specific Azc Rotterdam, the most recent data available on a report from 2017, shows that in this camp 69% of the inhabitants are families, while 25% are single man and 16% single women (Geemente Rotterdam, 2017). In the same year, COA reported the presence of 29 nationalities, and even though the capacity of the camp allows for 600 individuals, it will be reduced (2017).

De Vrolijkheid

The Vrolijkheid National Foundation for the Promotion of Happiness was founded in 1999, and it is currently functioning in 28 asylum shelters within the Netherlands (Vrolijkheid website, n.d.). This organization works with several creatives, gathering individuals from the field of music, dance, visual arts, and volunteers with diverse backgrounds (Vrolijkheid website, n.d.). The artists selected by Vrolijkheid conduct workshops with refugee children and youngsters that bring happiness to the camps (Vrolijkheid website, n.d.). Art is the primary tool that the Vrolijkheid uses to cultivate the kid's interest, developing what they are, and opening possibilities to what they will become in the future (Vrolijkheid website, n.d.). In the same lines, this organization pays attention to rehabilitation and integration that can build up these individuals' self-confidence, dignity, and well-being. Vrolijkheid approaches "*children who are victims of armed conflicts, torture, neglect, abuse or exploitation.*" (Vrolijkheid website, n.d.). On a last note, Vrolijkheid is funded in a dual manner: through private and public funding. (Vrolijkheid website, n.d.). Moreover, the work of the Vrolijkheid will be the main focus of this thesis that aims at an in-depth understanding of the underlying meanings that these projects can have. The contextual boundary of this research is set, and further allocation of the research spatial and temporal factors will be delineated in the next section.

3.3 Choice of Method

The ethnographic method was chosen for this research as we are looking for a subjective and in-depth comprehension of Vrolijkheid's work at the Azc Rotterdam. In Ethnography, the research design is not fixed as in quantitative research. Instead, it is rather organic as the main objective is to dive into the social reality and understand the structural meaning that surfaces the reality observed. According to Hall (2001), Ethnography "*puts researchers into other people's worlds*" (p.32). Hammersley and Atkinson (2007) state that in Ethnography the researcher studies at a wide range of information to capture a social reality, and it is "*the most basic form of social research.*" (2007, p.2). In ethnographic studies, the researcher looks for the hidden meanings of social life through observation methods and complementary data such as documents and interviews (2007). This naturalistic method calls for an inductive process where *verstehen* allows for the researcher to have an empathetic and emic understanding of social reality (2007). Ethnographic research aims to elaborate explanations that are idiosyncratic to the empirical study, but that can have a wider significance when related to bigger societal issues (Bryman, 2012). In this specific case, the ethnographic method allowed for an in-depth understanding of the presence of Vrolijkheid in the Azc Rotterdam, where I took the role of a volunteer as a means to conduct fieldwork in a four-month timeframe.

Ethnographic studies have long been seen as longitudinal investigations which are spread through a long period, posing great challenges to smaller researches as this one (Hammersley and Atkinson, 2007; Bryman, 2012). However, Wolcott (1990) argues that micro-ethnography, a valid form of research in Ethnography, is a form of investigation that calls for a more directed way of research where the ethnographic eye is still central to the study. Moreover, this micro-ethnography aims at a strategical understanding of certain aspects of reality, rather than a more classic approach where the priority is to apprehend all the features of social reality (Wolcott, 1990). In this particular study, there was a more significant focus on the activities proposed and the workers understanding of the organization and their work. This study seeks to identify what Geertz (1973) described as a web of significance, applying it to the case of Vrolijkheid at the Azc Rotterdam. These nets of significance are here described: "*Believing, with Max Weber, that man is an animal suspended in webs of significance he himself has spun, I take culture to be those webs, and the analysis of it to be therefore not an experimental science in search of law but an interpretive one in search of meaning.*" (Geertz, p.5). The Ethnographic method will identify a web of significance in the case of the Vrolijkheid, allowing for a theoretical proposition to come forward. The interpretative

character of this research allows a constant dialogue between previous theory and reality, therefore, both the theoretical framework and research questions were adjusted several times.

To answer the initial research question, it is essential to mention that the several dimensions of Vrolijkheid are assessed through a mixed-methods approach which gathers online content, the fieldnotes derived from four-month fieldwork conducted at the Azc Rotterdam and Interviews. Respectively, they will shed light on the expectations (content analysis), social dimensions (fieldwork), and tensions (interviews) identified in Vrolijkheid's work. For these very reasons, the types of data are exposed separately as each of them calls for a particular kind of analysis.

3.3.1 Content analysis

The analysis of secondary data that the Vrolijkheid displays online allows for an understanding of the identity and mission of this organization on a macro level. According to Foucault, specific texts and agglomerations of words can act as power knowledge as they have the ability to shape different individuals, being extremely relevant to study texts as a means to grasp their significance (Rapley, 2007). According to Rapley (2007), documents provide us an insight into how individuals construct meaning around a certain phenomenon. Rapley (2007), suggests that texts should be read 'skeptically' looking for how specific ideas and concepts are put forward, as well as what is omitted from the text. When analyzing a document is also of great importance to investigate the discourse that is used, and how it seeks to unfold a certain phenomenon (2007). According to Rapley (2007), the analysis of documents follows an intuitive procedure where reading and re-reading allows for the researcher to deconstruct the text while understanding the underlying categories stand out from the documents. In the same lines, Shannon and Hsieh (2005) describe the processes involved in content analysis. These authors classify several types of content analysis (2005). The one conducted in this research follows the procedures of Conventional Content Analysis, the most inductive type of analysis, where the flow of the empirical exploration forms an engaged and repeated read of the text (2005). This is followed by the underlining some words that stand out to the researcher, as well as simplified coding. Consequently, the researcher can take notes on his impressions on the text while looking for some codes that have been recurrent in the analysis (2005). The continuous reading and coding of the document will allow for the research to identify the links between the several codes and delimitate 'meaningful clusters' (2005). These clusters contain the overarching patterns, ideas or concepts of a text, and they can be organized and related to one another (2005). This particular content analysis was conducted manually, and programs such as Atlas ti were not used. In the following table, one can encounter the texts that were

analyzed in this part of the research, as well as summarized information on their structure and content.

Name of the content and link	Type of content analyzed	Main information
De Vrolijkheid website https://vrolijkheid.nl/	Website has two main sections that were analyzed: - who we are and what we do Website is in Dutch - translated to English.	Online image of Vrolijkheid's work composed of: - factual information - mission organization - types of projects
First aid for Vrolijkheid https://vrolijkheid.nl/media/1491/first-aid-for-vrolijkheid-spreadspdf.pdf	Report that is given to the workers of the organization and it contains guidelines for their practices. The Report has 58 pages and it is in English.	Guidelines for the workers - 5v's which should be at the core of the workers approach -Guidelines for practical matters of the work (space, format workshops)
De Vrolijkheid Strategisch plan 2017-2020 https://vrolijkheid.nl/media/1300/stategisch-meerjarenplan-2017-2020-def.pdf	This report consists of a strategic plan for the time frame 2017-2020. The report has 38 pages and it is in Dutch - translated to English.	Objectives of the organization - outline of their priorities - impact Art - description of activities and target groups
Jaarverslag 2018 Nationale Stichting ter Bevordering van Vrolijkheid https://vrolijkheid.nl/media/1543/2019-03-25-vrolijkheid-jaarverslag-1120-digital-s.pdf	Annual Report of the year 2018. The report has 118 pages, however only 50 pages were analyzed. The document is in Dutch - translated to English.	Report on the year of 2018 - types of projects conducted during the year - 3 pillars of the organization - impact of 2018

Table. 1 Name, link, description and summarized information of the documents that were analyzed.

As mentioned above, this particular content analysis aims to assess the meaningful clusters that encompass the identity and mission of Vrolijkheid. The four main sources of analysis will be shortly introduced alongside a justification for their sampling. Firstly, the website was selected because it remains one of the most informative contents on the Vrolijkheid, being the main vehicle from which their work and mission is presented to the audience in a simplified manner. The second empirical source, *First aid for Vrolijkheid*, delineates clear guidelines for the workers of Vrolijkheid to follow in their practices and it was given to the researcher during the fieldwork at the Azc Rotterdam. This particular report is one of the most important data sources for the content analysis as its aim is “to translate our core values into practical guidelines, which you can use in your daily work at the Azc” (Vrolijkheid Javerslaag 2018, 2018 p.2). The third data source, *Strategisch plan 2017-2020*, gives us an insight on the long-term plans of this organization, being a complementary document that outlines their goals. Lastly, the annual report on 2018, was selected as it presents a summarized reflection on Vrolijkheid's main achievements during a one-year time frame. It was selected as it is the most recent available, and only a segment of it was analyzed. Moreover, some excerpts of the text were repeated in the four data sources. On a last note, it is important to

mention that the website, the Annual report of 2018, and Strategic plan 2017-2020 were translated through tools as Google translate, which can deprive the text of their literary authenticity. During the analysis it became clear that the report *First aid for Vrolijkheid* was the most relevant source as it was giving instructions to workers and volunteers to apply in their work at the asylum shelters, allowing for immediate analytical dialogue to emerge between this literary source and the fieldwork conducted at the Azc Rotterdam.

3.3.2 Fieldwork

In this segment, input is given on the participant observation held at the Azc Rotterdam. The fieldwork was conducted during a four-month time period, in which the researcher attended workshops of the Vrolijkheid at the Azc Rotterdam. In this section, detailed input on the data gathered is outlined alongside clarification on the procedures involved in taking the fieldnotes upon the reality observed. This type of approach raises issues of reactivity, which are constant in Ethnographic research. Overall, this section will clarify the relation between the researcher and the field, the researcher and the analysis.

In a first glance, it is key to classify this type of research as *participant as observer* as opposed to observer as participant. In this type of study, the researcher establishes rapport with the entities studied, by becoming involved in the social reality studied (Bryman, 2012). In this specific case, the researcher was integrated into the ‘culture’ that was being studied, noticing that the level of reactivity from the participants was low. The process of *negotiating access* deeply affected the interaction between the researcher and the social actors. When the Vrolijkheid Rotterdam was emailed asking for an interview in December 2018, they replied mentioning they receive a large number of requests and proposed for me to instead see their work in person and volunteer in their workshops. The offer was accepted and the Vrolijkheid was informed that I had previous experience working in refugee camps in Greece. Subsequently, an empathy regarding this information was noticed as the organization gave me permission to take fieldnotes and for people that are involved in the project to be interviewed. From the first day, the 8th of January 2019, the *role of a volunteer* was fully incorporated by me as it was rather familiar due to my prior experience in Greece. In the first two workshops, a certain reflexive behavior was noticed, mainly when the workers of Vrolijkheid asked how and why I got in touch with the organization and I had to mention my research intentions. Consequently, I apprehended the empirical richness of these workshops and decided to make and Ethnographic case study for this thesis. The organization agreed to this research and the volunteering was extended into a weekly format, allowing for ongoing access to the Azc

Rotterdam where the role of a volunteer was embodied to the extent that at times I forgot about my inquiry purposes. My presence answered the organization's lack of volunteers, and the Vrolijkheid was very content with the consistent aid in their work at the Azc Rotterdam. In these lines, Van Maneen (1978) calls attention to the role of the researcher in the field, which can vary from active to passive. In this case, one of the most challenging aspects of this research to remain passive as the program coordinator invited me to give workshops to the children. However, this would profoundly affect the social environment that was being studied, and it was refused.

The fieldwork started on the 8th of January 2019 and ended on the 1st of May 2019. Throughout this timeframe, the researcher participated in several activities. The fieldwork encompassed a total of fifteen initiatives which are documented below. In Table 2, there is a detailed outline of the dates and the main activities proposed as well as an approximation of the number of children and workers of Vrolijkheid present. The length of the activities depended on its nature. The majority of the workshops lasted around two to three hours, but when the children were on vacation, they took four hours. Sporadic activities such as going to the theater, which involved going outside the camp, would last from four to six hours.

Dates of Fieldwork	Main activities proposed	Social actors present
8 th January 2019	A1: Learn Dutch through images A2: Play musical instruments A3: Cut-outs and drawings	Approx. 30 children VW: Katie, Donnie, Machteld, Yvette, a young volunteer and Vera (me)
21 st January 2019	A1: Theater workshop, with themes of Superheroes (superman and superwoman)	Approx. 15 children x 2 VW: Fleur, Kim, Vera (me)
22 nd February 2019	Outside activity: Hofplein Theater (Metamorphose)	Approx. 40 children VW: Fleur, Vera (me)
26 th February 2019	A1: to do an Animation with cut-outs (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rNS8qMtuqWE&feature=youtu.be)	Approx. 30 children camp + 1 Dutch child VW: Machteld, Riahne, Vera (me)
1 st March 2019	A1: Paint tulips with forks in a paper A2: Do animation with objects (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LT6OE37Nsfo&feature=youtu.be)	30 children VW: Machteld, Riahne, Jenneke, Esmee, Linde, Vera (me)
4 th March 2019	A1: theater pretend to fight A2: chair game	Approx. 20 children x 2 VW: Fleur and Vera (me)
19 th March 2019	A1: Singing songs of their choice A2: Doing drawings and playing with papers.	Approx. 20 children VW: Machteld, Donnie, Vera (me), another girl doing research for University
25 th March 2019	A1: Theater with strength – pretending to be very strong A2: Theater in the dark (keys)	Approx. 20 children x2 VW: Fleur, Kim, Vera (me), another girl doing research for University
26 th March 2019	(interview Machteld) A1: singing and playing musical instruments	Approx. 25 children VW: Machteld, Donnie, Fleur, another girl doing research for University and an older volunteer

1 st April 2019	A1: Theater with sounds of nature - birds A2: Theater with foil paper - robots	Approx. 20 children x2 VW: Fleur, Pauline, Vera (me)
15 th April 2019	A1: Theater with circus topic (Miffy book) A2: Imitate pictures of sports	Approx. 20 children x2 VW: Fleur, Kim, Vera (me)
16 th April 2019	Team Bonding Event: Tour in the Humanity House Den Haag and dinner at Machteld's house	VW: Machteld, Fleur, Ghandoura, Donnie, Younes Pauline, Jenneke, Marion, Esmee, Vera (me) and another volunteer
24 th April 2019	A1: Theater with circus topic A2: Imitate pictures and gun game	Approx. 15 children x2 VW: Fleur, Vera (me)
1 st May 2019	Outside activity: going to a Brienenoord island garden with performance artists	Approx. 35 children VW: Fleur and Vera (me)

Table 2. An overview of the dates when the participant observation was conducted, as well as an outline of the main activities and the individuals present. [A1/2: Activity 1 or 2 VW- Vrolijkheid Workers; x2: two groups]

Fleur, the program coordinator, was the primary mediator between me and the activities, providing me with information on schedules and timings. She also became one of the key informants of this research since she was present in the majority activities, giving great insights into the organization and children. The other volunteers and workers of Vrolijkheid were mostly Dutch, and they had different artistic backgrounds such as poetry, music, painting and theater. On the other end, the children had from 4 to 14 years old and the majority of them were from Eritrea, Somalia, and Syria. Workers of Vrolijkheid mentioned there was a population shift in the camp in the last years: before they had mostly Syrian children and now this had changed since most of the children were Eritrean. In the time-frame of the research, I also came across children from Sri Lanka, Pakistan, and Bulgaria.

Zooming on the fieldwork, it is crucial to mention the focal aspects of this particular participant observation. According to Agronsino (2007) through the method of participant observation, the researcher must extend his observation skills from commonsense to a systematic and scientific view. This research seeks to identify Geertz (1973) invisible webs of significance in the case of the Vrolijkheid, zooming on the in loco work at the Azc Rotterdam. The focal aspects taken into consideration in this participant observation were the content of the activities proposed to the children, as well as their reaction. At the end of the activities I always stayed close to the workers so that they would share their reflection on the workshop. In this social environment, the language spoken was Dutch, which created a comprehension gap since I do not possess any knowledge of the language. However, this also allowed me to take on a more behavioral analysis, where gestures and symbols that took part in the workshops were of central relevance. At times, I felt as if I was also a migrant in this reality, as I didn't possess any knowledge of the Dutch language as some of the smaller children. According to Hammersley and Atkinson (2007), the role of the researcher can be seen through the metaphor of a migrant arriving at a new social reality, observing everything as if it was the first time he

encountered it. In this research, the linguistic insufficiency of the researcher is both a benefit and a downfall, as it didn't allow for accessibility the majority of the dialogues but fed an understanding of the reality with an outsider look that is less biased and encounters strangeness in the obvious.

The fieldnotes were taken either in the following hours or days consequent to the participant observation at the Azc Rotterdam. The process of collecting such notes allowed the researcher to go back in time and to relive his experience, by gathering a narrative of his experience on a notebook. According to Emerson, Fretz and Shaw (2001) fieldnotes can be seen as a form of representation, that showcase certain aspects of social reality, forming a depiction that can be later on consulted by the researcher. In the process of writing the fieldnotes, I began by closing the eyes and visualizing the beginning of the workshop, which gave a structure to a consequent narrative that was built in bullet points accompanying the evolution of the workshop. In the end, the text was re-read, and some notes were added, as well as a separate reflection, where the data was interpreted and related to bigger issues, ideas or concerns that came to the head of the researcher. Such a process can be seen as initial analysis, which is later on connected to the macro interpretation of a social environment (Emerson, Fretz & Shaw, 2001). Following Schatzman and Strauss (1973), this reflexive and analytical type of notes can be classified as theoretical notes as opposed to observational notes. These analytical ideas allow for a constant analysis where interpretations can be connected and tested through further observation (Emerson, Fretz & Shaw, 2001). In this case, the field notes transformed and reorganized, aiming at a categorical representation of what was observed. Two simple notes books with written and re-written fieldnotes built the analytical domains which are presented in this thesis.

3.3.3 Qualitative Interviews

For an understanding of the perspective of the individuals involved in Vrolijkheid at the Azc Rotterdam, three semi-structured interviews were conducted during the fieldwork, shedding light on their motivations, experiences, and opinions. Interviews are dialogues with a structure and a purpose that provide an understanding of meaning-making processes (Kvale, 2007). Different types of research call for different types of interviews. In Ethnography interviews tend to be unstructured due to the inductive character of this type of research. However, the adoption of a micro-ethnography paradigm as suggested by Wolcott (1990), entails that the analysis should be focus on specific issues and, therefore, less open-ended. For this very reason, qualitative semi-structured interviews were conducted, shedding light on the

concerns of this specific research. The interview guide (see appendix A) follows a logical order. It starts with introductory questions on the interviewee and their life story, as well as their relationship with the Vrolijkheid. Consequently, it moves on to more concrete domains such as their relationship with the children at the Azc, their preferences in workshops and the challenges they face in their job. The interview develops with their view on the role of art and its integrative propensities, which are the main focus of this research. The interviews disclose with a light and open question ‘how you would like to see the organization in the future?’, which allowed for a reflective moment. The topics chosen for this interview are both related to literature and the observations derived from the fieldwork (see in appendix B a table with the relation between the topics of the interview, previous research, and the participant observation).

For this current research, the method of purposive sampling was adopted as the respondents were selected because they have certain characteristics that are of interest to this research. According to Byrman (2012), purposive sampling involves a strategic manner of choosing participants, whereby the primary process of selection feeds the interest of the researcher. Transporting theory into this case, the interviewees were selected for specific characteristics that will be here exposed. Firstly, it was a point of interest to choose the interviewees that had a longitudinal view of Vrolijkheid’s work. Many individuals worked sporadically at the Azc, which made them a sample of non-interest to this research. Moreover, this sample consists of the individuals who have been working at the Vrolijkheid Rotterdam, since its inception, two and a half years ago.

Both Fleur and Machteld are the program coordinators at Vrolijkheid Rotterdam, and for these very reasons, since day one of the fieldwork, they have stood out as individuals of interest for this research. Katie is a volunteer of this organization since the beginning when they opened the camp, and therefore, it was also fascinating to document her narrative. In terms of sampling, some difficulties were faced as many of the artists that participated in the workshops changed, making it hard to sample them for an interview. However, several informal conversations took place during the fieldwork which gives a complementary strength to these interviews. Moreover, the close proximity built with these individuals throughout the participant observation prevented these interviews from being a dialogue that came from the Vrolijkheid, instead, they were dialogues between two individuals that ‘shared the same mission’. These interviews lasted around one hour each, and they were conducted in distinct stages of the fieldwork, as well as different settings (see table 3 for a systematic overview of the interviews).

Interviewee	Country of Origin	Position at the Vrolijkheid	Background information	Interview place and date	Interview Duration
Machteld Dicke	Netherlands	Program Coordinator Rotterdam. For two years and four months	HBO in Leisure Studies specified to the Arts. Worked in orchestras and amateur artists	Interview at the Azc Rotterdam Conducted in the 26 th of March 2019	01:07:21
Fleur Van Gelderen	Netherlands	Program Coordinator Rotterdam. For two years and four months	Attended theater school. Worked as a performer and teaching children theater	Interview at the Azc Rotterdam Conducted in the 1st of April 2019	00:48:06
Katie Lorand	Netherlands (Hungarian descent)	Volunteer for two years and four months	Artistic schooling. Worked as a ceramic artist and for the Red Cross	Interview at Katie's house. Conducted in the 12 th January 2019	00:55:29

Fig.3 Basic information on the interviewees and their background, as well as the date, place and duration of the interviews.

The semi-structured interviews were analyzed through the method of directed content analysis, in which the categories of analysis are deduced from previous theory (Hsieh & Shannon 2005). This method is crucial for the extension and validity of previous theories (2005). Content can vary from transcripts of interviews, field notes, books or articles (Kondracki & Wellman, 2002). In this case, the semi-structured interviews were analyzed under the three domains of social anchoring, outlined by Grzymala-Kazlowska (2016). This specific theory entails that identity, security and, integration are three crucial aspects of cultural adaptation, and here they will be applied to the narratives of the interviewees. Moreover, Grzymala-Kazlowska (2016) mentions *“the concept has potential for both theoretical considerations and empirical research, but it might also be employed in social practice to support the adaptation of immigrants and their integration”* (p.1135). This connection in a concept that serves both for research purposes, and for individuals to apply in their social practices, made it the critical conceptual paradigm to analyze the interviews, where people that work in the immigration field speak about their practices. Moreover, a thematic analysis was allowed for these three conceptual layers to be deductively applied in the analysis, while grasping their inductive meaning in the case of the Vrolijkheid. This brings objectivity into the coding process.

The interviews were fully transcribed, and the coding was done manually and programs like Atlas ti were not used, since manual analysis allows for the three deduced lenses to be applied one at a time.

3.4 Triangulation

After presenting the separate research methods used in this research, the method of triangulation is briefly mentioned as it allows for three approaches to be glued in one analysis. The method of triangulation is often used in Ethnographic research as a response to the inherent subjectivity nature of this interpretive method, which may distort the researcher view and pose a validity threat to the study. In Ethnography, this mixed methods approach can be seen as a *triangulation* of the data, shedding light on the different angles that form a certain reality (Hammersley and Atkinson, 2007). The method of triangulation allows for validity to be secured since different empirical standpoints are faced, assuring that there is a methodological parallel, feeding the reflexivity of the researcher. Hammersley and Atkinson (2007) also underline the importance of identifying the different empirical suggestions of the data as they will also be addressed in the theory later formed. This type of approach is largely used in ethnographic studies, since hybridization of method doesn't allow for a single voice to overshadow the multilayered dimensions of a social environment, promoting a quality approach (Flicker, 2008). This method was extended to this specific Ethnographic study that assesses the relationship between what is expected of Vrolijkheid, what was seen in the field and the perspective that the Vrolijkheid workers unveil in their words. A reflective triangulation allows for these analytical layers to be identified and to assess how they relate to one another.

3.5 Ethical considerations

Unlike quantitative methods of research, in the practice of Ethnography, the researcher needs to have long-sided reflexivity regarding his participation in a social environment, calling great attention to ethical issues which can be consequent of his presence. According to Diener and Crandall (1978), the ethical concerns of research can be summarized in four main areas: harm of participants, lack of informed consent, invasion of privacy, and involvement of deception. When applied to this research, it is crucial that some aspects are further discussed in terms of the *fieldwork* conducted at the Azc Rotterdam. On the one hand, the fieldwork allowed for a close relationship with both the children and workers involved in the activities. Mainly with the children, a strong tie was built which, could affect them when the study ended, and the researcher had to leave. This aspect was tackled from day one at the Azc, by agreeing to come only once a week and skipping some weeks so that the attachment wasn't too strong. The lack of linguistic comprehension also helped in keeping a distance with the children. Attached to this, a strong connection was built with both the volunteers and workers, which at times made this research challenging in terms of critical analysis. However, with distance from

the field and further analysis through triangulation, this aspect was dissipated before the strength of scientific comprehension.

On the other end, there was a lack of informed consent from part of the children that were involved in the workshops where the participant observation was conducted. In this case, the consent was given by the Vrolijkheid program coordinator Rotterdam, Fleur, that granted access to this social setting which involved the children. In this case, the consent of the workers of Vrolijkheid was considered sufficient. This ethnographic research faced some ethical challenges; however, they were tackled in a very strategic manner.

In terms of political interference, the researcher must adopt value-neutrality when engaging with certain topics of research (Byrman, 2012). This aspect was deeply tackled throughout the research, aiming at the fair depiction of Vrolijkheid's work, which didn't fall into critical spheres created by my *habitus* that tend to see migrants and refugees as victims of social circumstances. I tried to be reflexive in both the fieldwork and during the analysis, adopting an emic approach, where my identity as a Portuguese girl that experienced working in refugee camps was 'erased' to adopt clear lenses in understanding this social phenomenon. In the next section, the results of all the methodological steps presented in this section will be outlined, shedding light on the complex dialogue between the expectations, social dimensions and, tensions found in Vrolijkheid's work.

4. Results

In this analytical segment, the domains outlined in the research question will be separately presented through an analytical tryptic. In the first instance, the results of the content analysis allow us to identify the meaningful clusters in the case of the ideal Vrolijkheid. Secondly, the recurrent themes derived from the analysis of the fieldnotes are presented into three systematic domains that give an insight into the real Vrolijkheid, the one found in the Azc Rotterdam. Lastly, the analytical metaphor of Social anchoring created by Grzymala-Kazłowska (2016) is deductively applied to the analysis of the interviews conducted with Vrolijkheid workers, shedding light on the gaps between the ideal and the real Vrolijkheid. Each section is complemented with a theoretical bridge, in which the findings of this particular research are connected with previous theories.

4.1 Expectations from Vrolijkheid – The ‘ideal Vrolijkheid’

In this section, an withdraw of the foremost aspects of the online depiction of Vrolijkheid will be presented through an analytical scheme that identifies core values and mission of their work. The meaningful clusters here exposed are a result of the conducted conventional content analysis of their website and reports available online. The identity of this organization is revealed, providing us a macro picture of ‘what Vrolijkheid is’. This segment is further understood as a depiction of the ideal Vrolijkheid since the content analyzed derives from the discourse of the organization that displays their personality and identity. Moreover,

when this content was crossed with other data sources, it was seen as an archetype of their work, which is ambiguous when related to the reality observed in the field. From the content analysis, *Diversity*, *Emotional empowerment*, and *Answering uncertainty* were the identified meaningful clusters in the case of the ideal Vrolijkheid.

4.1.1 Diversity

One of the critical points drawn from this analytic sphere is Diversity: the capacity of embracing and answering to a wide range of cultures. In this analysis, the concept of Diversity was identified in a trinary manner – through Vrolijkheid concerns regarding the space of the workshops, through the characteristics of the work team and the content of the workshops. Zooming on the first one, the Vrolijkheid coordination team contemplates the underlying messages of the workshop area, paying close attention to thoughtful gestures that can build an inclusive space, representative of *diverse cultures*. The Vrolijkheid work team provides clear examples of how objects, such as pictures and books, should avoid typical western representations. Instead, different and *diverse linguistic and visual content* should be part of the Vrolijkheid space. In these lines, the Vrolijkheid Coordination Team acknowledges the critical importance of workers not falling into stereotypical and ethnocentric views towards the children's cultures. Moreover, all these aspects are noticed in the following excerpt of their report:

“When furnishing the space use recognizable colours and patterns. Use materials from all over the world. Offer books in different languages. When you put up or show pictures of people, make sure to not only show pictures of kids with blonde hair and blue eyes. Be on your guard for generalisations and stereotyping. Don’t just assume: “You’re from Iran, so you are probably a Muslim. You are from Somalia, so your mom probably wears these clothes.” Genuine interest and stereotypical assumptions can seem very similar: don’t assume too much about someone’s background.” (First Aid for Vrolijkheid, 2018, p.40).

On the other end, this concern for variety is revealed through Vrolijkheid’s concern that the team of workers is diverse so that several cultural perspectives are at play during the workshops promoted by the organization. On a first level, the Vrolijkheid should involve people that live in the neighborhoods surrounding the Azc. Indeed, this is found in the following quote: *“Besides Azc residents you will also involve volunteers and artists from within the immediate vicinity of the Azc.”* (First Aid for Vrolijkheid, 2018, p.41). The Vrolijkheid aims at diverse teams with people that have different genders and ages. It is understood that the Vrolijkheid should gather a hybrid team, with people from dissimilar social and cultural backgrounds. According to the organization, this multicultural aspect boosts the value of the work conducted in the camps. The annual report of 2018 describes the working teams of the Vrolijkheid as the following:

“The teams Vrolijkheid consist of men and women, young people and older people, people with and without refugee background, creative and organizers. Just as varied as residents of Azc themselves. This diversity enhances the quality of our work.” (Vrolijkheid, 2018, p.8)

Lastly, the third manner in which the organization displays concerns with Diversity is through adjustment of the workshops content. The workshops are idealized for different age groups, and they should answer to the children's preferences and needs. The artistic medium also varies, since the selected artist chooses the one in which he is specialized. Moreover, this invites the artist to create different workshops, which should, when completed, should be shown to the parents. Moreover, this process of creative adjustment as a catalyzer for Diversity is found in the following quote:

“An artist manages the studio. Therefore, starting up a studio begins with finding a suitable artist. The artist thinks of a nice overarching theme that forms the common thread for a project that suits his or her art discipline. The plan for one of these projects consists of a series of activities. It is important that the activities suit the needs and wishes of the participants. This means an artist can't do the exact same project with different age groups. The series is concluded by a short presentation for the parents of the children and other residents.” (First Aid for Vrolijkheid, 2018, p.44)

This analytical web of meaning identifies Diversity as one of the meaningful clusters in the case of the ideal Vrolijkheid. This overarching concept extends into considerations regarding space, the work team, and the workshops of the organization. Firstly, it displays the importance of Diversity in space, which is readjusted to build multicultural environment within the camp. Secondly, the organization has teams which are socially and culturally diverse, as a means to form an inclusive environment the workshops. Lastly, the workshops themselves are adjusted to the children, calling for solutions that speak to a diverse group.

4.1.2 Emotional Empowerment

Throughout the coding, another repetitive pattern uncovered *emotional empowerment* as a central aspect of Vrolijkheid activities, which allows for the children to become more grounded in themselves. This aspect is identified in a dual manner. On the hand, the organization focused on *talent development* through self-expression, while on the other, the children are encouraged to tell their *stories* through artistic mediums. Indeed, Vrolijkheid's use of Art was often justified through these two domains. Starting by the first, in Vrolijkheid website, a comparison between young people in general and young people at the Azc is drawn, whereby the ones that live in the Azc don't have access to the same opportunities as the others. Drawing from that, the Vrolijkheid outlines their mission as an entity which tackles this issue by giving a ground for the Azc children where they can express themselves and fed their talents. Indeed, one can find this comparison alongside the supporting mission of the Vrolijkheid in the following quote:

“Young people generally live in the healthy optimism that the world is open to them. They believe that their future prospects are almost limitless. But young people who grow up in an asylum seekers' center soon discover that this is different for them. Especially for these young people, De Vrolijkheid developed projects in which they are in the lead. Being able to determine where their talents lie and how they want to develop within the unfree world of the Azc.” (Vrolijkheid website, n.d.)

On another level, the organization outlines its mission as a catalyzer for *storytelling*, which, according to the organization, has a positive impact on the children's resilience and self-esteem, fostering their emotional empowerment. In the strategy plan 2017-2020, Vrolijkheid presents Art as a crucial tool that allows for children to tell their story and for it to be heard by others. These stories can vary content and form and shed light on these children's experiences. Vrolijkheid is the entity that gives room for these stories to be shown to others. Moreover, all these aspects are found in the following quote:

“Everyone is entitled to a story and every story deserves attention. Storytelling through various art forms the core of the process of Vrolijkheid. A story can be a flight story, but also a dream or fantasy story. Stories provide recognition, recognition and shape personal experiences. Vrolijkheid provides these stories stage, what this story or stage also. Seen and heard strengthens the self-confidence of young Azc-residents.” (Vrolijkheid 2017-2020, n.d., p.15)

The emotional empowerment capabilities of Vrolijkheid are summarized in these two empirical excerpts that outline talent development and storytelling as two focal points of their work. These two strategies allow for the children to develop emotionally by becoming more confident and resilient. Vrolijkheid acts as a 'stage provider', engaging in a process which tackles some of the isolating tendencies of the Azc.

4.1.3 Answering Uncertainty

Throughout the coding process, it was clear that one of the central domains of the organization's work is to tackle the uncertainty present in the natural setting of the camp, which is related to issues of safety and instability. The organization's concern to address uncertainty is both expressed in their worries to create a safe space and the way in which they relate to the children at the Azc. Firstly, the organization focuses on creating a safe space, where the workshops are coherently organized and adjusted to specific target groups, creating a sense of continuity that contrasts the lack of safety in the Azc. Attached to this, the Vrolijkheid produces distinct layouts and schedules to meet the children's and youngsters' expectations. The organization also provides a space that creates a sense of belonging, with a positive and engaging atmosphere. In the following sentence, it is clear how the Vrolijkheid aims to answer to the uncertainty present in the Azc:

“Safety is not obvious to an Azc. Vrolijkheid tries to fill this lack of security by ensuring continuity, a clear structure in the program, a team of volunteers and artists and a carefully designed space. This space is a place where everyone is happy and feels comfortable and seen. By at fixed times to

be present and work in workshops with a clear beginning and end, namely children and young people what they can expect and get them space to be themselves and show themselves.”
(Vrolijkheid, 2018, p.8)

Zooming on the second aspect, in their website, one finds the description of how the organization responds to the feeling of uncertainty, which is fostered by the asylum process. The organization aims to answer the uncertainty that the children's face at the Azc by offering continued support, which allows them to feel stable and secure. They aim to foster their talents and develop them throughout time, which, according to the organization, will enhance their capability to deal with difficulties. Moreover, the Vrolijkheid's capacity to deal with the uncertainty children's face is found in the following quote:

“The (often long and) uncertain asylum procedure and the many relocations create a feeling of insecurity for children and young people who need so much stability, security and continuity. At the same time, these children and young people are full of talents and dreams. De Vrolijkheid appeals to these children about those talents and ensures that they can be further developed. And offers these children new experiences to strengthen their resilience.” (Vrolijkheid website, n.d.)

Following the same notions, the organization also aims to go beyond the standardized view of refugees and acknowledge their unique identity. This phenomenon is illustrated in the following quote: *“At Vrolijkheid we therefore do not call residents of asylum seekers 'refugees' or 'newcomers'. Vrolijkheid believes that children and young people who live in asylum seekers' centers should be seen for who they are.”*(Vrolijkheid website, n.d.). Gathering all this empirical evidence, makes us conclude that one of the central aspects of this organization is to tackle the overall sense of uncertainty of the children life circumstances and offer them a safe space and a network of support that give them a sense of security and stability.

4.1.4 Theoretical Bridge

In this analytical segment, three main analytical categories provided an empirical ground to the online depiction of Vrolijkheid's work: *diversity, emotional empowerment, and answering uncertainty*. Here, these central domains are connected to the literature exposed in the initial chapter of this thesis. According to Diken (2014), shelters are non-places in which the individual is mostly waiting, facing high levels of uncertainty. The ideal Vrolijkheid tackles this by providing structural and continuous support to the children and youngsters at the Azc. Ghorashi, Boer, and Holder (2018) see the liminal condition as time within structures where the individual can reflect on his past and reinvent his life. Through the analysis, one might argue that the Vrolijkheid's aims to be part of this process by feeding the children's emotional empowerment by telling their story and developing talents, fighting their liminal condition by developing their creative skills. In Zelneir's case study, this author defends that artistic practices are the 'excuse' for social ties to be formed in encounters that have an aesthetic aim

(2003). Contrarily, in the case of the ideal Vrolijkheid, Art seems to be the central tool through which individual empowerment is formed through storytelling and talent development. Very much aligned with O'Neill's case study, the Vrolijkheid also aims at storytelling and talent development, by 'giving a stage' to these children's talents (2008).

Feeding the hybrid socialization within camps, the ideal Vrolijkheid builds a team with individuals from various social and cultural backgrounds and aims at preparing diverse and inclusive workshops. In this sense, the organization appears to be very much in contact with intercultural practices as suggested by Gonçalves and Majhanovich (2016). Relating this type of social interaction with the multicultural model of Hartmann and Gerteis (2005) allows us to classify that this type of micro social environment as *interactive pluralism*, since great importance is given to cross-cultural dialogue, and the workers of Vrolijkheid are empathetic and reflexive of other cultures. In this case, the contact zones preserve cultural differences.

4.2 Vrolijkheid on the field – The ‘real Vrolijkheid’

In this segment, the preeminent findings derived from the analysis of the field notes collected within a four-month timeframe are systematically presented. The remembrance fieldnotes that guide this analytical construction are complemented with some excerpts of interviews, which shed light on the intentions that foreseen the activities. Moreover, three major categories were identified. Two refer to the patterns found in the workshops: *cross-cultural dialogue* and *role of reproduction*, and one gives insights on the type of activities which allow the children to go outside the camp, here understood as *Bridging activities*. This participant observation allowed for the researcher to focus on the symbolic interactions that are involved in the work of Vrolijkheid at the Azc Rotterdam, providing us with an insight on the socialization processes involved within the in loco work of this organization. The social dynamics of this multicultural environment gain form in this segment. The ethnographic scope of this research allows for a caption of the *real Vrolijkheid* through categorical islands. Furthermore, in the last section of this analysis, a conceptual bridge allows for some ideas of the theoretical framework to be related to the inductive findings of this study.

4.2.1 Cross-cultural dialogue

One of the recurring patterns identified in the work of the Vrolijkheid at the Azc Rotterdam zooms on the organization abilities to render a cross-cultural exchange. Within the present systematic analysis, this determined in a twofold manner. On the one hand, the activities can merge most of the cultural backgrounds of the children present in the workshops. While on the other, the Dutch Culture and their traditions are introduced to the children.

According to Machteld happens in a very natural way: *“Yeah, sometimes we try to tell them, what is really Dutch food or what we do in Holland when it's your birthday, but we are not explicitly introducing them to Dutch Culture, I think. It's not a goal or target, but it happens automatically.”* (2019). This analytical segment is drawn in a compass between fostering connections among children from diverse backgrounds, while introducing them to the Dutch Culture. This is exemplified through narratives that illustrate some of the cross-cultural dimensions found in the fieldwork.

Zooming on the first aspect, most of the activities witnessed in the camp were able to create connections between children, even though they tended to socialize more with the ones from their country of origin. In one of the interviews conducted in this study, a volunteer exposed some of the challenges that of dealing with the multicultural group: *“there was a time when we had much more Syrian people and less from Ethiopia, then we were surprised that some of the children were really discriminating the black children.”* (Katie, 2019). Even though during the timeframe of this study, such direct conflicts weren't encountered, a recurring trait of Vrolijkheid's work at the Azc Rotterdam was to use small gestures to incite engagement between all children, which would foster an overarching sense of dialogue. There is one clear example, which was repeated in every workshop. At the end of one activity, a child would be selected to say goodbye to all the others, which could choose between a hug, a high-five, or a hand-shake. In the field notes gathered one can observe how this process affected the children: *“Massa was on the door giving awkward hugs and high-fives to the children he didn't know, and strong ones to his friends.”* (fieldnotes, 2019). In a sense, the simple greetings allowed for Massa to go beyond his comfort zone, inviting him to directly engage with children he probably didn't know so well. In this small exercise, one can encounter the first aspect mentioned in this analytical segment, as a means to underline how simple gestures can foster cross-cultural dialogue between the children themselves, fighting the tendency they have to engage with the children from their country of origin.

The phenomenon of cross-cultural dialogue is also encountered in activities where the Dutch Culture is central. During the participant observation, it was noticed that the Dutch Culture acted *as a mediator of other cultures*. Arguing in favor of this, both an example of how giving the children the freedom to express their own culture can form social segregation in a workshop, while on the other, engaging with the Dutch Culture creates a more cohesive and integrated workshop. Zooming on the first one, on the 19th March 2019, during a music workshop conducted by Donnie, he gave the freedom to the children to sing songs of their preference. In the beginning, some children went to sing their favorite songs. As time passed,

there was an accumulation of the Eritrean children who were with the phone choosing Eritrean songs such as Andit Okbay - Ti Gudeye, which last around eight minutes. This created cultural segregation in the group consequent of the music choice, which can be found in the following quote: *“They were singing Eritrean songs and you could see that in the singing corner the Eritrean kids were dominating the singing.”* (fieldnotes, 2019). The door of the room was open, and the children could get in and out at any time. At some point, I noticed that three kids from Syria were looking with some uncertainty to the Eritrean group since they didn’t know the songs. Eventually, they either left the room or went to do drawings. This can be found in the following quote: *“you see that Syrian kids are a bit more isolated and indecisive.”* (fieldnotes, 2019). In this example, one can observe how different cultures can become segregated in a workshop, and when a specific culture is prioritized, it doesn’t allow for a positive cross-cultural dialogue. On the other side of the scale, some Dutch songs united the group. One example cohesion in the group was identified in the social consequences of listening to the song Kinderen voor Kinderen – PasaPas. Every Monday, before the workshop we would go around the camp with big speakers calling the children, and when this music was on, all the children sang and danced to this choreograph with Fleur. This can be found in the following quote *“no matter where they were from, all of them were singing and doing the choreography of this song, every week.”* (fieldnotes, 2019). One can understand that this type of cultural products allowed for cohesion-building, and this can also be seen through the use of the Dutch language, which was able to bridge all the other languages present in the workshop, becoming the standard form of expression. The same tended to happen in the activities since the majority of them used mediums that contained elements of Western and Dutch culture, which is exemplified in some workshops where the central theme was superheroes or learning the Dutch language through cards. Moreover, one can also understand this phenomenon through the interview of Fleur, where she mentioned that the activities that she does with the children at the Azc are very similar to the ones she does with other Dutch kids. Indeed, this is identified in the following quote: *“so for doing my theater lessons, I can do quite a lot what I can do with the other kids, not like, the big language things, without that, I can do quite a lot.”* (Fleur, 2019). In this quote one can understand that in the case of Fleur, a theater teacher, she does the same activities with other children, meaning that there is no specific cultural adjustment when working with the children at the camp, giving a bigger space for cultural transmission of the Dutch culture in the workshops.

The cross-cultural dialogue phenomenon encountered in the workshops of Vrolijkheid is expressed in a twofold manner. On the one end, the use of small gestures can extend the

children's network within the camp, creating a connection between children from different cultural backgrounds. On the other end, when the kids have the freedom to express their home culture, groups can become culturally segregated, allowing for a specific culture to dominate. Contrarily, the Dutch Culture played a uniting role in the workshops, where all the children were able to participate, forming social cohesion in the group.

4.2.2 Role of reproduction

The second recurrent aspect identified in the theoretical notes gathered throughout the analysis was the copy of behavior found in the workshops, meaning that the children were invited to repeat the gestures of the teachers. This aspect is very much central to the activities, and it is understood as a way to avoid activities based on explanations, as well as a strategy to keep the children in a constant flow of observation and repetition. The empirical ground of such a statement will be given through the description of two workshops that exemplify the phenomenon of reproduction. This will allow us to zoom on the copying behaviors present in the activities, identified in the use of different artistic mediums such as painting and theater.

On the 1st of March 2019, during the holiday period, a four-hour workshop was conducted, where the exercise proposed was to paint tulips with forks. When I arrived at the Azc, I meet Jenneke for the first time, a Dutch lady that was going to be the workshop teacher. She brings with her a bunch of tulips and a painting that depicted tulips in a jar. Both these things are positioned in the center of the big table so that all the children see them while painting. In this initial phase, I help Jenneke to set the primary colors in plastic plates and complementing it with plastic forks since the children would use them to recreate the shape of a tulip. This can be found in the following quote "*The idea is that the kids use the fork recreate what she did.*" (fieldnotes, 2019). The children gathered around the table and Jenneke exemplified, showing how the ink in the fork can create the shape of a flower. I stay close to Feruz. During the process of painting, she looked several times to the painting that Jenneke brought as an example, to be sure that she was reproducing it accurately. Tesfit, however, was mixing more colors, recreating the tulips more originally. However, the gesture of holding the fork was still central to his piece, and he placed it carefully to make sure the shape of a tulip was reproduced. Other children would arrive, and when they saw the others stamping with the fork, they would immediately understand the exercise and grabbed a paper to do the same. After half an hour, some of the children dispersed into other activities such as playing puzzles with images of the Beauty and the Beast and Searching for Nemo. In such an event, one can notice how a simple gesture was able to merge all the children into a single exercise. The tulip,

the most typical flower of the Netherlands, was central to the activity proposed, where all the children reproduced the movement of the fork and recreated its shape. In this case, I also noticed that the reproduction gesture made it possible for all the children to grasp the exercise, even without explanation.

In the theater workshops, simple mimicking exercises fed the children's embodiment of specific characters, which were exemplified by the teachers. In these workshops, one could notice the crucial role of reproduction. Most of the times, this involved themes such as superheroes, circus, and fighting. For example, in the activity on the 4th of March, Fleur led a theater workshop where the children pretended to be fighting in slow motion (approx. twenty-five children in the room). In the beginning, she and I represented a slow-motion fight, and the children were seated down, observing us. After this, the children would be called one at a time to pretend as they would be in a fight with Fleur. One can grasp the atmosphere of the classroom in the notes I gathered: "*the children sitting down laughed a lot at the others pretending to fight.*"(fieldnotes, 2019). With time, the children became impatient watching, and started to play with some objects in the room and talking in groups. Responding to this, Fleur suggested that we all got up and mimicked a fight in slow motion with one another, allowing for the children to become engaged, once more. Overall, this type of mimic exercises was widespread in the workshops, and it shows how the children were quickly engaged in a simple activity. In the same lines, it also displays the adaptable character of theater, where through a simple change, the group dynamics can change, keeping the children's interest. This strength of change is exemplified in Fleur's direction for the group to collaborate as a response to their impatience. Indeed, this phenomenon of quick change and response was noticed in many workshops. On the 21st of January, Kim, the theater teacher, placed the tape in the floor, delimitating the route that the children had to follow while imitating several poses of superheroes. In the first instance, she exemplified all the steps they had to follow and the type of things they had to do while following the tape on the floor. The children reproduced these gestures and poses, and as time passed, she added more stops in the path with tape, so that they had to mimic new things. Moreover, in this empirical segment, one finds that the reproduction in the case of theater allows for a sense of flow, in which there can be a quick response to the children's needs, and no language is needed.

This category outlined the role of reproduction in the workshops. On the one hand, it allows the teachers to get across simple exercises, which can be easily understood by children. In the same lines, the reproduction of behavior entails minimal linguistic comprehension, making the workshops accessible to all. Secondly, in the case of theater, the mimic processes

allowed for new things to be quickly introduced by the teacher into the workshop. In this analytical segment, one can also notice that reproduction in the case of theater allowed for a constant adjustment of the exercises, while in the painting exercise it allowed for a simple task to come easily across, however, when finished, the children dispersed into other activities such as playing puzzles. Moreover, this section shows that reproduction was key in the instruction of the workshops.

4.2.3 Bridging activities

One of the foremost aspects of the Vrolijkheid work refers to its bridging capabilities, which present the children with an opportunity to go beyond the camp, and to connect with the 'outside world', most specifically by taking them to cultural activities. Fleur, the Program Coordinator, describes the importance of bridging activities in her interview: *“Yeah, its contact with Dutch people, so that's nice. I think that when you go to the theater or the museum you can get inspired more than maybe here and seeing some professional artist that could be inspiring.”*(Fleur, 2019). During the four-month timeframe of this ethnographic study, I attended two activities of this type, where the children went to distinct places within the city of Rotterdam. Further empirical evidence on these two activities is going to be drawn and discussed in terms of social inclusion.

On the 22nd of February 2019, around forty children of the Azc Rotterdam went to the Hofplein Theater with me and Fleur. We leave the camp in a very unsettled and chaotic manner fed by the children's excitement reflected in their rapid counting of the minutes for the tram to arrive. After a while, we reached the city center of Rotterdam, where the children tilted their heads looking at the enormous skyscrapers, being distracted by several elements of the city. When we arrived at theater *“we sat down and they [theater workers] gave us some fliers with a lot of questions in Dutch, but the children only knew how to answer to the name part [first question] - the rest was really complicated and only the oldest managed, the smaller continued asking me.”*(fieldnotes, 2019). In these notes, one encounters a moment of uncertainty, where the younger children faced with a task which was too complicated for their abilities: to answer a set of questions in Dutch. The theater staff was informed, and we moved on to go upstairs with some colored stickers and small stones that were given at the entrance of the play. Upstairs, I find the children all seated in the last row of the theater, and I sit in the middle of them.

The theater actors start by saying welcome to Vrolijkheid, and from then on, I collected adjectives such as "futuristic, emotional, deep, contemporary" (fieldnotes, 2019). This play was named *Metamorphoses* and it presents the story of youngsters and their hopes, dreams, and chaos in responding to Societies challenges, "*inspired by the city of Rotterdam, Metamorphoses by Ovidius, Metamorphosis II by Escher, science and our belief in how things can be different.*" (Hofplein Theater, *Metamorphose*, n.d.). The Dutch language dominated this dramatic play, and "*after two and a half hours, the children were a bit lost*". (fieldnotes, 2019). The theater play ends in a moment when all the spectators gathered in the stage to put their stones on the floor, which created a lot of excitement among the children. We left the performance, and the kids started to play in the hall of the theater with an old piano and a colored table of light. We go outside, and the children are happy running in the street. We return to the Azc.

In this example, one encounters the paradox within an activity which integrates the children by giving them access to cultural activities in the city, while facing some communication barriers. The positive engagement with the people from the theater made the children happy in moments such as going on stage. However, the lack of confidence in the language makes the smaller children partially excluded from this reality. Even though the central idea of this activity is to allow them to get to know Dutch people and get inspired by them, there might be a gap in the understanding which makes the children excluded from the intentional dynamics of the artists and workers of Vrolijkheid.

The second bridging activity witnessed by me took place on the 1st of May 2019. In this daily activity, the children spent the day in the park where several recreational activities were proposed. We left the Azc on a bus that brought us to a big garden where theater performers organized some events for us. We arrived at the garden, where they explained to us the activities - in this segment, some of the children- in this segment some of the children "*were lost due to the language*" (fieldnotes, 2019). We move on to the garden, and we see that an actor is laying on the floor, playing the role of a wounded bird. The children got excited, and they touched the bird costume of the artist, which moved, scaring some of them. After this segment, all of us were split into teams, each of them led by the artists that prepared the activities. I was assigned to a group comprised of seven boys from age 5 to 10, half from Eritrea and a half from Syria, as well as an older girl from Syria. We walk for a bit, and we reach a place where an individual introduces the activity. However, he was ignored by the children. One can find this in the following quote: "*he was very shy and he was asking me: do they speak Dutch? The children were not paying attention to him.*"(fieldnotes, 2019). He gave the children some creative tubes so that they could speak to each other and echo was produced. We

continued the path stopping in some places and using these tubes for hearing one another in various ways. During the route, the performer proposed an exercise to the children: they had to recognize sounds in nature through the eco-tubes, yet the children didn't respond to the task, and the instructor adapted to their intentions. We can further understand these social dynamics in the following quote: *“he gave us a paper with drawings of nature for us to see if we identified them through sound - the children continued singing and dancing, and the instructor was okay that they didn't do the exercise”* (fieldnotes, 2019). Even though the artist *“continued to be very shy”* (fieldnotes, 2019), we walked in nature until we arrived at the final stop where we met the other groups. All of them had done different things: *“the other group collected leaves and flowers inside the small plastic bags. Another group made drawings.”* (fieldnotes, 2019). The group, which I belonged to, produced echo sounds with the tubes and showed it to the other children. In the afternoon, some children played football, while others did yoga. Around four, we returned to the Azc.

In this second activity, one finds a bridging event where children had the opportunity to go outside the refugee camp and spend a day in Nature. The neutrality of the artistic mediums used, allowed for the kids to enjoy a day on the outside, which didn't follow any outlined structure. Even though the language remained a barrier, the activities explored the senses in a very primary and universal way. The fact that the children were not able to follow all the instructions, was immediately accepted and an organic activity took form, allowing for the focus to be on the children's enjoyment of a day outside. This bridging activity of the Vrolijkheid enables the children to be grounded in another setting while engaging in sports activities such as football and yoga, which complemented the overall experience of being a day outside.

When facing both activities, one on the 22nd of February and the other on the 1st of May, one might argue that there are two different approaches at play. In the first activity, there is a more significant focus in children listening to others and following a story, while in the second they have greater freedom to enjoy nature and explore materials. In the first one, the artistic medium also plays a more conservative role since the children attend a cultural event, where observation is vital. Contrastingly, in the second one, the children engage with artistic mediums in a very informal way, giving room for the children to practice sports. Moreover, the response to the lack of linguistic comprehension also differed: in the first case, it excluded the smaller children from the full understanding of the performance, while in the second the linguistic gap was acknowledged, and greater attention was given to the senses and walking in nature. Overall, both experiences allow for the children to go beyond the borders of the camp

and getting to know other places and people by becoming more integrated and aware of their surroundings.

4.2.4 Theoretical Bridge

The social dimensions encountered in the field notes gathered throughout the time frame of this participant observation are cross-cultural dialogue, the role of reproduction and bridging activities. They reveal some of the most important aspects of socialization in the case of Vrolijkheid at the Azc Rotterdam. In cross-cultural dialogue, it was noticed that the Dutch Culture played a mediating role in the activities. The workshop can be seen as a ‘contact zone’ as proposed Cantel (2015, 2012), where communitarian cohesion is central. However, there can be two multicultural dynamics at play, according to Hartmman and Gerteis (2015). On the one end, one can identify processes of assimilation, since the Dutch culture can bridge all the children backgrounds within the space of the workshop. While on the other, when freedom is given to children to share cultural objects of their country of origin, the group can become segregated, where processes of fragmented multiculturalism are at play. This fact poses an impossibility to the intercultural dialogue as proposed by Gonçalves and Majhanovich (2016) in the case of Vrolijkheid. Aligned with Merkin, Taras, and Steel (2013) propositions, the lack of mediation regarding certain artistic products created further cultural segregation in the case of the Vrolijkheid at the Azc Rotterdam. This phenomenon can be illustrated through the use of language - in the workshops, the language spoken was Dutch, and it was the common ground of understanding between individuals from different backgrounds. It is here argued that, as in language, the Dutch artistic discourse was the common ground for these children.

Contrarily to O’Neill’s (2008) case study where the focus on storytelling activities with refugees is central, in the Vrolijkheid this is replaced by group activities that are simple and straightforward, where the children are invited to reproduce the teachers. In the workshops, it was noticed that copying behavior and actions played a significant role in keeping communitarian cohesion (Cantel 2015, 2012). On another level, the bridging activities of Vrolijkheid, fight the spatial exclusion allowing for the children to be in contact with mainstream culture (Madanipour, 2015). However, Madanipour (2015) brings forward the hypothesis that these activities can produce further exclusion. This phenomenon can be understood through his concept of mental accessibility, a process through which an individual goes to a mainstream space and feels pressured to act according to specific rules, feeling excluded and forced into a particular context (Madanipour, 2015). In this sense, we found in this analysis that different bridging activities include and exclude the children in different ways.

On the one hand, when the children went to the theater with Vrolijkheid, and their role was to observe a theater play, some of them could have felt uncomfortable in a reality where the comprehensive gaps were too big, making them feel further excluded from the mainstream society. However, in the second activity, the children went to the outside with theater artists and through the process the exercises were adjusted to their comprehensive abilities, allowing for small steps of inclusion to be taken.

4.3. (In)tensions – Zooming on workers of Vrolijkheid

In this segment of the results, some of the challenges and tensions identified in the analysis of the interviews collected are exposed. The gaps between the ideal and the real Vrolijkheid are bridged through the narratives of the volunteers and teachers. The theory of social anchoring presented in the literature review puts forward three crucial aspects for migrants to feel socially anchored in a new country: Identity, Security, and Integration (Grzymala-Kazłowska, 2016). In this analytical segment, these three domains are going to be discussed in terms of the viewpoint of workers as a means to fill in the gaps between the ideal and real Vrolijkheid. Making use of these three aspects allows us to identify the challenges entailed in the children's process of cultural adaptation. On the first hand, some of the problems that the workers face when assessing the children's identity and past are discussed. Consequently, issues of maintaining a sense of security in the workshops will be debated. Lastly, also tensions on integration will be discussed alongside the response of the children to some of the activities. It is essential to mention that these are umbrella terms, however, when applied to the work of Vrolijkheid they can give us a glimpse of Vrolijkheid that *“helps young people welcome in the asylum centers to set an example by getting in touch with them, to work together on an equal footing and to make new connections. Thus we contribute to the inclusion of young azc residents in the Dutch society.”* (Vrolijkheid 2017-2020, n.d.).

Transcending this theory into the case of Vrolijkheid, allows us to evaluate its capabilities in terms of social anchoring, and one can understand the challenges and responses of the organization faces in dealing with three key aspects of cultural adaptation.

4.3.1 Identity

One of the key aspects of social anchoring, according to Grzymala-Kazłowska (2016) refers to identity, the process by which people form their traits through group identification and consumption. In this segment, we are going to apply this idea to understand how the workers of Vrolijkheid interpret the children's identity and how this affects the practices of their work. The difficulties of assessing their identity are exposed on several fronts. The

interviewees show difficulty in understanding the children behavior, as well as being deprived of any information on their life story. Lastly, one can understand how this distinct social behavior can be framed through the children's nationality. Firstly, one zooms on Machteld's difficulties in interpreting the children's behavior, exposed in her answer to the question 'How would you describe the children you work with?'. While answering the question, the interviewee built a narrative on the children's past as a means to justify their behavioral oddness, which is here understood as a form of distinction, since the word 'strange' is used to describe the children's behavior as opposed as what she considers to be 'normal'. This interviewee argues that the children show a high level of resilience because when she watched the news, she noticed a high level of destruction and devastation, which, logically, must have negatively affected the children. Contrarily, she encounters a discrepancy between expectations and reality, since the children appear to be very happy and positive. However, the interviewee identifies some peculiar traits in children's social behavior, which is exemplified by their over-friendliness, such as giving too much affection, or, on the contrary, being exceedingly detached. Furthermore, Machteld also finds some strangeness in the children level of knowledge, since some of them display very basic or inexistent skills, such as having never having drawn an animal or cut a paper before. In her narrative, Machteld puts forward the hypothesis that maybe the children lacked several years of formal education, making them behind in the process of acquiring such skills. Moreover, all of these aspects can be found in the words of Machteld herself:

"I think they have a lot of strength because when I see the news on the TV about Syrian, and I see all these bombed houses, and then I think the children that are living there must be very traumatized or sad or you know? And when I see the children here, they are always enthusiastic and fun and active, and that surprises me. I think that the parents are much more traumatized than the children. But you can see that a lot of children have strange behavior. Some kids have difficulty to get along with adults or new adults. Sometimes they are hugging you when you just met, it's like too much affection, it's not normal, it's very cute, but it's not normal. And some kids you are sitting like painting for two hours and then they just walk away without saying goodbye even. So that's strange. (...) Some children are like nine years old and they have never drawn an animal, or it's the first time that they cut with the scissors, that's very strange for me. Maybe they skipped so many years of normal childhood, that they are missing a lot of practical experiences."(Machteld, 2019)

Another challenging aspect of working with the children at the Azc, is the Vrolijkheid workers scarcity of knowledge regarding the kids past, an essential trait to grasp one's identity. In the interview conducted, Katie, a volunteer of Vrolijkheid at the Azc Rotterdam, mentioned she finds it difficult not knowing what happened to the children before, however she respects this characteristic of Vrolijkheid's code of conduct. She also raises a hypothesis regarding the children, stating that they might have been too young to remember anything that happened to

them. The interviewee also explains that the Vrolijkheid instructs the workers not to ask the children about their past, because they should be part of the present and entertaining them. However, for Katie, this makes it difficult, because she would like to have more input on the children she is working with. In this sense, the interviewee shows a tension between what is expected of her, and what she would like to know. Katie is dealing with a difficulty to assess the children's identity, due to the fact she doesn't know what happened to them. Moreover, one can find these aspects in Katie's words:

"We don't know what happened to the children, some children we think perhaps they didn't go through the worst because they were too small to know, but we don't know, (...) we are taught that we don't ask the children, if they want to tell something, we are ears, but when they are with the Vrolijkheid, this is what we want that they can do things and not be with that part. But it feels sometimes strange because you want to have a little bit of a picture of what happened, but, perhaps it's better, I don't know, but they want a sort of, that we are not for that part. It feels sometimes difficult, because you want to know what was before this." (Katie, 2019)

In the interviews and fieldwork, it was also recurrent that the humanitarian aid actors relied on nationalities to apprehend the identity of the children they work with at the Azc Rotterdam. When Fleur, the program coordinator Rotterdam was asked to describe the children that she works with, she starts by describing the Syrian children as pure and intense. Furthermore, the interviewee reads the children's social behavior through their cultures, making it the justification for their attitudes, such as the male children not wanting to give hands to female children. Alongside this, she also mentions a distinct cultural behavior from the Eritrean people that tend to talk during theater plays, which is opposed to her expectations of silent and observation. The interviewee mentions that through this, she becomes more understanding of other cultures and individuals that, according to her, had a challenging past. In Fleur's narrative, one understands that nationality is a crucial aspect in apprehending the children's social behavior and giving meaning to their identity. Moreover, Fleur's description of the children she works with is here exposed:

"When I started, most of them were from Syria, and Syrian kids are really intense, but intense nice, intense busy, in everything and I really like that about the kids. They are really pure. And yeah, it's so nice, but also the other cultures, when you come here and they are happy with you, and they give you a hug and they really show they are happy we are there. And that's really nice with the kids, and yeah... Some things like when we are in a circle and in the beginning the guys don't want to sit next to the girls and they even don't want to do that now because it's just their culture, but I didn't know anything about it, it was like give them a hand, you know? Ahh... No, I don't give a girl a hand and all that sort of things they are all new to me and they have all have their own [culture], because the Eritrean people, they are used to when they see a theater play, to talk, its... Its, you just see a concert and you just talk and we are here like, we are silent and we watch. So that's a big difference and we see that when we go to the theater. It's like.. Shhhhh, be quiet, but they are used to something else so I think that's really... I really like that for my own learning from the world or something. Yeah... I just really like the kids... I am just there and I am just happy to be there and

see this and it feels so good to do something for them because they are through such a rough past....”(Fleur, 2019)

Extending the critical category of identity into the case of Vrolijkheid at the Azc Rotterdam, one can grasp that the workers identify some tensions in the children’s social and cultural behavior. In a first glance, Machteld recognized strangeness in their behavior, as opposed to what she considers to be normal. Secondly, Katie, exposed the difficulties in being deprived of information regarding the children’s past, making it hard to assess their identity. Lastly, one notices that Fleur uses nationalities as a tool to read the children’s behavior, which was also noticed during the fieldwork. The workers of Vrolijkheid interpret the children’s past and identity through idealized expectations of what children went through. Their behavior is also read through cultural meanings that are exposed in specific actions, that the workers connect with their country of origin, a means to anchor their understanding of the children. This makes the work of Vrolijkheid a very complex one since the workers of Vrolijkheid try to fill in the gaps of knowledge regarding the children’s identity.

4.3.2 Security

Grzymala-Kazlowska (2016) mention security, meaning avoidance of uncertainty and a need for stability at both individual and communitarian level, as a fundamental aspect of social anchoring. In this case, one zooms on the views of the Vrolijkheid’s workers to further understand how they try to create a safe space, and what are the challenges they face in such a process. In this analytical segment, one identifies challenges in generating safety and continuity in several fronts. Firstly, the multicultural cohort of the camp poses threats to safety, secondly, the lack of information from COA forcibly detaches the workers from the children, creating a sense of instability in the practices, and lastly, dealing with the different levels of personal relation with the children also poses a challenge to a cohesive and equal environment. Starting with the first, Fleur, the program coordinator Rotterdam, when asked about the main concerns in the preparation of a workshop, shows great concern with dealing with multicultural tensions of the group, since one of the challenges is to create a safe space for all the children. She mentions that the agglomeration of different cultures poses a threat to the safety in the group and that such aspect needs to be tackled before the children do the activities proposed. Only after creating the safe space she can move on to show their talents or do activities of their preference. Creating a safe space is the main concern of Fleur when preparing the workshops, which can be found in the sentence below:

“But the main thing, what’s really my concern it’s the safety in the group because we have all different kind of cultures in one group and it’s not a safe place... That’s a big thing, it needs to be safe at first and then you can teach drama or other things. That’s my concern. That everyone here

feels safe and feels seen, and after that, we can grow and show their talents.. yeah, so that's what, I am thinking about some games they all like and to work with each other, some teamwork that's I think important.. yeah... yeah. ” (Fleur, 2019)

On another front, throughout the analysis of the interviews, it was clear that some of the volunteers found it hard to cope with laws of practice imposed by the manager of the camp, COA. At the beginning of their work, the program coordinator Machteld had to sign a contract in which she agreed not become too close with the children, always keeping a professional distance. However, Machteld finds it difficult to deal with such work guidelines, which is exemplified in the case of Alyas, when she asks COA workers where he is and do not provide her the information. The interviewee mentions the hardships of this professional distance since she would have liked to be informed about this child's departure as she worked two years with him. She also mentions that an emotional connection is built with the children, which is consequent of their weekly practices in the camp, contrarily to the expectations of COA. Moreover, this aspect affects the volunteers and workers of Vrolijkheid, as well as the practices in the group, because there is an emotional connection from the part of the volunteers, making it hard to deal with the imposed detachment. In this sense, it is challenging to keep a constant feeling of safety in the working dynamics of Vrolijkheid, since their practices involve emotional attachment and the working contract calls for a big detachment. This grey area in which the relation between the workers and the children is built, poses a threat to security and continuity since both the group and the children are affected by these non-expected departures. Moreover, all of these aspects can be found in the following quote:

“But sometimes COA is remembering us, ah, so when I ask where is Alyas? I haven't seen him for four weeks! Then they say that's private information. Like, yeah, I say: I work here, and they: yeah but you are not from the COA. Then I ask somebody else from COA, where is Alyas I haven't seen him for weeks and she told me he was sent back to Iraq, I said how can you do that? And then they say it's not your job to get personally involved so... Sometimes they are so strict and heartless, yeah... it's really crazy. Because our job is to have fun with the children, that's the first part of the job, and you can only have fun when you are very close with them, so of course, you are personally involved. When you work for two years with a child every week, of course, I wanna know if he is still here or if he is back somewhere...”(Machteld, 2019)

On another level, Fleur describes the struggle she faces in constantly adapting to the new children coming into the camp, which is here understood as another difficulty in keeping a cohesive and continuous practice, posing a threat to the safe space of Vrolijkheid. Even though the interviewee states that she is emotionally available to all the children, she mentions that it's hard when some of the children leave the camp. Fleur indicates that there is a need of personal relationships when working with the children, which consequently affects the group dynamics because some of the children are closer to her than others because they have been there for

longer. The interviewee mentions that she hopes that the children do not notice that she has tighter relationships with some of the children, however, it is hard for her to continuously adapt to new kids coming in the camp. These different levels of involvement with the children pose risks to the safe space, in terms of dealing with the various levels of personal relationships with the children. Moreover, as found in the following quote:

“I think the only difficult thing is that they are leaving and you're like oh.. and new people are coming and of course my heart is open to everyone, but sometimes yeah... that's a pity of the work, but that's just how it works. And they need to know me, and I need to know them, yeah... It's not at the beginning at the same level with the kids who are here for years. But I hope they don't feel like that, I hope that they all feel welcome...”(Fleur, 2019)

In this analytical segment, some of the challenges on the creation of a safe space in the Vrolijkheid's workshops, are exposed. Here, security is assessed through emotional and personal connections between the volunteers and the children, as a means to understand how it affects the group. In the first level, the multicultural aspects of the group pose a threat to a coherent workshop, since different cultural and social meanings are at play. Secondly, it is noticed that the workers struggle with the lack of knowledge regarding the situation of the children since they are not aware of when they leave. On the last level, it is hard to keep a social balance in the workshops as the workers of Vrolijkheid have different levels of personal relationships with the kids present. Moreover, this analytical segment allowed us to outline some of the difficulties that the workers face in creating a safe space as they are dealing with individuals that have several habitus, that can leave at any moment and that have different relations with the workers. Overall, multiculturalism, a sense of forced detachment and management of different personal ties are some of the challenges of creating safety within the workshops at the Azc Rotterdam.

4.3.3 Integration

Zooming on issues of integration through the lenses of Grzymala-Kazlowska (2016) allows us to assess the effects of social networking in the case of Vrolijkheid. According to these scholars (2016), integration refers to the consequences of contact with the mainstream culture. The phenomenon of integration is here exposed through the children's process of adjusting into what is considered by the interviewees normal, through the activities in which the children are in contact with Dutch kids and through the individual adjustment to the group. Firstly, Machteld describes the process of integration that the children go through in the Azc, by answering the question: *‘how do you feel your relationship with the children evolved?’*. The interviewee replies stating that the longer the children remain in the camp, the more ‘normal’ they become. Through this sentence, the interviewee shows that the adaptation comes from the

children themselves, which adopt a normal behavior. Attached to this, she mentions that the constant reallocation of children affects the children as they have to adapt to new social settings. According to the interviewee, the children take from three to four months to adjust to a certain routine. Alongside this, she remarks that the more the children stay, the better for them because they get adjusted to this social environment. At the same time, the interviewee also expects the children to find a new home, where they will become integrated into a new environment. Moreover, one can see that during the period that they stay in the camp, the more adjusted they become to Machteld's idea of normal, meaning that they become integrated to a certain social and cultural behavior. This adjustment to Machteld's paradigm of 'normal', is here understood as a process of adaptation into a certain culture. Moreover, one can find these integrative aspects in the words of Machteld:

"The longer they stay, the more normal they get. I think when a child has to move a lot of times, it's not very good cause you have to make new friends, new routines, new environment, new contacts, new school. It takes like 3 or 4 months to get used to the normal daily routine and then you can start picking up your normal life. And when you have to move every three months, you're never picking up a normal life. So it's better for them, for the routine to stay more than a year here. But at the same time, you hope they will find a house sooner, so when they find a house, they have to start over again, so then it starts again."(Machteld, 2019)

In direct terms of integration, the Vrolijkheid conducted a project in which the children of the camp had contact with Dutch children. They were invited to send letters to one another, and the Vrolijkheid created some activities for them to meet each other. In this case, the Vrolijkheid creates contact zones between the mainstream culture and the children at the Azc camp. In terms of integration, it is crucial to understand how the children responded to such an encounter. Fleur describes the first time the children met, taking us through the social consequences of the activity in which the Dutch children came to the Azc. Initially, the interviewee distinguishes the Dutch children as intrinsically more well behaved than the kids at the Azc Rotterdam, since they stayed more years in Dutch schools. She compares them to the children at the Azc, which tend to be looser in their conduct because they are not aware of the 'rules'. However, in this particular workshop, the children were behaving according to these rules, and they looked like different kids. According to Fleur, they were showing the best of themselves because they were following the Dutch children behavior, which, according to her, is 'their best'. The effects of the creation of these contact zones can be found below:

"They did their best. The Dutch kids they were really nice and there are from nature more behaved in listening and stuff. Because they are for years now in Dutch schools and of course they know the Dutch rules. The kids from here, you know, sometimes they are a bit busy and not listening, a bit wild and it's just because they don't know the rules or something. And now, they are just showing the best of themselves and see the other kids and yeah, that was nice. They were different kids." (Fleur, 2019)

Lastly, Machteld gives an example of the evolution in one child, which became more and more active through the workshops of Vrolijkheid. In this case, one can zoom on a particular child to understand how the normalization of behavior comes into place. It all started in a workshop where a girl was acting oddly by putting other children's pencils inside a box, instead of making a drawing herself. The workers of Vrolijkheid tried to find a solution by telling her to order the pens in colors and learn them in Dutch. After this, the child hugged them and left, which for them was very strange. However, this girl came more to the workshops, and with time she adjusted to the group, becoming more and more normal. Through this example one finds integration at the group level, since this child behaved as the other children did. Moreover, one can follow this process of adaptation in the words of Machteld:

"We gave her a paper, but she didn't want to draw, but all the other kids were having fun and were drawing, and we are making portraits. But when a child put down a pencil, she took it and she put it back in the box. At last there were no pencils anymore because she didn't say anything, but she took it. It was so strange, after half an hour we say that, don't that please, maybe you can just order them in colors. She did that and after one and a half hour, we try to teach her the names of the colors in Dutch. But still, she didn't want to draw, it was so strange. And she looked like this kitsch poster with these eyes and with the tear. When the lesson ended she was hugging us, the three of us, out of the blue! When she walked away, we were saying: what was this, it was so strange! But after that, she came back every day, and she was always hugging us. The first months, she was not talking, but then she started talking and she was acting more and more normal. And in the end, she was like all the other children. So strange."(Machteld, 2017)

In this analytic construction, one can understand that different types of integration are at play within the Vrolijkheid's work. Firstly, one realizes that the more time the children stay in the camp, the closer they become to the worker's notion of normal. Secondly, one can induce that the contact between Dutch children and the children at the Azc affected their behavior since they looked 'well behaved' and 'showed the best of themselves'. Lastly, one can understand how integration happens at a group level, where odd behaviors are left behind. Moreover, this analytical segment shows that there are several integration processes, which are mediated by the workers of Vrolijkheid, that are born in the Netherlands and have a particular way of apprehending what is 'normal'. In the end, one might argue that an active process of normalization is induced through the work of Vrolijkheid.

4.3.4 Theoretical Bridge

In this section, one enters in the perspective of the workers to understand the meaning-making processes that are at play in their work. By outlining some of the challenges and tensions in their practices, it is expected that the differences between the ideal and the real Vrolijkheid will be understood. Here, a bridge between these particular findings and previous research is going to be drawn. In a first instance, one can argue, aligned with Diken (2014) the

people that work within a camp exercise high social power. According to Agier (2010), the humanitarian actors present in camps have a particular culture which affects the social dynamics of the camp. In the case of Vrolijkheid, this is evident, since the workers' habitus affected how they related to the children at the Azc. According to Krufeld (1994), refugees and migrants face great instability in the liminal phase of their lives, since their identity is on the threshold. With the integration through Vrolijkheid, one noticed that a process of normalization according to the Dutch paradigm was in play, making the children more anchored and less in limbo. However, this comes alongside processes of assimilation which have long been criticized by scholars (Alexander, 2001). Moreover, the essential trait of Art as a grounding stimulus for intercultural dialogue, as suggested by Gonçalves and Majhanovich (2016) seems far from the case of Vrolijkheid. This can be justified by the interviewee's lack of knowledge regarding the children's past and their difficulty in apprehending their cultures. Normalization comes in play.

The qualitative study of Selkrig (2001) argued that artists change through they work in Humanitarian projects. This scholar argues that artists become more empathetic towards others, extending their view into other cultural worlds and becoming more reflexive and adaptable to different contexts (2001). In the case of Vrolijkheid, this was partially identified. Some of the artists mention that they learn about other cultures. However, the gap that there is apprehending the children's identity, and the constant change of children poses a significant challenge for the artists of Vrolijkheid to enter into their cultural worlds. Alternatively, they rely on more instant categories such as nationalities, and strange vs. normal, than working in an in-depth knowledge regarding Others as there are pressures from COA and the Vrolijkheid. Empathy stays in this limbo between wanting to know about the other cultures and needing to have a quick response and categorization to tackle with a group that it's always changing. This can be understood as what Madanipour (2015) defined as paradigms of association. All of these aspects are going to be discussed as a means to understand the gaps between the ideal Vrolijkheid and the Real Vrolijkheid, the differences between theory and reality.

4.4. Reflexive Triangulation

This particular study sets out to apprehend the *expectations*, *social dimensions* and *tensions* that influence the work of Vrolijkheid, a cultural organization that brings artistic activities into camps all over the Netherlands. To grasp these three key aspects, an Ethnographic approach was adopted, whereby the method *reflexive triangulation* entailed the use of three data sources that shed light on the specific dimensions of this research. In this

segment, we are going to cross the results the analytical pieces presented above and introduce some of the dilemmas encountered in Vrolijkheid's practices.

One aspect that is clear from the analysis is that there is a mismatch between the ideal and the real Vrolijkheid, a mismatch between the organization's online image and the social dynamics found in the fieldwork conducted at the Azc Rotterdam. The first difference is identified in the empirical opposition between the analytical cluster's *diversity* and *cross-cultural dialogue*. On the one hand, their online content suggests that the Vrolijkheid is an organization that uplifts the different cultures of the children in the workshops, while in the fieldwork the Dutch culture was identified as a mediator the cultures within the activities. The ideal celebration of diversity is replaced by a need to create a cohesive workshop where the Dutch culture appears to merge the various actors. It was also noticed that when the children had the opportunity to share Art from their countries of origin, a social segregation was formed in the group, according to the children's culture. Moreover, in the ideal Vrolijkheid the working teams would be composed of diverse individuals, but in reality, the team at the Azc Rotterdam was mostly Dutch and homogeneous. In theoretical terms, this can be seen as an opposition between interactive pluralism and assimilation, the difference between preserving the cultural differences in a certain environment or merging the cultural differences into the dominant one: the Dutch (Hartmann and Gerteis, 2005). Gonçalves and Majhanovich (2016) outlined the natural propensities of Art, which can create intercultural dialogue and hybrid forms of expression. However, this seems to be an impossibility in the case of Vrolijkheid. But why does this happen?

To understand the opposition between the findings of the analytical category's *diversity* and *cross-cultural dialogue*, the results of the interviews will shed light on some of the possible reasons that justify this gap between the ideal and the real Vrolijkheid. In the *security* segment of the analysis, one understands that managing a multicultural environment is very challenging, as well as dealing with the constant departure and arrival of children at the camp. In this sense, the use of the Dutch culture can be the solution to tackle the different cultures, since there is a danger of prioritizing some of them, and if so, it would pose threats to the safe space. Keeping the workshop socially stable, means that the Dutch culture plays a dominant role. The unpredictability of the children that will attend the workshop, make it very hard to create workshops that are tailor-made to their cultural backgrounds. The idea of Vrolijkheid as an organization that creates an intercultural dialogue is substituted by a need in to balance the social tensions of the group and create a cohesive and integrated workshop through the use of the Dutch Culture. In here, one identifies the first dilemma of this analysis, the one between

assimilationism and pluralism, the one between creating a cohesive workshop through the Dutch Culture or creating social segregation in the group by allowing the children to express their native cultures.

A second dilemma was also identified in crossing two analytical categories outlined in the results section: *emotional empowerment* and *role of reproduction*. On the one end, in the idealized dimension, the Vrolijkheid empowers the children by allowing them to tell their stories and develop their talents, while in the fieldwork one noticed that in the majority of the workshops the children had to respond to copying exercises, where simple communication and quick responses were at play. Emotional empowerment through talent development and storytelling, would imply a more individualized accompaniment of the children, where there is time to give to each of them. However, in the fieldwork there was a bigger concern in creating a sense of flow, where all the children would participate in the activities. It can be argued, that in long-term the talents of these children can be developed. But the storytelling capabilities that the Vrolijkheid outlined in their website, are replaced by workshops where the children respond to quick visual and performative stimuli. Ghorashi, Boer, and Holder (2018) define the liminal condition of asylum seekers as time in which individuals can reinvent their lives since they are not attached to a particular social structure. Considering this, one can argue that the Vrolijkheid affects the children liminal condition. In an ideal manner, they would give more specific attention to some of the children, while in reality there is a concern to unite the children in repetition exercises, where processes of cultural adaptation tilt towards the Dutch structures. Moreover, O'Neills (2008) technique of storytelling would be complicated to manage in the case of Vrolijkheid at the Azc Rotterdam.

To further understand the disparity between *emotional empowerment* and *role of reproduction*, we are going to zoom on the challenges that the Vrolijkheid workers face at the Azc Rotterdam. In the analytical cluster *Identity*, one can understand that there are some difficulties in understanding some of the children's identity, posing challenges for the personal relation between the children and the workers, where tailored storytelling and talent development would take place. The workers of Azc Rotterdam face great difficulty in apprehending the children's past as well as their behavior. They also rely on nationalities as a paradigm of association. The activities don't imply a personal relationship between the workers and the children that would allow for their identity to be revealed. In the field, the lack of linguistic comprehension feeds simple exercises that are easy to get across in groups that change without warning. The second dilemma is identified, the one between creating social

cohesion in a group where copying simple exercises are at play or investing in the individual accompaniment that allows for the children to share their stories and talents.

In the results section, one can also notice that there are some apparent differences between the ideal and the real Vrolijkheid through the categories *answering uncertainty* and *bridging activities*. In the case of the ideal Vrolijkheid, the organization feeds the children's resilience through activities that bring continuity and structure to the children's lives, but in the fieldwork, it was noticed that in the bridging activities, they are socially challenged in new spaces around the city of Rotterdam. During the fieldwork conducted, two outside activities pointed to two different approaches, since in one the children faced greater uncertainty, and in the other, the adaptation to the outside world was taken through smaller steps. Even though the Vrolijkheid aims to create a feeling of security and continuity in children's lives, it was noticed in the field, that in one of the activities outside the camp, some uncertainty was encountered. If the integrative step is too big then the children can feel further excluded from Dutch society, facing high levels of uncertainty (Madanipour, 2015). In this sense, as the Vrolijkheid mediates the children's access to the outside world, inclusion steps need to be taken very carefully as they can generate further uncertainty in the children.

This dialogue between uncertainty and the integrative activities can also be further discussed through the domain *Integration* retrieved from the analysis of the interviews. In this segment, it was argued that the children went through a big process of normalization through the work of Vrolijkheid: 'strangeness' was transformed into 'normality'. It is here reasoned that since the group changes constantly, there are different levels of integration at play. In this process of cultural adaptation, the ones that just recently arrive can face uncertainty in their process of integration. Moreover, in this segment one identifies the third dilemma of Vrolijkheid, the one between generating predictability in a safe space through continuous exercises and taking the children outside, where they can face social uncertainty.

In this section, a web of significance was outlined in the case of the Vrolijkheid Rotterdam in a confrontation between the ideals and reality. Fed by tensions in the worker's narratives, this mismatch was further understood, and it is going to be concluded in the next section, where these micro-findings are merged in a macro reflection.

5. Discussion and Conclusion

The goal of this research was to delve into the world of Vrolijkheid, an organization that brings art workshops into asylum centers in the Netherlands and assess the *expectations*, *social dimensions*, and *tensions* that influence their work. By comparing the organization's online content to the reality found in the field at the Azc Rotterdam, it was understood that there are significant differences between the ideals of the organization and the social dimensions encountered in their work at the asylum center. Through Ethnographic methods of research, several conflicting aspects were discovered, giving strength to this research that aimed to identify the main divergences between the ideal Vrolijkheid (online), and the real Vrolijkheid (in the field). Alongside these aspects, the present study aims to understand *why* the Vrolijkheid principles are not applied in the camp, and for this reason, interviews were conducted with some of the workers of this organization, that revealed the central *tensions* of their practices.

Vrolijkheid's online content reveals that the organization is *expected* to celebrate diversity through their practices, to provide emotional empowerment through storytelling and talent development, and to answer the uncertainty and instability the children face in the camp with a continuous offer of workshops. On the other end, the fieldwork revealed the *social dimensions* of Vrolijkheid at the Azc Rotterdam where the Dutch Culture mediated a cross-cultural dialogue, the children were invited to imitate the teachers during the workshop, and the activities outside the camp allowed for the children to have contact with the mainstream culture. Due to this opposition, three empirical dilemmas were singled out throughout the analysis. They shed light on the contrasts between Vrolijkheid's *expectations* and the *social dimensions*, the ideal and the real. Firstly, the Vrolijkheid states their mission is to celebrate diversity within a multicultural environment, however, in the fieldwork, it was noticed that the cross-cultural dialogue was mostly mediatized by the Dutch Culture, that allowed for communitarian cohesion. Secondly, the organization is expected to empower the children through storytelling and talent development, yet, in the field a pattern of reproduction was identified, where the workers invited the children to copy visual and performative stimuli, allowing for simple exercises of repetition to gather a whole group. Lastly, the organization defines their role as an entity that answers uncertainty through continuous support, however, in the participant observation it was noticed some of the activities that connected the children with the mainstream culture created doubts and uncertainty in them.

To understand the disparity between Vrolijkheid's online representation and the reality witnessed in the fieldwork, three interviews were analyzed through the deducted lenses of

Grzymala-Kazłowska (2016), which put forward three main aspects of cultural adaptation: identity, security, and integration. The analysis of the interviews revealed that the workers of Vrolijkheid have difficulty in grasping the children's *identity* and dealing with the *security* in the group, however, they indicate that the children go through a long process of normalization during their social *integration* with the Vrolijkheid Rotterdam. If one sees the Vrolijkheid as a social anchor, one understands that integration is the central trait of their anchoring work. This fact allows us to induce the motives why the Dutch Culture plays such a central role in the workshops, as well as the use of mimicking exercises. It is deduced that the biggest concern of this organization is to create communitarian cohesion in a challenging and multicultural environment, by integrating them into the Dutch Culture that acts as a mediator the other cultures. This also shows that the identity of the children is less anchored. It displays the limits of Vrolijkheid's work: if the workers cannot apprehend the children's identity, it is hard to create activities that celebrate diversity and preserve children unique cultural traits. In terms of security, workers struggle in assuring it, since they face a high level of uncertainty regarding the unexpected departure of children and they face challenges in creating safety within a multicultural environment. Normalization processes allow for identities to merge, and behaviors to be standardized, which brings a bigger sense of security into the workshops.

Integration appears to be the key-anchoring aspect of Vrolijkheid at work, whereby the children engage with Dutch culture, and they are invited to mimic several exercises, as well as, to go outside the camp to participate in mainstream cultural initiatives. The social power of Art as a tool that can create intercultural dialogue and storytelling (O'Neill, 2008; Gonçalves & Majhanovich, 2016) is in deep contrast with Vrolijkheid's need to create an integrated and cohesive workshop. It is inducted that the primary concern of the workers is to manage a cohesive contact zone, as suggested by Cantel, an efficient response to multiculturalism (2015; 2012). This fact raises questions related to assimilation processes. Homogenization has long been criticized as a response to multiculturalism (Alexander, 2001). However, in the case of Vrolijkheid, assimilation processes appear to balance the worker's lack of knowledge regarding the children's identity, as well as answering to the unpredictability of the work. On one side of the scale, this feature undermines the children's identity. On the other, it is capable to fight their liminal condition and build a connection with a new social structure (Turner, 1994).

Uncovering the work of Vrolijkheid raises several questions on the role of Humanitarian aid in camps, contributing to the field of studies of Humanitarian aid with artistic purposes (Zelizer's, 2003; Appe, 2006), more specifically in the case of provisory settlement (Andemicael, 2011; O'Neill, 2008). Building on these findings, this study focuses Art and

Humanitarian aid in the case of Vrolijkheid, which is here linked to processes of multiculturalism, giving a sociological insight on the cultural dimensions of projects with a humanitarian and artistic aim. Aligned with Agier (2002, 2010), it is noticed that the Humanitarian actors that come into the Azc contribute to its hybrid environment and disturb the social dynamics in the camp. Moreover, when connected to Madanipour (2015) one understands the importance of these integrative steps, that connect the children with the mainstream culture. Nevertheless, this author also shows that if the integrative steps are too big, the children can feel further excluded from their surroundings.

This thesis puts forward the complexities of Vrolijkheid's work. The first discovery is that the online content of this organization is not aligned with their practices found at the Azc Rotterdam. It is suggested that this happens because online the organization presents an idealized version of their work, which would imply a tailored approach. Contrarily, when working with the children in the field, it was noted that the biggest concern of the staff was to manage the group and create a cohesive environment. Ideas are replaced by needs. The Ethnographic method allowed us to identify the complex web of significance in the case of Vrolijkheid, where artists face a diverse group, and they need to build a common ground, between Eritrea, Somalia, Sri Lanka, Iraq and Syria through Art. However, this thesis underlines that before Art is intercultural dialogue, Art is cultural identity, meaning that the artist leading the workshop interferes with the social environment through his cultural conceptions. In this sense, when artists come into the Vrolijkheid and bring their artistic workshops, a cultural transfer is at play, especially in shelters since they are usually deprived of cultural and political forms (Diken, 2014). In a time when globalization is reducing the differences between individuals at a fast pace, one wonders if the Vrolijkheid's work is just part of this global movement, or if the children that participate in the workshops are losing their native cultural identity.

5.1 Limitations and further research

This case study opens several avenues for new research. Due to its Ethnographic character and its in-depth qualities, this particular research calls for further research that tests some of the findings of this study in other contexts.

Moreover, this study also faced some empirical boundaries, since this thesis focused on the work of Vrolijkheid within a specific camp in Rotterdam, which makes the data limited and site-specific. To further understand the work of Vrolijkheid, it would be crucial to analyze a representative sample and grasp how the Vrolijkheid works in other camps. Gathering data on

several camps in the Netherlands would allow further evaluation of these findings, to assess if they are similar to these or not.

One fragility of this ethnographic study was the short time span in which it was conducted. Ethnographic studies are spread through long periods (Byrman, 2012). Further research would benefit from a longitudinal study which accompanied the Vrolijkheid during a lengthier period of time. Alongside this, a constraint of this particular research was the fact that the phenomenon was analyzed from the production view, instead of the reception. Further studies would benefit from interviews that shed light on the children's experiences with the Vrolijkheid. Indeed, interviewing the children that are in the camps would allow for an overarching view on the impact of this organization, and to grasp how the children interpret the activities.

On another level, it would very interesting to compare the work of Vrolijkheid to artistic projects in other countries. Italy and Greece receive more significant portions of migrants that are consequently sent to other European Countries. It would be academically relevant to understand how they tackle such integrative aspects in their practices. A qualitative comparative case study could shed light on how different countries integrate the children through artistic projects.

Moreover, this Ethnographic study allowed us to extend the research gap of Andermichael (2011), as it showed that this area of research is very complex, outlining the importance of first well-mediated steps into the host society. Further studies should delve into this area of studies, a challenging field that reflects on the paradoxes between exclusion and inclusion, segregation and integration, pluralism and assimilation, diversity and cohesion, which are at the core of these small organizations that bring Art into 'waiting zones'. These dilemmas present the choices that will shape the future of our Societies.

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7. Appendix

A. Interview Guide

Category 1: Personal Profile

1. Could you tell me a bit about yourself?
 - Age, occupation, interests
 - Nationality/ country that they live in currently

Category 2: Personal Relationship with Vrolijkheid

2. Can you tell me about your position within the activities?
 - Time period, Responsibilities

- 2.1. Can you tell me about what your role (What you do) in the activities?
- 2.2. What was your first impression of the work here in the Azc?
- 2.3. What motivates you to be here? (Meaning, what does it make you feel?)
- 2.4. Can you maybe tell me a little bit about the Azc Rotterdam? (How it relates Vrolijkheid)

Category 3: *Vrolijkheid's work*

3. Can you tell me a bit about the projects you do?
 - 3.1 What do you consider to be the most important aspects of the work you do?
 - If they prepare workshops what are the main concerns
 - 3.2 Can you tell me a bit about how this works with the other volunteers and teachers?

Category 4: *Children and Impact*

4. Can you maybe describe the children you work with?
 - 4.1. How has your relationship evolved with the children over time?
 - 4.2. Give an *example* of child which resonated with you?
 - 4.3. What would you say the workshops bring to the children's lives?

Category 5: *Activities*

4. Can you maybe describe one or two of your favorite workshops?
 - (Why it was one of your favorites) (How did the children react?)
 - 4.1 What were some of the important aspects of these particular activities? (Strengths)

Category 6: *Challenges*

4. Overall: What are some of the difficulties that you came across in the workshops?
 - 4.1. *Give examples.*
 - 4.2. Personally: for you what are some of the challenges that you face as a volunteer?

Category 7: *Art*

5. How important are the Arts in the projects you do?
 - 5.1. How do the children relate do the different types of artistic expression? (Music, dance) -
Examples

Category 8: *Integration*

8. How do you interact with people from outside the camp?
 - 8.1 Can you give an *example* of some of the projects that build these dialogues?
 - 8.2 How do you help children becoming closer to the Dutch culture?

Category 7: *Impact and Future*

7. Overall, how would you describe the evolution over time of these workshops here at the Azc?
 - 7.1 How would you like to see these projects in the future?

B. Interview Topics

Topics of the interview guide	Relation to literature	Relation to observation notes
Personal profile (contextualization of the interviewees)	Building on multicultural environments (Sealy, 2018)	Volunteers and workshop leaders have a particular <i>habitus</i> , which affect the social environment in a different way

Personal relation Vrolijkheid (motivations, development over time, position)	Sherman (2009) relevance of Humanitarian aid. Sandri (2018) – solidarity faces alienation. Appel (2006) artists and humanitarian aid.	The role that they play: volunteer or a leader of an activity. Improvisation in role-taking in the activities
Vrolijkheid's work (Context of the shelter, work dynamics, the main aspects of their work)	Agier (2010) humanitarian aid in refugee camps. Dikens (2014) temporary spaces – absence of cultural and political forms. Exclusion spaces (Madaniypour, 1988)	The context in which the activities are set appears to affect the children's behavior.
Children and impact (zoom on the children, relationship built, a special child, impact)	Multicultural dynamics Hartmann and Gerteis (2005). Liminality suggested by Turner (1994) – individuals between structures.	Difficulties in assessing the children they work with. Distinction between them and comparing to the 'normal'.
Activities (workshops, motivations, examples)	Andermichael (2011) types of mediums used.	Relation to the artistic medium-workers take constant pictures of the activities.
Challenges (difficulties, on a practical level, personal level)	Exclusion spaces (Madaniypour, 1988). Art and cultural identity.	Chaos which can provoke uncertainty in the children, as well as challenges when taking them outside the camp.
Art (importance artistic medium)	Fitzpatrick (2002) Arts in refugee camps Appel (2006) Humanitarian role of Art making Cohen (2005) Arts overcome the traumas of War Art and intercultural dialogue (Gonçalves and Maihanovich, 2016)	Arts as a toll of acculturation and assimilation in some of the activities proposed. In others, there is a freer character of the materials and a cultural role is dispersed.
Integration	Social anchoring (Grzymala-Kazłowska, 2016) Multicultural dynamics (Sealy, 2018)	Role of different cultures in a space. Cross-cultural dialogue.