



“Mins, ik goan ier nooit maar weg”

A study concerning community identity, cultural differences and social cohesion in Urk

MA Thesis

Name: M.W.J. (Romi) Visser

Student number: 2012966

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Department of Culture Studies

School of Humanities and Digital Sciences

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Supervisor: Dr. Martin Hoondert

Second reader: Dr. Hans Siebers

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1. Abstract

The former island Urk has been researched many times before due to its salient culture which is marked by island history, its inhabitants, religion, cohesiveness, dialect and fishery. Despite the current diversity and dynamics within the community, it is still perceived to be a strong cohesive group. However, existing literature lacks attention concerning these topics within the Urker population, viewing them as a homogenous, static community. Therefore, this study attempts to cover these underappreciated concepts of diversity and dynamics by stating the following research question: “*How do the cultural differences between the older and younger generation of Urk affect the Urker community identity and the social cohesion within the community?*”. In order to answer this research question, previous research concerning the Urker culture and theories of community identity and social cohesion are utilized. Additionally, qualitative data is collected through in-depth interviews. The outcome of this study contributes to understanding the concept of social cohesion within the Urker community in relation to diversity and community identity. Additionally, based on the outcomes, this research attempts to provide recommendations which can be applied to contemporary societies.

Key words: Urk, cultural differences, cultural diversity, community identity, social cohesion

Word count: 23.119

2. Introduction and Problem statement

“Urk dat is een suutendal, wie d’r is die blift er al ” is a quote stemming from the anthem of Urk, a former Island in Flevoland, the Netherlands. Roughly translated, it says “Urk is a candy shop, everyone who’s there will stay forever”, which is a preview describing the salient culture amongst its Urker inhabitants. Urk used to be an island in the middle of the ‘Zuiderzee’, located in the centre of the Netherlands. In 1932, a dike named the ‘Afsluitdijk’ was finished, which marked the boundary between the Zuiderzee and the Noordzee (North Sea) (Brouwer & de Vries, 2006). From 1939 onwards, Urk was not an island anymore, but connected to the mainland (Brouwer & de Vries, 2006).

Urk has a rich history and a salient culture characterized by religion, dialect, island history and fishery. Although Urk became a part of the mainland 80 years ago, it is still considered to be a closed community (Gaag, 2009) with a strong dichotomy between in- and outsiders, hardly influenced by secularization (Hak, 1992), and still counts 94% of its population as churchgoers (Schmeets, 2016). Regardless, there is reason to believe that the identity of Urk has changed due to influences like globalization, digitalization, increase in wealth, emancipation, etc. (Kempe, 2007). Especially the younger generation might be affected by these influences (Li Chungling & Liu Senlin, 2020; Kempe, 2007). This is exactly the topic of this research: the differences in community identity between the older and the younger generation of Urk, and the extent of social cohesion within the community regardless these differences.

2.1.Relevance of the research

Urk has been the object of study many times before (Brouwer & de Vries, 2006; Declercq, 2020; Gaag, 2009; Kempe, 2007; Kruize 2012; van der Maat, 2007; Roos, 2015; Wallenburg, 2008). Its community, language, culture, religion, history, inhabitants, geographic symbols, archeology, etc. have been studied by archaeologists, historians, journalists, writers, and many more. Urk has been romanticized as ‘the lost paradise’, and the ‘garden of Eden’ where time stood still, but it has also been criticized by the media, exposing contradictions like ‘psalms and pints’, and ‘Saturday violence versus Sunday rest’ (Brouwer & de Vries, 2006). Despite the change of times, Urkers still prefer partners to be an Urker (Brouwer & de Vries, 2006) and believe that the ‘special Urker bond’, the feeling of being an Urker, despite the cultural changes, will never cease (Kempe, 2007, p. 53). This indicates that the Urker community is very close knitted. The fact that many young Urkers return to Urk after their studies, is a very ‘interesting

phenomenon to do further research upon' (Kruize, 2012). Research by Gaag (2009) confirms the idea of a 'special Urker bond' by concluding that the Urker community is relatively- to strongly closed. Even though Urk is considered to be a closed community, there is reason to assume that this community is changing (Kempe, 2007). Declercq (2020) speaks of a 'generational dichotomy', describing that the world looks different for the older generation than it does for the younger generation. Therefore, an intergenerational perspective is not only interesting but also relevant to apply when doing research on the Urker community. In 1932, the former mayor optimistically proclaimed change when the 'Lemsterdijk' (the dike that connected Urk to the mainland) was finished, stating that "Much of 'the old' will be replaced by 'the new' [...] It will change." (Brouwer & de Vries, 2006, p. 4).

Kempe performed the most recent in-depth research on cultural changes in Urk in 2007 which is a considerable amount of time ago, especially taking into account the rapid changes concerning for example the development of digitalisation of society over the past fifteen years. This is an important factor to take into account, since internet exposes people to more diversified cultural content, which can have a weakening effect on (national) identity (Li Chungling & Liu Senlin, 2020). The Urker identity is one of the most valued characteristics by Urkers (Kruize, 2012), which makes research into this topic very relevant as it gives insight into how this identity is affected by cultural changes.

Furthermore, the Urker community has often been looked at as homogenous and static in previous researches. "The outsider has the idea that the Urker population is one homogenous, very conservative community" (Kempe, 2007; Langstraat, 1967, p. 12), paying limited- or no attention to the diversity and dynamics of identity within the community and between generations.

In this thesis the differences within the Urker community will be denounced. In contrast to existing research, this thesis will focus on diversity by zooming in on what is actually happening *within* the community. By also taking into account the influence of new developments like digitalisation, this thesis aims to present a relevant description of the Urker community identity and its' social cohesiveness.

2.2. Aim of the research

Looking at community identity from an intergenerational perspective will contribute to contemporary literature and society in several ways. Firstly, the use of an intergenerational perspective allows for an understanding of the cultural diversity within the community, taking into account the changes that developed over the past decades.

Secondly, an intergenerational perspective allows us to see how the cultural differences between generations have affected community identity. Namely, at times we ‘imagine our identities as static’ while identities are actually always ‘plural, fluid and changeable’ (Hedges, 2021, p. 153).

Third, the maintenance of the Urker community identity, or at least the idea of a stable identity as phrased by the Urkers themselves, is a relevant research topic, especially nowadays. “In an increasingly individualistic society, it is like a breath of fresh air to know that there are still communities” (Kempe, 2007, p.59). Kempe (2007) continues by stating that the Urker culture is one that “needs to be cherished” (p. 59). It is interesting to compare fragmented, individualistic societies, like many western societies nowadays, with Urk since it is still considered to be a strong socially cohesive community to which its inhabitants feel connected (Gaag, 2009, Kempe, 2007, Kruize, 2012). Can we learn from Urk and its strongly experienced social cohesion? In order to restore trust and solidarity ‘we need to create a new, more capacious sense of ‘we’ [...]’ (p. 163-164) according to Putnam (2007). Social cohesion, i.e. being close knitted as a group based upon trust and solidarity, can lead to a large number of economic, social and political goods (Holtug, 2017) and can therefore be a key concept for contemporary fragmented and individualistic societies. Additionally, there is a lot of evidence that proves communal living to be strongly associated with wellbeing and health (De Vos, 2004).

This thesis fits the content of the master ‘Management of Cultural Diversity’ as it looks into increasing cultural diversity alongside the continuity of a cohesive community. It looks in to how cultural differences between generations in Urk, affect community identity and the degree of social cohesion. The aim of this thesis is to contribute in understanding how contemporary societies can learn from the outcome of this thesis in battling detrimental fragmentation and building social cohesion.

Furthermore, on a more local level, this research aims to contribute to the knowledge of local stakeholders such as the municipality of Urk or the local schools. It could be helpful for them to understand by what and how the younger generation is influenced, by what cultural factors the community identity is affected and how that influences the social cohesion within the community.

Based on the literature and problem statement presented above, the following research question is formulated: *“How do the cultural differences between the older and younger generation of Urk affect the Urker community identity and the social cohesion within the community?”*

In order to answer the main research question, several sub questions are formulated below.

1. What is the cultural background of Urk concerning the past decades?
2. What are the differences between how the older and the younger generation perceive the Urker community identity?
3. What are the cultural differences between the two generations?
4. What cultural factors affect the older generation?
5. What cultural factors affect the younger generation?
6. To what extent is the community cohesive regardless of its diversity?

The first chapter of this thesis is the theoretical framework. It is advised to read the historical background on the Urker community (Appendix A) before reading the theoretical framework, in order to fully grasp the context of this research. The remaining chapters consist of the methodology, results, conclusion, discussion, recommendations and limitations.

3. Theoretical Framework

Based on the research question, community identity, cultural differences and social cohesion are taken as main concepts of this thesis. The following theoretical framework will provide theoretical background and insights concerning these concepts. Community identity will be elaborated on first, followed by cultural differences. Finally, the concept of social cohesion will be looked into. All paragraphs of this chapter are concluded with how the discussed theory can be applied to the Urker community.

3.1. Community Identity

In the following section, approaches by Durkheim (1964), Taylor (1982), Li Chungling and Liu Senlin (2020), De Vos (2004) and Barth (1998) concerning the concept of community identity will be elaborated upon. The work of Durkheim (1964), Taylor (1982), and Li Chungling and Liu Senlin (2020) is mostly used for defining community identity. Work by De Vos (2004) has previously been used by other researches concerning Urk (Kempe, 2007), and mainly focuses on the conditions for building and maintaining a community. It focuses not only on defining community identity, but also on what *binds* a community. This is especially relevant due to the significant role that social cohesion plays within this thesis, the extent to which the Urker community is bound regardless of internal differences and diversity. Therefore, work by De Vos (2004) will be elaborated on most.

3.1.1. In-group Similarities, Between-group Dissimilarities & Urker Identity

Identity relates to ‘how we think about other people around us, and what we imagine others think of us’ (Kid & Teagle, 2012 , p. 7). When applying this to a community, the distinction between in- and outsiders of the community is added to that identity. Ethnic identity furthermore, relates to one’s (cultural) background and is very important to take into account within the framework of community identity, because of the role it can play for people within a community. According to Barth (1998), ethnic identity is regarded as a status that is superordinate to most other statuses, it is imperative and cannot temporarily be put aside. This also means that this identity ‘implies a series of constraints on the kinds of roles an individual is allowed to play, and the partners he may choose for different kinds of transactions’ (p. 17). The moral and social components of this ethnic identity are even made further resistant to change by being put into stereotyped clusters belonging to this identity. Naturally, one’s ethnic identity therefore has a great impact on one’s behaviour and thoughts towards in and outsiders. This is in line with Durkheim (1964), who argues that communities live based on a social bond,

or a ‘mechanical solidarity’, which results from in-group similarities with positive sentiments towards in-group members, and between-group dissimilarities and negative sentiments towards others (De Vos, 2004). In-group similarities could for example concern certain traditions, rituals, beliefs skills and activities (De Vos, 2004). Durkheim (1964) additionally argued that social bonds are not only based on one’s interests alone, but that one also has a need to be interdependent with others, it needs altruistic sentiments. “Men cannot live together without acknowledging, and, consequently, making mutual sacrifices” (Durkheim, 1964, p. 228).

Language is also an important marker of (dis)similarity, because it enables people to understand others around them, where they are from and what their background is in a split second (Kruize, 2012). Knox (2001) explains this by stating that ‘language [...] constantly reasserts the membership of particular people to particular categories’ (p. 318). Such in-group similarities and between-group dissimilarities can be instigators of stereotypes as mentioned by Barth (1998). This is why ethnic identity plays an important role in inter-ethnic interaction (Barth, 1998), or in other words, interaction between insiders and outsiders. This is because in- and outsiders have different values due to their ethnic identity, and differences between these value orientations can lead to constraints on inter-ethnic communication. This is in line with the between-group dissimilarities and negative sentiments towards others mentioned by Durkheim (1964).

Furthermore, according to Barth (1998), behaving in a way that is discrepant with a person’s value orientations can be negatively sanctioned. Just as males and females can be ridiculed for not ‘acting according to their role’, so can members of ethnic groups be ‘punished’. It is then expected that people are reluctant to act in other ways, so not according to their ethnic identity and its characteristics, out of fear that it might be inappropriate (Barth, 1998). This encourages the proliferation of cultural differences which can accordingly be used to dichotomize between in- and outsiders. Barth (1998) states that “a dichotomization of others as strangers, as members of another (ethnic) group, implies a recognition of limitations on shared understandings, differences in criteria for judgement of value and performance, and a restriction of interaction to sectors of assumed common understanding and mutual interest” (p. 15).

General in-group similarities as mentioned by Durkheim (1964), concerning the Urker community are often related to having the same Christian religion, speaking the Urker dialect, living in Urk, and sharing more or less the same norms and values with the rest of the community. Altruistic sentiments furthermore, implying the absence of expecting something in return, corresponds with the Urker community as well. Mutual aid is ‘one of the biggest

pillars that Urk leans on' (Kempe, 2007, p. 44). There will always be someone there to help when one is in need. Especially within families, it is considered 'normal' to help or to do things for each other without expecting anything in return (Kempe, 2007).

In this case, ethnic identity relates to Urker identity, and the fact that it is superior could be an explanation of why the identity of Urkers has such a big impact on the decisions that they make, and how they have maintained their culture, values and behaviours although they lost their 'island status' many years ago. Furthermore, the dichotomization of others as strangers is also to be seen in the fact that Urkers literally call them strangers (*vreemden*). A limitation of shared understandings between them and outsiders could be the result of differences in their cultural background. Also, due to the media that often portray negative images of Urk, outsiders can have a strongly divergent image of Urk that does not match with the view that Urkers themselves have (Kruize, 2012). Additionally, identifying insiders is made easier by the fact that Urkers recognize other Urkers when being outside of the village, for example because of the way that they look, speak or behave. 'You find them everywhere' (p. 38), and when they do, they chat because they share a collective background and language, even though they never speak to each other in Urk (Kempe 2007). In an intergenerational research concerning the Urker dialect, Roos (2015) concluded that there are some aspects of the dialect that changed, but that overall there have been almost no shifts towards standard Dutch. This indicates, that the Urker dialect has been maintained together with the Urker ethnic identity.

Declercq (2020), a journalist that lived in Urk to do ethnographic research, recognized the 'role' that people within the Urker community (Barth, 1998) play, and described it as the 'Urker passport'. The passport determines who you are, and prescribes you to meet rules created by the church and your family (Declercq, 2020). It works like a life insurance: if you comply with the rules, 'the people of the village will always be there for you' (Declercq, 2020, p. 97). Consequently, it can be stated that the Urker identity, as a superordinate ethnic identity, contributes to the process of confirming one's identity as an insider. This emphasizes a clear distinction between in- and outsiders and explains the boundary between them. It takes hard work to understand the ethnic identity of Urkers, let alone to affiliate with it as an outsider. Respondents in a research by Kruize (2012) add to this by indicating that 'Urkers are very open to outsiders, but if they don't adapt, it will be very hard for them to settle in Urk' (p. 32). So for an outsider to overcome the boundary, they would have to adapt to the Urker identity, norms and values and conform to the 'passport'. To conclude, theory by Barth (1998) leads us to expect that Urkers are reluctant to act out of their identity as an insider, and outsiders have a

significant boundary to overcome if they ever were to try to really understand or even become part of the insiders.

3.1.2. *Economic & Governance Factors of Community Identity*

Besides looking at community as a social concept, Taylor (1982) highlights economic aspects as indispensable parts of a community (De Vos, 2004). Fishery as a source of income is an example of such an economic aspect. In literature by McGoodwin (2001) concerning small-scale fishing communities it is stated that “fishing at sea requires high degrees of interdependence, self-reliance, autonomy, risk-taking, and outdoor work challenging nature, and if these are important cultural characteristics of the fishing occupation they are also necessarily important characteristics of individual fishers.” (p. 14). The practice of fishing in a fishery dominated place, is additionally described to be the ‘glue’ that holds a community together according to Brookfield et al. (2004). Thus, fishery is not merely of economic importance, but also plays an important role in binding a community on a more social level.

Furthermore, when taking into account governance factors, Bowles and Gintis (1998) also describe communities as a ‘governance structure’ that solves coordination problems through applying punishment and restrictions on its people (De Vos, 2004).

Economic aspects also play a salient role within the Urker community, because since the 17th century they only had fishery to rely on as their main source of income (Brouwer & de Vries, 2007; Kempe, 2007). The fact that fishing is related to challenges and risk-taking is made clear by the Fishers Monument (Vissersmonument) that presents all the names of people that did not return after going out to sea (Kempe, 2007). When it comes to a governance structure, high levels of social control seem to play an important role in community governance (Kempe, 2007). For example, in the documentary ‘Nashville – Urk’, two American basketball players are filmed as they settle in Urk to pursue their basketball career there. ‘Black men of 2 meters tall who only speak English and walk through the village besides women in traditional Urker costumes and men in wooden shoes: the Urker notices’¹ (Declercq, 2020, p. 102). An Urker also peeked through their window as they watched a movie in which a man pulled down a women’s pants, for which DJ later received a phone call from the mayor asking ‘why he was watching porn’ (Declercq, 2020, p. 102). DJ states there to be ‘no kind of privacy at all’, but the PR person of the municipality states that ‘If there is peeking through the windows and control exercised over these boys, then they are to blame. There is no need to peek through a window of one who behaves normally’ (Declercq, 2020, p. 102). Of course, this documentary is from years ago, but also in the more recent study by Kempe (2007), it is said that social

control is still present within the Urker community. And even though it is sometimes experienced as something negative, it is also said to have positive outcomes when it is used as a resource to increase things such as socially desired behaviour, to offer help, warn or to pay interest in one another (Kempe, 2007).

3.1.3. Status Competition, Reciprocity & Conditions for Community

De Vos (2004) concludes that a community is ‘a group of individuals with an internal structure of reciprocity relations’ (p. 15). It is a social form related to the human social life and struggling between the two contradictory modes of reciprocity and status competition, which will be elaborated upon below. Having reciprocity relations is essential for a community to exist and such relations are increased when a community meets four certain conditions. Therefore, these four community conditions will be elaborated upon in this section.

To begin with, ‘status competition mode’ refers to the motivations and abilities that can help in competing over resources like territory and money (De Vos, 2004). It is much older than the reciprocity mode as it is a ‘natural’ mode for human beings (De Vos, 2004).

The ‘reciprocity mode’, also known as the ‘communal mode’, refers to kin and reciprocal altruism. Firstly, kin altruism concerns altruistic behaviour and care such as feeding, protecting, coaching, sharing and instructing towards related individuals like offspring (De Vos, 2004). Secondly, reciprocal altruism refers to helping behaviour towards non-kin without an explicit, calculating expectation of future return. When people show such care and attachment to non-kin, a mechanism of reciprocal altruism is put into operation (De Vos, 2004). To elaborate upon such a mechanism, if person A gives something to person B, it doesn’t have to be person B who returns the favour to A immediately, but it could be that person C does in the future and vice versa. This generalized exchange means that a community is more than merely the ‘sum of its parts’, since the probability of a favour returned is much higher compared to a ‘single’ relationship (De Vos, 2004). This accordingly builds ‘a common interest in the continuing existence of the group as a whole’ (De Vos, 2004, p. 15).

Like mentioned above, there are four conditions that are essential for communities because they increase reciprocity relations. First, the interdependency condition. When everyone expects to 1) sometimes be in a position to have something to offer and 2) to sometimes be in a position to need something of someone else in the community, it means that people are aware of their interdependency which triggers the communal mode.

Second, the condition of (expected) long-term relationships. The mere existence of the expectation of a long-term relationship with community members, can trigger the communal

mode. For example, inviting your neighbours to get to know them, leads to developing reciprocal relations, because it signals that you expect to have a common future.

Third, there is the multiplexity condition. When relationships have many dimensions, people develop more reciprocity relations, because it means that there are more opportunities to help each other. Help that is offered on one dimension, for example friends, can be returned in another dimension, for example, colleagues. Multiplexity is also related to interdependency, as more dimensions means a higher potential interdependency.

Lastly, the condition of easy accessibility. As straightforward as it sounds, it is easier for people to reciprocate when it is easier, cheaper, or faster to do so. However there are different aspects to it. First, it is important for people to understand each other's language (cognitive aspect). Second, interaction can be hindered by physical distance (spatial aspect), but can be overcome with digital communication resources like a mobile phone (technical aspect).

When taking in-to account the technical aspect and the way that the internet influences communities, De Vos (2004) argues that it only leads to an easier mutual accessibility, by adding a 'communication device in the form of electronic mail' (p. 25). He mainly expects the internet to have favourable consequences for the relationships that people build with each other, because it leads to 'a relaxation of time constraints, [...] richer content, self-disclosure and emphatic connection compared to face-to-face communication' (p. 25). De Vos (2004) saw mostly positive opportunities when it comes to the use of internet within communities, arguing that it will not change the degree of interdependence, the expectancy of long-term relationships and the multiplexity of relations. The existence of digital facilities can also be used as a means to be able to disperse without losing contact (De Vos, 2004). Of course, such facilities do not fully replace (physical) contact, but it at least eases being away from your loved ones. Here, only e-mail is considered, but currently there are many more forms of digital communication like calling, texting, facetime, etc. via a great deal of different (social media) platforms. Additionally, it is very important to consider the differences between generations when it comes to the use of internet, social media and digital devices. Take for example the younger generation who are far more familiar with digitalisation compared to older generations and therefore make more use of mobile phones, social media and the internet. Due to this enormous growth in digital facilities, it can be stated that De Vos's (2004) statements are outdated.

To continue with the Urker community, competing over resources to gain status is a common case (Kempe, 2007). According to Urker respondents in a research by Kempe (2007), the competition for women is mainly in things like furniture or clothes, and for men working

in the fishing industry, the profit is something to compete for. Also, among Urker youth there are competitions concerning (souped up) scooters, designer clothes and who drinks the most alcohol (Kempe, 2007). Due to Urkers living close to each other, they see everything and that can make them want to have the same materialistic things, as a respondent indicates (Kempe, 2007). Not only on economic, but also on religious level, forms of competition are to be found within the Urker community. Several respondents (Kempe, 2007) indicate that between conservatives and progressives, there are people who believe to be ‘above’ others. A progressive respondent stated that ‘A part of the group (conservatives), have, according to me, the feeling that they are better than we (progressives) are. We are lighter and therefore lesser’ (Kempe, 2007, p. 43). Status competition within and between churches explains how the Urker community went from 3 churches to almost 30 in a timeframe of about 80 years. However, religion still brings a high level of unity. We recognize this in the Urker community where support comes from everywhere in the community, regardless of the (religious) differences.

Furthermore, the reciprocity mode. According to the respondents of Kempe (2007) Urkers have, to the amazement of outsiders, an eye for each other and pay a lot of interest. Especially in times of mourning, people offer lot of support by providing food and emotional support by sending letters and asking how someone is holding up (Kempe, 2007). The local newspaper ‘Het Urkerland’ also contributes to this, by posting rubrics with names of people that have been ill for a long time for example (Kempe, 2007).

At last, the Urker community meets all the community conditions. Firstly, the interdependency condition. Participants in the research by Kempe (2007) indicate that Urkers depend on each other in several ways and that there are many opportunities to provide help. For example, the older generation is dependent on people to bring them to the hospital or to clean their houses, and younger people can for example need babysitters or emotional support when losing someone. Besides the day-to-day support there is also need for mental health support, however this is a more ‘sensitive’ topic within the community (Kempe, 2007). When talking about reaching out for help when you have mental health problems one respondent stated: ‘You would rather have that nobody knows about that, so that they will not talk about it’ (Kempe, 2007, p. 34). Therefore, it can be stated that for certain topics, people experience boundaries like shame and fear that prevents them to ask for help.

Secondly, the Urker community knows many (expected) long-term relationships (Kempe, 2007). Besides a few exceptions, all Urkers are born and raised in the community and end up with an Urker partner. ‘Urk marries Urk’ (Kempe, 2007, p. 35). Mostly the older generations used to know everyone, but that became less as the community grew in numbers

(Kempe, 2007). Urkers however found a way to ‘cope’ with this by asking ‘Van wie bin jie ur iene?’ (From who are you one) in order to be able to place them in a certain family that they might know (Kempe, 2007). The younger generation also knows many Urkers, but mainly from within their own generation (Kempe, 2007). Furthermore, Urkers tend to stay within the village. You would have to need a ‘well-founded reason in order to move away’ (p. 35), like for your studies or job (Kempe, 2007).

Third, Urk knows a high level of multidisciplinary relations within the community (Kempe, 2007), since being a small and dense community increases the odds of your uncle being your teacher or your friend being your carpenter for example.

Fourth, the condition of easy accessibility including the cognitive, spatial and technical aspect. Urkers all speak the same dialect, understand each other well and are always up for a chat, which means that Urk meets the cognitive aspect of accessibility (Kempe, 2007). However, you ‘should not always be too open-hearted when talking to Urkers. You have to watch out that the entire community does not find out’ (Kempe, 2007, p. 37)². When it comes to the spatial aspect, there is no problem for Urkers to visit each other. Everyone has access to some kind of transport and sees no boundary in ‘traveling’ in order to see each other (Kempe, 2007). At last the technical aspect: mutual relations are usually maintained face-to-face, combined with a phone call every now and then (Kempe, 2007). This supports the idea of De Vos (2004) that digital devices are merely a bonus to the already existing physical contact. There is no up to date research concerning the Urker community taking into account the effects of further digitalization since about 2007 onwards. However, it is reasonable to expect that the use of digital devices has evolved enormously. Therefore, any of those effects found in this thesis will be discussed in the results section.

When it comes to the community identity of Urk, it can be stated that the community is still standing despite the changes it went through (Kempe, 2007). However, the persistence of the Urker community identity does not imply that it is static, because identity is plural, fluid and changeable by nature (Hedges, 2021). It could therefore be that the content of the identity itself has changed over time or that it is valued differently within the community, about which the next section will elaborate upon.

3.2. Generations and Cultural differences

After having looked into Urk’s community identity and the elements by which it is defined, this next section aims to dive deeper, looking at the diversity within the community.

Specifically speaking, the cultural differences between the older (70+) and the younger generation (18-25) will be elaborated upon. To better understand the concepts of this section, generation and culture will first be defined. This is followed by theory regarding generational differences (Li Chungling & Liu Senlin ,2020) and concluded with how this theory applies to the Urker community.

3.2.1. Defining Generation & Culture

When talking about generations, it is important to note that this research implies that it is not merely age, but that it is mostly one's cultural background and living conditions during adolescence that marks a group as a generation and separates them from another generation (Li Chungling & Liu Senlin, 2020). Furthermore, a simple definition of culture is 'the way of life of a group of people [...] it includes the customs, attitudes, beliefs, traditions, and rituals of a society' (Kid & Teagle, 2012, p. 6). In researching both the concept of identity as well as the concept of culture, it is important to note that 'identity can be expressed through culture' (Kid & Teagle, 2012 , p.7). This emphasizes their interdependence as well as their distinctiveness.

Doing research into cultural differences means doing research into culture. Thus, since we are looking at mainly generational differences, at least the following fields will be taken into account describing the Urker culture: religion, dialect, island history, cohesion, and fishery. These are the aspects that are most referred to in other literature (Brouwer & de Vries, 2006; Gaag, 2009, Kempe, 2007; Kruize, 2012). Any differences in how people from different generations experience these cultural aspects, or other traditions and rituals for example, could be indicators for generational differences.

3.2.2. Generational differences

According to Li Chungling and Liu Senlin (2020), each generation grows up in a different frame of time, a different (cultural) context which can affect their sense of national identity, or in this case community identity. Generally, the older generation has a stronger sense of community identity, are more influenced by social structural factors like their position in social hierarchy, and are less affected by media because their values are more or less fixed. Younger people however, have a weaker sense of community identity and are influenced more by cultural factors. For example, media and education have a direct impact on them, because they are in the stage of value formation (Li Chungling & Liu Senlin, 2020). Therefore, a higher exposure to media (internet, newspapers, magazines) can weaken the sense of one's community

identity. Furthermore, the influence of higher education leading to a lower community identity was found to be very significant.

Especially within the Urker community, the change of time has been an important determinant of the differences between the older- and the younger generation. The cultural background of the older generation is marked by their experiences with Urk being an island. Their generation is the only one alive today that has lived through the challenging process of Urk losing its island status and becoming part of the mainland. Their shared experiences regarding the change of time is what makes them a generation. The cultural background of the younger generation however, is marked by their relatively increased exposure to modern societies outside of Urk due to globalization and digitalization. In contrast to the older generation, they have never experienced Urk as an actual island and have had different opportunities for example to work or study outside of Urk.

The first difference between the older and the younger generation that Kempe (2007) indicates is that the younger generation is a considerably larger group. Almost half of the community is under 25 years old. This naturally leads to the fact that younger people mostly know people within their generation, while older people indicate to know their own- as well as the generation above them. The younger generation does know some people within the older generation, but these are usually family members. Additionally, younger people have different social activities, like going out in the weekends, and they make less distinction between people with conservative and progressive religious backgrounds compared to older people. Especially older people with a conservative religious background are said to try to distance their children from fellow generation members with a progressive religious background. Furthermore, Kempe (2007) states that due to the revival of the fishing industry in the 70's the 'community life' has watered down, because the higher wages led to a lower level of interdependency and more focus on materialistic matters. The increased wealth has also led to more use and abuse of alcohol and drugs, especially among the younger generation (Declercq, 2020; Wallenburg, 2008). It is hard for people to talk about addictions or their emotional struggles, because it can affect your reputation within the community in a negative way. 'You get a connotation that is very hard to get rid of. [...] Social control leads to eternal silence' ³ (Declercq, 2020, p. 250, 251). According to Declercq (2020), the older generation does not want to see this generational gap and focuses more on the positive things about Urk.

The younger generation of Urk grew up with increased digital culture, wealth, and opportunities when it comes to education compared to the older generation. The opportunity to study and work outside of Urk has later on been of great importance for Urk, since people were

forced to utilize this because of the decline in the fishing industry (Kempe, 2007). Regardless, the Urker industry is booming and expanding enormously which results in a variety of challenges. For example, according to Declercq (2020) there are work related activities on Sunday and a large part of the workforce is foreign and not religious at all. ‘The young generations that replace the older people in the top of the organisations, are religious in theory, but base their day-to-day operations on their financial- and investor’s interests’ ⁴ (p. 285). This endless growth however, is ‘a potential threat to the Urker culture. The industry is way too big for the village’ ⁵ (p. 284).

‘Just like the rest of the Netherlands, Urk has to keep up with the time which leads to changes in the culture, norms and values’ ⁶ (Kempe, 2007, p. 56). Urk will grow to look more and more like the rest of the Netherlands, but there will always be a ‘special Urker connection; the feeling of being an Urker’ ⁷ (Kempe, 2007, p. 53). When it comes to differences in thoughts and values, Kempe (2007) unfortunately provides limited insight only stating that the older generation ‘thinks differently concerning various things compared to the younger generation’ (p. 44).

Looking at the information above, it can be stated that the main cultural differences between the older and the younger generation within the Urker community are to be found in (religious) values, opportunities for education and work, quantity of relations, social activities and the exposure to- and use of media. However, no conclusions can yet be drawn concerning the differences of how both generations perceive the Urker community identity. Urkers themselves however, believe that regardless of these differences, the ‘special Urker connection’ will always remain. Kempe (2007) predicts that this will mainly be because of the shared history, dialect, social control, family ties, mutual help and reciprocity within the community, but no sustainable conclusions are furthermore drawn as to what this ‘connection’ is driven and maintained by, taking into account the change of the time.

3.3. Social Cohesion

The final concept to discuss in this chapter is social cohesion. This is a very important concept within the thesis, because what I want to know is how the Urker community experiences itself to be cohesive, despite intergenerational differences. Urk’s community identity is looked into from an intergenerational perspective, which can lead to seeing both differences and resemblances between the older and the younger generation as discussed above. Through the lens of social cohesion, this thesis aims to see how these generations are still part of the same

community regardless of their differences. Therefore, social cohesion acts as an overarching concept.

However, it is very important to note that social cohesion as a concept seems to refer first and foremost to something like harmony. In this thesis, I have a more nuanced approach in which the issue is: how a community is *still* cohesive *despite* differences. In the discussion section, this research will point out if social cohesion is the right concept to use, or that another concept is needed.

In this section, first social cohesion will be defined according to Chan et al. (2006). Second, two possible explanations will be discussed of how a cohesive community can be maintained (Bayertz, 1999; Berman and Phillips, 2012; Holtug, 2017; Ratcliffe, 2012; Spicker, 2014).

3.3.1. *Defining Social Cohesion*

Diving into the roots of the concept of social cohesion, ‘cohere’ means ‘to hold firmly together’, ‘to form a whole’ (Oxford dictionary) or ‘stick together, remain united’ (The Oxford American dictionary) (Chan et al., 2006, p 288). ‘Cohesion’ is defined as ‘a state or situation in which all the parts or ideas fit together well so that they form united whole’ (p. 288). This means that social cohesion is about how well people in a society stick together. This is a reflection of an individual’s state of mind which will be manifested in a particular behaviour (Chan et al., 2006). People are said to stick together if the following three criteria are met: 1) when they can trust, help and cooperate with their fellow members of society, 2) when they share a common identity or a sense of belonging to their society on the long-term, and 3) when their subjective feelings and willingness in 1 and 2 are acted out in objective behaviour. Besides sharing a common identity, social cohesion also implies the presence of core sets of collective values (Berman & Phillips, 2012).

Chan et al., (2006) conclude that ‘Social cohesion is a state of affairs concerning both the vertical and the horizontal interactions among members of society as characterized by a set of attitudes and norms that includes trust, a sense of belonging and the willingness to participate and help, as well as their behavioural manifestations’ (p. 290).

At first glance, it looks like the concept of social cohesion fits the Urker community, because Urkers share a collective historical background, language, and they often participate and provide mutual help within the community. However, collective values are more difficult to define. This is mostly because of the generational and religious diversity within the

community. Kempe (2007) does state that the older generation ‘thinks differently’ (p. 44), but how and concerning what values remain to be unanswered questions.

3.3.2. *Social Cohesion & Solidarity*

According to Berman and Phillips (2012), social cohesion maximises solidarity. This also works the other way around: solidarity maximises social cohesion, which shows that they interact reciprocally and thus sustain each other (Holtug, 2017). Solidarity is the mutual attachment between individuals and refers to their shared identity, the actual common ground between them (factual level), and the mutual obligations to support and aid each other when necessary (normative level) (Bayertz, 1999). The two levels indicate that there is more to the attachment between individuals than merely sharing common ground, but that there is an emotional dimension in which a feeling of obligation emerges (Bayertz, 1999). Solidarity ‘is what ties people together, exclusion is the other side of the coin’ (Spicker, 2014, p. 3). Exclusion happens when people are not part of these networks of solidaristic social support. This would mean that any signs of exclusion within a community, also affect the level of social cohesion because not being part of a network is the opposite of remaining united and sticking together.

The feeling of having to support each other when necessary, as described by Bayerts (1999), is in line with the mechanical solidarity; ‘mutual obligations of rights and duties’ (De Vos, 2004, p. 8), that forms a community and is also present within the Urker community as previously mentioned. It could be that it is due to the reciprocal interaction between social cohesion and solidarity, that the community has been maintained. Perhaps this has been a key factor in overcoming intergenerational differences.

Furthermore, the role of exclusion within the Urker community is not yet researched directly. However, a concept that it could be compared to is ‘the Urker passport’, as referred to earlier by Declercq (2020), which works like a life insurance as long as you comply to the rules. It could be that, in order to avoid exclusion, people in the community make sure that they comply so that they are part of the networks of solidaristic support.

3.3.3. *Community cohesion*

Another possible concept that could explain social cohesion regardless differences, could be ‘community cohesion’. Community cohesion has been described as ‘living together well, implying social interaction and tolerance for diversity’ (Ratcliffe, 2012; Spicker, 2014, p. 6). Importantly, this definition refers to relations *between* groups/communities and therefore refers

to something like a community of communities (Parekh, 2000; Spicker, 2014). This is akin to seeing society as ‘a complex set of solidarities – a network of networks’ (Spicker, 2014, p. 3).

The concept of ‘community cohesion’, could be an additional explanation of how the Urker community has been maintained. It is most comparable to the strong family ties that the Urker community has. Therefore, it could be that family relations serve as ‘smaller network’ within the community, the overarching network.

4. Methodology

In this methodology section, the research design, data collection, sampling strategy and data analysis will be explained. Moreover, the quality indicators concerning the reliability, validity and transferability of this research will be elaborated upon.

4.1. Research Design & Data Collection

A qualitative research method is most appropriate for this research, because it is about deeper understanding the complex context of a particular community and the people that are part of it (Frankel & Devers, 2000). Instead of drawing on existing theory like in quantitative research, this research is explorative in nature, because it tries to provide new insights related to the concepts of community identity, diversity and social cohesion (Frankel & Devers, 2000). In order to answer the research question, this research made use of data collected through semi-structured, in-depth interviews. This is favoured over survey questionnaires, because it allows for dialogue and follow-up questions which is essential when trying to understand the complex topic of this research (Kendall, 2008).

During the interview, the Urker language was spoken by both myself as well as by participants. A first step in defining the Urker community identity was to ask participants to rank which words were most representative for this identity. This was done by providing them a physical stack of cards with words, in order for them to visually rank them. This list of words can be found in the interview guide and were chosen based upon previous studies by Kempe (2007), Kruize (2012), and Brouwer & de Vries (2006) indicating their significance for the Urker community. This list was also used as a starting point for asking the right open-ended interview questions in relation to the given ranking. Further questions that were asked regarding community identity and social cohesion were based upon previously constructed interview guides by Puddifoot (1995) who offered several elements to take into account when measuring community identity, and Chan et al., (2006) who did the same concerning the concept of social cohesion. A selection of the questions within these guides related to cultural markers such as religion, language, rituals and norms and values were processed into the interview guide. The concept of fishery was included as well, despite its economic nature, because it appeared to be a relevant marker for the identity of the Urker community based upon previous researches (Kempe, 2007; Kruize, 2012). At last, questions regarding what (generational) differences participants noticed concerning how the community identity and social cohesion were perceived were included as well.

4.2. Sampling Strategy

Selective sampling is used as a strategy to group participants according to pre-selected criteria (Mack, 2005). The pre-selected criterium that all participants had to meet was Urker ethnicity, meaning that they had to be born in Urk and had to have lived there for most of their lives. Age is included as a variable in order to select participants. This was essential for this thesis since it looked at two different generations (70+ and 18-25 years old), and because it is found to have a significant effect on community identity (Li Chungling & Liu Senlin, 2020). When taking into account control variables, religious background and gender are included in order to gather a group of participants that is as representative as possible for the Urker community. Religious background is furthermore a very important indicator for the background of participants, because it has a big influence on one's culture, norms and values in Urk (Kempe, 2007). Based on previous research by Kempe (2007), participants will be categorised as progressive or conservative, based on the church that they are part of.

The ideal sampling scheme can be found in Appendix B. The names and identity of the participants have been abbreviated to a 4 letter code. The first letter is their participant number, the second letter refers to the generation which they belong to (O = old, Y = young), the third letter relates to their religious background (C = conservative, P = progressive), and the last letter concerns their gender (M = male, F = female).

Kempe (2007) conducted fourteen interviews selecting participants based upon gender, age, place of birth and religious background. Kruize (2012) conducted fourteen interviews but states that in hindsight, 8 to 10 would have been sufficient. Based upon these previous researches, this thesis took into account twelve participants matching the characteristics mentioned above. The realised sampling scheme ticked off all of the boxes of the ideal sampling scheme. This scheme, and additional information concerning the participants can also be found in Appendix B.

To gather participants for this research, the municipality and the Cultuurhuis (local organisation; house of culture) served as a gatekeeper, which is someone in the position to identify and recruit potential participants (Mack, 2005). Additionally, the my own social networks were used. Calls for participants were spread via social media platforms such as Instagram, Facebook and Whatsapp of which some were shared by other Urkers on their social media pages. Potential participants were asked to fill out a Google Form in order for them to be able to provide information regarding their age, gender, religious and educational background. Based upon these filled out forms, the potential participants that best fit the criteria

were selected as participants and interviews were scheduled with them. The English interview guide is based upon the central elements of this research: community identity, cultural differences between generations, and social cohesion, and can be found in Appendix C. The Dutch version can be found in Appendix D. After the two first pilot interviews, the interview guide was adapted in order to optimize the other 10 interviews that were scheduled. Several questions were either removed, merged or rephrased.

4.3. Data analysis

The interviews were recorded and the analysis process was initiated with an 'intelligent transcription' of the audio records using the non-automated software 'oTranscribe' (oTranscribe.com). The Urker audio's were translated to standard Dutch during the process of transcribing. This form of transcription mainly ignored aspects that were not relevant to the study, such as emotional tone and pauses. In addition, the social conversation was marked as social talk with the exact time.

For coding the transcriptions, the data was selectively coded, according to the concepts of the literature presented above (Brouwer & de Vries, 2006; Gaag, 2009; Kempe, 2007; Kruize, 2012; Puddifoot, 1995). Axial coding was used to determine dominant patterns within the data (Saldaña, 2021) and open coding to cover additional themes that might be relevant for the central and/or sub research questions. A codebook that provides the main codes and sub-codes can be found in Appendix E.

In order to answer the main- and the sub-question(s) of this research, the answers of the participants belonging to the older generation were compared to the answers of the participants of the younger generation based upon the themes that appeared to be most relevant.

To ensure anonymity of the participants, codenames are used to replace their original names. Moreover, participants were asked to verbally give consent at the start of the interview in order to state that they were fully aware of how the interview was going to be processed as data.

4.4. Research quality indicators

4.4.1. Reliability

In order to make the participants comfortable and to increase the reliability of this research, the interviews were either conducted in their homes or in a private room at the local Cultuurhuis (house of culture), depending on their preferences. Interviews were held individually instead

of in groups to avoid socially desirable answers (Kruize, 2012). The interviews were furthermore held in the Urker dialect as ‘Urkers’ is the mother tongue of both myself and the participants. Being able to speak in their first language made it more comfortable for participants to share their thoughts. Since the linguistic structure of the dialect barely differs from the Dutch language, it was possible to transcribe the interviews in Dutch. Phrases of participants that are used in this thesis are translated of which the original Dutch text can be found in Appendix F.

Furthermore, a critical note must be made concerning the identity of myself as a researcher. I am to some extent an insider of the Urker community, because I have been partially brought up there. I additionally belong to the younger generation, which is also a category within this research. This can increase the reliability of the research by being able to do the interviews in the Urker dialect and making the participants feel comfortable and understood. Besides the advantages, my identity could also bring disadvantages like bias during the interviews and during interpreting the data. In order to eliminate as much bias as possible, the objectivity of data analysis is increased by using semi-structured interviews and objective coding close to the text. Also, during the interview briefing, participants were made aware of my Urker identity and were accordingly asked to answer the questions as if they were talking to an objective person who had no knowledge of the community. As a researcher, I made sure to ask enough follow-up questions in order to avoid having to use my own interpretation and background knowledge concerning the community. Furthermore, two supervisors of this thesis provided objective and critical feedback in order to contribute to the reliability of this research.

4.4.2. Validity

Doing qualitative research by conducting in-depth interviews is a valid approach in order to answer this research question, because it enables the researcher to find out the underlying thoughts to an answer, and how interviewees give meaning to their experiences (Flowerdew & Martin, 2005; Kruize, 2012). It provides complex descriptions of people’s experiences (Mack, 2005) in this case related to Urk’s culture and community identity.

4.4.3. Transferability

By using well established theories that have been used to do research before (Barth, 1998; Durkheim, 1964; Hedges, 2021; Li Chungling & Liu Senlin, 2020; Puddifoot, 1995; Taylor, 1982; De Vos, 2004) the transferability of this thesis increases. Moreover, the insights gained by this thesis concerning cultural diversity alongside the continuity of cohesion can contribute

to larger communities or societies. Within the discussion and recommendations section, it will be attempted to apply the results regarding the community to higher levels such as the Dutch society. Because Urk is a specific community, a reflection on the applicability of the results of this research in other contexts will be provided as well. As mentioned in section 1.4 ‘Aim of the research’, the outcome of this thesis aims to contribute to contemporary society in battling detrimental fragmentation.

5. Results

The results of the conducted research will be presented according to the central concepts within the theoretical framework of this thesis and the additional relevant themes that appeared in the coding process. First of all, community identity is discussed. Second, the differences and diversity within the community will be discussed. Third, cohesion will be elaborated upon. It turns out that the concepts and themes are closely interrelated; although I present them separately, it is important to know that they together form a complex web of factors that determine both the community identity and the cohesion in Urk.

5.1. Community Identity

During the interviews, participants had to form a top three of elements that, in their opinion, were most fitting for the Urker community identity. They could choose from a set of cards with 13 elements and were also free to add elements themselves. Most participants indicated to find all elements fitting or stated to not have a strict ranking among the three they chose. ‘Religion/church/faith’ was mostly put in the top 3, followed by ‘Family relations’, ‘Communal behaviour’, ‘Hospitality’, ‘Generosity’, ‘Dialect’ and ‘Status competition’. No clear pattern was found between the ranking of the elements and the demographic background of participants (generation, gender, religious background). This means that no clear distinction can be made in how the older and the younger generation described the community identity. Therefore, this section presents the findings regarding the most important community identity markers as indicated by all participants taken together. Furthermore, a brief description of the Urker character will be given, as this helps to better interpret the results by understanding the identity of Urkers, or at least the identity to which they compare themselves or others to.

5.1.1. Religion

Religion/church/faith was often described to be an indirect factor, serving as a motive for people to act out religious values such as hospitality and generosity. *Urk is religious which results into looking out for each other and communal behaviour. Religion/church/faith is the denominator of things like mutual help etc. (12YCM)*⁸. Even though some did not feel personally attached to it, it was still considered to play an important role within the community.

This is confirmed by the fact that participants often indicated religion, church and faith to be of influence on people’s behaviour, values and daily practices and rituals. An older participant for example states: *[...] the church leaves a dominant imprint and has certain norms*

and values, and one church is different from another, and if you want to be part of that, that is very pleasant, you belong somewhere... you are part of a community with these people (2OPM)⁹. Another younger participant confirms this by stating that *an Urker has a point of view often based on their belief* (6YCF)¹⁰. Regardless of personal religious differences, both generations agreed that religion, church and faith were important markers for the Urker community identity.

Furthermore, participants often mention rituals and religious practices to be relevant. For example, one participant mentions: *Sunday, two times to church and a coffee at grandma's. That really is the image I have when thinking about a typical Urker* (1YPF)¹¹. Religion is additionally visible on political level within the community. *Also in politics, the fact that the entire council here is Christian, that is truly exceptional* (12YCM)¹². Besides that, not only Urkers themselves, but outsiders too, notice the religious character of the community. They seem to have an expectation regarding the community that everyone there is very religious. *Religion/church/faith, that is the big one right. If you talk about Urk with others, then it is like 'everyone there goes to church, a decent two times on a Sunday'* (8YPM)¹³. Outsiders seem to have a more homogenous image when it comes to religion and Urkers are aware of that. In contrast, participants themselves emphasize the religious diversity and changes over the past years within the community. This will be elaborated upon later in the results section.

5.1.2. Family Relations

The second-most mentioned factor that identifies the community according to participants is 'Family relations'. Both young as well as older Urkers value the relations with their family a lot. Family plays a salient role within the community, which does not necessarily mean that it is always about roses, but it does show that it makes a lot of impact. [...] *I think that family relations are important. [...] I mean, they say 'outside Urk they do not have their children living nearby them', and we do have that. That is why I think it is important, but that does not mean that the relations are always good, but they do determine what you stand for in life I think* (11OPF)¹⁴. The fact that family relations are valuable is also seen in how often Urkers visit and see their family. All participants indicated to see their family weekly, if not daily. One young participant who moved out recently because she got married mentions: *now that I do not live at home anymore, my mom really likes it when I visit [...] because she misses me* (4YCF)¹⁵. Urk is rich in large families, but regardless of the size of the group Urkers still want to meet each other. As an older participant mentioned in marvel: *Yes that is the sticking, right. Look, they all have to continually be together. My oh my look, my neighbour has 9 children, I can see*

everything you know when my curtain is up, [...] and I said 'well your married ones (children) they always come, also to eat etc.'. And one has 4 children and the other has 3 so that is an additional 7 grandchildren! (3OCF) ¹⁶. Urkers realise that this differs compared to families outside of Urk, which could be a reason for them to value it even more as they realise how special it is to have something like it.

5.1.3. Communal Behaviour

The third factor that participants often mentioned, is communal behaviour. This acts as an umbrella term for markers like hospitality, generosity and mutual aid within the community. Therefore, these identity markers will be jointly elaborated upon under this heading of communal behaviour. This behaviour translates into looking out for each other, and helping each other physically as well as emotionally. *When it is asked, there are always Urkers that help out (6YCF)¹⁷. Furthermore, collections for charity are guaranteed to be a success in Urk: Yes, the famous 'Ethiopia collection', then we make it to the national news because Urk is the most generous municipality of the Netherlands' (8YPM)¹⁸. Generosity is not just about money but also about other materials. You know, if you really need something, there are lesser places to live when it really comes down to it. [...] We for example recently bought a house and within a week we had chairs and a table, 'here take this, it will come in handy' (8YPM)¹⁹.*

Additionally, participants mentioned the high level of mutual aid within the community which expresses itself in many different ways. *I think that it is pretty special that you do not necessarily have to know someone well to offer your help in that regard (1YPF)²⁰. Another participant confirms this: When my mom was ill, she could not do much and then someone from our church who my mom met only two times maybe, but she just offered to help. Well, we could really use that, so she came and she kept coming (12YCM)²¹. Another older participant mentioned about his daughter in law, who is not from Urk originally: her dad just died and she had not lived here long yet, and she said: where does it happen to you that you walk around in the grocery store and a stranger puts their arm around your shoulder and says "how are you?"' (10OCM)²². This emphasizes how involved Urkers are, also in the lives of people they do not know that well. To top it all off, during one of the interviews, the conversation about this topic was interrupted by the doorbell. At that moment, the participant received a gift from someone as a thank you, just because. *You see? Now I get a pudding with a gift card. That is what I mean! (3OCV)²³.**

5.1.4. Dialect

The Urker dialect was also found to be very important for the community identity. It was mentioned that it serves as a tool to identify Urkers, to express oneself and to form a group. *It is kind of an identification tool, and at the same time it is a sort of distinction from others, 'we are not really Dutch' (1YPF)*²⁴. However, all participants also acknowledged that the dialect is changing and some even expect for it to become extinct. Compared to the older generation, the younger generation uses words that are more similar to Dutch. About the way that younger people use the Urker language, an older participant who is particularly fond of the dialect, mentioned: *When someone writes a story in Urkers (dialect) for the church newspaper, then my eyes start to well up with tears. [...] They write in the way that they believe is correct, but it is not. [...] I find it dreadful (2OPM)*²⁵. Despite the fact that the younger generation uses different words within the dialect, both generations cherish the dialect enormously, and find it to be very important for the Urker community identity.

5.1.5. Status Competition

When it comes to status competition, some participants mentioned it to be very prominent within the community. However, not everyone felt that way since they personally did not value a certain status position. Urkers know and support each other like described above, but it can also lead to them comparing themselves to each other. *You know that there is people talking about you, so I better make a good impression (8YPM)*. As the same participant furthermore jokingly stated: *There are a couple of horsemen of status in Urk. You have to have wooden blinds behind the window, then you know you have really made it, you always have to have a shed with a frying pan. It is true! Your neighbour has it so you should too. You easily pay €400 extra a month to be able to drive a cool car and your fish company has to be the biggest etc. (8YPM)*²⁶. In most examples it is about copying behaviour which, according to participants, is not surprising in a community where the people live close together. One of the participants, also a former fisherman, confirmed the high level of status competition that he witnessed while working. *It was always about, when you were going back home on a Monday, you wanted your name to be mentioned. 'They have this amount of turnover'. They did not ask what was left over from it, no the turnover. [...] You had these roughnecks that fished in places where you actually could not fish. So you had a lot of damages, but you did catch a lot of fish. Your turnover would be good, but you would have many costs because of the repairments that had to be done, there were more costs (10OCM)*²⁷. This indicates that some are willing to give up a lot in order to gain status, at least in the fishing industry.

5.1.6. Urker Character

The character of an Urker, is first of all described as: hard working, *do not mull, just do it (3OCF)*²⁸, down-to-earth, *if there is people whining, then you easily think like 'those outsiders..', and luckily we keep our feet more firmly on the ground (4YCF)*²⁹, persevering, friendly, easy to talk to, ambitious, and hospitable. An Urker furthermore *does not hide their opinion (12YCM)*³⁰, which can sometimes make them look rude or noisy. The Urker stereotype is described to be a religious person, hard-working, wearing sweatpants and an earring, driving a souped-up scooter, and to marry and start a family at a young age. However, all participants indicate that this is really a stereotype, and none of them identified themselves with it. One image of what an Urker is does not exist anymore, because there are too many sorts of different people within the community. *Thé Urker does not exist, because I am also an Urker (11OPF)*³¹. By saying this, it is emphasized that you do not have to be a (stereo)typical Urker to identify as an Urker.

Furthermore, when asking participants about whether they were proud to be an Urker, positive community elements belonging to communal behaviour described above, were often the foundation upon which a feeling of pride was built. This feeling is fostered by the realisation that high levels of mutual aid, generosity and hospitality are not as common anymore outside of Urk. Urkers seem to be aware of that difference which makes them cherish their community. When asking about whether there were things within the community that they were less proud of, it seemed that the media played a big role. *None of us are proud when Urk is in a negative spotlight in the media, I am also not proud of that (11OPV)*³². Participants indicated to sometimes even feel ashamed to talk about their Urker identity, especially when talking with outsiders. This will be further elaborated upon later.

Summarizing, it seems that the biggest identity markers of the Urker community are family relations, religion together with faith and church, status competition and communal behaviour such as generosity, hospitality, and mutual aid. Together with the dialect, these elements additionally serve as a tool to set them apart from outsiders.

5.2. Differences and diversity within the community

Looking at the section above, it can be seen that there are some core elements that all participants indicated to be important for the community identity in general. However, this is only the tip of the iceberg, as there seem to be many other variables that may be more difficult to witness at first glance. These 'hidden variables' are the differences within the community

and are equally important in defining community identity. Therefore, in the following section, the level of diversity within the community will be elaborated upon.

This section will start off with an elaboration on the younger generation, followed by the older generation. Additionally, the important factors that influenced these generations will be discussed together with other markers of diversity within the community.

5.2.1. *A free generation*

When talking about generational differences, there is a very stable pattern to be seen in what participants indicated to be happening within the community. In general, the younger generation is perceived to be more ‘free’ compared to the older generation. *I think that the youth becomes more free and that the vision of the elderly remains a bit black and white (4YCF)³³*. Various supporting arguments were given for this statement concerning the behaviour and open-mindedness of younger people in contrast to the older generation who are generally perceived to be more traditional and old-fashioned. Not only is the younger generation more open-minded, but there seems to be more room among them to talk openly about the differences between them. *They understand each other more; thinking differently and being able to discuss it (3OCF)³⁴*. This is new for a community where inhabitants would not usually ‘hang out their dirty laundry’. *It can take a while until they do, but younger people do come out with it, but that is how it should be (3OCF)³⁵*.

Thus, it seems that the community in general has not always been as open about things like mental health, but that this is changing within the younger generation who dares to be more vulnerable and open to others who are not like-minded. For example, a younger participant states: *What I often see is that young people are more open to others, also to people of other religious backgrounds, and the older generation is more bound to the rules. If you are younger you are more in contact with other people which makes them more nuanced (7YPF)³⁶*. Religion thus seems to play a different role for the older generation. *I think that the older generations go to church more often compared to younger people. And if you have always been a church goer, you still have very strong norms, values, ideals, principles that are mainly bible related. [...] For older people it is more of a theoretical fundament from which they cannot depart because they are so familiar with it (12YCM)³⁷*.

Not only in the mindset, but also in daily practices, generational differences are to be seen. *They (younger people) easily go out on a Sunday, back in the days that was not the case (5OPF)³⁸*. When it comes to the church, it is often mentioned that young people, *part of them, they are leaving it behind. Secularization currently occurs in Urk. [...] I think [...] that they do*

not want to be bound, that they only go to church when it suits them (9OCM)³⁹. Regardless of the main trend of secularization among the younger generation, other developments seem to be occurring as well. For example, a young, progressive participant mentioned: *I know many people who say 'I am not going to do anything with it (religion)', but I also have friends that make a creed (8YPM)*⁴⁰. An older, more conservative participant mentioned the same: *What I do see, luckily I think, is that younger people become more radical in the sense that I see younger people coming to faith and really going for it. I also see young people, which was less the case back in the days, who dare to say 'it does not relate to me, it does not bother me, figure it out!'* (10OCM)⁴¹. Thus, we see a change within the younger generation becoming more open, free and flexible within many different fields.

5.2.2. Different upbringing older generation

The younger generation being more 'free' is one of the biggest differences between the generations. The differences with the older generation are caused by a number of factors. First of all, older people grew up in a very different context as mentioned before. *It is very different compared to our time, you cannot imagine (5OPF)*⁴². Compared to the rest of the Netherlands, the Urker community was behind which mainly had to do with the island being secluded. *Back in the days it was different, the big cities had electricity and running water and we did not have that.. (2OPM)*⁴³. There was no diversity and not much of an hierarchy either. *There were only three steps, the dignitaries: the mayor, pastor and the doctor, that was it.* The island was mainly marked by fishery, and there were no riches. Without any money to spend, people back then had to entertain themselves. *You did not know any different, it was wonderful entertainment, much better than playing with a screen (2OPM)*⁴⁴. Even though the level of wealth used to be a considerable amount lower compared to now, they seem to indicate to have had a good time regardless. A younger participant furthermore acknowledges the idea that knowing people from back in the days, *that is really a thing of the older generation. [...] When my grandmother tries to make something clear, she does that by using names, nicknames, family relations. Old people just know that among themselves, 'Jantje, the son of those and those from Piet', and bam they know it in an instant (12YCM)*⁴⁵.

The upbringing of the older generation was also characterized by tough parenting and hard work. *We were brought up a bit hard and misunderstood. [...] You just had to work. [...] There was no attention or listening, 'what do you want?!' they would say (3OCF)*⁴⁶. There were few to no opportunities to pursue a study, especially not as a girl. An older female

participant mentioned: *My mom said ‘what does a girl have to study? She needs to learn how to sew and cook, when she marries she will not work anymore anyways’.[...] (5OPF)⁴⁷.*

Additionally, religion, church and faith was, and often still is, a big part of the lives of the older generation. *Back then, it would not come to mind to say ‘I do not practice religion, I am not a believer’, maybe that was not the case because down to your every fibre you were raised with religion, church and everything related to it. Now, that is not the case anymore (10OCM)⁴⁸.* A younger participant states to still notice the salient role that religion plays within the older generation: *Back then it was not socially acceptable to leave the church behind and now that is more accepted, but at that age to then take that step to break with something that is such an intrinsic part of your identity, that is just very difficult (8YPM)⁴⁹.* As mentioned earlier, there is a group of young people that seem to be more involved with religion, church and faith because they deliberately wish to do so. On the other hand, you also see some members of the younger generation with a conservative religious background who are perceived to be obliged to be religiously involved by the people around them. *They have to come to church, and they do, but they are sleeping and eating during, that is what you hear, because they are obliged to go (5OPF)⁵⁰.*

It could be that any differences within the community, are not solely due to a generational gap but also due to a gap between people’s religious backgrounds. Participants often mentioned ‘the conservatives’ or ‘the more progressive people’ when explaining who they were talking about. This indicates that one’s religious background is a salient factor in determining ones identity and role within the community.

5.2.3. Extrinsic influences: Urk is catching up

The Urker community has been influenced more and more by ‘the outside world’ throughout the years. Just like the rest of the world has changed, so has Urk. Many participants mention to see that Urk is about 20 to 50 years behind compared to the rest of society. *Urk is catching up with the rest, what you observed 20 years ago is slowly happening in Urk now too. We are lagging behind but it is happening (10OCM)⁵¹.* Because Urk is not an island anymore, *you can go elsewhere more easily (5OPF)⁵².*

The thing that has had the biggest influence on the generational gap is the fact that many more young people go studying. *You can see that more and more young people that have studied, have seen other cultures and ways of doing outside of Urk and bring it back with them to Urk (1YPF)⁵³.* Almost all participants believe that it is studying that leads to people becoming more open minded and free. *When it comes to generational differences, we study, we read and*

see other things, get different impressions, and you copy that which you can never rationalize away (12YCM)⁵⁴. Not every older person understands the idea of studying however. One young participant for example said: If I have to explain to my grandmother what I studied, then she does not understand.. Even people younger than her do not always know. I then have to explain what kind of work I do and what kind of added value it brings (4YCF)⁵⁵. What she says emphasises the fact, that not all differences within the community are the result of age, but that one's educational career can play a significant role as well. Many older people have not studied unlike a growing amount of young people currently, which can lead to misunderstandings.

The effects of studying also lead to a division within the younger generation: the ones that study and want to discover the world outside Urk, and the ones that do not and decide to keep their focus on the community. *There is a generation that was brought up here, went to school here and form a clan, but luckily, I can see that young people also go studying and get a different view on society. They will think differently, [...] because being in touch with the outside widens of course your view of the world (11OPF)⁵⁶. Another young participant mentioned something similar: You see many young people that are swimming against the current. At the same time, you also see many young people choosing for Urk (12YCM)⁵⁷. However, whether this is related to educational level is not said, but it is mainly the influence of 'the outside' that has changed the community in general to which people that study outside Urk are most exposed to.*

Another big player in the generational gap is digitalisation. *Back in the days, an Urker maybe had ten neighbours to compare with on the street, but now you have a million because of the wide web. [...]Because of social media, the norm is less strict, people become looser, less conservative (4YCF)⁵⁸. The world is changing fast and so is Urk, however the older generation is lagging behind a bit. This can be explained by them being less in touch with digital devices, the internet, and having had a different upbringing. Overall, many participants indicate that older people are more stubborn, not open minded, and simply do not always understand young people's different minds and actions. They have not been in touch with people and ideas from the outside as much and therefore think differently compared to the younger generation. The lack of open mindedness does not apply to the entire older generation, but it can prevent young people of sharing any possible opposing ideas and thoughts. In order to keep the peace, younger people will not always say what they actually think and the older generation, their values will be challenged less. They will always be confirmed in what they think (8YPM)⁵⁹. This could be a pattern that leads to creating and maintaining a generational gap.*

5.2.4. Increased wealth

One other factor that contributes to generational differences is the increase of wealth over the years. Younger people are used to living in wealth and want to enjoy it, *while the older generation is more strict I think, like 'this has to happen and that'. I am more like, this is my money, my life, I am going to enjoy it (4YCF)*⁶⁰. The older generation confirmed the idea that younger people handle their income differently: *now there are parties that are organised, they are all like 'get this and buy this', they are only 17 and they already have an I-do-not-know-what-brand of car under their assess (10OCM)*⁶¹.

5.2.5. Diversity within the community

Besides talking about generational differences within the community, diversity in a broader sense was also discussed during the interviews. When talking about diverging from the community it can be stated that any differences or 'abnormalities' definitely do not go unnoticed within the community. When asking a participant about when someone would be considered to be 'alternative', she jokingly answered: *that boundary is very thin, it could already be because of the shoes you are wearing. I think it has to do with diverging from the 'standard life' (1YPF)*⁶². Regularly, comments are made concerning one's behaviour. It could be positive or negative and it could be remarked by anyone for any reason, but when you act differently than the standard, or the 'norm', it is to be expected to get some sort of reaction from the community. Often, it is due to generational differences, as for example a young participant mentions: *When I went out on a Saturday, she (older lady) was like 'don't you have any work to do in the house?', while I was like, well hello, it is the weekend, let me do my thing, you know (4YCF)*⁶³. As an Urker citizen you might also receive comments because of the way you look: *If you are for example wearing a jacket with bright colours and you enter a bar, then it could be like 'you are wearing a gay jacket'.[...] Just the simplest things you know, you have to behave like an Urker, and a little bit different is not allowed so to say (8YPM)*⁶⁴. Concerning religious topics, it is also common to receive comments. *My grandmother is strongly religious (oud gereformeerd) so to say, [...] but we were never allowed to visit her wearing pants. [...] If we did, she would say 'you look just like a boy!'*(4YCF)⁶⁵. An older participant tells about her experiences with 'being looked at' due to her more progressive ideas concerning the role of women in church compared to others within the community. *They just cannot understand, like 'but we have such a nice church and there is so much community spirit, what do you miss?!'. But I cannot really say what I miss, because they do not miss it, they think it is all wonderful (11OPF)*⁶⁶.

Most participants indicate that it is important to not care too much about the opinion of another. You have to learn to live with the fact that others will have an opinion about you. *I do not care one bit about what others might say, but you do have to be able to let that go. I also know people who leave Urk, because they really dislike that people always talk about them. You really just should not give a shit I think (8YPM)*⁶⁷. Not everyone, but many other participants agree that there are boundaries that some people just cannot overcome, which leads to them feeling removed from the community. Sometimes, this is to such an extent that they decide to leave the community.

5.2.6. Confronted with Urker identity

In addition to being commented on within the community, another pattern is found among mainly young people. Namely, getting comments from outsiders regarding their Urker identity. Almost all participants mention to be ‘confronted’ with their Urker identity when being in contact with an outsider. I use the word confronted, because it is often a negative image that outsiders have of Urkers, and Urkers are very aware of this. *I could very well imagine that there are people that say ‘Noordoostpolder’ [...] instead of ‘Urk’ when answering the question about where they are from (8YPM)*⁶⁸. This negative publicity is often due to the misbehaviour of a group of young Urker people rebelling or destroying something. According to the participants, the media has a reason to target Urk. *Well, that’s because of religion. [...] ‘so many churches, all Christian people’, that is what they mention (11OCF)*⁶⁹. They believe, that the media makes use of the ‘amusing’ contradiction between a Christian identity and rebelling or misbehaving. However, Urkers do not identify with this image that the media create. *They show, this is álso Urk. But I think it is a pity that they emphasize that part, but that is good for the ratings of course (10OCM)*⁷⁰. They thus acknowledge that there is a small percentage that misbehaves within the community, but that that is not the entire and only thing that characterizes Urk. Another participant mentions: *I disgust the misconduct in Urk, because I personally think that that is not Urk, but an outsider says ‘boy oh boy, that Urker community..’, and then you get that whining about ‘that Christian community, oh look at that’ (2OPM)*⁷¹. The participants mention to of course disapprove of misconduct and excessive use of alcohol and/or drugs, but they find it to be annoying that the media and outsiders mention it so often. *It is okay that it is mentioned, but sometimes it is a bit exaggerated because it is Urk (11OPF)*⁷². Regardless, they can talk about anything that is wrong, but I will always know that it the core is different (10OCM)⁷³.

Even though Urkers themselves do not always identify with the negative image of the media, it can still be difficult for them when outsiders have prejudices about them because of their Urker identity. One of the younger participants mentions: *Maybe there are other people that are more proud of Urk, but I am more in touch with people that have an opinion about Urk, and I have to sometimes, not necessarily defend myself, but that I do have to explain things so then you are confronted with it more (12YCM)*⁷⁴. Additionally, because of the striking accent and appearance that some- to most Urkers have, they are often recognizable to outsiders. This makes it hard for Urkers to 'hide' their identity, due to which the question 'where are you from' is often asked.

Because young people are exposed more to the outside world compared to older people, they have a harder time dealing with such confrontations. This is also seen in the fact that no one of the young participants mentioned any examples of outsiders having a positive image of Urk. It might be that they themselves do have a positive image, but in their experience it is not something that is confirmed by outsiders that they know. Some older people in contrast, were able to see how outsiders can have a positive connotation to Urk. This is mainly influenced by tourists or people that visit Urk. What is interesting, is that the people that mentioned this, are all part of the older generation.

This research aimed to reveal the cultural diversity and differences within the community. Based upon the sections above, it can be stated that the main gaps are to be found within generations, but religious background and educational choices also play a salient role. In general, the younger generation is more 'free' in their mindset, is open to discuss any differences among themselves and dares to be vulnerable. They enjoy their wealth and, more than ever, use the opportunity to study and/or work outside of Urk. In combination with the greater use of the internet, the younger generation is more connected to the outside world than ever before. However, due to this they are also more often confronted with their Urker identity. Additionally, a further distinction has to be made when it comes to the diversity within the younger generation. Among them, there are the ones that left their faith and religion behind, the ones that practice religious rituals like going to church out of obligation, and the ones that deliberately came to faith. Furthermore, regardless of the growth of opportunities outside of Urk, many young Urkers still want to return or remain to live within the community. Although it is more common nowadays to choose to live and invest outside the boundaries of the community, it still is the exception.

The older generation has had a very different upbringing, mostly marked by the island (history) and religion. In general, they did not know about a life of wealth, the opportunity to study or the option to not practice religion. For a period of time, they lived in a closed off community and have been less in touch with the outside world compared to the younger generation, which can lead to misunderstandings.

5.3. Cohesion

Regardless of the amount of diversity within the community, all participants, and thus both generations, indicate to still feel connected with the community, and most would say that the community is cohesive as a whole. There are several patterns throughout the interviews that can explain this experience of cohesion despite the diversity. These will be elaborated upon below.

5.3.1. Groups within a group

When it comes to connection with the community, there was one thing that often came up during the interviews. This is the fact that participants spoke a lot about a certain group that they belonged to within the community. A group could for example could be their closest friends or family, which accordingly is part of the community as a whole. *I think the advantage is that all my friends also have studied, have lived outside of Urk, and are doing their own thing. So within my friend group I am not out of place (6YCF)⁷⁵*. Another participant mentioned to not identify with the stereotypical Urker, but that this did not harm the feeling of being connected with the community. *I do not think that the community is one whole. I have my people and I associate myself wonderfully with them, I get along well with them and for me they are also Urkers, but not the stereotypical Urkers (8YPM)⁷⁶*. Both of them, and many other mostly young participants, thus mention the idea that they do not identify as a ‘(stereo)typical Urker’, but still feel connected with the community because they are part of a sub-group within the community. *I think feeling different than the average Urker, that can also be a connecting factor. All the people I know, I would not say that they are an average Urker so to say (8YPM)⁷⁷*.

Furthermore, participants indicated that there is not only a growth of diversity, but that there is more acceptance and/or tolerance towards each other’s differences too. *Well it (differences) is more accepted, other opinions from young people and so, and we have to be open for it, because if you are not, then it is impossible (3OCV)⁷⁸*. This participant later on mentioned that Urk in general meets this requirement of being open to differences, which is necessary for the community to be connected. Another participant confirms this: *There is more*

*freedom. I sometimes think like, is it really necessary to park your caravan out front on a Sunday to go and pack you know? Because you know that there are people who are annoyed by that you know. But one does not mind so much anymore, they do their own thing. 'I think about it like this, so respect me and I will respect you' (5OPF)⁷⁹. These quotes state a shift within the community, not only towards more diversity but also towards more acceptance/tolerance concerning the growth of diversity. However, there is still *some people in Urk that have a too narrow view, that has to become more open (3OCV)⁸⁰*.*

The feeling of being connected with one another within the community seems to be very important for many Urkers. Another older participant emphasizes that being there for one another, looking out for others, and helping them is worth overcoming any differences. *There is always such a battle going on, but on the other hand if you have to be there, then you will be there (10OCM)⁸¹*. Why this is the case, is connected to the shared Urker identity: *It could be that it clashes more due to the different views, but I still think that the connectedness is strong, because it is quite an identity for many people (7YPF)⁸²*. Being an Urker is the most important part of one's identity, all other parts like religious background for example come after that. The Urker community could thus be seen as an umbrella, holding diverse internal groups together because they all share an Urker identity, perhaps each in their own way. This Urker identity is important to such an extent that it is worth overcoming differences for, as it is the one common denominator that all of them share.

5.3.2. *Together they stand*

Despite generational differences and diversity, also within one generation, participants generally indicate to still have a group-feeling. *We are Urk, and we do it together (4YCF)⁸³*. In a more broader sense, it is even said that Urkers feel that *sometimes it is a bit us against the world (4YCF)⁸⁴*. Urkers will stand their ground for the community when being 'attacked' by outsiders. *I am proud of Urk, but I am a critic as well. But if an outsider has criticism, then I become a bit vicious, you know? (11OPF)⁸⁵*. This indicates that Urkers will feel as one group when they are confronted by outsiders, their Urker identity overrules at that moment. Furthermore, when there is an emergency or a need, many participants mention that Urkers will always be there to help. In such cases, it does not matter how 'different' someone is or what their background is. For example, Urkers usually distinguish people based upon religious backgrounds, but *when it comes down to it, when there is someone in need, then everyone will be ready, religious background is not an issue then (5OPF)⁸⁶*. Another participant confirms this: *You will not often call on an Urker in vain, in whatever matter (10OCM)⁸⁷*.

Offering mutual aid also has to do with Urk's history, being an island and having to rely on one another, especially when working at sea. A recent example that almost all participants referred to is an Urker boy that got lost in a ship that capsized during the period that the interviews were carried out. *[...] that ship that capsized, everyone is talking about it, everyone worries (8YPM)⁸⁸*. In cases like these, the entire community comes in action. *[...] everything that is undertaken in order to find that boy! I mean, humanly speaking, well it has been a couple of days now, you stop searching, [...] and then there is a group that takes action. I think that is something, well you see that nowhere else (11OPF)⁸⁹*. Thus, within the community people still support and help each other when there is a need to. They also realise that this occurs to a lesser extent outside of the community, which makes mutual aid a very valuable trait that Urkers would like to sustain for as long as possible within the community.

Furthermore, being together in a more literal geographical sense, also contributes to overcoming differences and arguments between people. *In Urk you live nearby each other, everything is within reach, you could bump in-to anyone, you easily eat together or go for a cup of coffee, that can disguise arguments so to say (12YCM)⁹⁰*. Thus, it is not only easier to 'disguise' arguments, but sometimes necessary to work things out with someone, because you know you will have to face them anyway. Therefore, the community forms a literal group based upon the fact that they are all positioned in the same location.

5.3.3. Family relations

Additionally, the feeling of being one cohesive community is strongly related to the quantity and quality of family relations. As earlier indicated, family is a very prominent element within the community. A family serves as a group that people belong to, but also as a 'tool' to connect groups through family relations. Family bridges the gap of differences and serves as a group that people feel part of within the community. In the case of an argument of whatever kind, people tend to *let it go, let it be, because it is family you know, you move on (4YCF)⁹¹*. Wanting to maintain good family relations can thus lead to avoiding or backing out of discussions and arguments. Being involved within your family is also something that is expected and stimulated within the community. *If I have not visited my grandmother for a week then she will say 'well, I will put up a painting of you, because you never visit!'. [...]. I think that you feel connected because you are brought up with the idea that they are people you have to respect, you have to maintain that (4YCF)⁹²*. Thus, people find it important that their family ties are continued, which could also be a reason for some to overlook any differences or negative behaviour. *[...] the fact that some kids do drugs and that older people then tend to look away, that is also due*

to the fact that they want to remain a positive connotation with their children and think that all will be alright (12YCM)⁹³.

Family is a tool for inter-generational connection and does not only work within families, but may also be an effective tool for connecting generations outside of family boundaries. [...] *because they are the grandchildren of the people.. If I ask someone of 25 years old 'from who are you one' (van wie ben jij er een) then they will have to say who their grandfather is, and then I have reached my generation (2OPM)⁹⁴.* Especially the older generation indicates to feel connected with the younger generation through family relations.

Some younger participants indicate that digital devices can help staying connected with family as well. When on holiday, it is easy to stay in contact by calling for example. However, everyone preferred to visit family face to face. This indicates that, for young people, digitalization is an additional tool that fosters family relations, but that it does not replace physical contact.

5.3.4. *Maintaining the community through punishments and rewards*

As can be concluded from the previous arguments surrounding the existence and perseverance of the Urker community, the community still stands strong, however, times are changing to some degree. There seems to be a higher level of openness and diversity. These 'newer' aspects of the community have been integrated slowly. However, there seems to be some sort of reward system in place where specific behaviours in line with the Urker identity seem to be rewarded, whereas behaviours that deviate from the Urker norm seem to not be appreciated and often punished in some degree. This implies that, though the community has become more flexible, there is still a certain golden standard in place that should not be deviated from too much.

This paragraph is discussed under the section 'cohesion', because 1) it shows that there is still a certain 'norm', or a certain idea of what the community is, what it should look like and 2) it shows how people 'fight' for its maintenance by giving remarks on other people's way of thinking and behaviours. Therefore, it may seem that the following paragraphs only emphasize differences within the community. However, they serve to show what this so called 'norm' is within the community and how people behave in order to live accordingly so that they can maintain to be a cohesive community.

The processes of reward and punishment are very broad in range and the examples elaborated on below come from participants talking about 'deviating from the community'. *An alternate is someone who does not fit the image of 'a real Urker' (1YPF)⁹⁵.* Another participant explained that the community reacts to this, because *it is purely a kind of evolutionary survival*

(12YCM)⁹⁶. This refers to the community wanting to ‘survive’ as the cohesive group that they have always been.

Behaviour that fosters community maintenance is rewarded. *Just showing that you are committed to Urk. [...] going to church twice and being actively involved with people. That is what people like to see I think (12YCM)*⁹⁷. Here, the participant gives an example of behaviour that fosters the ‘survival’ of the community and is consequently rewarded by the fact that people ‘like’ to see that behaviour. Another example is having good relations with family and friends, being able to share your life with them and to receive their support. *If you choose for family or friends, then you choose with all your heart. You are totally invested, it cannot be 50% it has to be fully (1YPF)*⁹⁸. By ‘giving yourself’, and investing in the community by doing your part, you benefit from the mutual aid, generosity, hospitality and many other positive traits within the community. *It has to do with whether you give yourself. It does not matter in what way, whether this is via the church or in an association (10OCM)*⁹⁹. Being fully invested could mean that you have grown up there, have your friends and family there, work there, go out there, etc. One participant explained that by investing like that in the community, you climb a hierarchical ladder of status which creates possibilities and opens doors. *For example if you are part of the football team Urk 1, then there are many doors that open for you. [...] they did not even study and get for example 5 job offers at, I don’t know, big offices in the fish industry. [...] or they go out in their ‘Urk 1 jacket’ and women will be around them in ‘swarms’ so to say (12YCM)*¹⁰⁰. Being rewarded for investing is not a literal agreement, but Urkers feel this and anticipate on it. Knowing that outside the community this amount of social support, relations, or other opportunities is not a given, makes staying within the community even more attractive. It is comfortable and safe for people and they know what to expect.

Additionally, participating within the community is often facilitated. Urk knows associations of many kinds and sectors, which gives people the opportunity to get involved with other Urkers, to actively participate and to practice their hobbies or talent and to do their part within the community. *Yes, that gives connection right, when you set things up together you are proud together. And so many things are organised here in Urk you know, also by younger people and I really see that as a positive feature. It is stimulated and I think it is wonderful, we do it together (11OPF)*¹⁰¹.

Opposite to rewarding ‘good’ behaviour, behaviour that diverges from the norm too much could be a threat to the maintenance of the community and can be ‘punished’. One participant told that he posted something on social media about disapproving the corona riots that took place in Urk and that he received comments by other community members. *[...] If I*

say on social media 'I disapprove of that', then you break an unwritten code, you betray the group and you are called NSB'er and everything. That bothers me quite a bit (12YCM)¹⁰².

To the question whether they ever felt removed from the community, one participant said: *I am not very churchy, so in that area yes (7YPF)¹⁰³.* This supports the idea that being religious, or practicing religion by going to church is part of the norm within the community. Not only within the community in general, but also within churches there can be consequences when you decide to for example switch to another church. *I had a colleague who grew up in [name church] in Urk and he is with us now. Well, then you can count yourself lucky if your family still looks you in the eyes so to say (8YPM)¹⁰⁴.* In this case, the colleague was part of the church that is known to be the most strictly religious one within the community. Participants often mentioned, that within the more religious churches, there are stricter rules and expectancies compared to the more 'lighter' or progressive churches. *I know a boy and well he was a bit more alternative, a bit more left-winged, with more free ideals, but he was part of a very religious (oud gereformeerde) church. And there really were people who spoke to him very firmly like 'you cannot do that', he was just bullied away, that is a fact (12YCM)¹⁰⁵.*

Furthermore, participants mentioned to sometimes feel removed because of the way they thought about things. *I also see within my group of friends that Urk is not necessarily attractive, because there is a certain thought and norm that does not fit them well which makes them think 'this is not really me, I am going to leave Urk'. I think that there is too little facilitated for these people and that their group is too small for them to take their own place (6YCF)¹⁰⁶.* This confirms the existence of a prevailing norm and that not everyone is able to identify with it or conform to it which can make people want to leave the community.

Moreover, the pandemic created significant turmoil within the community resulting from varying opinions on aspects like government decision-making. *[...] There is no room for discussion. [...]. I have the idea that, also within my group of friends and family, that it would lead to arguments and that I thought 'you just want to be proved right', or that when you think differently then they say you are wrong. I think that is a pity (4YCF)¹⁰⁷.* Narrow-mindedness, not being open to discuss with people who have a different opinion is something that participants sometimes use to describe people in the community. Such an attitude could be due to wanting to preserve the community as one whole, which leaves no room for other opinions.

Not only in the way of thinking, but also concerning the way of behaving there are certain norms. *You have to behave like an Urker, and a little bit different than that is not okay so to say. If so, you are a bit weird, you fall by the wayside (8YPM)¹⁰⁸.* Another participant explained this by stating: *It is just like among student associations: 'mores'. If you do not show*

up for 3 weeks, then people will say something about that, and that is also the case in Urk. They have expectations of themselves, so they also have expectations of others (12YCM)¹⁰⁹. It is not necessarily about the written rules, rather the unwritten rules seem to exert a great level of impact on the behaviours of the members of the community. About the role of women there is a certain expectation as well as to how to go about things. For example I am 25 now, I do not have a boyfriend yet and I recently moved to live on my own. Well, that is not something that matches the image of a typical Urker girl. If I think about her, then it is like she has a boyfriend at 19, she marries at 22 and at 23 she has her first child. I do see that around me often, but I am not like that myself (6YCF)¹¹⁰. Participants sometimes described diverging from the norm as ‘odd’, which emphasizes the fact that there is an emotional charge to not meeting the norm.

Social control plays a big part in determining whether a member’s participation diminishes within the community. *‘Where were you last Sunday, because I did not see you in church?’ (2OPM)¹¹¹. People can also fear such social control which can lead them to adapt to the norm, in order to avoid any comments on their behaviour. When talking about her father’s opinion about whether or not to wear a hat to church back in the days, one participant mentioned: He had a fear for the church right, like ‘they will talk about that’ and that was not okay, it was more the fear for that, rather than that he himself was really against it. And we used to have that mentality in the beginning as well, like ‘what would people think’, you know (5OPF)¹¹².*

Sometimes, diverging from the norm too much can lead to feeling removed or even to moving away from the community. *My aunt has a brother who is gay and he really did not feel at home here. There really were people who would say that his sexual orientation was wrong, and he just moved to another place. I think that those people choose to leave, because it is just not a pleasant environment because you do not get a lot of acceptance (12YCM)¹¹³. It could also be that one chooses to live somewhere else, because there they do not feel like they have to meet a certain norm. One participant mentioned that she felt more connected to people outside the community and that that was something she missed in Urk. Well, there are more people who are more open I think, for everything really (7YPF)¹¹⁴.*

As mentioned above, members of the community often find sub-groups to which they feel a strong connection. This allows them to diverge from the norm while still being part of the community. Furthermore, it seems to be of importance to neglect most of other’s opinions towards you. Participants mention that not caring as much about other’s opinions allows people

to still be a part of the community without having to follow the community guidelines to a tee. This method of acceptance seem to work for some, while others cannot cope with the criticism and choose to move away from the community, due to the fact that they are unable to find their respective space within the community. [...] *some people do not feel at home within that group, they go to live somewhere else and you do not hear of them anymore (12YCM)*¹¹⁵. This could explain how the cohesive ‘core’ of the community remains. The people that feel at home will invest in the community and the ones that do not for whatever reason leave, which fosters the cohesiveness of the group that stays. Additionally, due to the growth of diversity and tolerance towards diversity, more people are able to find their place within the community. It is thus a combination of a higher tolerance on the one hand, and maintaining a norm on the other hand that keeps people involved and connected within the community.

6. Conclusion

“How do the cultural differences between the older and younger generation of Urk affect the Urker community identity and the social cohesion within the community?”

In order to answer the main research question, several sub questions were formulated which will be answered below.

1. What is the cultural background of Urk concerning the past decades?

Until around roughly 1940, Urk was an island in the IJsselmeer. As a secluded island, Urkers back then had few opportunities related to studying and career. They lived in poverty, and had to rely on the fishery. Urk was known as a very tight-knit community, where religion played a salient role, everyone knew each other and spoke the Urker dialect. Losing their island identity mid-20th century was a struggle that Urkers had to overcome, which they did. From around the 60's onwards, Urk grew in wealth and became more and more exposed to the influences of the outside world through processes of digitalisation and globalisation. Throughout the years, Urk thrived and the inhabitants got to enjoy a growth of opportunities regarding for example, studies or work. Especially during the last 15 years, it became more common for young people to study and gain a broader perspective and more connection to the outside world. Even though these events led to a significant number of changes, which will be elaborated upon below, Urk is still a remarkable community. The inhabitants share the rich historical background, speak the Urker dialect and are considered to be a tight knit community.

2. What are the differences between how the older and the younger generation perceive the Urker community identity?

No prominent patterns of differences were found when looking at how both generations described and valued the community identity. Some of the younger participants in the research did expect the older generation to value religion and Urk's historical background more, however this is only true to a certain extent, and does not apply to the entire older generation. Based upon the results, it can be concluded that the participants largely agree about the most important markers of the Urker community identity.

According to the participants, the community identity is mostly marked by religion. It affects the rituals, norms and values and is also said to be the instigator of communal behaviour such as generosity, hospitality and mutual aid within the community. Even some young participants who personally are not involved that much with religion in general, indicated that

it is an essential element for the community identity. Family relations were also said to have a big influence together with the Urker dialect. These three elements are essential for Urkers to connect with other community members, to have a sense of belonging within the community and to feel like a 'we'. Fishery was also mentioned to be important for the community identity, however it is expected to become more and more something of the past since times are changing. At last, some participants indicated status competition to be an important element, however others did not think it to be relevant for the community since it did not play a big role for them personally.

3. What are the cultural differences between the two generations?

The way that the younger and the older generation perceive the Urker community identity seem to be of little difference, as seen in sub question 2. However, based on the results it can be concluded that there actually are many cultural differences between them.

The biggest generational difference is that the youth is perceived to be more free and open minded compared to older people who are more conservative, and lag behind in certain aspects. Young people are more free in their thoughts and behaviours, dare to be vulnerable and are more free to make their own choices related to for example religion or finances. This is mostly due to the fact that it is more common to study, and to live outside the community. However, there is also a group within the younger generation who remain very focused and invested within the community.

Additionally, there seems to be a difference within the younger generation concerning religion. Some are deliberately devoted, some deliberately chose to leave it behind and it is said that others are obliged to go to church, or only go out of habit. However, this is not only due to generational differences but is also related to one's religious background (conservative vs progressive). Currently, there is more acceptance towards the differences between people within the community, however it can still sometimes lead to misunderstandings or arguments.

Furthermore, the younger generation is generally more in contact with the outside world which can sometimes lead to being confronted with their Urker identity. This is because outsiders can have a negative image of Urkers, mostly due to negative media attention concerning Urk. The younger generation therefore often has to deal with being put into a stereotyped category of Urk, which can be difficult. It makes them very aware of their identity and makes them think critically about what it means for them to be an Urker and to be part of the community. This issue seems to show less of an impact on the older generation.

4. *What cultural factors affect the older generation?*

Like described in sub question 1, the older generation grew up during the process of Urk becoming part of the mainland. This era was marked by poverty, and the community could only rely on each other, religion and fishery. The older generation has experienced Urk as a community where everyone still knew each other, religion was ingrained, and opportunities outside of the community were scarce. Nevertheless, participants mostly shared positive notes regarding their experiences within the community back then.

5. *What cultural factors affect the younger generation?*

The current younger generation grew up in a significantly different context compared to the older generation. The younger generation has experienced times of wealth instead of poverty and has more opportunities when it comes to studying, working, traveling, etc. outside the community of Urk. Therefore, they are much more exposed to the outside world and developments like digitalization. Due to this, the younger generation is less isolated, more independent, and has more possibilities and freedom to do and think what they want. Additionally, the negative effect of the increased exposure to the outside world is that they are confronted with their Urker identity and have to deal with being stereotyped by outsiders. This leads them to feel more aware of their Urker identity as an individual and to think more critical about what it means to them.

6. *To what extent is the community cohesive regardless of its diversity?*

Regardless of the diversity and differences within the community, participants mentioned that they still perceive Urk as a cohesive community. This is due to a couple of things which will be elaborated upon below.

Urkers share a rich historical background in which they have overcome many obstacles. They are a 'we' and are proud of community characteristics like hospitality, generosity, mutual aid, and the dialect. Through these elements, they differentiate themselves from the rest of the Netherlands. Therefore, the Urker community is still cohesive because it is the Urker identity that is deeply rooted which surmounts any differences. The fact that people are from Urk is key, and this feeling bridges the differences between people and thus leads to a feeling of being connected with each other.

Also, being geographically close to family and other community members, because they live in the same village, contributes to the cohesiveness of the community in a more literal sense.

Additionally, there is a dominant norm concerning certain behaviour that is expected within the community. The exact content of it is difficult to describe in detail, because it is something that is unwritten and can differ per person. However, it is generally expected that one is invested and involved within the community in several fields such as religion, (in)formal activities, associations and relations with family or friends. The expectancy can lead to Urkers altering their behaviour in order to act accordingly. This consequently contributes to the maintenance of the community. This norm however, has become more flexible due to the growth of tolerance towards differences. One does not always have to conform in order to fit in anymore. You could still get remarks, and Urkers will let you know what their opinion is regarding your behaviour, but as long as you do not care too much you will be alright.

In some cases however, people choose to leave the community out of free will, or they feel like they have to leave because they do not feel accepted anymore. For the latter, there are many different possibilities, but it usually has to do with diverging from the norm too much. Due to this, it is the case that the 'core' remains which is also a reason for the maintenance of the community.

At last, Urk it is not one homogenous community (anymore), but there are sub groups within the group through which Urkers feel connected with the community as a whole. Family, friends or churches can for example serve as such 'sub groups' through which people feel like they are part of the community as a larger group. As long as they are able to connect or associate with such a subgroup, it is possible to deviate from the dominant norm more easily, because they already 'belong' to a sub group.

It can be concluded that there are cultural differences between the older and younger generation but they do not lead to considerable differences between how the two perceive the Urker community identity. Additionally, the differences have affected the social cohesion within the community, but because of the shared identity and other important factors as described above, participants would still perceive Urk as a cohesive community.

7. Discussion and recommendations for future research

In this section it will be verified whether the results correspond with the theory as described in chapter 2 of this thesis. The questions raised by the theory concerning the cohesiveness of the Urker community despite differences, will be discussed. The literature that was provided in the theoretical framework has all been applied to the Urker community. The results of this thesis confirm these assumptions for the most part. Therefore, only the theories that still need confirmation or discussion will be elaborated upon. Additionally, recommendations for future research will be given.

7.1. Discussion

Firstly, community is, among others, described as a ‘governance structure’ that solves coordination problems through applying punishment and restrictions on its people (Bowles & Gintis, 1998; De Vos, 2004). Previous research has confirmed that this applies to Urk through the high levels of social control within the community, and that the community additionally applies rewards (Kempe, 2007). Based on the results of this thesis, it can be stated that social control has an additional effect. Applying punishment and rewards on its people is also effective for maintaining the cohesion within the Urker community, because it makes sure that people behave according to the norm as much as possible. Therefore, social control as a governance structure, contributes to the social cohesion within the community by ‘punishing’ different thoughts or behaviours, but also by rewarding behaviour that fosters the maintenance of a community.

High levels of social control were also assumed to lead to status competition within the Urker community (De Vos, 2004; Kempe, 2007). The results of this thesis show that status competition is still a visible element within the community, but that it appears to be less prominent compared to the results of previous research by Kempe (2007). Participants did notice that it plays a role within the community, but not everyone feels a strong need to conform to the norm anymore which could be the reason for lower levels of status competition. The decrease in the need to conform however, is something that could affect the social cohesion within the community in the future.

Second, it can be concluded from the results that the Urker identity of individuals plays a very important role for the social cohesion within the community. The argument by Barth (1998), who describes it as ethnic identity, about the idea that it is imperative and superordinate seems to be in line with what we see in Urk. When it is needed, all differences are put aside

and help is provided. The fact that Urkers have this identity that they share, makes it possible for them to disregard all differences between them. However, it must be mentioned that these differences will only be disregarded completely in case of high urgency or emergency. Therefore, whether this form of solidarity is related to social cohesion is debatable, since it seems to be conditional.

Third, ethnic identity can lead to constraints on communication between in- and outsiders due to the different values that the two have due to their identity (Barth, 1998). Participants mentioned to recognize this in a form of being stereotyped or having to deal with prejudices. According to the results of this thesis however, these constraints are not necessarily due to different values like Barth (1998) suggested, but appear already due to Urker stereotypes and prejudices from outsiders. Participants did acknowledge that Urkers sometimes differ from outsiders, but it seems as though the media is the main cause of the formation of such stereotypes and prejudices. This can lead to a growth of the gap between in- and outsiders, because being confronted with negative stereotypes and prejudices outside Urk can evoke a feeling of rejection. Staying in the community is in that case a safer option because it usually is a place where Urkers feel safe and have family and friends that they care about. So even though rejection it is a negative stimulation to stay, it could still partially explain why the younger generation feels drawn to Urk.

Fourth, the most recent literature concerning the culture of the Urker community was by Kempe in 2007. Therefore, there was a big gap of knowledge when it comes to the effect of digitalization within the community over the past 15 years. De Vos (2004) argued that the use of digital devices would not change the degree of interdependence but that it would rather be a bonus for the maintenance of a community, by functioning as an extra way of communication between people. However, the results of this thesis are not in line with this expectation. Namely, the younger generation is much more familiar with the use of digital devices, the internet and social media compared to the older generation. This has led to misunderstandings and a growth of the gap between these two generations. Furthermore, Kempe (2007) indicated that Urkers depend on each other and help each other in several ways which additionally is important for the existence of a community (De Vos, 2004). Digitalization however, has decreased the level of interdependence, especially among the younger generation, because it provides many more opportunities to experience and to connect with the outside world. Additionally, both generations indicated to only really connect with each other face-to-face, so the use of digitalization cannot be seen as a bonus to the maintenance of the community per se, but rather as a potential threat.

Fifth, the concept of exclusion, which happens when one is not part of a network of solidaristic social support, is also discussed in the theory. Based on the results, the ‘Urker passport’ to which Declercq (2020) referred, indeed seems to be an explanation as to why Urkers comply to the norm in order to avoid exclusion. However, the reality is more nuanced. The results indicate that the norm is not that strict anymore and that there is more freedom to diverge from it while remaining part of the community. This implies that not complying, does not automatically mean exclusion from the community anymore, or at least not always. An explanation for how people remain to feel a part of the community, is the concept of ‘community cohesion’ which refers to a community of communities, or a network of networks. To specify, the results suggest that Urkers find connection with family, friends, or other relations whom they love and whom they associate themselves with. Such relations therefore serve as a smaller community within the overarching community. This explains that many participants do not fully comply to the norm or identify as a ‘typical’ or ‘real’ Urker, but still experience the Urker community to be cohesive and feel part of it. The norm is more flexible, due to which there is more room for diversity within the community without damaging the level of social cohesion. However, the question remains about how far the norm can stretch and grow alongside of growing levels of diversity. Additionally, it is questionable whether community cohesion is sustainable for the future if the number of sub communities will increase.

Sixth, social cohesion in a community is about people sticking together which includes trust, a sense of belonging, participating and helping (Chan et al., 2006). The Urker community seems to fit this description, however in its own particular way. The critical note that must be made, is that there are conditions for whether people stick together, for example only in case of emergency like discussed above. People can leave the community if they do not feel at home, which contributes to the maintenance of the ‘core’ that stays. Urkers do not always belong, trust, participate and help *unconditionally*, but the community has found several detours in order to still be able to stick together. The definition of social cohesion thus mentions a few criteria that have to be met in order for people to stick together, but the Urker community only meets those in certain conditions, like described above. Therefore, it is debatable whether the concept of social cohesion is fully appropriate for the Urker community or that there is a need for a new concept that better describes the way that the Urker community sticks together. An alternative could be the creation of a new concept that emphasizes the dynamics of socially cohesive communities or groups. Rather than social cohesion as a natural state that a group is in, a new concept that includes the efforts that are consciously undertaken in order to maintain

a group would fit better. This is because, social cohesion in that case would be the result of certain activities and dynamics within a group. In the case of the Urker community, the process of punishment and reward and social control are examples of such dynamics which shows that they put in effort in order to be cohesive, rather than it being a natural result.

Seventh, Urk is a specific community, and has a rich history which is very determining for the community today. Because of this specific context, it is debatable whether the results of this thesis are directly applicable to larger communities or even a society. Nevertheless, the results of this thesis show that cohesion can indeed exist alongside of diversity, which opens a road of possibilities for fragmented, individualistic communities/societies in search of a way to achieve this as well. The Urker community achieved it in its own particular way, using detours, and applying conditions, but this is all context dependent. Specific elements like the Urker identity, the dialect, the history, family relations, etc. which are important for the cohesiveness of the community, are too specific to translate to other communities. Furthermore, the distinction between in and outsiders within the Urker community must be considered. This can contribute to social cohesion, a feeling of a 'we', but it can also lead to exclusion and can create a 'we vs them'. Thus, it is questionable whether this is desirable for a larger society, because it could lead to boundary making between people and further fragmentation. Something that could be applicable to other communities/societies however, is the concept of community cohesion: a cohesive set of communities within an overarching network.

7.2. Recommendations for further research

First of all, the discussion above raises some questions regarding the concept of social cohesion. Due to this, one of the questions that remains is whether the concept of social cohesion is most appropriate and whether a new concept should be created. Therefore, it is recommended that further research is performed specifically within the Urker community in order to be able to create a new concept concerning its cohesiveness that fits the community best.

Second, further research is recommended concerning the role that the media employ or could employ when it comes to social cohesion or fostering a network of communities. It would be valuable to find a way to use media as a tool to positively foster social cohesion without the damaging formation of stereotypes and prejudices.

Third, looking at the Urker community specifically, research concerning the sustainability of community cohesion is recommended. Currently, the Urker community seems to be a network of communities to which people belong. The overarching element that connects all these communities and overcomes its differences is the Urker identity that insiders share.

However, the question remains whether this is a sustainable model for the cohesiveness of the community as a whole, especially taking into account possible future changes like increasing digitalization, globalization and levels of diversity. Additionally, the decrease to conform to the norm could have a lot of impact on the cohesiveness of the Urker community in the future. It would be interesting to find out more about whether sharing a norm based on collective values is a condition that is absolutely essential for the cohesiveness of the community, or that it is a more flexible condition also allowing room for more divergence of the norm.

Fourth, continuing with digitalisation, further research regarding its role within cohesive communities like Urk is recommended. Currently, both generations, the older and the younger generation, indicate to still be able to connect face-to-face with each other, but the effects of digitalisation on the long-term are unknown. It would be interesting to look further into whether digitalisation could be a threat, since it affects the level of interdependency which is essential for the existence of communities.

Finally, further research is recommended concerning what can be done to achieve social cohesion alongside diversity within contemporary communities/societies, and whether a model like community cohesion is achievable for other larger communities/societies.

8. Limitations and recommendations for stakeholders

8.1. Limitations

The first limitation of this research is the fact that only 12 interviews have been conducted. Regardless of the careful selection of participants based on their demographic backgrounds (generation, gender, religious background), no conclusions can be made that are representative for a population of over 20.000 inhabitants.

Second, based upon previous research, this thesis made a distinction between participants with either a conservative or progressive religious background based upon the church that they were part of. However, during the interviews I noticed that being part of a certain church is not always a direct reflection of the actual religious behaviours or beliefs of participants. It could thus be, that the group of selected participants within this thesis is not the most representative group when it comes to the representation of the community on religious level.

A third limitation is the identity of myself as a researcher. As already mentioned in the method section, I am familiar with the Urker community, being partially brought up in it, and I belong to the younger generation which are two central categories in this research. Participants were made aware of my identity and my objective role as a researcher beforehand, but it could still be that it has influenced their responses during the interviews. It could additionally be, that my identity has influenced the way how I interpreted the data. However, this is avoided as much as possible by the use of quotations for the results for example. Additionally, the feedback of both the first and second reader have fostered the objectivity of this thesis.

8.2. Recommendations for stakeholders

In this paragraph, recommendations will be given for the stakeholders of this thesis which are the Urker community itself as well as larger groups like the Dutch society.

There are several things that the Urker community could do to maintain its cohesiveness. First of all, it is important that community members have the opportunity and are stimulated to actively participate within the community. This is already achieved because of the many associations that the community knows. However, it is recommended that the municipality, the churches and schools keep facilitating these activities. In order to include the entire community, everyone must have the opportunity to join in or to be active. Therefore, it

is important, that such facilitated associations and activities are a reflection of the need within the community.

In order to find out what this need is, especially within the younger generation, digital communication could be used through for instance, providing the youth with a voice through social media which is heard by a large part of the community. According to De Vos (2004), the use of media and digital communication can increase government to citizen communication, or in this case municipality to community member. By using it to involve the younger generation, digitalization becomes a tool to maintain cohesion, rather than a threat to its existence.

Second, a very important element within the community that enables people to overcome their differences is the idea that they share an Urker identity. Therefore, it could be helpful if schools were to educate their pupils about this identity and where it comes from in order to maintain it. Learning about a collective history, the Urker dialect, and the elements that are to be cherished like hospitality and mutual aid, can contribute to the maintenance of the Urker identity. However, a balance should be created between learning about the Urker identity and being able to be your unique self in order to prevent the identity from being imposed upon people.

Third, as mentioned in the discussion, it is difficult to apply the results of this thesis directly to a larger group like the Dutch society. According to Chan et al. (2006), there are no conditions that create social cohesion, but there are factors that could increase it or could be related to it. This thesis discussed what these factors are for the Urker community and proved that social cohesion and diversity can exist alongside each other. A recommendation for society is thus to try to find out what these factors are. Dutch society is known for its so called multiculturalism and diversity. However, the element that citizens share, something that they have in common is not always paid as much attention. Rather than only emphasizing on diversity and people being different, emphasizing shared elements or interests, belongingness and including people could be crucial missing elements which society needs in order to overcome differences that are in the way of achieving social cohesion. If the Dutch society is serious about wanting to achieve this, topics like inclusion and belongingness should be higher on the political agenda.

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10. APPENDIX A – Historical Background

Before elaborating on relevant theory for this thesis, some historical background information is provided to create a better understanding among readers regarding the context of the Urker community. In order to understand the present, you have to understand the past. This context will be sketched based upon the most prominent markers of Urk: island history, fishery, dialect and religion.

October 3rd, 1939: “The day begins as every other day: with the rise of the sun above the Zuiderzee. At this early hour, nothing proves that today will be an all-decisive moment for the more than one thousand year old island of Urk.”¹¹⁶

- Brouwer & de Vries (2006, p. 1)

Going back to 1918, it was June when Lely’s Zuiderzee law (Zuiderzee wet) passed. The plan was to reclaim 225.000 hectares of the Zuiderzee in order to ‘tame the hostile sea’ (Brouwer & de Vries, 2006, p. 8). This new piece of dry land in the middle of the Netherlands, the ‘Model Polder’, was going to be the promised land for young people with high potential and competent farmers to start a new life. However, there was a problem that had to be taken care of. A problem called ‘Urk’.

In 1918, Urk was an island of a thousand years old, inhabiting around 2200 people. When Urk heard of the law, the opinions were divided. Older people worried about the decay of (religious) morals, young people saw many advantages, others were afraid to be forced to leave the island and some fishermen that did not believe that the plans would even succeed (Brouwer & de Vries, 2006). However, nothing could be further from the truth. Just before Urk left the ‘island era’ in 1939, the Urker culture was characterized by fishery, poverty and a strict Calvinist doctrine (Kempe, 2007).

Urk was an island located in the Zuiderzee, currently the IJsselmeer, which meant that the Model Polder was going to be connected to Urk. The governments’ plan made sure that the people who would inhabit this new place, would fit several strict requirements such as professional competence, financial capacity, and physical health (Brouwer & de Vries, 2006). Urkers were promised a place in this polder to start working as farmers. This was essential for Urk since fishery, as their main source of income, was much more difficult due to the newly built dikes and the water becoming fresh. Changing their professions from fishermen

to farmers could cover this loss. However, according to the ‘Polder Committee’, Urk was a big problem and had no place in this Model Polder due to its ‘abnormal’ culture which did not fit the requirements (Brouwer & de Vries, 2006). There have even been plans to evict part of the community to other places in the Netherlands in order to ‘get rid of this eyesore’ (Brouwer & de Vries, 2006, p. ...).

The negative reputation of Urk was influenced by scientific claims concerning the nature of the Urker people. Long before the Model Polder, in 1852 a scientist named Pieter Harting visited Urk in order to perform cranial measurements, currently an outdated research method, on Urker inhabitants (Brouwer & de Vries, 2006). This was performed in order to do research on the primeval race, *Batavus Genuinus*, which was believed to still exist in several places in the Zuiderzee of which Urk was one. In 1877, several skulls were even stolen in order to do research on them. The outcomes of these researches were either marked as ‘unresolved’, since they were based on prejudices, or they were very negative towards Urker inhabitants (Brouwer & de Vries, 2006). The population was often labelled as ‘retarded’, ‘dumb’, or ‘irresponsible’ according to several of those researches (Declercq, 2020).

Fishery

Due to Urk’s history, the Urker mentality was strongly focused on the idea that they were on their own, which created a high degree of self-reliance. Self-reliance however, was not a new concept to Urk as a fishing community. After being excluded from chances to farm in the polder, Urkers had only themselves to rely on and had to overcome many setbacks in order to move their fishing activities to the North Sea. In the 60’s this paid off and Urk was engulfed with wealth due to the incomes of the fishing industry. This phenomena is also known as the ‘miracle of Urk’ (Brouwer & de Vries, 2006; Kruize, 2012). Urk later became one of the most important fishing industries within the Netherlands (Kempe, 2007). For Urkers, this only proved that Urk is capable of taking care of its own. Outsiders and ‘the people in Den Haag’ have excluded Urkers for a long time and even wished them gone (Brouwer & de Vries, 2007), but Urk has always overcome by relying on itself and doing it ‘their way’. De Vries (1976) allocated a large part of the cause of the ‘miracle’ to the persevering mentality of the Urkers that has led them to survive as a community, even overcoming hard times of poverty and maltreatment by the government. Throughout history, governmental disapproval towards Urk led to a feeling of inferiority and the need to be self-reliant among Urkers which to this day is still present (Kruize, 2012). Kruize (2012) describes Urks’ history concerning losing their island identity and main source of income, experiencing governmental

disapproval and struggling to adapt, as ‘placetrauma’. To inhabitants, this can feel like a feeling of loss which can lead to alterations in attitude (Kruize, 2012). Events like these can even be passed down through generations, because these alterations can become part of one’s identity (Kruize, 2012).

In 1940, Plomp (1940) indicates that Urkers are ‘alert and have eye for all that is new’, which might contribute to explaining this ‘miracle’ and the fact that Urkers were the first fishers that motorized their ships for example. In the early 2000’s, the Urker industry aggregated a revenue of around 700 million euros (Declercq, 2020). Around 2020, the industry knew over 60 wholesalers, 50 fish processing firms, and the revenue was doubled to an astonishing 1,5 billion euros (Declercq, 2020).

Dialect

The identity of Urk lies in its people. It is the people that speak the language, are religious, generous, open, curious, involved and hospitable (Kruize, 2012). So it is not only the language, but also the content of conversation and the attitude that make it possible to distinguish insiders from outsiders, or *Urkers* from *Vreemden*, by making a distinction between speakers and non-speakers. It is important to note that the Urker dialect is still widely spoken among its population.

Religion

If an Urker does not know a fellow Urker, the main first question will be: ‘Van wie bin jie ur iene?’, which means ‘who are your parents?’ (literally: from who are you one). This emphasizes the fact that knowing who they are dealing with is very important for Urkers. Liking to know where you stand and depending on what is known has been suggested to also be related to religion, according to Urker respondents in a research by Kruize (2012). He indicated that Urk is quite conservative when it comes to faith and religion. ‘In an ever changing world, faith is the safe haven’ (Kruize, 2012, p. 26). Religion being on a pedestal is proven by the fact that Urk has the most churchgoers of the Netherlands, with an astonishing 94% (Schmeets, 2016). In contrast, from an economic perspective, Urk’s fishing industry is very progressive, so ‘in order to still keep a feeling of continuity and steadiness, there is little change in peoples’ faith’ (Kruize, 2012, p. 26). Religion is one of the core elements of the Urker culture and identity, as indicated by participants (Kruize, 2012).

According to Kempe (2007), religious identity is your ‘second’ identity, it comes after ‘being an Urker’. The community can be split up in to two main groups: the conservatives

and the progressives. These terms are based on the type of church that Urkers are a part of (Kempe, 2007). Besides being part of another church, these groups have separate schools, associations and other places to go to for entertainment and social activities (Kempe, 2007). Also, in day to day life, members of the groups can be recognized by their appearances and norms and values. For example, more conservative females wear only skirts whereas progressive females could also wear pants. Moreover, progressives can go by car when going to church whereas conservatives would only walk. However, according to Kempe (2007), this gap of differences between conservative and progressive is much smaller within the younger generation compared to the older generation. Additionally, the differences within the community also lose significance during times of mourning, when for example an Urker died at sea (Kempe, 2007). During these times, Urkers unify and support each other no matter the differences in (religious) backgrounds.

The division of progressives and conservatives has not been something of all times within the Urker community. In times of poverty, the Urker culture was unified with a strict religious character in which dependency on God, several commandments and prohibitions played a salient role (Kempe, 2007). Kempe (2007) suggests that due to the increase of wealth in the 60's and 70's, some people struggled to combine a life of wealth with the Calvinist doctrine. Therefore, part of the community decided to alter the interpretation of the doctrine, in contradiction to other community members who did not agree to such adjustments. Kempe (2007) believes that this is how the community got divided into a conservative and a progressive part. Conservatives clamp to the strict Calvinist doctrine, but part of them struggle to do so. It is possible that they hold on to it not necessarily due to religious convictions, but out of habit, pressure and expectations of family members (Kempe, 2007). This could explain the double standards, the gap between a religious attitude to the outside world and a 'hedonistic life' behind closed doors that is to be found within parts of the community according to Kempe (2007).

For 'outsiders', Urkers are often seen as a homogenous group (Kempe, 2007; Langstraat, 1967, p. 12), all being 'Christian'. However, within Urk there is a great diversity also when it comes to religious groups. About a decade ago, Urk knew three Reformed churches: the 'Gereformeerde' church, the 'Hervormd Gereformeerde' church, and the 'Christelijk Gereformeerde' church, but recently, Urk has lived through an overwhelming amount of schisms. Currently, there are up to 28 churches to be found within the community.

11. APPENDIX B – Sampling schemes and participant information

- Ideal sampling scheme

		Religious background		
		<i>Progressive</i>	<i>Conservative</i>	
Age	70+	3 ($\frac{2}{3}$ male or female)	3 ($\frac{2}{3}$ male or female)	6
	18-25	3 ($\frac{2}{3}$ male or female)	3 ($\frac{2}{3}$ male or female)	6
		6	6	

- Realised sampling scheme

		Religious background		
		<i>Progressive</i>	<i>Conservative</i>	
Age	70+	2 female ; 1 male	1 female ; 2 male	6
	18-25	2 female ; 1 male	2 female ; 1 male	6
		6	6	

- Additional participant information

Name	Age	Religious background	Extra
1. JPV	18-25 (22)	Progressive	Has lived in a big city as a student
2. OPM	70+ (84)	Progressive	Worked outside of Urk
3. OCV	70+	Conservative	
4. JCV	18-25	Conservative	
5. OPV	70+ (75)	Progressive	
6. JCV	18-25	Conservative	
7. JPV	18-25	Progressive	Not religious anymore
8. JPM	18-25	Progressive	Has lived in a big city as a student
9. OCM	70+	Conservative	
10. OCM	70+	Conservative	Used to be a fisherman
11. OPV	70+	Progressive	
12. JCM	18-25	Conservative	Student, currently living in a big city

12. APPENDIX C – Interview guide English

Informed consent:

This interview will be used as data concerning my research. The results will be processed anonymously and will be only used for the goal of this research. You have the right to end your voluntary participation at any moment during this research.

1. Do you declare that you have been well informed concerning the process of this research?
2. Do you give consent in recording this interview?
3. Do you give consent in order for me to process this interview as data for my research?

Introduction (10 min)

1. Goal of the research: looking into the Urker community identity and the generational differences (of cultural factors) between the older (70+) and younger generation (18-25) within the community. It is not necessary for you to have any specific knowledge, all I want to know about are your personal ideas and experiences regarding this topic. You are not obliged to answer every question if you do not feel comfortable doing so. The interview will take up to an hour.

2. Background questions (Fact checking and gathering extra information):

- Name:
- Year and place of birth:
- Education:
- Current occupation:
- How long have you lived in Urk:

3. Briefly explain the topics: During this interview different topics will be discussed that could be determining for your and the Urker community identity. Besides that, it is good to know that we can carry out this interview in Urkers and that you should keep in mind that I will take on an objective role as much as possible. Despite the fact that I am an Urker myself, you can answer my questions as if I would not have any background information regarding Urk.

- Do you have any questions so far?

1. Cultural factors Urk and Community identity (25 min)

1. What cultural factors/marks identify Urk's community best?

(Use the cards so that they can rank the 3 most important ones and the 2 least important ones)

- Urkers
- Dialect
- Fishery
- Generosity
- Mutual aid
- Family ties
- Paradoxes
- Hospitality
- Status competitive behaviour
- Community behaviour
- Religion/ Church/ Faith
- Objects in the village (monuments, the harbour, the lighthouse, etc.)
- Historic background/ Island identity
- Other? Are there more words missing?

2. What do you personally value most?

3. What describes a 'real' Urker?

4. Do you think that the other generation has a different ranking?

→ If so, how come?

5. What does the Urker community have that other communities do not have?

→ What makes Urk special?

→ Why is that special?

6. And the other way around: what does the Urker community not have that other communities do?

7. To what extent do you identify with the Urker community?/ To what extent do you feel that it is part of you?

→ Do you feel like you belong?

→ To what extent do you feel like you are involved within the community? Do you participate in voluntary work, societies, do you have family, friends here

→ Do you feel like you could miss Urk when being away or when you would live someplace else?

8. Are you proud to be an Urker?
 - What makes you proud
 - What makes you less proud?
9. Do you think your generation is more- or less proud to be an Urker compared with the other generation?
10. . To what extent do you feel alienated from the community?
 - Do you feel/think/do/behave things different to some extent?
 - Does that impact your cohesion with the community?
11. In what way could the other generation feel alienated do you think?
 - Do alienated people have a place in the Urker community?

2. Cohesion (15 min)

12. How much contact do you have with people of the other generation within the community?
 - Is that mostly with family members or also outside of that?
 - What does this contact look like? Family visits, birthdays, calling, online, etc.
13. Do you think that there are conflicting issues between your generations?
 - On religious level: do you experience disagreements/arguments
 - On political level: do you experience disagreements/arguments
 - On social/cultural level: do you experience disagreements/arguments when it comes to norms, values, habits, rituals, language
 - Other?
 - By what are these differences influenced by?
14. To what extent do you feel cohesion regardless of these differences?
 - Is there understanding for each other's differences?
 - Is it easy to talk to each other about the differences?
15. What drives this cohesion?
 - Identity markers: language, religion, history
 - Doing things: rituals, church, holidays, habits
 - What drives/causes these things, what maintains them
16. Do you think that the other generation also feels this degree of cohesion?
 - Why or why not do you think that is?
 - How do you think that is?

3. Checklist: conclusion differences between generations (10 min)

1. What do you believe to be the **main differences** between the older and the younger generation within the Urker community?
2. By what are these differences **influenced** do you think?
→ era, accessibility to outside of Urk, religion, language, politics, wealth, digitalisation
3. Do you see the differences as **problematic**? How?
4. Will these differences affect the **cohesion** (het wij-gevoel) of the community?
5. Do you think the **differences** in generations will have **grown in the future**? Why?
6. What do you expect in the **future** concerning the **Urker community identity**?

Any other questions, additions or remarks?

13. APPENDIX D – Interview guide Dutch

Interview Guide – Onderzoek Urk

Toestemming:

Dit interview zal worden gebruikt als gegevens voor mijn onderzoek. De resultaten zullen anoniem verwerkt worden en alleen worden gebruikt voor dit onderzoek. Je hebt te allen tijde het recht om je vrijwillige deelname stop te zetten tijdens dit onderzoek.

1. Verklaar je dat je voldoende bent geïnformeerd over het proces van dit onderzoek?
2. Geef je toestemming voor het opnemen van dit interview?
3. Geef je toestemming voor het gebruiken van dit interview als data voor het onderzoek?

Introductie (10 min)

1. Doel van het onderzoek: een kijkje nemen in de Urker gemeenschapsidentiteit en de culturele verschillen tussen generaties. Ik kijk hiervoor naar de oudere generatie (70+) en de jongere generatie (18-25). Het is niet nodig dat je veel of specifieke kennis hebt, maar wat belangrijk is zijn jouw persoonlijke ideeën en ervaringen wat betreft de Urker gemeenschap. Je bent niet verplicht vragen te beantwoorden die je niet wil beantwoorden. Het interview zal niet langer dan een uur duren.

2. Achtergrond vragen:

- Naam:
- Geboortjaar- en plek:
- Opleidingsniveau:
- Huidige beroep/bezigheid:
- Hoe lang heb je op Urk gewoond

3. Korte uitleg van het interview: Tijdens dit interview zullen verschillende onderwerpen aan bod komen die bepalend zouden kunnen zijn voor jouw en de Urker gemeenschapsidentiteit. Daarnaast is het goed om te weten dat we dit interview in het Urkers kunnen doen en dat je in je achterhoofd moet houden dat ik zoveel mogelijk een objectieve rol inneem. Ondanks dat ik zelf ook een Urker ben mag je antwoord geven alsof ik geen achtergrond kennis van Urk heb.

- Heb je tot nu toe vragen?

1. Culturele factoren Urk en Gemeenschapsidentiteit (25 min)

1. Welke culturele factoren/dingen geven het beste de Urker gemeenschapsidentiteit weer? (Met behulp van kaartjes, zodat participanten een top 3 kunnen samen stellen)

- Urkers
- Dialect
- Visserij
- Vrijgevigheid
- Onderlinge hulp
- Familie relaties
- Paradoxen (tegenstrijdigheden)
- Gastvrijheid
- Status competitie
- Gemeenschapsgedrag
- Religie / Kerk / Geloof
- Objecten in het dorp (monumenten, de haven, de vuurtoren, etc.)
- Historische achtergrond / Eiland geschiedenis
- Overig?

2. Waar hecht jij persoonlijk het meeste waarde aan?

3. Wat beschrijft een 'echte' Urker?

4. Denk je dat de andere generatie een andere rangorde schikking heeft?

- Zo ja, waardoor komt dat?

5. Wat heeft de Urker gemeenschap wat andere gemeenschappen niet hebben?

- Wat maakt Urk speciaal?

- Waarom is dat speciaal?

6. En andersom: wat hebben andere gemeenschappen dat de Urker gemeenschap niet heeft?

7. In hoeverre identificeer jij je met de Urker gemeenschap/ In hoeverre heb je het idee dat dat onderdeel van jou is?

- Heb je het idee dat je erbij hoort?

- In hoeverre ben je persoonlijk betrokken in de gemeenschap? Doe je aan vrijwilligerswerk, ben je onderdeel van (sociale) verenigingen, heb je hier familie/vrienden

- Denk je dat je Urk zou missen als je er niet zou zijn, of als je ergens anders zou gaan wonen?

8. Ben je trots om een Urker te zijn?
→ Wat maakt je trots?
→ Zijn er dingen die je minder trots maken?
9. Denk je dat de andere generatie net zo trots is? Meer of minder?
10. In hoeverre voel je je soms verwijderd/anders dan de Urker gemeenschap?
→ Bijvoorbeeld dat je anders denkt/voelt/doet/gedraagt
→ Wat doet dat met jouw gevoel van je verbondenheid met de gemeenschap?
11. Op wat voor manier zou de andere generatie zich anders/verwijderd kunnen voelen van de Urker gemeenschap?
→ Als je denkt aan 'andere/verwijderde' mensen op Urk, hebben zij een plek in de Urker gemeenschap? Zo ja, welke?

2. Cohesie / Verbondenheid (15 min)

12. Heb je wel eens contact met mensen van de andere generatie binnen de gemeenschap?
→ Binnen of buiten de familie om?
→ Hoe ziet dit contact eruit? Familiebezoek, verjaardagen, online, bellen, etc.
13. Heb je het idee dat er ook (wel eens) conflicterende verschillen zijn tussen de generaties (oud en jong)?
→ Op religieus gebied: ervaar je wel eens onenigheid?
→ Op politiek gebied: ervaar je wel eens onenigheid?
→ Op sociaal/cultureel gebied: ervaar je wel eens onenigheid wat betreft normen en waarden, gewoontes, rituelen of in de taal?
→ Andere vormen van conflict?
→ Waardoor worden deze verschillen door beïnvloed? Tijdsperk, bereikbaarheid naar buiten Urk, religie, taal, politiek, welvaart, digitalisatie,
14. In hoeverre voel je je toch verbonden met elkaar ondanks de verschillen?
→ Is er begrip voor elkaars verschillen?
→ Is het makkelijk om te praten met elkaar over de verschillen?
15. Wat drijft die verbondenheid?
→ Identity markers: de taal, religie, de geschiedenis
→ Dingen doen: rituelen (krans, kost, zorg), kerkgang, feest(dagen), gewoontes
→ Wat is de oorzaak van deze factoren? Wat houdt ze in stand/ wat doet ze ontstaan?
16. Denk je dat de andere generatie zich net zo verbonden voelt?
→ Waarom wel of niet?
→ Hoe kan dit denk je?

3. Checklist: Conclusie over de verschillen tussen generaties (10 min)

1. Wat denk je dat je **algemene verschillen** zijn tussen de oudere en jongere generatie binnen de Urker gemeenschap?
2. Waardoor worden deze verschillen door **beïnvloed** denk je?
→ tijdsperk, bereikbaarheid naar buiten Urk, religie, taal, politiek, welvaart, digitalisatie, etc.
3. Denk je dat deze verschillen **problematisch** (kunnen) zijn? Hoe?
4. Hebben deze verschillen effect op de **verbondenheid, het wij-gevoel** van de gemeenschap? Of kunnen ze effect gaan hebben in de toekomst?
5. Denk je dat de **verschillen** tussen generaties op Urk zullen **toenemen** in de toekomst? Waarom en hoe?
6. Wat verwacht je verder van de **Urker gemeenschap in de toekomst**?

Nog andere vragen, toevoegingen of opmerkingen?

14. APPENDIX E - Code book

Religie/kerk/geloof	• <i>Behoudender</i> • <i>Negatief</i> • <i>Nieuwe generatie</i> • <i>Speelt een rol</i> • <i>Veiligheid/verbinding</i> • <i>Vrijer</i>
Verbinding	• <i>Familie relaties</i> • <i>Kerk</i> • <i>Minder</i> • <i>Samen zijn/doen</i> • <i>Thuis voelen</i> • <i>Verschillen/groepen</i>
Urker identiteit	• <i>Karakter</i> • <i>Stereotype</i> • <i>Verbinding</i>
Kenmerken gemeenschap	• <i>Diversiteit</i> • <i>Veranderingen</i>
Gemeenschapsgedrag	• <i>Aanpassen</i> • <i>Aansluiting</i> • <i>Afwijken gemeenschap</i> • <i>Behoud Urk</i> • <i>Sociale controle</i> • <i>Sociale correctie</i>
Jongeren	• <i>Studeren</i> • <i>Vrijer</i> • <i>Wangedrag</i>
Ouderen	• <i>Gesloten</i> • <i>Ouderwets/traditioneel</i> • <i>Vroeger</i>
Buiten Urk	• <i>Digitalisatie</i> • <i>Eigenschappen buiten Urk</i> • <i>Invloeden buitenaf</i>

	• <i>Media</i>
Visserij	• <i>Kenmerk gemeenschap</i>
Trots	
Familie	• <i>Verbinding familie relaties</i>
Toekomst	
Taal	• <i>Verandering</i> • <i>Waardevol</i> • <i>Verbinding</i>
Gastvrijheid	
Status (competitie)	
Vrijgevigheid	
Onderlinge hulp	
Paradox	• <i>Ideaal / realiteit</i>

15. APPENDIX F – Translation Quotes

¹ Zwarte mannen van twee meter die alleen Engels praten en door het dorp slenteren, tussen vrouwen in klederdracht en mannen op klompen: een Urker kijkt op.

² Als je praat met Urkers moet je niet al te openhartig zijn. Je moet uitkijken dat het niet door wordt verteld en dat heel Urk het te weten komt.

³ Je krijgt een stempel waar je erg moeilijk van afkomt. [...] Sociale controle eindigt in eeuwig zwijgen.

⁴ De jongere generaties Urkers die de oudere vervangen aan de top van het bedrijf, zijn in theorie wel gelovig, maar laten de praktijk aansluiten op de portemonnee en op de investeerders.

⁵ De eindeloze groei houdt ook een mogelijke bedreiging van de cultuur in. Het industrieterrein is veel te groot voor het dorp.

⁶ Net als in de rest van Nederland moet en gaat ook Urk met de tijd mee en dat brengt veranderingen in de cultuur en in de normen en waarden met zich mee.

⁷ [...] een speciale 'Urker' band: het gevoel van Urker zijn.

⁸ (12YCM) Dat Urk gelovig is en dat daaruit voortkomende kenmerken naar elkaar omkijken en gemeenschapsgedrag zijn. Religie/kerk/geloof is meer de noemer waaronder ik dingen als onderlinge hulp enzo schaar.

⁹ (2OPM) [...] de kerk is de overheersende stempel die bepaalde normen en waarden heeft en de ene kerk is anders dan de andere, als je daar aan mee wil doen, en dat is erg prettig, dan hoor je ergens bij, ja.. je bent een gemeenschap met die mensen.

¹⁰ (6YCF) [...] een Urker heeft vaak een standpunt vanuit zn geloof

¹¹ (1YPF) Zondag 2 keer naar de kerk en een bakje koffie doen bij oma. Dat is wel echt het beeld wat ik heb als ik denk aan een typische Urker.

¹² (12YCM) Ook in de politiek, het feit dat hier de hele raad christelijk is, dat is echt uitzonderlijk.

¹³ (8YPM) Religie/kerk/geloof, dat is de big one he, als je met mensen over Urk praat dan is het 'ja daar gaat iedereen naar de kerk en netjes 2x op de zondag'.

¹⁴ (11OPF) [...] ik denk dat familierelatie belangrijk is. [...] Ik bedoel, dan zeggen ze 'ja aan de wal hebben ze hun kinderen niet om hun heen wonen', en dat hebben wij hier toch wel. Daarom denk ik dat wel belangrijk is, maar het is niet gezegd dat het altijd een goede familierelatie is, maar ze zijn wel bepalend voor hoe je in het leven staat denk ik.

¹⁵ (4YCF) Nu ik niet meer thuis ben vindt mn moeder het ook leuk als ik langs kom, [...] omdat ze een beetje 'anwinnig' is [iemand missen].

¹⁶ (3OCF) Ja dat is van dat kleven he, hoor dan, ze moeten allemaal continue bij elkaar zitten. Oecheden, kijk mijn buurvrouw heeft 9 kinderen, ik kan alles zien he als het gordijn opgeschoven is [...] en ik zeg nou jouw getrouwden die gaan elke keer heen ook om te eten enzo. En de ene heeft 4 kinderen dus dat is 6 mensen en die ander heeft er 3 dus dat is 5 dan he!

¹⁷ (6YCF) En bijv die vrijgevigheid, [...] er zijn altijd wel mensen die onbeperkt geld geven, ook als er dingen gevraagd worden er zijn altijd Urkers die opstaan.

¹⁸ (8YPM) Ja de famous Ethiopië collectie elk jaar, dan maken we weer landelijk nieuws want Urk is de meest vrijgevege gemeente van Nederland

¹⁹ (8YPM) Weet je als je wat nodig hebt, er zijn mindere plekken om te wonen als het er op aan komt. [...] Wij hebben bijvoorbeeld net een huis gekocht, dan staan er binnen een week tafels en stoelen, 'neem even mee, dat is handig'.

²⁰ (1YPF) Ik denk dat dat wel bijzonder is dat je hoeft niet per se iemand goed te kennen om je hulp aan te bieden in dat opzicht.

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- ²¹ (12YCM) Toen mijn moeder ziek was kon ze heel weinig, toen kwam er zo iemand uit de kerk die m'n moeder misschien 2 keer gesproken had maar die bood gewoon aan om te helpen. nou dat konden we goed gebruiken, en toen kwam ze gewoon en ze bleef ook komen.
- ²² (10OCM) Haar vader was gestorven toen ze nog niet zo heel lang op Urk woonde, en ze zei 'waar overkomt het je dat je in de jumbo loopt en dat er een wildvreemde dan een arm om je schouder legt en zegt 'hoe gaat het met je'.
- ²³ (3OCV): Nou zie je het nou, nu krijg ik een puddinkje en een bon, dat bedoel ik he!
- ²⁴ (1YPF) Ja het is een soort identificatie middel, en tegelijker tijd ook een soort van onderscheid van de rest zijn, 'wij zijn niet echt Nederlander'.
- ²⁵ (2OPM) Dan schrijft iemand in een blaadje van de kerk een verhaal in't Urkers, dan schieten de tranen in m'n ogen. [...] En in het schrijven van het dialect dan doen ze wat zij zelf denken dat goed is. [...] ja dat vond ik vreselijk.
- ²⁶ (8YPM) Je weet er wordt gepraat dus dan kan ik maar beter goed voor de dag komen. [...] Je hebt een aantal 'horsemen' van Urk in status. Je moet houten lamellen achter je raam hebben, dan weet je dat je het gemaakt hebt, je moet áltijd een schuurtje met een bakpan Ja maar dat is zo! Je buurman heeft dat ook en dan moet jij dat ook. je betaalt gerust 400 euro in de maand bij om een dikke auto te kunnen rijden. en je visbedrijf moet het grootste zijn enzo.
- ²⁷ (10OCM) Echt status en altijd maar dat competitie, dat hebben we ook op de vloot ontzettend meegemaakt. het ging er altijd maar om, als je maandag weer int busje zat, dan moest jouw kotter nummer en naam genoemd worden. 'Zij hebben zoveel besomd'. er werd niet gevraagd wat is er van over gebleven, nee wat er besomd was. [...] je had vroeger van die rauwdouwers die overal visten waar je eigenlijk niet kon vissen, dus dan maakte je veel brokken maar daar lag wel dikke visserij. Dan besomde je wel goed, maar je bracht een net weg, en enz. Dus je had meer onkosten, veel onkosten.
- ²⁸ (3OCF) Niet piekeren, doen op [gewoon doen].
- ²⁹ (4YCF) Als er gezeurd wordt of er is wat, dan denk je al snel van nou 'die vreemden' en gelukkig staan wij wat meer met onze beide benen op de grond.
- ³⁰ (12YCM) een Urker steekt z'n mening onder banken
- ³¹ (11OPF) Dé Urker bestaat niet, want ik ben ook een Urker.
- ³² (11OPF) We zijn geen van allen trots als Urk negatief in de belangstelling staat in de media, daar ben ik ook niet trots op.
- ³³ (4FCF) Ik denk dat de jongeren steeds wat vrijer worden en de ouderen blijven een beetje zwartwit. dus dat je daardoor meer verschil krijgt
- ³⁴ (3OCF) Er is meer begrip voor elkaar; anders denken en erover kunnen discussiëren
- ³⁵ (3OCF) Een Urker hangt niet z'n smerige was buiten, dus dat duurt even voordat ze dat zeggen. maar de jongeren komen daar wel mee naar buiten, maar dat moet ook.
- ³⁶ (7YPF) Ik denk dat wat ik vaak zie is dat jongeren best wel ja wat meer open staan voor de rest, ook buiten het geloof om en de oudere generatie is dan meer gebonden aan de regels. als je jonger bent dan heb je meer contact met andere mensen waardoor je genuanceerder wordt.
- ³⁷ (12YCM) Ik denk dat oudere generaties nog veel meer naar de kerk gaan dan jongeren, en als jij altijd in de kerk gezeten hebt heb je nog hele sterke normen, waarden, idealen, principes die vooral met de bijbel gerelateerd zijn. [...] Dat is meer een theoretisch fundament waar ze niet van afwijken omdat ze er zo thuis in zijn
- ³⁸ (5OPF) Ze gaan nu zondags ook rustig ergens heen ofzo. vroeger was dat niet zo

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- ³⁹ (9OCM) Een gedeelte van de jeugd wel, die laten ze liggen. de ontkerkelijkheid komt op Urk wel voor hoor nu. [...] ik denk [...] dat ze niet gebonden willen zijn. als het ze uitkomt dat ze dan eens naar de kerk gaan.
- ⁴⁰ (8YPM) Ik ken veel mensen die zeggen ik ga er niks mee doen maar ik heb ook vrienden die belijdenis hebben gedaan.
- ⁴¹ (10OCM) Wat ik wel zie, gelukkig denk ik, dat jongeren radicaler worden in de zin van ik zie jonge mensen die tot geloof komen en die er voor gaan. ik zie ook jonge mensen, wat vroeger dus minder aan de orde was, die durven zeggen van 'zeg me niks, doet me niks, zoek het uit'!
- ⁴² (5OPF) tis heel anders als in onze tijd. dat kun je je niet voorstellen.
- ⁴³ (2OPM) Vroeger was het anders, dan had je in de grote steden gas, licht en waterleiding, en dat hadden wij niet..
- ⁴⁴ (2OPM) Hoepeltijd, toltijd, knikkeren, vliegeren, dat was allemaal straat activiteiten die je dan ook groepsgevoel deed. [...]. En ik vind dat wij ons daarmee uitstekend mee vermaakt hebben. Ja je wist ook niet anders, het was prachtig vermaak, veel mooier dan dat je op zon schermptje zit.
- ⁴⁵ (12YCM) Dat is meer het mensen kennen van vroeger nog, dat is echt wel een ding van de oudere generatie. [...] Als mijn oma iets probeert te duiden doet ze dat altijd aan de hand van namen en bijnamen, familierelaties. oude mensen onderling kennen dat ook allemaal gewoon, 'jantje van die en die van piet'. bam, gelijk weten ze het.
- ⁴⁶ (3OCF) Wij zijn toch wel een beetje hard en onbegrepen opgevoed. Er was geen ruimte voor aandacht en luister, 'nou wat moet je dan' was het dan.
- ⁴⁷ (5OPF) Mn moeder zei, 'wat moet een meisje leren, die moet leren naaien en koken, als ze trouwt dan is het werk af'.
- ⁴⁸ (10OCM) vroeger in mijn tijd, daar kwam het niet in je hoofd op zal ik maar zeggen, om te zeggen 'ik doe nergens aan, ik ben ongelovig', dat was misschien ook wel niet zo want je werd natuurlijk tot in je vezels groot gebracht met geloof kerk en alles wat ermee te maken had. maar, dat is niet meer zo.
- ⁴⁹ (8YPM) Toen was het niet maatschappelijk acceptabel om uit de kerk te stappen en nu is dat is dat wat meer geaccepteerd. maar als je op zon leeftijd bent, om dan nog de stap te maken om te stoppen met iets wat zo intrinsiek deel uit maakt van jouw identiteit dat is gewoon heel lastig.
- ⁵⁰ (5OPF) Ze moeten in de kerk komen en dat doen ze ook, maar ze liggen meer te slapen en eten in de kerk, dat hoor je dan wel van die jongelui, omdat ze moeten.
- ⁵¹ (10OCM) Urk is aan een inhaalslag bezig he, wat je 20 jaar constateerde aan de wal gebeurde, dat gebeurt hier zachtjes aan op Urk, we hobbelen erachteraan, maar het gebeurt allemaal.
- ⁵² (5OPF) Ik denk ook doordat je eiland af bent, je kunt makkelijker ergens heen.
- ⁵³ (1YPF) steeds meer jonge mensen die gestudeerd hebben ouder worden en die zien de culturen en de manieren van doen buiten en Urk en zien dat het anders kan en brengen dat weer terug.
- ⁵⁴ (12YCM) Maar als dan op generatie verschillen komen, wij studeren, leest meer je ziet andere dingen, doet andere indrukken op, en dan ga je dus bij jezelf kopiëren zo kan het ook, en dat kun je nooit meer vergeten dat kun je niet wegdeneren.
- ⁵⁵ (4YCF) Als ik aan mn oma moet uitleggen wat ik heb gestudeerd, dan snapt ze dat niet. Zelfs niet 70+ weten dat niet altijd. ik moet dat dan echt uitleggen waarvoor ik dan op kantoor zit en wat voor toegevoegde waarde dat dan heeft.
- ⁵⁶ (11OPF) Je hebt een generatie die hier opgegroeid is, hier naar school geweest is en ook die clan vormen, maar ik zie wel gelukkig dat jongeren buiten urk ook gaan studeren die ook een andere kijk krijgen op de samenleving. Die zullen er anders in staan, want je blik naar buiten toe verbreed natuurlijk ook je kijk op de wereld

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- ⁵⁷ (12YCM) Je ziet veel jongeren die zich afzetten. tegelijkertijd zie je ook veel jongeren juist vóór Urk kiezen.
- ⁵⁸ (12YCM) Vroeger had een Urker misschien 10 buurmannen om mee te vergelijken op straat nu heb je er een miljoen door het wide web. [...] Door social media vervaagt die norm iets, als in mensen worden losser, minder conservatief.
- ⁵⁹ (8YPM) [...] dat ze dan zeggen van 'nou ik zeg maar niet hoe ik erover denk' en ik denk dat de oudere generatie, dat hun idealen minder vaak gechallenged worden wat dat betreft. Die worden altijd maar bevestigd in wat zij denken.
- ⁶⁰ (4YCF) Terwijl die oudere generatie was denk ik veel strakker, van dat moet dit gebeuren en dan dat. ik heb zoiets van mijn geld, mijn leven, ik ga lekker genieten.
- ⁶¹ (LOCM) nu worden er feesten georganiseerd, het is 'haal maar op en koop maar', je bent 17 dan hebben ze ik weet niet wat voor auto onder hun gat.
- ⁶² (DYPF) Dat ben je al heel snel, dat kan al aan de schoenen liggen die je aan hebt. Ik denk gewoon als je je afzet tegen het standaard leven.
- ⁶³ (BYCF) Terwijl als ik op zaterdag een dagje weg ging was het, 'heb jij niks in huis te doen dan', terwijl ik dacht ja hallo ik heb weekend, laat mij uit gaan weet je
- ⁶⁴ (DYPM) Nouja als je een jasje hebt met felle kleuren en je komt de kroeg in dan is het 'wat heb jij voor homo jas aan', weet je wel. Gewoon de simpelste dingen weet je wel, je moet je gedragen als een urker en een beetje daarbuiten dat kan niet zegmaar
- ⁶⁵ (4YCF) Mijn oma is echt oud gereformeerd zeg maar. [...] maar wij mochten daar nooit met een broek komen. [...] dan kwamen we er in en dan wast het van 'je bent zo een jongetje'
- ⁶⁶ (11OPF) Nou dat vragen ze dan, dat kunnen ze niet begrijpen van, 'we hebben zon fijne kerk en er is zoveel gemeenschapszin, en er is zoveel.. wat mis je dan?'. maar dat kan ik dan niet aangeven wat ik mis, want zij missen dat niet, dat vinden zij juist prachtig.
- ⁶⁷ (8YPM) Het kan mij echt een worst zijn wat mensen over je zeggen. maar dat moet je wel kunnen. Ik ken ook mensen die gaan van Urk af omdat ze het heel vervelend vinden dat mensen altijd over ze praten, ja daar moet je een beetje schijt aan hebben denk ik.
- ⁶⁸ (8YPM) Ik kan me goed voorstellen dat wanneer mensen vragen waar je vandaan komt, dat ze dan zeggen Noordoostpolder.
- ⁶⁹ (3OCF) Ja, dat ligt aan de religie, geloof. [...] 'zoveel kerken en allemaal christelijk', dat wordt erbij gezegd.
- ⁷⁰ (10OCM) Er wordt laten zien, ook dit is Urk. maar dan vind ik het jammer dat daar het accent op gelegd wordt, ja dat trekt kijkers natuurlijk.
- ⁷¹ (2OPM) Ik walg van dat losse principiëren op Urk zeg maar, want ik vind zelf dat is Urk niet, maar een buitenstaander die dat 'ziet ja dat is Urk tjonge jonge jonge', en dan krijg je dat gezeur over dat 'christelijke Urk, moet je is even kijken'.
- ⁷² (11OPF) Het mag wel benoemd worden, maar soms is het ook wel een beetje overdreven omdat het Urk is.
- ⁷³ (10OCM) Ze kunnen nog zulke verkeerde dingen over Urk zeggen, maar ik weet dat vanuit de kern dat het anders is.
- ⁷⁴ (12YCM) Ja en dat vind ik het meest vervelende, je wordt onder een groep geschaard. stel je hebt Feyenoord supporters dan heb je de hooligans die mee gaan naar het buitenland voor een wedstrijd en die vernietigen dan een fontein in Rome, dan krijg je dus dat een klein gedeelte van een hele groep als representatief wordt gezien voor de hele groep en die heeft dan een reputatie en een naam. zo gaat het ook op Urk. terwijl ik geloof best dat 90% van de Feyenoord supporters gewoon vredig is, graag een wedstrijd wil kijken en gewoon een biertje wil drinken gewoon gezelligheid, maar een klein

percentage kan het verpesten voor de rest en dat heb je ook met Urk. als ik tegen mensen zeg 'ik kom uit Urk', 'ooh..' weet je wel. dat is vaak een van de eerste reacties, ze weten niet wat ze moeten zeggen. dat zegt iets, dat is informatie zeg maar, dat is niet zomaar. misschien heb je andere mensen die trotser op Urk, maar ik kom meer in aanmerking met mensen die een mening over Urk hebben en dat ik me soms anders, niet per se moet verdedigen, maar dat ik wel dingen moet uitleggen dus dan wordt je daar ook wel meer mee geconfronteerd.

⁷⁵ (6YCF): Ik denk dat het voordeel is dat ik allemaal vrienden heb die ook gestudeerd hebben, die allemaal buiten Urk ook wel gewoond hebben en hun eigen ding doen. Dus binnen m'n vriendengroep val ik niet buiten de toon.

⁷⁶ (8YPM) Ik denk dat de gemeenschap niet 1 ding is. ik heb mijn mensen en daar associeer ik me fantastisch mee en daar kan ik goed mee, en voor mij zijn zij ook Urkers, maar niet het stereotype Urker.

⁷⁷ (8YPM) Ik denk je anders voelen dan de gemiddelde Urker, dat dat ook een verbindende factor kan zijn. al de mensen die ik ken, daar zou ik niet van zeggen jij bent een gemiddelde Urker zeg maar.

⁷⁸ (3OCF) De andere meningen van de jeugd enzo daar moet je voor open staan, want sta je er niet voor open dan kan het niet.

⁷⁹ (5OPF) Ja meer vrijheid. ik denk wel eens van die dingen, van nou moet je nou per se op zondag je caravan voor de deur zetten en inpakken en alles weet je wel, want je weet dat er ook mensen zijn die zich daar aan ergeren snap je. maar daar geeft men niet meer zo veel om, ze gaan hun eigen gang. [...]. 'Ik denk er zo over dus laat mij in m'n waarde, en ik laat jou in je waarde'

⁸⁰ (3OCF) want sommigen op Urk hebben een te nauwe blik, die moet wat groter.

⁸¹ (10OCM) aan de ene kant is er altijd een enorme strijd bezig, en aan de andere kant als je er zijn moet dan ben je er.

⁸² (7YPF) nou het kan zijn dat het meer botst omdat er meer verschillende opvattingen zijn. ik denk dat het nog steeds wel verbonden en sterk is, omdat het toch wel een hele identiteit is voor veel mensen.

⁸³ (4YCF) Wij zijn Urk, en wij doen het samen

⁸⁴ (4YCF) wij tegen de rest soms wel een beetje.

⁸⁵ (11OPF) Ik ben ook trots op Urk, maar ik mag zelf wel kritisch zijn, maar als een buitenstaander wat zegt dan word ik een beetje venijnig, snap je?

⁸⁶ (5OPF) [...] als het er op aan komt als er nood is of hulp, dan staat iedereen klaar, dan valt de kerk weg.

⁸⁷ (10OCM) Je zal op een Urker niet vaak tevergeefs een beroep doen op wat voor gebied dan ook.

⁸⁸ (8YPM) [...] die boot die omgeslagen is, dan heeft iedereen het erover, iedereen maakt zich zorgen.

⁸⁹ (11OPF) [...] wat er dan allemaal gedaan wordt om toch nog die jongen gedaan wordt. Ik bedoel, menselijkerwijs gesproken, nou tis nu een paar dagen geleden, je stopt dan met zoeken, [...] en dan is er een groep die in actie komt. Dat vind ik iets, ja dat zie je bijna nergens.

⁹⁰ (12YCM) Op Urk woon je dicht bij elkaar, alles is bereikbaar, je kan elkaar overal tegenkomen, je eet makkelijk samen of komt om een kopje koffie, dat verbloemt dan weer die ruzie zeg maar.

⁹¹ (4YCF) [...] laat maar gaan, laat maar zitten weet je wel, want het is wel je familie, dan ga je weer verder.

⁹² (4YCF) Als ik een week niet bij m'n oma ben geweest dan krijg ik een berichtje of dat ze zegt 'nou ik zal een schilderijtje van je ophangen, want je komt nooit'. [...]. Ik denk dat je je toch verbonden voelt omdat je vanuit huis meekrijgt van dat zijn wel mensen waar je respect voor moet hebben, die moet je wel onderhouden. Je wordt zelf ook oud dan wil je ook wat hebben.

⁹³ (12YCM) [...] dat sommige kinderen aan de drugs zitten, en dat ouderen dan weg kijken, komt ook wel omdat ze graag een positieve connotatie willen houden bij hun kinderen en dat ze denken dat het goed komt.

⁹⁴ (2OPM) [...] omdat dat gewoon de kinderen zijn van de mensen.. Als ik aan iemand van 25 vraag van 'wie bin jie dr iene' dan moeten ze zeggen wie hun opa is, dan zit ik in mijn generatie.

⁹⁵ (1YPF) Een alternatieveling is iemand die niet bij het plaatje 'echte Urker' hoort.

⁹⁶ (12YCM) Dat is puur een soort evolutionair overleven.

⁹⁷ (12YCM) Dus dat je gewoon laat zien dat je committed bent to Urk. [...] dat je 2 keer naar de kerk gaat en lekker actief bent met mensen. Dat zien mensen graag denk ik.

⁹⁸ (1YPF) Als je voor vrienden of familie kiest, dan kies je gelijk met heel je hart. Je bent helemaal geïnvesteerd, het kan niet voor de helft, het moet helemaal zijn. [...] omdat, als je dat op Urk niet hebt, wat heb je dan nog wel?

⁹⁹ (10OCM) Het heeft alles te maken hebt met je geven of niet. Het maakt eigenlijk niet uit, of dat nou via de kerk is of via een vereniging.

¹⁰⁰ (12YCM) Bijvoorbeeld als je op voetbal zit bij Urk 1, dan zijn er heel veel deuren die er voor je openen. [...] die hebben geeneens een opleiding gedaan en krijgen bijvoorbeeld 5 banen aangeboden bij weet ik veel, grote kantoren van visbedrijven. [...] of dan gaan ze met een Urk 1 jasje naar het dorp toe, dan lopen de vrouwen om hen heen zeg maar in 'zwermen'.

¹⁰¹ (11OPV) Ja dat geeft verbondenheid he als je samen wat klaarmaakt ben je samen trots. En er wordt hier ontzettend veel gedaan he op Urk, ook door de jongeren er wordt zoveel leuks opgezet dat vind ik écht een positief gegeven. Het wordt gestimuleerd en dat vind ik prachtig en dat we dat dan samen ja.

¹⁰² (12YCM) [...] als ik zeg op social media 'dat keur ik af', dan breek je een ongeschreven code, dat je de groep verradt en word je uitgemaakt voor NSB'er en alles. Dat schuurt mij best wel.

¹⁰³ (7YPF) ja ik ben niet heel erg kerkelijk enzo dus op dat gebied wel.

¹⁰⁴ (8YPM) Ik had een collega die is opgegroeid in de [naam kerk] op Urk en die zit nu bij ons, nou dan mag je je handen dichtknijpen als je familie je nog aankijkt zeg maar.

¹⁰⁵ (12YCM) Ik een jongen die was heel erg kunstzinnig en die maakte graag schilderijen en portretten en nou ja die was wat alternatiever, wat linkser, wat meer vrije idealen, maar hij zat in de oud gereformeerde kerk. En er waren gewoon echt mensen die hem heel erg hard toespraken van 'dat kan niet', hij werd gewoon echt gepest, dat is een feit.

¹⁰⁶ (6YCF) ik zie wel ook binnen m'n vriendengroep, dat Urk niet per se erg trekt omdat er een bepaalde gedachte en norm heerst waar ze minder goed bijpassen, dat ze denken dit is niet echt voor mij, ik ga van Urk af. Ik denk dat er voor die mensen te weinig gefaciliteerd wordt om hun plekje te vinden en dat de groep te klein is om, zelf dat plekje echt in te kunnen nemen.

¹⁰⁷ (4YCF) [...] dat er geen ruimte is voor discussie. [...]. Ik heb het idee, ook binnen ons gezin of vriendengroep, dat het dan ruzie werd, dat ik dacht 'jullie willen je gelijk halen' ofzo, of als je anders denkt dan ben je niet goed. Dat vind ik wel jammer.

¹⁰⁸ (8YPM) je moet je gedragen als een Urker en een beetje daarbuiten dat kan niet zeg maar. [...] Dan ben je een beetje raar, dan val je buiten de boot.

¹⁰⁹ (12YCM) Dat is net als een studentenvereniging: 'mores'. als jij 3 weken lang niet op een borrel komt, dan gaan mensen daar iets over zegen en dat is ook op Urk zo, ze verwachten dat van zichzelf en dus ook van een ander.

¹¹⁰ (6YCF) Bijvoorbeeld ik ben nu 25, ik heb nog geen vriend en ik ben laatst op mezelf gaan wonen. Nou dat is niet iets wat bij een typisch Urker meisje past. Als ik daaraan denk dan is het van op haar

19e heeft ze verkering, op haar 22e trouwt ze en op haar 23 heeft ze haar eerste kind. Dat zie ik ook wel veel om me heen maar ik ben dat zelf niet.

¹¹¹ (2OPM) 'Waar was je nou zondag want ik heb je niet gezien in de kerk'.

¹¹² (5OPF) Hij had weer die angst van de kerk he, van daar wordt over gepraat en dat mocht niet, dat was meer de angst daarvoor dan dat ie er zelf nou zo tegen was. En die mentaliteit hebben wij in het begin ook wel gehad dat je dat je dacht van nou wat zullen de mensen wel niet denken weet je wel.

¹¹³ (12YCM) Mijn tante heeft een broertje die is homo en die voelde zich hier écht niet thuis. Er waren echt mensen die zeiden dat z'n geaardheid verkeerd was enzo, die is gewoon ergens anders gaan wonen. Ik denk dat die mensen er zelf voor kiezen om weg te gaan, omdat het gewoon niet een prettige omgeving is omdat je niet veel acceptatie krijgt.

¹¹⁴ (7YPF) Nou daar zijn meer mensen die wat opener zijn, voor alles eigenlijk.

¹¹⁵ (12YCM) [...] en sommige mensen voelen zich niet thuis in de groep, die gaan ergens anders wonen maar daar hoor je niks van.

¹¹⁶ De dag begint zoals iedere andere dag: met het opkomen van de zon boven de Zuiderzee ter hoogte van Schokland. Op dit vroege uur bewijst niets dat vandaag een alles beslissend moment voor het ruim duizend jaar oude eiland Urk zal plaatsvinden.